

PARLIAMENT OF VICTORIA

**PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES
(HANSARD)**

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

Tuesday, 7 February 2017

(Extract from book 1)

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The Honourable LINDA DESSAU, AC

The Lieutenant-Governor

The Honourable Justice MARILYN WARREN, AC, QC

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(from 10 November 2016)

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FIFTY-EIGHTH PARLIAMENT — FIRST SESSION**

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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

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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

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FIFTY-EIGHTH PARLIAMENT — FIRST SESSION

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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	Naphthine, 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
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Bull, Mr Timothy Owen	Gippsland East	Nats	O'Brien, Mr Michael Anthony	Malvern	LP
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Crisp, Mr Peter Laurence	Mildura	Nats	Pesutto, Mr John	Hawthorn	LP
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Lim, Mr Muy Hong	Clarinda	ALP	Williams, Ms Gabrielle	Dandenong	ALP
McCurdy, Mr Timothy Logan	Owens 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 Elasmarr and Mr Melhem.

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

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

Family and Community Development Committee — (*Assembly*): Ms Couzens, Mr Edbrooke, Ms Edwards 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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Tuesday, 7 February 2017

The SPEAKER (Hon. Telmo Languiller) took the chair at 12.04 p.m. and read the prayer.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

The SPEAKER — Order! We acknowledge the traditional Aboriginal owners of the land on which we are meeting. We pay our respects to them, their culture, their elders past, present and future, and elders from other communities who may be here today.

BLACK SATURDAY

The SPEAKER — Order! I remind the house that today marks the eighth anniversary of the devastating 2009 bushfires, which affected communities across the state. We will take a moment to pause and think of those communities and the lives lost during those devastating fires.

I invite all members to stand in their places and join me in a minute's silence.

Honourable members stood in their places.

DISTINGUISHED VISITORS

The SPEAKER — Order! I would like to welcome to the gallery today congressmen and members of Parliament from Argentina. They are the recipients of the Australia Awards fellowships, funded by the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade. On behalf of the Premier, the Leader of the Opposition and all members, we welcome you. Bienvenidos.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

Standing and sessional orders

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

That so much of standing and sessional orders be suspended today so as to immediately allow —

- (1) the Premier to move a motion of condolence in relation to the Bourke Street tragedy, and the Leader of the Opposition, Deputy Premier, Leader of The Nationals, Lord Mayor, member for Melbourne, a government member and then other members to speak on the motion;
- (2) the Right Honourable Lord Mayor of Melbourne, Mr Robert Doyle, onto the floor of the house until the conclusion of his contribution; and
- (3) at the conclusion of the motion, the house to adjourn until Wednesday, 8 February 2017.

Motion agreed to.

Right Honourable Robert Doyle escorted into chamber by Serjeant-at-Arms.

BOURKE STREET TRAGEDY

Mr ANDREWS (Premier) — I move:

That this house extends our thoughts, prayers and support to the victims of the Bourke Street tragedy and their loved ones; expresses our gratitude to emergency service personnel for their unwavering professionalism; and pays tribute to the everyday Victorians who, in the face of unimaginable tragedy, showed the most remarkable courage and compassion.

Eighteen days ago our whole state stopped — in shock, in grief, in sadness. Today this Parliament also stops — to pay tribute to the victims of an unspeakable crime that took place in the heart of our city. The thousands who bore witness, the dozens who were injured, the six who were lost — today we honour them, we remember them and we stand by their families and their classmates and their colleagues and their friends.

I think the precise events of Friday, 20 January, do not need to be revisited here in all their terrible detail. We all know what happened. We will always know what happened. On that Friday afternoon it felt like a giant shadow was cast over our city, and in many ways it still has not really gone away.

It was one of those days where you cannot help but think: this could have happened to my family. This could have happened to anyone. It was one of those days when I am sure each of us did a mental checklist of everyone we know and love who might have been in the city in that place at that time.

It was one of those days when parents right around the country, I expect, might well have had to sit down with their kids just to say, 'You know, bad things happen, bad people exist — but there is love in our world'. And it was one of those days that will stay with us for a very, very long time.

I think even in 10 years there will be people walking along Bourke Street who will stop quietly and, even just for a second, feel that shadow and all of that grief wash over them again. For the rest of our history Bourke Street will stand alongside Russell Street, Hoddle Street, Walsh Street and Queen Street as a marker of great tragedy.

Normality eventually returns to these places because it has to. But the city never forgets. Victorians never forget. I will never forget going there the morning after.

I wrote in a small note to the victims and their loved ones: ‘You could have been any one of us. You were bystanders. You were innocent’. They were sons, daughters, brothers, sisters. They were ordinary, respectable, law-abiding people who did nothing wrong. They were victims of the worst tragedy in Victoria since Black Saturday and the worst mass murder in Melbourne in almost 30 years. And they died simply because they were there.

There is nothing that I can say that will make things better for them and their families. There are no words from any of us that will make this right. It is only action that truly counts. That is why I promise them and promise every Victorian that, whatever circumstances put that man behind the wheel of that car at that time in that place, we will do everything we can so that that does not ever happen again.

We would be dishonouring these innocent victims and the people who loved them so much if we did not consider their deaths and this tragedy a wake-up call, a reason for change — whatever the cost, whatever the effort. Changes must be made because Victorians do not just feel sad about this tragedy. We feel angry too. We feel outraged. And it is right to feel that.

But I also want to say this: we should not just use the events of that day to reflect solely on what is wrong in our world. We should also remember that in the wake of this tragedy we learned so much about what is right with our world and what is right about our people, because even in the worst of circumstances we saw the very best of the Victorian spirit. We heard so many stories of everyday heroism, modest acts of greatness: people who dropped every possession and ran towards the victims, towards the chaos, towards the fear, towards the danger; who comforted, who cradled, who checked pulses, who held hands and held heads. A group of people — hundreds strong, all strangers, with nothing in common but their location — who all launched into action that afternoon without a moment’s hesitation. We will never know for sure of course, but I think these ordinary Australians must have saved at least one life.

We must also thank our doctors and nurses and hospital staff whose dedicated, calm and methodical care made all the difference, and the army of volunteers, including those from the Red Cross, the State Emergency Service and the Victorian Council of Churches, who have done us all proud. I would like to mention the Lord Mayor and his staff, who have been simply outstanding.

We also need to include all paramedics, police and firefighters — all of those professionals to whom we

owe everything. They serve in the defence and the protection of the things we value most. They provide the care, the love, the support and the safety that is so important for all of us. In doing that they carry a unique burden; they too will be forever changed by what they experienced on that day. Our gratitude, our best wishes and, most importantly, our priority for their welfare is also extended to them today.

Each of them has given us all a lesson in bravery and nerve. We have heeded that lesson. We — I think all of us — have given thanks for our health. We have said prayers for those who are recovering, some who still remain in grave circumstances in our hospitals. We have spared our thoughts for those six families and the many more whose lives will never be the same again. I am sure that we will tonight, just as we did that night, go home and perhaps hug our children a little tighter, thankful that we were not caught up in those terrible circumstances.

We will never forget the day that Melbourne’s heart was broken, and we will always remember that the people of Victoria are strong and brave and proud to stand together. We will always remember with respect those who have paid such a high price for this evil act, but we will also pause to celebrate that, in the worst of circumstances, we saw love and care and compassion. We saw the very best of the Victorian spirit.

Mr GUY (Leader of the Opposition) — On behalf of the Liberal and National parties I rise to support this motion. Melbourne is my city, and to so many in this Parliament, it is your city. To all of our families, our friends and our loved ones it is our state capital, the city we all love. It is a place that has grown from a small colony by a bay to an international city of approaching 5 million people. It is one of the world’s great cities that has a magnificent past of long-term Indigenous settlement in this area, being a trading port and being the central hub for one of the world’s great gold rushes, rising at one stage to become the second city of the British Empire. Our city is now a place of many, for many, with that wonderful past and what should be a confident future.

Sadly, we have had dark and devastating moments in our history too — terrible times that have scarred us, hurt us and impacted so many. We are here on Tuesday, 7 February, to mourn the events of Friday, 20 January, where a mass murderer took the lives of six people, injured dozens of others and caused enormous anguish, distress and hurt to thousands — and, sadly, we do this on the eighth anniversary of the Black Saturday fires of 2009, another devastating scar on our state’s recent history.

The events of 20 January have impacted so many of us so deeply. The level of hurt, not just in Melbourne but right across Victoria and Australia, has been overwhelming. The loss of life has been felt by all of us, whether we knew those taken or not. All of us have felt loss, have felt the tremendous sadness and grief being borne by six families and have shaken our heads and asked 'Why?'. We have all prayed and sent in our own ways our strength and best wishes to those in hospital, hoping that they make a speedy recovery. We have all felt the anguish, the distress and the hurt by those who saw what happened and by those who jumped out of the way and avoided being struck, and the emotional pain being felt by those who arrived at the scene to witness what they did.

Our city — all of us — extend our love, our sympathies, our prayers and our best wishes, knowing that Melbourne has been challenged in the past and that this event will not define Melbourne or its people but indeed that love will. The floral tribute at the GPO was not just an expression of grief; it was also an expression of our city's heart, a heart open wide to families and individuals who are hurting — still hurting — and will be for a long time to come.

On that afternoon of 20 January six people died or suffered injuries that led to death, with another 36 suffering non-fatal physical injuries. Ten-year-old Thalia Hakin died that day, a student at Beth Rivkah Ladies College. She was part of our proud and vibrant Jewish community. 'Sparky, vibrant, vivacious and colourful' is how she is described. Let us never forget that beautiful little girl. Her mother and sister were also injured in the attack.

Three-month-old Zachary Bryant was a 'beautiful, loving, happy and perfect little baby' his family have said. A perfect little baby, lost at just three months old.

Twenty-two-year-old Jess Mudie was one of six children and a twin. Jess was visiting her brother and his fiancée here in Melbourne, having come down from Sydney's south-west.

Thirty-three-year-old Matthew Si was a devoted husband, father, brother and son. He was an architect, who had finished having lunch with his wife in the city when he was struck and killed.

Thirty-three-year-old Bhavita Patel was a senior manager at Deloitte in Melbourne. She had been promoted multiple times in recent years. She was considered a high-flyer, someone to watch as she progressed in her career. She was in the class of 2001 at Canberra's Radford College.

Also a 25-year-old Japanese man. While still unnamed, this young man who lost his life in our city will not be forgotten. He is not a 25-year-old from a foreign land to us; he is someone who will always be remembered and whose Prime Minister, Shinzo Abe, condoled in the land of his birth.

To all of the families of those lost we send our love, our heartfelt sympathies and every bit of empathy we can muster.

The stories behind the victims are heartbreaking: people enjoying a summer's day in the middle of the city, walking to and from work, getting some lunch, strolling in the city with children — doing what we have all done before. The scenes, the photographs of the aftermath are gut-wrenching.

To those injured, physically or emotionally, we send our love, we send our support and we send our strength to you all. While official statistics say 36 suffered physical injuries, the emotional scars are with so many and will be there for so long. There is nothing that can be done to erase the memories of what so many people saw and endured. We owe it to all of those injured to support them, help them and care for them as long as is needed.

All of us have a story as to where we were on that day and at that time. Almost all of us know someone who was in the city at that time — family, friends, staff or colleagues. Time may pass, but this incident will never disappear for so many.

In an incident like this it is hard to believe that anything could possibly be spoken about that fills you with pride or hope, but indeed there is that. What our emergency services workers, particularly our ambulance officers, nurses, doctors and apprehending police, did on that day should fill us with a sense of pride in what these men and women did to respond in the ways they did. We should be proud of them, of what they endured and the professionalism of their response. These are men and women who are amongst our state's finest.

And of course you have hope for humankind when you hear the stories of what so many ordinary people did on that day to help — cabbies, office workers, people in town for lunch, people just passing by — those who nursed victims, who assisted the emergency services and who gave us hope that humanity is not as bad as one individual showed, but that in fact we can in the most difficult of times show a human spirit that is so admirable and overwhelming as to fill you with all the hope that you can think of.

Victorians — Australians — are a resilient people but also far more caring than our usual rugged overseas image belies. The Victoria that I see, the Melbourne that I see, arising out of this incident is one saying, ‘Let us not just grieve; let us move forward with resolve and determination’.

While this incident is one we will never forget — we will never stop hurting from — it is not one that will define our city or our people, and as legislators we cannot let it do so. We owe it to the memory of those lost — to those families left behind, to the many, many hundreds injured, physically or emotionally — to say that our city must once again be a safe place for all of us. As people in this room, as leaders in this state, every one of us has that duty, that responsibility, not just to grieve and condole today, but to move forward with resolution, not just words, to make Melbourne safe.

I have felt so much hurt from this incident from so many Victorians. So many people cannot believe that this has happened in beautiful Melbourne town. I know that so many people have so many questions that they want answers to. Whether it is bail or community safety, they are inevitable topics that we must confront with all our courage after an exceptionally difficult time. Not to do so would be to not respond to Victorians’ grief, sadness and the many, many questions that so many Victorians currently have.

