

PARLIAMENT OF VICTORIA

**PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES
(HANSARD)**

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

FIFTY-EIGHTH PARLIAMENT

FIRST SESSION

Thursday, 8 December 2016

(Extract from book 17)

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

By authority of the Victorian Government Printer

HANSARD¹⁵⁰



1866–2016

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

The Governor

The Honourable LINDA DESSAU, AM

The Lieutenant-Governor

The Honourable Justice MARILYN WARREN, AC, QC

The ministry

(to 9 November 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
Minister for Consumer Affairs, Gaming and Liquor Regulation	The Hon. M. Kairouz, MP
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
Attorney-General and Minister for Racing	The Hon. M. P. Pakula, MP
Minister for Agriculture and Minister for Regional Development	The Hon. J. L. Pulford, MLC
Minister for Women and Minister for the Prevention of Family Violence	The Hon. F. Richardson, MP
Minister for Finance and Minister for Multicultural Affairs	The Hon. R. D. Scott, MP
Minister for Planning	The Hon. R. W. Wynne, MP
Cabinet Secretary	Ms G. A. Tierney, MLC

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Minister for Planning	The Hon. R. W. Wynne, MP
Cabinet Secretary	Ms M. Thomas, MP

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

Speaker:

The Hon. TELMO LANGUILLER

Deputy Speaker:

Mr D. A. NARDELLA

Acting Speakers:

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

Leader of the Parliamentary Labor Party and Premier:

The Hon. D. M. ANDREWS

Deputy Leader of the Parliamentary Labor Party and Deputy Premier:

The Hon. J. A. MERLINO

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

The Hon. M. J. GUY

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

The Hon. D. J. HODGETT

Leader of The Nationals:

The Hon. P. L. WALSH

Deputy Leader of The Nationals:

Ms S. RYAN

Heads of parliamentary departments

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

Council — Clerk of the Legislative Council: Mr A. Young

Parliamentary Services — Secretary: Mr P. Lochert

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

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

¹ Elected 31 October 2015

² Resigned 3 September 2015

³ Resigned 3 September 2015

⁴ Elected 14 March 2015

⁵ Elected 31 October 2015

⁶ 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 Elasmr and Mr Melhem.

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

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

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

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Thursday, 8 December 2016

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

PETITIONS

Following petitions presented to house:

Ormond railway station

To the Honourable the Speaker and members of the Legislative Assembly:

We, the undersigned citizens of Victoria, call on the Legislative Assembly of Victoria to note:

the foundation deck for the development of an up to 13-storey residential tower above the Frankston railway line on North Road above Ormond station has been constructed without informing or consulting the local community;

established low-rise suburbs should not be destroyed and permanently scarred by the construction of inappropriate, high-rise overdevelopments on railway land, particularly in the absence of community consultation; and

the local community does not support or consent to the construction of a residential tower of up to 13 storeys above Ormond station.

We therefore demand the Andrews Labor government abandon its plans for the inappropriate overdevelopment of the Ormond station site and instead proceed with a development that is smaller in scale and more in keeping with the low-rise village atmosphere of Ormond.

By Mr SOUTHWICK (Caulfield) (374 signatures).

Carrington Grove, East St Kilda

To the Honourable the Speaker and members of the Legislative Assembly:

We, the undersigned citizens of Victoria, call on the Legislative Assembly of Victoria to note:

the residents of and regular visitors to Carrington Grove, East St Kilda, are concerned over the adequacy of the street lighting in Carrington Grove. At night, the existing lights do not provide enough visibility throughout the street;

additional lights and appropriate tree management could help to improve the levels of light and, as a result, the safety of local residents and visitors.

We therefore call on the state government to work proactively with Glen Eira council and other relevant stakeholders to improve the level of street lighting in Carrington Grove, East St Kilda.

By Mr SOUTHWICK (Caulfield) (60 signatures).

Tabled.

Ordered that petitions presented by honourable member for Caulfield be considered next day on motion of Mr SOUTHWICK (Caulfield).

Ordered that petition presented by honourable member for Gembrook on 7 December be considered next day on motion of Mr BATTIN (Gembrook).

GEELONG CITIZENS JURY**Interim report**

Ms ALLAN (Minister for Public Transport), by leave, presented report.

Tabled.

SUPREME COURT OF VICTORIA**Report 2014–15**

Mr PAKULA (Attorney-General) presented report by command of the Governor.

Tabled.

DOCUMENTS

Tabled by Clerk:

National Health Funding Pool — Report 2015–16

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

Ballarat — C183

Bayside — C129

Campaspe — C103

Colac Otway — GC57

Glen Eira — C145

Hepburn — GC57

Indigo — GC57

Macedon Ranges — C105, GC57

Manningham — GC57

Mitchell — C107

Moorabool — GC57

Mount Alexander — GC57

Murrindindi — GC57

Nillumbik — GC57

Surf Coast — C115, GC57

Yarra — C224

Yarra Ranges — GC57

Infrastructure Victoria — Victoria's 30-Year Infrastructure Strategy

Subordinate Legislation Act 1994 — Documents under s 16B in relation to the *Education and Training Reform Act 2006* — Ministerial Order No 928 — Power of School Council to Grant a Licence in Relation to School Lands or Buildings.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

Adjournment

Ms ALLAN (Minister for Public Transport) — I move:

That the house, at its rising, adjourns until Tuesday, 7 February 2017.

Motion agreed to.

MEMBERS STATEMENTS

Lancefield Primary School

Mr WAKELING (Ferntree Gully) — I recently had the pleasure of attending the opening of the new Indigenous garden at Lancefield Primary School. It was a great event, and it was attended by many in the Lancefield community and local councillors. I was warmly received and welcomed by the students, the staff and the parents at this great school. It was pleasing to be part of the official opening. I note that the local member of Parliament, the member for Macedon, was not in attendance at the event, but I was very pleased to attend this event, and I was honoured to participate in the official opening.

Melbourne Metro rail project

Mr WAKELING — I raise concerns on behalf of one of my constituents, Galina Hitchen, who has grave concerns about the government's actions with regard to St Kilda Road and the removal of the mature trees along that boulevard. Many would know of those trees that are going to be affected by the Domain works. Ms Hitchen has contacted the Premier raising her concerns but is gravely concerned with the response she has received from the Premier. It is imperative that the Premier listen to the concerns of residents like Ms Hitchen to ensure that their views are not being ignored.

St Vincent de Paul Society, Ferntree Gully

Mr WAKELING — I would also like to take this opportunity to congratulate St Vincent de Paul —

Gordon Veersasawmy, all the committee members and the president — for the work they did with the recent Christmas lunch. It is a great annual event, and I am always honoured to participate in the provision of food.

Williamstown RSL

Mr NOONAN (Minister for Industry and Employment) — I rise today to speak in support of the Williamstown RSL sub-branch and to thank its committee and members for their fortitude throughout an extremely difficult time. Since 2013 the Williamstown RSL has been working tirelessly to relieve itself of considerable debt that its committee inherited. This debt was not created by fraud but by an inefficient business model. As a result of these efforts the club has substantially broadened its membership base, and for the first time in a number of years it has started to record a profit. However, Anzac House recently informed the Williamstown sub-branch that it must close its doors on 3 January next year.

The importance of the RSL in our community cannot be overstated. It is more than a club; it is a local institution. Gifted to returned servicemen in 1919, the site has been used by members for generations. On Monday night the local sub-branch accepted that it cannot continue to operate a commercially viable sub-branch. But what the members are seeking is an assurance from Anzac House that a traditional club can be maintained in Williamstown. After almost a century of having a local RSL presence, I do not think that this is an unreasonable request.

I want to thank all members of the community who attended on Monday night. I am especially grateful to Bruce O'Brien, Rob Rowe, Bernie Bicknell, Alan Hart and David O'Meara, who make up the current sub-branch committee, for their unwavering dedication to the club and its membership.

Country Fire Authority volunteers

Mr McCURDY (Ovens Valley) — I cannot let the last week of Parliament go by without expressing my absolute support for our Country Fire Authority (CFA) units in Victoria. As we approach another dangerous fire season, I want to pledge that The Nationals team and I will fight to the end to ensure that our CFA volunteers are supported. At every chance we have we will fight against any changes the Premier pushes upon the CFA and work to reverse these disgraceful imposts upon it.

The safety of the Ovens Valley is my no. 1 priority, whereas this Premier's attack on his once local

community is nothing short of treason. The community that nurtured him as a young boy to be the Premier is so disappointed and disgusted that he sold them out for a few lousy pieces of gold. He can change the rules, he can try to dramatically dismantle one of the world's greatest volunteer organisations, but let me warn him: the next time he pulls on the R. M. Williams and rolls back into Wangaratta pretending to be the local boy made good in the city, he will receive the same negative comments and cold shoulder that he earned on his last visit to the saleyards. If he thinks that Victoria will forget his bullying, harassing and standover tactics, he is completely wrong. We will never forget. He will not be forgiven for this treason.

Merry Christmas to all in the Ovens Valley, especially our CFA volunteers.

Portarlington Primary School

Ms NEVILLE (Minister for Police) — One of the great communities on the Bellarine Peninsula, and they are all fantastic, is Portarlington. I have had the pleasure over the last couple of weeks to make some significant announcements and be part of significant events. Firstly, last week I was pleased to join the Minister for Education to turn the first sod to mark the beginning of works on the \$5.7 million upgrade to the Portarlington Primary School. This has long been an aspiration of the school, and it has got a great outcome in terms of design. It is going to be a fantastic school and will include a refurbished heritage building. I really want to thank Lesley-Ann Allbutt, the principal, all the previous school council members and particularly Karen Bourke-Finn, the president, who has really led the way on this matter.

Portarlington–Melbourne ferry service

Ms NEVILLE — On another exciting matter, on Monday, 21 November, I was pleased to join Port Phillip Ferries and many from the local community to launch the Portarlington–Melbourne ferry service. This is now a guaranteed service with some additional support from the government to ensure that this important aspiration of the local community of Portarlington has become a reality. I want to thank John Rae and Geoff Henderson.

Portarlington commercial jetty

Ms NEVILLE — On another matter, this weekend an open day is being held in Portarlington to mark the completion of the new commercial jetty, which will accommodate the growing Bellarine aquaculture industry well into the future. The jetty is part of the

state government's \$15 million Portarlington Safe Harbour project, which amongst other things will ensure the operation of the ferry service. These are all significant announcements for Portarlington, and I look forward to the new year and working further with and for the community of Portarlington and the Bellarine Peninsula.

Western Port Warriors

Mr BURGESS (Hastings) — I was pleased to join John Ballis, chief executive officer of Reclink Australia, in Hastings last Friday to announce the re-establishment of the Western Port Warriors football team and its invitation to rejoin the annual Reclink football fixture. The Western Port Warriors was and will be again an excellent Australian Rules football team for disadvantaged young people in the Hastings and Somerville areas. Reclink Australia will be raising funds through the 2017 Great Peninsula Paddle to be held on Australia Day to assist the re-establishment of the Warriors. The Western Port Warriors football team was a very popular football team that earned the support and admiration of the entire Hastings community. The team was coached by former police officer Andrew Brady, and such was the impact Andrew and his team had on the local community that Andrew, a decorated police officer, was recognised as the Mornington Peninsula Shire Council citizen of the year.

It was an incredible experience to see these young men celebrating on the day team selections were announced, not because they had made the side but because one or more of their team mates were no longer available for selection because they had got a job. The Western Port Warriors was the only means for hundreds of disadvantaged young people and their families living in the Hastings and Somerville areas to connect to the wider community and to break the cycle of loss of confidence, low self-esteem, unemployment, isolation and boredom. I am a strong supporter of the Warriors, and the community will get right behind this team again.

I am very pleased that the community will be welcoming back the Warriors. Reclink Australia is calling on businesses to get behind the Western Port football team and to help raise \$15 000 in the first year. Reclink Australia is a national community-based, not-for-profit organisation working in partnership with over 70 community-based organisations throughout Victoria to deliver cost-effective targeted services to improve the lives of people experiencing disadvantage, including homelessness, mental health, alcohol and drug addiction, justice and Indigenous issues.

Government achievements

Mr EREN (Minister for Tourism and Major Events) — I rise to update the house on the achievements in my portfolios in the first two years under the Andrews Labor government. Since becoming Minister for Tourism and Major Events I am proud to have modernised Victoria's approach to the visitor economy. We established Visit Victoria — very successful — and secured \$101 million under the new Regional Tourism Infrastructure Fund, \$20 million for the new Regional Events Fund, \$9 million towards the Business Events Fund and \$80 million for our Major Events Fund, and we unveiled Victoria's new visitor economy strategy, which aims to grow tourism sector jobs to 320 000 by 2025. In addition, our government has secured regional events, including the Cadel Evans Great Ocean Road Race, the Marilyn Monroe exhibition at the Bendigo Art Gallery and White Night Ballarat in 2017.

In my portfolio of sport we have worked hard to increase sport participation through the \$100 million Community Sports Infrastructure Fund, the female-friendly facility grants program, the Country Football and Netball Program, \$22 million for the Better Indoor Stadiums Fund, sporting club grants and over \$25 million to our state sporting associations.

As Minister for Veterans it has been a privilege to work alongside our veterans community to help secure and deliver \$5 million to commemorate the Anzac centenary, \$1 million to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the Battle of Long Tan in 2016, \$400 000 for the RSL to combat social isolation amongst younger veterans, \$1.2 million to extend free public transport to all eligible totally and permanently incapacitated/extreme disablement adjustment veterans and the opening of the \$1.3 million Richmond housing accommodation project for veterans. I look forward to the next two years.

Waurm Ponds police station

Mr KATOS (South Barwon) — Last night a forum at the South Barwon Civic Centre was held to discuss the opening hours of the Waurm Ponds police station. The Andrews government gave the community just 24 hours notice of the meeting and held it on a parliamentary sitting night, knowing full well that opposition members would not be able to attend. The Andrews government cut counter service hours at the Waurm Ponds station from 16 hours a day to just 8 hours a day. I have been informed that police at the meeting made it clear that unless they were given more resources they would not be able to reinstate the

16-hour counter service and that even if they did get more resources, their priority would be patrols.

This is a disgraceful indictment of the Premier and the Minister for Police who, due to their cuts, are forcing local police to choose between counter service or patrols. It should not be either/or; it should be both. People who are victims of crime, domestic violence victims, people who wish to report suspicious activity or people who need police administrative services only have an 8-hour window per day in Waurm Ponds. Crime does not happen just 8 hours per day, and Waurm Ponds station needs to become a full 24-hour station to properly service one of Geelong's fastest growing areas. Clearly the review of these cuts to the hours ordered by the minister was nothing but a farce.

The cynic in me says that Waurm Ponds station will probably receive additional resources — in, say, what, October 2018, Minister? — just in time for the election. But the people of South Barwon are not silly, and they will not forget the callous cuts that this minister and this Premier have made to police resources in the South Barwon electorate.

Farm Vigano

Ms D'AMBROSIO (Minister for Energy, Environment and Climate Change) — I rise to speak on a matter in my electorate that is very close to my own heart and to many others across Victoria. In 2005 I stood in this place and thanked the then Labor Minister for Victorian Communities for the work that he brought about with the \$20 000 grant that was invested in a very important and culturally significant property. The property had been neglected, vandalised and considered for demolition. A lot of work and significant resources brought the place back to life and have made it into a place used and valued by the community.

The property in South Morang is called Farm Vigano and was purchased originally as little more than a cottage by Mario and Maria Teresa Vigano in 1934–35. Over the years Mario and Maria Teresa transformed the small cottage into a legacy. They have become one of Australia's most prominent restaurant families and were amongst a small number of Italian immigrants who pioneered the introduction of Italian culture and cuisine to what was then the monoculture of Australian society.

Working Heritage began managing Farm Vigano in 2005. I was incredibly proud and honoured just two weeks ago to have launched the Farm Vigano master plan and management plan in the wonderful Plenty Gorge. Working Heritage is planning for the future of

Farm Vigano. I would quickly like to acknowledge the work of everyone involved over these many years. The support that has been demonstrated by the community is second to none, which has ensured that this beautiful part of Melbourne is sustained and developed for future generations.

Darchei Shalom project

Mr HIBBINS (Prahran) — It was my pleasure to visit the Inkerman Heights housing estate to see the wonderful work that Dr Miriam Weisz and the team at the Darchei Shalom project from the Caulfield synagogue do as they provide soup, sandwiches and a chat for residents at the estate and wider community. They spent their Sunday making soup and baking cakes with the residents of the Emmy Monash Aged Care to share with tenants at the estate. Thank you for your kindness and for bringing people together.

Donald Street Early Learning & Kinder

Mr HIBBINS — I attended the Donald Street Early Learning & Kinder Christmas party with my daughter, who thoroughly enjoyed herself playing with toys in the new facility. The centre has just opened in Prahran, in a refurbished building at 2 Donald Street, and is now taking enrolments. If there is one thing our community needs, it is high-quality, accessible child care. I wish the staff and families well as they build a thriving local community.

World AIDS Day

Mr HIBBINS — The launch of World AIDS Day was held at Alfred Health in South Yarra on 1 December. Powerful stories were shared by speakers from the Positive Speakers Bureau. A world free of HIV transmission is possible. To get there we must speak out against and end the stigma of HIV and encourage people to get tested, to know their HIV status and to receive the treatment that they need. Pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) is central to preventing the transmission of HIV. Whilst medical trials of PrEP are occurring, it needs to be available and accessible to everyone who needs it.

If any demonstration is needed as to why this needs to happen, it was the World AIDS Day memorial service at the Positive Living Centre in South Yarra, a heartfelt ceremony surrounded by names of those who have passed on memorial quilts. I would like to acknowledge the Victorian AIDS Council, Living Positive Victoria, Positive Women Victoria, Straight Arrows, the Quilt Project Melbourne and everyone in the positive community for the work they do.

Kalianna School Bendigo

Ms EDWARDS (Bendigo West) — I was honoured to recently attend the 2016 graduation ceremony for 15 students from Kalianna School Bendigo. I would like to read an edited speech by student Tully Morris that encompasses what Kalianna means to students:

Kalianna is a school for kids that have special needs and disabilities.

But it is more than just a school; it is more than a place for kids to learn. It is a place filled with stories for other kids to share with others.

When I first started here I was worried that I was going to a school for kids with special needs. But the more time I've spent at this school, the more I realised that the kids, who like me, have the same story we all came from.

This school has changed my years in school life, and I am grateful for that. Everyone taught me the ups and downs of Kalianna, and most of all, everyone likes me for ... you know, being me.

When this school throws obstacles at me, I jump over them. When another kid needs help with something, I help them out. When 'I' need help, it's not just the teachers, it's everyone that helps me out.

I'm glad I could be in a school like this because I would never have made it into this world, and I am happy for everyone to cheer on me for being myself. My friends are always there for me, the teachers are always happy to lend me a hand, and I thank my mum for bringing me to this school.

Because no matter where I'll be in life, I'll always think about Kalianna.

Because this is the school that got me to where I am today.

To all the teachers, friends, family and Kalianna, I say thank you.

National Australia Bank, Korumburra branch

Mr D. O'BRIEN (Gippsland South) — I rise to condemn the National Australia Bank (NAB) for its decision to close its Korumburra branch from next February. Korumburra is a growing town, with new housing investments and future expansion touted for its major employer, Burra Foods. Of the 140 businesses in town, about 40 per cent bank with the NAB, and few will be inclined to travel 15 kilometres to do their banking in Leongatha each day.

The NAB's decision is a bad one and should be reversed. The company made a cash profit of \$6.48 billion this year, while revenue increased by 2.5 per cent against expenses growth of 2.2 per cent — hardly the signs of a company in serious trouble. I would hate to think this is a return to the bad old days of the 1990s when Australia's big four banks closed

regional branches throughout the country. The NAB should reverse this decision and keep the Korumburra branch open.

Firearms

Mr D. O'BRIEN — I call on the Andrews Labor government to make a decision based on evidence when deciding the classification of the Adler seven-shot lever-action shotgun ahead of tomorrow's Council of Australian Governments meeting. Classifying this shotgun as category D without rigorous supporting evidence is an overstep from politicians who clearly do not understand this particular firearm or our current firearms classification system. Too much focus is placed on matters such as this for political gain and not enough on cracking down on illegal firearms use, which is the real threat to our community's safety.

Not for one second am I arguing for the weakening of our national gun laws. I simply call for the status quo and for reasoned, evidence-based decision-making in the face of ill-informed hysteria. The national firearms agreement was based on clear evidence for the categorisation of firearms and their use, and the current debate around the Adler is devoid of the rigour that was used in 1996. There has been virtually no communication or consultation through this entire debate, and certainly no evidence put forward to the community on why this particular gun should be reclassified — an insult to landholders and law-abiding firearm owners.

East Keilor Community Bank

Mr CARROLL (Niddrie) — I rise to congratulate the Keilor East Community Bank on their 15th birthday and, more importantly, 15 years of service to the community. From humble beginnings through an established standing committee comprising local community activists Trevor Sinclair, Yvonne Moon, OAM, accountant Ken Matthews and local pharmacist David Todd, the Keilor East branch of the Bendigo Bank was born in my community.

As declared on their website, Bendigo Bank is 'bigger than a bank' and 'more interested in the good that money can do'. Nowhere is this more true than in Keilor East. Over the past 15 years that branch has repeatedly delivered community dividends to grassroots communities right across our local community. Schools including Aberfeldie Primary School, St Christopher's Catholic Primary School and Essendon Keilor College have all benefited from grants, as have the environmental group East Keilor Sustainability Street,

the Avondale Heights Library and Learning Centre, and local Neighbourhood Watch groups.

On Monday, 21 November, a 15th birthday was held to mark this occasion. Speeches from the mayor of Moonee Valley council, Cr Andre Surace, chairman John Andricciola and I were arguably surpassed by a rendition of Tina Turner's hit *Simply the Best* by the Songbirds, a group of female volunteers who do great things at local organisations. I take this opportunity to congratulate chairman John Andricciola and current directors David Todd, Bruce Millar, Matthew O'Rourke, Gordon McFarlane, Nancy Montforte, Yvonne Moon, OAM, who was in charge of marketing, and Tina Ballos, the branch manager.

Customer service is a hallmark of the branch and the bank has been well served by Nancy Jasmine and Leanne Andrew in customer service, as well as Doris Dorgan in administration. For the 10-year anniversary we celebrated with a party in the park at the Centreway, and for the 15-year anniversary we celebrated at the Avondale Heights Library and Learning Centre. I am already looking forward to the 20-year celebration for this pillar of the local community.

Gordon 'Rex' Chamberlain

Mr TILLEY (Benambra) — Gordon 'Rex' Chamberlain was born in Cardiff, South Wales, on 29 August 1925, one of eight children. I have known Rex and the majority of the Chamberlain family for nearly 20 years. What an amazing man he was for the contribution he made to our region. Sadly, we lost Rex last week. His funeral service was held yesterday at St Augustine's Church in Wodonga.

At age 12, when the depression was at its worst, Rex was put in an orphanage. About six months later, on 10 June 1938, he was put on a ship bound for Australia, one of 25 boys and 3 girls. Arriving in Melbourne on 17 July 1938, Rex worked on farms until he joined the army at 16. After a small anomaly over his age was identified, he was discharged and immediately joined the Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF) and saw active service in places including Madang, Numfor, Morotai, Tawi Tawi and Tarakan. After his war service Rex took a discharge from the RAAF and immediately rejoined the army, this time at legal age, and served for a further 13 years.

However, it was truly after Rex Chamberlain's war service that he, as just one man in Wodonga, rural Victoria, did more for the 'wogs', our new arrivals, regardless of their country of origin, than any other man

had done, taking into consideration our state's current growth and multicultural fabric.

Rex married Joyce on 21 January 1950 and they had seven children: Rex, Anne, Chris, Michael, Danny, Kate and Cheryl.

Amongst his long record of community service and volunteering, Rex served on Wodonga City Council from 1971 — —

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

Growing Suburbs Fund

Mr BROOKS (Bundoora) — Last week I had the pleasure of representing the Minister for Local Government to announce three allocations of funding from the Andrews Labor government's \$50 million Growing Suburbs Fund, which delivers much-needed infrastructure in growing areas. I was able to announce that Whittlesea City Council will receive \$1.48 million to deliver three projects under the 2016–17 Growing Suburbs Fund. There is just over \$1 million for urban streetscape upgrades in Bundoora and Lalor. The improvements to Denison Mall at the Bundoora shops is long overdue, and local traders will see a significant improvement in this retail precinct.

There is \$310 000 for a refurbishment of the Janefield community centre, which will provide a space for much-needed health and community inclusion activities. This part of Bundoora, known as University Hill, has grown significantly in recent years and there is a recognised shortage of community services and meeting spaces. This project will see the old Janefield training centre building refurbished and made accessible to all residents.

There is \$167 000 allocated for a playground renewal program in Mill Park and Thomastown. I know that families living near the Statesman Crescent Reserve in Mill Park will welcome the improvements to that local piece of open space.

I would like to acknowledge the role of Whittlesea City Council in managing these projects and the significant funding they are also providing to them. Last year the City of Whittlesea received just over \$6 million towards the delivery of five projects, and this year it is receiving a total of over \$8 million, recognising that this is an area growing at a rapid rate.

The Growing Suburbs Fund, along with massive investments in transport, such as new high-capacity

E-class trams to Mill Park, the Mernda rail extension, the Hurstbridge line — —

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

Eildon electorate communities

Ms McLEISH (Eildon) — Recently I spent the best part of a weekend visiting the smaller communities of Jamieson, Kevington and Woods Point, and I want to thank the people in those communities for making me feel so welcome. The Woods Point Gun Club are always great hosts. It amazes me from how far and wide members of the gun club travel on a monthly basis to have their Sunday-morning shoots. A comment from one shooter struck me. He wanted to know why many politicians think registered shooters are dangerous and criminals in the making rather than responsible, normal people. This is a good point, because the shooters I know are responsible.

I met with many community members at the Woods Point Hotel, a charming old-style pub which hosts visitors to the region. I want to thank the people of Woods Point for their time and their willingness to discuss what is important to them. As with many country communities, roads are an issue, particularly as traffic increases with both visitation and employment in the area. Deer have been spotted in the main street of Woods Point, which is indicative of the deer population. Residents are calling for action to manage the deer problem. Of concern are reports that deer have been illegally shot within the town boundaries. As usual the locals at the Kevington Hotel are always up for a chat and very happy to speak about issues important to them.

Jamieson Primary School

Ms McLEISH (Eildon) — Although Jamieson Primary School is a very small rural school, the principal, Genevieve Bolwell, makes sure the students are given every opportunity. Recently seven students from grades 4, 5 and 6, with principal Genevieve and a parent, had a wonderful two-week trip to Japan to visit schools in Kyushu. The trip was all the talk in the community, who are so proud of their school. The Jamieson fishing club, who support the community in so many ways, contributed financially to really top off a great trip. For the last 10 years or so the students have had the benefit of a tutor from the University of Kitakyushu come to the town to live and to teach the language, and it was great for them to go back.

Epping Primary School

Ms HALFPENNY (Thomastown) — On Monday, 5 December, I attended Epping Primary School to present the Victorian Premiers' Reading Challenge awards. I presented awards to the seven students who read the most books over and above the reading challenge requirements. Congratulations to Sophie Bromage, who received the highest award for reading a massive 179 books over the year. The school and her family are of course very proud of her. I would also like to congratulate Tina, the librarian from Epping Primary School, who organises the Premiers' reading challenge every year. I congratulate her for her commitment and effort. She also does many other community-minded activities, such as collecting second-hand books that she then sends to Africa for students who do not have books of their own.

Epping Primary School is a very caring and nurturing school, and I want to make special mention of Glenn Beattie, the principal at the High Street campus, which is for the early years of primary school, who does a fantastic job. He knows every single student by name and knows what they are doing, where they are at and what is happening in their lives, because he is such a compassionate principal with such empathy. Epping Primary School really has a good future ahead of it.

Mount Waverley electorate conservation groups

Mr GIDLEY (Mount Waverley) — Today in the Parliament I rise to thank the Friends of Damper Creek Reserve and the Friends of Scotchmans Creek and Valley Reserve for all of their work over the year to improve our local environment. Whether it is tree planting days, muscle-working weeding, or hosting interesting guest speakers, both conservation groups have achieved much throughout the year. I thank them for their efforts and look forward to continuing to support them in 2017.

Energy prices

Mr GIDLEY — I rise in the Parliament to outline my grave concern about the impact escalating electricity and gas prices are having on households, families and businesses. With retail price increases of 15 to 20 per cent to hit electricity bills — not the government department spin-doctored 4 per cent rolled out by this government — households and families are turning off the Christmas lights this year. Yet another Christmas tradition is being destroyed by the Andrews Labor government. And let us not forget about the number of businesses that are shutting and will shut their doors as these 15 to 20 per cent electricity price

increases hit, nor the jobs that Victorians are losing as a result under this government.

Burke Hall Mothers Association

Mr GIDLEY — Today in the Parliament I rise to recognise the hard work and dedication of a group of mothers who sought to raise much-needed funds for Youth Projects. Through enormous volunteer fundraising efforts, the Burke Hall Mothers Association raised \$40 000, which will go towards the services Youth Projects provides. I had the opportunity to join the member for Narre Warren North to meet with members of the association and the event fundraising committee, including Kath Toohey, Alicia MacKinnon, Suzanne Lee and Lilian Topic, as well as Xavier College principal Dr Chris Hayes, when a cheque for funds raised was presented to the Youth Projects chair, Melanie Raymond, and director, the Honourable Monica Gould. Congratulations again to the association, the committee members who raised those funds and all volunteers who worked to produce such a successful fundraising outcome.

Geelong electorate employment initiatives

Ms COUZENS (Geelong) — In Geelong last week I joined the Minister for Industry and Employment on a visit to Backwell IXL to announce funding to support this Geelong manufacturing stalwart. Provided under the Local Industry Fund for Transition, set up to help automotive component makers diversify into new areas, the funding will assist Backwell IXL to move into a new manufacturing era. It was great to meet with management and workers and to hear about their future plans.

We also visited Corio Waste Management, an employer of the Jobs Victoria Employment Network (JVEN) program, to meet participants and other employers. It was great to hear participants share their stories about the help, support and employment they have received as JVEN participants. The minister finished off the Geelong visit with lunch at Dial-A-Lunch, a social enterprise that employs people with disabilities who love the work they do and the staff who support them.

Pivot Summit

Ms COUZENS — I was also pleased on behalf of the Minister for Small Business, Innovation and Trade to open the Pivot Summit 2016, a digital tech conference held in Geelong. I want to congratulate Leighton Wells and his team for a highly successful event. I am proud to have supported this fantastic global and national event. I was pleased to announce that in

Geelong we have delivered \$1.7 million in funding for the Runway project, which will establish a major start-up hub, a catalyst for innovation, and also for Dimension Data and Deakin University to establish a cybersecurity incubator.

The Gordon

Ms COUZENS — I then joined the Minister for Training and Skills at The Gordon to announce \$14.6 million to ensure that The Gordon is ready to hit the ground running when Skills First is introduced in January next year. On top of the \$14.6 million, The Gordon will also receive more than \$500 000 — —

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

Yarra Boulevard, Kew

Mr T. SMITH (Kew) — I am very much looking forward to joining local police, VicRoads and the mayor of Boroondara City Council at a crime forum at VicRoads on 14 December. We will be discussing lawlessness on the Yarra Boulevard, which has seen regular tack attacks by a number of individuals over the last two years. These tacks have been laid out deliberately to try and burst the tyres of cyclists. It is incredibly dangerous. The cycling community and indeed my own local community are fed up with this. So the council, the community, local MPs and VicRoads are gathering to discuss ways that we can catch the perpetrators and also to discuss issues of driver safety on Yarra Boulevard as well. There have been a number of tragic accidents on Yarra Boulevard this year in which a number of young people have lost their lives. We want to look at ways that we can alleviate the concerns of local residents but also do something for driver safety in that quite beautiful part of my electorate.

Kew Community Carols by Candlelight

Mr T. SMITH — I was delighted to attend the Kew carol service at Kew Baptist Church on Sunday evening. It was supported by Boroondara City Council, but because of the inclement weather it was shifted to the church. The Kew Baptist Church did a wonderful job at late notice putting on the carols.

North Balwyn Christmas celebrations

Mr T. SMITH — I congratulate the North Balwyn Village Traders Association and the North Balwyn Rotary Club for their Christmas celebrations, which were held at North Balwyn village on Saturday morning. It is a wonderful event that brings the

community together to celebrate the spirit of Christmas in a multicultural setting.

Head of the Yarra

Mr T. SMITH — I was delighted to present medals at the Head of the Yarra on 26 November.

King George VI Memorial Reserve pavilion, Bentleigh East

Mr STAIKOS (Bentleigh) — Earlier this year I joined with the sporting clubs at King George VI Memorial Reserve in a campaign for an upgrade to the pavilion. This is a pavilion with no female change rooms or even a female toilet — sadly a common story. So many sporting facilities in our area and indeed across the state were built without any regard to female participation in sport. That is why I was pleased on Monday to announce that the Andrews Labor government will contribute \$100 000 towards a \$454 000 upgrade of the pavilion by Glen Eira City Council. This upgrade will finally provide female change rooms and toilets. This is a great outcome, given that this year Bentleigh Auskick had 38 girls and Bentleigh ANA Cricket Club has two female teams, both currently at the top of the ladder.

The Andrews Labor government is providing desperately needed female-friendly facilities to give girls a fair go on the sporting field. Women and girls deserve equal facilities. We are putting an end to players being forced to change in temporary, run-down facilities. This upgrade to the pavilion is a good start, but there is still more to do. I am pleased that Glen Eira City Council has commenced discussions with the clubs about what stage 2 of the upgrade will encompass, including the addition of a social room where families can gather. As a result of our campaign for an upgrade, a number of candidates in the recent council election included King George reserve in their platforms. Some of these candidates are now councillors. I look forward to supporting another application to the state government for funding of stage 2 of the pavilion upgrade in the very near future.

Christmas felicitations

Mr EDBROOKE (Frankston) — I would just like to take this opportunity to wish everyone in the chamber and their staff a very happy and safe Christmas.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Ms Blandthorn) — Order! The time for members statements has concluded.

CLIMATE CHANGE BILL 2016*Second reading***Debate resumed from 23 November; motion of Ms D'AMBROSIO (Minister for Energy, Environment and Climate Change).**

Mr BATTIN (Gembrook) — First of all, with a bit of indulgence, Acting Speaker, I would like to wish you a merry Christmas, as well as all the staff who have helped out this year within the chamber. To all the staff that help us in the Parliament, to Ray and the clerks and all the whole way through to Hansard, who manage to make us sound fantastic all the time, we thank you very much and we wish you a very merry Christmas. Merry Christmas also to the catering staff and to one particular member of the catering staff who is leaving — TJ. I am sure that everyone in the chamber would agree that TJ is a fantastic asset to our catering staff. When you come into the Parliament in the morning she has always got a smile for you and remembers your order every time. I want to wish TJ all the best for the future as she heads back home. I have said to her that we would love to have her back at the Victorian Parliament in the future.

I now go on to the Climate Change Bill 2016. First of all, I will quote from the second-reading speech. The second-reading speech tabled by the minister has the first line:

The Andrews Labor government recognises that climate change is one of the most critical issues facing us today ...

When you walk around the streets of local electorates like mine, or when you travel around regional and rural Victoria, people come up to you and say that the most critical issue that they are facing at the moment every day is crime — law and order. People are worried about safety. They are worried about jobs, they are worried about their future and they are worried about their power bills. They are worried about how they are going to pay their way. We have a government that at the moment is making many changes, but all they are doing is putting prices up and making life harder for Victorian families.

