

PARLIAMENT OF VICTORIA

**PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES
(HANSARD)**

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

FIFTY-EIGHTH PARLIAMENT

FIRST SESSION

Thursday, 7 June 2018

(Extract from book 7)

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By authority of the Victorian Government Printer

The Governor

The Honourable LINDA DESSAU, AC

The Lieutenant-Governor

The Honourable KEN LAY, AO, APM

The ministry

(from 16 October 2017)

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

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

Speaker

The Hon. C. W. BROOKS (from 7 March 2017)

The Hon. TELMO LANGUILLER (to 25 February 2017)

Deputy Speaker

Ms J. MAREE EDWARDS (from 7 March 2017)

Mr D. A. NARDELLA (to 27 February 2017)

Acting Speakers

Ms Blandthorn, Mr Carbines, Ms Couzens, Mr Dimopoulos, Mr Edbrooke, Ms Graley,
Ms Kilkenny, Ms Knight, Mr McGuire, Mr Pearson, Mr Richardson, Ms Spence, Ms Suleyman,
Ms Thomson, Ms Ward and Ms Williams.

Leader of the Parliamentary Labor Party and Premier

The Hon. D. M. ANDREWS

Deputy Leader of the Parliamentary Labor Party and Deputy Premier

The Hon. J. A. MERLINO

Leader of the Parliamentary Liberal Party and Leader of the Opposition

The Hon. M. J. GUY

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

The Hon. D. J. HODGETT

Leader of The Nationals

The Hon. P. L. WALSH

Deputy Leader of The Nationals

Ms S. RYAN

Heads of parliamentary departments

Assembly — Acting Clerk of the Legislative Assembly: Ms Bridget Noonan

Council — Acting Clerk of the Parliaments and Clerk of the Legislative Council: Mr A. Young

Parliamentary Services — Secretary: Mr P. Lochert

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

| Member | District | Party | Member | District | Party |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------|--------------|--|------------------|--------------|
| Allan, Ms Jacinta Marie | Bendigo East | ALP | McLeish, Ms Lucinda Gaye | Eildon | LP |
| Andrews, Mr Daniel Michael | Mulgrave | ALP | Merlino, Mr James Anthony | Monbulk | ALP |
| Angus, Mr Neil Andrew Warwick | Forest Hill | LP | Morris, Mr David Charles | Mornington | LP |
| Asher, Ms Louise | Brighton | LP | Mulder, Mr Terence Wynn ² | Polwarth | LP |
| Battin, Mr Bradley William | Gembrook | LP | Naphine, Dr Denis Vincent ³ | South-West Coast | LP |
| Blackwood, Mr Gary John | Narracan | LP | Nardella, Mr Donato Antonio ⁴ | Melton | Ind |
| Blandthorn, Ms Elizabeth Anne | Pascoe Vale | ALP | Neville, Ms Lisa Mary | Bellarine | ALP |
| Britnell, Ms Roma ¹ | South-West Coast | LP | Noonan, Mr Wade Matthew | Williamstown | ALP |
| Brooks, Mr Colin William | Bundoora | ALP | Northe, Mr Russell John ⁵ | Morwell | Ind |
| Bull, Mr Joshua Michael | Sunbury | ALP | O'Brien, Mr Daniel David ⁶ | Gippsland South | Nats |
| Bull, Mr Timothy Owen | Gippsland East | Nats | O'Brien, Mr Michael Anthony | Malvern | LP |
| Burgess, Mr Neale Ronald | Hastings | LP | Pakula, Mr Martin Philip | Keysborough | ALP |
| Carbines, Mr Anthony Richard | Ivanhoe | ALP | Pallas, Mr Timothy Hugh | Werribee | ALP |
| Carroll, Mr Benjamin Alan | Niddrie | ALP | Paynter, Mr Brian Francis | Bass | LP |
| Clark, Mr Robert William | Box Hill | LP | Pearson, Mr Daniel James | Essendon | ALP |
| Couzens, Ms Christine Anne | Geelong | ALP | Perera, Mr Jude | Cranbourne | ALP |
| Crisp, Mr Peter Laurence | Mildura | Nats | Pesutto, Mr John | Hawthorn | LP |
| D'Ambrosio, Ms Liliana | Mill Park | ALP | Richardson, Mr Timothy Noel | Mordialloc | ALP |
| Dimopoulos, Mr Stephen | Oakleigh | ALP | Richardson, Ms Fiona Catherine Alison ⁷ | Northcote | ALP |
| Dixon, Mr Martin Francis | Nepean | LP | Riordan, Mr Richard ⁸ | Polwarth | LP |
| Donnellan, Mr Luke Anthony | Narre Warren North | ALP | Ryall, Ms Deanne Sharon | Ringwood | LP |
| Edbrooke, Mr Paul Andrew | Frankston | ALP | Ryan, Mr Peter Julian ⁹ | Gippsland South | Nats |
| Edwards, Ms Janice Maree | Bendigo West | ALP | Ryan, Ms Stephanie Maureen | Euroa | Nats |
| Eren, Mr John Hamdi | Lara | ALP | Sandell, Ms Ellen | Melbourne | Greens |
| Foley, Mr Martin Peter | Albert Park | ALP | Scott, Mr Robin David | Preston | ALP |
| Fyffe, Mrs Christine Anne | Evelyn | LP | Sheed, Ms Suzanna | Shepparton | Ind |
| Garrett, Ms Jane Furneaux | Brunswick | ALP | Smith, Mr Ryan | Warrandyte | LP |
| Gidley, Mr Michael Xavier Charles | Mount Waverley | LP | Smith, Mr Timothy Colin | Kew | LP |
| Graley, Ms Judith Ann | Narre Warren South | ALP | Southwick, Mr David James | Caulfield | LP |
| Green, Ms Danielle Louise | Yan Yean | ALP | Spence, Ms Rosalind Louise | Yuroke | ALP |
| Guy, Mr Matthew Jason | Bulleen | LP | Staikos, Mr Nicholas | Bentleigh | ALP |
| Halfpenny, Ms Bronwyn | Thomastown | ALP | Staley, Ms Louise Eileen | Ripon | LP |
| Hennessy, Ms Jill | Altona | ALP | Suleyman, Ms Natalie | St Albans | ALP |
| Hibbins, Mr Samuel Peter | Prahran | Greens | Thomas, Ms Mary-Anne | Macedon | ALP |
| Hodgett, Mr David John | Croydon | LP | Thompson, Mr Murray Hamilton Ross | Sandringham | LP |
| Howard, Mr Geoffrey Kemp | Buninyong | ALP | Thomson, Ms Marsha Rose | Footscray | ALP |
| Hutchins, Ms Natalie Maree Sykes | Sydenham | ALP | Thorpe, Ms Lidia Alma ¹⁰ | Northcote | Greens |
| Kairouz, Ms Marlene | Kororoit | ALP | Tilley, Mr William John | Benambra | LP |
| Katos, Mr Andrew | South Barwon | LP | Victoria, Ms Heidi | Bayswater | LP |
| Kealy, Ms Emma Jayne | Lowan | Nats | Wakeling, Mr Nicholas | Ferntree Gully | LP |
| Kilkenny, Ms Sonya | Carrum | ALP | Walsh, Mr Peter Lindsay | Murray Plains | Nats |
| Knight, Ms Sharon Patricia | Wendouree | ALP | Ward, Ms Vicki | Eltham | ALP |
| Languiller, Mr Telmo Ramon | Tarneit | ALP | Watt, Mr Graham Travis | Burwood | LP |
| Lim, Mr Muy Hong | Clarinda | ALP | Wells, Mr Kimberley Arthur | Rowville | LP |
| McCurdy, Mr Timothy Logan | Ovens Valley | Nats | Williams, Ms Gabrielle | Dandenong | ALP |
| McGuire, Mr Frank | Broadmeadows | ALP | Wynne, Mr Richard William | Richmond | ALP |

¹ Elected 31 October 2015

² Resigned 3 September 2015

³ Resigned 3 September 2015

⁴ ALP until 7 March 2017

⁵ Nats until 28 August 2017

⁶ Elected 14 March 2015

⁷ Died 23 August 2017

⁸ Elected 31 October 2015

⁹ Resigned 2 February 2015

¹⁰ Elected 18 November 2017

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 Carroll, Mr Clark, Ms Edwards, Mr Hibbins, Mr Hodgett, Ms Kairouz, Ms Ryan and Ms Sheed.

Legislative Assembly select committees

Penalty Rates and Fair Pay Select Committee — Ms Blandthorn, Mr J. Bull, Mr Clark, Mr Hibbins, Ms Ryall, Ms Suleyman and Ms Williams.

Joint committees

Accountability and Oversight Committee — (*Assembly*): Mr Angus, Mr Gidley, Mr Noonan and Ms Thomson. (*Council*): Mr O’Sullivan, Mr Purcell and Ms Symes.

Dispute Resolution Committee — (*Assembly*): Ms Allan, Mr Clark, Ms Hutchins, Mr Merlino, Mr M. O’Brien, Mr Pakula 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, Ms Garrett and Ms Ryall. (*Council*): Mr Bourman, Mr Elasmarr and Mr Melhem.

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

Environment, Natural Resources and Regional Development Committee — (*Assembly*): Mr J. Bull, Ms Halfpenny, Mr Richardson and Mr Riordan. (*Council*): Mr O’Sullivan, Mr Ramsay and Mr Young.

Family and Community Development Committee — (*Assembly*): Ms Britnell, Ms Couzens, Mr Edbrooke, Ms Edwards and Ms McLeish. (*Council*): Dr Carling-Jenkins and 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 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 Gepp 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 Patten, Ms Pennicuik and Ms Shing.

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

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Thursday, 7 June 2018

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

DISTINGUISHED VISITORS

The SPEAKER (09:33) — I welcome to the gallery today a former Treasurer of Queensland, now the Honourable Speaker of the Queensland Parliament, the Honourable Curtis Pitt.

PETITIONS

Following petitions presented to house:

Residential planning zones

To the Legislative Assembly of Victoria:

The petition of concerned Victorians draws to the attention of the house:

the negative impact of the Andrews Labor government's changes to Victoria's planning laws that will force even more inappropriate development into our neighbourhoods;

that residents do not support an increase in maximum height limits across neighbourhood residential and general residential zones;

that residents do not support the removal of restrictions on the number of dwellings that can be built on land within neighbourhood residential zones.

The petitioners therefore request the Legislative Assembly of Victoria demand Daniel Andrews halt the forced densification of our local suburbs and properly consult residents on the negative impacts of his changes to Victoria's planning laws.

By Mr HODGETT (Croydon) (31 signatures).

Mooroolbark police station

To the Legislative Assembly of Victoria:

The petition of concerned Victorians draws to the attention of the house that under the Andrews Labor government crime is up 25 per cent in Mooroolbark yet our '24-hour police station' is closed every night.

The petitioners therefore request that the Legislative Assembly of Victoria demand Daniel Andrews keep Mooroolbark police station open 24 hours!

By Mr HODGETT (Croydon) (180 signatures).

AGL floating gas terminal, Crib Point

To the Legislative Assembly of Victoria:

We, the undersigned, call on the Legislative Assembly of Victoria to reject AGL's proposal to transport liquid natural

gas from all over the world to a floating storage regasification unit (FSRU) moored to the Crib Point jetty on Western Port Bay for the following reasons:

1. the potential risk of a significant and devastating fire/explosion event;
2. the potential for ships under 'flags of convenience' transporting the LNG to be: poorly maintained, staffed with cheap, foreign labour and bringing marine pests to a sensitive ecosystem;
3. it risks permanent damage to delicately balanced marine life, birdlife, seagrasses and mangroves in an area that is an internationally recognised, Ramsar-listed wetland and UNESCO designated biosphere reserve;
4. pollution (air, noise and light) contaminating both the immediate and regional communities;
5. the potential negative impact on local businesses dependent on tourism and fishing;
6. construction of approx. 60-km pipeline from Crib Point to Pakenham disrupting landowners and the environment and with its own inherent risks.

By Mr BURGESS (Hastings) (1295 signatures).

Tabled.

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

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

DOCUMENTS

Tabled by Acting Clerk:

Statutory Rules under the following Acts:

Borrowing and Investment Powers Act 1987 — SR 69

Children, Youth and Families Act 2005 — SR 70

Criminal Procedure Act 2009 — SR 70

Impounding of Livestock Act 1994 — SR 66

Subordinate Legislation Act 1994 — SR 67

Transfer of Land Act 1958 — SR 68

Subordinate Legislation Act 1994 — Documents under s 15 in relation to Statutory Rules 66, 67, 68, 70.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE**Adjournment**

Ms ALLAN (Minister for Public Transport) (09:35) — I move:

That the house, at its rising, adjourns until Tuesday, 19 June 2018.

Motion agreed to.

MEMBERS STATEMENTS**Ferntree Gully railway station**

Mr WAKELING (Ferntree Gully) (09:36) — This week I had the pleasure of joining the shadow Minister for Public Transport, David Davis in the other house, in attending Ferntree Gully railway station where we made a funding commitment of \$300 000 to upgrade Ferntree Gully railway station by installing a shelter on the city-bound platform. This is going to provide great benefit to commuters at that station who have raised this issue with me. I am very pleased that we will be delivering this in government — something this government has failed to deliver for the Knox community.

World Environment Day

Mr WAKELING — I was pleased to join the member for Bayswater and other residents from throughout the Knox community, as well as the First Friends of Dandenong Creek and Friends of Blind Creek Billabong, for World Environment Day and to do some tree planting in Wantirna. It was a great event, and I congratulate the Knox City Council and all involved for another wonderful event.

Knox Italian Community Club

Mr WAKELING — I was pleased also to join the member for Rowville in attending the Knox Italian Community Club's 30th anniversary dinner dance. It was a fantastic event. The Knox Italian community has made a significant contribution to the Knox community. I and the member for Rowville certainly well enjoyed that event, and I congratulate the president, Angelo Mazzone, and all members of that club for a great evening.

TAC Cup Girls

Mr WAKELING — Congratulations to the TAC Cup Girls for their best and fairest.

Victoria University Werribee East campus

Mr PALLAS (Treasurer) (09:37) — I rise to inform the house of the exciting plans to reopen Victoria University's Werribee East campus. This is what happens when governments invest in the big projects that Victoria needs and in the people we need to make them happen.

The Victoria University TAFE division will train hundreds of workers in the skills that they need to take up jobs on the West Gate tunnel, an outstanding project that will serve the growing western suburbs of Melbourne and will ensure that not only skills and economic opportunity are provided for but travel times are substantially improved. This includes through the TAFE a certificate III in civil construction, identified as a free priority TAFE course by the Andrews Labor government so that cost is never a barrier to finding meaningful work.

SkyBus Werribee service

Mr PALLAS — I would like to note that Werribee residents are also very excited to hear that they will soon have access to a SkyBus Werribee–Melbourne Airport service. This will offer Werribee residents a frequent and direct connection to Melbourne Airport once more, replacing the Gull bus service which ceased operations in 2015. This is great for local residents but equally a strong result for local tourism operators, who will benefit from increased visitation to Werribee.

FE2b replica plane

Mr D. O'BRIEN (Gippsland South) (09:39) — I rise this morning to congratulate former Wellington shire councillor Bob Wenger and students and teachers from Yarram Secondary College for their incredible project to create a half-scale replica of the first aircraft to undertake an operational flight in Australia. The replica of the FE2b commemorates the centenary of the first flight near Yarram by Captain Frank McNamara, VC, as part of efforts to locate a German raider ship thought to be operating in Bass Strait towards the end of World War I. Bob Wenger came up with the idea of the model and set about coordinating the project to produce the replica with students from Yarram and other volunteers. The plane now takes pride of place in Yarram Memorial Park. Well done to Bob and the team.

Giffard West hall

Mr D. O'BRIEN — Congratulations also to the Giffard West hall committee of management for their efforts in organising a centenary celebration recently of

the hall's opening. The event served as something of a back-to-for residents and former residents of Giffard West and surrounding areas such as Stradbroke, Darriman, Woodside and Seaspray. Well over 100 people attended and enjoyed the historical displays, talks about the old days and of course a scrumptious country lunch. Well done to president Sue Anderson, secretary Nicki Jennings and all those involved in a great day.

Gippsland rail services

Mr D. O'BRIEN — With the state government finally confirming a time line last week for the replacement of the Avon River railway bridge, it is now time for the government to turn its attention to additional services on the Gippsland rail line. I restate my call for the government to add additional services to Sale by extending a number of existing train services from Traralgon to Sale. Sale and Wellington shire residents are using the train more frequently, but many are forced to travel to Traralgon to pick up the train to Melbourne because we have only three services a day to Sale and Bairnsdale. Additional services to Sale were part of the government's own regional network development plan, and it is time it was delivered on.

Bellarine electorate fire brigades

Ms NEVILLE (Minister for Police) (09:40) — I am pleased to be able to work closely with and on behalf of our dedicated Country Fire Authority (CFA) brigades right across the Bellarine — like earlier this year, presenting the keys for the new tanker at Mannerim and turning the first sod for a new station at Portarlington. It was with the same pride that I recently announced significant funding for upgrades at both the Leopold and St Leonards brigades.

At Leopold on Monday, 7 May, it was great to meet up with a number of local CFA volunteer members to announce funding of \$800 000 for the redevelopment of this very proud station. Leopold has seen significant growth in both population and infrastructure over recent years and as such the station is now very much in need of redevelopment. I take this opportunity to acknowledge all members of the Leopold fire brigade, led by Captain Ashley Browne, and thank them for their committed and untiring efforts in protecting their local and wider community.

Following on from Leopold, last Monday, 4 June, I was pleased to visit the St Leonards station to announce \$800 000 for the redevelopment of that station. The current station no longer meets the needs of the St Leonards and Indented Head communities, which

are growing and which, of course, double in size over the summer period. The volunteers at St Leonards fire brigade, led by Captain Niki Habibis, have a proud and long history of responding to emergencies and keeping people safe. I congratulate all the St Leonards members for their dedicated and untiring work, and I am very pleased to work with them on building a new state-of-the-art facility, which is well-deserved by that community and those volunteers.

Riversdale railway station

Mr PESUTTO (Hawthorn) (09:42) — On 25 May I met with a number of my constituents at Riversdale railway station in Camberwell in my electorate. Christiane Kehoe, David Metzthen, Rebecca Peachey, Kerry Herson, Meredith Ure, Andrew Hynson and Warren and John Baring are local residents angry about the decision Metro Trains Melbourne took recently to cut down healthy gum trees on public land surrounding the station.

Recently residents of Wandin Road, Camberwell in particular managed to stop Metro Trains arborists cutting down a healthy 100-year-old gum tree on the east side of Riversdale station. Unfortunately another significant tree was already half down. Several residents who phoned Boroondara City Council were advised that Metro Trains did not have a permit for major works, only pruning. I am advised that Metro Trains arborists were stopped, pending further investigation.