I again support this motion and place on record the support of the Liberal and National parties for its passage.

Mr MERLINO (Minister for Emergency Services) — I also rise to pay my respects to those who lost their lives and those whose wounds will heal but who will be forever impacted by the tragic events of 20 January. I think one of the reasons that day resonated so deeply was not just its utter senselessness, but because, as the Premier said, it could have been any one of us. Bourke Street Mall is somewhere we have all been: to do some shopping, to grab some lunch, to visit the Christmas windows with our kids. So on that day, as those terrible events unfolded, as we called our loved ones to check that they were safe, each of us knew it could have been us instead.

I think the other reason 20 January will stay with us is the remarkable acts of kindness we saw from total strangers. As the Minister for Emergency Services, I want to make special mention of the emergency services workers who, as they always do, responded exceptionally well. Police, firefighters, paramedics — in those moments of chaos their calm diligence and their expertise made all the difference.

Not all of the emergency services workers who helped on the day were on duty. One of those workers was Andrew Picker, an off-duty firefighter with the Metropolitan Fire Brigade who is currently stationed at Carlton. I have spoken to Andrew, and he is here in the gallery with his parents. He is not here to be singled out, but for me he is a representative of all the emergency services workers from that day.

Andrew had finished night shift at 8 o’clock that morning. At about 1.30 p.m. he went to pick up his brother and sister-in-law. Andrew had no other reason to be in the city that day, but he was, and he knew that something was not quite right. He noticed the helicopter struggling to hover in the wind overhead and he went to investigate. Around him had unfolded the most inconceivable tragedy and the most incredible courage. With his permission, I would like to share Andrew’s words:

I stopped by a little girl who was being attended by three bystanders. They were doing a really good job reassuring her.

I sat with her and explained that the ambulances might take a while. I talked with her, trying to distract her while waiting ... I asked her about school and what games she liked to play.

I returned to [the little girl] a number of times in between seeing the other patients on the street.

I was running between patients to ensure that no-one was moving [them], ensuring airways were cleared and bleeding controlled.

Two more ambulances arrived. I assisted loading patients and helped clear the scene.

I counted 29 patients. I stopped at every one of them and made sure they were being attended to. I administered first aid to seven.

Andrew is a hero. He administered CPR, attended to wounds — many horrific — prioritised patients in preparation for the arriving ambulances and laid blankets over the deceased. He was just one of many heroes that day, just one of many emergency services workers who went beyond the call of duty. I asked Andrew what he was thinking as he confronted those scenes of chaos and devastation. He told me that all he saw were people in need, that he was not thinking, that automatically he fell back on his 11 years of emergency medical response training. He did what he could; he did everything he could.

Andrew also told me that the full impact of that day is yet to really hit home and may not for years. This morning, as part of the Black Saturday commemoration, I was at the state control centre, and Dr Rob Gordon, who is the disaster psychologist, spoke to me and referred to Bourke Street, and, before that,

September 11, Ash Wednesday and Black Saturday, and he talked about the peaks and troughs. There are peaks when people seek help and then times when they do not. But it peaks and it troughs, not just over weeks and months but over years and years when people will need support. So just as I urged Andrew, I urge every person impacted by the events of that day: do not be afraid to ask for help.

Since 20 January 520 Australian Red Cross, Victorian Council of Churches and Salvation Army volunteers have had more than 15 000 conversations with individuals and organisations within the Bourke Street Mall area and beyond. Emergency Management Victoria is continuing to work with the Department of Health and Human Services, with the City of Melbourne, who have been outstanding, with the Australian Red Cross, with the Victorian Council of Churches, with the Salvation Army and with other agencies to meet the immediate and longer term recovery needs of all those affected. This includes ensuring psychological support is available for those directly affected as well as the wider Victorian community who may have witnessed or been affected by the event.

The professionalism of our emergency service workers is without peer. They can all be proud of the lives they saved and the people they helped. We are all proud of their professionalism and their humanity, and we are proud and grateful for the unprompted acts of courage — of love — from members of the public, people who without a thought for their own safety rushed to the victims, who lay alongside them, who administered the first care, who whispered words of support. It is in their response and in the response of our emergency service workers like Andrew that we can take heart, because they showed us at our best even when things were at their devastating worst.

Mr WALSH (Murray Plains) — I rise as Leader of The Nationals to support the motion and support the Leader of the Opposition, the Premier, the Deputy Premier and all members of this house in expressing my heartfelt condolences and sympathy to the victims and the families of this absolute tragedy that occurred in Bourke Street Mall.

We all know the series of circumstances that led to a car being driven through the Bourke Street Mall in the early afternoon of 20 January, and it is well documented. Six people tragically lost their lives that day, and 37 were injured; nine of those are still in hospital. The effects on those families from this tragedy will live with them forever, and I do not think we

should ever underestimate the impact that will have on those families for the rest of their lives.

Tens of thousands of people are in the Bourke Street Mall on any given day, and so many people who we know were there sometime during that day, were there the day before, the day after, and they all say, 'There but for the grace of God go I' — that just by the point of being at a certain place at a certain time some people lost their lives or were seriously injured. We all know people who use the mall and who were there before or after that time, and they all are so grateful that it was not them, but they all have absolute sympathy for those who were affected.

We also know that the events of 20 January are caused by the worst of human nature, but as has already been said, it also brings out the best in humanity, as evidenced by all those who assisted after the event had actually happened. To all the emergency services personnel, thank you very much for everything that you did after that event. To all the medical staff and the hospitals that received those patients, thank you from everyone again for what you did. To all of those in the mall who actually assisted before the emergency services arrived, thank you very much, and we have heard what they did there.

I think the telling remembrance of that is probably the 8-minute YouTube video message done by the paramedics that talks about those particular people who helped there. I quote from two of the paramedics who spoke on that video. One said:

It's hard to explain just how inspiring that was to see that people were just doing what needed to be done amid the tragedy.

Another said:

You could see it meant a lot to the patients on the street that everyone was helping them.

To all those people whose instinct and compassion kicked in and who helped, thank you very, very much.

Probably like all members of this Parliament, on the Sunday when I came to Melbourne I visited the site where the memorial and the flowers were placed. I think we also owe a vote of thanks to all the volunteers who were there talking to people, those who were emotionally affected, upset by the events and the aftermath, all those volunteers who gave their time to be there to counsel; we thank them as well.

Probably like all members of the Parliament, I attended a number of Australia Day functions this year, as I do every year and as everyone does every year. With the

Bourke Street Mall tragedy fresh in people's minds, with the latest riots and escape from Malmsbury Youth Justice Centre the day before, people sought me out to express their anger, their seething anger about what had happened over the last weeks and what has evolved here in Victoria when it comes to law and order issues.

They were polite, as country people are, but you could tell that they were very, very angry about the events that are unfolding in this state. They expressed their concerns that the police seem powerless at times to do what needs to be done, and they would like to see that changed. As I talk to the police, everyone goes to work to do a good job but there is a belief that the system is actually failing people at the moment. They were the things that were brought to me at those Australia Day functions.

The more important thing that people brought to me at those Australia Day functions was that they believe that the court system in Victoria is failing both the people of Victoria and the police who capture the perpetrators of crime here in Victoria and that the bail system does need reform. We have heard the Premier talk about that, but they want to see real reform; they do not want to see another review and some small, incremental changes. They want to see real reform. They want to feel safe in their homes.

For the first time in my lifetime we have country people who do not feel safe in their own homes now, and that is something that we all need to work to change in the future. One of the first priorities of any government in the world is to make sure that its people feel safe and particularly feel safe in their community. If nothing else comes out of this tragedy, people need to know that there will be change so that they feel safer into the future, because they feel that the perpetrators get more advantage out of the system than the victims do and they want to see that change.

I do support the motion. I notice we are adjourning after this motion. I believe we should, as a mark of respect, adjourn for a shorter period of time and that this Parliament should come back and debate these issues and talk about the changes that are necessary in this state so that the legal system reflects the values of the community and makes sure that the people of Victoria feel safer in their homes and in their communities.

My heartfelt sympathy goes to all the families that were affected, to all those who were affected by helping afterwards and to all Victorians, because these sorts of events are life changing, do shape a society and do shape a city, and we need to make sure we actually learn from it and improve from it.

Mr DOYLE — I thank the house for the honour and the courtesy it has extended to me by inviting me onto the floor today.

On Friday, 20 January, at 1.30 in the afternoon, I was standing on the balcony of town hall, and I was doing a press conference. We had to break that press conference because the sound of the helicopter overhead was interrupting the sound technicians, so we broke briefly.

As we looked down Swanston Street towards Flinders Street we saw the approach of a maroon Commodore trailed by a number of police vehicles. When that vehicle reached Collins Street it accelerated very quickly. It wrenched left to turn into Little Collins Street, where of course its way was blocked by the bollards that pedestrianise Little Collins Street at lunchtimes, and to our horror we watched that driver then wrench right and drive along the footpath down Swanston Street. He turned into the mall, and we know the aftermath of that terrible journey — six dead, 37 injured, hundreds traumatised, all of us touched.

One thing that surprised me when I watched the CCTV video of that incident was that the time that driver was in the Swanston and Flinders intersection until the awful conclusion of that incident further up Bourke Street near the RACV Club was 6 minutes — 6 minutes to cause the mayhem that was caused.

At first, as speakers have said, I think we all shared that pain of grief and loss. Then there was a maelstrom of emotion — anger, bafflement, anxiety, sadness, shock. Then we all shared that outpouring of love and compassion that became the floral tributes, the messages left, the vigil in Federation Square, all of which marked our tragedy. That outpouring of love said, 'We feel, we hurt, we grieve, but we are here together for them and for us'.

Could I say thank you to our leaders for the last 18 days: our Governor, the Premier and the Leader of the Opposition, the Prime Minister and the federal Leader of the Opposition, the police, our emergency services, our church leaders, the Red Cross, our community, the Parliament, our city. All have played a role in helping, in coping and, I hope, just in the beginning of healing. In a time when sometimes our community despairs of leadership, in our tragedy leadership was there across the board, and it brought affirmation, not negation. It brought love, not hate.

Our lives will go on; six will not. Many more lives will never be the same. Mine will not. To remember is the least we can do. We grieve brutal, shocking death and harm, but we celebrate uplifting life and hope and the

heroism of our emergency services, our health professionals and, most of all, everyday, ordinary, remarkable people.

A special word here for our health system, if I may, particularly with the honour of being chair of the Royal Melbourne Hospital. We cared for 12 direct victims; two have died and one remains gravely, seriously injured. But the ambulance teams, the emergency teams, the surgical teams, the intensive care teams, the ward teams and the admin teams have all been magnificent under the worst pressure imaginable, and that story played out across all of our hospitals and across our system.

I have been acutely aware in the past weeks of my inability to reach the profound, to reassure with confidence, to explain why, to know the answers, to promise this will never happen again. All I can offer is how I feel. I will carry their deaths to my death. For me, although evil may happen and the innocent suffer, I will fear no evil. That is not how I will live my life as Robert or as Lord Mayor. We owe them no less.

Right Honourable Robert Doyle escorted from chamber by Serjeant-at-Arms.

Ms SANDELL (Melbourne) — I too rise today to speak in support of this condolence motion and to speak about the cruel act that happened on 20 January in the Bourke Street Mall and surrounding areas of the CBD. I do this on behalf of the Greens but also as the local member for the area in which this tragedy unfolded.

Listening to the events unfold on the ABC radio news, I felt the same way as many of my colleagues today have described. First was just the sheer shock, the disbelief — not just because this was happening in our home, in a place where we had all walked hundreds of times, but because of the cruelty and the deliberate nature of the act. But then came the heartbreak. As the severity of the crimes came to light, we learned that some people had already passed away and more were in a critical condition. In particular there was the heartbreak of that image of an upturned pram in the middle of the street.

I am the local member where this unfolded, but I am aware that every member in this place feels these crimes very acutely, whether they were near them or whether they were physically far away. I was in the Bourke Street Mall just 20 minutes before the tragedy and horror unfolded after a local community event I had attended as part of my job. So I was one of the lucky ones to miss the horror by mere minutes, but I know that thousands were in a similar situation, thinking,

‘That could have been me. That could have been my family. That could have been my friends’.

As I made my way out of the CBD I was oblivious to what was happening but, as I made my way out, I saw a police car speeding down Nicholson Street towards the CBD, sirens blazing, and I thought, ‘I wonder what has happened, but I’ll probably never find out’. But unfortunately and tragically everyone in Melbourne was about to find out.

As the Premier has said, there is nothing that can articulate the tragic loss of six lives on that day. There is nothing that can adequately console the families and friends of those who were taken so cruelly, but we can do justice to the victims by acknowledging them out loud here in this place to make sure that they are not forgotten: three-month-old Zachary Bryant, 10-year-old Thalia Hakin, 22-year-old Jess Mudie, 33-year-old Matthew Si, a 25-year-old Japanese man and 33-year-old Bhavita Patel.