Victorian families deserve better than that. It is vital that we address issues in our community, and if you are talking about the most critical issue, you talk about the one that is affecting people at the moment. We have a decline in growth; we have issues on our streets. The government has come out this week and talked for four days about law and order; that was the big answer to everything. There have been law and order issues over the two years of this government, and they have done nothing about it. Today we are debating a bill about

climate change, which the government says is one of the most critical issues facing Victorians today. That is something I have to fundamentally disagree with.

To add insult to injury, the bill before the house does nothing for Victoria, and it does nothing to change climate change in the future. It does nothing to help Victorians. The government is saying that it is going to give us a world-leading legislative framework to manage risks and climate change. The actual bill does nothing other than say that in the future a minister may be able to put in place some options and provide some opportunities around a framework so that they can put in place their own targets. This is an issue that has been raised at the federal level. It is an issue that has been supported by state governments in the past. The federal Labor and Liberal parties have both agreed that climate change action must remain with the federal government and that the states should be responsible for climate change adaptation. We should be continuing to concentrate on climate change adaptation.

The bill fails in relation to commonwealth compatibility. What they have spoken about, they have failed to deal with. They have failed to speak to the minister in Canberra and to get any feedback. What does the market want? The market wants certainty in what it is doing. They want certainty in their costs; they want certainty in their policy obligations. They do not want a document that comes out with information that says a minister can change their mind whenever they want. They want something like we had in the past with climate change adaptation, which was reported on every five years. Now they have even removed that, and there no longer has to be a report back on what happens with the climate change adaptation plan.

The climate change adaptation plan we had in place was a very good plan. It was a plan that many other state governments looked at and used as a reference point for what they were doing in relation to climate change adaptation. I note that sitting behind me is the former Minister for Environment and Climate Change, who went through the climate change adaptation plan and put in place plans in Victoria to make sure that communities could deal with climate change as it happens. The former minister gave local communities, local councils and community groups — everybody — a voice and made sure there was a plan in place for adaptation going forward. It was about integrating the management, integrating the risk, and it reinforced the need for climate risk management across all portfolios in the Victorian government. That was the one thing that we were very proud of. When we were looking at adaptation, it was not just about the one minister; the

entire cabinet understood it needed a whole-of-government response.

The bill before the house provides that specific departments at specific times can be involved. What it should be doing is saying that we need a whole-of-government approach to make sure that we can get the outcomes we need going forward. Who are we going to trust when we are talking about climate change and carbon emissions when we have a government at the moment that is talking up trying to put costs on businesses and trying to add costs? They will not tell us what the costs are when we have asked for them. They have done no planning on how this is going to affect businesses and zero planning on how it is going to affect local families when they are paying their bills. We have already seen the one bit of spin that came out in relation to Hazelwood of a 4 per cent rise, which we now know to be 10 to 13 per cent across the state.

We should actually review the record of this government on carbon emissions; the government that is now trying to tell all Victorians and other government departments how they should run; this government that is trying to bring in legislation to reduce our emissions in the future. If you look at the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), you see DHHS has had a 16 767-tonne increase in its carbon emissions. The Department of Premier and Cabinet alone has had a 156-tonne increase in its carbon emissions. You would have to ask where the extra emissions are coming from when you are talking about the Department of Premier and Cabinet. You would imagine that most of them would be coming from cars — probably cars travelling to Trentham and back on extra trips, carrying dogs back and forth from Trentham to Melbourne, rather than concentrating on what they should be doing down here. The other part of the department's emissions may be coming from flights, because the Minister for Small Business, Innovation and Trade, Mr Dalidakis, seems to be taking an extraordinary number of flights. The member for Footscray seems to be joining him on a lot of flights going overseas, and I am sure those emissions are going into the department's carbon footprint as well.

The Department of Justice and Regulation has had an increase of 7361 tonnes in their carbon emissions. We would ask the minister responsible for the Department of Justice and Regulation or Corrections Victoria, but we are not quite sure who that is this week as they have had four ministers in recent times. The government have totally lost control of the department of justice, totally lost control of our prison system and totally lost control of the youth justice system, but now they are

out there saying, 'Here we go. What we'll do is reduce the carbon emissions from the Department of Justice and Regulation'.

It is time you got your priorities right when you are a government that is struggling to deliver for Victorians, when you are a government that will not provide Victorians with law and order, when you are a government that cannot even guarantee jobs and when you are a government that cannot guarantee what is happening out on our roads. Congestion is up, any decent road projects have been ditched and \$5.5 billion is going to be spent on an exit ramp. I can only imagine how many carbon emissions that is going to add to those already in our society. It is very important to put on the record that we have a government that cannot do it.

Following the December 2015 United Nations Climate Change Conference in Paris, the commonwealth committed to reducing emissions to 2005 levels by 2030. We need to have a whole-of-Australia approach to actually reduce these emissions. The states hold varying degrees of regulatory oversight and can contribute to ways of reducing emissions. However, if you want to start reducing those emissions, the best place to start is with your own emissions by reducing emission targets and emissions from government departments themselves.

It is quite interesting that we can go back over time to see where this government is heading. We already know it is a government based on ideology. We already know it is a government that campaigned in the past to close Hazelwood. The government have campaigned continuously on Hazelwood, and the next one they will campaign for is the closure of the Alcoa smelter. I can guarantee that there are a few people over there who are already celebrating the number of issues that Alcoa has had with electricity and the problems they have caused down there. Every time this happens you are dancing on the graves of the jobs of Victorian people. Victorian people need that work and need those jobs going forward. Hazelwood should remain open; it represents 20-plus per cent of our electricity baseload and it has three viable options to ensure that it can keep on running.

We need only look across to South Australia to see the direction that this government is heading in. They want to push us into the same position that South Australia is in, where they do not have and cannot have a reliable electricity supply. South Australia relies on Victoria to ensure they have their power. They rely on Victoria to deliver electricity across to South Australia because the hottest days, the days when they most need it, are the

days they do not have the wind and they do not have the capacity to store the power they need. So what did we see happen? We have seen nearly two weeks of darkness in towns throughout South Australia. We have seen a massive effect on productivity and we have seen ongoing power blackouts since then.

They rely on our electricity, but what are we doing? We are going to reduce our baseload by 20 per cent, therefore putting not just us at risk but also adding to the risk of the incompetent Labor government in South Australia by reducing our electricity production here. The government talks about the interconnectors that go down through Tasmania, but I think it needs to be put on the record that those interconnectors do not always work. We have had issues with them in the past and I am sure we will have issues with them in the future.

In the end, all of this is putting costs back onto local families. It is putting costs onto pensioners who on a hot day just want to be able to sit at home and know that they can turn on the air conditioner without at the same time having to turn on their internet connection to watch their bank balances drop. They need to have confidence that, one, they can turn it on and, two, that it is not going to cost more than the pension they are receiving. These people have already made their contribution to the Victorian community and to the Australian community. At this time in their lives, what are we doing to them? We are putting up costs when they are already struggling. Their rents have gone up and so has everything else.

We can talk about businesses. As I said, we have asked for some business costings on this, and we got nothing. We have got nothing back. Where do the costs for businesses go back to? Again, they go back to Victorian families. I am not sure when this government is going to get it. They love to stand in here and say, 'We are chucking the costs onto big business and big business is going to have to pay', but it is simple mathematics: big businesses do not pay; they pass them down the chain until they get to family homes, which have to then pay for them out of their bank accounts.

People have lost jobs down in Hazelwood. They are the people who are going to end up having to pay. Not only do they have no work, but their cost of living is going to go up too, and the people solely responsible for this are none other than the Premier of Victoria and his cabinet. When we talk about Hazelwood and about the jobs that are going, the reason those jobs are going is quite simple: it has nothing to do with a French company, it is solely because of a tax of over \$250 million that was put on by this government. They went in and they caused the problem, then they went

down a few weeks later and said, 'No, no, we fixed it'. A \$250 million tax on the Latrobe Valley. The next thing you will probably want to do when you talk about climate change is get rid of the jobs in Maryknoll. We need to make sure that we protect the jobs down there. We need to make sure that jobs are available. It is vital that jobs are available down in the Latrobe Valley.

Mr Pearson interjected.

Mr BATTIN — I note the member for Essendon interjecting. You obviously do not care about the jobs down in Hazelwood. A thousand men and women have lost their jobs because of decisions made by your government. The government made those decisions and they blatantly do not care about those people down there in the Latrobe Valley.

Mr Pearson interjected.

Mr BATTIN — I will tell you, member for Essendon: when you get off the tram and you hop on a V/Line train you can travel all the way down to Hazelwood, and when you get to Hazelwood you can meet the thousand families that will no longer have work because of your decisions, because of the decisions of your government.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Ms Blandthorn) — Order! Member for Gembrook, direct your comments through the Chair.

Mr BATTIN — Did you want to say anything to the other side as well?

The ACTING SPEAKER (Ms Blandthorn) — Order! Direct your comments through the Chair.

Mr BATTIN — Okay, Chair, if you like.

Mr T. Smith — On a point of order, Acting Speaker, the member for Essendon was directing his comments to the member for Gembrook, interrupting him constantly. They were not through the Chair, so you might like to ask the member for Essendon to direct his comments through the Chair.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Ms Blandthorn) — Order! The member for Essendon will control his comments. The member for Gembrook will direct his comments through the Chair.

Mr BATTIN — The other part of this is that we actually asked for the regulatory impact statement, but none has been given. There has been no modelling. This is what we were saying before. We have been asking for this information. This is evidence that the

government has not done the work on this bill. This is evidence they have not considered the impact of this and how it is going to affect people.

Since I was talking about jobs before, we will go down to Alcoa. Alcoa are struggling at the moment. They have got a major issue with electricity supply. They have had to close down the plant for five and a half hours. When you close the plant for five and a half hours, it is going to take between three and six months to get it going again. They are going to need assistance, and the government has to step in and assist them. They have to ensure that Alcoa will be there for the future. It is vital for Portland. The only way to guarantee that is to guarantee electricity supply to Portland. It must be guaranteed; we must have consistency down there.

This bill will see the state buy international and domestic greenhouse credits to offset their emissions. Again we have not seen any costings for how this is going to be done. We have asked for those costings, so I would have to say that obviously none have been done. The government have not done their work on it. There has been silence on the purchase of carbon offsets they are planning to make in Australia and around the world. They talk about going to net zero. Well, to do that you have got to start purchasing from overseas. Carbon offsets are getting more and more expensive, but they do not show up once in the budget.

You have got a budget in which you have just spent however many billions of dollars — \$1.5 billion — not building a road in the east–west link. There has already been an amount of money wasted by this government over a period of time, and now you are going to have to add to the budget the cost of offsetting emissions from Victoria. Just consider, as I said before, the emissions of the government departments themselves: government department emissions are increasing every year, with particularly massive increases in the last two years under this government. Where is the money coming from to reduce that to zero, the target they want going forward?

There is also a section in relation to pledges, so people can go in and sign a pledge. Fantastic! You can sign a pledge to say, ‘I’m going to assist and do my part for climate change, and I’m going to reduce my target to zero’.

Mr T. Smith interjected.

Mr BATTIN — No, but what they do have to do is sign a pledge. They can go online. Once they have finished signing that pledge, they can press ‘submit’ and probably never think of it again. Let us be honest;

you go online, you fill in the details and you would probably never, ever think of it again, but you have done your bit for the environment.

I think it is very important that the government comes out and lets us know what it is doing with that information. Is that information guaranteed to not be used in a political campaign going forward? Does the government guarantee not to data collect and gather information on people trying to do the right thing, making a decision that they can or may be able to assist in the future, or is this just another exercise from the government to gather data from people across Victoria so the government can send their Victorian Labor emails to them in the future and talk about the things they have not done or the things they will commit to and never, ever deliver? That is a very important piece of information that we need to make sure that we can get.

On the cost shift across to councils, councils have been working with governments in the past to make sure that they are ready for climate change. They are ready for the climate change adaptation — they have changed the way they are doing planning, they have reviewed many options they have got going forward, they have tried to reduce the costs that they have outgoing and costs in relation to lights, power et cetera and what they are doing there. The cost shift across to councils now with this bill will make it near on impossible.

At the same time this government is bragging about putting a 2.5 per cent rate cap on councils — and I have seen many rates notices that are up about 30 per cent down through Casey and Cardinia — it is quite interesting that they then want to cost shift across to council. You have got the highest taxing government in state history, and then they want to pass on the costs to the local councils, which they are saying need to restrict their funds and restrict their spending. What is rather surprising is the strain this will put on the public service as well. If you are going to have to find all this extra money and the public service is struggling to reduce their own greenhouse emissions, you need to work out what you are going to do from there.

We have actually got a pretty proud history on this side of the house when you are talking about environmental issues. We have worked within the national parks scheme — the conservatives brought in national parks, originally overseas. We have got \$1 billion in the reef fund at a federal level for the Great Barrier Reef. We are recognising that some, if not the best, initiatives come from the landholders themselves, and we will continue to work with Landcare, a fantastic organisation that has delivered. The reason they have

delivered is that not only do they understand the importance of the land and environmental outcomes but they also get the best productivity out of it and they know that is important for the future of Victoria.

At the moment, whatever people want to say about the federal government, the federal government is on target to beat the 2020 target by 70 million tonnes. We need to leave the responsibility for this with the federal government, and this government needs to concentrate on climate change adaptation. We need to have support for renewables, but we cannot put at risk base load power in Victoria. We need to have a focus on the costs on families, and we must make sure that any of the costs that are put towards climate change do not get passed on to Victorian households who are already struggling.

Today we will end off there, but we say that it is vital that this government starts to work within the framework that they have got. It is vital that they start to actually put it in place. If they were serious about this, they would start to look at the sustainability funds that they have got sitting there of half a billion dollars, they would start to look at reducing waste, they would start to look at pollution and they would have a genuine action rather than a piece of paper that does nothing. That is why the Liberal-Nationals coalition will be opposing this bill.

Mr CARBINES (Ivanhoe) — It really is an indictment of those opposite that the lead speaker cannot even work his way through a full contribution on a climate change bill because he is incapable of explaining their position in relation to these matters.

Mr R. Smith — On a point of order, Acting Speaker, the member for Ivanhoe makes a claim that the lead speaker for the coalition was unable to fill his allotted time. In fact the member for Gembrook was asked by the Labor government to curtail his contribution to help with the government program — —

The ACTING SPEAKER (Ms Blandthorn) — Order! There is no point of order.

Mr CARBINES — I am pleased to continue my contribution. Of course those opposite want to chip in and try to deny an opportunity for members of the government to outline an election commitment to review the Climate Change Act 2010, which was pulled apart by those very dry right-wingers on the opposite side and failed environment ministers like those leaving the chamber now. Those public servants in the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning

can now actually mention the words ‘climate change’. They were forbidden words when the coalition was in office. It was actually called ‘climate variability’ under the failed leadership of the Liberal environment minister.

As we all know, it has always been the National Party tail that has waved the Liberal Party dog when it comes to climate change and environment policy in Victoria, and we saw that with the former environment minister in the Liberal-Nationals government, when virtually all of his responsibilities were passed over to the Leader of The Nationals, who made an absolute mess of it in running the Office of Living Victoria. I will go no further on that matter and instead will talk about the Climate Change Bill 2016.

In particular I just want to touch on a presentation that was given just recently in Parliament House by Malte Meinshausen and Ross Garnaut, in which it was mentioned by Associate Professor Meinshausen that:

The key to success is turning the global move towards a zero carbon economy into an opportunity for Victoria and Australia.

He said that combining renewable energies, mineral resources and the strong education sector of Victoria is our future. He then said:

After Hillary’s plan got trumped, hardly anyone else is better equipped to harness the opportunity of becoming ‘energy superpower in a zero carbon world’ —

than Australia and in particular Victoria. I think that really sets the tone for what the government is about in relation to this bill. As was stated by the minister in the second-reading speech, this bill:

... is a key component of the election commitment to reinstate Victoria as a leader in climate change action, giving effect to the vast majority of the recommendations of the independent review of the act, which the government initiated in 2015.

In particular I think we just need to touch on what those opposite did in the four years they had on the Treasury benches. We know that they did not do very much, and they were held to account for that at the recent election, but what they tried to do and what they should be held accountable for was their support of energy companies imposing a levy on families with solar panels. They abandoned the Victorian energy efficiency target scheme — a scheme which produces over 2000 jobs for the Victorian economy and a scheme which the Andrews Labor government saved and strengthened.

The coalition also cut \$40 million out of the energy innovation fund, which supported the development of

clean energy jobs. Then the state-based emissions reduction target and the reference to this target in the Environment Protection Act 1970 were repealed. The state-based emissions data reports were repealed. The policy objectives of the Climate Change Act 2010 were repealed. The climate covenants in the Environment Protection Act were repealed. However, gutting legislation does not make climate change go away. Forbidding anyone to mention it does not make climate change go away. And failure to act responsibly in the interests of all Victorians does not make climate change go away.

In my role as parliamentary secretary both for water and for energy, environment and climate change, I have met many people, particularly land carers across regional Victoria, and the people in particular you do not need to convince about climate change are our farmers, our primary producers of crops and our land carers right across Victoria. They understand the effect of climate change in their communities. They understand that climate change is particularly affecting their capacity to run their businesses to contribute productively in Victoria, and they need the support and activism of the government to support them in the work that they do across regional Victoria.

I refer to an article by Farrah Tomazin in the *Age* of 22 October this year, and I quote:

It's hard to believe it's been almost 10 years to the day since the Victorian Liberals had a comprehensive environment policy.

While that might sound ridiculous in the context of global warming and other environmental woes, the sad reality is that an entire decade has passed since the state Liberals offered voters a detailed vision to tackle the challenges we currently face.

Let us just touch on a couple of those challenges that the Andrews government has dealt with. I quote from the same article:

A permanent ban on fracking in Victoria? Tick. A renewable energy target of 25 per cent by 2020? Tick. The end of long-term leases for development in national parks —

tick —

a review of the Environment Protection Authority —

tick —

a statewide water plan to secure supply? Tick ... and tick again.

What have we got from those opposite? Nothing. As the *Age* pointed out:

When it comes to the environment, both major parties —

of course —

always have more to do. The trouble for Guy —

the Leader of the Opposition —

is that one party, in particular, also has much ... to prove.

What we have seen and what we have managed to point out is that part of this climate change bill refers to a lot of the review work that was done under this government and also undoes the damage done by those rabid right-wingers on the other side of the chamber. I quote from Deloitte Access Economics' *The economic cost of the social impact of natural disasters* for the Australian Business Round Table for Disaster Resilience and Safer Communities in 2016:

The total costs of disasters —

in Australia is predicted to —

... rise to an average of \$33 billion per year by 2050 unless steps are taken to increase resilience.

Again I quote:

The Department of Treasury and Finance has estimated that the Victorian government has spent over \$4 billion over the past 10 years on response and recovery to climate-related events such as bushfire, flood and drought.

That is from the government's *Victorian Climate Change Adaptation Plan* of 2013.

The costs of a changing climate are immense on our economy in Victoria. We need to take action to deal with that. Just last week at Rosanna Golf Links Primary School the Premier and I presented Resource Smart awards to the local community. The school moved from 2 stars to 5 stars in energy efficiency savings as a result of the work they are doing with sustainable gardens and the like.

This government wants to ensure that future generations of Victorians understand the effect of the environment and climate on their lives and on their capacity to make contributions as citizens and prosper as a society. Our children understand that. They are advocating that at a level that none of us quite understood when we were their age. The government is resourcing and recognising their achievements and supporting them in their work. What the government needs to do in this place, before those people have an opportunity as citizens to cast their own vote on their futures, is set the parameters and make sure that the right legislative framework is in place so that industry can continue to invest and communities have certainty about the opportunities for them into the future.

We have seen the repeal by this government of the terrible wind farm planning laws put in place by those opposite under Premier Baillieu. We saw investment in wind farms and really good technology leave the state and move to South Australia. We lost that investment and we lost those job opportunities because of the very retrograde policies and the short-sighted ideological zealotry of those opposite. What we did see of course was a return of those jobs and investment to Victoria through our policy parameters in providing great multimillion-dollar wind farm investment and technological development and innovation and through the commitments that we have made in both a planning context and an environmental context.

Can I say also that I know full well from my dealings and discussions with advocates in the community that, in a policy sense, for those opposite ‘climate change’ and ‘climate variability’ were words that were taboo. We remember they had, of course, fuel reduction units — cows back in national parks. That was about the sum total of their contribution to climate change.

We have also seen just in recent times the absolute mess and muddle from their colleagues in Canberra. I do not mind quoting from Laura Tingle at page 9 of the *Australian Financial Review* of 8 December 2016:

Meantime, the Prime Minister is once again left looking insipid and at the mercy of the right of his party. Emboldened, Senator Bernardi, for one, was pushing further on Wednesday and saying the government should abandon its Paris climate targets for good measure.

The Prime Minister has failed to capitalise on the possibility of reaching some policy bipartisanship with Labor on the climate change issue.

Instead, the coalition has gone back to the same sort of simplistic formula — which didn’t really work for it — as it used in the last election campaign about higher-versus-lower taxes and presenting itself as the party of workers’ interests in lower energy bills.

If we do not deal with the challenge of climate change, if we do not set those policy parameters in this place, the cost to the Victorian community, the cost to primary producers and the cost to the next generation of Victorians will be immense, not only in investment and jobs but in the environment and the quality of life that we want to have here in Victoria. We need to set the lead and the parameters. We are doing that again here in Victoria under the leadership of the Minister for Energy, Environment and Climate Change and the Premier of Victoria. Those opposite stand condemned in the community and they stand condemned in this place for their head-in-the-sand approach to dealing with the environment and climate change.

Mr WALSH (Murray Plains) — I rise to make a contribution on the Climate Change Bill 2016. In starting off can I say that I think the member for Ivanhoe, the Parliamentary Secretary for the Environment, missed an opportunity to actually talk about his own government’s legislation. He seems fixated with the opposition. He is obviously ashamed of his own legislation if he was not prepared to get up and actually support it in the contribution he made. Can I suggest that his minister might counsel him as to how he makes a contribution in this place, how he speaks about the legislation and what he perceives may be the benefits of the legislation?

I start off by supporting the member for Gembrook and the position he put forward, and particularly on the matter of what is the most critical issue for Victorians at this particular point in time. Yes, climate change is one of those issues, but I do not believe it is the most critical issue for the communities that I represent. If you talk to the communities that I represent — if you talk to the community of Lockington, where the supermarket has been burgled four times in the last two months; if you talk to the community of Gunbower, where there is a crime wave and there are no police resources — you will hear that they are the issues that are important to those particular communities at the moment. Talk to the communities of Timmering and Nanneella — again, a crime wave. They know who the burglars are; the police do not do anything about it. And when the police finally do catch them and take them to court, it is a revolving door and they are back out again on the street committing those same crimes again. They are the issues that are important to the communities that I represent.

Mr Donnellan — On a point of order, Acting Speaker, I would ask the member to return to the bill. He is obviously getting his ‘Cs’ confused — ‘crime’ with ‘climate’ — and I would encourage him to go back to climate.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Ms Blandthorn) — Order! If the member for Murray Plains could keep his comments on the bill.

Mr WALSH — Thank you, Acting Speaker. If you think about this piece of legislation before us, you will know there are no costings as to what it will do over time to the communities of Victoria, and particularly to jobs in Victoria. We have seen the increased cost of energy in recent times; we will see the forced closure of Hazelwood by this government. It is a policy the government has had since 2010 — to close Hazelwood. Whereas we were told by the Premier only a month ago that power prices would go up by only 4 per cent, we

now know they are going to go up by 10 per cent, and they will continue to go up.

I recently met with Kagome, a food processor in my electorate, and their gas costs are going to go up by more than 50 per cent this year. The detailed work and research that needs to go behind this legislation is to find out what is the cost and particularly what is the cost to jobs here in Victoria.

I want to limit my contribution to around the primary production and water part of the legislation particularly. If you think about the primary production side of it, you will know the last thing we need in this state is the Environment Protection Authority Victoria (EPA) — as it could be under this legislation — telling farmers how to run their farms. We do not need the EPA out there telling farmers how they can run their farms.

If you think about what agriculture has done in managing the environment in this state and in managing the climate variability and whatever climate change will be happening in this state in the future, you will see they have done a fantastic job. If you read history you go back to the big droughts — the federation drought of the 1890s and the early 1900s and the 1930s and 1940s droughts — where we had huge dust storms and a lot of topsoil was lost in this state, and you fast-forward to the millennium drought and look at the changes in farming practices and the fact that we effectively had no dust storms through that drought, you can see that farmers in this state have actually done a very, very good job of managing their soils and their farms for the future.

Farmers know that the soils are one of the critical components to whatever crops they grow or whatever pastures they grow for livestock, and now we have this legislation talking about how you are going to manage the storage of carbon in soils. We do not need the EPA or the Labor government telling people how to run their farms. Farmers are the best managers of the particular resources on their properties, and they do a very, very good job of it. You have the no-till farmers and you have the zero-till farmer groups who are leading the way in these things, and they are just getting on and doing it — no thanks to the current government.

The other thing I would like to talk about is water. In all the climate change modelling that has been done, it is going to be about extremes in weather — not just dry, but dry and extreme rain events. We have a government in this state which is an absolute denier about rainfall. It is only fixated on the dry times, not on managing the extreme rain events in this particular state. Why is that? The rhetorical question is: why is that? It is because they want to justify a very, very poor public policy

decision by a previous Labor government to build that great white elephant down at Wonthaggi, the \$20 billion-plus desalination plant, that is costing Melbourne Water customers about \$1.8 million per day — \$1.8 million per day! — to have it sit there year after year producing very little water. It is going to produce some this year not because we necessarily need it but because the government wants to justify that plant.

If you are actually serious about managing the effects of climate change, you would also have a focus on how you manage severe rainfall events, how you manage stormwater, particularly in the urban environment, how you harvest rainwater and how you utilise recycled water to take the pressure off the drinking water demand in this state. This Andrews Labor government just does not want to get involved in this discussion. It does not want to support these sorts of projects. Again, you would ask: why is that the case? The reason that this Andrews Labor government does not want to support those sorts of projects is because the previous Liberal-Nationals government was a champion of those issues. The government does not want to do it just because we did it, rather than the fact that it is a good thing that should be done.

If you start managing stormwater at its source, using swales, using wetlands, particularly in the urban environment, you reduce the cost of managing stormwater significantly because you take away that surge effect in our urban environment. You particularly have a really positive outcome for the bays. If you manage stormwater in the urban environment in Melbourne, you reduce the nitrogen and phosphorus run-off into the bays by about 50 per cent. There are good things you can do that this government refuses to do because the previous Liberal-Nationals government did those things.

Mr Richardson — Are you going to talk about climate change at all, Peter?

Mr WALSH — The member for Mordialloc probably needs a lesson in climate change. The member for Mordialloc is actually showing his ignorance about what the effects of climate change are.

Mr Richardson interjected.

Mr WALSH — If he keeps talking, I am happy to keep talking about the member for Mordialloc's ignorance on these particular issues. His community is one of the communities that will be impacted by these things. I would have thought he would have a very active interest in how you manage stormwater in the

urban environment for the benefit of his community rather than just yelling and shouting across the chamber about this issue.

We do know the climate is changing, and we do know that human existence, and particularly population increase, is having an impact on our climate. There is no argument about that. The argument is about what you do about it. Do you have a piece of legislation that has probably done more harm to the environment than anything else by the amount of paper that has been printed rather than actually do something real? All this bill is going to do is prepare strategies without any costings behind those strategies, and particularly what it is potentially going to cost in terms of jobs in Victoria. As I said, the last thing the farmers of Victoria want is the government and the Environment Protection Authority telling them how they are going to run their farms to meet some nebulous strategy in the future. And to finish, why can this government not actually embrace stormwater harvesting, rainwater and recycled water?

Ms THOMAS (Macedon) — It is a pleasure to rise today to speak to the Climate Change Bill 2016. What an extraordinary contribution we have just had from the Leader of The Nationals, the member for Murray Plains who, if I am correct, told us that climate change is real but actually failed to mention climate change at all in his contribution. Can I say also that if The Nationals wanted to take a stand and indeed stand for something, then let us see them come out in support of our ban on fracking. That is what I would really like to see. Let us see some leadership from the National Party in defence of farming communities across Victoria. But I would not hold your breath, Acting Speaker, because that would require the National Party standing up for once to their political masters, the Liberal Party. That would require The Nationals to show some backbone. That is something we have never seen and do not expect to see in the near future from the National Party.

I am very pleased today to be speaking on this bill. This bill is essential to reinstate Victoria as a leader in climate change action. Delaying action risks Victoria falling behind as other jurisdictions move to decarbonise their economies and risks locking Victorians into more adverse climate impacts. We need to take action. The bill builds on the original Climate Change Act 2010, a groundbreaking act of the former Labor government, which at the time was landmark legislation for Victoria and Australia. This bill provides Victoria with a world-leading legislative framework to manage the risks climate change presents and to maximise the opportunities that acting early and decisively will bring, helping Victoria transition to a net

zero emission, climate-resilient community and economy.

Earlier this year in August I was really privileged to attend the Newham Landcare annual general meeting in my electorate where Professor David Karoly from the University of Melbourne, who is a leading thinker in this area, gave a very compelling and authoritative presentation to us. What was interesting to me and what I did not know was that Professor Karoly came to climate science via mathematics. On that evening as he talked to us he told us how he really set out as a young mathematician to test the maths around climate change and the assumptions that were underlying the modelling that had been done on climate change.

Professor Karoly came to it, firstly, through the prism of wanting to undertake a mathematical challenge to prove the climate science modelling wrong. He did not come to it with any preconceived ideas but wanted to, as I said, undertake this challenge. Try as he might, he could not undo the numbers. No matter what mathematical formulas he applied it was very clear to him that the projections of the climate scientists were absolutely real and they were mathematically solid. He then went on to complete further studies in earth sciences and meteorology, and of course he is today one of the world's leading climate scientists.

I suppose what I was really struck by in Professor Karoly's presentation were a number of comments that he made. Of course he has been part of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), which in 2013 made the point:

Warming of the climate system is unequivocal, and since the 1950s, many of the observed changes are unprecedented over decades to millennia ...

Each of the last three decades has been successively warmer at the Earth's surface than any preceding decade since 1850.

The IPCC went on to say:

It is extremely likely that human influence has been the dominant cause of the observed warming since the mid-20th century.

What concerns me and what continues to concern me is that there are so many people — members of the Liberal Party and members of the National Party — who would seek to deny that climate change is real. That is why I was quite aghast to hear what I take as a concession from the Leader of The Nationals earlier today, and it is good to see. That is real progress if the National Party is indeed accepting the science behind climate change. One would have to ask then, if they do, why do they take a position in opposition to this bill?

What a disgraceful way to behave, and what a betrayal of their communities, because if we look at what the climate change risks to Victoria are, then it is obvious that the people who are most at risk from the impacts of climate change are those people who the National Party purports to represent, because if I look again at the risks that were presented by Professor Karoly, it is very clear that it is farmers who are going to be most disadvantaged by the impacts of climate change.

We know about the dangerous bushfire weather. We live it every day in my electorate of Macedon. We live the very real impacts of climate change in the increased incidence of dangerous, out-of-control bushfires, and we have seen that across our state. We also know the Gippsland region is the part of our state that is most at risk from rises in the sea level. Indeed Professor Karoly estimates that if we look around Gippsland, we see that between 27 000 and 44 000 homes are at direct threat from rising sea levels. We will see, and are seeing, declines in snow cover, and that is expected to continue. Of course this will have a big impact on Victoria's regional communities that depend on our ski season for their economic futures. I did just want to put on the record those comments from Professor David Karoly.

I think this bill is a fantastic initiative of the minister, and I would like to note also that I like the way the bill seeks to intersect with other very important parts of Victorian government legislation. My former role was Parliamentary Secretary for Health. Certainly the health and wellbeing plan takes account of the health impacts of climate change, and there are opportunities for local government to prepare health and wellbeing plans that take account of the impacts of climate change in their own communities and report upon those. All of those things are very welcome.

In the short time that I have left I did want to commend the minister on all the work that she has done in her portfolio. Certainly she is a regular visitor to my electorate and has taken some really fantastic steps. We now have a fantastic solar farm in Woodend, made possible through a small \$100 000 government grant. The minister is working very hard with the Minister for Planning on the delivery of an election commitment to enable community wind farms in my electorate, community wind farms that of course were banned by the former government. I commend the minister for all her hard work.

What a contrast it is to what happens on the other side. Knowing who was the shadow minister for environment was a mystery to me for a long time, such has been the absolute silence on any matter to do with

the environment. For the information of members, because I am sure everyone in this house would be scratching their heads wondering who the shadow minister for environment is, it is indeed the member for — —

An honourable member — Gembrook.

Ms THOMAS — Gembrook, thank you; it is the member for Gembrook. Not once has the member for Gembrook asked a question in this place on climate change. We know the recent assessment made by the *Age* of the shadow minister's performance on this matter. This is a great bill. I commend it to the house.

Business interrupted under sessional orders.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE and MINISTERS STATEMENTS

Thunderstorm asthma

Mr WALSH (Murray Plains) — My question is to the Minister for Health. Minister, yesterday in question time you said that on the night of 21 November you received regular briefings on the unfolding asthma crisis. Minister, what time did you speak to the state health and medical commander about issuing an emergency health warning that could have helped save lives?

Ms HENNESSY (Minister for Health) — I thank the member for his question. As the member may be aware, I was in communication both with my office and with the secretary of my department as this unprecedented and unpredictable event was unfolding. Our emergency and health services were attempting to grapple with what in fact was occurring, and I was receiving regular updates via my secretary in respect of the state health commander.

Mr Clark — On a point of order, Speaker, I draw your attention to sessional order 9(2) and your capacity to require a written response to be given if an oral answer is not responsive to the question. This was a very specific question about when the minister spoke to the state health and medical commander. The minister has not addressed that question. I ask you to ask her to provide a written response.

Ms Allan — On the point of order, Speaker, in asking you to rule out of order the point of order raised by the manager of opposition business, the minister was very clear that there was not just one time that she spoke to the chief medical officer but indeed many times across a period of the night — —

Honourable members interjecting.

The SPEAKER — Order! The members for Hawthorn and Warrandyte will come to order while the Leader of the House is on her feet.

Ms Allan — There were many times and many occasions that she was in regular contact with the secretary of department, as is appropriate under her responsibilities as a minister. I put it to you that she sufficiently answered the question.

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

Supplementary question

Mr WALSH (Murray Plains) — Minister, is it a fact that on the night of the emergency you at no stage spoke to the chief executive of Ambulance Victoria, to your chief health officer or to the chief executives of our major hospitals?

Ms HENNESSY (Minister for Health) — It appears that the member does not understand the structure of management both in respect of emergency services and health. The chief health officer in fact reports to the secretary of the department, and perhaps the member might also like to reflect upon the fact that in the course of this event unfolding — an unforeseen and unprecedented event, an event where there were ambulances being called every 4.5 seconds, when there were over 8500 people — —

Mr Walsh — On a point of order, Speaker, the question was very specific about who the minister spoke to as far as the chief executives of our various services here in Victoria. My understanding of the Westminster system is that the minister is ultimately responsible, and I would ask you — —

Honourable members interjecting.

The SPEAKER — Order! The Attorney-General will come to order. The Leader of The Nationals is entitled to continue making the point of order and to be heard in silence.

Mr Walsh — I would ask you, Speaker, to bring the minister back to answering the specific question, as she is ultimately responsible for these issues.

Ms HENNESSY — On the point of order, Speaker, I was being directly relevant in answering the question. I was outlining in fact what the chain of command is, something that I would have thought a former minister might have understood.