Local residents are concerned that they have not received any proper notice about the removal of established old trees. They are concerned that pruning efforts have now resulted in four perfectly healthy gum trees being removed while dead shrub continues to be ignored and is not pruned or cleared away. This group of concerned residents discussed with me the possibility of that happening and that if proper action is not taken, further beautiful trees will be gone.

I have written to both Metro Trains and VicTrack, and I am awaiting a response to my queries. In the meantime a petition is being circulated throughout the affected local area, and this is gaining a lot of community support. I certainly urge constituents in and around the area of Riversdale station to join us and support this important petition to save vegetation and healthy old trees in the area.

Lara RSL

Mr EREN (Minister for Veterans) (09:43) — On Sunday I was honoured to open a wonderful exhibition,

The Macs of Lara District, and see the hard work of the volunteers of the Lara RSL on display. It has given me great pride that the Andrews Labor government is funding projects such as this under the Veterans Heritage Project. We are providing \$494 000 to the Veterans Heritage Project to ensure that objects will be around to keep telling the stories of the Victorian experience of war — abroad and on the home front — for generations to come.

In Lara experts from Museums Australia spent time with the volunteers assessing the collection, cataloguing, ordering supplies and designing an exhibition — the one that I saw on Sunday. Over 830 objects have been photographed, catalogued and protected over the past year. They are now available to be seen by locals and students and online from anywhere in the world. The objects at Lara, including the ones chosen for this exhibition, tell the story not only of Victoria, but of Lara, Little River, Geelong and our surrounds. That is the importance of these collections being held in our sub-branches: they tell the local stories, the stories thought too small for the big museums but too big and important to be forgotten.

I am delighted we have been able to support the Lara RSL in telling the story of the Lara people and their wartime experiences. I would like to acknowledge Bruce Challoner, president of the Lara RSL sub-branch and commend his commitment to and hard work on this project, and I acknowledge the sub-branch overall. I would also like to acknowledge Dr Janet Butler, author of *Kitty's War*, who was there on the day to give us an expert overview of the exhibition. It is great work by all involved, and I was truly honoured to attend on the day and open this wonderful exhibition.

Yarra Boulevard, Kew

Mr T. SMITH (Kew) (09:45) — I rise to update the house with regard to the ongoing issues on Yarra Boulevard, particularly the incidence of the idiot or multiple idiots laying tacks on Yarra Boulevard, which is incredibly dangerous for cyclists. There have been a number of injuries over the last four years these criminal acts have been undertaken, and it is a great embarrassment for law enforcement that the perpetrators have not been brought to justice. George Mihailidis, the leader of the local cycling group, was on radio 3AW yesterday talking to Neil Mitchell about this. He lamented the fact that after four years those who have been perpetrating this crime against cyclists and against, frankly, everyone that wants to use Yarra Boulevard for recreational purposes, have not been brought to justice. I hope Boroondara police can redouble their efforts to find this bloke, and I hope the

Andrews Labor government can provide the resources to Boroondara police to catch the individual or individuals who are undertaking this crime.

Trinity Grammar School

Mr T. SMITH — The recent controversy at Trinity Grammar School has been most undesirable for my electorate. I want to put on record my thanks to former headmaster Michael Davies and his family, particularly because of the hardships they have endured in recent times. I also want to pay tribute to Mr Rohan Brown, the deputy headmaster, who thankfully has been reinstated at Trinity Grammar. Trinity Grammar is a wonderful local school in my electorate. It has done a wonderful job educating young men for the last 120 years in Kew, and I hope that in the years to come the controversies of recent months will subside.

Mill Park Heights Primary School

Ms D'AMBROSIO (Minister for Energy, Environment and Climate Change) (09:46) — Last week I had the pleasure of visiting Mill Park Heights Primary School to open the \$6 million classroom updates, as funded through the Andrews Labor government. There was a lot to celebrate that morning. Mill Park Heights Primary School now has 14 new classrooms. There was the installation of a new playground, a soccer pitch and a sandpit, which I am sure the students are particularly excited about. Finally, there were general refurbishments to ensure the architecture is part of the school's top-tier education program.

I want to thank the Minister for Education for his strong support for education in my electorate. The minister visited the school with me when in opposition to see firsthand the lack of adequate classrooms at the school, which relied on more than 20 portable classrooms in which to educate the students. Our government made a commitment then to fix this, and we have now delivered. The new classrooms have been kitted out to better meet students' needs and to ensure teachers have a productive work environment. I want also to congratulate Deborah Patterson, the Mill Park Heights Primary School principal, and the school council, students and staff on the success of the project. This is yet another example of how the Andrews Labor government is living up to its reputation as the Education State.

The northern suburbs are quickly becoming an economic hub of Victoria, and it is important that we have the services and infrastructure that match the growth and provide the best education possible so our

young children can truly thrive. I am proud to stand with a government that has listened to the community, acknowledged the need for service upgrades and, importantly, made commitments to actually deliver and see those outcomes through. I am so pleased now that the community and students can get the full benefits of a great education.

Somerville Football and Netball Club

Mr BURGESS (Hastings) (09:48) — On 20 April I was pleased to attend a luncheon hosted by the Somerville Football and Netball Club and to listen to their guest speaker, Dylan Alcott, OAM. Dylan's amazing achievements include being an Australian wheelchair basketballer, wheelchair tennis player, gold medal Paralympian, radio host and motivational speaker. He is an amazing young man, a dynamic speaker and very funny. I encourage all members to take the opportunity to hear him speak.

Anzac Day

Mr BURGESS — For Anzac Day services this year I was privileged to lay wreaths at Langwarrin, Pearce Dale and Crib Point, joining many hundreds of members of my community, young and old, to commemorate the Anzac tradition and recognise those who served our great country and its people. World War I was a state and nation-shaping event, and 100 years on the sense of nationhood and identity amongst our people continues to grow.

Apprenticeship and Traineeship Employment Partners

Mr BURGESS — On 4 May I was pleased to attend the Apprenticeship and Traineeship Employment Partners (ATEP) community awards night at the Frankston RSL. In operation since 1987, ATEP is a not-for-profit, community-based organisation employing around 200 apprentices and trainees and offering innovative career pathways to young people on the Mornington Peninsula and in the south-eastern suburbs.

Somerville Community House

Mr BURGESS — On 5 May it was a pleasure to be invited to speak at the Somerville Community House open day. Throughout the day there were demonstrations of yoga, tai chi and rock'n'roll, and there was painting for the kids and plant stalls, a barbecue, refreshments and the opportunity to inspect their outstanding new garden. There were opportunities for all.

Baxter Residents and Traders Progress Action Committee

Mr BURGESS — I was pleased to assist the Baxter Residents and Traders Progress Action Committee (BRATPAC) at its sausage sizzle on 5 May at the Baxter shopping centre as part of Baxter's centenary celebrations the following day. Congratulations to the wonderful Baxter community on their township's centenary and to those who serve Baxter residents as part of BRATPAC. A big thanks to all those local businesses whose generous donations made the barbecue possible.

Altona P-9 College

Ms HENNESSY (Minister for Health) (09:49) — On 25 May I met with the Altona P-9 College leadership group, including principal Julie Krause and vice-principal Matthew Kelly, to discuss some big news about their school. Students at Altona P-9 College will soon have the option of completing their secondary education at the school, as it will be transformed into a P-12. The school has been doing a fantastic job, but it is important to give local students and parents choice. The Department of Education and Training and the Victorian School Building Authority will work with the school on transition arrangements to allow year 10 students to enrol at the school from 2019. The school will then accommodate year 11 students from 2020 and year 12 students from 2021. The time is right to give local students the ability to complete their secondary education at this fantastic local school.

JK Grant Reserve pavilion

Ms HENNESSY — I was pleased to join with Hobsons Bay mayor Angela Altair and Cr Sandra Wilson for the official opening of the JK Grant Reserve pavilion last Tuesday. It has fantastic facilities and opens up greater opportunities for the involvement of women and girls in sports. A very big thanks to Hobsons Bay City Council, Altona Football Club, Altona Cricket Club and AFL Victoria who all made a contribution for the purposes of getting this long-overdue redevelopment done.

Barbara Yeoh

Ms HENNESSY — I would like to place on the record my appreciation and thanks to Ms Barbara Yeoh, who has been the chair of Monash Health for the past nine years. She will be retiring on 1 July. She has completed her duties with great capacity, with great dignity and with incredible compassion and optimism for the patients of Monash.

Greater Shepparton Volunteer Recognition Awards

Ms SHEED (Shepparton) (09:51) — Today I would like to take the opportunity to acknowledge the many members of the Shepparton district community who generously volunteer their time, experience and energy to make our electorate a better place to live, work and invest in. The work that they do is invaluable to our community, and it is a pleasure to be able to stand here today and put several of their names on the record as winners of the 2018 Greater Shepparton Volunteer Awards. Congratulations to Dawn Tricario, Aunty Kella Robinson, John Nisbet, Maya Ingham, Janet Batten, Joe Clarke and the team at the Book Inn on your contributions to our region.

It was particularly pleasing to see the winner of the long service award, Mooroopna's Mr Clarke, feature on the front page of our local newspaper, the *Shepparton News*, last week in honour of his 60 years of volunteer service at the RSL. Now 93, Mr Clarke served during World War II in Papua New Guinea, Borneo and Japan and through his role in the Shepparton RSL's welfare committees now visits returned services personnel in need of support.

Also acknowledged at the awards ceremony were 17-year-old Zahraa al Shamis and 18-year-old Suna Teia, who received certificates for their work on our local police youth committee. Both have been volunteering on the committee with an eye to one day perhaps becoming police officers themselves.

Australian Emergency Assistance Association

Mr LIM (Clarinda) (09:52) — Last Tuesday I was privileged to meet with leadership of the Australian Emergency Assistance Association Incorporated (AEAAI). The AEAAI is a registered non-profit organisation providing emergency assistance to members of ethnic communities. The organisation was founded by Mr Huifeng Liu in June 2016, and has been operating from the electorate of Clarinda. It has been working very closely with the police and other emergency responders for the last few years.

The organisation has a similar vision and mission to that of Neighbourhood Watch, but enjoys much higher efficiency by utilising the latest technologies, and importantly provides language and culturally sensitive services to the local Chinese community. Since its inception, the association has made use of the social media app WeChat as its primary communication platform, and has evolved from its three original contributors to over 1000 volunteers and now

40 000 participants. So far they have provided assistance in over 700 cases, of which around 500 cases were reported by different media including *ABC News*.

The association's functions include providing assistance with police reports and emergency rescue for victims of violence and injury, spreading scam alert information, organising safety awareness public events and finding missing people and property.

Murray Basin rail project

Mr CRISP (Mildura) (09:54) — The Murray Basin rail project was meant to secure the future of freight from Mildura to the port and pave the way for the return of the passenger train. The National Party in government allocated \$220 million from the sale of the Rural Finance Corporation for the project, which later received matching funding from the federal government. Instead of being the realisation of a dream, the project has become a nightmare. Stories abound of issues with the track, including on the Maryborough to Ararat line, which has speed restrictions and will need significant remedial work. Such is the restriction on the track that only one train can use the track per day, restricting the rest of the network from an effective freight service. As I understand it, the contractor is no longer on the project and the question has to be asked: where was the contract supervision that allowed this mess to occur? The issues that have arisen should have been managed, and the buck stops with the minister for this botched job.

The Mildura line was out of service for the entire grape season. We are now in the citrus season and the rail link to the port is vital for the export of citrus. Any sort of restricted service or delays, closures or any other problems are unacceptable. An unreliable service puts pressure on shifting our exports by road and puts additional pressure on the trucking industry as well as the highways, dealing with congestion and getting to the port. Denials and weasel word excuses simply do not cut the mustard. The buck stops with the minister, and my community demands a response that assures all those depending on the rail line that it will be fixed as promised.

Victoria University simulation-based learning facility

Ms SULEYMAN (St Albans) (09:55) — Last week I was delighted to attend the launch of the world-class simulation-based learning facility at Victoria University in St Albans. This simulation facility will give our future paramedics, nurses and midwives valuable practical training and experience in a realistic and

supportive environment. These sorts of simulated learning facilities help students to build essential skills in critical thinking, teamwork, problem solving and communication. These are real skills for the real world.

I would like also to thank Victoria University for placing its St Albans campus at the forefront of training in the west. This is on top of the Andrews Labor government's investment in the St Albans and Sunshine campuses of Victoria University and making TAFE available to students again, in particular the free courses that have been announced recently.

Turkish community

Ms SULEYMAN — On another matter, I had the pleasure of attending the Turkish-Australian iftar dinner. This was an opportunity to celebrate 50 years of Turkish and 70 years of Turkish Cypriot migration to Australia. There is no doubt that the Turkish community in Victoria has been an integral part of the vibrant multicultural tapestry in Victoria. We have seen contributions from all sectors.

Geelong Amateur Football and Netball Club

Mr KATOS (South Barwon) (09:57) — Last Saturday I was pleased to attend the Geelong Amateur Football and Netball Club, along with Liberal candidate for Geelong, Freya Fidge, to announce that a Liberal government elected this year will commit \$200 000 towards lighting at the Queens Park oval. This is an important project for the football club and was welcomed by club president Simon Farrell. The club has 26 junior teams and four women's and girls teams and they are really struggling at the moment with ground capacity due to the lack of lights. This is a welcome commitment for that area. It is the second-largest club in AFL Barwon and I was very proud to make that commitment last Saturday.

Iona college

Mr KATOS — Armstrong Creek in the South Barwon electorate continues to grow, and I recently attended the naming ceremony for Victoria's newest Catholic secondary college, to be named Iona college. The ceremony was led by the Archbishop of Melbourne, His Grace Denis Hart, who told us that the name Iona was inspired by one of the most significant sites in the British Isles, the monastery of Iona, located on the west coast of Scotland. Catholic Education executive officer, Stephen Elder, advised that Iona college in Geelong will be opened in 2020 and construction is expected to begin this September. This non-government education provider will complement

the government schools that I have fought for over the past few years and will continue to fight for. Iona college will add greatly to the educational opportunities for the families now calling Armstrong Creek home.

Yarra Me School

Ms GRALEY (Narre Warren South) (09:58) — Only a life lived for others is worth living. In my role as the Parliamentary Secretary for Education I am lucky enough to visit many schools across Victoria and see the great pedagogy in the classrooms and the work we are putting in to build the Education State school by school. The Yarra Me School is unlike most schools. It is a government specialist school that exclusively addresses the educational needs of students with significant social, emotional and behavioural challenges. The students come from a range of different backgrounds, including trauma, autism, speech and language difficulties, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, attachment disorder, anxiety and learning difficulties. A big thankyou to principal Nancy Sidoti and school council president Nicholas Abbey for your passion for education excellence and equity and for making me feel so welcome at your school. Thanks also to students George, Marco, Lucas and Eloise for your wonderful tour and letting me know how much you love your school.

Hester Hornbrook Academy

Ms GRALEY — We are committed to supporting children throughout their education no matter their postcode, no matter their personal situation. I recently opened the Hester Hornbrook Academy at the Melbourne Polytechnic, Prahran. The Hester Hornbrook Academy is a phenomenal education provider where the curriculum is flexed to respond to the strengths, interests and learning needs of each student. Thank you for the hard work and leadership of principal Dave Wells and board chair Dr Ros Otzen. The school is appropriately named after the late Hester Hornbrook, one of Melbourne City Mission's past presidents. Among her charitable works, she helped establish a system of 'ragged schools' that provided basic education for children who were too poor, dirty or otherwise marginalised to attend at any other type of formal education. This is great work and I thank everybody, especially the board and chair of Melbourne City Mission.

Alexandra Standard

Ms McLEISH (Eildon) (10:00) — For over 150 years now the people of Alexandra have been receiving their news through the *Alexandra Standard*.

This is a remarkable achievement for a small local newspaper. The world of print media has had its ups and downs, and it is terrific to see a small paper like this one absolutely go the distance. Yesterday they had their celebratory bash, which saw lots of people coming and going through the afternoon and included a giant cake. It is published now by Celina Mott through Alexandra Newspapers, and I want to recognise the team there: Karen Morrison, Anne Richey, Penny Paxman, Lynne Wise, Ebony Morrison and newly arrived journalist Holly Tregenza. May they have success in the years to come.

Rubicon Outdoor Centre

Ms McLEISH — Last week I attended the Rubicon Outdoor Centre, which was celebrating 40 years of operation. The centre is an outdoor secondary school operated by the Department of Education and Training. Some 2000 students pass through the doors annually. The Rubicon state forest was home to the hydroelectric scheme controlled by the State Electricity Commission of Victoria (SEC), and employees were housed at the current camp site. In 1978 the department of education acquired the camp from the SEC.

I want to acknowledge the principal, Dean McLean, who is on long service leave at the moment, and the acting principal, Andrew Monson, who has got the ropes at the minute. I also want to recognise the staff, many of whom have been there for ages. This is really indicative of such a wonderful, satisfying working environment. Outdoor education is a completely important element of a student's education, and I think this is an area that certainly needs continued investment.

McKinnon Secondary College

Mr STAIKOS (Bentleigh) (10:01) — Congratulations, McKinnon Secondary College! McKinnon has come first in the Language Perfect World Championships 2018. Language Perfect is a global online competition to promote language learning. McKinnon Secondary College has been participating for five years, finishing 30th in the world in 2014. In 2018 they are number 1 in the world, achieving victory against 2230 other schools. They answered a staggering 4 657 814 questions and were first in German, second in French and third in Chinese. Many staff also participated, and their professionalism, dedication and enthusiasm are a great inspiration for the students. McKinnon also received their best individual performance, with James Hardy in year 12 finishing 11th in the world, with 42 508 points and being the top student for Latin. Well done to all involved.

Bentleigh electorate scout groups

Mr STAIKOS — A couple of weeks ago I raced back to Bentleigh from Parliament to visit two scout groups. It was a pleasure to spend a bit of time with the cubs at Bailey Reserve Scout Group. Thanks for the T-shirt with the words, 'When I grow up I want to be a Rover scout', which I promised to wear in Parliament, and I will try to do that later. After that visit I went down to the 10th Caulfield Scout Group for Jessica Kaplan's Australian Scout Medallion presentation. This is the highest honour for a scout, and Jessica was a very worthy recipient. Achieving this honour has been years in the making. Jessica set her mind to it, and with hard work and determination, including a long hike, she got there. Well done.

Member for Sandringham

Mr DIXON (Nepean) (10:03) — During my 22 years as a member of the Victorian Parliament, including four years as Minister for Education, the member for Sandringham stands out as a visionary advocate in pursuit of better educational opportunities and infrastructure for the students within the Sandringham electorate, including Beaumaris. A defining example of his vision, community dedication and outstanding leadership is his initiation and development of the agreement with the Melbourne Cricket Club (MCC) and the education department for the shared club and community and school sporting and education facilities in what is now known as Beaumaris Secondary College. The investment by the MCC was pivotal to the simultaneous school rebuilding program. He should be proud that his work has come to fruition with the opening of the MCC facility in a couple of weeks time.