Nothing good can ever come from a cruel act like this — nothing — but seeing everyday people rush to the sides of those injured, banding together to provide first aid, supporting them, reassuring them — that is what made me proud to be a Melburnian. These moments were when our community showed its true colours. We showed that when it comes down to it we are strong, we are caring and we will put our own welfare aside to care for those in need. We have heard accounts of people who were there on the day, people like Henry Dow and Lou the taxidriver, who embodied what we all hope to be in times of tragedy. They did what we hope we would do if we were in a similar situation.

Again this was demonstrated a few days later by the 2000 Victorians who gathered in Federation Square at the vigil to mourn those we had lost. I was proud to stand with my fellow Melburnians. It was clear how affected people were but also just how big Melbourne’s heart is. I want to say a special thankyou to the Premier and to the Lord Mayor for organising the vigil but also for your leadership and for your collaboration at what was such a difficult time. It also has to be said, of course: thank you to the Victoria Police and the other state emergency services — Ambulance Victoria, local fire brigades — and the Red Cross who were professional as always and carried out timely and heroic responses in what must have been very challenging but also very unclear circumstances.

We can never do enough to acknowledge these first responders and our health workers at times like this. We acknowledge in particular the Royal Melbourne

Hospital and the Royal Children's Hospital and all the other hospitals involved and the surgeons, the nurses, the doctors and the other health workers and professionals who have cared for victims and who continue to care for victims. You provide world-class care, and we cannot be more thankful. We must not forget those who are still being treated for their injuries. Some of them are not out of the woods yet.

When terrible things like this happen it is obviously natural to ask ourselves 'Why?'. We do not know exactly why a man decided to commit such horrendous crimes in our city and, anyway, no matter the reason, it is inexcusable. But we can ask how we can prevent crimes like this from happening, how we can make our community safer.

Beyond just looking at the bail laws, which might seem like an easy fix at times, we must go broader: we must look at our mental health system. How can we better intervene in cases where people might pose a threat of serious harm to others? How can we intervene early so it never gets to that? Do we need to look further at the drivers of family violence and how we can better identify, treat or deal with perpetrators? None of these will be easy fixes. They require deep, difficult work over the long term. But of course it is necessary work. While we are thinking of the victims, their families and their loved ones, let us make sure we do turn our minds to how to make communities safer so that something like this is much less likely to happen again.

In this place we may disagree on some of those proposed solutions, but I hope that we can have a respectful dialogue about them for the good of everyone in Victoria and not just use them as political opportunities. It is the least we owe to the victims of this cruel event. On other days of the year my colleagues and I might disagree on a wide variety of issues, but when it comes to the loss that we feel after this incident, when it comes to the support that we want to provide victims, there is nothing to disagree about. Today we are united as one Victoria in loss and grief. My thoughts are with all those who, through absolutely no fault of their own, were caught up in this act, and I thank the chamber for the opportunity to share my thoughts on the matter.

Ms NEVILLE (Minister for Police) — I rise today to support the Premier's motion and to offer my sincere condolences to the families, friends and communities impacted by the Bourke Street tragedy and who are grieving the loss of six extraordinary lives. I also pass on my prayers and thoughts to those still recovering

from injuries, both physical and emotional, as a result of the events on that day.

There are a few days in Victorian history which are seared into our hearts and into our minds, days when innocent lives are lost suddenly and unexpectedly. The events of 20 January mean it will be one of those days that we will carry with us and remember forever. It was a devastating event that has left Victorians heartbroken and grieving, especially those family members who lost between them six loved ones, some way too young. To lose a child is a parent's worst nightmare; to lose one in these circumstances is unimaginable.

Just as we witnessed the worst of humanity on that day, we also witnessed the best. I was reminded of a quote from the book *A Paradise Built in Hell* by Rebecca Solnit, which I think well captures the heroism of everyday people when faced with adversity, which is what we saw on that Friday, and I quote:

The great majority of people are calm, resourceful, altruistic or even beyond altruistic, as they risk themselves for others. We improvise the conditions of survival beautifully ...

In some ways, people behave better than in ordinary life ...

We have all heard, and we have heard it today as well, and seen the stories of courage, caring and compassion shown by members of the community and by our emergency services during the Bourke Street tragedy.

I particularly want to pay tribute to the actions of the hundreds of Victoria Police members, and we know that there were at least 500 involved, who ran into danger to help the injured, perform CPR on a number of victims, secure the scene, attend at hospitals and take hundreds of witness statements. I had the privilege of meeting with many of these police first responders, particularly those from the Melbourne East and Melbourne West police stations, police who within minutes ran to the scene as it was unfolding. This included a team of probationary constables, constables who are still to complete their training and who did not hesitate for one moment to reach out to the community. All of those involved will carry the events of the day with them. Each one of those police officers has a story to tell about their involvement and also the incredible work of the community members who supported them and supported the injured.

Many remain deeply affected by what they saw on that day. More than 16 units from as far away as Moonee Ponds assisted on the day, providing first aid and logistical support and taking statements. Many stayed at the scene long into the night and across the weekend. In the hours after the incident and throughout the night

forensic and crime scene experts and detectives worked relentlessly, documenting and investigating the crime. And that continues today — building the case and evidence and supporting the coroner. We know that the homicide squad is working its way through the hundreds of statements from victims and witnesses and examining the wealth of footage and images of the incident as it prepares the criminal brief.

I have had a chance to meet with a number of the homicide team who are undertaking this investigation — very seasoned detectives, who are all very shocked and shaken by the scale of the incident and the injuries that were caused. The Victims Support Agency and Victoria Police victims advisory unit are supporting victims, coordinating the service response and putting in place plans to ensure the support is sustained. The welfare services within the emergency services are supporting their personnel to cope with the impact of the incident. Within Victoria Police, for example, hundreds of staff have contacted its welfare services, which illustrates the magnitude of the human cost of this incident. In the days following the incident police continued to provide support around the memorial in Bourke Street and in William Street, and to reach out and provide assurances to community members.

Incredibly many of the police who responded on that day turned up for work the next day and the next — although there are some who still cannot — to do their duty, to uphold the right and to keep Victorians safe, and we are a better state for their service. I do want to put on record in this Parliament that all of the police who responded that day — indeed from the top to the bottom, all the women and men in the blue uniform — have our deep respect and admiration.

In light of events like the Bourke Street tragedy it is natural for us to ask questions: why did this happen; how did this happen? I know that some of the police officers I have spoken to have asked themselves whether they could have done more on that day. I say to those officers and indeed to all members of the police force: you keep people safe, you protect lives, you save lives and we are so proud of your efforts.

As lead minister for the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning, with my colleague the Minister for Planning, I also had an opportunity to pay tribute and acknowledge the grief of many of the department's staff who are based near the corner of Elizabeth and Bourke streets and those in the offices in William Street. Having visited these staff in the days following 20 January, we heard many stories of the assistance they provided. There were many who

witnessed the terrible events, including the shooting, and many who were pulled to safety by other community members. It has been a difficult time for many of these staff, like it has been for other Victorians, and our thoughts and best wishes are with them too.

Today is a day to reflect, remember and pay tribute. Of course we know that changes will result from events like this, whether they are those announced by the Attorney-General regarding bail or through the coroner's investigation. But today we reflect and we remember. I want to thank the police officers involved, the other emergency services and of course the members of the community who provided comfort, first aid and protection to the injured and who assisted police and paramedics to do their job.

I am reminded today of comment that has always stayed with me — a comment made by someone who lost a close friend. When you lose someone you love you want the whole world to stop and take notice. You want everyone to feel what you are feeling. Today this Parliament is stopping and taking notice, and we acknowledge and feel the pain and the grief that comes from the loss of those innocent people, including adults and children. They will remain in our hearts, in our thoughts and in the work of this Parliament.

Mr SOUTHWICK (Caulfield) — I rise to extend my condolences and sympathies to the families that have suffered loss and injury as a result of the Bourke Street tragedy, and the hundreds of Victorians — in fact every Victorian — who would be feeling the pain from this tragic event. The 20th of January will be a date that we will never forget, but most importantly it will be a date to remember the six people that are no longer here with us.

One particular family, the Hakin family, will unfortunately have that date cast in their minds forever. Last week there was back-to-school day, and at Yeshiva Beth Rivkah College there is one girl who is not going back to school. Thalia Hakin would play with her sister Maggie, a year 9 student at Yeshiva Beth Rivkah and a year younger than Thalia. They would play together, they were best of friends and they supported one another. Thalia is not there; Maggie is on her own. There are no words to describe that feeling. No father should have to bury their young child. Unfortunately we have seen that situation with Tony having to bury his daughter. His father, Thalia's grandfather, also had to be there to bury Thalia.

In the Jewish community we have a way of honouring those that have left us. Each person that is close to the

family puts a bit of soil on the grave to return the person who is buried back to the ground. I and a couple of other members of Parliament, the member for Footscray and the member for Bentleigh, were there on the day of Thalia's resting. To see Thalia's grandfather, a 90-year-old, having to bury his granddaughter, and Maggie having to write her name in the resting place are things that will live with me forever. Tony said during the funeral that Thalia was a beautiful baby whose face lit up the world and that the kindness in her nature came out in her face.

Tony also described the tragedy of those events. Tony described the situation where he received that phone call on the day, when he was working in the city. He received a phone call from Maggie, who was run over by a madman. In fact Maggie, a nine-year-old, described the events as, 'Dad, I've been run over by a madman'. She also then said that her mother could not speak because she also had been run over. She also said, 'We can't find Thalia'.

For me, and for all of us in here who have heard similar sorts of stories, this is a wake-up call in terms of our responsibility — it does not matter the side of politics — for what we have to do to show leadership. We must honour each and every one of those six people who have passed away. We owe it to them to do this. We owe it to them to make sure that madmen, as Maggie described, do not cause horrific events like we have just seen, as happened on 20 January. We must do everything possible to ensure that that does not happen. If there is one job that we have in here, it is to make sure that people are safe, and we must do that. Everything else is secondary. Everything else is not important. This is important. This is why we are here. We are all here for that reason. We are all here for Thalia. We are all here for the six people that lost their lives and all the Victorians that have suffered as a result of this.

My heart goes out to all the victims, certainly to Thalia and to many that are affected — as I said, to the schoolkids that are all back at that school, Yeshivah Beth Rivkah; and to Rabbi Smukler, who is the principal there and who has been a solid part of that community in keeping everybody together in these tragic times.

I just say that we cannot finish with today. Today we mourn and we talk about the horrific events, but if we are not in here as quickly as we possibly can be to do something about it, then we are all wasting our time.

Ms HENNESSY (Minister for Health) — I too rise in support of the Premier's condolence motion. In doing

so, can I acknowledge the power of the contributions that have already been made. When we reflect upon condolence motions, we all seek words that can somehow give life to the gravity and the horror of the event on which we condole. As has been acknowledged by many other speakers, I do not believe such words exist. In condoling on the six lives that have been lost, I think it is important that we acknowledge that, as the member for Caulfield and so many other members of this place have just pointed out, the unbearable grief and the irreparable changes to the lives affected are not things that our mere words can necessarily heal. In doing so, it is important that those families and the Victorian community understand the deep love, compassion and motivation to learn from and reform after this incident are things that I doubt any member of this Parliament does not indeed share.

In making my contribution, I want to particularly reflect upon the outstanding and life-affirming response of all of those who responded to this great tragedy. Many have spoken about the wonderful contribution of bystanders. It is often said of courage that you do not know how brave you need to be until you are tested. Well, many were tested on that day. If there is a sliver of light which we must lean into, it is the incredible humanity and bravery of those bystanders who responded with instinct, care and compassion whilst the gravest of circumstances were unfolding around them. I think they should know how much we revere and honour them and that this Parliament and in fact many in the Victorian community take great solace from their contribution.

Our paramedics we know are heroes, but on that day there were over 54 paramedics involved in the immediate response and 12 non-emergency paramedics who responded. They released a video. I think it is characteristic of and insightful into the culture and character of our paramedics that that was a video in which they expressed gratitude to others. I think it is incumbent upon this Parliament and certainly on me as their minister to wholeheartedly express gratitude to them for their contribution.

Similarly, when it comes to our health system and our health services, the Premier and I have had the opportunity to visit some of those health services and to speak privately with those who worked on that day and night. There were over 37 patients admitted to our hospitals. We have one of the best trauma systems in the world, and by God we needed it on that night. We still have four people who remain in hospital, one of whom remains critically ill.

By way of example, to the extent that there can ever be any fortune that comes out of such a horrible set of circumstances, we were fortunate in that the shift changeover was occurring on that afternoon, and so there were both shifts present. Every single person that was available worked that day and worked into that night and in an ongoing sense. Having those additional resources available was absolutely critical at that point in time. Our emergency departments worked tirelessly to ensure that they could do the absolute best for every single patient. I had the fortune of speaking to one of our emergency department nurses. She had been in the emergency department for only two weeks. She spent the evening holding the hand of a patient for whom everything possible had been done.