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

Ms HENNESSY — There is a chain of command in this set of circumstances. Whilst I know that those opposite do like to interfere in chains of command, I indeed respected it on that night. I indeed ensured that I was receiving the information that was required from the secretary of my department and that I was not interfering with very challenging operational circumstances that our health service undertook.

Ministers statements: government achievements

Mr ANDREWS (Premier) — On 29 November 2014 the people of Victoria gave to us the greatest of gifts — the responsibility and the opportunity to govern our state. We have not wasted one single day. We were elected to put people first, and that is exactly what we have done.

We have stood with Rosie Batty in this place and heard her story — a call to action — and we have acted, leading our nation and the world in terms of taking action on family violence.

Then there is Cooper Wallace, someone we know only too well. We have heard his story — his parents were planning his funeral because they could not access the medicinal cannabis that is absolutely central to his wellbeing. Well, we have got on with that and we have legalised medicinal cannabis in this state.

Dianne Dejanovic's son, Daniel, died at the St Albans level crossing. I was out there just last week. St Albans and the Furlong Road level crossing have been put where they belong — in the history books. Gone as part of 50 level crossings — —

Honourable members interjecting.

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

Mr ANDREWS — Deathtraps, all of them, that are being removed because this government is getting on with delivering on the commitments that we made.

Alison Marchant was one of so many thousands of Victorians who participated in one of the most effective community-based, grassroots campaigns to make sure that the speculators did not finish up destroying the environment, which is the economy in regional Victoria. Because of her we are banning fracking and we are banning it for good.

There are so many other stories — 184 000 extra jobs, 1000 schools being upgraded, and of course 2729 new police, because this government is governing to put people first — —

The SPEAKER — Order! The Premier's time has come to an end.

Ms Thomas interjected.

The SPEAKER — Order! The member for Macedon is warned. The Leader of The Nationals on a substantive question, in silence.

Mr Battin interjected.

The SPEAKER — Order! That includes the member for Gembrook.

Thunderstorm asthma

Mr WALSH (Murray Plains) — My question again is to the Minister for Health. Minister, as the person ultimately responsible for the state emergency warning in relation to the 21 November asthma emergency, with calls flooding in to 000 every 4.5 seconds from as early as 7.00 p.m., and with the emergency management team convening at 8.00 p.m., why did you sit at home and do nothing — —

Honourable members interjecting.

The SPEAKER — Order! The Leader of The Nationals, in silence.

Honourable members interjecting.

The SPEAKER — Order! The Leader of the Opposition will come to order, and so will the members for Geelong and Yan Yean.

Mr J. Bull interjected.

The SPEAKER — Order! The member for Sunbury is warned!

Mr WALSH — Minister, why did you sit at home and do nothing rather than demand the issuing of an emergency health warning, as advised, to the community?

Mr Foley interjected.

The SPEAKER — Order! I warn the Minister for Housing, Disability and Ageing.

Ms HENNESSY (Minister for Health) — I reject the implications contained in the member's question. I answered this question yesterday, and I am certainly not

taking a lecture from those on the other side about doing nothing, a matter that they are incredibly expert in — —

Ms Staley interjected.

The SPEAKER — Order! The member for Ripon is warned.

Ms HENNESSY — Can I encourage those opposite that there will be a review in respect of the broad issue that occurred — —

Honourable members interjecting.

Ms HENNESSY — How dare they adversely — —

The SPEAKER — Order! The member for Warrandyte is also warned. The Minister for Health to continue, in silence.

Ms HENNESSY — How dare they adversely reflect upon the incredible hard work that our ambulance and hospital services were undertaking throughout that night and beyond — —

Honourable members interjecting.

Ms HENNESSY — All lessons that need to be learned will be learned, Speaker — —

Questions and statements interrupted.

SUSPENSION OF MEMBER

Member for Ripon

The SPEAKER — Order! The member for Ripon will withdraw herself from the house for the period of 1 hour.

Honourable member for Ripon withdrew from chamber.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE and MINISTERS STATEMENTS

Thunderstorm asthma

Questions and statements resumed.

Ms HENNESSY (Minister for Health) — All lessons that need to be learned from this very, very sad set of events will be learned, and I think to try to turn this into some kind of political football is a reflection upon those opposite.

Supplementary question

Mr WALSH (Murray Plains) — Minister, is it not true that on the night of the 21 November asthma emergency Ambulance Victoria was ringing news outlets to coordinate the next day's media and political response but no-one was ringing news outlets to ask them to broadcast immediate emergency health warnings and advice to the community that would have helped save lives?

Mr Foley interjected.

Questions and statements interrupted.

SUSPENSION OF MEMBER

Minister for Housing, Disability and Ageing

The SPEAKER — Order! The Minister for Housing, Disability and Ageing will withdraw himself from the house for the period of 1 hour.

Minister for Housing, Disability and Ageing withdrew from chamber.

**QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE and
MINISTERS STATEMENTS**

Thunderstorm asthma

Supplementary question

Questions and statements resumed.

Ms HENNESSY (Minister for Health) — That is absolutely untrue. That is an absolute insult against what our Ambulance Victoria personnel were doing on the night. That is a matter that the CEO of Ambulance Victoria has addressed. I think the Liberals are again reverting to form. They cannot help themselves but attack our paramedics. They do it industrially, they do it by cutting health funds — —

Honourable members interjecting.

Questions and statements interrupted.

SUSPENSION OF MEMBER

Member for Geelong

The SPEAKER — Order! The member for Geelong will withdraw herself from the house for the period of 1 hour.

Honourable member for Geelong withdrew from chamber.

**QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE and
MINISTERS STATEMENTS**

Thunderstorm asthma

Supplementary question

Questions and statements resumed.

The SPEAKER — Order! The Minister for Health to continue and to be heard in silence by all members.

Ms HENNESSY (Minister for Health) — They simply cannot help themselves. Old habits die very, very hard, and I would certainly refer the member to the statements that the CEO of Ambulance Victoria has made on multiple occasions in respect of their activities. But what a disgrace that when people were out there trying to save lives — —

Honourable members interjecting.

Questions and statements interrupted.

SUSPENSION OF MEMBER

Member for Dandenong

The SPEAKER — Order! The member for Dandenong will withdraw herself from the house for the period of 1 hour.

Honourable member for Dandenong withdrew from chamber.

**QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE and
MINISTERS STATEMENTS**

Thunderstorm asthma

Supplementary question

Questions and statements resumed.

Mr Clark — On a point of order, Speaker, the minister is debating the issue. It was a very serious and important question about the lack of emergency warnings and advice being given to the community on a night when eight people died. The minister should return to providing substantive information to this Parliament and the community about what went wrong on that night and why eight people died as a consequence.

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

Ms HENNESSY (Minister for Health) — In conclusion, Speaker, the member's question is absolutely false. The public record demonstrates it is absolutely false, and it is an absolute disgrace. The Liberal Party cannot help themselves when it comes to attacking our hardworking paramedics.

Ministers statements: police numbers

Ms NEVILLE (Minister for Police) — This week has been a very historic week, with the biggest ever investment in Victoria Police's history. But it is more than just money; it is a model to get the police numbers right now and into the future, a model that stops the bust and boom of police numbers. We also have a raft of law changes, new interventions, new equipment and technology that will ensure Victoria Police leads the nation in its ability to prevent, disrupt and detect crime. In fact the *Herald Sun* did a very good list today of all those investments and changes. I would say that although it is a great list, it actually has not captured everything.

Today I do not want to understate just how important the new allocation model is. As Ron Iddles said on the day — the secretary of the police association — this is about having a sustained model for the future. In fact it will stop the situation I experienced just recently — that the community of Cranbourne and Casey experienced recently — where there was a request made to me about whether we would back in a commitment of police numbers of 3000, with 1900 in the Casey community. As I was preparing a response I received an email from the *Cranbourne Leader* saying they had just received another email saying actually the figure was not 3000; in fact it was only 1900, it was statewide and it was up to the Chief Commissioner of Police to allocate. So on 4 November the *Cranbourne Leader* reported that the Leader of the Opposition promises 1900 more police in 2018. It was 3000 one moment, 1900 one moment — —

Mr Guy interjected.

The SPEAKER — Order! The Leader of the Opposition will come to order.

Ms NEVILLE — Only in the *Cranbourne Leader*. We could not find it on the website. We could not find the media release. We could not find it. So the big question is: are they backing the allocation model? Are they going to back that allocation model and stand behind the contract that we have signed that the police association and the chief commissioner have signed?

Member for Footscray

Mr T. SMITH (Kew) — My question is to the Premier. Yesterday you declared that a key reason that the member for Footscray, as a backbench MP, has a taxpayer-funded suite — —

Honourable members interjecting.

Questions and statements interrupted.

SUSPENSION OF MEMBER

Member for Gippsland South

The SPEAKER — Order! The member for Gippsland South will withdraw himself from the house for a period of 1 hour.

Honourable member for Gippsland South withdrew from chamber.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE and MINISTERS STATEMENTS

Member for Footscray

Questions and statements resumed.

The SPEAKER — Order! The member for Kew is entitled to silence when attempting to put a substantive question.

Mr T. SMITH (Kew) — I will start again, Speaker. Premier, yesterday you declared that a key reason that the member for Footscray as a backbench MP has a taxpayer-funded suite on the ministerial floor of 121 Exhibition Street is that she is a former minister. Premier, where are the comparable offices for your three other former ministers, or do they not provide you with the same level of internal factional information that she does?

Honourable members interjecting.

The SPEAKER — Order! The Premier is equally entitled to silence when endeavouring to respond to the member for Kew on a substantive question.

Mr ANDREWS (Premier) — Thanks very much, Speaker, and I thank the member for Kew for his question.

Honourable members interjecting.

The SPEAKER — Order! I warn the member for Bundoora.

Mr ANDREWS — If anyone had any doubt that it was beginning to look a lot like Christmas — two questions from the member for Kew two days running! But no question on the budget, no question on building schools, no question on repairing TAFEs, no question on the biggest boost to ambulance services in the history of the state, no question about police, no question about — —

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

Mr Walsh — On a point of order, Speaker, on the issue of relevance, I would ask you to bring the Premier back to answering the question. This question goes to the heart of the integrity of this government — —

Honourable members interjecting.

The SPEAKER — Order! The Chair is unable to hear the Leader of The Nationals. The Leader of The Nationals, in silence.

Honourable members interjecting.

The SPEAKER — Order! It is Thursday; I accept that. We still have a few minutes to go and a key performance indicator of the Speaker to be upheld.

Mr Walsh — On the issue of relevance, this is a very simple question about how the government is spending taxpayers resources on luxurious offices for backbench MPs.

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 for a period of 1 hour. The Chair must be able to hear the Leader of The Nationals.

Honourable member for Macedon withdrew from chamber.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE and MINISTERS STATEMENTS

Member for Footscray

Questions and statements resumed.

The SPEAKER — Order! The Chair upholds the point of order. I call on the Premier to come back to answering the question.

Mr ANDREWS (Premier) — Thanks very much, Speaker, for your guidance. The question relates to the outstanding job the member for Footscray is doing. Despite those opposite and their interest in criticising the member for Footscray, she is out there working every day to grow jobs, to improve our trade opportunities throughout the region — —

Mr T. Smith — On a point of order, Speaker, by way of relevance, I did not reflect on the member for Footscray; I reflected on the Premier, and I would ask him to come back to answering my question.

The SPEAKER — Order! There is no point of order. The Premier, to continue in a manner which is responsive to the question as put by the member for Kew.

Mr ANDREWS — I am asked about resources provided to the member for Footscray for the outstanding work that she does, and that is what I am answering. It must be of such delight to all those shadow ministers who bid for a question today and could not get one — not on health, not on education, not on roads, not on Metro. All those shadow ministers — —

Honourable members interjecting.

Questions and statements interrupted.

SUSPENSION OF MEMBER

Member for Hawthorn

The SPEAKER — Order! The member for Hawthorn will withdraw himself from the house for a period of 1 hour. The Chair is unable to hear the Premier.

Honourable member for Hawthorn withdrew from chamber.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE and MINISTERS STATEMENTS

Member for Footscray

Questions and statements resumed.

Mr ANDREWS (Premier) — The member for Footscray is doing an outstanding job, and I make no apology to the member for Kew or anybody else for

providing appropriate resources to her to get that job done.

Supplementary question

Mr T. SMITH (Kew) — Premier, given the special treatment you have afforded backbench MP the member for Footscray, can you advise the house: in what way is her contribution superior to that of the members for Geelong, Oakleigh, Bentleigh, Bendigo West, Thomastown, Carrum and Mordialloc, but particularly the member for Yan Yean?

Honourable members interjecting.

The SPEAKER — Order! The Attorney-General will come to order, and so will the Treasurer. The Chair is on his feet. I remind members that although it is Thursday and although we are now coming to the end of this parliamentary sitting, standing orders remain on foot for the totality of the sitting, including today. The Premier to be heard, in silence.

Mr ANDREWS (Premier) — I am not certain that I can add to my earlier answer. We ought to get the member for Kew a white flag because clearly he has given up — clearly they have just given up. If that is the best you have got —

The SPEAKER — Order! The member for Kew on a point of order, to be heard in silence.

Honourable members interjecting.

Questions and statements interrupted.

SUSPENSION OF MEMBER

Member for Clarinda

The SPEAKER — Order! The member for Clarinda will leave the house for the period of 1 hour.

Honourable member for Clarinda withdrew from chamber.

**QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE and
MINISTERS STATEMENTS**

Member for Footscray

Supplementary question

Questions and statements resumed.

Honourable members interjecting.

The SPEAKER — Order! The member for Kew is entitled to silence — including from the member for Malvern and opposition members — when attempting to make a point of order.

Ms Ward interjected.

The SPEAKER — Order! The member for Eltham is warned.

Mr T. Smith — Fair dinkum, Speaker! This bloke, he jumps on the hook for you. Could you bring him back to answering the question?

The SPEAKER — Order! The member will resume his seat. That is disorderly. The member for Kew is warned.

Mr ANDREWS (Premier) — Thank you so much, Speaker, for the call. Let me finish. I would not be quoting Paul Keating if I was the member for Kew, because you know Paul Keating. The member for Footscray and indeed every one of the members that the member for Kew mentioned are doing an outstanding job. They are on the government benches, and one of the reasons they are on the government benches is because of people like the member for Kew. Merry Christmas, member for Kew — keep your questions coming.

Ministers statements: health funding

Ms HENNESSY (Minister for Health) — I am delighted to rise to report to the house what two years of significant investment under our government in health services has achieved for the Victorian population. Of course this has been a bit of a challenge, because when we came to government \$1 billion had been cut from our health system by those who sit opposite, so we certainly had our work ahead of us.

But our investments are making significant inroads. I am delighted to advise the house that in the past two years we have invested over \$3 billion in additional funding to our health and ambulance services, including the biggest one-off elective surgery boost. I am delighted that we have got the shortest elective surgery waiting list in 17 years. That comes from not only hard work by our health sector but important investment from our government. Of course just recently we made a significant investment of half a billion dollars in our ambulance services that is going to recruit an additional 450 paramedics and build new and additional branches for people from rural and regional Victoria to our outer suburbs and the inner city.

We are also making some significant capital investments. We are of course making great progress on the Joan Kirner Women's and Children's Hospital. We have made a significant investment, Speaker, you will be delighted to hear — of \$85 million for Werribee Mercy Hospital. We have got \$10 million to open a new Ballarat catheterisation lab. We have put the biggest, \$200 million, investment into rural and regional health infrastructure — we are incredibly proud of that. We are investing in the Maroondah breast cancer centre that we are building. We have got an expansion at Casey Hospital. We have put the helipad back on top of the Monash Children's Hospital. We are opening a school in the Monash Children's Hospital. We are opening new mental health services in the Monash Children's Hospital — things that the previous government cut. We have fixed up their mess at the Royal Victorian Eye and Ear Hospital. We support our health workforce. Our government works with them and invests in them, in stark contrast to what those opposite did for four long, dark years.

The SPEAKER — Order! The minister's time has now expired.

Country Fire Authority enterprise bargaining agreement

Mr BATTIN (Gembrook) — My question is to the Premier. Premier, in June, 176 days ago, you said:

I was not going to have another fire season where instead of being out there on the fireground, senior representatives of the CFA are in the Fair Work Commission.

With the Country Fire Authority (CFA) and volunteers still in the Fair Work Commission, is it not a fact that volunteers across the state are warning the CFA that this ongoing dispute is a dangerous distraction from their ability to prepare for and respond during this fire season?

Honourable members interjecting.

The SPEAKER — Order! The Leader of The Nationals, the Chair is on his feet. The Premier is entitled to silence when responding to the member for Gembrook on a substantive question.

Mr ANDREWS (Premier) — Thanks very much, Speaker, and I thank the member for Gembrook for his question. I can assure him that every single one of our firefighters, career or volunteer, and management — everybody involved in the protection of property and life across our state — is absolutely committed to getting the job done. That is something that should be well understood. It is certainly understood by

everybody on this side of the house. I would hope that all members of Parliament be respectful of the talents and abilities and be confident in the talents and abilities of every member of our emergency services family. So, far from the assertion in the question, I would direct the honourable member to quotes made by emergency management commissioner Craig Lapsley just a couple of weeks ago when he said:

... our firefighters, whether career or volunteer, won't let us down. They haven't missed a call yet; they won't miss a call.

I could not agree more.

Honourable members interjecting.

Mr ANDREWS — Well, there is an agreement — —

Honourable members interjecting.

The SPEAKER — Order! The Leader of the Opposition will come to order. The Deputy Leader of the Opposition will come to order. The Premier to be heard, in silence.

Mr ANDREWS — That is the first point. Secondly, we should all be supportive and confident and be backing up those in our emergency services team for their skills and their abilities and their commitment, not calling into question their preparedness or readiness, when they are fine Victorians who will, yet again, do a fine job.

In relation to the agreement, there is an agreement between the workforce and the employer. There is also, sadly, what can only be described as a threatening letter from Minister Michaelia Cash that is being considered by CFA management, as is appropriate. Much to the disappointment of the member for Gembrook, every single member of the CFA, career or volunteer, I reckon they will be focused on the fire season — absolutely they will be — because they are great Victorians, they are the best of Victoria, and they will do us proud this fire season, as they have every one before.

Supplementary question

Mr BATTIN (Gembrook) — Will you now guarantee that your government will not sign any deeds or enter into any other arrangements that would allow any of the 50 veto powers over CFA operational decision-making being given to the union so that your enterprise bargaining agreement deal with Peter Marshall would be introduced by a back door for this fire season?

Mr ANDREWS (Premier) — As I was just saying, there is an agreement between the employer and the workforce. The parties are actually in Fair Work Australia at the moment — —

Honourable members interjecting.

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

Mr ANDREWS — I am not sure quite sure what the member for Gembrook is on about, but he asked me to guarantee things, and I will tell you what I will guarantee — —

Honourable members interjecting.

The SPEAKER — Order! The Leader of the Opposition will come to order.

Mr ANDREWS — Well, you asked the question. I will guarantee that 48 aircraft will be the biggest air fleet we have ever had. I will guarantee that.

Mr Clark — On a point of order, Speaker, the supplementary question was a very specific one about whether the Premier would guarantee not to sell out volunteers by a backdoor deal with Peter Marshall. If he is not prepared to give that guarantee, he should simply say so, not debate the issue.

Mr Pakula — On the point of order, Speaker, the question actually that was put to the Premier was about whether the government would guarantee that it would not sign certain deeds, and the Premier's answer went to the fact that the parties to any agreement would be the CFA and its workforce. He has actually addressed the substance of the question entirely.

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

Mr ANDREWS — The questioner did seek certain guarantees, and we will guarantee a strong air fleet. We will guarantee a strong budget. We will guarantee the best equipment we could possibly provide. We will guarantee that we will not be using the CFA to raise funds for our political party. We will guarantee that when we talk about these issues, we will have some idea of what we are talking about, unlike the federal government. We will guarantee to back our firefighters, because that is what they do: they back Victoria.

Ministers statements: rail infrastructure and services

Ms ALLAN (Minister for Public Transport) — I am just delighted to provide an update to the house on the strong progress the Andrews Labor government is making on delivering on those critical commitments — and going further than that — in the public transport area. Let us start with level crossings. We committed to remove 50 by 2022. We have already removed 7, and there are 13 more under construction. Compare that to those opposite, who funded and finished not one single level crossing during their time in government. We are extending new rail lines — —

Mr Clark — On a point of order, Speaker, the minister is both misleading the house and debating the issue. If she wants to debate the funding for the removal of level crossings during our term in office, we would be very happy for her to do so.

Honourable members interjecting.

The SPEAKER — Order! The manager of opposition business should be heard in silence. The member for Eltham is warned and will not be want again. The Chair is unable to hear the manager of opposition business. The Chair will not warn the member for Eltham again.

Mr Clark — Speaker, if the minister wants to debate the coalition's removal of level crossings, such as Mitcham Road and Rooks Road, she should do so by way of substantive motion. She should not be debating issues in the course of a ministers statement.

Ms ALLAN — On the point of order, Speaker, in his point of order the manager of opposition business leaned into alleging that I may have been providing false information to the house. Can I repeat and make it very clear: those opposite did not fund and finish the removal of one single level crossing. The truth may hurt!

Honourable members interjecting.

The SPEAKER — Order! The Chair is unable to hear the minister; therefore the house must come to order. I warn the Minister for Consumer Affairs, Gaming and Liquor Regulation.

Ms ALLAN — The truth might hurt a little bit for those opposite, who wasted their four years in office, but that is not a reason to stand up and take a point of order.

Ms Ryall — On the point of order, Speaker, the minister just referred to ‘we might not like the truth’. I would expect that the minister — —

Honourable members interjecting.

The SPEAKER — Order! The Chair must be able to hear. The member will make a point of order.

Ms Ryall — I am certainly making that — —

The SPEAKER — Order! The member for Ringwood knows the rules of engagement well. The Chair expects the member for Ringwood to make the point of order in the appropriate manner.

Ms ALLAN — What is your point of order?

Ms Ryall — The point of order is Mitcham and Rooks roads, Minister.

The SPEAKER — Order! The member for Ringwood has concluded her point of order. The Chair upholds the point of order made by the manager of opposition business. The minister will come back to the question.

Ms ALLAN — We funded those two, Speaker. We are extending rail lines — the biggest public transport infrastructure program — —

Mr Wells interjected.

Questions and statements interrupted.

SUSPENSION OF MEMBER

Member for Rowville

The SPEAKER — Order! The member for Rowville will withdraw himself from the chamber for a period of 1 hour.

Honourable member for Rowville withdrew from chamber.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE and MINISTERS STATEMENTS

Ministers statements: rail infrastructure and services

Questions and statements resumed.

Ms ALLAN (Minister for Public Transport) — We are funding rail lines; the Melbourne Metro tunnel, the biggest public transport infrastructure program in the state, for which early works have started; the train line

to Mernda; duplicating the Hurstbridge line; duplicating the Ballarat line — —

Honourable members interjecting.

The SPEAKER — Order! The Chair is unable to hear the minister.

Mrs Fyffe interjected.

Questions and statements interrupted.

SUSPENSION OF MEMBER

Member for Evelyn

The SPEAKER — Order! The member for Evelyn will now withdraw herself from the house for 1 hour.

Honourable member for Evelyn withdrew from chamber.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE and MINISTERS STATEMENTS

Ministers statements: rail infrastructure and services

Questions and statements resumed.

Ms ALLAN (Minister for Public Transport) — Those opposite promised all sorts of rail line extensions, but did not deliver one single kilometre of extra track in the metropolitan network, and of course they crafted their Metro rail project on the back of an envelope.

In just two years we have purchased 65 new high-capacity trains with a local content of 60 per cent, we have purchased 19 X'trapolis trains that are made in Ballarat, we have purchased 48 VLocity carriages and 20 new E-class trams that are made in Dandenong, and we put a stop to the order of trains from South Korea that was going to be placed by those opposite.

In regional transport, we are upgrading the Ballarat line, we are supporting Bendigo Metro rail, we are building the Murray Basin rail freight project and we are adding more than 500 additional services to the regional network — five times the number of services added by those opposite in their four years, who did not deliver one extra service for Maryborough or one extra service for Warrnambool. We are building a stronger, better public transport system.

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

Honourable members interjecting.

The SPEAKER — Order! Opposition members and government members will allow the Leader of the Opposition to ask a substantive question. The Attorney-General is warned.

Country Fire Authority volunteers

Mr GUY (Leader of the Opposition) — Speaker, with your indulgence and with no-one else to do it, may I wish you, all members, media, staff and visitors a Merry Christmas. Merry Christmas, Dan. Have a lovely Christmas, Dan.

The SPEAKER — Order! The Chair thanks the Leader of the Opposition, but this is question time. The Leader of the Opposition now on a substantive question.

Honourable members interjecting.

The SPEAKER — Order! The Deputy Leader of the Opposition is warned.

Mr GUY — My question is to the Premier. Premier, in June you said you were not going to have another fire season where senior representatives of the Country Fire Authority (CFA) were wasting public money in the Fair Work Commission.

Ms Green interjected.

Questions and statements interrupted.

SUSPENSION OF MEMBER

Member for Yan Yean

The SPEAKER — Order! The member for Yan Yean will withdraw herself from the chamber for a period of 1 hour.

Honourable member for Yan Yean withdrew from chamber.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE and MINISTERS STATEMENTS

Country Fire Authority volunteers

Questions and statements resumed.

Mr GUY (Leader of the Opposition) — Premier, can you confirm that your new CFA board has so far spent more than \$2 million on advisers and lawyers simply to attack and undermine the very volunteers

who this summer will risk their lives to keep us and our property safe?

Mr ANDREWS (Premier) — I thank the Leader of the Opposition for his question. I cannot confirm that, and I have no idea where the Leader of the Opposition got his numbers from. It might have been the same unnamed source who said there were 15 carjackings on the Geelong Road. It turns out there were not. That is otherwise known as making it up. So no, I cannot confirm that. We always need to check every single number, every figure, every fact allegedly put forward by the Leader of the Opposition. I say that, because this week he has been caught red-handed, so I cannot confirm that — —

Mr Guy interjected.

Mr ANDREWS — Police have not responded to any attempted carjackings on the Princes Freeway since 1 November.

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

Mr ANDREWS — I have not completed my answer, Speaker. I would like the call afterwards.

The SPEAKER — Order! Absolutely. The Chair is clear, but the Leader of the Opposition is entitled to take a point of order.

Mr Guy — On a point of order, Speaker, on relevance. I ask you to bring the Premier back to the question that I asked him, which was not about any other portfolio except the CFA. It was around the cost to the CFA board to take on volunteers. It is a very simple question. My final point of order this year is: can you please bring the Premier back to answering a question about CFA volunteers who put their lives on the line for all of us?

The SPEAKER — Order! The Premier — —

Mr Guy interjected.

The SPEAKER — Order! I warn the Leader of the Opposition.

Mr ANDREWS — The Leader of the Opposition has indicated it is his final point of order for the year, and I feel that it is appropriate that I respond and add to the point of order with the call. I have been asked a question about whether I can confirm a certain fact as put forward by the Leader of the Opposition. I have indicated I cannot confirm that and I am explaining why. That is completely relevant, and I urge you to rule the point of order, albeit the final one, out of order.

The SPEAKER — Order! The Premier was being responsive in the early part of his answer to the question. With respect, I submit to the Premier that he come back to responding to the question. I think that would be a good note to finish on.

Mr ANDREWS — Thank you, Speaker. As I was saying, I cannot confirm the number that has been put forward by the Leader of the Opposition without any foundation or basis, and I would need to check those matters. That matter will be added to a growing list of things that the Leader of the Opposition puts forward as facts.

In the interests of accuracy — —

Honourable members interjecting.

The SPEAKER — Order! The member for Gembrook! The member for Hastings is warned.

Mr ANDREWS — In the interests of accuracy we are all spending quite a bit of time checking each and every one of the claims made by the Leader of the Opposition.

Honourable members interjecting.

Questions and statements interrupted.

SUSPENSION OF MEMBER

Member for Hastings

The SPEAKER — Order! The member for Hastings will withdraw himself from the house for the period of 1 hour.

Honourable member for Hastings withdrew from chamber.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE and MINISTERS STATEMENTS

Country Fire Authority volunteers

Questions and statements resumed.

Mr ANDREWS (Premier) — I could regale the house with lots of examples, but you, Speaker, have ruled that I should not do that, so I will conclude my answer there.

Mr Pakula interjected.

The SPEAKER — Order! The Attorney-General will come to order. I have not called on the Leader of the Opposition yet.

Ms Allan interjected.

The SPEAKER — Order! The Leader of the House will come to order. On a supplementary question, the Leader of the Opposition to the Premier.

Supplementary question

Mr GUY (Leader of the Opposition) — One fact the Premier I am sure will remember is when he said a few months ago, ‘This dispute had to come to an end, and I ended it’ — a statement Victorians all now know to be a lie. Premier, very simply — —

Honourable members interjecting.

The SPEAKER — Order! The Chair requires the Leader of the Opposition to rephrase his terminology. The Leader of the Opposition will rephrase that question.

Mr GUY — Six months ago the Premier said, ‘This dispute had to come to an end, and I ended it’ — a statement all Victorians now know not to be true. Premier, very simply: when will this dispute end?

The SPEAKER — Order! The Premier to respond to the Leader of the Opposition on the final supplementary question for this year.

Mr ANDREWS (Premier) — I am not sure what the Leader of the Opposition is referring to — —

Honourable members interjecting.

Mr ANDREWS — It is a laughing matter now, apparently.

The SPEAKER — Order! The Premier will resume his seat. The Premier to continue, in silence.

Mr Battin — On a point of order, Speaker, if the Premier is unsure, we are happy to help him. There has been a dispute with the CFA ongoing for a long period of time — —

The SPEAKER — Order! The member for Gembrook will resume his seat. There is no point of order.

Mr ANDREWS — Now we can see why the member for Kew gets all the questions. Thanks for that; it was very helpful. He did not get — —

Honourable members interjecting.

Mr ANDREWS — I think the member for Kew is a bit ahead of the member for Gembrook on the question

count — thanks for pointing that out as well. There is an agreement between the employer and the employees. There is a record budget for the CFA and there is every confidence, despite the political games and the political fundraising of those opposite, that we should all have faith and confidence in everyone at the CFA to fight hard to keep all of us safe. There is no industrial action, there are no bans — the only people talking about disputes are those opposite.

The SPEAKER — Order! The Premier's time has now concluded. The Treasurer has the call.

Honourable members interjecting.

The SPEAKER — Order! The Chair does understand that the Treasurer, particularly on the final day, is likely to enrage and engage the member for Malvern, but he has not yet started, so I request that the Treasurer be entitled to make his statement.

Ministers statements: economy

Mr PALLAS (Treasurer) — I rise at the end of this parliamentary year to reflect upon the achievements of the Andrews Labor government after two years of putting people first. We said we would get Victorians back to work, and then we created 184 000 jobs. We have created more new jobs in the last 12 months than the rest of the nation combined. We said we would make Victoria the education state, then we handed down the biggest education budget in Victoria's history. We said we would keep Victoria's finances strong, then we delivered one of the largest surpluses in Victoria's history. We said we would lease the port and we would remove 50 level crossings in eight years — well, we will be done or in the ground on 37 of those by the end of 2018. We delivered gross state product growth four times greater in 2015–16 than those opposite delivered in their last year.

The holiday season of course is a time for family and a time for reflection. For our government that means recognising that we have to change pace and reflect.

Honourable members interjecting.

The SPEAKER — Order! The Treasurer is entitled to silence.

Mr PALLAS — I am not sure whether those opposite will actually have to change pace at all in the holiday season.

To our intrepid Hansard reporters, thank you very much — —

Honourable members interjecting.

The SPEAKER — Order! The Chair and our friends in the media must, in the concluding 26 seconds, be able to hear the Treasurer, in silence. To conclude his statement the Treasurer must continue and the Chair must be able to hear the Treasurer make that statement.

Mr PALLAS — To the Hansard reporters, thanks for making the government sound erudite and for doing justice to the opposition.

Christmas is a time for giving, and the greatest gift the opposition could give is to remain exactly where they are, doing whatever it is they do. I think I speak on behalf of all of my colleagues in saying that we could not have asked for a better opposition. To quote Billy Joel: 'Don't go changing, we love you just the way you are'.

CHRISTMAS FELICITATIONS

The SPEAKER — Order! I would like to take this opportunity to wish the Premier, the Leader of the Opposition, the President of the Legislative Council, members from both sides of the house and of the Parliament, and the Victorian community best wishes for the holidays. To all the acting Speakers, thank you for your contribution and support this year in assisting the Chair to manage the house somewhat. To my Deputy Speaker, the member for Melton, thank you for your support, advice and guidance.

To the Clerk, Ray Purdey; the Deputy Clerk, Bridget Noonan; the Assistant Clerk Committees, Robert McDonald; and the Assistant Clerk Procedure and Serjeant-at-Arms, Vaughn Koops — thank you for your advice and guidance this year. I do not think I could do my job well, or reasonably well, without all of you, so I thank you as a team.

To our Assembly staff, thank you for your hard work this year. I am sure we are all looking forward to a well-earned break.

To the Secretary of the Department of Parliamentary Services, Peter Lochert, thank you for your advice, support and assistance this year. Peter and his staff look after all of us. Thank you.

Thank you to all the staff from Hansard, the library, security, property, buildings and grounds, catering — TJ, we will miss you — finance, organisational development and IT. Sometimes we take them for granted because we do not see them every day. They are the ones who do all the work in the background and

make this place function. I would like to personally thank them for taking care of us and managing this wonderful building.

To members of the media gallery, I wish you and your families all the best and a good break.

To my staff, Santhi and Jeremy, thank you for keeping my office running well. I would say that my office is a well-oiled machine. Thank you both for your professionalism, guidance and support throughout the year.

In conclusion, I share the sentiment of the people at the Transport Accident Commission who remind us at this most festive time of year to look out for our friends and families and to share the responsibility for keeping each other safe.

On behalf of the Premier and the Leader of the Opposition, I express my thanks to the Victorians who will be working during the Christmas period to ensure our safety and wellbeing. In particular I extend on behalf of us all our appreciation to Victoria Police, the ambulance service, firefighters, doctors and nurses.

We wish you all a good break with your families and friends. Recharge your batteries, and I look forward to you and us returning next year. Happy season. Merry Christmas. May I say, Feliz Navidad!

CONSTITUENCY QUESTIONS

Mr T. Bull — On a point of order, Deputy Speaker, I wish to bring to your attention some overdue questions. There are 11 in fact. Four relate to the Minister for Agriculture, two were asked on 25 October and two were asked on 27 October. They are questions 11 838, 11 839, 11 904 and 11 907. There are also seven questions to the Minister for Health that were asked on 24 and 27 October. They are questions 11 840, 11 896, 11 897, 11 898, 11 899, 11 905 and 11 906. I request that you encourage those ministers to please respond given that the answers are now well and truly overdue.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER — Order! I thank the honourable member for Gippsland East. I will forward that request to the Speaker. I do appreciate that the member has also detailed the numbers as well. We have had a discussion in terms of outstanding questions, so we are trying to deal with this particular issue, but I thank the honourable member for Gippsland East.

Caulfield electorate

Mr SOUTHWICK (Caulfield) — (12 157) My question is to the Minister for Planning. Can the minister please provide clarification immediately on the definition of ‘non-residential use’ to prohibit such overdevelopment in my electorate of Caulfield. Under current planning height restrictions, the height limit in a residential zone is 8 metres, or 2 storeys, but this limit does not apply to non-residential uses, such as aged care or independent living units. Currently there is a proposal to build a 19-storey tower overdevelopment on the Bethlehem hospital site at Kooyong Road, Caulfield South, which is completely out of character for the area. This is obviously an unwelcome Christmas present for the constituents around that area, so I ask the minister to please provide clarification of what a non-residential use is to prohibit such overdevelopment as the one at Bethlehem hospital in my electorate of Caulfield.