Balnarring traffic management

Mr DIXON — On another matter, I refer to a letter to the Minister for Roads and Road Safety from the federal member for Flinders, myself and the Liberal candidate for Nepean, Russell Joseph. I quote:

We are writing collectively to you following grave and overwhelming concerns received from the community regarding the safety of children, the elderly, people with disabilities and all other pedestrians that must cross two arterial roads to access Balnarring shopping centre and other community facilities.

A pedestrian crossing is required for Frankston-Flinders Road between the skate park, playground, preschool, infant welfare centre and playgroup/occasional care centre, community hall (that services many groups including the senior citizens association), a bus stop and the village common for a safe

crossing to the Balnarring Village shopping centre or vice versa.

I look forward to the minister's response.

Liam Birch

Ms GREEN (Yan Yean) (10:04) — On Saturday, 2 June, Liam Birch collapsed at a boundary throw-in during the third quarter of the Wallan Magpies under-19 grand final. News reports at the time said Liam had had a heart attack, and I understand he is going through medical tests to verify what the cause was. Liam was extremely fortunate that teacher Tony Freeman was passing by and jumped the fence to perform CPR on him. When interviewed on Channel 7, Tony said that Liam had no heartbeat and was turning blue, so he called for a defibrillator. This saved Liam's life. Assistant coach and Liam's dad, Adam Birch, travelled with Liam to hospital. Thankfully it was Adam who had previously pushed for defibrillators to be installed at the club. Thank you to everyone, especially Tony Freeman, for being there and acting quickly to assist Liam. This life saved shows that defibrillators can save lives and be a vital addition to sporting clubs. As someone who has suffered the loss of her dad on the cricket field aged a young 44, I remind any local club that does not yet have a defibrillator that state grants for defibrillators close on 20 June.

Write a Book in a Day

Ms GREEN — On another matter, I want to thank Kylah, Anjali, Jemma, Trinity and Tess, year 9 students at Diamond Valley College who I met with recently. I met with them during the Premiers' Reading Challenge, and their love for reading has now inspired them to join the Write a Book in a Day team, which is a fundraiser for the Kids' Cancer Project. What great citizens at Diamond Valley College.

TREASURY AND FINANCE LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL 2018

Statement of compatibility

Mr SCOTT (Minister for Finance) tabled following statement in accordance with Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006:

Opening paragraphs

In accordance with section 28 of the **Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006**, (the 'Charter'), I make this Statement of Compatibility with respect to the Treasury and Finance Legislation Amendment Bill 2018 (the **Bill**).

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

Overview

The Bill is an omnibus Bill that makes amendments to a number of Acts, with the following amendments relevant to human rights:

- extending transport accident benefits payable to family members;
- expanding the entitlement to transport accident compensation to cyclists who are injured as a result of a collision with a stationary vehicle;
- new powers to require compelled removal of asbestos and imposed management measures; and
- clarification of existing inspector powers to ask questions and request documents.

Human Rights Issues

Extending benefits payable to family members

The Bill makes a number of amendments to the **Transport Accident Act 1986 (TA Act)** to increase claim benefits to supporting family members of persons injured in transport accidents.

Under the existing scheme, the members of the immediate family of a person who is injured or dies as a result of a transport accident are entitled to benefits, including family counselling, and travel and accommodation expenses for hospital visits or funeral attendance. Clause 3 amends the TA Act to include grandparents as members of immediate family, to recognise that changing nature of family units and the supporting role of grandparents in modern society.

Similarly, the Transport Accident Commission (**TAC**) currently pays reasonable travel and accommodation expenses incurred by a parent whilst they visit their dependent child in hospital, in order to allow parents to spend as much time as possible with their children, and to support them in their recovery following a transport accident. Under the current scheme, parents are not compensated for loss of wages as a result of being unable to work during the period of visiting their child in hospital. Clause 12 introduces a new compensation benefit of up to \$10 000 per claim to mitigate the loss of wages of a parent visiting their child in hospital.

Finally, the TAC pays dependency benefits to children of a person who dies as a result of a transport accident. A 'dependent child' includes a child under the age of 25 years who is a full-time student, but does not include a person under the age of 25 who is undertaking a full-time apprenticeship. Clause 4 amends the TA Act align the entitlements of dependent full time apprentices with full-time students under the age of 25.

The above amendments, which all provide additional support to children and family members affected by a transport accident, strengthen the Charter's right to protection of families and children in s 17.

Amendments relating to pedal cycles

Part 2 of the Bill makes a number of amendments to the TA Act to expand the entitlement to TAC compensation to cyclists who are injured as a result of a collision with a stationary vehicle. Clause 3 amends the definition of ‘transport accident’ in s 3(1) of the Act to include a collision occurring between a pedal cycle and a stationary motor vehicle or an open or opening door of a motor vehicle. Clauses 5 to 9 make other amendments to bring the statutory requirements for cyclists in line with the requirements on owners or drivers of a motor vehicle when claiming compensation.

These amendments are relevant to the Charter rights to freedom of expression (s 15), property (s 20) and fair hearing (s 24).

Right to freedom of expression (s 15)

Section 15(2) of the Charter provides that every person has the right to freedom of expression, including the freedom to impart information and ideas of all kinds. This also encompasses the right not to impart information.

Clause 5 imposes a requirement on cyclists who have been injured to report the accident to the nearest police station within a reasonable time in order to access TAC compensation. Failure to report can result in the TAC not being liable to pay compensation in certain circumstances.

Section 15(3) of the Charter provides that special duties and responsibilities are attached to the right to freedom of expression, and the right may be subject to lawful restrictions, such as those reasonably necessary to protect public order and public health. In my view, the requirement to report accidents to police in order to access compensation is reasonably necessary to the proper administration of the traffic accident compensation scheme, and the efficient and transparent assessment of compensation claims. It is a commonly accepted obligation on road users that accidents involving injury must be reported to police. I also note that this requirement mirrors existing obligations on cyclists under the *Road Safety Act 1986* to report to police particulars of any accident involving injury.

Accordingly, I am satisfied that this requirement does not limit section 15 of the Charter.

Property rights (s 20) and the right to fair hearing (s 24)

A consequence of expanding the entitlements to compensation of cyclists is that it brings application of other parts of the compensation scheme, such as the extinguishment of common law rights to damages in certain circumstances (by way of s 93 of the TA Act). Accordingly, a cyclist who is involved in a collision with a stationary vehicle will no longer have a right to recover common law damages, unless they have sustained a serious injury as required by s 93 of the TA Act.

Section 20 of the Charter provides that a person must not be deprived of property other than in accordance with law. A legal right to damages may be considered ‘property’ for the purposes of s 20. The right has been interpreted as requiring that any deprivation of property occur in accordance with clear, transparent and precise criteria, and not be oppressive or capricious. As the scheme employs clear criteria for when a common law right is extinguished, and provides for a person to be entitled to enjoy the benefits of the statutory

compensation scheme in exchange for the loss of this legal right, the provision does not limit s 20 of the Charter.

Similarly, a provision which abolishes or limits a right to bring legal proceedings may constitute a limit on a person’s right to fair under s 24 of the Charter, by impeding their access to the courts of the State. To the extent that fair hearing can be said to be limited, I consider any limit to be reasonably justified under s 7(2) of the Charter. The right to common law damages is only extinguished in circumstances where a cyclist is injured but does not have a serious injury. In such circumstances, the person is provided with access to no-fault entitlements under the scheme, which include immediately payable benefits relating to medical and support services, transport costs, income support and associated benefits for family members.

While such persons will also be subject to statutory thresholds and caps for the recovery of such costs, the extinguishment of common law rights to damages is necessary in order to regulate TAC’s liabilities (as the indemnifier of persons involved in traffic accidents) and ensure that the scheme is able to provide benefits equivalent to the respective needs of each claimant. I also note that courts in the United States, Canada, Germany and South Africa, amongst others, have found similar legislation providing for compensation and limiting the right to claim common law damages not to be irrational or arbitrary in the context of limits on human rights.

Accordingly, I am satisfied that that the limitations on the right to damages in this context is compatible with the Charter.

Framework for the removal or management of asbestos

The manufacture, use, reuse, import, transport, storage and sale of asbestos has been prohibited in Australia since 31 December 2003, effected in Victoria through the **Occupational Health and Safety Regulation 2017**. Despite these prohibitions, a number of instances of asbestos-containing-materials have been imported, supplied and installed in Victoria since 2003. Despite the clear risk to public safety and welfare posed by these materials, there exists ambiguity in the current framework regarding whether duty holders are in breach of existing prohibitions for retaining such asbestos or whether they can be required to remove it.

Clause 25 of the Bill inserts a new Part VIA into the **Dangerous Goods Act 1985** to provide a clearer framework for the removal or management of asbestos that was installed on or after 1 January 2004. New section 39C requires a person who has management or control of property to notify the Victorian WorkCover Authority (**Authority**) as soon as practicable after becoming aware that their property contains asbestos that was installed on or after 1 January 2004. The person must then, within 60 days, enter into an agreement with the Authority to remove the asbestos in accordance with a removal plan approved by the Authority, or to manage the risks associated with retaining the asbestos on the property in accordance with a management plan approved by the Authority. An owner is liable to a penalty if they fail to agree with a removal or management plan, or fail to comply with such plans. The obligations do not apply in relation to property that is domestic premises used solely for domestic purposes.

The new framework is relevant to a number of rights:

the right to freedom from forced work (s 11), in relation to the requirement on a property owner to remove asbestos under the menace of a penalty;

the right to freedom of expression, including the right not to impart information (s 15), in relation to the requirement of a property owner to notify the Authority of asbestos; and

the right not to be deprived of property, in relation to any interferences with a person's enjoyment of property rights effected by the forced removal of asbestos or implementation of a management plan.

The above rights all include internal limitations within their scope that permit lawful restrictions on the right on certain grounds. Accordingly, I consider that these amendments do not limit these rights on the basis of these internal limitations, for the following reasons.

The right to freedom from forced work excepts work or service that forms part of normal civil obligations (s 11(3)(c)). While the phrase has not been subject to judicial interpretation in Victoria, 'normal civil obligations' have been interpreted under international law to include a property owner's obligation to maintain their property in accordance with health and safety standards. Further, such obligations are particularly enlivened where an owner is aware that the condition of their property may endanger the community (principally residents, visitors to the property and neighbours), and the risk is of such a nature that the community may be unaware of the dangers or be unable to adequately protect itself against such dangers. The health and safety risks associated with asbestos are significant, with inhalation of asbestos dust or fibres causing scarring, infection or interactions with a person's immune system leading to genetic damage and resulting carcinomas. Asbestos fibres are normally invisible to the naked eye and can be breathed in easily without noticing. It follows that the work requirements introduced by these amendments would be considered as part of the scope of normal civil obligations on property owners.

The right to freedom of expression is subject to restrictions reasonably necessary to respect the rights and reputations of other persons, or for the protection of public health (s 15(3)). As discussed above, the requirement to notify the Authority about the discovery of matters of health concern to the community clearly comes within the internal limitation of this right.

Finally, the right not to be deprived of property contains an internal limitation of 'other than in accordance with law'. While the effect of a compelled asbestos removal or management plan may deprive a person of their enjoyment of certain property rights (such as restricting their use or control of their property) any such deprivation will occur in accordance with law. The scheme includes clear criteria for removing or managing asbestos, and provides for exceptions in the form of management plans where it may not be reasonably practicable to remove asbestos and it is safe to take other protective measures. New section 39F sets out the considerations that the Authority must satisfy itself of when determining whether it is reasonably practicable to require an owner to remove asbestos, such as the likelihood of exposure to asbestos occurring, the degree of harm that would result if exposure to asbestos did occur, the availability of suitable ways to remove the asbestos, and the cost of removing the asbestos. Accordingly, I am satisfied that the imposition of any

restrictions or requirements on the use of land under this scheme will be reasonable, and occur in accordance with law.

It follows that I am satisfied that clause 25 is compatible with the Charter.

Inspector powers to ask questions and request documents

The Bill (through clauses 23, 28 and 31) amends the **Dangerous Goods Act 1985, Equipment (Public Safety) Act 1994 and Workplace Injury Rehabilitation Compensation Act 2013** to clarify the scope of existing inspector powers to ask questions and request documents under those Acts, in order to align those powers with equivalent powers under the **Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004**.

The amendments clarify that the power to ask questions is not inadvertently restricted to matters concerning documents required to be produced under the scheme, and that the power to request documents does not depend on where the document may be located or whether it is in the person's possession. These amendments prevent the ability of inspectors to perform their functions from being inadvertently limited.

It is my view that these amendments do not impose any additional limits on human rights, as it merely clarifies the intended operation of existing powers. However, I note that many of these powers to gather information were enacted prior to the introduction of the Charter and have not been considered by previous Statements of Compatibility. Accordingly, I consider it appropriate to briefly discuss the general implications for human rights posed by such information-gathering powers, and why any reasonable limits on rights are considered reasonably justified.

The powers are principally relevant to the Charter's right to privacy (s 13) and the right not to be compelled to testify against oneself or to confess guilt (s 25(2)(k)).

Right to privacy (s 13)

Section 13 of the Charter relevantly provides that a person has the right not to have their privacy or correspondence unlawfully or arbitrarily interfered with.

The powers permit inspectors to enter specified places (which, in relation to each scheme, are regulated occupational places such as equipment sites, workplaces or places housing dangerous goods) and require a person to produce a document or answer any questions put by the inspector. Not all information required to be provided under these powers will be of a private nature. However, to the extent that these powers do require disclosure of private information, the clearly prescribed nature of these powers protect against any arbitrary or unlawful interferences with the right to privacy. The powers are essential to monitoring industry laws and detecting non-compliance, and to safeguard the rights and interests of employees, consumers and the community in relation to workplaces and high risk industries. The powers are primarily available in respect of industry and occupational premises, where individuals have a limited expectation of privacy by way of the duties and obligations which attach to their roles under the relevant Acts. Confidential requirements apply to the information gained in the exercise of these powers.

Right not to be compelled to testify against oneself or to confess guilty (s 25(2)(k))

Section 25(2)(k) of the Charter provides that a person who has been charged with a criminal offence has the right not to be compelled to testify against themselves or to confess guilt. The right applies in relation to incriminatory material obtained under compulsion, and extends to cover information that may have been obtained prior to any charge being laid.

The powers to compel information allow a person to refuse or fail to give information if doing so would tend to incriminate the person (with the exception, in some contexts, of the person's name or address). However, the powers do not excuse a person from complying with a requirement to provide a document that the person is required to produce under the respective scheme.

The right to protection against self-incrimination generally covers the compulsion of documents or things which might incriminate a person. However, at common law the protection accorded to the compelled production of pre-existing documents is considerably weaker than the protection accorded to oral testimony or to documents that are brought into existence to comply with a request for information. This is particularly so in the context of a regulated industry, where documents or records are required to be produced during the course of a person's participation in that industry, and are brought into existence for the dominant purpose of demonstrating that person's compliance with relevant duties and obligations when required by inspectors. The duty to provide documents in this context is consistent with the reasonable expectations of persons who operate within a regulated scheme and undertake the responsibilities and duties that apply to their roles.

These powers enable inspectors to monitor compliance with the respective Acts, investigate potential contraventions, and protect employees from detriment or harm resulting from non-compliance with the regulatory scheme. It is necessary for inspectors to have access to such documents to ensure the effective administration of the regulatory scheme, and to use such documents to bring enforcement action where appropriate.

There are no less restrictive means available to achieve the purpose of enabling inspectors to have access to relevant documents, and access to such documents is necessary to ensure the safety of employees and to protect the interests of industry as a whole. To provide for a full document-use immunity would unreasonably obstruct the role of inspectors and the aims of the scheme, as well as give the holders of such documents an unfair forensic advantage in relation to criminal and civil penalty investigations. Therefore, I consider that the limitation of the privilege against self-incrimination with respect to documents is compatible with the right not to be compelled to testify against oneself in section 25(2)(k) of the Charter.

Robin Scott, MP
Minister for Finance

Second reading

Mr SCOTT (Minister for Finance) (10:07) — I move:

That this bill be now read a second time.

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

The Treasury and Finance Legislation Amendment Bill 2018 is an omnibus bill which amends

The *Transport Accident Act 1986* (TA Act) to improve the operational efficiency of the Victorian transport accident scheme by increasing claim benefits to persons injured in transport accidents and their supporting family members and expanding the eligibility of cyclists to access TAC compensation in circumstances where they are injured as a result of a collision with a stationary vehicle;

The *Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004*, *Dangerous Goods Act 1985*, *Equipment (Public Safety) Act 1994*, *Accident Compensation Act 1985* and *Workplace Injury Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 2014* to enhance the operation of the Victorian occupational health and safety, equipment public safety and dangerous goods regulatory frameworks and the workers compensation schemes; and

The *Emergency Services Superannuation Act 1986* to provide a mechanism for the transfer of the assets and liabilities of the Port of Melbourne Superannuation Fund into the Emergency Services Superannuation Scheme.

The Government is continuing to look at ways to strengthen the performance of the TAC and WorkSafe scheme and the services provided to those injured in a transport accident on Victorian roads and workplaces, as well as looking at ways to enhance the benefits that are available to the family members of those injured, and improve workplace safety standards.

Turning first to the TAC related amendments —

Transport Accident related amendments

The Transport Accident Commission (TAC) administers a world class transport accident scheme aimed at promoting the prevention of transport accidents and to ensure that appropriate compensation is delivered to those who are unfortunate enough to be injured on our roads.

The Government is continuing to look at ways to strengthen the performance of the TAC scheme and the services provided to those injured in transport accidents and their families.

In addition to enhancing the compensation available to TAC clients and their families, this Bill will also extend TAC compensation to cyclists who are injured as a result of a collision with a stationary vehicle by amending the definition of a 'transport accident' in the TA Act.

Expanding coverage for cyclists

In 2000, the Act was amended to extend access to TAC benefits to a cyclist who was injured in a collision with a parked vehicle whilst riding to or from work as at that time, a cyclist would not have been entitled to workers' compensation benefits following amendments made to the *Accident Compensation Act 1985*.

This meant that cyclists who were unfortunate enough to collide with a parked vehicle if they were not travelling to or from their employment were being treated differently and had

very different outcomes to those who were. This amendment addresses this current anomaly.

The unequal access to TAC benefits was highlighted in an incident involving Mr. Richard Wilson on 9 July 2014, where Mr Wilson sustained significant injuries as a result of colliding with a stationary vehicle whilst riding his bicycle. Mr. Wilson was not entitled to TAC compensation because the incident did not occur whilst he was travelling to or from his place of employment.