There were also our intensive care unit (ICU) staff. Our intensive care units are usually quiet and peaceful places, where the most sophisticated of intensive medicine is being practised. Our ICUs were not quiet that night as every resource available in the hospitals and every clinical expert designated worked tirelessly to ensure that every hope was given to every patient that came into our emergency departments.

There were those that had to do diagnostic tests, particularly on patients that had been so traumatically injured again and again and again; they worked tirelessly through that night. I think it is absolutely essential that this Parliament records our admiration and gratitude for what was achieved. Our pastoral care workers have described to me moments on that night where families were desperate for hopeful information. They worked tirelessly, holding hands and just being there while people grappled with hope for an optimistic outcome for the person that they loved who was being cared for in hospital. Many of our clinicians, administrative staff, ambos and paramedics have all got a story about the different impact of this day on them.

I do think it is important that we continue to talk about the impact of trauma on the wider community and on those who responded on that day as well. Many said that they would never ordinarily know the stories of the patients that they worked upon. The nature of emergency medicine is that one part of the health system performs the role that they are expert in and they then move on to the next, but reading the stories of the people that they provided care for was something that had an indelible impact on these staff. Similarly those who felt that this was just a really challenging time and it was what they were paid to do have described the impact unleashed by looking at some of the public events that have been held and public monuments that have been in place. Everyone has a story, and I think it is important that people feel that

they can tell and respond and own their stories in order to ensure that we do not continue to propagate trauma in so many, many ways.

I just want to acknowledge Andrew, who is here in the gallery, and his contribution on the day. As the Minister for Emergency Services outlined in his contribution, I think it really exemplifies not just the heroic nature of what people did — whether they had a uniform on or not, whether they were being paid on the clock or not — but that they responded as human beings and brought to bear the very best that they had to give. I hope that Andrew's parents are glistening with pride up there in the gallery as well.

In condoling the unspeakable tragedy of the lives that have been lost, those families ought to know that this Parliament stands with them in their grief, yet understands that it is not just about the grief that we individually suffer but that every lesson that needs to be learned will be learned, and that on that awful, tragic day there were some examples of what is essentially good about the human spirit, and we ought not forget that as well.

Mr ANGUS (Forest Hill) — I also rise to speak in support of the condolence motion moved in this place by the Premier, both personally and on behalf of the residents of the Forest Hill district. As we reflect on the tragedy that unfolded in Melbourne on 20 January this year, we are all impacted as we understand all too well it could have been any one of us involved in this tragic event. We think of the grieving families and friends who are dealing with this dreadful loss in the aftermath of this senseless tragedy; we think of the families, friends and other relatives as they slowly work through the grieving process.

I think particularly of Bhavita Patel, a 33-year-old professional woman who lived in the Forest Hill district in the suburb of Blackburn South. Like all the other victims she was innocently going about her lawful business in the heart of Melbourne. Through no fault of her own she was caught up in this tragedy. I think that is one of the things that have impacted all Victorians so much — the fact that it could have been any one of us involved in this tragedy at such a familiar place to us all. This was reflected in the outpouring of grief from the broader community, partially evidenced by the floral tributes that were placed in various locations in the city. When I went to lay some flowers on behalf of my constituents it was deeply impactful to see the tributes and the many people taking time to pause, reflect and remember all those involved in this tragedy.

I join with other members in this place in supporting the motion and in passing on my condolences, thoughts and prayers to all the people involved in this tragedy and also my thanks to all those who assisted in so many ways both on the day and subsequently. I know that the residents of Forest Hill would certainly join with me in passing on their condolences to all the people involved in this very tragic event, whether they be family members of those killed, victims that were injured, bystanders who witnessed and assisted amidst the horror or of course the emergency services and medical personnel who responded in their usual selfless and professional fashion. We think of them all and the enormous personal challenges they have faced and inevitably will continue to face. We think and pray for each of them that they will have the strength to face these challenges as they continue in their lives. I support this motion.

Ms ALLAN (Minister for Public Transport) — There is one image seared into my memory from the unspeakable tragedy that struck Bourke Street on 20 January: two trams brought to a standstill at the general post office end of the Bourke Street Mall — those icons of Melbourne standing as a backdrop to this horrible, tragic event that we are recalling today in this place. It is in my contribution on this condolence motion today that I wish to pay tribute and great thanks to another group of workers who were caught up in these tragic events. In particular I would like to talk about the work of the Yarra Trams staff, some of whom were witness to this tragedy and many of whom worked tirelessly to keep the rest of the city moving on this very busy Friday afternoon when there was great uncertainty gripping the city.

At the time of the incident there were around 19 trams operating in the area affected, and five tram drivers and their terrified passengers were direct witnesses to the events unfolding. Tram drivers in particular were required to act quickly to protect frightened passengers, a job they did with utmost professionalism and care for those passengers. All this was done before anyone was aware of the full extent of the circumstances of the incident and without any regard for their own personal safety.

In the immediate aftermath the Yarra Trams internal crisis centre was mobilised around a number of tram stops. Around 60 were quickly closed in the CBD. Services were rerouted, and amazingly, even with 19 trams in lockdown, the vast majority of services continued to run. Yarra Trams staff were deployed to major stops across the city to inform passengers of interim arrangements. Signage was placed throughout the city and messages were relayed to passengers via

announcements and through social media channels. I wish to express my thanks to those tram drivers and other staff who were immediately caught up in the incident and who responded so quickly and also to passengers. They worked to address the immediate issues but also to keep the system going whilst there were tragic events ongoing that day.

I would also like to acknowledge the work undertaken by Yarra Trams on this day, particularly as they established the critical incident centre. I visited the Yarra Trams control centre on the Monday after the event and spoke with many people who had worked on that Friday, through the Friday night and into Saturday morning. As they shared their experiences the event continued to be marked by great sadness and shock but an understanding that they too had a duty to perform, so I would like to thank those staff at Yarra Trams and also the leadership of the organisation, who in turn are giving great support to their staff.

Today we have heard people talk about their many personal stories from that day. We have heard it said a number of times, quite understandably, that it could have been anyone; it could have been one of us. I also wish to express my support to a member of my ministerial staff whose partner was caught up in these tragic events, sustaining a very nasty lower leg injury but being fortunate to make it home at the end of a very gruelling and difficult day to a very grateful family. It is our thoughts and prayers that are with all those families who have been affected. We stand with you in support, and today's condolence motion is part of that deep reservoir of support we will continue to give for many, many years to come.

Ms RYAN (Euroa) — There are some moments in everyone's life when you remember exactly where you were and what you were doing when a piece of news first reached you. September 11 was one of those days; so too was the moment when we discovered the devastation of Black Saturday, eight years ago today, which affected communities across the state, including Clonbinane, Wandong and Redesdale in my electorate. Now 20 January is one of those moments for many Victorians, a moment which has become stuck on replay for those who witnessed the horror of what unfolded and which has unalterably changed the lives of the families and friends of those who were murdered.

It is hard to imagine the grief of the families of the six people who have so needlessly and senselessly lost their lives as a result of this event. Thousands of Victorians wander Bourke Street Mall each day. The phrase 'busier than Bourke Street' was coined for that very reason. But for the loved ones of the six people

who lost their lives, there can be no comfort in the randomness of this attack, in the fact that they were in the wrong place at the wrong time. It could have been any one of us or any one of our loved ones, as many speakers in the house have reflected today.

Instead, today we mourn the loss of three-month-old baby Zachary Bryant, remembered by his parents as the most beautiful, loving, happy and perfect little baby, and of 10-year-old Thalia, who should be settling into grade 5 at her school alongside her classmates this week. Thalia's father, Tony, told the huge number of people who gathered for her funeral:

I don't think I could have been more proud of a little girl from the day she was born to the day she died ... that girl gave me pride, gave me joy.

We send our love to Thalia's sister, Maggie, who was also injured, and her mother, Nathalie, who was in such a critical condition after the attack that she could not attend her own daughter's funeral. We mourn the loss of Matthew Si, who was returning from work after eating lunch with his wife just moments before; of Bhavita Patel, who was working as a finance consultant at Deloitte and whose colleagues spoke of an outstanding talent who had recently been promoted; of 22-year-old Sydneysider Jess Mudie, a beautiful, vivacious young woman whose family described her as a bright bubble of joy; and of the young Japanese man, who was only 25, who was also killed.

There is no rhyme or reason as to who — it could have been any of us — but it saddens me so deeply to think that for the families and friends of these victims it was not just any one of us; it was someone so important, someone who will never be forgotten, someone taken so unfairly and so unexpectedly that the gaping hole they have left will always exist.

From the depths of the horror and the tragedy that unfolded on Bourke Street on that day emerged a special type of strength and unity, one that is so often only seen in times of great sadness and horror. The outpouring of sympathy, love and support for victims and their families has been tangible, and the flowers that adorned the mall, as so many have spoken about, were a visual manifestation of this grief and support. Melbourne, Victoria and Australia stood in disbelief but also in solidarity that day and in the days that followed.

For those first on the scene it is hard to comprehend what must have unfolded. One reporter spoke of a high-heeled shoe strewn in the street, abandoned. To the emergency services workers — the police that were present that day, the paramedics, the Red Cross, the Metropolitan Fire Brigade, the State Emergency

Service, the Victorian Council of Churches and others — I extend my gratitude and the gratitude of thousands. Your quick response, your professionalism and your ability to carry out your work despite such unprecedented and, perhaps for many, never before seen circumstances is commendable.

A constituent recently told of seeing ambulances arrive at the Royal Melbourne Hospital the day of this event. She was attending an appointment nearby and spoke of seeing the first ambulance arrive, then another and another and another. To those bystanders who so quickly leapt to the aid of those who were injured, we will never know what you went through. We cannot understand the strength and courage that is required to be able to run towards the mayhem before fully understanding what is happening, to be able to assist and show love and compassion when you are trying to comprehend whether you or anyone is safe. You offered support, you held a hand, you consoled a crying mother. Perhaps you will never know the impact you had, but I have no doubt that you made all the difference in the world to those you touched.

While this abominable crime claimed six lives and injured dozens more, we must recognise the hundreds who have suffered emotionally. To everyone who witnessed this traumatic incident and is still grappling with what it means and how to move forward, your emotional scars are no less real than your physical scars.

Victorians are grieving, but they are also wondering how this could possibly have happened. Several days after the event, I attended the memorial service at Federation Square like so many others, and the mood of those who gathered was one of extreme sadness, of love and of sympathy. But I also felt tension, because Victorians are now asking for change and that is change which we must deliver.

In conclusion, I add my support to the motion before the house today and to the thousands of voices from across Australia who have already offered what they can in the face of something so unfathomable.

Ms KAIROUZ (Minister for Consumer Affairs, Gaming and Liquor Regulation) — On behalf of the people of Kororoit I rise to support the motion put by the Premier. Like many others in this place I was heartbroken when I heard about the tragedy that had happened in the heart of our city on 20 January. I offer my heartfelt sympathy to all those affected by the attack and, in particular, to the families and loved ones of those who were killed.

Moments like these are extremely difficult to speak about. Perhaps it is because these people were simply doing the things that we all do every day. Perhaps it is because it could so easily have been one of us in this chamber or one of our loved ones walking innocently down Bourke Street that afternoon and because these people are just like every single one of us.

Bourke Street is the heart of our beautiful city, an iconic precinct where people congregate, go shopping, enjoy street performances, eat delicious food and take in our vibrant city culture. It has always felt like a safe place to enjoy all that Melbourne has to offer. Yet that day these innocent people were struck down by a brutal act of senseless violence. People were going about their daily business. Some had planned a special day with their loved ones and others were there just through sheer bad luck. It was a senseless act, a cruel act, and it is a reminder that no matter how prepared we are for the senseless acts, we can never really be prepared.

Six innocent and beautiful souls were lost. Many were hospitalised and now face a long road to recovery. While some have physical scars, others have emotional scars. The perpetrator showed no regard for community, for society, for his family or even for himself. It breaks my heart that amongst the dead were two innocent children who had so much ahead of them. I think about the little children in my family, and I cannot imagine the grief and torment that those parents must be going through. Those who witnessed the event will carry that horrific memory with them forever. Our government will continue to provide support to all those who have been affected.

Just like every single one of us in this place and many people in the community, I was riddled with mixed emotions — anger, shock, sadness and pride. In this tragedy we saw the very best in people come to the fore. From strangers looking after the injured on the street in the immediate aftermath, to those who have generously donated to assist families and victims, this outpouring of love and support shows the resilience of Victorians. It was touching to hear the stories of the bravery and compassion at the vigil held for the victims at Federation Square on 23 January.