Carrum electorate

Ms KILKENNY (Carrum) — (12 158) My constituency question is for the Minister for Health. Minister, constituents in my electorate are concerned that the federal Liberal government is going to cut dental services, particularly urgent services. The current funding arrangement between the federal government and states and territories, which was put in place by the former federal Labor government, ends on 31 December; however, due to the Turnbull government’s inaction, new arrangements have not yet been made. Minister, constituents in my electorate who rely on the public dental health system are very worried and want to know what actions you are taking to ensure the federal government continues to pay its fair share of public dental funding.

Gippsland East electorate

Mr T. BULL (Gippsland East) — (12 159) My constituency question is to the Minister for Roads and Road Safety. The information I seek on behalf of several constituents who have contacted my office is whether the minister is aware of the need to repair the Gelantipy Road in the vicinity of the 115-kilometre marker. My office has been contacted about this section of road by a number of constituents who are concerned about both its condition and the reduction of the speed limit to 80 kilometres an hour.

VicRoads has advised that the reason for the reduced speed limit is as a result of the condition of this section of the road. It also said that permanent repair at this location does not form part of the current roads

program and will be considered in future programs. Local residents have found it astounding that this is an admission that speed limits are being reduced rather than fixed due to the condition of the roads. As a result they have asked me to seek the minister's views on whether this is an acceptable situation and whether the minister intends to reinstate the cuts to road funding to address such matters.

Essendon electorate

Mr PEARSON (Essendon) — (12 160) I direct my constituency question to the Minister for Education, and I ask: what is the latest information about the application by Ascot Vale Primary School for funding from the Inclusive Schools Fund for a sensory garden to benefit children with special needs?

Eildon electorate

Ms McLEISH (Eildon) — (12 161) My question is to the Minister for Families and Children, and I raise it on behalf of Toolangi Castella District Community House. Minister, will you request that the Department of Health and Human Services review the policy which requires all staff at neighbourhood community houses to have annual working with children checks even when they do not work with children? The committee sees this requirement as unnecessary and cumbersome red tape. Whilst Toolangi Castella District Community House supports child protection initiatives and good governance, they, like others, are experiencing difficulties with compliance and in particular the cost of compliance. Compliance for this small community house, which runs on a shoestring budget, equates to \$592.60 after the initial set-up cost of \$238, and this impacts heavily on their costs and already slim operations. The additional bureaucracy gains nothing but frustrates the end users and puts pressure on the sustainability of smaller operations. It just does not seem to make sense that they need to have working with children checks when they do not work with children.

Eltham electorate

Ms WARD (Eltham) — (12 162) My question is to the Minister for Roads and Road Safety. Minister, what are you doing to ensure that women in the Eltham electorate are respected when travelling on our roads? In particular I refer to images and words of a sexist and misogynistic nature used by a well-known registered company providing transport services. A number of women in my community have contacted me about this issue, including young women who contributed to various school forums held in my electorate this year.

The Labor government in Queensland has recently put forward legislation that allows the government to rescind the registration of Wicked Campers' vans which do not comply with Advertising Standards Board decisions.

Victoria launched the state's first gender equality strategy this week. Sexist and demeaning images and words on mobile billboards displayed on transport vehicles available for hire should not be tolerated in Victoria. Women and girls in my electorate want to feel respected, and they want to be treated as equals. Minister, what will you do to keep images and words of a sexist and misogynistic nature off vehicles that are masquerading as billboards on our roads?

Prahran electorate

Mr HIBBINS (Prahran) — (12 163) My constituency question is for the Minister for Roads and Road Safety, and I ask: will the minister or representatives from his office or VicRoads meet with local residents to discuss the Dandenong Road–Hornby Street crossover? The crossover was closed last year due to a number of collisions between trams and vehicles at the site over several years. The closure affected the travel movements of local residents, forcing them to make a U-turn at Dandenong Road and Chapel Street — a vehicle movement that congestion can often make difficult and lengthy.

Residents feel that they were not properly consulted regarding the closure or over other potential solutions such as a controlled crossing with traffic lights. I have written to the minister's office requesting that a meeting be held with residents and am yet to receive a response. I note VicRoads, in an email to residents earlier this year, stated:

If you have ideas on how to improve your travel experience in this area without compromising safety, we would be pleased to receive them.

Residents would greatly appreciate a chance to meet with the minister or officials to discuss the crossover, to outline their concerns, to share their ideas — —

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

Ivanhoe electorate

Mr CARBINES (Ivanhoe) — (12 164) My question is to the Minister for Education and Deputy Premier. Can the minister advise when he will be in a position to announce the next round of funding under the inclusive schools program? I just wanted to also point out that,

amongst schools in my electorate, Rosanna Golf Links Primary School, which is a regional deaf facility and was visited by the Premier just last week, is undergoing a more than \$6 million redevelopment for the over 500 students that attend that school. We were also able to reward them for their great work in becoming a 5-star ResourceSmart school just last week. In particular I would also like to mention in relation to this funding program Ivanhoe Primary School and the work they also do — as all schools in my electorate do — around ensuring that they provide inclusive infrastructure and support programs for students in the electorate. I look forward to hearing the minister's response to that query.

Forest Hill electorate

Mr ANGUS (Forest Hill) — (12 165) My constituency question is for the Minister for Education. My question is: when will the government provide funding to build a staff car park at Livingstone Primary School? Livingstone Primary School in my electorate of Forest Hill is a popular, fast-growing school with increasing enrolments and consequential increases in teaching and other staff. The school has no staff car park. This provides ongoing challenges for the school community, not the least of which is that the staff have to park in nearby areas away from the restricted parking zones adjacent to the school, as well as for parents dropping off and collecting children. The main entrance to the school is located opposite a local sporting area comprising a bowling club, a tennis club, a darts club and a social club. These popular and well-patronised clubs also generate large amounts of vehicular traffic and consequent parking issues. The school has land available to build an on-site staff car park and has had plans drawn up for this project. My school community is very keen to know what the government is going to do to rectify this situation.

Thomastown electorate

Ms HALFPENNY (Thomastown) — (12 166) I have a question for the Minister for Health, and I am asking for information on the future of pathology at the Northern Hospital. The pathology department was privatised some years ago and is now owned by a company called Clinical Labs, which is actually owned by a venture capital company. I have been approached by many staff members, hospital workers and union representatives who are very concerned about the conduct of this company in operating the pathology department, where it gives preference to private patients over public patients. The staff morale is very low, and the company's industrial relations practices are appalling. I believe the Northern Hospital has a great

future, but there is a lot of concern around the pathology department.

CLIMATE CHANGE BILL 2016

Second reading

Debate resumed.

Ms SANDELL (Melbourne) — It is my pleasure to speak to the Climate Change Bill 2016 before the house. As we have heard from many other speakers, this bill fulfils the government's election commitment to review the Climate Change Act 2010 and improve it after the previous Liberal-Nationals government tore it to shreds. In that sense we do welcome many of the changes contained within this bill, and we are really heartened to see the state government acting on its election commitment to review and amend this act. I would like to congratulate the Premier and the Minister for Energy, Environment, and Climate Change and all the staff in the department for taking this step forward.

The bill is a real improvement on the previous Climate Change Act 2010, and the government should be commended for that. However, there are still some holes in this bill which would allow this government, or a future government that does not care about climate change — —

Honourable members interjecting.

Ms SANDELL — I am talking about the opposition, the member for Essendon and the member for Melton, so maybe have a little bit of a listen, because I think we are probably on the same side on this. There are holes in this bill that could allow a future government or this current government to get away with doing very little on climate change but still meet the requirements of the bill. I have some questions of the minister about those holes, because in that sense it is really a missed opportunity to embed in our laws requirements for governments to deal with the biggest moral challenge of our generation.

I am a little disappointed that the Labor government will not let this bill go into consideration in detail, as I did request on Tuesday, so that we can ask questions of the minister about some of the really important details that are in this bill, because the devil really is in the detail. Even though the intention is really good, the devil will be in the detail, and I would have appreciated an opportunity to ask the minister questions about that detail. If we have time for the opposition to make budget reply speeches on a budget that was handed down over six months ago, I think we should have time to actually debate climate change legislation. The

government brought forward a supposedly urgent bill on parole reforms, and if we have time to discuss those kinds of urgent matters, why does this government not consider climate change urgent enough to even go into consideration in detail on this bill?

Over the years it has become increasingly clear that responding to climate change cannot be left to federal governments alone and that state governments need to step up to the challenge. Just this week we saw the Turnbull government in complete disarray over its climate change policy with the right wing really setting the agenda and blocking Malcolm Turnbull from taking any action. So it is becoming clearer and clearer why states need to step up. This is especially the case for states like Victoria, where we are disproportionately responsible for causing climate change due to our carbon-intensive brown coal power industry. So I am very pleased that the Victorian government has recognised the need to take some responsibility for reducing Victoria's emissions and the impact they have, not just here but globally.

Many of the measures contained in the bill could be useful and effective tools for combating climate change. In particular, setting the 2050 emissions reduction targets and interim targets is really important; those interim targets are really the key here so that we do not leave action to down the track when it will be much more expensive and more difficult to achieve. The mandate for the Environment Protection Authority Victoria to regulate greenhouse gas emissions is very welcome, and the whole-of-government focus on emissions reduction, particularly requiring each sector to pledge emissions reductions, is also very welcome. If implemented under a government that is truly committed to tackling climate change, this bill has really great potential to drive emissions reduction and adaptation.

But unfortunately it does not guard against the whims of future governments who may be less concerned with the dangers and risks posed by climate change. So while this bill implements an overarching system of principles which call on the government to consider mitigating climate change across all its decisions, it really places no real actual requirements on decision-makers to do so. Crucially, the bill also lacks any consequence for a government which does not fulfil the requirements that it lays out.

Put simply, this bill is not strong enough to mandate government action on climate change regardless of the views of the government of the day. It is quite a scary thought, given the contributions from the opposition

side, who clearly do not want any action on climate change at all and are even opposing this bill.

Mr Nardella interjected.

Ms SANDELL — So if the government were actually serious about tackling climate change, it would have — and here is my solution, member for Melton, it is a very simple solution — included a charter, as recommended by the review into the Climate Change Act, or a 'climate test', as proposed by climate and environment groups really early on in the climate change review process. These would obligate this government and all future governments to actually reduce emissions, regardless of their personal views on climate change or their ideological position.

Unfortunately, as it stands, there is nothing in this bill that prevents a future government from doing essentially nothing. They would not even, on my reading, need to repeal the act in order to take very little action on climate change.

Honourable members interjecting.

Ms SANDELL — And I would hope that the member for Melton and the member for Essendon, who are interjecting, are just as scared about a future Liberal government undoing action on climate change as I am.

There is no third-party standing in this bill where a community group or the public could take action against the government for failing to meet its climate targets. This lack of enforcement or incentive for action is really in contrast to, say, the bill to ban unconventional gas and fracking which, I note, has been, disappointingly, delayed until next year so the government could focus on its punitive law and order agenda this week. However, that bill looks like a really good bill, and in order to allow gas fracking in Victoria, a new government would actually need to repeal that act and bring that before Parliament and endure the scrutiny of the public in doing so. But that is not the case for this bill.

Without some stronger enforcement mechanisms, Victorians can take no real reassurance that these plans for 2050 will actually be followed through until 2050. So there is not much point having an emissions reduction target for 2050 if there is no real incentive for going through with it or punishment for not doing so. It is concerning, because Victoria has long been falling behind other parts of the world in responding to climate change.

As the minister has acknowledged, Victoria is already feeling the effects of climate change and has

experienced a rise in temperature and a reduction in rainfall across the state since 1950. Droughts have been getting longer, bushfire seasons are becoming more unpredictable and more extreme, and extreme weather events are becoming more and more likely. Just last week, experts told us we are now seeing weather patterns and events across Australia that we did not expect to see until at least 2030, which is a pretty frightening prospect. So climate change is happening even faster than scientists have predicted, and that is very scary, especially as we go into another dangerous, long, hot fire season.

We are running out of time to prevent the worst impacts of climate change. It is entirely possible that it is already too late to avoid any impact on Victoria — on our environment, our agriculture, our economy and our way of life. That is why the Greens would have liked to see this bill be stronger. It is disappointing the government has fallen short of including a 'climate test' or charter in this bill.

During the review process environment stakeholders called for provisions to be included in the new bill that required any government agency considering a major decision which would make it difficult for Victoria to meet its emissions reduction targets to reconsider that decision until it did not have that impact. The aim of this is to mandate climate considerations across all areas of government so that emissions reductions in one area are not completely wiped out by increases in another. For example, if a department is considering a huge, new toll road that would put more cars on the road and contribute to more emissions, this bill allows them to do so. If the energy minister wanted to open up new gas fields or coalfields, this bill would allow them to do so.

Instead, this bill has included climate principles and policy objectives that certain decision-makers are asked to consider, but without any requirements beyond that. Essentially, as long as departments and ministers say they have considered climate change, then the job is done. Sure, that is better than nothing, but it could have been a lot stronger.

The bill also leaves some key questions unanswered. That is why I would have liked to go into consideration in detail, to get some clarity from the minister on these questions. It might be that the government has the best intention, but we will not know that because we are not able to question her. It seems like there is no upper limit on the international offsets the government can use to meet its emissions reduction target. For example, can the government buy dodgy offsets from palm oil plantations overseas and say it is saving emissions,

while doing virtually nothing to actually change our energy system systematically at home? The bill does not seem to say that it cannot.

We understand that interim targets before 2050 might be best set outside of the act, we understand that, but we are concerned that the first set of targets — that is, for the period 2021–25, will be set so close to the commencement date for these targets that they will have to be set low to actually meet them in the tough and tight time frame that is required. So why not set them in 2017, as was initially indicated to environment stakeholders? Why is there a delay? Why will they be pushed off to 2018 or beyond? And why has the government not introduced more timely reporting of emissions?

Currently the bill looks like it will use the current emissions inventory to report on Victoria's emissions, but by the time these are released they are usually one and a half or two years out of date and therefore often useless in determining if the government policy on emissions reduction is having an impact. It would have been more sensible, I would have thought, to at least institute some kind of interim emissions reporting or more timely emissions reporting to bring a bit more transparency into the process. That would help this government to hold future governments to account as well.

One really good thing about the bill is that if a future government wants to amend the interim targets, they need to publish that in the *Government Gazette* and also online along with their reasons for changing the targets. However, disappointingly, if they want to vary the sector pledges, which are actually the most important part of this bill, there is no requirement for the minister to publish the reasons for doing so. Why is this the case? I would have loved the chance to ask the minister that question of why there is not transparency in the sector pledges and whether that will let departments and sectors off the hook. It means that future governments can ratchet down targets for sectors. If that is the case, that would be quite a bad outcome. If this government really wants transparency around climate action and wants to ensure future governments actually meet the targets, why not make the minister publish the reasons for varying the sector pledges, given they are the most significant part of the bill, as I have said, for reducing emissions?

Speaking of the sector pledges, they are only required to be made under categories which will be prescribed by the minister under regulation. It is a little confusing to me why these are not listed in the bill in order to embed them in the law and make them more resistant

to being eroded or changed by future governments. The minister has outlined some of these sectors in her second-reading speech and the explanatory memorandum of the bill, so why are they not in the bill? This does not seem to make much sense to me. It seems like it would be easy to fix. Perhaps the government is not inclined to fix it and therefore certain sectors can get away without pledging emissions reductions. Will this leave out some of our biggest emitters like stationary energy and forestry? It is very scary.

Speaking about stationary energy, in setting the interim targets this government will need to make sure that much, much more is done in this sector to reduce emissions given that we do have the dirtiest and the most polluting brown coal in the country, if not the world. Now that Hazelwood has decided to close — due to a company decision, not leadership from this government, I might add — the government cannot simply claim this as enough of an emissions reduction and therefore do nothing else when it comes to coal. I am quite worried that they will just count Hazelwood's emissions reduction and say, 'That's that; we can leave the rest of the brown coal industry doing as it likes, and that is enough of an emissions reduction'. That is just not the case. If we want to meet our 2050 targets, if we have any hope of avoiding the worst impacts of climate change on ourselves and future generations, we must have a comprehensive plan to retire our old, dirty brown coal power stations and replace that power supply with clean energy. We know we can do it. The Greens have a comprehensive plan called *Renew Australia* that would make us the clean energy superpower. I think all governments should look at that plan and adopt some of those policies, because we can become a manufacturing powerhouse and a clean energy powerhouse again.

If this Labor government does nothing on brown coal during its first term, it will really be an abject failure — not just a failure in terms of climate change but also a failure in terms of planning for the future of coal communities, who are crying out for new industries and new jobs beyond coal. They really deserve a comprehensive plan from this government, not just a reaction once brown coal closes on the day the announcement is made. They deserve a plan and jobs ahead of time.

In conclusion, the Greens will of course be supporting this bill — we are happy to support anything that takes a step in the right direction on climate change — but we will be looking for potential amendments in the upper house. I note the member for Melton and the member for Essendon were asking what those amendments are.

Rest assured, they will come in the upper house to make sure that this bill is as ambitious and as robust as it needs to be and to make sure that this government and future governments cannot get away with shirking their responsibilities to deal properly with climate change. We look forward to working with this government to make this bill the game changer that it really could be.

Ms EDWARDS (Bendigo West) — I am very pleased to rise to make a contribution on the Climate Change Bill 2016. I have to say first up that it is all very well and good when the Greens party get to their feet and talk about climate change. It clearly is a one-trick-pony party. I think I have heard the member for Melbourne speak many times over the last two years and do not think that I have once heard her speak of her electorate of Melbourne or about her constituents. In fact she is indeed a one-trick pony. Of course when it comes to climate change and the many pieces of legislation that this government has brought before the house over the last two years to improve our position in relation to climate change, our environment and our energy sector, it is never good enough for the Greens.

This bill is so important for the future of this state and the future of our children. In 2010 the previous Labor government saw the need for a world-leading legislative framework to both drive and guide action and in fact delivered the original Climate Change Act 2010. The critical importance of climate change legislation has not diminished since that time. In fact it has become more urgent. The 2012 amendments introduced by the previous Liberal-Nationals government gutted that legislation and took us backwards when it came to climate change. Therefore the new legislation before the house today is critically important. We all know that climate change is both pervasive and our long-term challenge, and we absolutely need clear frameworks and enduring rules to guide our response.

Our review of the act in 2015 ensured that it would provide a strong foundation for action by the government, by business and by our communities. Thirty-three recommendations came from that review on how to create an act that supports current and future needs. The vast majority of those recommendations have been accepted by the government and will now be given full effect through this bill.

The review committee set ambitious targets and considered the recommendations. There were thousands of individuals and organisations who made submissions to that review, and the government thanks

them for their input. What we do know is that those opposite — the Liberals and The Nationals and even the Greens party, to a certain extent — are way out of touch with their constituents, way out of touch with their electorates and way out of touch with the views of Victorians on climate change.

Acting Speaker, if you ever get a chance to look at the sustainable development goals that were set by the UN some time ago — back in 2012, I think it was — you will see that climate change is right up there amongst the most important goals that have been set by the UN. Clearly this bill is very much in line with and in keeping with those sustainability goals. That is really important because we have been mindful of what the rest of the world is doing. We have been mindful of the fact that Victoria is the leading state in this nation when it comes to improving legislation in relation to climate change, improvements to renewable energy and improvements to sustainability. The bill provides Victoria with a world-leading legislative framework, and that is being done by setting emissions reduction targets and objectives to guide policy development, by requiring strategic whole-of-government planning across adaptation and mitigation and by driving transparency and accountability through regular information and reports.

The Loddon Mallee region, which is in my electorate, has had serious fires over the last decade. There have been serious floods, and they, of course, are a direct consequence of climate change. The Loddon Mallee region has already become warmer and drier, a climate trend that is likely to continue well into the future. In response, local residents, businesses and communities are changing the way they do things, and it is time the government moved in response to those communities and their attitudes to climate change and how they want things to change. Getting climate ready means not just introducing this act but involves understanding how climate change is going to affect you, everybody in this place, our children and our children's children well into the future and working out ways right now about how we can adapt.

The Loddon Mallee region has very hot summers, with an average maximum temperature of 30 degrees, while the winters are mild with the average daily temperature around 10 degrees Celsius. The southern part of the region experiences cool and relatively wet winters and warm, dry summers. The rate of warming in the Loddon Mallee region has increased since the 1960s. On average, rainfall has declined since the 1960s, especially in the autumn, and the harsh millennium drought from 1996 to 2009 ended with two of the wettest years on record in 2010 and 2011. All of these

things point to climate change impacting on our local communities. The cost to our local communities — the economic cost to our communities, the economic cost to the government — in response to these climate challenges is significant. There is no doubt that once we start putting in place measures to address climate change, that economic impact will be reduced.

A number of members wish to speak on this bill today because of its importance to our communities and to the state of Victoria, but I want to finish by commending the minister. The minister has worked very hard to make sure that climate change is right at the top of this government's agenda. This bill is important to our future, and anyone who opposes this bill is not thinking clearly about how climate change is going to impact on our families, on our children and on the generations of children to come, who will be left with a legacy — if we do not act right now to make changes — that makes climate change a reality. It is not folklore; the science is clear. It exists. It is happening right now, and as a government we are proud to be actually doing something about it. I commend the bill to the house.

Mr R. SMITH (Warrandyte) — I rise to just make a few comments on the Climate Change Bill 2016. I start by putting the bill into some context. I refer to an article in the *Herald Sun* of 23 October headlined 'Andrews government's carbon emissions jump while telling rest of Victoria to cut back'. That is a good context to start with, because it shows a government that is quite willing to tell other people how to act in a range of settings, be it with respect to gender or issues of that nature and certainly on this issue as well. The government is quite happy to tell individuals, local government and business that they need to cut their emissions but has done nothing in two years to actually do anything itself. I think that is very important.

I want to refer back to the original act that this supersedes, the Climate Change Act 2010, and a little bit of its history. When the coalition came to government after the 2010 election, towards the end of 2011 there was a review into that act, which the act compelled the government to take due to the introduction of the carbon price scheme at a federal level. We had some very good people undertaking that review, very independent people, and one of the things they came up with, in opposition to the original act, is frankly that it was unenforceable. This bill suffers from the same thing.

Under the purpose clause we find a long list of reasons for the introduction of this bill. They include: to set a long-term greenhouse gas emissions reduction target, to provide for the setting of a five-yearly interim

greenhouse gas emissions reduction target — I could go through them all, but if members wish to look at the bill and look at part 1, clause 1 and all the subclauses to it, they will see there are a number of them. But in fact it has no enforceability whatsoever. There is nothing that will actually happen if none of these particular clauses are adhered to, so in that sense the government could have put out a policy with a standard Labor glossy brochure to tell the community and Victorians what it is going to do; it did not need to put it in legislation. That is probably the first thing: the lack of enforceability.

Another thing that the climate change review came up with was the cost. I know the Minister for Energy, Environment and Climate Change enacted another review just recently which talked about the cost of climate change, but it did not cover the cost to the Victorian economy — as I said, to business, to local government or to individuals — as a result of this particular bill. As the member for Gembrook said earlier, in order for the emissions target of zero emissions by 2050 to be met there will have to be international carbon credits purchased.

The review into the previous bill basically worked out that in order to meet the targets at that stage, a reduction by 2020, the government would have to spend a cumulative value of \$2.2 billion in order to purchase those international carbon credits. That is by the standards set a few years ago, but I wonder how much it is actually going to cost the Victorian taxpayer to purchase those international carbon permits, going forward, to meet this particular target. There is nothing in the budget — nothing at all. There has been nothing said. I can almost guarantee you, with maybe some understanding of how the debate is likely to unfold, that those opposite will never tell us how much this is actually going to cost.

Even when the original bill was put forward in 2010, former Premier John Brumby, when asked, consistently refused to answer how much it would cost. This is what happened when the former Leader of The Nationals, the Honourable Peter Ryan, asked the question of Mr Brumby very clearly back on 27 July 2010:

... the Premier is debating the question. He has simply been asked a question of very narrow compass as to the cost ...

The fact of the matter is that the government then, back in the previous iteration, and today, has no idea what these lofty aspirational targets will actually cost the Victorian taxpayer. I can tell you that between now and 2050, if the target of net zero emissions by 2050 is to be met, there will be a considerable cost in the billions of purchasing these international carbon credits. But of course the government does not seem to care about that

at all and does not seem to care about what the cost may be.

The first person I heard talk about the fact that emissions reduction targets should be dealt with at a federal level was former climate change minister Greg Combet. When I attended Council of Australian Governments meetings back in the previous term of government, it was Greg Combet who actually said that the states should not get involved in this. Those words were an echo of what John Brumby had said in his climate change green paper back in 2009 when he said that the government does not see any benefit in legislating for a state-based emissions reduction target.

Greg Combet said the same thing, and in fact Greg Combet asked state environment ministers to send their carbon reduction policies to Canberra for review and assessment, and he and his department would make an assessment and advise each of the states as to whether or not their particular policies should be continued. In almost every case with policies set by the state environment ministers, Greg Combet advised that those policies should not be continued because carbon emissions reduction should be dealt with at a federal level, and I support that view. I supported it then, and I support it now.

I am surprised by this government, frankly, given that former Premier John Brumby, who I am sure all of those opposite respect, and former climate change minister Greg Combet said the same thing. These are Labor luminaries who have said, 'This is not a role for the state at all; it is a role for the feds'. Particularly on the back of the fact that the federal government has recently signed the Paris agreement, which puts targets in place, to have them superseded by a state target seems nonsensical and smacks of just seeming to do something rather than actually doing something.

The member for Gembrook, the coalition's environment spokesman, recently went to Canberra and arranged to meet with the federal Minister for the Environment and Energy, the Honourable Josh Frydenberg, with the aim of sitting down and saying, 'In the briefings that you've had from Victoria, how is the compatibility between their bill and what the federal government is trying to do?'. It was very surprising to hear that the federal minister had not had any briefing at all from the Victorian government, had no idea what the bill was going to be about and had not had a chance to look through the bill and see where the compatibility was. For the state to go alone on this without even a reference to the federal government is quite absurd, extraordinary and, frankly, quite perplexing.

We are seeing with this government, as I said before, a habit of just seeming to do something without actually delivering anything. But I probably need to correct myself, because they are actually doing something. This bill, along with actions that they have already taken and along with their stated policy to close Hazelwood, will increase power prices. The government has said in the past that power prices will only increase by 4 per cent. The reality is that they will increase by over 10 per cent.

The pursuit of these policies and the pursuit of this target will only impact on businesses further, will only impact on local government further and will only impact on individuals further through the power bills that they are charged. The government, unfortunately, has not taken a lot of care in putting this bill together. As the bill briefing showed, they have not done any modelling on the impact on business, on local government, on power bills, or on anything at all.

This will be a cost to our community; this will be a cost to our economy. It is ill-thought out, it is unenforceable and it will cost the economy and the taxpayer a lot of money through the purchase of these international carbon permits over time. That is something that the government has not spoken about. I doubt any of them will. I doubt that I will see any line item in the next budget about the purchase of these international carbon permits. It is a massive cost, one the government has not considered, and it is certainly true of this government that they like to do things that sound good, but they do not actually put a whole lot of thought into them.

Mr RICHARDSON (Mordialloc) — It gives me pleasure to rise to speak on the Climate Change Bill 2016, a bill that implements the Andrews Labor government's commitment to taking the necessary actions and steps to respond to dangerous climate change.

I wanted to just take up a couple of points that have been raised so far in the debate. Specifically, the Leader of The Nationals came to the proposition of accepting that climate change is real and that it has an effect on our community, but concluding that it is not a priority for this time. I cannot disagree more with the member for Murray Plains. If you are to accept that climate change is real, then the empirical evidence you must also accept on the other side of the coin are the consequences. The consequences of not acting will be damaging over the longer term. It will go beyond the terms of Parliament of every single member. Being one of the youngest members of the Legislative Assembly,

it will predate when my children are going through school and into university.

We have an obligation to respond to these challenges now, and if you will not listen to the Labor Party — and I particularly say this to modern-day Liberals of the Victorian Liberal Party — if you will not listen to other people, then listen to Dr John Hewson, who made a fantastic assessment at the London School of Economics and was recently written up in April of 2016 warning that the world was headed for a recession if we did not take serious action on climate change. John Hewson said — and it was underpinned by his work at the London School of Economics, a fantastic institution renowned worldwide — that the cost of not acting on climate change, according to their researchers, could be as much as \$31 trillion.

If you do not believe the fantastic scientists that support my community at the Aspendale CSIRO, if you do not believe the Labor Party and the government on the need to act, then you should believe one of your former Liberal leaders in Dr John Hewson, who warns that we must take that action. Beyond that, he is warning that your own supposed constituency in companies across Australia and the world are greatly underprepared in their risk management and assessment of climate change and the effect on their bottom line.

In fact John Hewson, in an article for the ABC, talked about the fact that about 1.5 per cent of companies are taking seriously their risk of not mitigating against the effects of climate change. This is now the time for the modern-day Liberal Party to be the liberal party and to step up and join the Labor Party in taking serious action in Victoria to mitigate the effects of climate change.

I am passionate about this area and I am passionate about this policy, having worked as an adviser to the former federal Parliamentary Secretary for Climate Change and Energy Efficiency, Mark Dreyfus, and having also worked alongside Greg Combet's staff in Canberra. The Rudd-Gillard era in government was damaging and bruising, but what was most disappointing was the U-turn made on climate change policy. It was a hard-fought road to get market-based mechanisms, something the coalition should be supporting — not the interventionist, prop-up policies that have been put forward by the Prime Minister. Not one single person on the other side of this house acknowledges the great challenge that we now face. They should be joining us on this bill and implementing and accepting those renewable energy targets, not opposing them and speaking them down.

The other thing that is absent in this debate and not being raised by any member of the opposition, be they from the Liberal Party or The Nationals, is a solution to this problem. If you accept the proposition that climate change is real, if you accept the conclusion that the CSIRO and their fantastic researchers have come to — that we must act now — then you must come to the table and put forward a solution for our communities and for future generations.

The greatest contribution the Leader of The Nationals made was saying that we need to look towards stormwater. Stormwater mitigation is not climate change abatement. I am sorry, Leader of The Nationals, but that is not acting on climate change. It will be exponentially worse for your communities, for the people you represent. In terms of agriculture, in terms of farming, it is exponentially more important for our regional communities that we take this problem seriously and act.

The member for Warrandyte raised a point about this being a federal issue and I will take up that point as well. If the federal government were acting in the full interests of our nation and taking the necessary steps to abate the dangerous effects of climate change, then maybe we could assess that proposition. However, it was reported this morning that it will take state premiers coming together to consider how there can be a coalition of governments and territory representatives to try to take the action that the commonwealth will not take, because there is an absolutely vacant space here from a Prime Minister who consistently said that he supported an emissions trading scheme in 2010 and that he would not do anything differently: he would support an emissions trading scheme. Well, fast forward to 2016 and that could not be any further from the truth.

It will take the leadership of the Andrews Labor government, along with the leadership of Premier Jay Weatherill and even maybe the intervention of the Premier of New South Wales, Mike Baird, to come together and find a solution to dangerous climate change. It will take the states. It will be a flip-around of the convention of our federation, but it will take the states and territories to take the necessary action to respond to climate change.

I will make one further point because I know a number of members want to speak on this bill. It was an extraordinary contribution from the member for Warrandyte. The former Minister for Environment and Climate Change got up in this place and said that the whole point of his term — his legacy of four years — was not acting on climate change. It was someone else's problem; it was someone else's issue to deal

with. Half your title, as a minister of the Crown, was not to do anything! I put forward to you, the member for Warrandyte, that you should look to the eminent professor that is John Hewson and read his stuff; you should read his contributions. I put that forward because, mate, you could not get a degree at the London School of Economics and Political Science if you tried.

Mr SOUTHWICK (Caulfield) — I rise to speak on the Climate Change Bill 2016. We have just heard an absolute rant from the member for Mordialloc, who referred to using market-based policies to try to tackle climate change. Well, the member for Mordialloc would not know a market if he fell over one.

This government is absolutely all about intervention, it is all about one-line press release headlines, it is all absolute spin and no substance when it comes to this particular area. It is a Liberal government that understands conservation, that understands waste management and that understands the environment. We use resources efficiently and we minimise waste. Strong Liberal principles in the economy and the environment are the way to reduce emissions.

We saw this in an article published on 23 October that said the Andrews government's carbon emissions jumped, all while they told Victoria to cut back. Here is an example of where this government puts out a press release and says that it is going to do something, but when it comes to emissions reduction it is absolutely doing quite the opposite.

The Andrews government carbon emissions increased by almost 25 000 tonnes over the past year. At the same time they are telling the rest of Victorians to cut their carbon footprint. So they want everybody else to do the hard yards. They want us to be efficient in our energy use, which we should, but in contrast this government is doing very little. They have had a 2.6 per cent rise in emissions and that is doing nothing for the carbon-neutral policy or target of 2050.

This also throws into doubt what their government departments are doing. We have seen a number of figures from various departments that suggest that they are in fact emitting more than big companies like McDonald's, Arnott's and others that are working towards energy efficiency. Meanwhile Labor government departments are increasing greenhouse emissions. If this government were serious about greenhouse emissions, they would start by showing leadership; they would start by actually doing something rather than just talking about it.

We have seen many instances where things are working this way. What is very important when it comes to an emissions reduction focus is the fact that we take a national approach to this and that Victoria does not go it alone. Instead we sit down with the federal government and work towards a target and ensure that we achieve that target.

I was very proud to see us sign up to the Paris agreement. I know that was something that was well negotiated. But again, moving forward, we should have the Victorian government sit down with the current federal Minister for the Environment and Energy and work towards how we can achieve our targets going forward.

I understand the shadow minister for environment, the member for Gembrook, met with the current federal Minister for Environment and Energy to speak about this particular bill before the Victorian Parliament. He said that the Victorian Minister for Energy, Environment and Climate Change did not even meet with the former minister; he did not even talk to the former minister. He did not even pick up the phone. You would think that at the Council of Australian Governments, which is an important policymaking framework for this government, they would actually stick it on the agenda. But no, they are not interested in that. They are interested in playing politics. This government is interested in playing politics with the environment rather than actually working together to achieve something.

We have seen former federal ministers that have said state-based targets do not work — that to really do it the states need to be working alongside the federal government to achieve targets that are in the national interest. That is the only way we are going to achieve things — working in the national interest. Because if we do not, and if we see the sorts of government intervention that this Labor government has had, we start to see massive impact on individuals and householders.

We have seen that with energy prices. We have seen that with uncertainty in Portland at the Alcoa smelter. These are jobs. Now, if we close down Hazelwood, if there is a threat, thanks to this current government, to jobs down in the valley, if we look at Alcoa and see the threat to that company staying in operation — a threat to further jobs and a further impact on the Portland community — and if those people who have been working in those industries then do not have a job and do not have the ability to put food on the table, they will certainly not be able to do anything about carbon emissions.

We have seen that those on the lowest income are the ones who unfortunately face the highest bills, who do not have the energy star-rated appliances. They are not buying the 5 and 6-star-rated appliances. They have the appliances that emit the most. So if this government was serious about reducing emissions, they would be working with people in low-income households and they would be working with the most disadvantaged, and they would be pursuing policies that actually help them to be able to reduce emissions. They would not be taxing them, putting more impost on them and putting them out of work; rather they would be saying, 'We're going to ensure that we will help those suffering the most in terms of reducing their emissions'. That is not what we are seeing on the part of this government. It is ideology first and jobs, affordability and security last. We have seen it with this government. They are not interested in jobs. They are certainly not interested in energy prices.