To ensure that Mr Wilson and other people injured in similar circumstances can be entitled to TAC compensation, this amendment will apply retrospectively to 9 July 2014, the date of Mr. Wilson's accident. This means that a cyclist that has been injured as a result of a collision with a stationary vehicle is now able to make a claim for compensation with the TAC, which the TAC can now accept in accordance with these new provisions.

Increasing benefits for family members

In addition to amending the definition of a 'transport accident,' a number of additional benefits have also been introduced or enhanced for TAC clients and their families. To acknowledge the changing nature of family units and the supporting role that many grandparents play in a modern society, the Act will be amended so that grandparents will be entitled to the same benefits currently available for immediate family members of a TAC client. This change will apply from the date of commencement and apply to all transport accidents on or after that date.

The Bill also introduces equivalent amendment to the *Workplace Injury Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 2013* and the *Accident Compensation Act 1985*.

The TAC pays for the reasonable travel and accommodation expenses of immediate family members to visit a TAC client in hospital up to a capped amount of \$10 780 per claim.

When an injured person requires an extended in-patient stay or family members are required to commute long distances to a hospital, this amount can be insufficient. To address these circumstances, the Act will be amended so that this cap is increased to \$20 000, indexed each financial year with CPI. This amendment will apply to all claims for travel and accommodation expenses on or after the date of commencement.

Again, the Bill also introduces equivalent amendment to the *Workplace Injury Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 2013* and the *Accident Compensation Act 1985*.

Payment for loss of wages for parents

If a child is injured in a transport accident and admitted to hospital, the TAC can pay the reasonable travel and accommodation expenses incurred by parents to stay with them. If a parent also incurs a loss of wages as a result of being unable to work during the period that they are with their dependent child in hospital, the TAC is unable to provide them with any financial assistance.

To provide additional financial support to parents, this Bill will introduce a new benefit of up to \$10 000 per claim for parents to access if they incur a loss of wages after five working days from the date of their child's first admission to hospital. This change will support the parents of children

injured in a transport accident on or after the date of commencement.

Apprentice

The TAC can pay dependency benefits to the child of a person who dies in a transport accident, which can include a lump sum award, weekly benefits and an education allowance. Generally, a child will only be entitled to dependency benefits if they are under 16 years of age. However, if a child is a full-time student between 16 and 25 years of age and they remain dependent on their deceased parent for economic support, they will also be entitled to dependency benefits. This currently does not extend to apprentices in the same circumstances. To ensure that a dependent child undertaking an apprenticeship is not disadvantaged as compared to a child under 25 years of age undertaking studies, this Bill will align the dependency entitlements of a full time dependent apprentice under the age of 25 with those of a dependent full-time student under the age of 25. This amendment will affect all transport accidents involving an apprentice tradesperson on or after the date of commencement.

LOEC benefit review

If a person is unable to return to work 18 months after their transport accident, then they may be entitled to Loss of Earnings Capacity (LOEC) Benefits from the TAC. LOEC benefits can be paid for a maximum period of 18 months, unless a person's Whole Person Impairment (WPI) is assessed at greater than 50 per cent, and they continue to suffer a loss of earning capacity. A person so assessed will be eligible to receive these benefits until they reach the Federal retirement age, or until their WPI is assessed at below 50 percent or they no longer have a loss of earning capacity — whichever occurs first.

The TAC is currently required to conduct a mandatory review of a person's ongoing entitlement to LOEC benefits at least once in every five year period. The TAC reviews a person's WPI and their work capacity. This may involve a TAC client having to attend a number of medico-legal examinations and vocational assessments. In instances where a person has sustained catastrophic injuries which have destroyed their earning capacity and their impairment level will never fall below 50 percent, conducting a mandatory review is not necessary.

This Bill replaces the mandatory requirement for the TAC to undertake a review of entitlements to LOEC benefits every five years with a discretionary one. The TAC may still undertake a review in appropriate circumstances. This amendment will not have an effect on a person's right to request that the TAC conduct a review at any time and will apply from the date of commencement to all transport accident claims, regardless of when they occurred.

Overseas attendance care

If a TAC client requires attendant care services within Australia, the TAC can pay the reasonable cost of these services for a period of not more than 8 weeks in any year if these services are required by a TAC client overseas. The TAC currently has no discretion to pay for a period of attendant care services overseas beyond this period. In order to support TAC clients who may be required to travel overseas during the course of their employment, this Bill will provide for an additional 4 weeks of overseas attendant care

services to TAC clients in these circumstances. The amendment will apply to all requests for these services from the date of commencement.

Payment for court appointed administrator

Severely injured TAC clients may require a Court or Tribunal appointed professional administrator to act on their behalf and manage their financial affairs. Where a professional administrator is appointed by a Court or Tribunal to act on an injured client's behalf, they are entitled to charge fees for their services in managing the financial affairs of a client. Currently, the TA Act makes no provision for the payment of the fees incurred in the management of a client's income and lump sum impairment benefit. This is contrasted with the common law position where an injured person can recover the fees incurred by an administrator in accordance with the High Court case of *Willet v Futcher*.

To enable the TAC to pay the reasonable fees associated with the professional administration of a client's TAC no-fault compensation; this Bill introduces a new benefit into the TA Act to allow a professional administrator to apply to the TAC to be reimbursed for the costs of their professional administration fees that are set by a Court or Tribunal. This provision will apply to all requests for reimbursement of eligible fees incurred on or after the date of commencement.

This amendment is not intended to impact on the assessment of transport accident common law damages claims. The current practise for the recovery of management fees continues to apply whether these costs are incurred by a professional administrator or by Funds in Court.

Turning next to WorkSafe related amendments —

WorkSafe related amendments

The Bill makes a range of amendments to improve the operation of Victoria's Workers Compensations Scheme as well as Victoria's Occupational Health and Safety, Equipment Public Safety and Dangerous Goods Regulatory Frameworks.

Broadly, the Bill makes amendments to:

- provide increased transparency in regards to WorkSafe investigations responding to prosecution requests and to ensure that WorkSafe has sufficient time to undertake these investigations;
- clarify occupational health and safety consultation requirements;
- provide a clear framework for the removal or control of asbestos installed subsequent to 31 December 2003; and
- provide fairer compensation entitlement for injured workers and the family members of injured workers.

The Bill also makes a number of minor amendments clarify the operation of the legislation and to improve consistency.

Providing increased transparency in regards to WorkSafe investigations responding to prosecution requests and

ensuring that WorkSafe has sufficient time to undertake these investigations

The *Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004* (OHS Act), the *Dangerous Goods Act 1985* (DG Act) and the *Equipment (Public Safety) Act 1994* (EPS Act) allow members of the public to request prosecutions in circumstances where they consider that a breach of the legislation has occurred.

This Bill introduces amendments to strengthen WorkSafe's accountability and transparency in regards to investigations relating to prosecution requests under these Acts. Specifically, the Bill requires WorkSafe to publicly report any instances where it fails to meet its mandated legislative timeframes for these investigations.

These amendments address recommendations arising out of the Parliamentary Committee Inquiry into the CFA Training College at Fiskville — Final Report (Fiskville Inquiry) and the Independent Review of Occupational Health and Safety Compliance and Enforcement in Victoria 2016 (Compliance and Enforcement Review).

The Bill also makes amendments to ensure that WorkSafe has sufficient time to undertake thorough and comprehensive investigations relating to prosecution requests for more serious indictable offences. These amendments substitute the existing three month timeframe for completion of these investigations, with a requirement that if an investigation into an indictable matter is not completed within nine months, WorkSafe is to refer the matter to the Director of Public Prosecution. In the interim, WorkSafe is to provide three monthly updates to the person who requested the prosecution, and the Minister, advising them of the status of the investigation. The Bill also introduces new safeguards to ensure that these investigations are undertaken without undue delay.

Clarifying OHS consultation requirements

The Bill creates an explicit link to clarify that a failure to undertake the consultation procedure in accordance with requirements of the OHS Act amounts to a failure to consult and comply with the obligations in the OHS Act.

The OHS Act places a duty on employers to consult with employees about a number of specified health and safety matters to identify hazards and risks, procedures for resolving health and safety issues and monitoring health and conditions at the workplace. The OHS Act also sets out how the consultation process must occur.

The Independent Review of Occupational Health and Safety Compliance and Enforcement in Victoria identified a lack of clarity regarding whether enforcement action could be taken for a failure to undertake the consultation procedure in accordance with requirements of the OHS Act. The Victorian Government confirmed enforcement is actionable under the current legislation and committed to being more transparent about this obligation.

This amendment confirms the importance of the consultation procedure and clarifies that a failure to undertake the consultation procedure in accordance with requirements of the OHS Act is an offence.

Removal or control of asbestos

The Bill provides a clear framework for the removal or control of asbestos installed subsequent to 31 December 2003.

The Victorian Government is committed to providing a safe workplace for all workers. The unknown presence of asbestos is a significant risk. Buildings constructed post December 2003 are assumed to be asbestos-free and if a building is treated as asbestos free when it in fact contains asbestos, serious health and safety risks may arise.

The manufacture, use, reuse, importation, transport, storage and sale of asbestos has been prohibited in Australia since 31 December 2003. Despite the prohibitions, a number of instances of asbestos-containing materials being imported, supplied and installed in Victoria subsequent to 2003 have been identified. Currently, uncertainty exists as to whether, and in what circumstances, these prohibitions would compel a duty holder to remove asbestos.

To provide a clear framework for the removal or control of asbestos that has been installed after 31 December 2003, the Bill amends the DG Act to insert a provision requiring that any asbestos installed after 2003 must be removed in accordance with a removal plan approved by WorkSafe or controlled in accordance with a management plan approved by WorkSafe. Importantly, the management plan must ensure a level of health and safety that is at least equivalent to that which would be achieved by removing the asbestos.

Failure to comply with the relevant requirements of a removal or a management plan that has been agreed is an indictable offence attracting a maximum penalty of 500 penalty units for a natural person and 2500 penalty units for a body corporate.

Payment of impairment benefits following the death of the claimant

The Bill proposes to build flexibility in the WIRC and AC Acts to enable impairment benefits to be made in specified circumstances where the worker passes away before a claim can be finalised.

In very rare situations, the worker may pass away between their entitlement being determined and the processing of their compensation payment. In these circumstances, WorkSafe is prevented from making the payment.

The Bill proposes to amend the WIRC Act and the AC Act to allow for impairment benefits to be made after the worker has passed away if the worker's degree of impairment had already been determined by WorkSafe prior to their death.

This amendment will ensure fairer outcomes in situations where a claim is well progressed and an injured worker passes away prior to its finalisation and the payment of compensation.

Provisional payments for travel and accommodation expenses

The Bill proposes amendments to expand the ability to make provisional payments to include compensation payments for travel and accommodation expenses of family members including grandparents.

The WIRC and AC Acts currently allow reasonable costs to be paid to family members of deceased workers for travel and accommodation where the deceased worker's burial or cremation is held more than 100 kilometres from their residence. The Bill proposes to allow for these expenses to be paid provisionally, without a claim needing to be lodged.

This amendment ensures that a deceased worker's family can obtain payments more quickly in the period immediately after the worker's death. It ensures that family members are not put under additional financial hardship prior to the conclusion of the compensation process during a very difficult and stressful time.

Turning finally to ESSS related amendment —

Transfer of the Port Fund to the ESSS

In September 2016, the Government leased the Port of Melbourne to the Lonsdale Consortium for a period of 50 years. At the time, the Government agreed that the Port of Melbourne Superannuation Fund should be transferred into the Emergency Services Superannuation Scheme after the completion of the lease transaction.

There are currently 32 members of Port Fund. Only six of these members remain active. The Fund is "fully funded".

Currently, the cost of administering the Port Fund is around \$360 000 per annum which is met by the Lonsdale Consortium and the Victorian Ports Corporation (Melbourne). If the Port Fund is transferred to ESSSuper, the cost of administering the Port Fund is expected to reduce to \$150 000 per annum because ESSSuper will be able to take advantage of economies of scale.

The Port Fund is currently regulated by APRA, whereas all funds administered by ESSSuper are exempt public sector superannuation schemes regulated by the Victorian Government. Transferring the Port Fund into the ESSS will involve the Port Fund being transferred into an exempt public sector superannuation scheme regulated by the Victorian Government. The Port Fund, in conjunction with ESSSuper, will need to consult APRA to ensure that any requirements they have regarding this transfer are satisfied. In order for the transfer to occur both the Port Fund and ESSSuper have to agree.

This Bill will provide a mechanism for the transfer to occur once the Trustees of the Port Fund (Diversa Trustees Limited) and ESSSuper agreed in writing to the Minister for Finance that the requirements to the transfer have been met.

I commend the Bill to the house.

Debate adjourned on motion of Mr MORRIS (Mornington).

Debate adjourned until Thursday, 21 June.

BUDGET PAPERS 2018–19

Debate resumed from 5 June; motion of Mr SCOTT (Minister for Finance):

That this house takes note of the 2018–19 budget papers.

Ms SHEED (Shepparton) (10:08) — I rise to respond to the 2018–19 budget, and I am very pleased to do so. I have been proud to advocate for major investment for my electorate since entering Parliament after what was years of neglect of the Shepparton district by consecutive governments. When I decided to

stand one month before the 2014 Victorian state election I, like so many others, was entirely frustrated by the lack of understanding of the needs of our community. We were tired of receiving grants across a range of areas but never the big investments that we really needed to progress as a region.

For years work had been underway preparing master plans for the redevelopment of Goulburn Valley Health. They stood neglected on the shelves of the CEO's office with little prospect of being turned into reality. We aspired as a community to a redeveloped hospital serving the needs of our region. We hoped for a chance to be able to build an outstanding and inspirational Shepparton Art Museum on the edge of Victoria Park Lake. We bemoaned the lack of investment in rail services to our region over such a very long period. Many of us were very concerned about the high levels of disengagement of young people, evidenced by poor school attendance and high youth unemployment. The duplication of our highway to the Victorian border was not advancing, and we were very keen to see work commence on the Shepparton bypass. Today I am pleased to say that a significant investment is now underway in relation to all of these aspirations for our region.

In relation to rail, for many years the people in my community stood by while regional centres like Bendigo, Ballarat, Geelong and the Latrobe Valley were heavily invested in to the extent that in 2014 most of them had 20 return rail services a day to each of these cities. Shepparton is the fifth largest city in Victoria, but we had been ignored and no real investment had occurred in our rail. This left us with railway tracks that are old and not fit for purpose for fast trains and with a classic fleet that is way overdue for replacement; really you only see them in old movies these days. So our community wanted to see and had been calling for years for improvement to our rail services, and they felt like their pleas had been falling on deaf ears.

November 2014 showed that the Shepparton district was no longer prepared to be ignored. In the last budget a commitment of \$43.5 million was made to commence works to improve the rail service by facilitating the building of a passing loop between Shepparton and Seymour, as well as providing stabling for more trains at the Shepparton railway station. This work is now well underway and should be completed by the end of the year. It will result in the fifth service being introduced shortly thereafter.

However, the absolute jackpot came in this year's budget, with the government announcing a

\$313 million commitment towards the works that need to be undertaken between Shepparton and Seymour to bring the infrastructure to a level that will enable nine return VLocity train services each day between Shepparton and Melbourne. This is a huge win for the Shepparton district and will be transformational when it rolls out. Not only will it provide that connectivity to Melbourne, but it will also bring more people into our town. They will come to the universities, to our TAFE college, to the new Shepparton secondary school that is being built, and also to contact and use the health and medical services that we hope will be put in place with the rollout of the redevelopment of Goulburn Valley Health that is now underway.

The investment in our rail service will also, I expect, have a significant impact on tourism in our region. We have so much to offer — delicious farmgate produce, award-winning wineries and the beauty of our Goulburn and Murray rivers, not to mention the impressive collections at the Shepparton Art Museum and the about-to-commence new Shepparton museum on the banks of our lake, to which the government also contributed a welcome \$10 million. I have often wondered how many tourism dollars we have lost as a result of the inadequate public transport system afforded us for all these years. The opportunities this investment will present to our community are most welcome, and I seriously look forward to seeing those VLocity trains coming up and down the tracks to Shepparton, bringing people in to see all the wonders of our region.

I was shocked before entering Parliament to start to understand that there was a high level of youth disengagement. After entering Parliament I came to realise the extent of the neglect of our education system in my electorate. I had been aware of the low numbers of people completing their secondary education in our region — they were simply not job ready when they did leave school — and it became clear that our region was well below state averages across a range of indicators.

I used my first grievance debate in this place to decry the discrepancy between rural and metropolitan outcomes for our young people. How could it be that previous parliamentary representatives of our region had not seen what was happening and done something about it? This was a fatal flaw in the representation which had been provided to our region and was something I was not prepared to tolerate. I have advocated loud and long and worked very hard with the government of the day to achieve an investment in our children's future. The Shepparton education plan is the outcome of that advocacy, with \$1 million allocated in last year's budget to commence work on the plan and a

further \$20.5 million allocated in this year's budget to begin design planning and early building works for a new secondary college in Shepparton that merges the existing four secondary colleges. The funding also extends to the establishment of an integrated children's centre in Mooroopna along the lines of the Doveton College model.

We have undertaken a great deal of work to get to a point where change is about to happen. It has not been easy and change will always be challenging for a community, especially seismic change of this nature when it comes to the new secondary school. We need to get it right and we need to provide our children with the educational opportunities they deserve in schools which show that they are worthwhile and deserve better than they have been getting.

Our local advisory committee has visited many schools in Victoria to look at their models and to try to construct an outstanding school that will service the needs of our diverse communities in the greater Shepparton region. I see it as my job to identify the needs of the community, take my advocacy to government and demand to have these shortcomings addressed. I am so pleased that we have the Shepparton education plan underway, with plans for our new secondary school moving forward and the focus now shifting to the needs of primary school students and then of course children in early childhood.

There is much work to be done in our community from an educational point of view. We have high levels of disadvantage, a multicultural community with many new arrivals and the highest Indigenous population outside of Melbourne. These impact in many ways on the outcomes that we can achieve. Knowing all of this will help inform us when we are putting together a new secondary school that meets the needs of our community. We want the changes that are being made to address the particular needs of our broad community but also those subsets within the community that have special needs. I am hopeful that our community working together will be able to achieve an outstanding education precinct that will be visited by others throughout Australia, because it is an educational showpiece. Of course the breadth of this project will require ongoing funding, and I will be looking to government to commit to future funding for the remainder of the works that will need to be done to roll out this secondary college.