The work of our doctors, nurses, hospital staff, firefighters, police and ambos should also be praised, as it has been on several occasions this afternoon. These men and women work tirelessly for our community, and the professionalism and empathy they showed on that tragic day and in the days after will never be forgotten. Their work often goes unnoticed, but in the aftermath of this tragedy and in

the face of a horrific crime their performance was outstanding. They are true heroes.

I would like to end with a quote by a Lebanese poet, Khalil Gibran:

Tenderness and kindness are not signs of weakness and despair, but manifestations of strength and resolution.

My thoughts and prayers are with all those affected. To those who lost their lives, may they rest in peace. You will not be forgotten.

Mr PESUTTO (Hawthorn) — I remember too many years ago as a young boy growing up in Traralgon and catching the train to Melbourne. It was a very exciting trip. We did not take it often, and it was almost as if you could never get to town quickly enough. As somebody growing up in the country, when you passed our magnificent coliseum — the MCG — and then you travelled slowly past, I think it was the old Channel 7 sign and the old Herald building, it was impossible to contain the excitement. As a young boy I remember thinking how great our city is, our great metropolis. I have to confess that that awe has never left. When I drive down Canterbury Road on my way into town I still look at the marvellous skyline of our city and marvel at its greatness.

What makes a city great? Is it the streetscape? Is it the architecture or the roads? These are all manifestations. We have beautiful heritage buildings like the chamber we serve in. But what makes a city great are the virtues of civility, compassion and love. Those were all on display on 20 January in the face of the horror and the unspeakable loss that was visited upon our city.

I cannot help but think that our city — our great city — is not so much the victim of what happened on 20 January; our city is what saves us, it is what gives us redemption, it is what gives us comfort. It is what drove the volunteers and the emergency services workers, the paramedics, the police officers, the office workers. It is what animated them without fear for their own safety and wellbeing to put themselves in harm's way to help others who had been injured. I was struck by the courage they showed, and only hope that if I were ever to be placed in such a situation, I could emulate that courage of running out onto the street, having heard gunshots and crashing, not knowing if that gunfire was going to cease, not knowing if there were other perpetrators, but just running to the aid of sisters and brothers in need.

Whilst Melbourne itself — our great city — may not be a victim, we know there were: Zachary, three months; Thalia, 10; Jess, 22; Matthew and Bhavita, 33, the age

of heroes. They all died young, so young. Had fate selected any other composition of victims, it could have been no more or less just. The loss not only of their lives, but of the great promise, is what I think hurts the most, for all of us. I extend my deepest sympathies on behalf of all the people in my electorate of Hawthorn to the victims, their families and their friendship networks.

In the days since I have been struck by the feedback from Victorians, locally and from afar. They are hurting, they are in distress, as we all are. They want to know what we will do about it. They do not care about party and they do not care about faction; they only seek action. We owe it to the people of this state to do everything we can as urgently as we can to make sure we fulfil our primary responsibility of keeping the people of our great state and our great city safe. I am committed to that and, as the Leader of the Opposition has stated many times, we are here to work together to do that, and to do so faithfully in fulfilling our primary obligation to the people of this city and state, to take their safety as the highest and most urgent priority of the business we transact as members of this place. I extend my condolences once again.

Ms D'AMBROSIO (Minister for Energy, Environment and Climate Change) — I provide my support to the Premier's condolence motion. There has been so much said today in this place, and in the days and weeks passed, about the terrible event that occurred 18 days ago. It is so terrible because we never imagined such a thing could happen here, to us, scant hundreds of metres from where we are standing right now. I give my condolences and mourn for those who have been lost. We know of course who they are, and we know that it is an act of the utmost injustice that their lives were taken on that day. I pay my deepest and profound respect to those who lost their loved ones on that day, and to the families and friends who were left to mourn.

So many of us who call Melbourne and Victoria home come from places scarred by violence, discord and war. Many of us are here because parents and grandparents dreamt that we should never have to know this; they came to a land of peace and in hope to build better lives. So it does hurt us, it hurts all of us deeply, in ways that we may not fully understand, that these appalling and despicable actions took place in the heart of our city.

I stand here with all members of this place to condemn: we utterly condemn what has occurred. Justice of course is called for, and justice will be done. I stand here with all members of this place to mourn. We mourn with the mothers and fathers, with the friends, the families, the loved ones. We cannot truly know their

pain, but on that day and today and forever in the future our hearts bleed with theirs.

I stand here with all members of this place also to give a heartfelt thanks. Our thanks, tinged with pride, respect and admiration, go to the police, to the paramedics, to the other first responders and other professionals, and to the women and men, the people incidentally passing by, who rushed to the aid of those struck down. Their lives are now changed forever. Previous speakers have told us of their actions. Their heroism is the embodiment of a stunning humanity that comes to the fore in the blink of an eye, in the seconds when we are thrust into an unthinkable and shocking event that changes our lives forever. When I reflect on this tragedy, their courage and compassion — their pure humanity — is the light that outshines the darkness of that day. I stand here with all members of this place to reaffirm that our hearts, our prayers, our thoughts and our actions are with those changed by that day.

I thank all members for their heartfelt contributions and compassion, and I would like to acknowledge the staff of Parks Victoria. Just outside their office on Bourke Street is where this tragedy was stopped by the courageous members of Victoria Police. These appalling and violent incidents are distressing by any measure. Many of the Parks Victoria staff were exposed to what happened, and I visited them in the days following and was heartened to hear of the response by the colleagues of those affected — looking after them, being aware and being there for them. Parks Victoria's people quickly rallied around those they knew to be impacted, and I commend the management and the staff involved for their response and consideration. We will continue to support them as they work through the ongoing challenges.

For all of us it is particularly poignant when you consider that many of those who bore witness to this tragedy have already, or will soon, return to the locations of the incidents, as they resume their lives. It will not be easy. We will support them and all who were thrust into that life-changing event. As we keep in our minds the effects the terrible day has had on all of us, we must remember those who have lost loved ones and send our thoughts and prayers to them. We must remember those who have borne witness to unspeakable horror and tragedy and support them in every way possible. And those of us in this place must vow to do all we can to ensure it never happens again and vow that we will not let an act of evil change us or in any way diminish the boundless hope and compassion, the joy and freedom, that define our city and our state and, above all, our humanity.

Mr CLARK (Box Hill) — I rise to add my support to the motion before us to extend our thoughts, prayers and support to the victims of the Bourke Street attack and to their loved ones, to express our gratitude for the response of our emergency services to the tragedy and to pay tribute to the courage and compassion shown by so many in responding to the tragedy.

What happened on Bourke Street on 20 January is almost beyond words. People who were innocently going about their lives walking the footpaths of our city streets were suddenly confronted by the terror of a speeding car rushing down upon them and struck down unable to escape, or else hit without warning with their lives ended or irrevocably changed. It was a terror that killed and maimed infants and children, young adults with their lives in front of them and much-loved and loving parents. It was a terror that has touched thousands: those killed and injured and their friends, family and colleagues; those forced to flee in sudden fear; those who witnessed the horror of what was happening; those who rushed to respond and give aid; and all those who heard the news and accounts of what their loved ones had experienced or had narrowly escaped.

As others have observed, many in this house or their loved ones have been touched in one or other of these ways. In my case a close family member returned to the ground floor of her workplace fronting Bourke Street just minutes before the attack occurred, saw the events unfold before her eyes and rushed out to find one victim lying seemingly lifeless at her feet and to hear the sound of gunshots ringing out. Many, many others have had similar accounts, and those accounts have helped bring home to us the realisation that it could have been our loved ones amongst those struck down while for others of course there came the terrible news that it was in fact their loved ones who had been struck down.

As the member for Caulfield so powerfully expressed, we owe it to those who were killed, we owe it to those injured and we owe it to those traumatised to do everything we can to prevent such a terrible attack or anything like it from happening again. There is much work, much investigation, much consideration and much change that will be needed before that task is done. Even at this stage it is clear that many aspects of our society, our approaches and our practices will need to be examined — the roles of families and of education and of social values, the effects of drugs and of chaotic lifestyles and what we in Parliament, in governments and as community leaders can do about each of those aspects and factors.

The role of the justice system will need to be prominent in that consideration. The justice system lays down the framework that shapes the values and the norms by which we live. It is also the last line of defence for society when the values and standards of behaviour of certain individuals towards others that should have been imparted to them by their families, their schooling, their peers or from other sources have either not been imparted or are not being respected. It is the justice system that must assert and enforce those minimum standards of behaviour that individuals need to observe so that others can live in safety, free from threats and fear. If the justice system fails in that fundamental task, then Victorians are left exposed and our community is diminished.

It is clear that our justice system needs to be strengthened in many ways. Most immediately we need to strengthen our bail laws to make clear, beyond any opportunity for misreading, the importance that Parliament, on behalf of the community, attaches to community safety in making decisions about bail, and to make clear to all who are granted bail that if they fail to respect their bail and its conditions, they will forfeit their claim to it.

Beyond bail reform we need to ensure that offenders and would-be offenders of all ages know that the consequences of offending will be speedy, certain and unpleasant for them. The sentences and other consequences imposed in our courts must be effective to deter offending and protect the community. It is sometimes thought that this is in some way inconsistent with measures to enable offenders to turn away from crime and steer their lives in a more positive direction, but the opposite is in fact the case. A clear framework of norms and values, and of consequences for actions, supports rather than hinders offenders to realise — if anything can make them realise — that they must and should change their ways.

Today we are expressing our thoughts, prayers and support for those who have suffered and our gratitude and tribute to those who came to their aid. Beyond today we need to turn our sentiments into actions and into results so that Victorians can have confidence that our laws, our justice system and our other institutions are providing them and their loved ones with the protection and the security that they are entitled to expect.

Ms SULEYMAN (St Albans) — I rise today in support of the condolence motion moved by the Premier. I too add my heartfelt, sincere condolences for the victims of the Bourke Street tragedy. It is not often that such an horrific event has the power to impact so

many lives and families across our state. The carnage of Friday, 20 January, has caused great tragedy across Victoria but also united our city in shared solidarity with the victims and their families. I would like to extend my deepest condolences to the families and friends of the six loved ones who tragically lost their lives. These lives have been so unfairly taken. I cannot begin to comprehend the pain of the families that are experiencing it at this time. My thoughts are also with all the victims who are still recovering in hospital.

Friday, 20 January, was like any other day for me in my electorate office. I had just completed a meeting when information began to come in about the incident occurring in the CBD. As I watched the news, more and more reports came in. There was a real sense of shock and disbelief that such carnage was unfolding in our streets. Later in the day I was informed that one of the victims impacted by this tragedy was a friend of mine, local constituent Serkan Hasan, a 28-year-old engineer from Keilor Downs. I could hardly imagine what Serkan and his family would have been going through. I immediately thought, 'What was he doing on Bourke Street?'. Later on in the day I met his mother, Keziban, his father, Erdal, his sisters and his extended family at the Alfred hospital and was informed of his condition.

Keziban and Erdal have been dedicated volunteers in our local community for many years and have raised their children to be upstanding citizens who contribute to our state. The ordeal experienced by Serkan's family and in particular his parents has been extremely difficult. Serkan's injuries are quite severe.

Thankfully, with time, love, support and a very long rehabilitation, he will recover, but the scars of that day will probably take much more time to heal and for some will not heal at all.

Recently I had the opportunity to speak to Serkan about what actually happened that day and to understand his perspective. Serkan told me how ordinary his day was. It was just another Friday. He had stepped out for lunch with two colleagues. As he walked back to work alone he could hear some commotion, a lot of screaming and a lot of panic, but unfortunately Serkan did not have time to run. All he remembers is being in and out of consciousness, lying on the footpath in complete shock — so much shock that he could not feel any form of pain. He had not yet realised what had happened or the scale of events around him, but he recalls the generosity of two bystanders named John and Mark, who I believe work at the RACV City Club, and a female police officer, Kim, from the Collingwood police station, who came to his aid, supporting him and comforting him until the ambulance arrived.

As he learned of the events that had just unfolded Serkan's manager, John Maroulis, called the three staff members who had gone out for lunch, as he was concerned that two had returned to work but one had not. Serkan did not answer his phone, so his boss immediately rushed down to Bourke Street and was able to locate Serkan, identify him and comfort him, with the bystanders, until the ambulance was able to attend to him and get him to a spot where he was stable. One thing Serkan said to me that clearly stood out is that he kept saying, 'Please don't call my parents. Call my sister'.

I would like to place on record the level of compassion and support shown to Serkan by his manager, John Maroulis, and in particular his work colleague Benjamin To of NJM Design, who have been true examples of the Victorian spirit. The Bourke Street tragedy highlighted the strength and resilience of everyday Victorians, who offered support and aid to strangers. We are very blessed that Serkan and many others survived this tragedy. We know he was fortunate, but his ordeal and the pain endured by his parents and family have been horrific and highlight the large impact that this incident has had throughout our community.