Ms Thomas interjected.

Mr SOUTHWICK — The member for Macedon can rant all she likes, but when over summer the member for Macedon's constituency start to pay another 10 per cent on their energy bills — as they go skyrocketing up — I would suggest the member for Macedon's constituents write to her and ask the government what they are doing about the power prices. I will tell you: absolutely nothing.

What they are doing is introducing policies that are hitting householders fairly and squarely, right between the eyes. That is what they are doing, because they do not care about householders. They do not care about Victorians. They just care about ideology and green votes and trying to win those four inner-city seats at the next election through these one-liner press releases. These press releases say, 'We can out-green the Greens', but when it comes to real, practical environmental issues, we know they are doing absolutely nothing, as their emissions rise through their government departments, as the pressures on affordability and power bills rise and as there is no work on increasing efficiency in people's homes, where it really counts, which would really be working with Victorians and with industry to ensure they reduce emissions.

Just in the last few days we have had the electricity network put out a transformation road map which talks about where the energy industry is going up to 2050. It is about reducing emissions, about working in innovation and about not working in terms of taxing people and putting up energy prices. It is about looking at putting customers in the centre of Australia's future

electricity system. It is putting customers first — not the Labor government first — for greater choice, greater control and greater autonomy while they enjoy the security and benefits of reconnection. That is what we should be doing. We should be transforming into a future that provides security and affordability and that lowers emissions and looks after Victorians in the process.

This sort of government interventionist policy and lack of regard for Victorians and this not working with but playing politics with the federal government does nothing for the environment. It does nothing for reaching energy targets, and this bill that the government has put before the house is an absolute joke. On that basis we will not be supporting the bill.

Mr J. BULL (Sunbury) — I am very pleased and very proud to be able to contribute to debate on the Climate Change Bill 2016. It is always very interesting to follow the member for Caulfield. I can understand why the member and those opposite are unhappy with this bill. Those members had for four years the greatest gift the people of Victoria could give them — that is, government — and did absolutely nothing; not a thing. They come into this place week in, week out, thinking they are still in government, and they lecture us on what should and should not be done. They look back on those four years with rose-coloured glasses. They were wasted, long, dark miserable years.

This government has done more in two years than those opposite could do in four. I am very pleased to be able to contribute to the debate this afternoon on the Climate Change Bill. If you look over the past 15 to 20 years, you see there have been considerable amounts of research done in this space. Much of the debate has centred around the science of climate change and the effects of carbon pollution as a direct result of humans burning fossil fuels. It was President Barack Obama who said:

Some may still deny the overwhelming judgement of science, but none can avoid the devastating impact of raging fires, and crippling drought, and more powerful storms.

We know that as time goes on more humans inhabit the earth. In mid-2016 it was estimated that the world population was 7.4 billion. The United Nations estimates that by the year 2100, 11.2 billion people will inhabit the earth. We have seen that the world population continues to grow, certainly since the Great Famine of 1315–17 and the Black Death in 1350, when it was around 370 million. All this increase in global population of course requires more in terms of our energy, and as we go through time we obviously place more and more pressure on the environment.

The global growth we have looked at and considered is certainly something that plays a very big part in relation to today's bill. The Andrews Labor government has from day one been serious about tackling this fundamentally challenging issue, and as always we have done it in a way that is responsible, that is practical and that of course takes advice from the experts. Unlike those opposite, we trust scientists and we listen to the experts. And unlike the Greens political party we actually live in the real world. We understand that many of the jobs associated with these already established industries keep food on people's tables. They pay mortgages. These are very important things, certainly for my community in Sunbury and I know for the member for Macedon's community. It is always such a joy to listen to those in the Greens political party lecturing the government about all of these measures, although they come in here, week in and week out, and do not do a thing for working people or to support these people in jobs. This is incredibly disappointing on their part.

Our policy has been based on three key pillars — renewable energy, energy efficiency and combating the effects of climate change. When in government those opposite, as I said, did absolutely nothing. They took us backwards, and not once did they look forward. Still to this day they cannot arrive at a position on climate change. I heard the member for Mordialloc talk about the events of the last week. It starts at the top; it is always about leadership. If you look at the Prime Minister, he has always talked a big game on climate change and on taking real action, but since becoming the Prime Minister he has walked away from that position. He is hamstrung by the right —

Ms Thomas — The hard right run the Liberal Party these days.

Mr J. BULL — The member for Macedon is correct: it is because the hard right runs the Liberal Party these days. If we look at the *Australian*, just recently it published an article headed 'Cory Bernardi slams Liberal's carbon pricing on power companies idea', which states, and I quote:

A group of 'nervous' coalition MPs could support a type of carbon pricing on power companies if it reduces electricity costs, says Liberal MP Craig Kelly, as his colleague Cory Bernardi slams the idea as 'one of the dumbest things I have ever heard'.

Disunity has broken out within the coalition after the government released its terms of reference for a highly anticipated review of climate change policies, which has left open the possibility of applying an emissions intensity scheme to the electricity sector.

But South Australian cabinet minister Christopher Pyne flatly rejected the concept and Senator Bernardi questioned why the government would 'reopen a cauterised wound that had healed'.

Ms Thomas — Who runs the Liberal Party?

Mr J. BULL — Who does run the Liberal Party?
The article continues to quote Senator Bernardi:

'It will not lower prices and is not in the national interest' ...

Senator Bernardi said any emissions trading scheme or form of carbon pricing was 'economic suicide'.

'It's like ripping a scab off an old wound' ...

This goes to the heart of the issue: that those over on the other side are split on this issue and they have never been able to arrive at a position — not once have they been able to get there.

An honourable member interjected.

Mr J. BULL — I do not doubt that the Prime Minister has very good intentions in this space.

Ms Thomas — Do you?

Mr J. BULL — I think the Prime Minister actually went in — —

Ms Thomas — That is very generous of you.

Mr J. BULL — It is very generous, but I do think he may have gone in thinking — —

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr Crisp) — Order! It is now time to break for lunch. The member for Sunbury will have the call when we resume after lunch.

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

Mr J. BULL — As I was saying before lunch, those opposite do not have a policy position in this place. For four long, dark, wasted, lonely, miserable years, they were a rudderless ship. It was like *National Lampoon's Vacation*, watching them head up the highway with absolutely no idea about where they were going, and it comes from the top — it is leadership from the top. This is the problem the Prime Minister has. This is a problem at a federal level, and it ripples right through at a state level, and these are the issues that they face in this space.

The Andrews Labor government understands that Victoria can act on climate change — and Victoria will act. As I mentioned before lunch, this bill commits to our long-term target to achieve net zero emissions by 2050, consistent with the international commitments of

the Paris agreement. The bill also allows for rolling interim targets.

Honourable members interjecting.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Ms McLeish) — Order! Members should keep the tone down.

Mr J. BULL — These will allow the economy to smoothly transition into a low carbon future. Thanks for the support, as always, from the other side!

These reforms are necessary. They are important reforms and we want to achieve an orderly transition aligned to the global objectives for our economy, our society, and to help us sustain and support those who are already feeling the effects of climate change.

It is fantastic to see members of the government so passionate about this bill and so passionate about my contribution. Can I just say I am incredibly proud — so very proud — of our record in this space, of the renewable energy target of 25 per cent by 2020 and 40 per cent by 2025, with an estimated 4000 jobs at the peak of construction; the kickstart of the growth of sustainable jobs through the \$20 million New Energy Jobs Fund; and of course we have launched our solar for life-saving clubs program. This is fantastic news right across this space.

Also, the Andrews Labor government is very proud that we have given renters the power to access solar energy and have lower power bills, and we have wound back the previous government's onerous wind energy laws, which is certainly something that I have spoken a lot with the member for Macedon about, and it is something that she has been working very hard on. We have also saved and strengthened the energy savings bill and reduced the Victorian energy efficiency target scheme, a scheme that supports at least 2000 jobs.

I am very pleased to be able to contribute to debate on this bill. I understand there are a number of members who also want to make contributions, so I will wind up very shortly. Before I do, can I commend the minister for her tireless efforts in this space, her vision and her determination to see renewable energy evolve and see energy efficiency improve through new technologies and create jobs. Victorians understand one thing — that is, this Andrews Labor government gets on and delivers for each and every Victorian. I commend the bill to the house.

Mr NORTHE (Morwell) — I rise this afternoon to speak on the Climate Change Bill 2016, and what an interesting bill it is. When you have a look at the legislation that we are debating today, it is very hard to

identify decent practical outcomes of the bill. In fact, it is really merely a framework that is set out with regards to the legislation before us today. As members on this side of the house have quite rightly said, there are many concerns about what impacts there may be to Victorian consumers as part of this, because the legislation we have before us simply does not have a regulatory impact statement or any understanding of the impacts upon Victorian consumers, and that has certainly been topical in recent days, to say the least.

In the second-reading speech, the minister talked about climate change being one of the most critical issues. I think we all agree that the climate is changing, and wherever we can it is important that we try to reduce our carbon output. If you have a look at the advancement in technology over a number of years, we have done a good job on that, but the fact remains that population is growing and there are more and more needs within the community, which does put a strain on our environment in many respects.

It is interesting that the member for Gembrook in his contribution spoke to the fact that, from a Victorian government perspective, we have actually seen an increase in carbon emissions, even from the office of Premier and Cabinet. That is a really interesting analysis of where, on the one hand, the government talks about climate change and doing things about it, and on the other hand, even the office of Premier and Cabinet is seeing an increase in carbon emissions.

It is interesting listening to government members speak on this bill. They would have you think that when the coalition was in office there was absolutely nothing done in this space, and that is just far, far from the truth. The former Minister for Environment and Climate Change, who is here blushing at the table, can point to a number of examples where that happened. I know in my short time in government as Minister for Energy and Resources I visited, for example, Beaufort hospital, a bioenergy project run from that particular facility through the support and assistance of the coalition government at the time, which gave them a grant.

I remember visiting many solar-related businesses when we were in government and supporting a number of solar industries and businesses to develop their technologies to the next phase. For those opposite to say that the coalition did not do anything while in office is just completely and utterly false. They should at least get the facts straight when they are talking about this issue.

The member for Gembrook in his contribution talked about state-based climate targets or energy emission

targets. In my view that is really something that we have to do from a federal perspective. It is important that we do that, because the situation where different states and territories have their own targets and climate change initiatives does not serve the purpose of us all trying to work together. To have a national perspective is really important.

The members for Warrandyte and Gembrook spoke in their contributions about the climate change adaptation plan that was put in place. Among other things, I did want to talk about it too. The plan was put in place when we were in government and it had some very good practical outcomes that we delivered within the community.

I also want to talk about other matters, particularly those related to energy. I know when we are talking in this space, other industries such as transport, waste and water get forgotten in the conversation. A lot of the focus seems to be on the energy industry, particularly electricity generation which obviously comes out of the Latrobe Valley in the electorate that I represent. At the moment the policies that have been developed by this government and plans that they have put in place have basically forced the closure of one of the major employers in my electorate. The flow-on effect from that will be absolutely profound. This government had a policy six years ago to close Hazelwood — a gradual closure, by the way. Yes, they have got their wish, but then again they did not quite get their wish. They will not be able to deliver on their policy commitment that it would be a gradual closure; we have not even got that. It is a disgraceful situation that in less than four months time Hazelwood power station will close, leaving thousands of people in the Latrobe Valley without a job.

We have seen a massive rise in electricity prices for consumers, and the whole community is questioning where we are going to be in a few months time. The basis for the rise in electricity prices is not only a policy of this government but also the fact that earlier this year it imposed \$252 million in additional taxes on Latrobe Valley generators. This is a broken promise. We all remember that prior to the 2014 election the then Leader of the Opposition, now Premier, said, 'We will not increase fees, taxes or charges beyond CPI', yet we have seen this massive tax grab by the Victorian government on some of the Latrobe Valley's largest employers, whose community are already doing it tough. In the short space of two years we have seen unemployment rise by nearly 50 per cent in Latrobe City. If anybody thinks imposing another \$252 million tax on large employers in the Latrobe Valley is not

going to have an impact, then they have got rocks in their head.

What we are seeing now is the culmination of Hazelwood closing its doors — a loss of jobs, price increases and energy security potentially under threat — and it is just staggering to see our community at this point in time. I have spoken to I do not know how many workers, contractors, businesses and others, and the feeling of the majority of people is one of absolute uncertainty at the moment. They are not quite sure what they are going to do. Many workers, particularly those who have worked at Hazelwood for a long period of time and those with young families and with significant mortgages, novated car leases and strong financial commitments are potentially faced with being out of work in less than four months time. This is real. This is not made up; this is real.

The response by the government to this situation is simply not good enough. The workers need support, as do contractors, as do the employees of those contractors and our local businesses who are going through an enormously difficult period of time. I have already been contacted by employees with contractors who have been told that they no longer have work. There are people losing employment right here and now, and that is not good enough.

We all agree that wherever we can we should try to improve our environmental performance. That is not in question. But we should not have ideological views that go to the point of costing Victorians thousands and thousands of jobs, which is what has happened in this case, particularly with Hazelwood. At the very least Hazelwood should have a gradual closure similar to what has occurred in the car manufacturing industry.

When you read about what is happening with Alcoa at the moment, it is really concerning and disturbing from so many perspectives. For the people who live in my community and who read in the newspaper that the state and federal governments and others are working together to keep Alcoa, that is good; that is positive, and hopefully that is what will happen. But my community say, 'What about Hazelwood? Why is that just allowed to close?'. I call upon governments at all levels to make sure they do what they can to honour the commitment that was made by the Labor government — that is, to at least have a gradual closure while at the same time considering how we will secure the energy supply in the state of Victoria. We should remember that after Hazelwood closes we will be a net importer of electricity in this state, which is absolutely ridiculous.

Ms WILLIAMS (Dandenong) — It is my pleasure to rise in support of this bill. All of us on this side of the house would agree that there are few more important issues for our environment and our economy than climate change. You would think that such an important issue and one with such profound consequences would garner bipartisan support. But too often we have seen those opposite deny the science and refuse to act, and their position on this bill is true to form.

It is somewhat perplexing and certainly laughable to see the shadow minister for environment continuing his record of opposing every measure that benefits the environment and opposing every measure that supports renewable energy. At best the coalition might pay weak lip-service to the concept of climate change, but never with any real commitment and certainly with no real intention of doing anything about it. I am proud to be part of a government that not only recognises the gravity of the issue and of the challenges it presents but a government that is also committed to taking serious and far-reaching action.

I am disappointed that still we largely have to drag those opposite kicking and screaming to any kind of realisation that this is an important issue. Indeed over the past few days we have seen the federal Liberal Party imploding over climate change, with the dinosaur faction stamping its feet even over the slightest move that might look even vaguely like a climate change policy. They do not want a bar of it, and they have made that absolutely clear. But we are different. Prior to the last election we promised Victorians that we would make this state a leader in climate change action. The bill before us today goes some way in achieving this. As we have heard, this bill is based on the recent independent review of the Climate Change Act 2010, and it repeals and re-enacts that act with amendments. As many in this place will know, Victoria does not currently have a legislated emissions reduction target because the previous government scrapped that in 2012. In June of this year we announced a long-term target for Victoria of net zero emissions by 2050, and this bill delivers on that commitment.

Turning now to the details of the bill, as I said, the bill commits to our targets to achieve net zero emissions by 2050, which is consistent with the international commitments made in the Paris agreement. It allows for rolling interim targets — that is, five-yearly interim targets — to allow the economy to smoothly transition to a low-carbon future. It also embeds climate change in government decision-making and requires adaptation action plans for key systems that are either vulnerable to the impacts of climate change or essential to ensuring

Victoria is prepared. Finally, it establishes a system of periodic reporting to provide transparency and accountability and to ensure the community remains informed. These reforms are incredibly important, and the need for action grows more serious and more urgent each and every day.

The reforms outlined in this bill are about supporting an orderly transition for our economy and for our community. More than that, they are about supporting new economies and providing the policy certainty that business relies upon in order to respond to the challenges, and not just to respond to them but to flourish. There is an enormous opportunity in climate change policy. There is an opportunity to deliver jobs and investment in low-emissions technologies and in goods and services — that is, in the local market and in exports — and there is an enormous opportunity for innovation.

In debate on a bill a couple of sitting weeks ago I referred to an article by Farrah Tomazin in which she rightly claims that the opposition has no environment policy. I outlined then and I will do so again that the opposition has a record of failure on feed-in tariffs, having slashed the feed-in tariff rate time and time again. They have actively discouraged all renewable energy, even supporting energy companies imposing a levy on families with solar panels. They cut \$40 million out of the energy innovation strategy fund, which supports clean energy jobs, and they banned the Victorian renewable energy target scheme, a scheme that produces over 2000 jobs for the Victorian economy and a scheme that this government not only saved but strengthened.

Then there was what they did to the original Climate Change Act 2010, which can only be described as an act of vandalism. They repealed the state-based emissions reduction target in the Environment Protection Act 1970. They repealed the state-based emissions data reports, they repealed the policy objectives of the Climate Change Act and they repealed the climate covenants in the Environment Protection Act. That is without talking about more specific areas, like essentially banning wind farms, for example. This is what happens when you do not believe the science and when you do not believe it is an issue. This is what happens when you pay absolutely no regard to the future of our economy, to the future of our environment and to the future of our community.

Then we have their most recent efforts: peddling blatant mistruths about the closure of Hazelwood, making wildly inaccurate claims about energy price rises and playing petty politics that are designed to do nothing

but pander to their base. In doing so they have sent a clear message to the Victorian — —

Ms Ward — They're not even sure what their base is any more.

Ms WILLIAMS — That is right. They have sent a clear message to the Victorian community that they are unfit to govern. Victorians are more than capable of listening to what those opposite say and then watching what this government actually does, and as the song goes, 'A little less conversation, a little more action, please'. They can beat their chests all they like, but as the sun sets at the end of the day the reality is the same, and it is this: they lack substance, they have no policy and the spectrum of opinion within their ranks is essentially between paying meaningless lip-service to climate change on the one hand and denying it outright on the other. There is really nothing beyond that. They are fighting for relevance in a changing world, and their ranks of middle-aged white men in grey suits are finding it hard to navigate their way through a modern landscape.

On the other side there is a government prepared to stand up and do something — a government that knows that pretending something does not exist does not make it go away, a government prepared to show leadership and tackle the big issues. It is precisely because of the attitudes of those opposite and their overlords in Canberra that we need to get this bill passed now. Between the state opposition and the federal government we have lost about 10 years of action. They can claim they have an issue with the state-based targets, but the reality is that there are no federal targets to harmonise with and no federal leadership on this issue at all.

If Canberra will not lead, we will. It is as simple as that. After 2020 the federal government has no renewable energy targets or national plan to decarbonise our electricity market. Australia's national emissions targets and policy frameworks are not sufficient to meet the objectives of the Paris agreement, and we are not waiting around for the federal government to come to its senses on this.

I understand that the commonwealth have announced a review of their climate change policies in 2017. A review should not take long — a few minutes should do it, because there is not much to review. After the Prime Minister's comments this week I would be prepared to put my money on the fact that after a review and after much squabbling he will cave to the party's dinosaur faction yet again and we will be sliding backwards, just as we have been under their

so-called leadership for the past few years. The community deserves better than that, and quite frankly Victorians cannot afford it. If the federal government decides to come to the party, this bill will work alongside them, but most importantly it will still work without them. I commend the bill to the house.

Ms STALEY (Ripon) — I rise to speak on the Climate Change Bill 2016. I too start with the Paris agreement, which I note covers 94 per cent of global emissions and 97 per cent of the global population. It of course was signed up to by the Australian federal coalition government, and they agreed to limit global warming to 2 degrees Celsius and to back a goal of limiting warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius. Australia recognises our obligation to the global effort to reduce emissions and as such has signed up to a reduction of 26–28 per cent of 2005 emissions by 2050. Australia is on target to meet that. This is a global problem requiring global solutions.

It is the height of hubris for speaker after speaker on the government side to get up with their talking points and claim this aspirational bill is anything other than grandstanding. The government has not bothered to consult with the federal government. No attempt has been made to find out if this go-it-alone approach is consistent with the overriding federal legislation, but then there is no actual action required under this bill until October 2018 and no initial target until 2020. It is yet another bill from the government to say, ‘Look at me, look at me, I am the most progressive in the room’.

Honourable members interjecting.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Ms McLeish) — Order! Can members keep the volume down?

Ms STALEY — The lengths this government is going to to protect the jobs of the members for Richmond and Northcote from marauding Greens are astonishing. This bill is an empty shell of aspiration, framework and targets but no actual measures. In fact a crucial part of what is wrong with this bill is something that is not in it, and that is the regulatory impact statement — there is not one. Taking action on climate change is fundamentally an economic activity, and that is why it is contested: there are winners and losers. Where is the modelling to show how this bill will affect businesses?

Action on climate change at its basest level requires a switch from a cheap source of power to more expensive ones. That is why the closure of Hazelwood and the move to more wind energy has already driven up household power bills by 10 per cent and small

business bills by over 13 per cent. Yet there is no attempt by the government to address this fundamental omission in the bill. To reduce greenhouse emissions means less energy from coal, less livestock and more trees. All of these changes have costs, but the government does not even pretend to face this. There is simply no regulatory impact statement.

I turn now to clause 44 of the bill, which is about sector pledge requirements. It goes through a number of things that ministers must do and how they must go about that. I want to draw particular attention to the CO₂ emissions of the Department of Health and Human Services. They make up 86 per cent of the public sector emissions. There is an obvious reason for that: our hospitals need a lot of power to keep operating. Hospitals use power to keep their lights on and their machinery going, but they also have very large laundry bills that use a lot of power.

There is nothing in this government’s plan and nothing in their thinking to help the health sector, which is overwhelmingly a public sector organisation, not only to comply with this bill but also to deal with the very real changes that come from higher energy prices. Health is the largest public sector emitter of emissions, and yet the government does not seem to think that that is a problem. The government can come up with these pledges and say that they need to make these sector pledges, but there is no way that the health department can then go to the Treasurer and say, ‘Sorry, Treasurer. This Climate Change Bill 2016 makes us come up with all these sector pledges, but we have got no money to fund them’.

When it comes to the fundamental problem of how you tackle climate change, there are winners and there are losers, and it seems that this government only wants to think about the winners — the renewable energy companies. There are many, many losers when you consider higher energy prices, and this government does not want to face them.

I now turn to clause 45. This is an interesting clause. It sets out a process for the minister, in consultation with the Premier, to nominate ministers to prepare sector pledges. It is to enable flexibility, it says. I have got to say that on today’s question time form, the environment minister will clearly have to invoke this clause to nominate her own choice for the health sector pledges, because the current health minister has demonstrated she believes she has no responsibility for it under her watch. Perhaps she can nominate the member for Footscray, as the Premier seems to believe she is some sort of secret minister with a special ministerial office and with access to ministerial travel. All the member

for Footscray needs now is a ministerial portfolio. This bill is too flawed to support. It is yet another desperate attempt by the government to demonstrate green credentials while not doing a single practical thing to reduce emissions.

Mr PEARSON (Essendon) — I am delighted to join the debate on the Climate Change Bill 2016. I do so in the knowledge and understanding that I am the last speaker on this piece of legislation in this house. Acting Speaker, you might ask yourself what is the relevance of this observation. Why I raise this is that there are two members of this chamber who purport to represent the Greens political party — the member for Melbourne and the member for Prahran. I do not believe the member for Melbourne managed to talk on this bill for 20 minutes, which is her allotted time. I do not think she did that, and the member for Prahran has not spoken on this bill. He is a member of the Greens political party, and he has not bothered to come in here and make a contribution.

Now, I hold the National Party in very low esteem indeed, but I would say to you that there are eight members of the National Party who are members of this place, and it would be the equivalent of four members of the National Party not speaking on a bill in relation to agriculture, or the forestry industry or the food and fibre sector. I have not been here long, but one thing I have learned to loathe with a deep, deep hatred is laziness — laziness from members — and the member for Prahran would have to be the laziest member of this place in a very long time.

To think he says that he is a member of the Greens political party! He went on the campaign trail in 2014 and said, ‘Vote for me, because I believe in climate change. Vote for me, because I believe in the environment. Vote for me, because I believe in a cleaner, greener future’, but he is conspicuously absent from any form of debate on environment policy in this place. It is an absolute joke, and the people of Prahran should know that they have sent a dilettante — a lazy dilettante. He is the polyester member for Prahran; that is what he is. He is not the real deal. He is just a fraud. He is a con, and he does not deserve to be here, because he does not believe in what he purports to believe.

As I said, I do not hold the National Party in high esteem, but at least its members will come in here and will argue the case for the things that they purport to represent. At least they will do that. But I cannot say that for the member for Prahran.

This is an important piece of legislation. It will ensure that we set our economy on a smooth transition to a

cleaner future. You could basically bury your head in the sand and say that climate change is not real and is not going to happen, but if you did that it would be like driving along the Eastern Freeway at 100 kilometres an hour without a seatbelt on — if you have an accident, you are gone. This bill is about a smooth transition to a cleaner future, and it is about making sure that we are in a position where we can set the right framework and policies in place to effect that.

I note that I follow the member for Ripon, who said that this is a global problem requiring a global solution. That may indeed be the case, but what I would say, though, is if we sit here and wait for the United Nations to come up with a binding accord, I reckon there will be sand beaches at Mount Buller. If we wait for the UN to get off its backside and deliver an outcome, it will be far too late. We have got an obligation and a responsibility to do our bit of heavy lifting and to get on with it, and we are not going to abdicate our responsibilities to do things. We will get on and do the things that are the right things to do.

Member after member of the Andrews Labor government rose to their feet today to support this bill, yet the member for Melbourne could not speak for her allotted time and the member for Prahran was absent. What a joke! What an absolute joke! We are the ones that are getting on with it. We are the ones that are transitioning the economy to a cleaner, greener future. We are making the changes now, we are doing the hard yards and we are doing the work, and we are not being assisted by these lazy dilettantes from Melbourne and Prahran who have got no interest in doing the hard work, no interest in channelling the economy to a smoother future. It is just hopeless. On that note, I commend the bill to the house.

Debate adjourned on motion of Mr CRISP (Mildura).

Debate adjourned until later this day.

BUDGET PAPERS 2016–17

Debate resumed from 6 December; motion of Mr FOLEY (Minister for Housing, Disability and Ageing):

That the house takes note of the budget papers 2016–17.

Mr DIMOPOULOS (Oakleigh) — When this motion was last before the house I was referring to the actions that the government has taken in my community to keep faith with those people who elected us. I was about to talk about the fact that we have removed the level crossing at Centre Road in Bentleigh.

While that crossing is in the wonderful electorate of Bentleigh with the even more wonderful member for Bentleigh, it certainly affects my community also because we are neighbouring electorates.

We also built the brand-new train station at Bentleigh. We have provided \$7.6 million to create a brand-new bus interchange at Huntingdale train station, including fixing the notoriously bad car park there which has been on the front page of the local paper for the last few years. We rolled out protective services officers at Murrumbeena train station. We rolled out protective services officers at Hughesdale train station. Through the Minister for Public Transport and her department, we provided an app for real-time tracking of the route 822 bus.

Mr J. Bull — Busy government.

Mr DIMOPOULOS — We are absolutely a busy government, as the member for Sunbury reminds me. We established a world-leading public transport research centre at Monash University in partnership with that great institution in my electorate.

We are building Australia's first ever heart hospital right here at Monash University in Clayton with a government commitment of \$150 million. We are completing the Monash Children's Hospital in Clayton, as the Minister for Health again said today in question time. We are putting back the much-needed helipad at Monash Children's Hospital. We are putting in \$14 million for the early life mental health service at the Monash Children's Hospital, which I was fortunate to attend with the Minister for Mental Health the other month. We are building a brand-new school at Monash Children's Hospital so sick kids do not miss out on an education, again as the Minister for Health reminded us today.

We are spending \$16.5 million for a new specialist suite at the Monash hospital in Moorabbin, and the member for Bentleigh and I had a tour of that facility recently. We are spending \$7.1 million to improve important water and drainage issues at Monash hospital in Clayton. We are spending \$1.2 million for a major refurbishment of the Waverley ambulance station on Waverley Road, which I also had the pleasure of visiting recently. We are spending, again as the minister said today in question time, \$330 million to boost elective surgery, which includes major funding for beds and equipment increases for Monash Health in my community.

We are spending \$65 000 for the Monash Health's hospital in Moorabbin to improve fetal surveillance to

better monitor women and their unborn babies, \$210 000 at Monash Medical Centre in Clayton for a specialist allergy centre for jumping jack ant allergies. Any kid who had a jumping jack ant allergy would have had to go to Tasmania, and that is outrageous. I had the pleasure of attending that launch with the Minister for Health a few months ago. We are providing a pilot program at the Monash hospital in Clayton so private midwives can provide birthing services in public hospitals — another election commitment that we made — and there are a couple of trial sites. We oversaw and opened the new premises of Link Health and Community in Oakleigh, and I was proud to attend that with the Premier of Victoria.

We started fixing the notorious black spot at the intersection of Grange Road and Oakleigh Road in Carnegie with the installation of traffic lights — a campaign commenced by my predecessor some years ago. We are fixing the intersection at Gardiner Road and Ferntree Gully Road in Notting Hill. We are fixing the intersection at Forster Road and Ferntree Gully Road in Mount Waverley. We are providing safety improvements at Batesford Road and Warrigal Road, Chadstone, and safety improvements at Rugby Road and Warrigal Road, Hughesdale. I was very fortunate to be allowed to make that announcement for the Minister for Public Transport on site. There was about \$1 million worth of announcements in those four traffic improvements. We are increasing capacity on the Monash Freeway with more lanes and new technology for better traffic flow. Again I was at that announcement with the Minister for Roads and Road Safety and the Premier.

We are providing \$5.68 million extra in student resource package funding for the 2017 school year for 11 government schools in and surrounding the electorate of Oakleigh. In the 2017 school year these 11 schools in our community will receive \$50 million in funding under the student resource package collectively. We are providing \$5.7 million for an upgrade at Amsleigh Park Primary School in Oakleigh, something we committed to in the 2010 election and recommitted to in 2014, and now it is underway. We are providing \$10.1 million for an upgrade of Glen Eira College, and that is in full swing with hoardings up.

We are providing \$4 million for a major upgrade at Carnegie Primary School, \$13.4 million for the major upgrade at Bentleigh Secondary College, \$2 million for Glenallen School in Glen Waverley, \$290 000 to Glen Huntly Primary School to complete needed works to add to the \$390 000 previously provided, \$290 000 to Murrumbeena Primary School for urgent works and \$160 000 to Clayton North Primary School for urgent

works. We have provided funding to assist the rebranding and promotion of Mount Waverley Heights Primary School. We have provided major funding for Hughesdale Primary School to plan for future upgrades, and we have done the same for Oakleigh Primary School to plan for future upgrades. We have provided funding to ensure Oakleigh Primary School can install a new security fence and fix drainage problems which were very desperate.

We are bringing back tech schools, and I am proud to have 1 of the 10 in my community in Monash. Planning is significantly advanced in relation to that. We are providing \$10 million for a rebuild of the Alexander Theatre at Monash University, an excellent resource both for the university and local schools that use the Alexander Theatre very often.

We are providing funding to Glen Huntly Primary School as part of the statewide Bully Stoppers program to develop a new curriculum and material for that very important program. We have provided funding for Sacred Heart Girls College in Oakleigh as part of that same statewide Bully Stoppers program. We are providing a breakfast club program at the Clayton North Primary School in my community in conjunction with Foodbank Victoria to make sure kids can get a healthy breakfast every morning at school.

There is over \$190 000 in extra funding to 600 students under the Camps, Sports and Excursion Fund in my community; \$3.5 million for Holmesglen TAFE to boost support for vulnerable students; \$4.17 million to Holmesglen TAFE to get almost 1400 people skilled up for jobs in growing industries; \$8 million for a new student hub at Holmesglen TAFE; \$1.3 million to Holmesglen TAFE to boost important relevant training and to drive growth in apprenticeships and traineeships; \$25 000 for the Brine Street, Hughesdale, kindergarten to increase its capacity, and I have had the real pleasure of visiting that fantastic kinder a few times in the last couple of years; \$9000 for the Monash Children's Centre in Clayton to refurbish the children's bathroom; \$9900 to the Monash Children's Centre in Beddoe Avenue, another facility, for the new doors; and \$500 000 for the much-needed upgrade and rebuild of the Scrammell Reserve pavilion in Oakleigh South, home to the Crushers, where I am the no. 1 ticketholder and very proud to be.

We opened the Duncan Mackinnon Pavilion upgrade in Murrumbeena with half a million dollars provided under the previous Labor government. We opened up Caulfield Racecourse for greater public use, and I was proud to be on the committee with Ken Ryan and the member for Caulfield. We provided defibrillators for

Glen Eira soccer club, as part of the government's rollout of the 1000 defibrillator program, and also defibrillators for Ormond Tennis Club and Oakleigh Bowling Club, and we have provided a community safety grant to Murrumbeena Bowls Club for new security shutters, and I went and inspected the locations for the installation of those recently.

We provided active club grants to Murrumbeena Netball Club, East Oakleigh Sports Club, Murrumbeena Bowls Club, Monash University rugby football club and Caulfield Football Club. We have provided sporting club grants to Chadstone Lacrosse Club, Emmanuel Calisthenics, Monash City junior soccer club, Murrumbeena Bowls Club and Murrumbeena Netball Club. We have provided sporting club grants to Murrumbeena Netball Club for skill development under the volunteer coaching training. We have provided sporting club grants to the Glen Eira Football Club for uniforms, Oakleigh District senior football club for uniforms and Oakleigh youth football club for uniforms.

We have boosted police numbers locally, with many more to come. The police academy in Glen Waverley, which I had the fortunate pleasure of visiting with the minister, is running at capacity, training more than 1000 new police officers. We have provided \$10 000 to Notting Hill Neighbourhood House under the Living Victoria grants. We have provided funding for local festivals like Glendi and Pan Macedonian in my community. We have reviewed the Glen Eira planning scheme and the entirety of the former government's botched installation and implementation of the residential zones, and I understand there will be more to say on that in the next few months.

We have provided \$100 000 to the Monash State Emergency Service unit for the purchase of a medium rescue truck, and funding support for the Polish Community Council of Victoria's ethnic schools. The Polish community council and I have offices in the same building. We are providing funding support to Sylogos Halkidikeon and Halkidiki for a senior support program; a \$10 000 grant to the Southern Cross Recycling Group in partnership with the Monash council to prevent illegal dumping; \$30 000 to the Monash Men's Shed; \$160 000 to GriefLine in Moorabbin; and an extra 40 total educators in Glen Eira and Monash, after we increased the educators-to-children ratios in kindergartens.

Acting Speaker, thank you for your indulgence. I have just read out, in this contribution and in my contribution two days ago on the budget papers, 101 actions, funding and achievements already in my community

over two years — 101. It is officially on the record. I am enormously proud, not because of a sense of pride in myself but of a sense of commitment, that we promised and we are delivering to the people who elected us, and even to those who did not and will hopefully give us a go next time. With these kinds of actions in my community at the two-year mark, I look forward to making a similar contribution in another two years, or in a year's time, to extend that 101 to a number of other needs — —

Mr J. Bull — Two hundred and two!

Mr DIMOPOULOS — Two hundred and two, the member for Sunbury says.

An honourable member interjected.

Mr DIMOPOULOS — It could be 1001, but fundamentally it is keeping faith with the community that has trusted us with the great privilege of office.