For the first time in many years we have received substantial investment in many of our primary schools to bring them up to a higher standard and provide better facilities for our children. In this year's budget it was

pleasing to see that one of our small and most disadvantaged rural schools, Ardmona Primary School, received an allocation of \$500 000 to build on the \$90 000 in last year's budget in order to undertake significant maintenance and repairs to bring the school to a standard that its students deserve. When it comes to education it is not just about bricks and mortar, it is about what goes inside them. Our Neighbourhood Schools project, which has come from the community, has been partly supported by government. It needs more funding and there is a long way to go, but it is an outstanding project that is identifying disadvantaged young people in primary school who are not able to function at the level they should and providing them with therapeutic services on a weekly basis to address those needs, giving them a chance as young people in our community.

GOTAFE is an important institution in our region, and in Shepparton it plays a pivotal role in education. There is no doubt that TAFE colleges have faced a lot of challenges over the years, but they remain important providers of education in many areas, including in my electorate. I would also like to mention the government's commitment to making a suite of 30 TAFE courses free. In areas such as the Goulburn Valley this enables courses to be made available to students in fields in which employers are looking for employees. It also provides educational opportunities for young people who would otherwise simply not be able to afford the courses on offer. I have heard many stories of young people not going ahead with the tertiary aspect of their education because they simply could not afford it, and quite frankly that is simply not good enough. For instance, with the redevelopment of Goulburn Valley Health there will be a huge need for more nurses, business administrators and other trained staff. Our TAFE college and university can target their courses to produce the young people we need within our region to provide that workforce for the future.

In relation to roads I can say that in last year's budget \$10 million was made available to undertake the planning work for stage 1 of the Shepparton bypass. This is an important project which will link the Goulburn Valley Highway to the New South Wales border, and ultimately it will be a dual carriageway. It is an important transport route that carries many trucks daily. The first stage also requires the building of a second bridge over the Goulburn River just north of Shepparton. This is something that has been desperately needed for a long time to enable trucks to pass above the town without going down our main streets. It will also provide much better access for emergency services. Having only one river crossing can be very

dangerous for emergency services when they are in hurry to get to certain things.

In this year's budget \$20 million was provided for two roundabout upgrades on the Shepparton alternate route at New Dookie Road and Old Dookie Road, and that is also very welcome. That route experiences heavy traffic and a lot of trucks pass around the edge of the town between factories, farms and orchards. While there was no funding for the much-needed Shepparton bypass in this year's budget, I look forward to progressing this project as the planning works are undertaken and finalised.

The Shepparton district has the highest Indigenous population outside of metropolitan Melbourne. I was very pleased that the government, which had funded a business case for this project in last year's budget, saw fit to provide \$23 million for the Munarra Centre for Regional Excellence to be built within the sporting precinct at Shepparton. This is a project which has been conceived by the Indigenous community and worked on collaboratively by the Greater Shepparton City Council and the Rumbalara Football Netball Club, with the Aboriginal community led by elder Mr Paul Briggs. The aim is to provide a centre focusing on Indigenous education, sporting excellence and cultural development. This will be a potential showpiece in regional Australia. The allocation of \$400 000 for the Barmah visitor centre is also welcomed and will provide jobs in the Aboriginal community.

In terms of the budget more generally our regional businesses will benefit from the reduction in the payroll tax threshold across regional Victoria. Changes such as these do have a significant effect and were welcomed broadly by the businesses community in my electorate. They have the potential to bring more businesses to our region when people see the benefits that will accrue to them by setting up business in regional areas.

There was also funding in the budget for a jobs procurement office for Shepparton district. And with so many works going on and with such government investment in the region, having this jobs procurement office will be of great benefit to many of the smaller businesses who perhaps do not know how to access the opportunities that are there for them.

I am grateful for the support for my electorate in the budget. It is going to be significantly transformational across many areas — connectivity and educational outcomes are probably two of the main things that Shepparton has lacked for a very long time. But I must say that there is much more to do. There is unfinished business in respect of a number of the projects I have

referred to as well as others funded in previous budgets. Much more investment in our region is required after so many decades of neglect.

The life of a local member of Parliament is a busy one, and we hear constantly about the needs of our community as we go about our electorate. It has been a great honour to hear of the needs of the community and the needs of the people who live and work in the Greater Shepparton district and to have the opportunity to advocate on their behalf. I commend the motion to the house.

Ms GARRETT (Brunswick) (10:22) — It is a great pleasure to rise and acknowledge the terrific 2018–19 Victorian budget, which continues this government's delivery in the important areas and core Labor values of health, education and skills, transport and jobs. A hallmark of this government's approach to our community over successive budgets has been to make this state the Education State. The most recent budget continues that remarkable journey. I am delighted that the budget has pledged much-needed funding for our schools in Brunswick. Local families in Brunswick will benefit from having great schools close to home, and children right across the state will benefit with the government investing nearly \$1.3 billion across the community. This includes building 28 new schools, as well as upgrading 130 existing schools, an unprecedented investment.

For us close to home the budget has allocated \$4.1 million to upgrade Brunswick South West Primary School to modernise its facilities. This is a growing school and a wonderful school community, and the funding will go a long way towards providing the school with the facilities it desperately needs. By providing our students and teachers with the right space and tools the students can then apply their learning in an environment that complements their rich and inquiry-based curriculum, which is drawing interest from other schools right across the state because of their innovative approaches.

The budget also sees funding of \$600 000 to Moreland Primary School to upgrade their facilities and learning spaces, including refurbishing and modernising classrooms and amenities. Again, Moreland Primary School is one of the great innovative schools in Victoria. The leaders there have been often the first to come to the melding of technology and learning spaces. I am delighted to see their hard work rewarded with this funding for upgrading their facilities.

I had the pleasure of visiting these schools, in particular Brunswick South-West Primary School, to make

much-anticipated and happy announcements of this funding. The students, the teachers and the principal at Brunswick South-West Primary School were delighted to see their school rewarded for all of its hard work. In a similar vein, Moreland Primary School has been delighted with their funding upgrade, which will go a long way towards supporting their valuable work.

I would also like to acknowledge the work of the Minister for Education. We have got more to do in Brunswick. In particular I continue to advocate for funding for the relocation of the Sydney Road Community School, which is an institution in Victoria and Melbourne and needs to find a new home because the lease has run out on the old church site in Sydney Road. That advocacy will continue. I know the Labor candidate for Brunswick, Cindy O'Connor, will be taking up that challenge as well, and we look forward in coming budgets to seeing that school get the funding they need to relocate and continue their amazing work.

As I stated earlier, the budget includes \$272 million to purchase land for new school sites right across the state. New schools will be built and planned, which means that every community will have a good-quality school close to home. We know how important that is given how much pressure there is on families these days to get to work, to get home, to do all the activities that need to be done. Having a good local school takes a huge amount of pressure off and also allows your kids to be embedded in your local community, which means you feel a great sense of relief that their mates are around the corner and that they are getting an education close to home — they can walk to school, they can ride to school and there are all of those attendant benefits. So that is a wonderful and welcome initiative.

This Labor government, like Labor governments before it, continues to provide the support needed to keep children in schools and learning the skills they need for the future. We have \$32.9 million to fund 200 additional primary maths and science specialists, \$22 million for workshops and teaching tools to improve literacy and numeracy and \$9.8 million to contribute to the cost of swimming and water safety education programs. I know during my time as Minister for Emergency Services it was critically important that we made sure our kids knew how to swim. Too many kids were leaving school, primary school in particular, without those basic skills. We are surrounded by water and going to the beach or the local swimming pool is a critical activity and we are still seeing too many drownings in this state, so giving kids a basic knowledge of swimming before they leave school is an absolute and utter lifesaver.

Then there is some extra money for musical instruments and music professional development for teachers. That is really important not only for the love of music and musical instruments but because music and the pursuit of it can give kids skills in other areas. My daughter is studying French. She is great with written French but her pronunciation could do with a bit of work. I was talking to her teacher and he asked, 'Does she play a musical instrument?' and I said, 'No, she should probably'. Apparently playing a musical instrument really helps you with your languages.

Honourable members interjecting.

Ms GARRETT — No recorder. I thought, 'I can't deal with the recorder'. The clarinet she did play for a while and we popped that one away, which I think was good for the household in general. But allowing kids the opportunity to experience music, to find a passion for music is another method of inclusion and broadening their horizons.

Of course there is no point coming to school if you have not had a good-quality preschool education, and all of the research over the decades is now showing the critical importance of making sure that kids are getting to three to four-year-old kinder. They are sponges at that age — they are developing all of their needed skills. So the budget — not surprisingly given it is a Labor budget — makes massive contributions to early childhood facilities, including more kindergarten places and more money to support the workforce. Our childcare workers are a precious, precious resource —

Mr Edbrooke — A recorder for every child.

Ms GARRETT — A recorder for every child to send the parents mad, and 4 million bucks for an early-start kindergarten for vulnerable children, which is something we should all be very, very proud of.

We cannot talk about education and we cannot talk about this budget without reference to the unprecedented investment in TAFE — free TAFE courses are making sure that kids, wherever they are, have got a pathway to fulfil their dreams and become productive and engaged members of the community. With all of the works that the government is undertaking right across this state, it is making sure that our apprentices are properly trained, that they get jobs on sites, that they are looked after — this will have a lasting impact right across the state for generations to come. It is a terrific centrepiece of this budget. From starting in kindergarten and going through primary school at a local school to progressing through high

school and having pathways beyond year 12, this budget delivers.

It also invests a significant amount in upgrading our special schools right across Victoria, but as the minister has pointed out, there is still much more to do in that space. It is, again, to stand by the mantra and live by the value that every child deserves the best education possible regardless of circumstance, and that is no more true than when you have vulnerable kids or kids who have been dealt a difficult start in life. To give them A-grade facilities is precisely what a community and a government should be doing.

I do want to touch on the investment in sports facilities, because I have spent a lot of my time as the member for Brunswick seeking and achieving investment in our local sporting clubs, particularly in the inner city. I have said this many times, but in the inner city, where there are not many backyards and lots of people live in apartments or in small houses — there are very few quarter-acre blocks — it is important to have proper local sporting facilities, like ovals, for thriving clubs. A lot of people spend their volunteering time there — that is where they meet their friends — and so there has been a real investment by this Labor government in sporting facilities. We have had some great achievements — the Zebras at Balfe Park and other ovals right through Brunswick.

This budget is making a massive investment of \$64.6 million in the State Netball and Hockey Centre, which is just on the cusp of my electorate. That is huge. Like many of us in this room, I have certainly spent many, many hours watching netball at that facility, and I know that it is groaning at the seams with all of the interest. Netball Victoria has been calling for that upgrade for many, many years. The Minister for Sport is here; it is great to see him at the table. This is transformative for our kids and our netball players and for allowing that full potential of girls sport. We are seeing it with AFLW, and netball is just going absolutely gangbusters. This is really, really important for our girls.

As we talk about girls sport, there is \$20 million for Ikon Park. I still want to call it Princes Park — my local running track. That is on the border of the Brunswick electorate, but that is a real ‘put your money where your mouth is’ investment in women’s sport. It is a recognition of the Carlton Football Club’s great commitment to the AFLW as a foundation tenant. They are making that a hub for the elite athletes that are playing AFLW. It is very exciting for the local area. It takes me back to the days of wandering over to ‘Prinny Park’ to watch the Blues — now we are wandering

over to Prinny Park to watch a new breed of Blues, and we are very, very proud of those Blues. They have got a bit of work to do, though, let us be fair, but I think we are on the right track both in the men’s and women’s. I have got 3½ minutes; why don’t we have a chat about the Blues? Well, Cripps, you are a star.

Moving on to transport — I am going to run out of time here with this enormous amount of budget, but I do think it is important to touch on transport. It is very important to my community that people have access to good-quality bike paths. There are a lot of people; it is the highest concentration in the Moreland area of people —

Ms Victoria — Ask for an extension!

Ms GARRETT — An extension of time? Yes, I think so — look, I have still got all of this to go!

It is important that people have access to good-quality bike paths. The Upfield bike path is probably one of the busiest corridors in Victoria, with people zipping along there as they do, and there is funding for an upgrade to that bike path, which will make many, many people in my electorate very, very happy.

An important safety initiative in the transport area for Brunswick has been an additional \$470 000 for a pedestrian-operated signal installed at Moore and Nicholson streets in Coburg. This has been a real danger trap of an intersection. There is a large new development there, which was approved under the previous Labor government by the then minister, Justin Madden, and that was one of the first and I think really successful developments which had the proper mix of social housing and private dwellings. Some of the people coming out of there are real advocates for this, allowing people to live in their communities when they have been unable to continue to afford rent because of the skyrocketing house prices in the area. It has been a terrific development, but it has seen a lot of people come to the area, and that intersection has been really difficult — there have been a few accidents there — so I am delighted to see that in the budget, and I thank the Minister for Roads and Road Safety for his commitment there. That is going to make for safer trips — safer for pedestrians, safer for cars, safer for cyclists.

Public transport — trams, trains; this is the lifeblood of the Brunswick community and the inner city. We know that the government has undertaken the biggest public transport overhaul in our history. Given the parlous state of affairs when we took office, this has been outstanding. This government has invested \$1.9 billion for public transport. There is heaps of money for extra

parking spaces at metro stations and a massive amount of money for improvements to bus services. We have a lot of trams in Brunswick, we have the Upfield line and the buses have been really, really important to the community as well, particularly on the east–west routes, so I am pleased to see that investment there. There will be new CCTV cameras to make sure people can get home safely.

On health — we just do not have enough time — we are very lucky in Brunswick to be right near the Parkville medical precinct. I am very proud of the investment over successive governments that have made that a world-class centre for medical research and for children, with a children's hospital. The ongoing commitments there are just outstanding.

I commend the budget to the house on behalf of my beautiful community of Brunswick. It is a budget that delivers massive investment in education, in new skills, in proper jobs, in more schools, in better and safer roads and public transport and in making sure we have a healthy, inclusive and optimistic Victoria.

Mr NORTHE (Morwell) (10:37) — I am pleased to rise to provide my response to the Victorian government's budget. It is interesting to hear many of the contributions: on the government side it is a perfect budget, of course; and on the opposition side it is less perfect. But my comments will be confined to the issues within the Morwell electorate. Probably a little bit like the member for Shepparton, I acknowledge the fact that there are some positive aspects to the budget, but I think all of us would like to see more done in our electorates, and I will talk about that as well.

From a positive perspective, some of the investment in our educational facilities in the Morwell electorate have been well received. There have been announcements with respect to Traralgon Secondary College, my old school, for some infrastructure upgrades, and they are very much needed. It has both junior and senior campuses. While the junior campus is relatively new from one point of view, certainly the secondary college is not, and any investment in that is well received.

In particular, I am also very pleased to learn of commitments made towards the Latrobe Special Developmental School. I am a regular visitor to the school, and it is an absolutely marvellous school. From principal Barb Walsh down to staff, teachers, volunteers, parents and students, it is a wonderful school. Certainly for the last couple of years they have been crying out for improved facilities. I cannot articulate here how bad the conditions of that school are — you can only see that adequately when you visit

the school and talk to the school community. Hopefully investment in that school will happen sooner rather than later.

The government also announced some funding for the TAFE Morwell campus. Again, the infrastructure investment is welcome for those facilities, and it will be interesting to see how that evolves over time. However, it does also raise a question that has been asked in our community, and that is: what is the future of the TAFE Yallourn campus? The Yallourn campus is in pretty horrible condition and is in desperate need of an upgrade. There is much uncertainty about the future of the Yallourn campus. Not much has changed since I was there doing some apprenticeship schooling way back in the day. But the question being asked by local residents is: will the Yallourn campus survive? There is no funding in this budget for the Yallourn campus, and I think the government needs to articulate to the community about the future of the Yallourn campus. Unfortunately, like many other campuses across the state, there has been a significant reduction in student numbers, but hopefully with that investment in the Morwell campus we can see that rise again.

The member for Shepparton spoke about some payroll tax relief for regional businesses. Again, increasing the threshold amount to \$650 000 for those who are eligible and reducing the payroll tax to 2.45 per cent has been well received by those who fit the criteria and have to pay payroll tax, which is a significant burden for many businesses.

I was also pleased to see in the budget in excess of \$40 million allocated towards three rural alcohol and drug residential rehabilitation facilities. It has been noted that one of those is to be constructed in Gippsland. Whilst I am hopeful that it will be in the Latrobe Valley, I also acknowledge the fact that the Hope project in East Gippsland is well underway and well advanced, but the point I make is that I think there is an inherent need for two facilities in Gippsland. Gippsland is a massive area. We basically do not have any residential alcohol and drug rehabilitation beds in the whole region, so if the Hope facility advances and is constructed first, that is great, but there is still an inherent need for such a facility in the Latrobe Valley. One only has to look at the statistics of drug use and crime rates associated with drugs in the Latrobe Valley, in Latrobe city, to understand the need for such a facility.

The feedback from local residents and constituents in regard to the budget is what I would describe as a mixed bag. I have spoken about some of the positives, but from a more general point of view some concerns have been expressed to me from the local community

about the significant investment in, for example, the AFL and maybe the lack of opportunity for grassroots sports and local sporting clubs, which may be disadvantaged compared to that AFL investment.

Certainly I raise the broken commitment on taxes by this government, and I will elaborate on that a bit more in a minute. The public sector wages growth is of concern to many people. For those who live within our region certainly the tolls are an issue. They may not be discussed in the media too much, but there is a lot of anger from a lot of transport companies, businesses and individuals about the western distributor project and some of the roads projects that are happening in the west of Melbourne because those who live in the east are now having to pay tolls for a longer period of time, have more tolls and have increases in their tolls. That is grossly unfair for those who live in the east. That has a massive impact on the Morwell electorate, where there are a substantial number of transport businesses and industries that will not actually use the roads that are under construction in the west of Melbourne but will be forced to pay tolls for a longer period of time at an increased cost.

More generally there is concern that a lot of the focus is on major projects in Melbourne and not in regional areas. The cost of living is a massive one as well. When we talk about taxes, I know it has been relayed many times by members in opposition but the fact is that just before the election in 2014 the Premier, then in opposition, said there would be no new taxes and no increases to existing taxes. We now have 12 new taxes just in this term of Parliament, a 35 per cent increase in taxes in this term, totalling an extra \$6.2 billion. That comes from people. It comes from businesses that have to pay that, and subsequently cost-of-living expenses rise substantially.

From a local point of view many people in our community have not forgotten the fact that two years ago in the budget, while we are talking about broken promises on taxes, coal royalties in the Latrobe Valley rose by an extra \$252 million, which was just extraordinary at the time. There was no other industry and no other community forced to pay such a specific increase in tax in the budget, and it was at a time when unemployment was a massive concern. The fallout of that is the loss of jobs. We have had electricity prices increase and go through the roof. Security of supply has been threatened.