We as a community are united, and we will be supporting the victims, families and friends affected. There has been and will continue to be a lot of debate and a lot of conversation regarding the circumstances of that day and how it unfolded. I believe we should leave the investigation to the coroner, Victoria Police and the justice system, but not a stone should be left unturned. We owe it to all victims, their families and the six innocent lives that were taken that day to understand exactly what happened and how we can prevent it from happening ever again. Serkan and bystanders like him who were impacted were all innocent people who were going to work or shopping and had no idea what would happen, and their lives have now been changed beyond understanding.

I would like to extend my thanks to the medical staff who treated the victims, in particular those in our hospitals; of course Ambulance Victoria; the other first responders, the emergency services and Victoria Police, who handled this tragedy with professionalism and courage; and all Victorians who came to the aid of those injured on that day. My thoughts and my prayers are with the families of those who have been affected, and I know that life will not be the same for them. I know that for me Bourke Street will never be the same. The victims of the Bourke Street tragedy will never be forgotten, and the tragic events that unfolded that day will forever be in our memories.

Mr McCURDY (Ovens Valley) — I rise to support the condolence motion, along with my colleagues, and I certainly pay my respects to the families and all who have been affected by this callous and gutless act in the Bourke Street Mall. Families have lost loved ones, but so many have been scarred for life, and what a price they will pay for being in the wrong place at the wrong time.

I cannot even try to imagine the grief, the despair and the sense of loss, and these feelings will shadow many for years to come, and I wonder: how can this happen in Victoria? This is not New York or Chicago; it is the Bourke Street Mall in one of the most livable cities in the world, but Melbourne has lost its innocence and we can no longer preach our community safety record. The families who were walking and shopping in the Bourke Street Mall had a right to feel safe and had a right to be safe, and I ask: where are their rights?

The tributes have flowed and the stories have been told. Many bystanders offered amazing support for those most in need, but we cannot stop there. We need action, because the writing has been on the wall for some time now. In my own community in north-east Victoria and Wangaratta there has been a campaign running for 12 months or more called Enough is Enough. Tania Maxwell and Carol Roadknight continue to support us to do all they can to get the bail system changed. They are not blaming the bail justices or police; they want leadership in this state to act. A year ago 1000 people marched through the streets of Wangaratta calling for a safer community. When a country community like Wangaratta in north-east Victoria — which is removed from the crime wave in Melbourne — demands action, to me that means the system is broken. Only last week that group met with Derryn Hinch to try to talk about bail reform as well.

This condolence motion is for the families, the victims, for those who have suffered and will suffer into the future because of this terrible crime. But I cannot and will not miss this opportunity to get this message through that enough is enough. I believe in a second chance. Everybody deserves another go, but when you cross that line for the second, third and fourth time I believe you forgo your right to remain in that community. And what will it take to get this broken system fixed? If the Bourke Street Mall tragedy is not enough to make wholesale changes to our system, then sadly the changes will not occur. Again, I offer my utmost respect and sympathy to all of those families who have been affected by this tragedy.

Mr STAIKOS (Bentleigh) — It is with sadness that I contribute to this motion. We are all politicians in this

house, but today is not a day for politics. Today is a day when we leave the politics at the door. Today is a day about the collective grief of our state, because there are just no words that can accurately describe the horror that unfolded in Melbourne on Friday, 20 January.

The Bourke Street Mall is one of the most iconic parts of our city, but Bourke Street now takes on a somewhat altered identity. While life will move on as it always does, Bourke Street now joins Queen Street, Hoddle Street and Russell Street in evoking images of tragedy at the hands of evil. Evil was what claimed the lives of six people, including 10-year-old Thalia Hakin from my electorate.

It is inconceivable that a child could perish, but especially on a school holiday outing with her family in Melbourne. Thalia was with her mother, Nathalie, and her younger sister Maggie when a car ploughed through Bourke Street. Along with the member for Footscray and the member for Caulfield, I attended Thalia's funeral, where her father, Tony, went into harrowing detail of the moments in which he came to realise that something terrible had happened to his family.

He received a phone call from Maggie before running to Bourke Street from his office on Flinders Lane to discover that Thalia, the family's 'little butterfly', as they refer to her, had died. Mrs Hakin was so critically injured that she was unable to attend her daughter's funeral, which added just another layer of heartbreak in an already too tragic event. Thalia's father said of his daughter:

She was something special to everybody who ... met her.

She exuded kindness, but she was a very pretty girl. She was pretty on the inside and ... on the outside.

...

I don't think I could have been more proud of a little girl from the day she was born to the day she died ... that girl gave me pride, gave me joy.

Thalia's funeral was a very traditional Jewish service, and in that same tradition I wish the Hakin family long life.

Families have been left mourning the loss of loved ones — some who were in the midst of the best years of their lives and others who had barely started. While families of the victims mourn, Victoria grieves — grief that was so evident at the floral tribute on Bourke Street and at the vigil at Federation Square, where strangers were comforting each other.

As Victorians we grieve and we give thanks to the people who comforted the victims in their final

moments. We thank the first responders, the police, the paramedics and the firefighters as well as the hospital staff who treated the injured. Not only do we thank them, but we also wish them well as they recover from the trauma and devastation that they witnessed. As it is said in the gospel of Matthew, 'Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted'.

Mr BATTIN (Gembrook) — Australians, particularly Victorians, are built on resilience, community, helping each other and standing up for their mates. We extend that compassion in times of need, and we help a stranger, support our neighbours or simply keep an eye on our neighbourhoods. We have seen bushfires, floods and other natural disasters that challenge our communities, our families and even governments, but it is a world different when the tragic event that unfolds on the streets of the city we love is caused by another human.

I can say for me personally it is a lot more difficult to process in my mind, and here we are today paying our respects to those who were going about their daily lives. The victims were walking one of the safest places on earth, we thought, as they would have on 20 January 2017 — three-month-old Zachary, 10-year-old Thalia, Melbourne father Matthew, Sydney twin Jess, Bhavita Patel and an unnamed 25-year-old Japanese national. To his family: kokoro kara okuyami moushiagemasu.

I will focus first on the man who we do not know. And whilst this man is very real and a very real victim of this crime, he is a symbol of the many unnamed victims of this tragedy: the people who witnessed it, the families at home who received the horrific news they had lost loved ones, the families of those who were waiting more anxious than usual for loved ones who did return home that night, retail workers, office staff, council workers and of course our emergency workers, on and off duty. We express our thanks to emergency services personnel who responded — who always respond. Those who attended Bourke Street will never forget this day. They will talk about it to their colleagues, and it will have a profound effect on many of them forever.

I heard Andrew Picker's story obviously through the Minister for Emergency Services before. I know we do not always get along out in the social media world, but the reality is that we do genuinely thank him, and on this day we thank all of those involved with the emergency services for what they have done.

Then there are the everyday heroes, those ones who would say, 'Anyone would respond the way I did at the time. That is normal'. Well, let me tell guys like Nick

the office worker and Lou the cabbie and many others like them that not everyone would respond the way they did, and the community thanks them as well. We hope they get the care they need after this event, and we trust they will understand their contribution will never be forgotten. They did not deserve this. Their families, friends, work colleagues, schoolmates and local communities here and abroad did not deserve what happened, and we send our prayers and strength to each one of them.

Bourke Street has a rich history and is part of the culture of Melbourne. Everyone knows Bourke Street, a street that has a reputation dating from the 1850s to the current day. It has been a lively place that represents all we are in Victoria, with the first public hospital and the first synagogue. And, of course, it is a place of entertainment, with theatres and public halls that have all paved the way for the fantastic multicultural state we live in now.

There are still restaurants, retailers, street performers and of course my favourite, as mentioned before, the Myer Christmas windows — an institution in themselves. I took my children again this year to see the windows, and the theme was a reflection of the history of Melbourne and its iconic Luna Park. It was the story of a local family and a simple silver coin, a coin to the magical place of the merry-go-round.

Next year we will do this walk again. We will look at those windows and sadly have new thoughts about our family Christmas tradition. We will stop and think about those that, just under 12 months prior, lost their loved ones. We will have a thought for the families who are going through a year of firsts and will be just about to go through their first Christmas without their loved one at a table. It is at that stage that all of us in here and in our community will start to feel guilt for celebrating at a time when we are with our families. I know I find it difficult to say, and we say things like we will give our kids an extra hug tonight or we will tell our husband or wife we love them, but they are the extra things that we should do.

That is when I know I feel a bit of anger, which many in the state will feel, because a person did this. It was not an accident or a freak of nature but the result of a person's actions. The allegations against a 26-year-old male, who does not deserve his name anywhere in my condolence speech or any of the condolence speeches made in here, are beyond belief. Whilst the police will do the investigation and work hard towards ensuring that justice is served for this crime, we as a state must make sure we work towards reducing the risks in our community. If, as reported, the person was on bail, then

fix the bail system. Bail laws must take into consideration those walking on Bourke Street, doing their shopping or having lunch with a friend. Bail must put everyone — people who are at home, dining alone or with family — as the first consideration. Bail must only be given when the consideration of victims is put before the consideration of offenders.

Victoria is our state. It is a state we are proud of, a state I am proud to be bringing up my children in. We must ensure we stand together and use our voices and the power of this Parliament to protect the very people that elected us. That means we cannot continue in the direction we have, with crime the major issue in this state and fear in some local communities, or with, in terms of the streets of our capital city, us having dominant headlines of negativity rather than the positive effect that Bourke Street has been known to have.

Our condolence motion today is to pay respect to those who have lost their lives on our streets; it is to the families who will mourn the loss of loved ones for years to come; it is to the emergency services workers, the staff and the other people who were involved in or witnessed this very dark day; and it is to all Victorians affected by the tragic events that were on our TVs or in our newspapers. On behalf of the Gembrook electorate, my staff and my community, we send our strength, our prayers, our thoughts and our support to each and every one of them. As not only a member of the Victorian Parliament but as a former police officer and corrections officer, I send my commitment: I will never, ever forget this day, and I will work on your behalf to fix the system to offer a greater level of protection to all Victorians, who thoroughly deserve it.

Mr RICHARDSON (Mordialloc) — It is important to rise today and reflect on this condolence motion. I feel a sense of humbleness following the people who have spoken today, but I wanted to make a brief contribution, particularly after being touched by the story of Zachary Bryant. I am a new parent and along with the impact that that story has obviously had on many people across our state, its profoundness is something that really touched my family.

Some members have touched on where they were on 20 January this year. I was at home at the time, because I had been off work, sick, and I had the pleasure of looking after my little girl, Paisley. I actually had the telly off, because I was working and doing a couple of other things, but my wife had rung in and said, ‘Have you seen on the news what’s happened on Bourke Street?’. It really was profound, her sense of anguish. The media reports on the ABC at the time were based

on only the knowledge that a car had connected with a pram and a stroller. Then after I turned on Sky News, the harrowing images — that will live for decades to come — were of the compartment of the pram that a bub sits in being lodged in that car. That will be one of the harrowing images that lives on for years. At a time when a bub is starting to communicate, to laugh, to giggle, to smile, that is the stage Zachary was up to in his life — a life which was so cruelly taken away in that moment of absolute terror.

As a state we are surrounded on so many occasions by tragedy and sadness every single day — we lose people through natural causes, through accidents — but there is something when people are taken with intention that really sticks with us. When we have a symbol such as the heart of Melbourne, being Bourke Street, as somewhere so many of us had been, with the Christmas windows there during those festive times, and during a time when school holidays were still on and it was such a busy and bustling time, it is hard to comprehend how such devastation can occur in our city. On the afternoon before the vigil I took a walk down Swanston Street onto Bourke Street and walked all the way up to Elizabeth Street and then on to Queen Street, and one thing that stuck out for me was how, days after, the normal bustle of the city had returned but there was a dark shadow that hung over our city. To see so many Victorians who had come and walked that route, the floral tribute outside the GPO which stuck out for people and where people had suffered along that journey and where our first responders and Melburnians and other Victorians had stood up to help one another in a time of critical need was really profound. People’s grief was so touching and telling.

There will be a lot of talk about the pathway forward — and that time is coming now and will happen over the coming weeks — but I want to touch on the comments of Nawwar Hassan Bryant, the mother of Zachary, after reflecting on her son’s passing. I want to put that into *Hansard* because I think it is profound and it needs to touch our resolve in terms of why we have to act swiftly in this area:

Every move I make, every corner of the house and every sight we pass by reminds me of my child.

...

He may not be physically in my arms anymore but besides photos and memories I will always remember him by wearing his birth scars on my body as badges of honour to have given birth to such an angel.

She also wrote:

Amidst all this sadness I feel so grateful to know there is so much love and kindness all around us. I feel for parents who have lost their children, especially in war-torn countries, and feel extremely lucky to have all this support where I am.

That support continues through the Bourke Street Fund. We commend Victorians and people interstate who have given their hard-earned money to this fund, and we encourage people to continue to support and give money to families such as the Bryants and so many others that have been touched by this tragedy. We reflect on the good spirit and kind-heartedness of our city. As we unite in grief we unite in anger, but we unite also in our resolve to make our city and our state even better for the future. I offer my condolences.