Mr RIORDAN (Polwarth) — I rise today to make my first comments on a budget since being elected to this place. It is interesting to have just heard the member for Oakleigh in his two-part miniseries there talk about the efforts of the current government. I sat here and thought about the poor people of Polwarth. While *101 Dalmatians* have been running rampant in Oakleigh, with the 101 promises and the 10 or 15 minutes of prattling of the achievements of the government in his electorate, it is a shame that there is nowhere near 101 achievements that I can come up with for the good, hardworking people of Polwarth.

Honourable members interjecting.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Ms McLeish) — Order! The member for Sunbury is out of place and out of order.

Mr RIORDAN — This government, with its very city-centric focus, has been spending money on roads that it does not build and on overpasses and sky rails and other fanciful commitments that it comes up with midstream. Of course we do not have that luxury in Polwarth. So it is a privilege to be making comments on this budget some six months after the budget was handed down to the state, because so much has happened in this state since that budget. That really makes me wonder how relevant the budget is going forward.

Only in recent weeks have we seen the closing of Hazelwood power station and the enormous changes in our rural and regional economies because of that. I will just cite one example, being the near disaster at Alcoa

in recent days, where manufacturing, jobs and a whole community have been put at risk because of the uncertainty, and the growing uncertainty, relating to Victoria's energy supply. We have seen just in the last week a huge amount of extra money being thrown at the police. Now, that was not talked about in the budget; it has come from nowhere.

Mr Nardella — So you oppose it, do you?

Mr RIORDAN — No, what we oppose is the fact that we do not know where it is going. We know in our country communities that we have had an endless succession of closed police stations and reduced hours. We had a situation at Easter, for example, where tens of thousands of people travelled to enjoy the best parts of the Polwarth electorate along the Great Ocean Road, but there were no police rostered on at all, to keep both locals safe but also of course the many, many visitors to the area. The government finds money for last minute, drop-of-the-hat political reasons to try and grab the news the in the last week of the Parliament, but we have no assurance at all that the real needs — the ongoing needs right across the state of Victoria — are being seen to.

The concern that I will talk about is that this budget makes no reference to the immediate closure of Hazelwood and what that means to energy reliability and supply. Of course the government's continued keenness to stall any gas exploration or encouragement of diversity in energy affects industries. The ABC, for example, this week had a news item that one of the major buyers and value-adders to the wool industry in Victoria are looking to move out of Victoria because they just cannot get gas contracts to continue to process wool. Wool of course is a major commodity that comes out of my electorate. We have got major meat and dairy producers all needing to sign long-term contracts for their energy, and this government is providing no direction or vision in that at all, unless they are wanting to buy a pig in a poke as to what is going to be available in Victoria over coming years.

Business wants to know that they can be guaranteed reliability and affordability going forward in Victoria. If we are going to keep jobs in rural and regional areas, where there is the tyranny of distance, if we do not have cheap, readily available, affordable energy in those towns and communities, then sadly we will see what has happened so often — that is, industries packing up and moving to central areas where the choice and diversity in energy is available.

The budget that we are talking about today did not deal with any of those issues because these major, quite

strategic and big changes to the Victorian economy have happened since the budget. But we saw in the budget that there was no talk about the growing crime issues along the Surf Coast, in growing communities like Bannockburn, and where they were going to be seen to be fitting in with police numbers and police resources. We had the announcement in the budget, which was good, for a new police station in Colac, and that has certainly been welcome. But it is only half the job that has to be done; the original plans were for the redevelopment of the courthouse and the police service. This government has made much of its focus on domestic violence and the need to have better and more appropriate court services, and yet at the courthouse in Colac, the major facility that is sadly overworked on Mondays and Tuesdays every week, there are no modern facilities. Both sides of the argument are corralled in a single foyer, if they are not standing out the front or at the front door. In the past 12 months — —

Mr Nardella interjected.

Mr RIORDAN — Well, they had it sorted, and this government of course has recommitted funds elsewhere, probably to sky rails or roads that they are not building, member for Melton. But the reality is that is not being done. So we are going to have a new facility for the police, but unfortunately the most vulnerable and at-risk people in our community will continue to have to make do with very, very substandard legal services. That is a great disappointment.

Probably the biggest disappointment — and one from a government that prides itself on looking after all communities and saying that it governs for all — was the very callous announcement buried deep in the budget papers that Victoria's last supported housing service in Colac, the Colanda Centre was to close. The unions were not told, the residents were not told, the 80-odd employees were not told — no-one was communicated with. It was only from ploughing through these documents that I discovered the truth about the future of this centre. Colanda has not only employed many, many local people but also it has been home for hundreds of Victorians for a long, long time. There are still 80-odd residents for whom, because of government admission policies for many, many years, it is their home. Many of them have very few other places to live in life. The government has just said, 'Oh, we're closing you. We're going to build 10 new houses'. Therein lies one of the great problems with this budget. Announcing the building of 10 houses is easy, but they have not announced where they are going to be, what communities they are going to be in, what jobs

will be available for the many trained and skilled people that work there. So for a government that makes much of it governing for all and caring for people and supporting diversity and the needs of others, they have left a very large community of people high and dry as to what their future is. That is something that we would certainly hope can be addressed sooner rather than later.

It also raises another very important issue. The site that the Colanda Centre is on now is a very significant parcel of land owned by the state. It is strategically located in the growing rural community of Colac. Government often has a tendency not to forward plan and keep people abreast of what they plan to do with land when they are finished with it. There is a prime opportunity here for the community to be engaged and worked with to get the best benefit for both the state and the Colac regional community from the infrastructure and resources that will be left abandoned once the Colanda Centre is closed.

Moving on to other health issues that have been totally ignored in this document, South West Healthcare has been pushing and lobbying hard for quite some time for a major upgrade of the Camperdown hospital. The Camperdown campus of South West Healthcare services a large area — north to Lismore and south down to Cobden and Timboon. It is an important service. It provides maternity and GP services that are not easily accessible in other places. It needs funding to do the master planning and of course it needs funding to upgrade a facility that is now quite dated. There is no mention of that in this document.

There is no mention of improvements to drug and alcohol services right across that area. There has been a move by the Department of Health and Human Services in recent years to consolidate funding in larger centres like Geelong and Warrnambool, with those who require those services in-between not having ready access to them. This is a great disappointment, because the scourge of ice and the perils that families and communities face when there are addictions, whether it is to alcohol or drugs or other problems like gambling, are not easily dealt with when those suffering these problems are expected to get in the car or have family members drive them on 1 or 2-hour-plus return trips to see counsellors for a short time. That is an inadequate service. Right throughout my electorate we are very fortunate that we have a lot of good community health services, but none of these community health services is being properly supported or funded for the addiction services we need. We have outreach from Warrnambool and Geelong, but it is just proving to be inadequate. There is a cost being borne by country people in this area.

The final part on health, I guess, is in Cobden where we have the bush nursing service, which this government continues to treat as a very poor second cousin when it comes to providing good mainstream, world-class health services. It is disappointing that in this day and age communities still have to fundraise very, very heavily, significantly, in order just to keep a very basic health service open in their community.

In country communities a big area that dominates public debate regularly is of course roads. This budget brought very little joy to south-west Victoria and to the Polwarth electorate in particular on road funding. We saw that highlighted enormously over September this year when the ongoing lack of funding for roads in this area and for the maintenance of major infrastructure, such as the Great Ocean Road, was brought to bear.

A huge economic toll continues with this government providing no clear alternatives or options. They have managed to bail out their law and order issue by finding a magic \$2 billion to put extra police out, they have managed to find \$1.2 billion to keep the Greens happy and not build a road in Melbourne, but when it comes to maintaining an iconic, classic piece of infrastructure — a piece of infrastructure that brings \$780 million worth of revenue and income to the state over the course of the year and is the second most visited area in the whole country — the government cannot find anything. They have been dragged kicking and screaming to put up a bit of a concrete wall in one spot just to patch it up for the next little while, but there is no vision, there is no strategic plan, there is no commitment to funding and there are no alternatives being put out there as to how a road as iconic as the Great Ocean Road will be kept functional, kept contemporary and most importantly kept safe and functional all year round. That is a great disappointment.

For the locals of Polwarth, major connecting routes such as Ayrford Road, Fox Road and the Princes Highway west of Colac are all sitting in worsening condition. We have had a very wet year this year and with what was already an infrastructure backlog, particularly after this government last year cut the country roads and bridges program, we have now seen these roads go back even further with no clear direction on how to fix them. The federal government threw the state government a bit of a lifeline — \$380 million for rural roads to be matched dollar for dollar — and yet even with that bone thrown out to this government it was unable to show any commitment to making some real improvement to our country roads.

On the Warrnambool rail line, the communities are growing. The communities are expecting more contemporary public transport services and yet there is still not the funding being put there to continue to upgrade the train crossings. One of the main barriers to getting more train services on the Warrnambool line is the amount of crossings that still do not have modern safety lights or boom barriers. Once again we have seen the government can find money not to build a road and the government can find money to bail out law and order issues. but it cannot find the money just to keep some roads and basic transport infrastructure to a contemporary standard.

The other opportunity I will talk about in my last minute that was missed throughout Polwarth and south-west Victoria was the great state asset of Glenormiston Agricultural College, which is sitting there idling along. There have been some opportunities and some investors have been looking at it, but there has been no real clear vision or thought coming from this government on how that might better grow rural industries throughout Victoria, importantly in our area, but also what opportunities the state can take forward there.

We have got two special education schools in my electorate, and it is quite a worry to think that in this day and age we find it okay for some of our most vulnerable young people to be educated in portable classrooms on makeshift sites. They just do not get a priority on that. They are sitting on the waiting list waiting to have a modern, real building to work from and they have not got it. This budget, while it was great for those sitting in Oakleigh, was not so good for those in Polwarth.

Mr PERERA (Cranbourne) — It is with great pleasure that I speak in support of the motion to take note of the 2016–17 budget papers. Unlike the member for Polwarth, I will confine my comments to the budget, because there is so much ground to be covered. The budget delivers a strong and sustained surplus of \$2.9 billion in 2016–17 and an average surplus of \$2.1 billion each year in the forward estimates. I am absolutely positive that Victorians would be pleased to see a government which does not hide behind the debt-and-deficit mantra or use it to cut back on essential services such as public education and health.

Today we have a government in Victoria which believes that investment in health, education and infrastructure is paramount to our prosperity. Despite all the investment, the net debt remains low and manageable, at 6 per cent of gross state product. Our economy is forecast to grow by 3 per cent in 2016–17.

The unemployment rate has fallen to 5.7 per cent, with further falls projected. This is in stark contrast to when the coalition was in government and our unemployment rate rose to 6.9 per cent in 2014. This wonderful state of ours remains in a very strong economic position, with strong surpluses, job growth and a secure AAA credit rating.

We will see infrastructure investment rise to an average \$7.4 billion per year. The Andrews Labor government's centrepiece of investment is of course the Melbourne Metro tunnel, and we are funding this in full. What does the metro tunnel mean for my electorate? The project will give the Cranbourne line its own tunnel through the CBD. The Andrews Labor government's investment will also see 65 brand-new, high-capacity trains running on the lines, including the Cranbourne line. This will mean more trains and more services on the Cranbourne line. This is in stark contrast to when the coalition was in government; they simply ran the Cranbourne line into the ground and turned their back on the commuters of Cranbourne.

However, a more efficient train service to Cranbourne can be delivered by duplicating the single track from Dandenong to Cranbourne. In Australia one of the highest growth suburbs at the moment is Cranbourne East. At the 2011 census Cranbourne East had a population of 8211. In 2016 the population forecast is 22 255, and it is forecast to grow to 42 067 by 2041. It does justify the long-awaited Cranbourne East — or Clyde — railway station, starting with the duplication of single-rail track from Dandenong to Cranbourne. There is always the next budget, and we live in hope.

Investment in roads is also strongly represented in this Andrews Labor government budget. This government is delivering when it comes to fixing one of the most notorious and congested roads in Melbourne's south-east. The budget commits \$79.4 million for the duplication of Thompsons Road between the South Gippsland Highway and Marriott Boulevard, including the removal of the level crossing in Thompsons Road at Merinda Park. This budget has also committed to a further \$154.5 million to upgrade Thompsons Road. Thompsons Road will see two lanes in each direction between Frankston-Dandenong Road and Evans Road, and between Narre Warren-Cranbourne Road and Berwick-Cranbourne Road.

The project will also include replacing the existing roundabout at the Thompsons Road and Western Port Highway intersection with traffic lights to reduce travel delays by 10 minutes while a full business case is prepared for a much-needed flyover. The travel delays can only be substantially reduced by a flyover. I hope

the funding will be allocated in the near future. Pedestrians will benefit too, with 10 kilometres of path to be constructed along Thompsons Road, with connections to public transport and local shops.

Construction will begin on the first stage of the Thompsons Road upgrade, including the level crossing removal at Merinda Park, before the end of the year, with works on the remaining sections to be underway in 2017. The sod turning will take place next Monday. This \$233.9 million Thompsons Road upgrade is on top of the previous Labor government investment in the partial duplication of Thompsons Road. This road was widened between the South Gippsland Highway and Narre Warren-Cranbourne Road with an investment of \$22 million. Thompsons Road was widened between the Mornington Peninsula Freeway and Frankston-Dandenong Road with an investment of \$30.5 million.

Let us do the maths. The previous Labor government invested \$52 million prior to 2010 to start the much-needed duplication works along one of the most notorious and congested roads in Melbourne's south-east, Thompsons Road. During 2010 to 2014, when the coalition were in government, nothing happened. There was no investment at all; however, more than 5000 families moved into the electorate during that time. It has taken another Labor government to invest \$234 million to finish the job. All the Liberals could do from 2010 to 2014 was come up with a funding commitment on the run, two weeks out from an election, that the voters saw as desperate, to say the least. Thompsons Road is one of the most notorious and congested roads in Melbourne's south-east, and the Liberals turned their back on the community who use it day in, day out.

The Liberals also turned their back on residents of Lynbrook, Lyndhurst, Hallam and Hampton Park. The Andrews Labor government is investing \$40 million in this year's budget to duplicate 1.2 kilometres of Hallam Road between Ormond Road and the South Gippsland Highway. Also, the intersection of the South Gippsland Highway, Hallam Road and Evans Road will receive a major upgrade, allowing Evans Road to be opened in its entirety, reconnecting Lyndhurst and Lynbrook. Again, we had seen no action by the Liberals between 2010 and 2014 on this notorious intersection. It has taken a Labor government to deliver again.

Labor is also widening the Monash Freeway, slashing travel times for drivers in my local area. The electorate of Cranbourne just completed a community bus network consultation that will see at least 17 new or enhanced services in our local area. This is part of

the \$100 million allocated for bus networks in Victoria in this budget. This is a very generous public transport initiative by the Andrews Labor government for Cranbourne and surroundings. This is in stark contrast to the previous Liberal government, which delivered one extension of an existing bus route in four years. In this period our local area grew — with approximately 5000 new families — and all the coalition government could do between 2010 and 2014 was extend an existing bus service a few hundred metres. What a shame.

The Andrews Labor government is also delivering when it comes to supporting our paramedics, doctors and nurses, and as a result treats more patients faster. This budget delivers in getting our patients off hospital waiting lists through a massive \$335 million elective surgery boost. A world-class heart hospital is closer, with a further \$135 million to be invested. This budget will also see investments in real-time prescription monitoring and funding for tackling ice.

Locally, the Casey Hospital expansion, part of a public-private partnership with \$106.3 million allocated in the budget, will increase the floor area of the existing facility by about 35 per cent and add 96 beds, four new operating theatres and a new sterile services department. Casey Hospital was built by Labor, and it is a Labor government that is investing heavily in Casey Hospital.

Labor is increasing support for our residents with a mental illness with a 10-year mental health plan to achieve better outcomes and to save lives. Labor is also ready for the national disability insurance scheme, which includes an investment of \$132 million in disability-related initiatives. Vulnerable residents will also receive more support in this Andrews Labor government budget, with a strong investment in social housing, aged care and services for people with a disability.

Casey is getting a tech school, giving local students the opportunity to attend school at the same time as they develop their hands-on skills. This Andrews Labor government is making Victoria the education state. Cranbourne Secondary College will see a strong \$9 million modernisation project funded. This will deliver stage 3 of the modernisation work that was started by the previous Labor government. Cranbourne Secondary College received \$1.6 million for stage 1 of the modernisation work under the previous Labor government, and they have also received a further \$7.2 million for the stage 2 modernisation, also under the previous Labor government.

Let us do the maths. Labor invested \$17.8 million to modernise Cranbourne Secondary College to accommodate over 1300 students and the fine teaching staff, compared to a zero investment towards the modernisation by the Liberal government between 2010 and 2014. Labor started the modernisation of Cranbourne Secondary College, and Labor is finishing the job. On top of the \$9 million modernisation of Cranbourne Secondary College and the construction of a technical school in Casey, the Andrews government has committed to purchasing land in the Casey Fields area for the construction of a new primary school.

The budget will see Labor invest funds to deliver purpose-built consultation rooms for general practitioner doctor services in growth area secondary schools, including in my local area.

The Andrews Labor government wants to fix our broken family violence system, protect vulnerable women and children and bring the perpetrators to justice. The Andrews government is taking urgent action on family violence. A record \$572 million investment is the first step towards a long-term solution, and it will cater for more housing, refuges, programs, counsellors and support for women and children, as recommended by the Royal Commission into Family Violence. The Andrews government is also working on a 10-year Victorian family violence plan, which will also include changing negative attitudes towards women.

Law and order is a strong part of the Andrews government plan. Unlike those opposite, who meddled in the affairs of police command, this government will work with Victoria Police to give them the resources they need. The Andrews government's announcement of our \$596 million public safety package gives police the necessary resources and capability to respond to gang-related crime, gun crime, terrorist threats and family violence. This reflects what a modern, smart police force should look like. Funding will be provided for an extra 406 sworn police and 52 support personnel. Three hundred extra frontline police are to be deployed across Victoria. The Chief Commissioner of Police has indicated that that deployment will focus on responding to local crime issues in growth corridors like Casey, to be determined in consultation with Police Association Victoria.

There will be 106 specialist police officers and 52 support personnel. They will include a special operations group, a public order response team, fingerprint analysts and an expansion of the anti-gang task force. The budget will also fund a major investment in police equipment and technology, such as

a heavy armoured vehicle and three new bulletproof vehicles. Victoria Police will also receive new bomb robots, night-vision and camera equipment for specialist units, and will begin developing a new special operations training facility. They will get new information systems, mobile technology and body-worn cameras, getting rid of the fax machines. There will be anti-ballistic vests for frontline police.

The chief commissioner said Victoria Police have been waiting for this investment in their technology for many, many years. The Andrews government has delivered. Police have told us they have often learned of incidents occurring through social media. We have listened. We have provided funding to ensure their incident control centre can operate 24 hours a day, 7 days a week to improve response times and information sharing.

The full deployment of 400 police custody officers funded in last year's budget will also be fast-tracked by six months to the end of 2017. This is in addition to almost 700 extra police personnel in our first year of government, bringing the total number of new police personnel funded by the government to over 1150. This announcement is the biggest single investment in Victoria Police in many years. I commend this bill to the house.

Ms BRITNELL (South-West Coast) — It has been a long time coming, but finally I rise to take note of the 2016–17 budget papers, and what a missed opportunity this budget was. It simply shows that this current Andrews Labor government is focused on Melbourne while regional areas are left to languish. This government's budget completely misses the mark and disregards the opportunities available in rural and regional areas. It lacks vision and does nothing to facilitate business growth outside the city. This is just another example of the Premier we have being the Premier of Melbourne and not the Premier of the state of Victoria. It provides absolutely no incentive to grow population in regional areas. New figures derived from the national accounts this week showed just how city centric this government is. While Melbourne's economy rockets ahead, the regions are left to languish.

You can see that every single day around my electorate, as infrastructure crumbles away, with no sign of it being fixed by Labor. There was not one line in the budget for specific road projects in my electorate of South-West Coast to repair a road network decaying under ever-increasing, economy-boosting freight volumes. According to VicRoads's own data, now backed up by the RACV, we have the worst roads in the state, yet once again they have been completely

ignored. The roads are appalling. We need a summer blitz of works to get them fixed, and we need it now.

The port of Portland, which is setting records in tonnage of products exported, is being stifled in expansion plans because of the poor state of the roads into the port. It is the largest blue gum woodchip port in the world, with an annual throughput of about 6 million tonnes, delivering about \$2.5 billion into the region and nation annually. A 700 per cent increase in timber harvest volumes is expected in the next five to seven years, equating to around \$15 billion in exports through the port. The Great South Coast Group calculates that about 200 kilometres of road leading to the port has been impacted by the booming freight volumes, particularly timber. Those opposite would say the previous coalition government had their chance and did nothing, but it is impossible to fix 12 years of neglect from the previous Bracks-Brumby Labor governments in four years.

Recent announcements that funds pledged by the commonwealth will be matched by the state are a great start, but that money will cover just the tip of the iceberg — there is so much more that needs to be done. Much, much more is needed if we are to bring our roads back to an acceptable standard. The Minister for Roads and Road Safety must surely know how the people of my electorate feel about this issue by now. I have sent countless letters to his office, giving specific examples of product damage, truck damage and accident damage, and relaying the concerns of the people I represent.

The government's focus on road safety is misplaced. I agree it is imperative that people get to where they need to be safely, especially as we approach the festive holiday season. That is not something I would ever dispute. But the way Labor plans to go about it is wrong. It is simply wrong! Sticking up signs to slow people down will do nothing more than slow people down — it will not keep them safer when the roads are damaged — and it will slow productivity. That is what we cannot afford if we want to improve this great state.

The best way to improve road safety is to fix the potholes and the warped and distressed surfaces. We need a summer blitz and we need it now so that we can put an effort into making our roads safe again and so that the problem does not get worse when winter rolls around again. It should be no surprise — we will have a winter! But it is summer now, so we need to get on with it right now. We know there is money available for this. The coalition secured around \$700 million from the lease of the port for rural and regional infrastructure, but to date there has been absolutely zero mention of

how or where that money will be spent. The budget included a fourth train service added to the Warrnambool line. This is not before time; my community has been crying out for this for a decade. I remind the house that it was the previous coalition government that facilitated this by building a \$10 million passing loop at Warncoort, replacing the passing loops that the previous Labor government ripped out.

Following the lead from roads, it seems the Labor solution to safety concerns in the country is to slow things down. Warrnambool line trains are currently travelling on speed restrictions because of safety concerns at level crossings. Rather than fix the safety concerns, the government just slows trains down. Services are being delayed every day, sometimes for up to 30 minutes. This is another example of this government's city-centric nature: 'Just let it keep going badly and don't fix it'.

The Minister for Public Transport started the year with V/Line in chaos, and she is ending it the same way. Commuters on the Warrnambool line deserve better. It was disappointing to see that there are no plans to upgrade long-haul rolling stock, with all the new trains on order — no surprises here — not able to be used on the Warrnambool line; they are all for the cities. My community is left with carriages from the 1980s that are well beyond their use-by date. They are cold in the winter and hot in the summer. The toilets often do not work and the locomotives often break down, meaning the long trip to Melbourne or return to Warrnambool and Portland is often made via a cramped bus with nowhere to buy a drink, get something to eat or to go to the toilet for up to — and sometimes longer than — 4½ hours. When the train is running, many times the buffet car is closed because of a shortage of staff. Again, in this day and age we really do deserve a better service.

I must take some time to commend the V/Line staff, who provide exceptional service under trying conditions. They just do not have the resources to do the job they can and want to do. This is certainly not a criticism of the staff. Their efforts do not go unnoticed, and I sincerely thank them for their work. I have been at the station to catch the train to Melbourne on my way to Parliament when magically the train has turned into a bus. I have seen the anger of the commuters directed at the staff, so I again commend them.

In the previous Labor budget, regional projects accounted for only 3 per cent of the total infrastructure spend, and this year it seems nothing much has changed. This is a high-taxing, high-spending,

metro-centric government. It seems that the further you live from Melbourne, the less you get from this government, despite that promise to govern for all of Victoria.

There are a raft of opportunities in regional areas. They just need some investment. Devondale Murray Goulburn has plans to expand its Koroit manufacturing plant, right in the heart of dairy country, but they do not have adequate electricity supply, adequate access to gas or the necessary wastewater facilities. They estimate it will cost \$50 million to upgrade those essential services and are now considering building that new plant in the west of Melbourne to save money, adding to congestion in the city and putting more trucks on the roads. This is a perfect opportunity for the government to upgrade such vital infrastructure, not just for Devondale Murray Goulburn but to allow other new industries to leverage off the infrastructure and set up in the region. The answer to easing congestion in the city is regional investment. It is a shame that this government cannot see beyond the tram tracks.

Exceptional healthcare and educational facilities are another way to bring people into regional areas and lessen the congestion in the city of Melbourne. Latest health statistics show the demand for services at Warrnambool Base Hospital is growing, and the magnificent and hardworking staff are doing the best they can with what they have got. But unfortunately the vital second stage of Warrnambool Base Hospital's redevelopment was again ignored in the budget. We need the final touches to the epicentre of the hospital to be built, and that is the accident and emergency department and the theatre. The accident and emergency department is cramped and cannot cope with a large event such as a motor car accident with several vehicles involved. The staff do an exceptionally good job in these trying circumstances, but there is no room. I have worked in this environment; I have been in that accident and emergency department, and it has not grown in many, many years.

There are three theatres at Warrnambool Base Hospital. When I nursed in those theatres in 1986 there were also three for a population of 20 000 in Warrnambool itself. In this current day and age we have still got three theatres, yet the population in Warrnambool alone has grown to 35 000 people. This does not take into consideration the catchment areas. It is just not adequate. I hope that now the Minister for Health has visited the hospital and seen for herself the areas earmarked for renewal there will be money for the upgrade in the next budget. At the very least she can use some of the money in the regional and rural health

fund to get the master plan underway so that by the next budget, in May next year, we can get on with the job.

It was also a shame to see not one dollar for the Warrnambool Special Development School in the budget. They need the next stage committed to as a priority. All they have at the moment is an empty block of land. This current government gave them half what we gave them, and that was not enough to build the school. I hope the next budget contains the money that will allow them to build the desperately needed new school, and I hope it will allow them to build what they need. The current one was built in 1999 in a very steep environment that is not suitable for wheelchairs for 30 students, and there are now 126 students. It is totally inadequate. We need modern facilities with undercover sporting areas so that these children, who are often more susceptible to illness, can have somewhere to play in the cold and wet south-west winters.

This government says it is putting people first, but in reality it is doing completely the opposite. It is driving up the cost of living, it is driving up the cost of doing business and it is hurting employers and hurting employees as a natural consequence. Increasing the royalties on brown coal is hurting the back pockets of hardworking Victorians. This new tax has forced the closure of Hazelwood, driving up the cost of power for every Victorian. Adding \$250 million in costs to companies like Engie simply drives up the cost of doing business, destroying profit margins, leaving them no incentive to continue to seek profits and driving them out of business. It was the government introducing a new tax that put the final nail in the coffin of Hazelwood — let us be clear — and the government needs to be accountable for that and should not blame anyone but themselves.

Victoria's ability to produce cheap electricity for our state and the national grid is one of our advantages, and this government seems determined to destroy that advantage. This new tax also hurts other energy-intensive operations like dairy farms. I have a constituent who owns a dairy in my electorate. He received a quote that he shared with me just two weeks ago for his energy supply after the Hazelwood closure announcement, and it is 37 per cent higher than his previous agreement. The offer was withdrawn 22 hours later because the market is in chaos. The operator of an exporting seafood business tells me the same story. These businesses are exporters, and they cannot be successful — they cannot compete against other businesses in other parts of the world — if we tax ourselves to such a point that we make ourselves uncompetitive on the world scene.

This government is hampering our ability to produce food cheaply and responsibly in our own backyard. That is what we actually do well — another natural advantage — and our government is destroying our ability to do this. We should be looking for opportunities to facilitate increasing food production by embracing the opportunities, not hampering and harnessing them.

Other energy-intensive industries will be forced out of Victoria if energy prices continue to rise. Portland Aluminium uses about 10 per cent of the energy produced in Victoria, but it is not the environmental vandal members of the Greens want to paint it as. It produces a product that is growing in demand. As technologies advance, aluminium is used readily in new devices. It is not a dying industry. The Portland smelter is set amongst 500 hectares of wetlands and parklands. It is known as the 'smelter in the park' around the world in the Alcoa group and locally, and it is something the management and the staff are justifiably proud of.

If that smelter is closed, not only would it be devastating for the Portland community in terms of jobs and economic impact but the operations would simply move to another country where there are not the strict rules — because aluminium is in demand — and where there are not the regulations on environmental impacts that we have here in Australia. This would simply shift the problem elsewhere, resulting in less positive environmental benefits that we can offer in Victoria. I hope, though, that the members of the government recognise the importance of Portland Aluminium to the people of my electorate and Victoria. I hope they do everything possible to ensure that the smelter remains open and an active part of the south-west community and that jobs are retained.

Given the smelter's latest issue, brought about by lost energy, I cannot stress to the government enough that no stone be left unturned so that we can find out what happened and assure the staff and management and the company that it will not happen again. We need to provide certainty.

It all arcs back to the valuable role our regional areas can play in the future of this great state and the opportunities that are here in abundance. It is just a shame this budget did absolutely nothing to make the most of those opportunities. This Labor government is spending without thought for a sound financial future. It ignores regional Victorians, particularly in the far west, where opportunities are in abundance for a government to increase revenue from industries ready to grow but needing a partnership approach to facilitate their

expansion. This budget is a missed opportunity, not only for my electorate but for the entire state of Victoria.

Ms KAIROUZ (Minister for Consumer Affairs, Gaming and Liquor Regulation) — I have great pleasure in rising to speak in support of the 2015–16 budget, and I follow on from the member for South-West Coast. I was in my office listening to the start of her contribution and heard the rest of it in here, and one of the things she said was that the worst roads in Victoria are in her electorate. Well, perhaps it is something she needs to have a look at quite carefully. I remind her that the former member for South-West Coast was a member of Parliament for 27 years, Dr Denis Naphthine, who sat on the front bench for most of that time and was also the Premier of Victoria during his time in Parliament. So perhaps he did not work hard enough for his electorate. I certainly wish the new member for South-West Coast well, and I am sure that she will advocate strongly for her community and ensure that the roads in her electorate are fixed and that other things she wants are delivered through and with the support of the Andrews Labor government.

When the Labor team led by the now Premier went to the Victorian people during the 2014 election campaign, we laid out a cogent and well-articulated plan for the state. We said we would make Victoria the education state, we promised to make our health system the best we could and we also undertook to deliver a world-class public transport system. We promised to deliver jobs for Victorians, and we also said we would deliver a safe and fair society and develop inclusive and sustainable communities. This budget is getting it done. This budget brings home the bacon for the people of my electorate of Kororoit and for the rest of Victoria.

Let us start by looking at education. Record investment in schools in this budget has clearly marked Victoria as the education state. Infrastructure spending includes modernisation of the Sunshine Special Developmental School at a cost of \$2.5 million. Between now and the second quarter of the 2018–19 financial year, buildings which are currently at an unacceptable standard will receive an upgrade. Inspired teaching and learning requires the right infrastructure, something the coalition cares little about.

The Andrews Labor government recognises that sustained population growth requires not just upgrades to schools but new schools. Kororoit will receive a share of the \$92 million to construct schools and buy land in growth areas to give local parents and families the certainty they need to and make sure their kids have the facilities they deserve. In addition to the purchase of

land for the proposed Burnside primary school and the Truganina East P–9 school, this budget will enable work to begin on a new school to be built at Taylors Hill, where stage 1 will be delivered by the fourth quarter of 2017–18. This will see students proudly ready to take their place in the \$12 million Taylors Hill secondary school in 2019. This is a great win for the western suburbs and for the people of Kororoit.

In addition to school infrastructure, Kororoit secondary students will benefit from the \$43.7 million program to help ensure young people get the health care that they need and deserve. Doctors will visit 100 Victorian government secondary schools. Getting around will also be easier for the students as a result of the massive spending on public transport and roads infrastructure across Victoria and in the western suburbs. People are now able to spend more time with their families and friends because of the massive upgrades that this government is making to western suburbs roads.

Let us go to the Ballarat line. There is \$518 million to duplicate the Ballarat line to Melton and to increase the frequency of services for the Ballarat region and Melbourne's outer west. As part of that package of funding, a 17-kilometre section of single track between Deer Park West and Melton will be duplicated. This will enable extra services in the morning and afternoon peaks and will improve reliability of services. This work will enable future electrification of the line. At Deer Park station the car park will receive a \$1.1 million upgrade to provide better facilities, and the platforms at Rockbank station will also be extended by more than 50 metres so that passengers can use any carriage in boarding or exiting trains. A sealed car park will also be built on the south side of Rockbank station. It is good news for those who live in Caroline Springs, because the new Caroline Springs station is scheduled for completion early next year and will include a double-sided platform, car parking, CCTV and other facilities.

My constituents, and anyone else who travels from or to the west, will be pleased with the \$1.46 billion western distributor project. These works will include a second river crossing, widening the West Gate Freeway from 8 to 12 lanes and other works connecting CityLink and the western edge of the CBD. This is a substantial project that will give a better connection between the west and other parts of Melbourne. Locally, the people of Kororoit will be pleased to learn that \$150 million of funding has been provided to undertake the next stage of the M80 upgrade to widen the road and to improve traffic management from Sunshine Avenue to the E. J. Whitten Bridge. This budget also provides the

money to enable planning for the duplication of Leakes Road and Derrimut Road and an upgrade of Palmers Road. Like the freeway upgrades, these projects will enable drivers to spend less time on the roads and more time with their loved ones.

This is a budget which delivers a massive \$61.3 million injection of funds for infrastructure works at Western Health's Footscray and Sunshine sites. This includes \$44.3 million to be spent at Sunshine Hospital to provide 64 new surgical and emergency beds as part of a plan to use the extra space that will be available once the new \$200 million Joan Kirner Women's and Children's Hospital has been completed. These include a 32-bed surgical inpatient ward to increase capacity for elective surgery and 12 surgical short-stay recovery beds. The capacity of the emergency department will also be increased, with an expanded 20-bed short-stay unit and an additional 12 emergency department cubicles. This is a massive investment in the health of my community.

The infrastructure spend of more than \$12.4 billion in this budget will provide employment opportunities for many Victorians; including many of the tradespeople, technicians and skilled labourers of my electorate. To go through a very quick run-down of some of the Victorian government-initiated infrastructure projects, the CityLink-Tullamarine Freeway widening project from Melbourne Airport to Bulla Road is in delivery and the section from Bulla Road to Power Street is also in delivery. As I mentioned, we have 15 new schools and the M80 upgrade from Sunshine Avenue to the Calder Freeway — that is in delivery. There is also the Melbourne Metro tunnel project and the level crossing removal project — and I particularly mention the removal of the ones at Main Road and Furlong Road. This is something that the community has been advocating for a very, very long time, and something that the community is now celebrating. There are people in their 80s and 90s who are finally seeing their dreams come true and all the work they have put in in campaigning finally come to fruition.

The Cranbourne-Pakenham line upgrade is also in delivery. I mentioned the western distributor, and also the 65 new high-capacity metropolitan trains and the Casey Hospital. I know other members have spoken about this. There is the Murray Basin rail project, the Chandler Highway bridge, the Western Highway duplication and the Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre expansion. I mentioned the Joan Kirner Women's and Children's Hospital.

There is the Mernda rail extension project — I know the member for Yan Yean is extremely proud of this —

the Goulburn Valley Health redevelopment, the Victorian Heart Hospital, the Yan Yean Road duplication and the Thompsons Road duplication, and of course there are many other suburban arterial roads that are in procurement at the moment. These sorts of projects are perfect examples of how many Victorians, including those in my electorate, are able to find work. What we have also done is come up with a package of \$53 million that will consolidate all Victorian employment services into one system, which will make it easier for employers and prospective employees to be connected. These investments alone show that we do not pay lip-service to our promises; we deliver them.