Even now with Hazelwood power station being closed we have Hazelwood Pondage under threat. That might not mean much to many people in this chamber, but with Hazelwood Pondage now closed there are a

number of user groups, such as the Latrobe Valley Yacht Club, which is a massive local organisation with hundreds of members, that now do not have a home effectively. This long weekend coming their annual Sauna Sail has had to be cancelled, causing not only consternation and grief to the Latrobe Valley Yacht Club but also a loss of income to our local economy. There are people from all over Victoria and beyond who come to that Sauna Sail event. It is just disgraceful that at this point in time the user groups of the pondage, including the Latrobe Valley Yacht Club, face an uncertain future.

It all comes back, in my view, to the imposing of unnecessarily high taxes on our power generators, as I say, and that has had a massive cost for everybody. Whether you are an individual or a business, cost-of-living expenses have gone through the roof. I know there is a lot of focus on electricity and gas prices being the main source of burden for people in terms of cost-of-living expenses, but we should also not forget that Gippsland Water customers between 2008 and 2013 endured a doubling of their water prices on top of all of this. Those of us who live in the Morwell electorate have had to endure a lot when it comes to these types of imposts.

We can talk about infrastructure projects, and I know the Treasurer spoke very broadly about the number of infrastructure projects and how good they are for the state, but heavens above, I have been at the Treasurer in his capacity as the Minister for Resources for months to have a look at the quarry industry within the Latrobe Valley. We have got Maryvale Sand, Latrobe Valley Blue Metal, Latrobe Valley Sands and Matthews Quarries that all want to grow and expand and provide material for these infrastructure projects for Victoria, yet they have just been stifled for more than two years. The government's own departments and agencies have breached constantly their own statutory time frames in trying to be advanced when it comes to these particular projects, and it is simply not good enough.

Again I plead with the Treasurer in his capacity as Minister for Resources to please come and meet with our local quarry owners and see what they want to provide not only for our local community but for the state of Victoria. What will end up happening is we will be in a position whereby we will be importing material from interstate if we do not intervene and do something about not only supporting good, local businesses who employ local people but providing material for the benefit of Victoria.

In the budget there is reference to some V/Line projects. We hear about that investment, but the reality

is the Gippsland line is a Third World service at the moment. It is just crazy. There are so many people who have contacted my office over the previous months who have missed medical appointments or who have been late for events or meetings or functions. There have been people who have missed out on work. If you are a casual worker and you are relying on a train to get to Melbourne for your casual work and you turn up late, what do you think happens? You get a call from the boss to say, 'Don't bother turning up today', and this is reality. This is happening constantly.

I understand that investment on the track has to occur, I understand the level crossing removal program and I understand the government's baby in sky rail and other projects, but right now Gippsland commuters are asking the question, 'What benefits are we going to derive from all this work?'. I have posed this question to the minister and to Public Transport Victoria, and I do not get any response. The real fear of Gippsland commuters is the fact that they are not going to see any benefit and they are not going to be better off, yet they have had to endure all of these disruptions, delays and cancellations. Right now as we speak there are buses replacing trains on our line again, with no end in sight.

In closing, I want to refer to jobs in the Latrobe Valley in the Morwell electorate. The facts are that unemployment in the last three and a half years has increased substantially, and that is the reality. We have had the Hazelwood power station close, we have had Carter Holt Harvey close, we had Target in Morwell close their doors just last week and we have Coles in Morwell about to close in August. This is real, and this is happening all the time.

I understand on the one hand that the government have imposed an extra \$252 million of taxes on power stations in the Latrobe Valley, but on the other hand they are saying we have got a \$266 million rescue package for the Latrobe Valley. We need to do something about not only creating jobs but retaining existing jobs. My concern is we are seeing businesses like this walk away from our community without any intervention or conversation with government departments, agencies, the Latrobe Valley Authority or whoever it might be. We have to focus on retaining jobs as well as creating new jobs. We have to get rid of the red tape that is prohibiting businesses that want to grow and expand in our electorate.

Another one at the moment is that we have got builders who cannot get electricity and gas connected to properties. It goes on and on. So there are things that government can do to intervene to help jobs and create employment and support businesses in our community.

Finally, as we always say, there is a whole lot more that could be done, and we will continue to advocate for those projects that have missed out on funding in this year's budget.

Ms WARD (Eltham) (10:52) — Acting Speaker Carbines, it is good to see you in the chair this morning because the first thing that I will be talking about regarding the budget will be the fantastic announcement that helps both your electorate and mine, which is the north-east link. There is \$110 million in the budget to fast-track the planning process for the north-east link so that we can go through and get all of the environmental surveys and other studies done so that as soon as we do get re-elected in November we can get started on this incredibly important project. It is incredibly important, this project, which will link communities across Melbourne, this project that will help trucks going from Gippsland all the way up into the northern reaches of the state. There are a lot of things that will benefit from the north-east link.

You and I both know, Acting Speaker, that our communities are crying out for a solution to the road challenges that we are currently experiencing. They want a road which will get traffic that does not belong in our communities, that does not live in our communities, that does not work in our communities off their roads so that they can have their local roads back. As we have said many times before, it is about giving local roads back to local people.

What I am disappointed to note is that our opposition does not want to build this road. They do not see it as important. They do not understand how important this road is to our communities. They had no interest in the north when they were in government, those four sad years that they were in government, no interest in the north whatsoever and it is sad to see that they still have no interest in the north. I would like to read from a newspaper article from the *Manningham Leader* of 13 April which talks about the north-east link. The Leader of the Opposition is quoted as saying that their proposal, along with their bizarre intersection removal plans in Heidelberg, could rapidly speed up eastbound freeway traffic. As you and I both know, Acting Speaker, that would just turn Rosanna Road into even more of a freeway. But the Leader of the Opposition is quoted as saying:

... it is the Liberal Party's policy to build the east-west link, not the north-east link.

This is just crazy. It is the craziest policy position I have ever seen. Clearly they have no idea what is important to people in the north-east and the needs of people in the north-east. It is just ridiculous. Why would you not

want to support a project that matters so much to the people who live in our community? Why would you not listen to what people want?

Acting Speaker, your experience would be exactly the same as mine, which is that people are not saying, 'Oh no, wait, we don't want you to build it yet. Can you please do all this other stuff? Don't build this for a decade or two or more. Please, we could wait 20 more years for this road'. That is not what they are saying. What they are saying is that they want it built now. They would love it to have been built yesterday.

It is only the Andrews government that will build this road. Make no mistake: the missing link will not be built by the opposition. It will only be built by an Andrews government. Why would you not want to support a road project that takes between 11 000 and 14 000 vehicles a day off Fitzsimons Lane? Why would you not want those vehicles off Fitzsimons Lane? Why would you not see that as a priority? Why would you not want to create 10 300 new jobs? Why would you not want that investment in our economy? Why would you not want that investment in the communities of the north-east? Why would you not want to support a project that returns \$1.30 for every taxpayer dollar spent? When you look wider for the economic benefits it actually goes to \$1.40 in benefits to the Victorian community — \$1.40 for every taxpayer dollar spent. Why would you not want to support this project? There will be \$250 million in economic value each year from better business connectivity when the north-east link is built — \$250 million a year when this road is built.

Acting Speaker, you and I both know that we need to do a lot of things to address traffic throughout the city of Melbourne and it is not just about building the north-east link. A number of things have to happen in the meantime. This is why we have put money into fixing Fitzsimons Lane. We will redo the intersections and we will get rid of the bus lanes between Porter and Foote streets and we will make the traffic flow — it is good to see the Minister for Roads and Road Safety here — along Fitzsimons Lane better. It will be improved while we get about the business of building the north-east link, that desperately needed missing link.

We have also put money in for traffic lights at Leane Drive and Main Road, and I thank the Minister for Roads and Road Safety for coming out to visit my community and this intersection and having a look at the effect that it will have once it is put in. This is something that local residents have wanted for some time. Admittedly — the Minister for Roads and Road Safety will agree — it took a little while for VicRoads to come out and have a look and see how they could

actually make that stretch of road better and safer, and I thank VicRoads for doing that.

I also think the minister for his investment in my community and for addressing the concerns that my community had around that intersection. I am pleased to share with the minister that I rang a local resident near Leane Drive and let her know of the news that we would be getting traffic lights there and she said to me, 'I could give you a hug. I am so happy I am almost in tears. I want to give you a hug. This news is just fantastic'. I accept that the hug was for me and not for you, Minister, and I apologise for not sharing the love with you. But she was ecstatic, as has been every other resident I have spoken to about this intersection. They are very happy, although I will flag with you, Minister, that they do want cars travelling a bit slower on Leane Drive. We will have a conversation with Nillumbik council about that.

Mr Donnellan — It's the hill.

Ms WARD — That is exactly right, it is the hill.

I also want to thank local residents John Fecondo and Stijn Liem for their support and advocacy in getting traffic lights for this intersection. These people were fantastic. Stijn is a student at St Helena Secondary College. He came out, he doorknocked local residents with me and we got surveys together so that we could tell VicRoads about the importance of this intersection and get them to do the necessary work to understand how to improve connectivity and safety on that stretch of road in my community.

There is also funding for studies to work out how to improve the connectivity, safety and thoroughfare of the Wallowa Road and Ryans Road intersection as well as the Civic Drive roundabout.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr Carbines) — Order! The member for Eltham will have the call when the take-note motion resumes. The time has come for me to interrupt business under sessional orders for questions without notice and ministers statements.

Business interrupted under sessional orders.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE and MINISTERS STATEMENTS

Energy prices

Mr GUY (Leader of the Opposition) (11:01) — My question is to the Premier. Princes Laundry Services operates four sites across Victoria, in Altona, Braeside, Box Hill and Preston, and in Victoria employs

480 people. They have been in business for over three decades but are now facing crippling increases in both gas and electricity costs. The cost of gas across the four sites in the financial year 2016–17 has gone up a staggering \$865 000 while their electricity cost has increased by \$163 000 in the same year. Premier, how are businesses like Princes Laundry Services expected to operate when they are paying the highest energy bills ever and have been hit with over \$1 million of energy price increases in just one year?

Mr ANDREWS (Premier) (11:02) — I thank the Leader of the Opposition for his question. As I was saying yesterday in answer to other questions in relation to the current energy market and impacts on businesses, the government, in direct response to these challenges, made the decision a couple of budgets ago — in fact, we have added to it since — to provide some \$90 million worth of targeted, tailored support for impacted businesses. I can report to the Leader of the Opposition that some 20 000 businesses have availed themselves of support under that program. Sometimes that takes the form of assessments and support to see whether there might be alternative energy treatments —

Honourable members interjecting.

Mr ANDREWS — Well, for instance, converting from using electricity to using another fuel. The energy policy expert over here — I offered you a briefing yesterday; you would be wise to take it up. Twenty thousand businesses, because of programs put in place by this government, have been able to change their energy usage and therefore change their energy costs via assessments and the work that has been undertaken. The Leader of the Opposition ought to do an assessment of his own show, I think. This is real support, targeted and provided by our government, and we will continue to work with businesses large and small to achieve those outcomes.

On gas specifically, I would more than welcome the Leader of the Opposition joining with this government in calling on the federal government to make sure that Australian gas is for Australian businesses and Australian households too. Australian gas should be for Australian businesses and Australian households first. That is how we will cut gas prices. If that is what the Leader of the Opposition is interested in, then let us have a proper domestic reserve and stop Victorian businesses having to compete with the world to get access to gas that belongs to us. I would welcome the Leader of the Opposition joining me in our call on the national government to take such a leadership position. There is support for businesses and it is having a significant impact, with some 20 000 businesses

availing themselves of all those supports — sometimes advice, sometimes direct financial support — and we will continue to provide that support to any and all businesses that need it.

Honourable members interjecting.

The SPEAKER (11:05) — Order! Before calling the Leader of the Opposition, I renew my warning from yesterday. The level of noise in the chamber is unacceptable. Members should consider themselves warned. I will remove members from the chamber if they persist in shouting across the chamber.

I would like to welcome to the chamber the Venerable Master Dow Tsi, vice-president of the Buddhist Association of China, who is in the gallery.

Supplementary question

Mr GUY (Leader of the Opposition) (11:05) — McLaughlin Consolidated Fishermen had a monthly power bill that has risen by 78 per cent from 2015 to 2018. The Melbourne Seafood Centre has had a monthly power bill that has risen by a massive 91 per cent from 2015 to 2018. Barbara Konstas of that company has recently said:

We are at our wits' end; we feel like we're being punished by a government that just won't listen and doesn't care.

These businesses, Premier, are at breaking point. They have received zero support from your government. They are looking for advice. How do you expect them to keep their doors open while they are being forced to pay the highest power bills ever?

Mr ANDREWS (Premier) (11:06) — I do not think the Leader of the Opposition was listening to the answer to the question previously or yesterday, because it did not suit his purposes. There is not only advice and assessments; there is support available to all businesses who need it, and the government will not be changing those policy settings. In fact, if we can do more, we will. We have provided that support, we have added to it and that sits in stark contrast to alternative approaches.

Ministers statements: Royal Children's Hospital

Mr ANDREWS (Premier) (11:07) — This morning I was delighted, as I always am, to visit the Royal Children's Hospital, one of the greatest centres of paediatric care anywhere in the world. I was joined by the Minister for Health in visiting it this morning to meet some patients and staff and to announce a new

website facility — quite a simple, commonsense reform, as the best reforms so often are — where parents will be able to go online and, with all the other advisory material they receive, they will be able to get an indication of just how busy at any time of the day the Royal Children's Hospital emergency department is. All of us as parents know that nothing is more stressful than to have a sick or injured child and to not know where to take them and not know where the quickest and best response will be able to be provided.

Of course the Royal Children's Hospital has a special place in the hearts of all Victorians, and we see that every day really, but we certainly see it in terms of the Good Friday Appeal. But the fact of the matter is that, as good as the Royal Children's Hospital is, it is not the only place where you can receive the care that your child may need. At a time that is a very busy period for the Royal Children's Hospital, for instance, you might be able to go to a GP, you might be able to use a nurse on call or you might be able to go to a local health service — one of the many other properly funded health services in Victoria, thanks to this government — and get your child exactly what they need.

Without that information many people may feel that the Royal Children's Hospital is their only option. There is no question that it is an outstanding option, but with this information parents will be empowered at a very stressful and difficult time to make that decision to maybe get exactly what they need but to get it faster because it is closer to home. This is commonsense innovation and just another example of how we listen to our clinicians and we back them by funding health properly so they can deliver the best possible care.

Energy prices

Mr GUY (Leader of the Opposition) (11:09) — Again my question is to the Premier. The Bairnsdale RSL has hundreds of local members and does a magnificent job as a focal meeting point for the East Gippsland community and their veterans. However, their new electricity contracts will see them paying an additional \$75 000 to \$85 000 a year for an RSL. Premier, as you know, RSLs are not-for-profit. Following Hazelwood power station's closure, you told Victorians their power bills would be impacted by only 85 cents a week. Other than telling them to shop around, what are you going to do to ensure that soaring energy costs do not force RSLs like Bairnsdale to have to close their doors, leaving veterans with nowhere to go?

Mr ANDREWS (Premier) (11:10) — The Leader of the Opposition asked a question — a serious question — in relation to an RSL sub-branch. I would be more than

happy to have somebody either in my office or indeed the Minister for Energy, Environment and Climate Change's office contact the Bairnsdale RSL.

Honourable members interjecting.

Mr ANDREWS — I assumed the purpose of your question was to have something done about it. Apparently it was not. We will contact that RSL and deal with them in good faith. This government respects the work that our RSLs do, and any support we can offer them we stand ready to do so.

Supplementary question

Mr GUY (Leader of the Opposition) (11:10) — Premier, Crest Fresh Poultry is a small family business in Somerville. When you became Premier in November 2014 their monthly electricity bill was \$900. Three years later it is almost double that, at nearly \$1800. This business provides jobs for local Somerville people, but the owners are now having to reduce their hours of operation just so they can pay their energy bills to keep the doors open. Premier, you told companies like Crest poultry that their bills were only going to go up by 85 cents a week. How did you get it so wrong?

Mr ANDREWS (Premier) (11:11) — I think we might need to fact-check that little claim from the Leader of the Opposition. He is at it again. You cannot believe a word that comes out of the Leader of the Opposition's mouth. We will have to check that claim in some detail.

In the meantime I would again refer the Leader of the Opposition to the fact that this government is adding to electricity supply, making sure that we have a proper debate and discussion and pushing the federal government to have a proper emergency reserve for gas. Beyond that we are providing industry assistance to affected businesses and other programs that are about transitioning businesses to lower cost energy solutions in their production. There is no involvement from those opposite in that agenda. They would rather play games and provide very dubious claims that will need to be checked rather than doing anything about these challenges.

Mr Guy — On a point of order, Speaker, I seek to make available to the house a document showing the Premier on 2 November 2016 saying that power bills would only rise by '85 cents per week'.

Honourable members interjecting.

The SPEAKER (11:12) — Order! The member for South-West Coast will leave the chamber for the period

of 1 hour, and the member for Kew will leave the chamber for the period of 1 hour.

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

The SPEAKER — The Leader of the Opposition knows the appropriate way to make documents available to the house.

Mr Battin interjected.

The SPEAKER — Order! The member for Gembrook!

Ministers statements: Geelong health services

Ms HENNESSY (Minister for Health) (11:13) — I rise to update the house on our government's initiatives to support the Geelong health workers that have been affected by the closure of Geelong Private Hospital. I was very proud to visit Geelong two weeks ago to announce that our government will support Barwon Health to deliver and generate 117 positions at Barwon Health to ensure that those workers are given employment opportunities and employment security. Those will be jobs from nursing to allied health, to administration, to cleaning positions, and additional positions are also going to be made available at Werribee Mercy Hospital and at Sunshine.

I have got to say that when I went down and met with the workers from Geelong Private, they were incredibly anxious about their future. They have got rent to pay and mortgages to pay. Some of these workers were pregnant and anticipating paid maternity leave and the like. We moved very, very quickly with the support of Barwon Health and with the support of the members for Geelong, Bellarine and of course Lara.

We find ourselves in this position because those opposite broke their promise to the people of Geelong to build another public hospital and instead signed a secret dodgy deal to deliver a private hospital into an already crowded market. On top of that, one would have thought that they would have supported generating public employment opportunities for these workers, but I am very disappointed to advise the house that the local Liberal representatives down there have questioned the legitimacy of supporting additional public sector employment for them. They have complained about investing money to provide employment opportunities for these people.

Our top of that, these workers know that only a Labor government will back them in. We have also committed \$10 million to start the planning work for a new

Geelong women's and children's hospital. The Liberal Party constantly cuts. The Labor Party constantly invests.

Police resources

Mr GUY (Leader of the Opposition) (11:15) — My question is to the Premier. Since your election in 2014 aggravated burglaries in Ballarat have increased by 165 per cent. In this year alone Ballarat residents have been shocked by horrific accounts such as the man confronted in the middle of the night in his own home by five men, one armed with a machete; a woman confronted by a man in her bedroom during an aggravated burglary at night; and the father who fought off an intruder in front of his children during an aggravated burglary. With this massive increase in violent crime in our third largest city, Premier, why in the last three years have you cut frontline police numbers in Ballarat by 18 officers?