Ms VICTORIA (Bayswater) — Friday, 20 January 2017, will forever be in the minds of all Victorians and indeed of many Australians. It was a day that left all of us in a state of shock and disbelief. One man's actions on that afternoon have led to a lifetime of pain and suffering for many victims, witnesses and the community as a whole. This was a man who was out on bail at the time of the incident, a man who had earlier allegedly stabbed his own brother and evaded police for most of the morning.

Innocent bystanders going about their day had their lives completely changed in the space of just a few short minutes. Six innocent people lost their lives from the events of the afternoon; many more have been injured both physically and emotionally. The trauma will remain for many years to come. To the people lost in this tragic event, we pay tribute to you and mourn you. We are forever thinking of your loved ones as they try to pick up the pieces from this tragic event.

We lost six innocent lives, and it is important that we remember them. Heartbreakingly we lost three-month-old baby Zachary Bryant, who was rushed to hospital in the back of a police car but unfortunately did not survive his ordeal. Thalia Hakin, who was only 10 years old, passed on. Her mother and sister were also injured in the tragedy. Matthew Si, a 33-year-old father who had just finished having lunch with his wife, died. Jess Mudie, a beautiful 22-year-old from New South Wales, died. A 25-year-old man from Japan was also killed. Of course the sixth and most recent victim was Bhavita Patel, who was just 33 and from Blackburn South. All six of these people could have been any one of us. These were ordinary people going about their day in Melbourne on a sunny afternoon.

Indeed, just the day before, Angelo and I had taken the children on a family fun day, playing tourists in our own city. Fate and luck were with us. Due to the weather forecast for rain on the Thursday, we had

discussed rescheduling, but we rugged up and traversed our streets and sites and enjoyed all Melbourne had to offer on the Thursday, as planned. The same blessing of luck was not on Bourke Street on the Friday. The families of those who lost their lives will forever remain broken, and while the rest of the community move on slowly, they will forever feel a hole where their loved ones should be. We also acknowledge and send our good wishes to the other people injured during this tragedy. For some, the healing and road to recovery will be a long one.

While this awful event will remain in all our memories, we will also remember the good that was present on that day — ordinary people doing extraordinary things, strangers providing care and medical assistance to those around them most in need. We have heard the stories in the media of courageous and heroic acts of bystanders who raced to help the injured. Some of these people had medical training; others did not. They nursed the injured until help arrived and remained calm and in control the whole time. Some had to soothe the dying while trying to remain strong. Many of them were faced with some of the most horrific scenes, scenes that instead of disappearing when they close their eyes at night will actually become more vivid. Those scenes may never fade. We acknowledge and thank them all for their amazing efforts. They should be very proud of their quick thinking and actions on the day. We thank them all for their courage, kindness and love.

We also thank our emergency service personnel who responded. Once again we are reminded of how lucky we are to have outstanding professional men and women to assist us in times of need. They did a herculean job during this ordeal, and we cannot thank them enough for their efforts. They continually risk life and limb in the line of duty and I, like all Victorians, am proud of our emergency service personnel. We should also remember these people are human too, and we offer them our thoughts and best wishes as they recover from this dramatic event.

Many things will change them as a result of this tragic event; many people's lives will be changed forever. But it is hoped that some of the biggest changes will occur to our bail laws and justice system as a result. It is unfortunate that such an event is required before major reviews and investigations are conducted. It is quite clear that our bail laws are in desperate need of review and change. We should also be reminded that our bail justices, who work in a voluntary capacity, have been hit hard by these events, and we need to be mindful not to tar all bail justices because of the outcomes of one decision.

The last point I will make is how wonderful Melburnians are in a time of need. Melbourne came together as a result of this awful event. We saw love, kindness and, above all, a sense of community. We came together as one, regardless of our differences, to show our support. We should remember the good from this day and not the bad. The perpetrator will be dealt with by our judicial system, and we pray that justice will be done. Melburnians showed dignity and compassion when it was needed the most. Regardless of world rankings, tourist attractions or sporting events, all of us know our city is truly the best place to live because of its people.

Mr DIMOPOULOS (Oakleigh) — I rise to support the condolence motion as well, and I just want to make a very brief contribution. Firstly, I express my condolences on behalf of the community that I represent to the families of the victims of this tragedy and to the victims themselves. Secondly, the Premier mentioned a mental checklist, and it was such an apt description, because I think we all go through that. I was in the car when I heard the news. I pulled over and turned up the radio, because I wondered whether I was hearing it correctly. I rang my partner, who works in the city. It was my first thought because he often has lunch in Bourke Street. He was okay, and then I went through the rest of the mental checklist.

If Melbourne is a village, then Bourke Street is really its centre. That is part of why I think it has struck such a chord, because it is a place, as others have said, that we know so well. We feel it is our main street, regardless of where we live.

The Premier also made a very valid point, as did others, that part of the way we honour the victims and those impacted by this tragedy is by taking action. I think the speed with which this government acted and the quality of those actions — within a day of this tragedy occurring — were excellent, and there will be more to come when due processes have taken place and investigations concluded.

The other way we honour them, as others have said, is by telling their stories, as we have heard here today. The young man who spoke at the vigil at Federation Square was outstanding. He told the story of Lou the taxidriver. On behalf of my community I want to put on record a thank you to all the emergency service staff — all of the paid and unpaid staff — and all of the people who were caught up in those events on that day.

In finishing my contribution I would like to add another story — a story of the mum of a friend of mine who

was there that day. In concluding my contribution I will read from Nicki's account. Nicki said:

My mother rarely goes into the city, but Friday, yesterday of all days, she decided, 'This is a great day for yum cha'.

However, a stroll through the arcades near Bourke Street, after her meal, brought her into the midst of chaos. After hearing awful noises, bangs and screeches, she saw people running, and along with them tried to hide from what they initially thought was a gun-wielding madman. But it quickly became clear what was actually happening.

She rushed out to Bourke Street Mall, and saw the carnage and the terribly injured. A working nurse with over 40 years experience, she ran over to help the people that she could. The details are heartbreaking and she held back her tears to be strong for those around her.

She made a difference this day. She comforted injured children and adults, she witnessed and worked on those wounded but alive and she shielded those too young to confront death.

I thank God, the universe, whatever you wish to call it, that by mere minutes and the sliding doors of fate she was not hurt.

But of all days, why this day to venture into the city? I can only determine it's because she was required to uniquely help those in need. She was one of many angels sent to do good as evil reared its ugly head in our beautiful city of Melbourne.

I'm filled with pride in how my mother was able to contribute and also crushed that she feared for her life, however fleetingly. My mother is with me but my heart is broken for the injured, those no longer with us, bystanders that witnessed the events and the families that have to pick up the pieces after this tragic and avoidable situation.

Mum —

Helen Goodman —

as hard and as crazy as the day was to reconcile, you were a light for people in need. In your hands they were in great care. You were meant to be there, and in this capacity I'm glad you were.

I think we are all glad that people like Helen Goodman were there that day.

Mr R. SMITH (Warrandyte) — I rise to support the motion of condolence. It was fantastic to see the outpouring of grief from Melburnians following this tragedy. It was a show of support that was evidenced by the number of tributes that were placed in the Bourke Street Mall and the crowds that turned up for the vigil at Federation Square. There are also obviously many who chose other, more private, ways to express their support and their grief at the tragedy that happened.

The following day, 21 January, I took my children to the Little Athletics club that we go to and, like the Leader of the National Party, many people sought me out to discuss the issue and the broader issues. In those

discussions we reflected on the young victims of the tragedy and we looked at our own children, who were playing on the field. We acknowledged that it could have been any one of our children.

I had in front of me a teacher who told me she was fed up, a policeman who said he could not believe things had gotten so bad and a father who had moved from Perth to Victoria only two years ago and who said he was seriously thinking about moving back because he did not believe his family was safe here in Melbourne. We are charged with a special responsibility here — a responsibility we sometimes forget. We are here to give voice to our communities, and we are here to raise the issues that they raise with us. When we are sent here we have a responsibility to do that, and sometimes we forget that. If we fail to do that, then frankly we are not doing our job.

If we are to truly honour those whose lives were taken, then things need to change, and they need to change quickly. I was at a junior football club on Sunday foreshadowing the government's agenda for the week. I have to say that the response from the families that I spoke to was one of disbelief. In their words, they said, 'Why are you guys taking a day off? You should be back in there doing something. You should be dealing with the issues. You should be dealing with the particular tragedy that was put before us two and a half weeks ago'. They said that on our first day for 2017, two weeks after the event, they wanted us to get on with doing the job and dealing with the issues at hand.

I have seen legislation go through this place, be drafted and moved through both houses, inside a week. It is possible if the will is there. We need to strengthen the bail laws as soon as possible, and any move by the government to do so would get in-principle bipartisan support. Victorians rightly expect us to be debating and passing these laws as quickly as possible. I urge the government to move much more swiftly than they so far have, to make sure that there are changes and to take heed of the principles that the Liberal and National parties put out only a couple of weeks. These principles have been embraced when I have discussed them with the community.

Anyone in here doing their job who talks to their community knows that there is angst about the situation here in Victoria. They know that Victorians are concerned about the depth of crime that is sweeping the state. They know that Victorians have opinions about recidivism rates. They believe that the justice system is broken. They believe that the corrections systems, both youth and adult, are in chaos, and they say that crime is

rampant. If members are not hearing this, then frankly they are not listening to the public.

As I said, we have a responsibility to come in here and raise these issues — to not shirk the responsibility that our community has given us but instead to come in here and talk about the issues that our community is talking about. It is not for this Parliament and it is not for this government to sit on their hands any longer.

It is bad enough that events like this have to unfold before there is even talk of change. Victorians want to see us take action. They do not want to see headlines that say there is no rush to change bail laws, and they do not want us to take an extra day, or even the months that have been foreshadowed by the government, before changes are made. Our mark of respect to the victims of this terrible tragedy should be a commitment to quick and decisive action to make our community safer. Victorians expect no less from us, and we should sit here and listen and act.

Mr PEARSON (Essendon) — I rise to speak in support of the Premier's motion, and I do so on behalf of the people of the state district of Essendon. I remember my initial thought when I heard of this terrible event unfolding. My thought was, 'I wonder if this is a terrorist act'. I begin my contribution by paying my respects to those ordinary Victorians who raced in to provide assistance to those in need, not knowing whether it was a terrorist act, those people who put themselves in harm's way, not knowing whether in doing so they too might become victims themselves.

I want to pay my respects to those Victorians as well as to the first responders — the paramedics, the firefighters and the police officers — who rendered assistance on that day. I would like to acknowledge Senior Sergeant Ian Jones, who is the senior sergeant at Moonee Ponds police station, and his team for their efforts. I do not know if Senior Sergeant Steve Kehagias from the Flemington police station was also involved with his officers, but I suspect that they might have been. I also want to pay my respects to the doctors and nurses at the hospitals who cared for the injured on that day. I also want to acknowledge that this awful act will touch many people for many years to come.

About a week after the event occurred I heard the Lord Mayor speak to Neil Mitchell. I thought, 'Haven't we grown and matured as a society?', when the Lord Mayor was able to express his emotions quite honestly and openly, to indicate the fact that it had had a profound impact upon him, that he recognised the fact that he needed to take some time to heal himself and that he would seek help and assistance if he required it.

The road to recovery is a long one. Having lived with someone who had been hospitalised for a long period of time and then came home with an acquired brain injury, I know that for the families involved it is extremely difficult. I have no doubt that when a person goes through that lengthy period of stay, as a family member you want them back home with you and you want your life to resume as normal, but it does not. In actual fact, when someone has been injured and has been taken away from you for a long period of time and they do come home, it is extremely difficult — because you have got nowhere to run. You cannot leave that situation; you have got to be with that person. So I have no doubt that for the injured and the wounded from this terrible event and for their families the road to recovery and rehabilitation will be a long one.

As a Parliament we have an obligation to heal the injured and the wounded, and I know that is an obligation that we shall fulfil.

Mr T. SMITH (Kew) — I too rise to extend, on behalf of the people of Kew, support for the condolence motion as moved by the Premier. Six innocent people were mowed down in their prime, going about their business on Bourke Street on 20 January. It was a tragedy but an entirely preventable tragedy. We remember today the victims of Black Saturday. It was a natural disaster. But this was an entirely preventable tragedy, perpetrated by an evil person. We must take our lessons from what we have learned, and this will obviously take place during the coroner's inquest.

The people of Victoria are demanding a resolute response to an unprecedented attack on the peace and stability of this great city. Evil flourishes when people do nothing, and I have a horrible feeling that not enough good people have done all they could to prevent this. This must never, ever happen again. We must be resolute as lawmakers, as public officials and indeed in law enforcement agencies to ensure that anything like this never happens again. That goes to the heart of the issue and that is tightening up the bail provisions in this state.