As part of the Andrews government's support for Melbourne's high-growth areas, this budget will also provide \$50 million to build community facilities in Melbourne's fastest growing suburbs, including community centres, arts and cultural hubs, parks and playgrounds. My electorate will also benefit from the allocation of \$22.2 million to upgrade and improve council and regional library services and \$50 million to build community hubs in growth areas.

The budget highlights for Victoria and my electorate are so many that I could go on and on for many hours in talking about the benefits to my community and the state as a whole. At this point, however, I would like to acknowledge the enormous commitment by this government to the issue of family violence and to funding the most urgent 65 recommendations from the recent royal commission. Family violence does not have a preferred postcode or an occupation type. It does not discriminate between young or old or ethnicities; there is no stereotype. Family violence can happen in the poorest or in the wealthiest households.

I congratulate this government for having the courage to bring this issue out into the open. It is something that many community struggle to talk about, but I know through the leadership of the Premier and the Minister for the Prevention of Family Violence that these discussions hopefully are happening in many households and are becoming easier to talk about. I congratulate this government on having the courage to say, 'No more family violence', and to act to tackle this issue head-on. I congratulate this government for putting in real money so that we can understand the complex issues that underpin family violence and for investing in supports for victims.

Acting Speaker McGuire, I do not have to tell you — I know that you agree because your community has also benefited from this wonderful budget — that this is a great Labor budget. I am extremely proud to be part of a great Labor team.

Mr WAKELING (Ferntree Gully) — It gives me pleasure to finally rise to speak on the budget papers, and it seems like quite a while ago since we actually had the budget presented before us in this house, but it is interesting to hear the member for Kororoit speak before me. If you want a contrast as to where this government's priorities lay, you just needed to listen to that last contribution, because that was a contribution that listed a litany of funding announcements in a Labor-held seat. One would only have liked to have seen a similar list of election commitments within the seat of Ferntree Gully.

May I say that I am not casting aspersions on the member for Kororoit or her community and what they received through the budget. All I am saying is that I think the good people of Ferntree Gully themselves would say, 'Well, if this is a government that is willing to invest significant amounts of money in Labor-held seats, what is it about people who are in Liberal-held seats or National Party seats that means they should miss out?'. I will come to my electorate later in my contribution, but it is not going to take long because the contributions provided by this government were scant.

One just needs to look at where this government is at; and if you look at the key measures of where the government is at the moment, it is worrying. We can look at roads and the east–west link. Labor in opposition said they were going to scrap the east–west link and that it was not going to cost the Victorian taxpayer one cent. Let us not forget that the east–west link was put on the political agenda by the former Labor Brumby government, and in fact it was the Brumby government that championed the cause. Then after the election the incoming coalition government, on a bipartisan basis, said, 'We will continue the process that was put in place by the former government', and the coalition committed to putting in place the east–west link. At the time the then Leader of the Opposition, the member for Mulgrave, actually agreed to the program. Later he changed his position and said, 'Well, we do not now agree with that, but we will honour a contract'.

Then polling came in that showed Labor were vulnerable to the Greens in the inner northern seats of Melbourne, and they said, 'Well, we had better do something to fix that. How are we going to fix that? How are we going to save the seats of the member for Richmond and other members of the Labor Party in this house? Oh, let us change our position again to try to out-green the Greens in those seats'. Therefore, at the 11th hour, the Labor Party came out with a policy to scrap the east–west link. It said, 'But do not worry, it is

all okay, it will not cost taxpayers one cent'. Well, we all know, over \$1 billion later, that that was a lie.

You just have to look at law and order issues like carjackings and home invasions. These are events that are daily occurrences which we did not see in this state two years ago. An incident involving one of my constituents has already been raised in the house. This woman's home was invaded at 2 o'clock in the morning when she and her daughters were sleeping. She lives in a relatively new home in the suburb of Wantirna South, but she told me that she is now contemplating selling her home to move to a safer suburb. Well, if I may say, with the greatest of respect, if people in Wantirna South do not feel comfortable in their own homes, heaven help us! Heaven help us if people do not feel comfortable in their own homes, and that is where law and order is under this government.

I now turn to juvenile justice. We have the debacle of the juvenile justice system, where you have clients in a juvenile justice facility who are destroying the premises, and this government has turned a blind eye and not provided the support that those people have needed. This government's solution to juvenile justice and to the crisis in the juvenile justice system is to hand out pizzas and soft drink in a bid to try to stop these offenders. I mean, seriously, is that what this government has come to?

I come to my shadow portfolio of education. Can I just say at a time when Victorians want this government to have numeracy and literacy, have education standards, as a top priority of this government, we have seen the Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study results come out, which have shown that we have gone backwards in maths and science, where countries such as Kazakhstan are doing better than students here in Victoria. We have seen in the latest Programme for International Student Assessment results that Victorians are flatlining, where other countries are moving forward — —

Mr Nardella — Because of you!

Mr WAKELING — I just love contributions from the member for Melton. This is a government that prides itself on its financial investment, on the fact that it is investing billions of dollars of extra money, but the best test of the results of that investment is how students have fared. That is the best way to assess their performance.

Mr Nardella — Correct.

Mr WAKELING — Correct. On that basis, given the money invested by this government and former

Labor governments, our results would show that we had skyrocketed in our performance, but they have shown that, despite everything that this government says, they have gone backwards. Why are we going backwards? Because we know that education standards are not at the forefront of this government. They are worried about every other fringe issue but not about the focus of our parents, who want to ensure their children can read, write and count.

One only need look at the hardline approach adopted by this government around the Safe Schools program, a program that under this government is compulsory in every secondary school in Victoria. School councils who say they do not want to be part of this program are told they have no option, and parents who ask politely if their children can be excluded from the program are told, 'No, your child is in the program and we question why you would even raise this as an issue'. They have labelled these parents bigots and homophobes. Let me tell you, Acting Speaker, the parents that I have spoken to are neither bigoted nor homophobic; they are just concerned about their children.

As we know, under this government, when it comes to issues around the Safe Schools program, if it is a decision of the Premier or if it is a decision of parents, I will back parents every day. We on this side of the house will back parents every day. Those on that side of the house have said to parents, 'We don't care what your view is. We don't care what you think about this program. You're going to be compelled to have your children participate in this program'. Let me tell you, Acting Speaker, we stand apart from this government. We have as a priority, and we are very proud of the fact it is a priority, that if we are afforded the opportunity to take the Treasury bench after the next election, the Safe Schools program in Victoria will be scrapped.

As we have seen this week, we now have a situation in schools where teachers will be standing up and making political statements regarding the refugee issue. I might say, with the greatest respect, that teachers I have spoken to this week just want to get on with teaching children. They tell me that schools should not be soapboxes for teachers to make political statements. Where are the priorities of this government? Where is the government on this issue? We have a Premier and an education minister who are hiding from this issue, not wanting to talk about it, whereas I am happy to call it out and say that schools and teachers should be focusing on teaching.

Mr Eren interjected.

Mr WAKELING — I take up the interjection by the minister at the table, the Minister for Tourism and Major Events and member for Lara — they should be focused on teaching, not focused on political activism. I can only hope that at next Monday's cabinet meeting the minister, when he sits at the cabinet table at 1 Treasury Place, will actually stand up for Victorian families and raise this issue as a concern.

Mr Eren interjected.

Mr WAKELING — I am glad to hear that the minister at the table, the member for Lara, will be taking this issue up. We are very pleased to hear that.

We have also seen the recent announcement regarding compulsory swimming lessons — that is, every child is going to be able to swim 50 metres by grade 6. Who is going to pay for it? Who is going to pay for the lessons? When children are attending schools in East Gippsland, in places like Buchan, they are going to have to get on a bus and travel significant distances to get to a pool. Who is going to pay for the bus? Who is going to pay for the swimming lessons? I can tell you one thing, Acting Speaker, the money is not being provided by this government. This government has said to the parents of Buchan, 'Your children will get this as part of the curriculum, but the school will pay' — because it is part of the curriculum, parents do not have to pay for it. If the school is not getting any additional money, what programs are being cut by this government? We know that it is going to directly impact on parents and it is going to directly impact on students, because we know that other programs are going to be lost as a consequence of it.

If we look at the issue of asbestos, we see the government has said that they going to make every school asbestos free by 2020. But we learned at the estimates hearings of the Public Accounts and Estimates Committee that when governments do their audits, they do not audit under a building and they do not audit the grounds. We know that children are playing in grounds where there is asbestos. So we know that the government's claim that they are going to make all schools asbestos free by 2020 — they have promised that every inch of it will be gone from every government school across the state — is unachievable. The government itself has admitted it is unachievable.

This government has said to us, 'There is no ban on Christmas carols'. Last year the government issued an order to all school principals on what they could and could not do with regard to the singing of Christmas carols. In their own directive they said to principals that they could not participate in plays or music. When the

Minister for Education put a comment on my Facebook page at the time, I said to him, ‘You can solve this problem overnight. Issue a new directive to schools to say that they can sing them’. Guess what happened in November this year? Every school got an email from the education department just seeking to clarify the situation on Christmas carols. Here we go: ‘Just to advise you that this year, you can sing commercial and traditional Christmas carols’. They finally did what we had asked them to do 12 months earlier. They can call it whatever they like, they can spin it in whatever way they like, but we had the Deputy Premier wearing a silly Christmas hat in a video. He did not have to do any of that, he just needed to issue an order 12 months earlier and we could have avoided all these problems.

You have also seen the government wanting to attack religious schools with the Equal Opportunity Amendment (Religious Exceptions) Bill 2016, a bill that was going to be a direct attack on our faith communities and faith-based schools. This side of the house said we would oppose it. We opposed it here, we opposed it in the upper house and we are pleased to see that, with the assistance of the crossbenches, the bill is now dead. I call on this government to stand committed to not seeking to reintroduce that bill.

In the minute and a half left to me, Acting Speaker, I will just talk about the seat of Ferntree Gully, because there is not a lot to talk about. In two years, how much capital investment has been provided to schools in my electorate? How much? Zero. Not one school in two years has received a capital investment under this government — not last year and not this year.

Can I say, though, that it was very pleasing to see that the government took up the coalition’s commitment to provide additional car parking at the Ferntree Gully railway station. But let me tell you what happened. The government did not announce that on budget day; they wanted to hold the announcement back. But what they forgot to do is tell the bureaucrats. A bureaucrat in the department actually put up on a website that the car park in Ferntree Gully was going to be upgraded. I found this and I then made an announcement to my local community that the car park was going to be upgraded. Uh-oh, someone in the department got rapped over the knuckles. It came off the website and then three months later the government came out to make the big announcement that they had provided this additional funding.

That is the only thing this government sought to do under this budget. There is nothing for schools, nothing for local roads, nothing for local sport and nothing for my local community. Let me tell you, Acting Speaker,

when we talk about the haves and have-nots under this government, you need only listen to the member for Kororoit talking about the money spent in her electorate. This side of the house gets very little, and we will hear in a second another member of the government standing up and talking about how much money Labor has spent in another Labor seat.

Ms THOMSON (Footscray) — I am proud to rise to speak on the budget for 2016–17. I have never heard a diatribe like the one we have just heard from the member for Ferntree Gully, because this is a budget for all Victorians. It is a budget that is an infrastructure budget that will impact in a positive way for all Victorians. We have never seen such a big infrastructure spend in the history of the state of Victoria. It is a budget based on delivering in health and in education and making sure that we look after the most disadvantaged in our communities. It is about bringing equity back into our funding for schools and making sure that the schools which have the most disadvantaged children get the support they need. It will ensure that children who often go to school hungry because they are not fed will have access to breakfast clubs so that they get some sustenance before they start their school day. We all know that a child who is well fed can concentrate better on their studies and get better outcomes if they have a full stomach. We know that to be the case, and that is why we have invested in breakfast clubs.

We have also invested in eye testing and glasses for kids who come from families who cannot access eye tests and obtain glasses. We are making sure those kids can get glasses free of charge. A former principal in my area who is a pioneer of these kinds of programs has actually written to me and thanked the Labor government for putting in place a program that delivers for these kids and makes sure that money is not a factor in providing an education for kids and that money is not a factor in ensuring that those who need to have their eyes tested get their eyes tested and that those who need to have glasses get glasses.

This would only happen under a Labor government; it would never have been done by those opposite and was not done by those opposite. They had four years to put such programs as these in place. Did they care? No, they did not. They come in here crying crocodile tears and talk about what they have not got in their electorates. There are a whole lot of kids out there who are better off because of a Labor government; kids who are going to school and who will be fed; kids who are getting the glasses they need so they can study rather than not study because they cannot see. I am proud of what this government has achieved. I am proud of the

first two budgets, and I am proud of what these programs will mean for the kids who most desperately need them.

I want to talk about my electorate, because my electorate is a beneficiary of this budget in very many ways. The metro rail tunnel, which will be the greatest piece of infrastructure since the city loop — probably greater than the city loop — will provide five additional stations, including a station at Parkville, which will mean for the first time people from the west will be able to access the Parkville district. That means access to the Royal Melbourne Hospital, that means access to the comprehensive cancer centre, that means access to the dental hospital, that means access to the university.

People from the west will be able to get on one train and travel to Parkville for all their needs. It will make a difference in the lives of patients who need to travel to the cancer centre for treatment or people who are undergoing a diagnosis. That is why I am so proud of this project. Yes, it will mean the unblocking of the city loop and it will mean that all of those around Melbourne travelling on the rail will be able to do it more easily, more efficiently and more effectively. That goes without saying and has been talked about a lot in other contributions on the budget, but what it means for the people in the west is that new opportunities will be opened up for them, and that is a great thing.

I also want to talk about the spend on Sunshine Hospital and Footscray Hospital. Were it not for a Labor government there would not be a Sunshine Hospital, and were it not for a Labor government there would not be a women's and children's hospital being built in Sunshine as we speak. We are intent on ensuring that it is the best that it can be amongst hospitals and that it provides a great service to a very high demand area. We put \$44.3 million into Sunshine Hospital to deliver an extra 64 surgical and emergency beds as part of a plan to utilise the extra space that will be available once the new Joan Kirner Women's and Children's Hospital is complete. We are putting more money also into Footscray Hospital for urgent works to fix key sections of the hospital and to undertake important planning work to develop the future of the hospital, which is very important in a very high demand area.

You only have to look at the thunderstorm asthma attacks to see the pressure that was placed on the western hospitals and how they dealt with those emergencies. I put on the record, because I think it needs to be put on the record, the great work that was done by our ambulance service and by the hospitals in dealing with the enormous workload that came about as

a result of the thunderstorm asthma attacks. It would have been incredibly difficult to deal with, and they did an extraordinary job — and they certainly did an extraordinary job at Western Health and at my local ambulance service.

I also want to talk about education. We met our election commitment to Sunshine College. We will make sure that school is rebuilt. We will make sure those kids get access not only to the first-class education that their teachers provide but also to first-class facilities. I want to finish on one other thing, and that is the education precinct in Footscray, an Australian first where there will be lifelong learning opportunities in first-class facilities for the people of the inner west. Only a Labor government would deliver that.

This is a government that is committed to the very best of education for our children. It is a government committed to the best of health for our community. Irrespective of how much they earn, they will have access to the best quality of health. It is a government committed to making sure that the infrastructure is provided to futureproof Victoria and prepare it for a dynamic future. It is a government committed to developing the jobs of the future and developing and looking after our communities. I am proud of this budget, and I am very proud to be a member of the Andrews Labor government.

Mr THOMPSON (Sandringham) — In contributing to the take-note motion before the house, I have a brief amount of time to make a number of comments. In October 2014 the then Napthine government committed a further \$13 million to Sandringham College if re-elected, in addition to \$6 million already delivered in 2013, making an aggregate total of \$19 million to a former Labor Party flagship educational reform school, which had the objective of providing multiple Victorian certificate of education subjects for the benefit of students living within the Bayside area and the electorate of Sandringham.

The then Premier, Dr Napthine, also announced in October 2014 a joint-use agreement between the school and the Melbourne Cricket Club (MCC), with the objective of providing the leveraging of further multimillions of dollars in world-class facilities at the Beaumaris campus. There was a precedent for co-investment in school facilities between the MCC and its philanthropic trust and a local school, being Melbourne High School, with the development of their sporting facilities, including a hockey pitch. The proposed partnering arrangement with the Melbourne Cricket Club was to bring additional funding to develop

the sporting fields and buildings to become first-class facilities which would be available to the aggregate school community, MCC sporting teams and local sporting clubs.

In a newsletter distributed by Sandringham College in October 2014 the question was posed: will it be a years 7 to 10 or a years 7 to 12 school? The answer to that question was:

The Beaumaris campus currently runs a years 7–10 curriculum which provides year 10 students with access to enhanced studies in VCE and VET. We also operate an alliance with Mentone Girls Secondary College to teach a variety of year 11 and 12 subjects at the Beaumaris campus. It is our intention that these arrangements will continue, with a plan to steadily increase the offerings of year 11 and 12 studies on the campus.

A question was also asked about how the funding would work. The answer was:

The coalition government has made an election pledge of \$13 million, \$7 million of which has been earmarked for the Beaumaris campus redevelopment. The remainder would be spent on further works at all three sites. The Beaumaris redevelopment would also include a multimillion-dollar co-investment from the MCC Foundation.

At the 2014 state election the commitment of the Labor Party to the Beaumaris campus, as I recall, was \$4 million. The commitment of the coalition to the Beaumaris campus was a direct \$7 million plus the leveraged MCC co-investment, which is at the level of \$15 million in today's terms, making an aggregate amount of \$22 million. One might contrast the amount of \$4 million committed by the Labor Party plus another \$2 million to the aggregate school, being the senior college campus, with the \$4 million to Beaumaris and \$22 million committed to the Beaumaris campus by the coalition with the leveraged co-investment. Additionally, it would have seen some \$19 million of state funding invested in public education by the coalition in the three campuses of Sandringham College.

There has been some misrepresentation in relation to these matters. Recently in answer to a question — question 11857 — the comment was made:

The Liberals were absolutely silent on the future of this Beaumaris school while in government.

I let the record of what I have already stated speak for itself. In addition a local activist remarked that effectively the coalition had closed the school down. Again, I let the facts of what I have already stated on the record speak for themselves.

Additionally I note further that the coalition had been very keen to ensure that there was a breadth of educational offerings for local students. It is important in public debate and public dialogue that the truth not be misrepresented, and it is of concern that for perhaps partisan purposes there has been an attempt to misrepresent the truth. I think it is important to state for the record — for the parliamentary record and for the people of Victoria and certainly the Sandringham electorate constituency — that the coalition had leveraged the initial co-investment with the Melbourne Cricket Club and had committed far more than the Labor Party had at the 2014 election. Ironically an independent candidate for that election had backed the \$4 million of the Labor Party against the \$22 million of the coalition. Let the record speak for itself.

Motion agreed to.

**URBAN RENEWAL AUTHORITY
VICTORIA AMENDMENT
(DEVELOPMENT VICTORIA) BILL 2016**

Second reading

Debate resumed from 7 December; motion of Ms ALLAN (Minister for Major Projects).

Motion agreed to.

Read second time.

Consideration in detail

Clause 1

Mr CLARK (Box Hill) — I raise with the minister the issue of how this proposed Urban Renewal Authority Victoria is going to relate to the various other entities within government that are dealing with related matters. I raised during the course of the second-reading debate the existence of a body entitled Land Use Victoria, which I understand is the responsibility of the Minister for Planning, who has now joined us in the chamber. There is another body called the Office of Projects Victoria, which is the responsibility of the Treasurer. There is Development Victoria. The Minister for Planning introduced a bill yesterday to create the Victorian Planning Authority.

As I said during the course of the second-reading debate, there is a concern that this plethora of structures that the government is creating is going to end up something akin to Barry Jones's Noodle Nation — that is, it is going to be a spaghetti tangle of entities with divided responsibilities, lack of clear accountabilities and no-one actually taking charge of getting things

done in a proper and responsible manner. I wonder if the minister could assist the house by explaining how these different entities are going to fit together; who is going to have responsibility for what, both bureaucratically and ministerially, where the minister's role starts and finishes, where the Minister for Planning's role starts and finishes and where the Treasurer's role starts and finishes in relation to the handling of projects on public land?

Ms ALLAN (Minister for Major Projects) — I am very pleased to have the opportunity to explain the bill in greater detail. It is one of the benefits of taking bills into consideration in detail. Can I ask that my contribution be supplemented by the Minister for Planning, who is responsible for some of those entities that the shadow minister is concerned with?

Can I say at the outset, though, the purpose of the creating Development Victoria is actually to streamline, bring into one place and consolidate the government's land development and civic project delivery. The creation of Development Victoria brings into one place two existing entities, Places Victoria and Major Projects Victoria. As has been indicated, I am the minister responsible for Development Victoria, and we will undertake projects through the development phase once they have been declared as projects that will come to our responsibility.

Projects Victoria is an entity that is the responsibility of the Treasurer. Projects Victoria has also been recently established. It will be, if you like, the oversight — it will be the cop on the beat in terms of ensuring projects are delivered on time and on budget. So it has very much, if you like, an advisory role in terms of the oversight of major and capital project delivery. It is not just for civic projects, it is also for across the whole suite of government infrastructure delivery.

The establishment of the Victorian Planning Authority comes from the Metropolitan Planning Authority, and I will let the Minister for Planning speak on that. Of course that was an election commitment, and I am sure he will go to those matters.

Land Use Victoria is also bringing together multiple functions into one place. The shadow minister is choosing to see this through the prism of a plethora, and he is trying to create all sorts of fear and anxiety about this. This is actually streamlining and improving the processes and the delivery of development and planning activity in this state. I think the shadow minister would well know that this is an area that needs fixing, and I am sure the planning minister might go to some of these issues in particular.

This is an area of public policy that needs fixing. I could suggest that the shadow minister and his colleagues do not come to this with clean hands, given some of the legacy issues we have inherited around Places Victoria, and again I will allow the Minister for Planning to address those because he has had to do a power of work in the last two years in addressing some of these issues. This is about putting these functions in a better structural arrangement — a cleaner arrangement — and making sure that we are getting the best possible outcomes given we are expending significant taxpayer funds on this range of projects.

Mr WYNNE (Minister for Planning) — I understand the intent of the questions from the opposition, and I just want to outline really what the broader thinking of the government has been in relation to both the development of the Urban Renewal Authority Victoria Amendment (Development Victoria) Bill 2016 and indeed how that intersects with Land Use Victoria and the enhanced role of the Victorian Planning Authority (VPA), which we will be debating. It is a Labor bill, and we will be debating that in February next year.

To supplement the position of the Minister for Major Projects, what has been brought together for the first time is all of the development arms of government into the one portfolio responsibility. So Places Victoria is going into this new entity, Major Projects Victoria is going into this new entity, and there is potential that other parts of government may consider the question of where they have development arms, such as VicTrack.

There may be opportunities in the future to bring about better coherence because, as I am sure the member for Box Hill would know, the way that government has sought to approach the question of the opportunities that attend to the appropriate use of government land for development really has been quite disparate. That is why having this new entity in place, we think, brings a level of policy coherence, but also at a practical level it puts all of those development arms together within the one entity and under the leadership of one minister. In the past the Minister for Major Projects, my colleague here, would have been responsible for that while I was responsible for Places Victoria, and the synergy, frankly, was not there.

In relation to Land Use Victoria, it is a complementary element which is with me. So it involves obviously the titles office, the land monitor and various other parts of government that deal with the land element. Where land is going to be sold, my responsibility is to say, 'Is this the best use of that land? Is there an alternative use of this land within government?' — as the member for

Box Hill knows, it can be offered to the local government arena as well — to see that we actually maximise the outcome in terms of a social outcome, if we can get one, and obviously an economic outcome as well. So bringing that together coherently, we think, is very complementary to the work of the minister.

In relation to the Victorian Planning Authority, I am sure members are aware it operated originally as the Growth Areas Authority and operated under a head of power that was provided through the Growth Areas Authority. To be frank, it extended its remit to do very good and important work but, I think, in a way that would suggest that it perhaps had exceeded somewhat the boundaries of its head of power under the Growth Areas Authority to do lots of other work. The government thought that this was really quite an inappropriate position and we ought to bring to what was then the Metropolitan Planning Authority a decent head of power. So we moved it to a state-owned enterprise as an interim position to protect it, and we have now introduced the legislation which will be debated in the Parliament.

We see it, as the Victorian Planning Authority, having a much broader remit than what it has got now and particularly working and partnering up with local governments to work alongside them on invitation — not intervening, but on invitation — to plan with them obviously for future growth that is going to be required to sustain population growth that we know is going to be in the order of 100 000 people year on year on year. We see that they will continue to play their growth area role, they will continue to play their role in strategic sites, which will be identified by government, and they will play an important role in regional Victoria as well.

I think the way that we have actually structured this and put in place all of the development aspects brings a sense of coherence with my colleague here in terms of her responsibilities, my responsibilities in terms of land, and the VPA, under the new head of power, having extended opportunity to operate across Victoria under the broader remit of the Plan Melbourne refresh.

Mr WATT (Burwood) — On clause 1 my question is specifically around the Urban Renewal Authority Victoria, which trades as Places Victoria, being brought into Development Victoria. I assume that means that the projects that Places Victoria is currently undertaking will be moved to Development Victoria. I want to specifically just talk about one such site, a site that I know the minister would be aware of because I know that she has received a number of communications about it. I will specifically look at some of the emails

that I have received, where they talk about the Markham estate:

Please note that I have no objection to Markham ... being used for public housing.

And I note that every time I raise this, the Minister for Housing, Disability and Ageing seems to assume that this is an anti-public housing discussion, but it is not:

... However, the proposal to have 252 units on the same site is going to result in six and seven-storey buildings.

Another email states:

I share ... widespread concern over the lack of genuine consultation with the Ashburton community with your plans ... It has been a sham. You have treated the people who have elected you with disrespect ...

This is not an email to me; this is an email to the ministers for planning and for housing and also the Premier:

I share the concern about the way the Boroondara council has been bypassed ...

... the new plans will not create any more bedrooms for residents in public units ...

Another email:

The massive increase (56 to 252 units) in the number of residences ...

Reducing public housing waiting lists is very important, however the proposed scheme, which involves selling off public ... land, does not achieve this.

Further:

The consultation being undertaken by Places Victoria is 'informal' and the full scope of the project is not open for comment.

A further email says:

The number of public housing apartments is insufficient ...

It also says:

The scale and siting of buildings along the southern and eastern boundaries is not consistent with the outcomes sought in council's adopted neighbourhood character policy.

A further email says:

I consider the proposal a massive overdevelopment ...

It makes a number of comments. One of them is:

Will not achieve its stated aim of increasing the number of public housing rooms available.

It says:

The number of public housing apartments is insufficient — and the scale and siting of buildings, once again, is a problem. Another email states:

The current proposal is a massive overdevelopment ...

The development proposal is a cynical grab for money by the Victorian government ...

...

I am not against public housing ...

Another one:

The crux of my complaint is that:

... There is a net loss of public housing accommodation by reducing the availability of family, or three-bedroom, units while increasing the quantity of one and two-bedroom units.

There is a significant bypassing of consultation ...

A further email says:

... we are appalled at the massive overdevelopment of the Markham ... site ...

It does nothing to reduce the queue for public housing ...

We are also concerned by the lack of visitor parking ... provided.

A further email — and all of these have been to the ministers, I must say:

I am writing to express my disappointment with the enormity of the overdevelopment being proposed for the Markham estate ... in Ashburton.

Further down it says:

... The development should not be seen as a way to make money at the expense of the future public housing residents that will live there.

...

The way the government has taken this project out of council's hands and made it a project of 'state significance' is appalling.

... the redevelopment of the Markham estate is welcomed if it is to be true to its vital role as a place for quality public housing, sized appropriately for the site, sympathetic to its surrounds, manageable in terms of traffic impacts, and completed in line with due processes as per any other development elsewhere in Boroondara.

A further email says:

... my extreme objection to the state government's plan to overdevelop the public housing ... at Markham ...

...

A 'super-profit' for the government from this development is nauseating and unnecessary ...

Scale of the proposed development is far too big ...

Net loss of public housing and lack of appropriate social planning ...

A further email says:

There is no doubting that there is a need for public housing in the ... community ...

Further down it says:

... I have lived in Ashburton for at least 30-plus years, and I have never witnessed such resistance across the political divide in ... such a shameful and deceitful handling of this ... project.

...

There is no doubt that this is an overdevelopment of the site ...

There is a further email, which talks about:

The Victorian government looks forward to working with local residents, Boroondara ... council, local businesses and community groups to plan the future of the site to make the most of the natural attributes of the location, and integrate the site with the wider community.

That was actually a government statement in November 2015. The question I have is: how does this bill actually bring about the government doing exactly what it says there? In light of all the other emails that I have just read out, how does this bill make sure you consult?

Mr WYNNE (Minister for Planning) — I have now had the opportunity to hear the member for Burwood on this matter at length twice in the last two days. I will be slightly constrained in my contribution here because I have to consider this matter as the Minister for Planning going forward, but I simply will just put a couple of facts on the table, which I think are worthy of consideration.

When I had the honour of being the Minister for Housing in a previous government the Markham estate was pointed out to me as possibly the worst public housing estate in Victoria — one of the worst. As I am sure members of the house know, I have been involved in public housing advocacy and working in that sector for most of my life. I acknowledge that the member for Burwood in fact was a public housing resident himself, but I feel that I have some credentials to be able to make a judgement about the quality of housing stock that we found at the Markham estate.

When I visited the Markham estate, I have to say with all sincerity, I was absolutely shocked at the standard of

that estate. It was in appalling condition. I remember going into one of the resident's houses. He was a single father who was living there with his son, and the conditions that he was living in were, frankly, not even Third World — they were something else again. His kitchen was so badly ventilated that the whole of the kitchen was in fact riddled with mould — despite the fact that he had assiduously tried to clean the place week on week on week. This was a disgraceful and disgusting estate by any measure — and the member for Burwood knows this absolutely. When we came to government the commitment that we made was that we would demolish this estate, and the public policy position that the Minister for Housing, Disability and Ageing sought an outcome on was that it would be a mixed public-private sector development that the existing 56 units would be demolished, and there would be a 10 per cent uplift, leading us to 62. That was a commitment of the government, and that would be dealt with by way of then a private sector development, which would be in effect the cross-subsidy to make the development work.

That is the basis upon which this development was arrived at. Indeed it is the first that has been undertaken by the government, and the hope is that we can in fact over time have a rolling program. There are other estates that I can point to — some in my own electorate — which are little better than the Markham estate. We have announced a development at Flemington — with my colleague the member for Essendon — which is a similar type of development. It is a four-storey, walk-up estate and is very similar to the Markham estate, which is in an appalling condition. It is well-located land, less than a kilometre from the city, right on tram lines with schools and so forth. If we get the Markham estate right, this can become a rolling program where we can see further development, such as what the member for Essendon has so strongly advocated for and now the government has committed itself to.

That is the history of this, and to say that there is a diminution in public housing stock there, the member for Burwood has to understand that the stock being rebuilt has to fit the waiting list. And the waiting list is in fact no longer requiring two and three-bedroom units, which of course were there in the past. Let us not confect the argument so we can say, 'Well, there's a net loss of public and social housing'. The answer is that there is not, and you have to admit that — 56 becomes 62 with the uplift. It is a configuration of the stock which is there to meet the public housing waiting list and which is no longer requiring two and three-bedroom units.

Ms ALLAN (Minister for Major Projects) — I am going to respond to the other matters that were raised in the member for Burwood's contribution, which obviously, as the Minister for Planning said, was almost identical to the contribution he made in the second-reading debate yesterday, which I have already had the opportunity to read. Topping and tailing his contribution were a couple of questions about projects and consultation. All of the existing projects that are currently being worked by both Places Victoria and Major Projects Victoria will be transferring across to the responsibility of Development Victoria. There is a significant suite of projects, not just housing-related projects but a range of other projects with things like the redevelopment of the State Library of Victoria and the Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre. I could go on and on; I am sure that might upset the manager of opposition business, if I do go on listing all the projects, but I say that by way of highlighting why it is important that we bring together in one place all those land development functions, because it brings together the expertise that can sit around those developments.

The member for Burwood also spoke about community consultation. Firstly, in terms of the consultations around specific projects, this government has developed a very strong record when it comes to community consultation. We understand very clearly the need to talk to communities about a range of different projects; however, that does not mean people necessarily always agree with those projects. No amount of community consultation will stop some people from protesting against particular projects or, indeed in the case of the member for Burwood, using those concerns for his own political purposes to campaign against the government. We will continue our strong approach to community consultation on the range of existing projects and future projects that will be the responsibility of Development Victoria.

When it comes to the specific issues around Markham estate, my colleague the Minister for Planning, who has a deep experience in this area, has very clearly addressed the mistruths that have been peddled by the member for Burwood when it comes to the development of the Markham estate and the fact that there is going to be more public housing in this area. The fact is that before this project was underway there were very few people living in this area because the quality of the housing stock was just so poor. I think the member for Burwood acknowledged some of those issues in his contribution.

We are about building more affordable housing and more public housing. That no doubt comes with some

challenges as you reconfigure the stock from what the traditional stock was into making sure we are meeting the needs of people who are on the public housing waiting list. That is important. As we develop these sites and others, we will be doing that based on the best advice and responding to the needs, which should very much be the focus. The people who should be at the focus of the work we are doing in this space are the people who need public housing.

Mr WATT (Burwood) — I acknowledge the comments from the minister. I would be the first to acknowledge that the Markham housing estate needed to be redeveloped, and everybody in my community that I have spoken to has said the Markham estate needs to be redeveloped. No-one is saying that the Markham estate should not be public housing. I made it very clear when I read out the emails from residents who have contacted me that it should be public housing, and I said we should have more public housing. The fact is the minister, I think, was half willing to admit that there were actually less people able to be accommodated on the site than otherwise would have been accommodated if we had kept the 56 two-bedroom units. I acknowledge that, yes, there is an increase in the number of units, but there has been a decrease in the number of people who could be accommodated on the site. I know the minister accepts that that is the case. It is a different mix, meaning less residents. The question I asked was specifically around a government statement in November 2015, which was 13 months ago, that stated:

The Victorian government looks forward to working with residents, Boroondara City Council, local business and community groups to plan the future of the site to make the most of the natural attributes of the location, and integrate the site with the wider community.

All the communications I have received say that the government has not done that. They have all said that there is insufficient information. If I go back to the previous communications I was talking about, they are all saying that the government has not consulted on this site. It is 13 months since the government put out an announcement saying that they would consult, and they have not consulted with the community. To have community information sessions is not consultation. It is not consultation to be told when I turn up to a community information session that there will be no consultation and there will be no discussion around the bulk or the size or the 190 which are for private sale. The minister was very scant when he glossed over the fact that more than three-quarters of what will be on this site will actually be for private sale. That is the real issue that my constituents have; it is not about public housing at all.

There are two things. The first is the fact that more than three-quarters of what is going on the site is going to be sold off privately; and secondly, we know, because of the discussions we had with the architect and the council, that if the minister was not the responsible authority, if the minister was not the one who was going to push this through, then it would never get through council. It just does not fit in any way with the local planning rules. The fact is that we will now have this body called Development Victoria. The fact is that the minister has acknowledged that he will be the one approving this. We have a development arm of the government while the government is saying, 'Yeah, that's fine. We can approve it'. It is not appropriate that the minister would take this in and ignore the community, particularly given the fact that in November 2015 the government made a very clear statement that they would be consulting with the community, with the residents, with the local council and with local businesses. As the local member I can stand here with hand on heart and say that that has not happened.