Honourable members interjecting.

The SPEAKER — Order! The Premier.

Mr ANDREWS (Premier) (11:16) — The Leader of the Opposition asks a serious question about a number of very nasty incidents in Ballarat. He then goes on to make a claim in relation to police numbers in the Ballarat area and asserts that there have been cuts — that is, less resources to Victoria Police in that region or indeed any region. The Minister for Police is very clear that that is an inaccurate statement. What I am prepared to do is I will consult with police command and I will get back to the Leader of the Opposition if I have anything to add.

But while I am on my feet, and directly relevant to the issue of policing and crime across the state, the police academy is full and the police academy is going to remain full because we are serious about giving to the chief commissioner the people, the powers, the equipment, the technology and the consistency of approach — not this boom-and-bust recruitment cycle but instead what is required each day and every day, and that is strong and consistent support.

Honourable members interjecting.

Mr Clark — On a point of order, Speaker, the Premier is now debating the issue and is not being relevant to the question. If he has got nothing to add to his undertaking to look into this issue, then he should cease his answer.

The SPEAKER — Order! The Premier was being relevant to the question. I ask the Premier to continue.

Mr ANDREWS — As I was saying, the academy is full and it will remain that way. There is more than \$2 billion — indeed if you look at the previous budget's investment, approaching \$2.5 billion I think in general terms — and more than 3000 police net additionally funded and being delivered. I was out at the academy just recently, and I took the opportunity to congratulate —

Honourable members interjecting.

Mr ANDREWS — I have been out there many times, and I will be back many times to come because they are doing a great job in recruiting additional police. The challenge is very real, but Victoria Police — the women and men of Victoria Police — are equal to that challenge. The chief commissioner said, 'These are the things I want, and if you give them to me as a government, we will turn this around'. That is what the chief commissioner said and that is what I believe the chief commissioner is delivering and will continue to deliver. Each and every element that the chief commissioner needs he will receive from this government, and that sits in stark contrast to others who sought to cut resources to police and undermine police command. The contrast is very clear.

Mr Clark — On a point of order, Speaker, the Premier is again debating the issue. He needs to come back to explaining to the citizens of Ballarat why he has cut frontline police numbers in Ballarat by 18 officers.

Honourable members interjecting.

The SPEAKER — Order! If members wish to have a conversation across the chamber, they may wish to take it outside the chamber.

Supplementary question

Mr GUY (Leader of the Opposition) (11:19) — Recently shocking video emerged of street violence by young thugs, including footage of a young woman being beaten senseless at the Little Bridge Street bus stop by another young woman. The incident shocked the local community in Ballarat. In the heart of Ballarat traders are closing their doors and people are scared because of the failure to keep Little Bridge Street and the Bridge Mall safe. Premier, your government's own Victoria Police 'police by location' statistics indicate the western region division 3 in November 2014 had 133.95 full-time equivalent police on location, and in March 2018 that figure was 115.47. Given these cuts to police numbers, do you take any responsibility for the rise in crime in Ballarat under your watch?

Honourable members interjecting.

The SPEAKER — Order! The Deputy Premier is warned.

Mr ANDREWS (Premier) (11:20) — I think in the supplementary question the Leader of the Opposition has reminded us why it will be very important to get a full and comprehensive answer from police command in relation to these matters. For instance, if one was to, say, exclude family violence dedicated policing resources — because according to those opposite that is not 'frontline policing' — then maybe, and I will get this confirmed by police command, you might be able to pedal a misleading interpretation of record support for Victoria Police.

Honourable members interjecting.

The SPEAKER (11:21) — Order! The Premier will resume his seat. The member for Macedon and the member for Ripon will leave the chamber for the period of 1 hour. The level of shouting in the chamber is excessive.

Honourable members for Macedon and Ripon withdrew from chamber.

Mr Guy — On a point of order, Speaker, the Premier may wish to belittle the term 'frontline police officers' for the figures I quoted, but that term is the term used by Victoria Police to describe those figures. I ask you to bring the Premier back to answering a very serious supplementary question.

The SPEAKER — Order! The Premier is being relevant to the question.

Mr ANDREWS — As I said, it is very important, given the history of these matters, to confirm these matters on advice from police command. If I can add to my answer, I will be happy to do that. We have seen some nasty incidents there. That is why we are supporting Victoria Police in record terms. We do not cut police resources; we boost them right across Victoria.

Ministers statements: employment initiatives

Mr CARROLL (Minister for Industry and Employment) (11:22) — I rise to update the house on the 6100 unemployed Victorians who are now in work thanks to the Andrews Labor government's flagship \$90 million Jobs Victoria program. The worst thing you can do as an incoming government is have a strategy to cut jobs. We have a strategy to grow jobs, and that is what we have done through our Jobs Victoria program. We had a clear agenda to rewrite the rule book on our employment programs, and through Jobs Victoria we

have done that — no whiteboard in sight. We are getting on with the job, and we are well on track to have 7000 long-term unemployed into work by Christmas.

On Tuesday morning I attended the Brotherhood of St Laurence's annual Given the Chance breakfast, and I heard some moving stories about how our Jobs Victoria initiative, in partnership with the Brotherhood of St Laurence, is giving people a chance into work. A young man, Will, had been told he should strive for a career in the cleaning industry, but his goal was to have a career in the finance industry. Through the Brotherhood of St Laurence and our investments in TAFE, Will has gone on to complete a certificate III in business administration and undertake a certificate IV in accounting. He is giving inspiration to Jobs Victoria and is showing why this program is so important.

Contrast that to the other side, who are focused on kettles and toasters. We all know about the new room that is being created this week in Parliament — the Knight Kerr Wooldridge Room —

Honourable members interjecting.

The SPEAKER (11:24) — Order! The member for Williamstown and the member for Ringwood can leave the chamber for the period of 1 hour.

Honourable members for Williamstown and Ringwood withdrew from chamber.

Mr Clark — On a point of order, Speaker, you have previously cautioned this minister about treating this house and the community with disrespect by debating issues and failing to make a ministers statement. I ask you to again caution him and bring him back into conformity with sessional orders.

The SPEAKER — I ask the minister to make a ministers statement and not to attack the opposition.

Mr CARROLL — The member for Box Hill is well-versed in history, and Knight and Kerr were very important architects that helped to create this building. I do not think they would appreciate that being turned into the Knight Kerr Wooldridge Room or the Taj Wooldridge, which it is known as right around this place today.

Mr Clark — On a point of order, Speaker, the minister immediately defied your ruling. I ask you to take action against him and refuse to hear him further.

The SPEAKER — Order! If the minister has a ministers statement, he should make a ministers statement, otherwise he will not continue.

Honourable members interjecting.

Mr CARROLL — I would not be quoting *Happy Days* if I were you, Patsie. Call me Richie Cunningham all you want, Patsie. Richie Cunningham had mates.

The SPEAKER — Order! The minister has concluded his statement.

Police resources

Mr CLARK (Box Hill) (11:25) — My question is to the Premier. The acting police chief commissioner told listeners on radio last Thursday what they should do in a road rage situation:

If you are in immediate threat, obviously if you can get somewhere safely, either to a police station or somewhere where you can ring police ...

Under your government, scores of police stations have either been closed or had their opening hours cut — stations such as Burwood, Murrumbena, Lakes Entrance, Somerville, Endeavour Hills, Ashburton, Carrum Downs, Mount Waverley and Nunawading. With the acting chief commissioner stating that an open police station is a place of safety and sanctuary for those fleeing danger, how many people have to be injured or worse before you finally reopen the stations you have closed and reinstate the opening hours you have cut?

Honourable members interjecting.

The SPEAKER (11:26) — The member for Bentleigh will leave the chamber for the period of 1 hour.

Honourable member for Bentleigh withdrew from chamber.

Mr ANDREWS (Premier) (11:26) — I thank the member for Box Hill for his question. Obviously incidents like carjackings are very serious, and whilst I did not hear the comments from the acting chief commissioner, I am sure that she would have made a very compelling case for lots of different points she would have made during that interview. I am not for a moment finding fault with the conclusions that she drew. What I might need to check, though —

Honourable members interjecting.

Mr ANDREWS — Well, no, because I think that there was a list given just a moment ago. I am not entirely sure that the way in which the member for Box Hill has asserted that those police stations have apparently all closed according to him in the last three and a half years —

Mr R. Smith — On a point of order, Speaker, this might assist the Premier. This is a sign at Burwood police station. It says ‘Closed’. Next to it, it says ‘Burwood police are not in attendance’.

The SPEAKER — Order! The member for Warrandyte will resume his seat. That is not a point of order.

Mr ANDREWS — As pleased as we are that the member for Warrandyte is almost here at 11.30 a.m., which is a first for a while, I am making the point, and I think I am well-advised to seek further advice from police command about the claims that have been made, with respect, by the member for Box Hill, because I do not know — and the member for Warrandyte is helping me in making this point — that they were wholly accurate. I will get further advice, and if in that advice I need any help from the member for Warrandyte, I will be sure to ask.

Supplementary question

Mr CLARK (Box Hill) (11:28) — Premier, the Burwood police station has not been staffed since mid-2015, yet the station is still listed on the web as being currently open for business. A person in danger, following the acting chief commissioner’s advice, would drive to the Burwood police station thinking assistance could be provided only to find a dilapidated, closed and empty station, leaving them unprotected and at the mercy of their attacker. When is this dangerous situation, and many similar to it, finally going to be fixed, or does the Premier have no intention of reopening the police stations like Burwood that have been closed under his watch?

Mr ANDREWS (Premier) (11:29) — I am not intending to argue about issues as serious as carjackings. I do not think any of us need to do that. What I would find fault with, though, is the conclusion that the member for Box Hill has drawn as to the status of that particular station and the dates that he has given. I think there is —

Mr Watt — On a point of order, Speaker, if the Premier would like to know when the police station in Burwood ceased to have police, he only need turn around and speak to the Minister for Police, who wrote in a letter to me, telling me that July 2015 —

The SPEAKER — Order! There is no point of order.

Mr ANDREWS — I do thank the member for Burwood for his assistance, but if it is all the same to him, I will get my information on these matters from police command. I do think that police command will probably be better able to provide me with information as to whether, for instance, that station had been an administrative centre and was not an operational police station well before the date nominated by the member for Box Hill. That might be the case. I will need to get that checked out, and I will not make the mistake of relying on any of those opposite, who have form for cutting police resources and always leaving Labor governments to fund and recruit additional police.

Mr Clark — On a point of order, Speaker, in relation to both my substantive and supplementary questions, the Premier has undertaken to get further information, which clearly indicates he has not been in a position to respond to the question today. I do ask you to therefore require him to provide a written response once he has obtained the information that he has undertaken to seek.

The SPEAKER — Order! I will have a closer look at the Premier’s answer and come back to the house.

Ministers statements: police resources

Ms NEVILLE (Minister for Police) (11:31) — I am very, very pleased to update the house on the great work Victoria Police and the government are doing to tackle high-harm crime in Victoria. Here is just a small snapshot of the last week of Victoria Police activities. The Dandenong criminal investigation unit tracked down and arrested a gang of would-be carjackers, the armed crime squad broke up a gang of crooks possessing and manufacturing illegal firearms, the joint anti-child-exploitation team charged a perpetrator with serious child exploitation offences, and the critical incident response team and the dog squad apprehended offenders after dangerous pursuits through Werribee.

Police have this relentless focus on community safety because we are backing them every step of the way. There are more officers than ever before. There has been a 35 per cent increase in police and community safety funding since 2014 — the biggest ever recruitment drive in the force’s history, with more than 3135 new officers. There are new laws, like the firearm prohibition orders and the cash for scrap ban, so police can shut down organised crime. It is an approach that means police no longer look over their shoulders and wonder if the government has their back. That is what

they have had to deal with before: funding and staff cuts that have made their job harder; \$100 million cut from their operating budget; cuts to key staff, like forensics and intelligence — in fact over 400 staff gone; undermining the Chief Commissioner of Police every step of the way, and not only the previous one but every single one since then; and not one dollar —

Mr Clark — On a point of order, Speaker, the minister is both misleading the house and debating the issue, and I ask you to bring her back to making a ministers statement.

The SPEAKER — Order! I listened carefully to the minister's statement and the minister, I thought, was making a statement.

Ms NEVILLE — Not one dollar was invested in new police, which meant that in 2014 the academy was a ghost town. We say, 'No more'. We are giving police the powers and the resources to keep their communities safe, and there will be more to come. That is the message I am more than happy for you to pass on to your little mates in your powwows over lobster dinners.

Sports funding

Mr D. O'BRIEN (Gippsland South) (11:33) — My question is to the Minister for Sport. Minister, when you gave evidence at the Public Accounts and Estimates Committee (PAEC) hearing last week, you refused to answer the simple question of whether there has been a formal cost-benefit analysis undertaken into your deal to gift the AFL \$225 million to upgrade Etihad Stadium. Minister, now that you have had a week to get yourself briefed on this important issue, can you tell Victorians whether a formal cost-benefit analysis was undertaken before your gift of millions of taxpayers dollars to the AFL, and if so, will you release it?

Honourable members interjecting.

The SPEAKER (11:34) — Order! The member for Gembrook will leave the chamber for the period of 1 hour.

Honourable member for Gembrook withdrew from chamber.

Ms Allan — On a point of order, Speaker, I am just seeking some clarification that the member has addressed the question appropriately to the minister responsible, because to my understanding the Minister for Sport is not responsible for the overarching arrangements that have been struck to make sure we keep the AFL Grand Final in Victoria for many, many more decades to come and to support communities.

Mr Guy — On the point of order, Speaker, if the minister was prepared to answer or respond to the question in PAEC, he should be prepared to respond to or answer those exact questions in question time, so I ask you to have the minister respond to the question directly.

The SPEAKER — Order! I seek guidance from the Treasurer as to whether this is a responsibility of his portfolio.

Honourable members interjecting.

The SPEAKER (11:35) — Order! The member for Hastings will leave the chamber for the period of 1 hour.

Honourable member for Hastings withdrew from chamber.

Mr D. O'Brien — On the point of order, Speaker, this line item is under the Minister for Sport's portfolio in the budget papers —

An honourable member — What line item?

Mr D. O'Brien — Budget paper 3, page 73. Have a look at it. The minister's own presentation at PAEC last week included this spending. This is very clearly part of his portfolio responsibilities.

The SPEAKER — Order! I am going to ask the Minister for Sport to answer the question.

Mr EREN (Minister for Sport) (11:36) — I thank the member for his question. I refer back to the answer that I gave at PAEC. The stadia deal obviously goes over a number of different portfolios, but what I can say as the Minister for Sport is: this is a great deal for Victoria — \$1.3 billion invested into sport and recreation —

Honourable members interjecting.

The SPEAKER — Order! The member for Malvern!

Mr EREN — unlike those opposite who invested much less than what we did. And can I just say —

Mr Clark — On a point of order, Speaker, it was a very specific question about whether or not a formal cost to benefit analysis had been undertaken prior to this gift of \$225 million to the AFL. The minister is debating the issue. I ask you to bring him back to answering the question.

The SPEAKER — Order! The minister was answering the question and strayed to attacking the opposition. I ask the minister to come back to answering the question.

Mr EREN — As I indicated, I responded to the question at PAEC, and I ask the member to refer to that response. But as far as the sports package is concerned, can I just say that there was over \$420 million spent on infrastructure across the state, and this deal —

Mr D. O'Brien — On a point of order, Speaker, on a question of relevance, this is a very simple question: was there a cost-benefit analysis undertaken, not whether the minister thinks it was a good idea or not. Was there a formal cost-benefit analysis undertaken? He is not answering the question.

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

Mr EREN — As I have indicated earlier, this question —

Honourable members interjecting.

The SPEAKER — Order! The Minister for Sport has the call.

Mr EREN — Unlike you guys I am never hung out to dry. That is why Matthew is so nervous about his backbench.

Honourable members interjecting.

The SPEAKER (11:38) — Order! The member for Hawthorn will leave the chamber for the period of 1 hour. Members need to cease interjecting across the chamber.

Honourable member for Hawthorn withdrew from chamber.

Mr EREN — I refer back to the answer that I have given at PAEC.

Mr R. Smith — On a point of order, Speaker, the member asked you to direct the minister to come back to answering the question as to whether or not there is a cost-benefit analysis. You directed the Minister for Sport to do so. He has continued speaking and has failed to address the question as you have asked him to answer it.

Ms Allan — On the point of order, Speaker, the minister in his opening comments in answering the question addressed the question directly. As I can

understand it, he has now concluded his answer, so the point of order is absolutely irrelevant.

Honourable members interjecting.

The SPEAKER (11:39) — Order! The member for Euroa can leave the chamber for the period of 1 hour.

Honourable member for Euroa withdrew from chamber.

Mr Walsh — Further on the point of order, Speaker, did I just hear right that the Leader of the House has just told the minister to sit down?

Honourable members interjecting.

The SPEAKER — Order! The minister will come back to answering the question. I have entertained points of order in good faith. I will not entertain frivolous points of order.

Mr EREN — The Leader of the House has indicated obviously, as I indicated earlier, my response at PAEC to the question that was asked stands today.

Supplementary question

Mr D. O'BRIEN (Gippsland South) (11:41) — At the same Public Accounts and Estimates Committee hearing last week you told the committee, and I quote:

... there are some sporting clubs out there that have actually approached government and said, 'Listen, we don't want your money, but what we would like to see is a low-interest loan from government' ...

You were then unable to name any club that would rather borrow and pay interest than receive grant funding from government. Minister, one week on can you tell Victorians which local sporting clubs have told you that they would prefer to pay interest on a loan instead of receiving a free government grant like the AFL did?

Mr EREN (Minister for Sport) (11:42) — In answering that question obviously I am not going to divulge the information of —

Honourable members interjecting.

Mr EREN — You can laugh all you like, but what I will mention is the low-interest loans — the \$100 million worth of low-interest loans. That is on top of the \$500 million that we have announced — record investments that we have made into sport and recreation. When you consider that there are some clubs, as I indicated at PAEC, that have the ability to earn —

Honourable members interjecting.

The SPEAKER — Order! The level of noise in the chamber is excessive.

Mr D. O'Brien — On a point of order, Speaker, the minister has not gone remotely towards answering the question, which was to name a club that has asked to have an interest-bearing loan rather than receive a grant. So far he has not named one.

The SPEAKER — I understand the point of order, but the minister was responsive to the question.

Mr EREN — So this opportunity allows clubs — those clubs that have the earning capacity — to apply for that very low-interest loan. So this is maximising opportunities for grassroots community clubs out there who have the capacity to pay back a loan. That is why this government on this side the house is proud of the investment — the record investment — into sport and recreation worth \$1.33 billion. We will continue to invest in sport, unlike those opposite.