The fundamental role of the state is to keep the state and its community safe. For too long the rights of perpetrators have trumped the rights of victims — and that must stop. People in my community in Kew and across Victoria are heartbroken by what has occurred, particularly to young children. But they are angry, and it is not political to suggest that anger is in some way undermining the important condolence motion that we are debating today. Reflecting that anger, reflecting that community sentiment is my job, and I want to get on with the job of making Victoria a safer place as soon as

possible. That is why I do not think we should be adjourning early today. I think we should be getting on with the job of making this state safer. That is not a political statement by any stretch. It is a statement of community intent, of all the commentary we have seen in the media and of everything that I have heard over the last couple of weeks. People are emotional, they are upset, they are angry and they want to know that we in this place as their representatives are going to do something about the issues that led to this crime being perpetrated.

I particularly want to pay tribute to Tongan Australian Isaac Tupou, who very bravely went out with a baseball bat in front of St Paul's Cathedral and attempted to stop this individual on his own. I thought that took a huge amount of bravery. And in spite of everything that we have seen perpetrated, as many speakers have said already, the way that Victorians — emergency services personnel, passers-by and the like — rushed to the aid of their fellow citizens showed the strength of our community and the strength of our society in the face of adversity and tragedy.

I conclude my remarks by saying this: we cannot allow this to ever happen again. In the interests and indeed in the memory of those people who died, our response must be resolute, the government's response must be absolute, and we must ensure that the cracks in our system are filled forever.

Mr HIBBINS (Pahran) — I rise to speak in support of the condolence motion for the lives lost and the people injured in the Bourke Street tragedy on 20 January this year. This tragedy was on a day that started with acts of violence in Windsor, in my local community, and ended with the deaths of four people, including a 10-year-old child, Thalia Hakin, and injuries to and hospitalisations of many others in the CBD. That heartbreak has continued since that day, with the deaths of two more, including three-month-old baby Zachary Bryant.

This tragedy shook our community — our city, our state and even our entire country. But in response, the community has rallied, both in its immediate response to those in need by bystanders and emergency services personnel and in the hours, days and weeks that have followed by police, all at our hospitals, our public service and the wider community. It came together in support of the victims, the survivors and those who gave assistance, and it demonstrated the values of compassion and unity, showing that it is these values that define us, not the unconscionable actions of one person.

Laying flowers with my family on Bourke Street on behalf of the Prahran community in the days after the tragedy was so incredibly sobering and it gave me pause to reflect on the fragility of life, which was ended so violently that day. This tragedy has left us all with questions on how this occurred, left us seeking answers and left us with a strong desire for a response from this place. Yes, there should be a response from this place — comprehensive, evidence based and with full and open consultation with relevant parties, whether they be in justice, law enforcement or mental health, and of course with the public. The gravity of this situation warrants nothing else.

We mourn with those families who have lost loved ones, and we are willing on those who are still suffering to survive and to heal. Our community is with you.

Mr WAKELING (Ferntree Gully) — I too rise to support this condolence motion before the house and wish to pay my respects to those six victims of this terrible situation, and on behalf of the Ferntree Gully community I pay their respects.

I, like many, rose on Friday morning to the news of an Elsternwick resident having been assaulted by his brother. Little did we know that several hours later the perpetrator of that crime would have committed such a horrendous crime in this state. We learned of the situation where he was driving his vehicle across various suburbs, which resulted in him, as we know, tragically resting at the end of Bourke Street, near Lonsdale Street. It is a terrible situation for everyone. For those families that are grieving, they have lost a family member. People going about their day and families visiting Melbourne are now facing the loss of a loved one.

Emergency services operators must be commended, and I do place on record the work that they have undertaken. I want to pay tribute also to those members of the Victorian community without any training who were thrust into a situation where they had to support someone in a terrible situation or in fact were faced with a situation where people had lost their lives. It is not until you are put in a position where you have to face tragedy that your instincts kick in. I recall a situation 25 years ago when a car accident occurred in front of me. I was the first responder to the accident and I had to face that situation. That still lives with me today. I know for those people who were personally affected by this, this will not be something they can deal with in a week, a month or a year.

I, like many, attended the site outside the general post office with my children. Just a month earlier I had stood

nearby at the Myer Christmas windows with my children. By the grace of God, if that had occurred when I was there with my children, the situation could have been different. As parents we think about how this would impact on us if it were our children. My daughter, in explaining the situation to her sister when looking at the picture of Thalia, said, 'She was my age. That could have been me or it could have been one of my friends'. At that point I stopped and thought, 'This could have been my family'.

A woman standing beside me talking to her friend said pointedly, 'Well, I hope the politicians are listening and will finally do something'. Given the moment, I did not introduce myself, but I said to myself, 'I will return to this place and at the first opportunity I have I will stand in this house on behalf of that Melburnian, that Victorian who I do not know, and others like her, and say, "Yes, politicians do have to listen and do have to act"'.

If there is anything that I am reminded of by this incident, it is that each and every one of us has been elected to this house to represent Victoria, to represent our community. As the member for Caulfield rightly pointed out, law and order is critical in the protection of all Victorians. I, like many, have concerns about the current system in regards to bail, police resourcing and sentencing, and I am not going to go through those at this point. But I do make this point today: yes, we grieve, and yes, we remember, but each and every one of us has an obligation to act. On behalf of that woman who stood beside me and expressed her frustration at politicians for not doing something about this situation, and others like her, I stand here today to say, 'We do listen, and yes, it is our responsibility to act'.

Ms BRITNELL (South-West Coast) — The events of 20 January shocked and horrified every Victorian. My heart remains heavy for those who were seriously injured and when I think of the senseless loss of life that occurred in the most horrific circumstances. My heart is also heavy for those who witnessed the atrocities, who saw the confronting events unfolding in front of them. I hope and pray they will eventually be able to find peace and come to terms with what they witnessed that day.

I would like to give thanks to the first responders, from the everyday people on the street who bravely stepped in to offer assistance to the men and women of our emergency services. The bravery shown on that day highlights to me all that is good about this city and our state — our people. The pain of that day was felt by all Victorians. When I laid flowers, picked from my garden, at the memorial in Bourke Street, it was done as a symbol to demonstrate that the people of South-West

Coast shared in the grief and that the pain was also felt in our community.

I never want to see this happen again, and I am sure every single person feels the same way. I will work in my role as a legislator to ensure that is a priority. That is what I was elected to do — not to sit back, but to work whilst I grieve. As a legislator, that is what I know is expected from me. The victims had the right to be safe on the street, the victims had the right to live their lives — and that right should never have been taken from them. Working towards stronger bail laws that have greater consequences for people who do the wrong thing, while supporting those who are affected by mental illness, drugs and other issues that may result in such evil actions, needs to be the priority.

I am ready to start work. I find it wrong that I am required to sit back today when I should be working to solve this situation that has resulted from our society accepting too much bad behaviour. I do not get paid to grieve; I am paid to work, and I can work whilst I grieve. As a nurse, a farmer and a mother I was often confronted by terrible things when I would have liked to have taken time off, but I had to get on with it. I find it more insulting than respectful that I am not legislating today. As legislators we owe it to the people who elected us to get on with it and address the concerns of the citizens of Victoria about law and order. It is disappointing that we will not be starting work today after a respectful reflection. Let us honour the victims of this horrific crime by getting to work and doing all that we can as legislators to stop this from ever happening again.

Ms RYALL (Ringwood) — I rise to support the condolence motion on behalf of my electorate of Ringwood. In minutes catastrophic and horrific devastation occurred on 20 January. Six lives were extinguished, one person is still fighting for life and many more are still receiving medical treatment. So many were injured, and so many more were scarred. We are a city, a state and a nation in shock and in mourning. It is a day we will never forget.

Those community members who acted immediately, who never for a moment hesitated, showed the true spirit of us as Australians — that spirit of mateship, that spirit of helping others out in need — and I commend them. I commend their actions, their selflessness and the innate goodness that came to the fore at that time. I pray for all those who are affected, those impacted, and for all the members of the public that those physical and psychological wounds will heal over time. Their courage and strength knew no bounds.

As a former health professional, we prepared often for catastrophic events in scenarios that simulated real-life tragedies on rooftops, in tunnels and in all sorts of environments. In full theatre make-up the adrenaline kicks in, just as it does in emergency, but nothing can fully prepare you for the reality of catastrophic and horrific circumstances. I recall as a student working at the Alfred hospital at that time when the Hoddle Street massacre occurred. I remember being in the intensive care unit at the time when some of the victims were there. A close friend missed that tragedy by minutes, and one of his work colleagues had bullet holes in the car. But at a major trauma hospital everyone swings into action. You do it, you act and you pull together, but you never forget.

Knowing that, I am so grateful to our police and emergency workers and to the medical and nursing teams in our hospitals that jumped into action and did what they were trained for. But when you train for it, you hope you never have to carry it out, and they did and did it well. As a board member of the Victorian Council of Churches Emergencies Ministry I commend our volunteers, as well as our Red Cross volunteers, who came forward to assist all who grieved and all who were directly impacted by the tragedy.

The support that psychological aid provides is vital in an ongoing capacity to assist all to heal over time. While the pain does not leave, we learn to live with it. We owe it to the victims, their loved ones and all Victorians to get on and work on this immediately — to debate the urgent reforms that need to happen and to fix the broken systems that exist in Victoria. My community expects us to be hard at work today, now, to not waste a minute, to not take the afternoon or anything off and to not do as the government has scheduled, but to urgently fix what is broken. That is our job, and that is why our community has put us here. My thoughts and prayers are with all who are impacted and all who came to their aid, and on behalf of my community I extend our deepest condolences.

Ms SHEED (Shepparton) — I rise to speak in support of this condolence motion, and I express my condolences to the families and friends who lost loved ones in Melbourne's Bourke Street tragedy on 20 January. I express these condolences not only on my own behalf but on behalf of the constituents of the Shepparton district. While Shepparton is over 2 hours away from Melbourne, we are not immune to a tragedy such as this that happens in our capital city, a city we all love, and we could not help but know and feel the deep loss, the pain and the grief that people were feeling throughout the state on that terrible day. Our thoughts remain with those who are still in

hospital and those suffering from the after-effects of such a traumatic situation.

I walked down Bourke Street in the days following this horrific event and visited the massive floral tribute that had been growing on the steps of the GPO and further along the street. I came back to Melbourne to attend the Federation Square vigil on behalf of my electorate. It was an incredibly hot day, but there were so many people there — so many people gathered to pay their respects — and there was an amazing sense of community and togetherness, and I think that really typifies Melbourne and Victoria.

We have heard stories from friends, family members and colleagues who were in the city on that day and who narrowly missed the danger or who were among those who stepped in to help the injured. We acknowledge the paramedics and other emergency workers on the scene and the many civilians who stepped in and acted on instinct in those shocking circumstances. Paramedics said on that day they did not have to ask for help — ‘You were just there’.

Melbourne is hurting, but I can assure you that the Shepparton district is hurting with you. The floral tribute at the GPO building was cleared away last Tuesday, but it has grown again. This is a tragedy which not only Melbourne but the whole of Victoria will remember for a long time. More can be said about much of this on another day, and there is much work to be done, but today is a day for the victims, for the families and for those who are still suffering. So I express my deepest sympathy to the families and friends of Zachary Bryant, Thalia Hakin, Matthew Si, Jess Mudie, Bhavita Patel and the sixth victim, the young Japanese man. We will not forget, but we know that those people who were lost will live in their families’ hearts forever.

Mr THOMPSON (Sandringham) — January 2017 saw the world focus on Melbourne for contrasting reasons. Today, in the words of an earlier speaker, we grieve shocking grief for Zachary Bryant, Thalia Hakin, Matthew Si, Bhavita Patel, Jess Mudie and a Japanese citizen. The Sandringham electorate local railway station coffee vendor and retired mobile intensive care ambulance paramedic reported to my office his insight and observations. Sandringham mothers with children in prams or with young children in hand stood out on the Sandringham railway station platform in the days following. They were carrying flowers. Our city mourned through the Federation Square service on 27 January. There were also battalions of mourners who over the week made their way to the Melbourne

GPO, placing by way of tribute, in silence and solidarity and shared grief, a wreath or posy of flowers.

I convey the gratitude of members of the Sandringham electorate to the citizen responders who provided help and hope, to the emergency services responders and to the teams of nurses, doctors and hospital administrators in our emergency departments.

Family members of mine were in the Bourke Street precinct at the time these events unfolded and stood metres from the mayhem. January 2017 in Melbourne saw the highest of humanity at Melbourne Park and the lowest in Bourke Street. Today we share shocking grief.

Motion agreed to in silence, honourable members showing unanimous agreement by standing in their places.

The SPEAKER — Order! I declare the resolution agreed to unanimously. In accordance with the motion agreed to earlier this day, as a further mark of respect to those affected by the Bourke Street tragedy, in particular the families of those who were killed, the house will now adjourn until tomorrow.

House adjourned 2.52 p.m.