I know the bill is not the Minister for Planning's bill, but the reason I am directing my questions and most of my commentary to the Minister for Planning and not the Minister for Housing, Disability and Ageing is that for me and my community Markham estate is not a housing issue, it is a planning issue. I accept that the bill is not the responsibility of the Minister for Planning — Places Victoria currently is — and that is why most of my communication has been directed towards the Minister for Planning.

The one thing that I would like to know is: given the fact that the land is going to have to be sold from the office of housing to Places Victoria, I assume that there is a stamp duty that has to be paid, and I want to know whether that is the case, because that would also go to the super profits that were discussed in July last year in an email. So I have a query around the sale of land from the office of housing — because it is an office of housing estate — to the developer and the cost of that and also whether or not that includes stamp duty.

Mr WYNNE (Minister for Planning) (*By leave*) — Can I again reiterate to the member for Burwood and to the house that he should not presuppose that I have made any decision in relation to this matter. I have not made a decision as the responsible authority in relation to this matter. Let us be very, very clear about that because it is very important that whilst I am happy to have a conversation and debate and seek to clarify matters with you, this is a matter that is still afoot, as you know. It is by no means completed, and I will receive final advice from my department in relation to

the planning aspects of this proposal, as opposed to my colleague Minister Foley in relation to the housing aspects, which of course are his responsibility. Indeed the minister responsible for the urban renewal authority bill, the Leader of the House, will have responsibilities as well. We have distinct roles to play in this, and as you know, I have a rather unique role, a statutory role, as the Minister for Planning to address applications in an unfettered way. I trust — —

Mr Watt — Assuming you will be the responsible authority.

Mr WYNNE — I will be the responsible authority for it, and I trust that you will respect that role, because it is important that I deal with these issues in an unfettered way. That is the first thing. The second thing to say is that in relation to stamp duty my colleague here is seeking some advice about whether it does attract a stamp duty on the transfer of the land into the minister's Development Victoria authority. Hopefully she may have some clarity on it; if not, we will come back to you formally and advise you about that particular aspect.

I have noticed that the member for Burwood has talked on a number of occasions about this notion of super profits. I have tried in as dispassionate a way as I possibly can to lay out the way that the government has in fact sought in the first instance to get these developments away. I have talked about what we will be doing with the member for Essendon in Flemington, where we are looking at sites that have got good value — reasonably good land value — and that are well located, with good amenity and good opportunity. I think the Markham estate certainly ticks all those boxes, as does the Flemington estate, where you can point to some of the worst concrete stock — the three and four-level walk-ups — which are well past their useful life and in fact are now providing very, very poor-quality housing, often for some of our most vulnerable residents.

We do want to get the model right. We want to ensure that we are in a position where we can ensure that in any of the redevelopments that we do we are not only getting the redevelopment of the existing public housing stock but that we are getting an uplift as well, with a minimum uplift of at least 10 per cent. Hopefully in some of the sites we may even be able to do better than that because, for instance, in Flemington, obviously the walk-up estate is within the confines of the five towers that are there, so there is some potential there to get more height than what you might have been able to get just with the four-storey concrete walk-ups, which of course adds to the yield

and to the return on the site. Hopefully we can get a better uplift than just the replacement of all that existing stock with 10 per cent.

Perhaps we can do better than that as well with a public-private mix, because that particular site directly abuts what is called the Flemington Hill, which is a very well established residential neighbourhood, with particularly well developed historic houses there. It is quite an expensive area, and to be able to lever off that in terms of the inherent value of the land that is there for redevelopment strikes me as being an extraordinary opportunity to recycle these assets in a way that provides a great social outcome.

Ms ALLAN (Minister for Major Projects) — I just wanted to make a few brief comments in addition to those made by the Minister for Planning in response to the second contribution by the member for Burwood. The first is he seems to be a little bit confused as to who is responsible for what. I am the Minister for Major Projects and responsible for this piece of legislation, so I appreciate he is venting his frustrations at the Minister for Planning and the Minister for Housing, Disability and Ageing. I am just wanting to make it very clear that Places Victoria is now in my responsibility.

Mr Watt — Only when the bill passes.

Ms ALLAN — No, it is already there. You do not need to worry about that. So I hope that clarifies matters for the member for Burwood. He likes to be well informed about these matters, but unfortunately he is not. I just wanted to make it clear that he probably needs to go away and do a little bit more research instead of running scare campaigns against public housing provision in his electorate. He needs to be making himself better informed. Let us be very clear. I appreciate that the member for Burwood might not be listening properly today and every other day, but the responsibilities transferred from the Minister for Planning to me on 1 July, I think it was.

As I said earlier, those opposite do not come to this debate on Places Victoria with clean hands at all. We could go there, and if the member for Burwood continues with that sort of performance, we might go there. We are getting some further advice on the stamp duty, but as I am advised that on stamp duty the normal provisions will apply and stamp duty moneys that are accrued as a result of these projects will go through the Department of Treasury and Finance as normal, so the member does not need to be worried about that.

I refer to the member's allegation about super profits. It is quite interesting that the member for Burwood was

worried about super profits. He was not worried about super profits accrued by his Liberal Party developer mates down at Fishermans Bend as a result of the planning arrangements put in place by the former, failed planning minister. He was not too worried about those super profits that robbed this state of tens of millions of dollars in funds that could have gone to providing more public housing, more public transport, more funds for TAFE and more funds for schools. He was not worried about those super profits that were lining the pockets of Liberal Party donor mates; no, he was not at all. So we are not going to take any of the crocodile tears from the member for Burwood on this matter. We will continue to make improvements to public housing, and this bill provides an important vehicle for us to continue with that program.

Mr CLARK (Box Hill) — I want to take further the issues raised by the member for Burwood, who rightly cited the Markham estate as an example of an existing problem, an example of a problem that is likely to continue and indeed become broader under this bill. The Minister for Planning said, ‘I have not made a decision as to whether or not I am going to take over planning decision-making in relation to that estate’.

Mr Wynne — I said I have not made a decision.

Mr CLARK — Exactly, you said you have not made a decision, and whatever might be in your head is a matter for you. You have not made a decision, but certainly that is the view of the local community; that is what they expect you will do and what they think you intend to do. Be that as it may in relation to the Markham estate, it is certainly a power you will have in relation to that estate and in relation to any other project being undertaken by Development Victoria. If you take that out of the hands of the local council as the responsible authority, you take away from the local community.

The Minister for Major Projects said, ‘Never you mind about that, we’ll still consult with the local community and listen to what they say’. But consultation and listening, and responding to what people say, are entirely different things. When the power has been taken away from the local community — taken away from the local council on behalf of the community — all of the power is in the hands of the government, and unfortunately communities across the state are seeing what consultation turns into in that context. Some of the consultation run under the auspices of the minister in her other capacity as Minister for Public Transport in relation to the Blackburn rail project are, I think, a classic demonstration of sheer refusal to listen even to reasonable points that are made by the community.

Nothing has been said so far that lays to rest the coalition’s concern about the way in which Development Victoria can be used by the government to ride roughshod over local communities. The Markham estate is an example that is currently underway. What is being mooted for the Ormond level crossing is a further example of the potential for the power being conferred on Development Victoria, in conjunction with the government’s other powers, to be misused. And that concern has just been added to by the release today of Infrastructure Victoria’s *30-year Infrastructure Strategy* report, Infrastructure Victoria of course being established by the Andrews government as the body to establish a blueprint for future infrastructure plans. They have reaffirmed what was in their draft report — that is, that the highest priority in their view should be the intensification of development in the existing suburbs. One recommendation is to:

Intensify medium density housing development in established areas of Melbourne ... that are already well serviced with infrastructure by amending planning schemes within 0–5 years. This should focus initially on Melbourne’s inner and middle-ring eastern and southern suburbs ...

So when you get Infrastructure Victoria, established by the government, reaffirming that this is the no. 1 priority that it is setting for the Andrews government, we already see what is going on with the Markham estate and what is being mooted for the Ormond level crossing project. I have to say, so far, all of the assurances that the Minister for Planning has given that he has not made decisions and the assurances that the Minister for Major Projects has given that there will be consultation even if the government has all the power at the end of the day do not reassure the opposition.

I again seek from the government some indication — indeed some commitment if they are prepared and in a position to do so — that is going to give any sort of reassurance to local communities that they are not going to be exposed to Development Victoria, through the government, riding roughshod over local communities, the Minister for Planning bypassing normal planning processes and Development Victoria being used to undertake very inappropriate, high-density projects — for sale in many instances to the private sector — that would never get planning approval if the land was sold to a private developer and a private developer had to go through the normal planning processes.

Ms ALLAN (Minister for Major Projects) — I read in the contributions yesterday that this was a theme that was returned to time and again by members of the Liberal Party who spoke on this bill, and I read those contributions with great interest. I was working through

them trying to understand whether the contributors were either being deliberately confused and misleading or just confused, because what became apparent through the contributions yesterday and again today is that there is a confusion between what happens through the normal, proper planning processes and what is being done on the creation of Development Victoria.

What we are wanting to do through the creation of Development Victoria is bring into one place the consolidation of the government's land development and civic project delivery. That does not in any way change all the requirements that need to be met around following proper planning processes. Once a project is declared the responsibility of Development Victoria and is allocated to Development Victoria it will then follow all the proper planning processes that the Minister for Planning is responsible for. This bill is not seeking to change any of those requirements; it is not seeking to change or override the statutory responsibilities that are held by the Minister for Planning, and for those opposite to say otherwise is just completely wrong. As I said, they are doing that either to deliberately mislead the community and whip up fear and anxiety or they are just plain confused. I would be pleased to provide a further briefing to those opposite, if they would like it, over the summer period on exactly what Development Victoria's intersection is with Planning Victoria, because clearly they did not listen properly in the first briefing that they were afforded.

I think the contributions of those opposite reveal their true intent, which is that these representatives of the leafy eastern suburbs opposite are saying to the rest of Victoria, whether it is in the south-eastern suburbs, whether it is in regional and rural areas or whether it is in the western and northern suburbs of Melbourne, 'You can have the development, but don't bring it into my backyard'. That is what they are saying. That is what is at the heart of the population approach of those opposite. It is, 'We don't want to see it in Kew, but everyone else can share the load. We like a development, but just don't do it in our backyard'. That was revealed by the member's reference to the Infrastructure Victoria report. We have gone through extensive consultation on that report. Infrastructure Victoria is an independent body that has been established to provide independent advice to all of us, and we will be responding in due course to Infrastructure Victoria's report.

But the contributions of those opposite on this matter reveal what lies at the heart of what they are saying to the rest of Victoria: one rule for the eastern suburbs that the Liberal Party represents and a different rule for

everybody else. That is what is at the heart of their contributions on this bill.

Mr WYNNE (Minister for Planning) (*By leave*)— In the brief moments I have left, the first thing is that I can clarify for the member for Burwood that Places Victoria is paying for stamp duty on the land it is acquiring from Markham estate from the director of housing. That is late-breaking news for you.

To the member for Box Hill, it is breathtaking that you can get up and talk about the question of consultation and the track record of the previous government in relation to consultation. Need I remind you —

Mr Clark interjected.

Mr WYNNE — Huge consultation?

Mr Clark interjected.

Mr WYNNE — If only I had a bit more time to talk a little bit about the implementation of the residential zones regime by the now Leader of the Opposition, who directed where residential zones would be put in place straight from his ministerial office. You could have neighbourhood residential, all of you over in the east; you could have all your areas locked up, whether it is Glen Eira or whether it is Boroondara, you are all sweet. I will get you fixed, no problem at all. Never mind the west. Do not worry about them. Never mind the inner city. Never mind Port Phillip. Port Phillip has got absolutely nothing — thank you very much to the previous government. What an outrage to be talking about consultation when the residential zones review was run out of the office of the now Leader of the Opposition — —

Ms Asher interjected.

Mr WYNNE — 'Good policy', says the member for Brighton! It was an absolute disgrace and a roting of proper process, and you all know it. You all know it because it was the wrong thing to do — —

Mr Pesutto — What are you going to do about?

Mr WYNNE — We will hear more about that very soon.

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 Urban Renewal Authority Victoria Amendment (Development Victoria) Bill 2016 in detail. The house is currently

considering clause 1, and I am required to deal with the question on this clause first.

Clause agreed to.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER — Order! The question is:

That clauses 2 to 39 inclusive stand part of the bill, the bill be agreed to without amendment and the bill be now read a third time.

House divided on question:

Ayes, 46

Allan, Ms	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	Perera, Mr
Edbrooke, Mr	Richardson, Mr
Edwards, Ms	Richardson, Ms
Eren, Mr	Sandell, Ms
Foley, Mr	Scott, Mr
Graley, Ms	Sheed, Ms
Green, Ms	Spence, Ms
Halfpenny, Ms	Staikos, Mr
Hibbins, Mr	Suleyman, Ms
Howard, Mr	Thomas, Ms
Hutchins, Ms	Thomson, Ms
Kairouz, Ms	Ward, Ms
Kilkenny, Ms	Williams, Ms
Knight, Ms	Wynne, Mr

Noes, 37

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

Question agreed to.

Clauses 2 to 39 agreed to.

Bill agreed to without amendment.

Third reading

Motion agreed to.

Read third time.

CREATIVE VICTORIA BILL 2016

Second reading

Debate resumed from 6 December; motion of Mr FOLEY (Minister for Creative Industries).

Motion agreed to.

Read second time.

Third reading

Motion agreed to.

Read third time.

OWNER DRIVERS AND FORESTRY CONTRACTORS AMENDMENT BILL 2016

Second reading

Debate resumed from 6 December; motion of Ms HUTCHINS (Minister for Industrial Relations).

Motion agreed to.

Read second time.

Third reading

Motion agreed to.

Read third time.

WRONGS AMENDMENT (ORGANISATIONAL CHILD ABUSE) BILL 2016

Second reading

Debate resumed from 7 December; motion of Mr PAKULA (Attorney-General).

Motion agreed to.

Read second time.

Third reading

Motion agreed to.

Read third time.

CLIMATE CHANGE BILL 2016*Third reading**Second reading*

Debate resumed from earlier this day; motion of Ms D'AMBROSIO (Minister for Energy, Environment and Climate Change).

The SPEAKER — Order! The question is:

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

House divided on question:

Ayes, 46

Allan, Ms
Blandthorn, Ms
Brooks, Mr
Bull, Mr J.
Carbines, Mr
Carroll, Mr
Couzens, Ms
D'Ambrosio, Ms
Dimopoulos, Mr
Donnellan, Mr
Edbrooke, Mr
Edwards, Ms
Eren, Mr
Foley, Mr
Graley, Ms
Green, Ms
Halfpenny, Ms
Hibbins, Mr
Howard, Mr
Hutchins, Ms
Kairouz, Ms
Kilkenny, Ms
Knight, Ms

Lim, Mr
McGuire, Mr
Merlino, Mr
Nardella, Mr
Neville, Ms
Noonan, Mr
Pakula, Mr
Pallas, Mr
Pearson, Mr
Perera, Mr
Richardson, Mr
Richardson, Ms
Sandell, Ms
Scott, Mr
Sheed, Ms
Spence, Ms
Staikos, Mr
Suleyman, Ms
Thomas, Ms
Thomson, Ms
Ward, Ms
Williams, Ms
Wynne, Mr

Noes, 37

Angus, Mr
Asher, Ms
Battin, Mr
Blackwood, Mr
Britnell, Ms
Bull, Mr T.
Clark, Mr
Crisp, Mr
Dixon, Mr
Fyffe, Mrs
Gidley, Mr
Guy, Mr
Hodgett, Mr
Katos, Mr
Kealy, Ms
McCurdy, Mr
McLeish, Ms
Morris, Mr
Northe, Mr

O'Brien, Mr D.
O'Brien, Mr M.
Paynter, Mr
Pesutto, Mr
Riordan, Mr
Ryall, Ms
Ryan, Ms
Smith, Mr R.
Smith, Mr T.
Southwick, Mr
Staley, Ms
Thompson, Mr
Tilley, Mr
Victoria, Ms
Wakeling, Mr
Walsh, Mr
Watt, Mr
Wells, Mr

Question agreed to.

Read second time.

Motion agreed to.

Read third time.

Business interrupted under sessional orders.

DISTINGUISHED VISITORS

The DEPUTY SPEAKER — Order! I would like to acknowledge in the gallery today Anthony and Chrissie Foster. To Anthony and Chrissie, and all survivors and their families, thank you for your courage and testimony to Parliament during the inquiry. Your testimony allowed us all to discover the truth and led to the Wrongs Amendment (Organisational Child Abuse) Bill 2016, so thank you very much.

ADJOURNMENT

The DEPUTY SPEAKER — Order! The question is:

That the house now adjourns.

Wantirna Park caravan park

Mr WAKELING (Ferntree Gully) — (12 167) My adjournment matter tonight is for the Minister for Housing, Disability and Ageing, and the action I seek is for the minister to intervene and work with residents of the Wantirna Park caravan park and Knox City Council with respect to identifying future housing opportunities for those residents. Over 120 people live at Wantirna Park Caravan Park, which is located on Mountain Highway in Wantirna and is a privately owned facility. Many of those residents are vulnerable, some are disabled and many are elderly, with the average age being 60 and the age range going up to 92. There are currently a range of housing options on the site. Some of the units that are located on the site are owned by residents. Some are known as huts, which are in effect units that are owned by the caravan park and rented out to tenants. Then there are caravans located on the site, and these caravans are either owned by the residents or owned by the park and rented out to tenants.

It is our understanding that the facility has been sold. As the result of that sale residents have been advised that in 2018 they will be required to move from the site, and it is assumed that the closure will happen in March 2018. The concern is that many of these residents are disabled or vulnerable and there are no potential housing opportunities available to these residents. Given these concerns, I implore the Minister for Housing, Disability and Ageing to work with Knox

City Council and affected residents to identify alternative housing opportunities for these residents. This is a difficult time in their lives. Yes, there is a period of time which they have to transition, but again many of them do not have alternative housing. Given that, I call on the minister to take action and work with those residents and Knox City Council to identify future housing for those residents.

CityLink-Tullamarine Freeway widening

Mr PEARSON (Essendon) — (12 168) I direct my adjournment matter to the Minister for Roads and Road Safety. As many members would know, the widening of the Tullamarine Freeway is currently occurring. Can the minister inform the house what action the government is taking to communicate the impending closure of the Tullamarine Freeway in January as part of the widening of the freeway?

Federation Training

Mr D. O'BRIEN (Gippsland South) — (12 169) My adjournment matter is for the Minister for Training and Skills, and the action I seek is for the minister to approve funding for the relocation of Federation Training's Fulham campus to the Sale CBD. This is a matter that I have been working on and fighting for basically since I was elected. Given that the minister is new in the portfolio, I am repeating the request that I made to the previous minister, although there is an update in that I understand that Federation Training does in fact have an application before the minister for about \$5 million in funding because it has identified, I believe, a site within the Sale CBD to construct the new campus.

This is important for a number of reasons. The Fulham campus is outdated and outmoded and will need significant maintenance spending in the next few years if it is to be serviceable into the future. It is also not the best place for this facility; it is a 10 to 15-minute drive out of town, which is not good for young students in particular. The transport connections are not good. I know the Wellington Shire Council and indeed the Sale business community are very keen to have the campus in the CBD to inject some life and some activity into the Sale CBD.

The coalition government provided \$40 million for the merger of Federation Training in 2014. I understand about \$20 million or \$21 million of that remains unspent, and this funding deserves to go to Federation Training. I know there will be all sorts of arguments that it was part of the university deal that did not go ahead, but the reality is that this was allocated to

Federation Training and it should be delivered to Gippsland and Federation Training. In particular the application for the funding to build a new campus in the Sale CBD should be approved, and that is the action that I seek from the minister.

Agricultural and horticultural education

Ms GREEN (Yan Yean) — (12 170) I rise to express my support for improving the status of agricultural and horticultural studies in Victorian secondary schools. The action I seek is that the minister outline what actions the education department is taking or can take in the future to encourage more students to participate in agricultural and horticultural studies at a senior school level. The uptake of agricultural studies in Victorian senior schools has been in decline for some years.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER — Order! Honourable member for Yan Yean, which minister are you directing your matter to?

Ms GREEN — The Minister for Education. Only a few hundred students are enrolled in the subject at a senior level in the Victorian certificate of education (VCE), and this is in contrast to reports earlier this year in the *Weekly Times* that interest in agriculture at a tertiary level is actually on the increase.

The Andrews Labor government has identified food and fibre as a priority industry sector, and there are actually a number of unfilled vacancies in this sector. It would improve students' pride in their farming families if the standardisation of agricultural studies was looked at. It is standardised down lower than any other subject at VCE level, and I think that is really unfair and undervalues agricultural studies. I urge the minister to have the department show more support for agricultural studies in Victoria.

Great Ocean Road Coast Committee

Mr KATOS (South Barwon) — (12 171) My adjournment matter this afternoon is for the Minister for Energy, Environment and Climate Change, and the action that I seek is for the minister to disband the Great Ocean Road Coast Committee (GORCC) and hand over their functions and responsibilities to the Surf Coast Shire Council. GORCC exists entirely within the Surf Coast shire and runs along the coast from Breamlea to Lorne. It adds a completely unnecessary level of bureaucracy and red tape to decision-making in the Surf Coast shire, and its decisions often lack scrutiny and are not subject to public accountability as it is an unelected body.

It is quite an absurd situation. The Torquay Foreshore Caravan Park is managed by GORCC, and then you cross the road and the Esplanade and Bell Street are Surf Coast Shire Council. Lorne is probably the most ridiculous one: we have Mountjoy Parade, where the ocean side of Mountjoy Parade is GORCC and the land side is the Surf Coast Shire Council. You have a duplication of resources and bureaucracy and red tape.

Recently some of the decisions they have been making in relation to local businesses have been appalling. Mick and Bindy Sheehan, who run Southern Exposure, which is an adventure tourism business, have spent 20 years in Torquay. I met Mick several years ago when I was doorknocking in Torquay, and he was nice enough to ask me to come in and have a coffee with him. After 20 years they have just been told by this body that they no longer have the right to run a business in Torquay, with no proper decision-making process. It is very ordinary.

Recently they just simply got rid of the managers of the Anglesea caravan park, which was run by the Moore family. It had been a family-run business for 20 years. They would not accept their tender, despite a very good tender and a very good track record, and GORCC wanted to take it over themselves. In Lorne we have Sam and Angelo Gazis at the Lorne Pier Seafood Restaurant at Point Grey. That Point Grey redevelopment has been a complete disgrace and has been handled very poorly by GORCC. Again, this was a family business for over 20 years, and they will not give them a lease.

This organisation has no accountability in its decision-making. I have spoken to the member for Polwarth, and he certainly supports my views on this and is asking for GORCC to be gotten rid of and its responsibilities to be given back to Surf Coast shire. I have certainly spoken to a few Surf Coast councillors who are quite receptive to this, and it would be very easy for the shire to take over the functions of GORCC. Most particularly, the more hands-on staff roles would be taken up by the shire. There is a massive duplication of resources, and it needs to end. I call on the minister to disband the Great Ocean Road Coast Committee.

Carrum electorate bus services

Ms KILKENNY (Carrum) — (12 172) My adjournment matter is for the Minister for Public Transport, and the action I seek is for the minister to work with me and my local community to identify and consider ways to improve local bus services for residents in and around Carrum Downs in my electorate of Carrum. Bus services provide a very useful service,

either end to end or linking communities with other public transport modes such as trains.

After four years of complete and utter neglect of public transport services for residents in Carrum Downs by the former Liberal government, I held a very well attended bus forum with the minister last year. Listening to residents, it is clear they want — and need — a good and reliable public transport system, and buses form an important component of this. In particular, residents in Carrum Downs, including many young people and students, identified the need to be able to access train stations at Carrum and Seaford. I look forward to working with the minister to see what improvements can be made to bus services in and around Carrum Downs.

Yarra Boulevard, Kew

Mr T. SMITH (Kew) — (12 173) My adjournment matter this evening is for the Minister for Police, and the action I seek from the Minister for Police is that she increase resources to Boroondara police to ensure that the spate of lawlessness that has been occurring on Yarra Boulevard can be stopped. This lawlessness includes — —

Ms Green interjected.

Mr T. SMITH — Thank you very much for your contribution, member for Yan Yean. You are a genius!

What I am seeking is attention to be given to the spate of tacks being put on Yarra Boulevard that are afflicting cyclists by popping their tyres, which is very, very dangerous. It is concerning not only the cycling community but my own community in Kew.

The police have been trying for two years to catch whoever has been doing this, but the police advise me that it could be a number of individuals who have been doing this really very dangerous activity. The police have had assets deployed in the area, but for whatever reason they cannot find who is doing this. It is a very dark part of my electorate at night. There is no street lighting of any sort, and the bushland on either side of Yarra Boulevard is quite dense, so it provides enormous cover for those people who are doing the wrong thing. But I am simply seeking from the Minister for Police added resources to ensure that we can catch these people, because they are putting lives at risk.

There will be a forum at VicRoads attended by representatives from the council, local MPs, the mayor of Boroondara, Phillip Healey, representatives from VicRoads and Boroondara police on 14 December at the VicRoads theatre. All these issues are going to be

raised there. It would be great if someone from the minister's office could attend this event, because it is an important display of unity by all public agencies and elected officials in the City of Boroondara and indeed in Kew to look at how we can alleviate what is an important law and order issue.

Hopefully we will also be discussing road safety on Yarra Boulevard. There was a tragedy earlier this year when young people driving way too fast came around the bend and unfortunately there was a fatality. Yarra Boulevard is often used for hooning, drag racing and the like, and again because it is so dark around there at night there are not often a lot of residents, passers-by and the like observing these activities who can call authorities when this sort of activity occurs. These issues will be raised on 14 December. They are important. Frankly I would like to see the minister get involved, look at these issues seriously and look at increased resources for that part of my electorate

Pascoe Vale electorate infrastructure

Ms BLANDTHORN (Pascoe Vale) — (12 174) I appreciate the opportunity to raise a matter for the attention of the Treasurer. The action I seek is that the Treasurer provide an update on what opportunities there might be for continued investment in my electorate of Pascoe Vale.

I note that in the first two years of this government there have been numerous local investments that benefit my community: \$1.3 billion for the CityLink-Tullamarine Freeway widening project, including the upgrade of the dangerous Bell Street interchange; \$13 million to provide a safe haven for women and their children in Coburg; \$10 million for new noise walls along the M80 ring-road at Glenroy and Gowanbrae; \$5 million for the rebuild of Westbreen Primary School; \$3.5 million for the rebuild of Pascoe Vale South Primary School; and \$2.78 million for three state-of-the-art portables for Strathmore Secondary College. Coburg North Primary School and Strathmore Secondary College were 2 of 35 schools to share in \$12 million of funding for master planning in the last state budget.

Further investments include \$1.8 million for the upgrade of the Oak Park ambulance station; \$1 million for the upgrade of the hall at St Oliver Plunkett Primary School; \$3.5 million for the rebuild of Pascoe Vale South Primary School; \$745 500 to VICSEG to deliver an employment program for refugees and asylum seekers; \$510 000 in additional equity funding for schools in the Pascoe Vale district; \$380 000 for maintenance for Glenroy College; \$300 000 for the

upgrade of the Anne Sgro Children's Centre; \$215 000 for a new medium-sized rescue truck for the Broadmeadows State Emergency Service unit; \$192 000 for new lights in the car park at De Chene Reserve, Coburg; \$163 000 for maintenance at Pascoe Vale Girls College; \$154 000 for maintenance at Glenroy West Primary School; \$100 000 for new floodlights for Richards Reserve, Coburg North; and \$75 000 for maintenance at Westbreen Primary School.

There is also \$62 500 to VICSEG for the provision of a family violence prevention program through playgroup; \$55 000 for design services for netball courts at Charles Mutton, Cole, J. P. Fawkner and Morris reserves; \$35 000 to the Australian International Academy for the development of an emergency management plan; \$31 609 for the redevelopment of two netball courts at Martin Reserve, Hadfield; a \$26 500 minor capital grant for Northwest Montessori Preschool, Coburg; \$20 000 to joiningthedots for a community harmony program; \$20 000 to refurbish the Glenroy Library; \$13 000 to support local band Tanzer to record their second album; an \$11 500 Grow Your Business grant for Spanish Doughnuts, Coburg North; a \$10 000 minor capital grant for Glenroy West Kindergarten; \$10 000 to support local band Beaches to record their album; \$4280 to refurbish the Coburg Library; a \$3789 community shade grant for the Glenroy Memorial Preschool; a \$3000 VicHealth Active grant for the Glenroy Cricket Club; a \$1500 minor capital grant for H. E. Kane Memorial Kindergarten, Hadfield; a \$1500 travel grant for the Moreland City Youth Boxing Club — —

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

Water policy

Mr PAYNTER (Bass) — (12 175) My adjournment matter is for the Minister for Water, and the action that I seek is for the minister to cancel the water order from the desalination plant in Wonthaggi. In another extraordinary display of waste, in April this year this government placed a 50-gigalitre water order at a cost to Victorians of \$27 million. Water storages are now at 72.6 per cent full compared with 71.4 per cent at the same time last year. Our local water storage, Candowie Reservoir, is currently sitting at 85.1 per cent full compared to 71.1 per cent in 2015. This water order is expected to add \$12 to household water bills. It is time the minister came clean and admitted the decision is wrong. The order was irresponsible, ill-informed and lacked any form of planning or foresight. Embarrassingly the minister could not even answer a question regarding the cost to cancel the order. Despite

the lack of information from the minister, cancelling the order is exactly what needs to be done.

To add insult to injury, funding for the relocation of the Wonthaggi Secondary College is yet to be committed. So whilst the people of Wonthaggi sit by and watch \$27 million being poured down the drain for water that is not needed, the Wonthaggi Secondary College is bursting at the seams. At the 2014 election the then coalition government committed \$21 million to a new school, which would now be well underway had it been successful. I ask the minister to do the honourable thing and pull the plug on this water order, and then head down the corridor and knock on the door of the Minister for Education and tell him to go ahead with building the new secondary college at Wonthaggi.

Edithvale Life Saving Club

Mr RICHARDSON (Mordialloc) — (12 176) My adjournment matter this evening is for the Minister for Emergency Services, and the action I seek is for the minister to visit Edithvale Life Saving Club in my electorate to talk about the \$1.5 million investment we are making in the club and how that will support their redevelopment plans. Some 31 000 people volunteer on our beaches, at our rivers and on our lakes each and every year to support our community, and Edithvale Life Saving Club is no different. They have a fantastic dedicated community and a wonderful program where they are supporting Afghan refugees to learn about water safety on the bay. These are people who have come from a landlocked country and who have never learned to swim properly. The club provides a fantastic program to support those adolescents to learn how to swim and to assist members of the community who live near Edithvale and Springvale roads.

I would like to acknowledge the wonderful committee of Dianne Montalto, Kerry Bell, Sandra Madeley and Andrew Firmin, who do an outstanding job. They are a fantastic committee. This club is one of the oldest lifesaving clubs going. It was established in 1919, not long after the Frankston line was continued through to Chelsea. The building works will coincide nicely in the future with their 100-year celebration. In conclusion, I ask the Minister for Emergency Services to come out to the Edithvale Life Saving Club to talk about the \$1.5 million investment. I also want to acknowledge the City of Kingston's contribution of \$1.5 million to this outstanding project. This is a great example of where state and local government work together to get great outcomes for our region.

Responses

Mr FOLEY (Minister for Housing, Disability and Ageing) — I thank the honourable member for Ferntree Gully for the proposition he put to us regarding the sad outcome, at this time of the year particularly but really at any time of the year, for the residents of the privately owned Wantirna Park caravan park. There is in fact a standard protocol between housing and homelessness organisations and most local governments, and I am confident, given the fine reputation that the Knox City Council has, that they will be part of this. I am not 100 per cent up with that, but I am confident they will. We will make sure that through our department we work with the honourable member's local council and his community to ensure that these residents are accommodated as far as we possibly can through the process of this protocol. Obviously the more notice the better, and I note the good-faith contribution the honourable member has made. I look forward to hopefully, at this time of the year in particular, working through that protocol with the department and the council to secure the future of those tenants.

I would like to use this opportunity to inform all members that the national partnership on homelessness, which funds many of these programs, particularly in Victoria through older homelessness groups, which is a specific element of that, is on the agenda for the Council of Australian Governments meeting tomorrow. I am hopeful I can use this opportunity to call on the Prime Minister to re-fund that program, which is due to run out at the end of this financial year.

Deputy Speaker, we thank you and all of the officials of the Parliament very much. I take this opportunity to wish everyone the compliments of the season. I look forward to working with the honourable member for Ferntree Gully to address this issue.

Ms ALLAN (Minister for Public Transport) — The member for Carrum has again raised in this place improvements to public transport in her community of Carrum. I thank her for her ongoing and tireless advocacy for that community. I well remember attending a public transport forum organised by the member for Carrum in her electorate last year. Unsurprisingly the issue of buses and better bus connections was a hot topic at that meeting with members of the local community.

Of course this is a hot topic for the government as well. We have got a key election commitment — a \$100 million election commitment — to improve our bus routes and our servicing of growth areas like Carrum Downs. We are continuing to roll that program

out. There is certainly an understanding within Public Transport Victoria of the need to improve bus services to Carrum Downs. We will continue to work with the local member, local residents and other key interested stakeholders to look at how we can improve these bus services and also make those critical links to other public transport services in the local area. I thank the member for Carrum for raising that matter.

Deputy Speaker, with your indulgence just before we rise for the Christmas period, the festive season, I would like to thank, on behalf of all members of this chamber, the parliamentary staff who serve us for their wonderful work. They will be here long after we have gone tonight.

To the Speaker and the Deputy Speaker — particularly you, Deputy Speaker — I thank you for your guidance in these debates over the course of the year. To the clerks, who give all of us great support, thank you. Thanks too to the Serjeant-at-Arms, the attendants, the Hansard staff, the garden staff, the maintenance staff, the IT staff, the dining room staff — have I left anyone out? I do hope I have not. I think all of us greatly appreciate the way you support us with dignity and good humour in the role that we perform in this place.

I would like to thank the opposition for their contributions during the course of the year. He is not here, but I am sure his colleagues will pass on my appreciation of the constructive way the manager of opposition business, the member for Box Hill, has worked with me through some sticky times this year. Certainly I have appreciated the way he has engaged in some of those conversations and in working through issues. I also appreciate the support that is provided to him by his whip, the member for South Barwon. The Independent and the Greens members of Parliament, I also acknowledge their contributions to the operation of the house.

Thanks to the Labor team. We have got a great Labor team, and I would like to thank them for the way they have once again risen to the occasion and performed the duty of forming government in the house. It is a big job, but we are up to the task and we do it with pride and passion. I am also thankful for the support I have had this year from two of my colleagues who have held the position of whip: the member for Yuroke and now the member for Thomastown, who does great work. I thank them and their staff for their support. I should get a plug in for my staff and the parliamentary staff in the Premier's office, who also do a great job in supporting all of us.

I appreciate the indulgence of the house in extending those best wishes to everyone for the Christmas period. I hope we all come back next year in good health, good spirit and good form as we take up again the opportunities that being members of Parliament provide us in this place.

The remaining eight matters that were raised by eight members of this place will be referred to those ministers for their action and response.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER — Order! I also thank people for all their work over the year: the Speaker, for his support of me and the team here at Parliament; Ray and all the clerks; Hansard and the attendants — Paul and the team — who do a fantastic job looking after us over the course of the year. I would like to wish all honourable members a happy, safe and merry Christmas and a well-deserved break before we all come back to serve the great people of Victoria for another 12 months. The house is now adjourned.

**House adjourned 5.42 p.m. until Tuesday,
7 February 2017.**