Mr D. O'Brien — On a point of order, Speaker, under sessional order 9 I do not believe the answer was responsive either to the substantive question or the supplementary, and I seek your advice on whether that should be provided to us in writing.

The SPEAKER — I thank the member for his point of order. I will have a close look at the matter and come back to the house.

Ministers statements: education funding

Mr MERLINO (Minister for Education) (11:44) — In December 2013 Greensborough TAFE closed its doors. Four hundred and fifty students were impacted, and it closed because of the relentless cuts of those opposite when they were in government. TAFE needed its supporters, and it had its supporters in the community, who refused to accept its closure, and it had them in the Labor Party in the members for Eltham, Ivanhoe, Yan Yean and yourself, Speaker.

In 2017 we reopened Greensborough TAFE as part of Melbourne Polytechnic. I recently visited the Greensborough campus to open a new community careers centre. This new centre will provide career advice and information to the local community with a focus on helping people facing disadvantage and long-term unemployment, and its services will also be open to students at Melbourne Polytechnic.

We promised not only to save TAFE but to make it bigger and better than ever. There are now more than

1600 students enrolled at Melbourne Polytechnic in Greensborough, something that would not be possible if those opposite were still in government. When I looked out the window, there was the Banyule Nillumbik Tech School almost complete. Around 12 500 students from 18 secondary schools — government, Catholic and independent — will all go to that tech school on this campus, engaging with industry and engaging in high-tech learning in science, technology, engineering and mathematics.

Yet, incredibly, the Turnbull government is now cutting TAFE to the tune of \$60 million. You cannot expect the weak, rotten and crumbling deadwood opposite to stand up to their federal colleagues, but you can count on Labor to stand up for students and for TAFE.

Mr Watt — On a point of order, Speaker, I refer to question without notice 12 707. To help the Premier as he is leaving the chamber, the Minister for Police actually wrote:

Since July 2015, the Burwood police station has been opened irregularly by various patrols.

The police station has not been open since July 2015. He could just refer to the minister's response to constituency question 12 707 and he would understand it has not been open since that date.

The SPEAKER — Order! there is no point of order.

CONSTITUENCY QUESTIONS

Warrandyte electorate

Mr R. SMITH (Warrandyte) (11:46) — (14 520) My question today is directed to the Minister for Education. Imogen and Steph of Wonga Park Primary School are two wheelchair-bound students who require special access lifts to move from one side of their school to the other. If one of these three lifts is out of order, Imogen and Steph are unable to access their classrooms. This has unfortunately occurred on many occasions, with the lifts sometimes being out of action for several days before being repaired. The school also needs just \$15 000 to pave an area to make access easier for both Imogen and Steph. Despite repeated requests from the school, your department has so far refused to communicate with them to discuss these issues. Minister, will you direct your department to meet with Julie Crawford, principal of Wonga Park Primary School, to urgently discuss alternative solutions for Steph and Imogen to ensure these girls do not miss out on their education?

Dandenong electorate

Ms WILLIAMS (Dandenong) (11:47) — (14 521) My question is for the Minister for Major Projects. I ask the minister: noting that the temporary site has closed, will the Dandenong pop-up park be moved to another, more permanent location? The Dandenong pop-up park was built as a temporary feature on land awaiting development as a part of the revitalisation of central Dandenong initiative. It was built for the local community to reinvigorate an area that had long been underutilised and was prone to antisocial gatherings. With two soccer pitches, a BBQ area, picnic tables and a community garden, the park quickly turned from an unsightly vacant land into a hub for community activity, particularly for our youth. It was a great example of using urban design to improve the safety, functionality and attractiveness of public space. The pop-up park brought new activity and energy to the area, and I hope that we can continue to foster the community spirit and enthusiasm established there by installing a new, permanent park at another location.

Lowan electorate

Ms KEALY (Lowan) (11:48) — (14 522) My question is to the Minister for Education, and the information that I seek is: when will the government provide the desperately needed funding to redevelop Baimbridge State College in Hamilton? This college was promised funding by a department representative who met with the college in Hamilton late last year, but unfortunately since then the money has not flowed and the college community has been left high and dry, with not a cent allocated in the budget. The school has spent a significant amount of time planning for this redevelopment. The school is run-down — it just does not meet the needs of that community. It is the only public high school in Hamilton which services the entire region. It is an important project, and therefore I do ask the minister: when will the government finally provide desperately needed funding for the redevelopment of Baimbridge college?

Essendon electorate

Mr PEARSON (Essendon) (11:49) — (14 523) I direct my question to the Minister for Education, and I ask: what is the latest information on the upgrades of and renovations to Ascot Vale Primary School?

Rowville electorate

Mr WELLS (Rowville) (11:49) — (14 524) My question is to the Minister for Roads and Road Safety. Minister, what plans do VicRoads have to upgrade the

intersection of Ferntree Gully Road and Janine Street in Scoresby with a signalised turning arrow? Janine Street currently has a dedicated lane for vehicles turning left and another lane for vehicles turning right and going straight ahead. Drivers turning right from Lynton Place in Scoresby Village navigate this turn against a steady queue of oncoming traffic — some cars turning right, others coming straight through the intersection. Right-turning vehicles are often left stranded while they wait for pedestrians to cross all eight lanes of Ferntree Gully Road and block the entire intersection. Minister, local Scoresby Village traders are concerned at how dangerous and confusing this intersection has become. Exit traffic from the new supermarket which exits onto Janine Street makes fixing this intersection an even greater priority.

Narre Warren South electorate

Ms GRALEY (Narre Warren South) (11:50) — (14 525) My question is for the Minister for Roads and Road Safety, and I ask: when will the overpass on Thompsons Road be operational? The residents of Casey just cannot wait for the roadworks at Thompsons Road to be complete. A major step towards the completion of the upgrade would be the overpass that has allowed for the removal of the level crossing at Merinda Park — and people are really happy about that — being operational. So we are just wondering: when will the overpass be complete and commuters be on their way?

Northcote electorate

Ms THORPE (Northcote) (11:51) — (14 526) My question is for the Minister for Public Transport, and it is: will the government meet with residents and properly consult with the local community regarding the upgrade of the Preston substation on the South Morang line? Residents living near Bell railway station were shocked to receive a letter, dated 10 May, notifying them that works would begin on 14 May on construction of a new substation required for the level crossing removal. This substation will be substantially closer to homes than the previous one and is on land that the community had hoped would be new green space as part of the level crossing removal. No consultation has taken place on this new substation, and no master plan for the area, including the new level crossing, has been shared with the community. They deserve a say and an explanation.

Yan Yean electorate

Ms GREEN (Yan Yean) (11:51) — (14 527) My question is to the Minister for Roads and Road Safety,

and I ask: when can kangaroo signs be installed on the Windy Mile in Diamond Creek? I was written to early this week by Rebecca Fisher on behalf of wildlife carers who have noted that there has been a steep increase in the number of roos being hit on the road, both fatally and not fatally. My staff and I and indeed all local residents are very fond of these roos. They are known as the Sutherland kangaroos, and they mainly range around the property where my office is located. We actually want these roos to continue to be part of the community but we also want residents not to be fearful of having their vehicles damaged or experiencing the distress of them or their children having to witness animals in distress.

Bass electorate

Mr PAYNTER (Bass) (11:52) — (14 528) My question is for the Minister for Regional Development, and the question I have for the minister is: will you approve additional funding to review the car ferry business case down at Phillip Island, orchestrated by the Bass Coast council, to include the existing Cowes jetty? To date that option has not been included in their business case. Other alternatives have been put to the community. The community are very unhappy with the outcome. What we would like to see is a new business case conducted, with the existing Cowes jetty included as an option. The Cowes jetty needs a redevelopment, and the community are putting that forward as a proposal — that that be redeveloped to include access for a car ferry. It is causing great anxiety amongst the community, so I am asking the minister to fund the new business case, including the Cowes jetty.

Cranbourne electorate

Mr PERERA (Cranbourne) (11:53) — (14 529) My constituency question is for the Minister for Sport. In my electorate of Cranbourne the Casey City Council have recently applied for funding under the country football and netball program for a lighting upgrade to service growth in participation at the J & P Cam Reserve east oval. My question is: when will the minister be making a decision as to the status of this application?

BUDGET PAPERS 2018–19

Debate resumed.

Ms WARD (Eltham) (11:54) — I left off talking before about the terrific initiatives and work that the state government is doing in terms of roadworks within and around Eltham, including the much-needed north-east link. I would like to talk a bit about education

as well. It was great to hear the Minister for Education talking about the importance of TAFE in his ministers statement during question time. It is absolutely important that we recognise the important role TAFE plays in our communities. Like him I was furious about the closure of Greensborough TAFE by the coalition in December 2013. It was terrific to be able to reopen this campus last year, and to see it now thriving as much as it is is just fantastic — and it is absolutely thriving.

We put \$50 million into this budget to help TAFEs support their most vulnerable students to get the training they need to get a good, secure job. That includes \$3.5 million for Melbourne Polytechnic, and of course there will be students at Greensborough TAFE who will be advantaged by this. This is important funding not just because of how it helps vulnerable students in our community but also because it actually reinstates funding that was cut by those opposite when they were in government. It is incredibly clear to see that they do not support TAFE and that they have absolutely no love for TAFE and do not understand its importance.

We talk about this in the context of the 50 free courses at TAFE that this government is offering that those opposite do not see the worth of. In fact I believe the federal Minister for Education and Training referred to this funding for free TAFE being for basketweavers, people who are engaging in basket weaving. He can come down with me to Graham Bodyworks in Eltham and talk to the owner there, who is desperate for workers. He thinks it is fantastic that we will have panelbeating as a free course that will help people do their apprenticeships and be recruited, because he is actually looking for workers. He is looking for apprentices as well as skilled workers, and what we are doing is helping kids create pathways that will get them to where there are already job vacancies. You and I both know, Acting Speaker Spence, how important it is to this government to get people into work and how surprising it is that those opposite just cannot support TAFE. We have brought back funding for vulnerable students. We have put money into Greensborough TAFE, with \$10 million to get it started again. There is \$10 million for the Banyule-Nillumbik Tech School that is, as the Minister for Education said, almost complete.

I did talk about roads before, but I tell you what, the public transport story in the seat of Eltham is pretty good too. Not only did we invest money in the last budget working on a business case for duplicating the line from Greensborough North, but we are also investing another \$2.5 million in this budget to make sure that it is done properly. I tell you what, Acting Speaker Spence, you would be well aware that when

you are talking about work as serious as duplicating the Hurstbridge line, that is not stuff that is done on the back of an envelope, where you fudge some figures and hope for the best; you have actually got to do proper analysis. You have actually got to work out where it needs to go and how it needs to be. It surprises me that those opposite do not have the capacity to be able to do that.

We have also got funding for additional bus services in the St Helena area, which is very important because they could have better connectivity than they currently have. This is in addition to the 343 bus, which has been going for over a year now and which the member for Yan Yean and I advocated very strongly for. We love the 343 bus. We like getting on the 343 bus and talking to our constituents, who love that bus.

Ms Green interjected.

Ms WARD — As the member for Yan Yean says, we do mobile offices on the bus, and it is good. It is a great opportunity to have a conversation with people and understand how important the actions of this government are in the lives of members of our community and how much they are benefiting.

Ms Green interjected.

Ms WARD — As the member for Yan Yean says, this includes young people, which brings me to Eltham Central Park and the Panthers. There is \$400 000 in this budget to refurbish their pavilion and do some works there, and that is in addition to the \$800 000 that was already granted under this government in the Growing Suburbs Fund. That is \$1.2 million for the Eltham Central Park pavilion to help extend it and to give girls the change rooms that they need, because as you would know, Acting Speaker Spence, there is huge growth in female participation in football in my community and in yours. The Eltham Panthers are no exception. They have got girls coming out of everywhere wanting to play their footy, loving their footy, and they deserve the facilities that are going to be provided.

I am also pleased to note that an additional \$100 000 has been provided by this government for the lights at Eltham Central Park. I do hope that Nillumbik council get their skates on and get this work underway. There are a few projects that they seem to be on the cusp of starting that this government has put heavy support and funding behind, and I hope that they really do get their act together and get them going out there. These projects are incredibly important to my community.

Along with the member for Yan Yean, I give a shout-out to all those terrific women who came along on Saturday afternoon to our Women in Sport

workshop. There is still a lot of work to be done and it was great to see how glad they were for the investments that this government is putting into sport and women in sport. It was inspiring to hear their different views on how we can do even more. I thank them very much for their effort, and I thank the Diamond Creek Men's Shed for their sausage sizzle as well.

I am really looking forward to Nillumbik council getting on with it and joining with this Labor government to help make things happen, and I thank the clubs in my community for their patience while Nillumbik rolls slowly through the motions of getting these projects up and underway. It is disappointing to note that only one project under the Growing Suburbs Fund has been completed by Nillumbik council, and I do look forward to some more projects commencing, because we have funded them and they really need to happen.

Before I finish I do have to note the disappointment that I have in the member for Mount Waverley, who used his opportunity to speak on the budget to yet again engage in the culture wars regarding Safe Schools. I have to call him out again for the misinformation that the coalition continues to peddle about this important resource. They talk about forcing gender fluid theory on people through the Safe Schools program. Again in this place I will set the record straight and speak from experience. Both my girls attend Eltham High School, which was one of the first pilot schools in the Safe Schools Coalition program over 10 years ago, and neither of my girls has experienced gender fluid theory being forced on them at all. The rubbish that is being peddled by those opposite needs to stop because this is far too important. The issues that Safe Schools confronts and helps teachers with are far too important for the stupid games that those opposite play.

Mr THOMPSON (Sandringham) (12:02) — In contributing to this take-note motion on the Victorian state budget papers I would like to refer to a number of remarks I made some years ago in this chamber. Sir Arvi Parbo, a former head of Western Mining, made a comment that:

A worthwhile society must be underpinned by a ... prosperous economic base.

In the same speech that I quoted Arvi Parbo I quoted Charles Carter, a British scientist who once noted that:

Unfortunately in our society in recent years there has been a tendency for bias against wealth creation in favour of so-called socially significant activities; but which, ironically, depend for their support in the first place upon wealth creation.

It is important that we as a legislature balance the taxation of our citizens with the wise expenditure of taxpayers money. According to work done by the shadow Treasurer, the member for Malvern, it was noted that there have been some \$25 billion of cost blowouts in Victoria in recent years. The point has been made that that money could have been invested in 25 new Royal Children's Hospitals. It could have acquired 125 000 ambulances. It could have built 926 secondary schools. It could have built 2083 primary schools. It could have built four east-west links, 125 women's and children's hospitals, 1563 large police stations, 42 suburban rail line extensions, 2500 new cardiac catheterisation laboratories, 1714 trams, 1389 X'trapolis metro trains and 1136 special development schools.

A key focus of government is to deliver responsible government, accountable government, honest government, and it is important that we as a legislature allocate taxpayers resources wisely in the state of Victoria. At the moment numbers of Victorians are facing challenges in meeting obligations to pay a range of bills. The pay packets of Victorian householders are being gouged through the increasing obligations to meet electricity price rises. We have the obligations of Victorian householders to meet the cost of the desalination plant, which is \$1.8 million every day for 28 years since it commenced — \$1.8 million every day.

There is the impact of land tax on Victorian householders. I remember a number of self-funded retirees who came to see me who were gravely concerned about their independence being eroded. People had worked hard, had an investment property but through the non-adjustment of the land tax scale were losing their retirement income and were unable to meet a range of important household expenses, including medical expenses on the part of people who are ageing.

There is the impact upon the Victorian community of crime, with crime increasing in a range of serious areas. In the last four years we have seen a carjacking in the Sandringham electorate and a home invasion in the Sandringham electorate, events which were unheard of in yesteryear. We have the challenge of households meeting rising council rates and increasing motor vehicle registrations. I recently had a constituent raise a concern with me. He and his wife as retirees maintained one email address and he wanted to record two motor vehicles online but was told that he needed two separate email addresses. In his view there was a lack of proficiency on the part of VicRoads as they went about their motor vehicle registration system. There are other people too who through inadvertence, oversight or

misdirected mail did not receive their VicRoads registrations and are paying massive fees as a result of not having their vehicles re-registered.

There is a challenge in metropolitan Melbourne, with our population doubling, of a lack of access to junior sporting ground space. There is the example of the Beaumaris Football Club, which has over 40 men's and women's senior and junior teams and a lack of oval space. It is incumbent upon this legislature to provide the necessary leadership to provide the space and infrastructure that will enable Victorians in the future to have access to strong recreation outlets, whether that be soccer, football, cricket, netball, basketball, athletics, hockey or lacrosse.

At this point I would like to place on record the great work that was undertaken by the coalition in the last Parliament in Beaumaris where there was uncertainty as to the future direction of the then Beaumaris campus of Sandringham College. It was made a campus of Sandringham College under reforms introduced by the Kirner government and that was regarded as a landmark achievement. Enrolments were low and reinvestment was needed and there were issues regarding what nature of reinvestment would take place.

Well before the Labor Party made an announcement regarding reinvestment in the school I had been working with the Melbourne Cricket Club (MCC) to see if there was a prospect of co-investment so that the best educational and sporting precinct in the southern region of Melbourne had the opportunity to be re-established. I am delighted to note that there will be a new complex opening in a couple of weeks. However, but for the work of the coalition government in reserving the land for educational and sporting purposes and but for the co-investment by the MCC — which wanted and sought the concurrent reinvestment by the state government in that site — what is about to be opened down there today would not be there.

I should add that good work was done by the community, by the school council at Sandringham College, by education department bureaucrats and by people who gave their time voluntarily on school councils and in the wider community. Many people contributed to the outcome that has been achieved, but I would add for the parliamentary record and for the sake of posterity that but for the work of the coalition in reserving this site for the development of education and sporting facilities and but for the co-investment by the Melbourne Cricket Club what is there today would not be. I also note that that co-investment was predicated upon it being a win for the school community and a win for the Melbourne Cricket Club for their sporting teams,

funded through the philanthropic foundation of the Melbourne Cricket Club to promote the advancement of development of sport.

There was the great example of Melbourne High School, which had its hockey facility managed by the MCC for the benefit of the students and the MCC community. As I said, it had to be a win for the school, for the MCC but also for the local community. As a result of the redevelopment that has taken place on site there will be three world-class surfaces developed in Beaumaris, including two main cricket and football ovals which could be adapted for other uses and a multipurpose, specialised all-weather surface for hockey, lacrosse and soccer. There will be a full-sized soccer pitch which will be able to be converted into two junior pitches for junior soccer.

In the work that was undertaken by me, together with the member for Nepean, the then Minister for Education, and Dr Denis Napthine, the then Premier, for the announcement in October 2014 of the co-investment by the MCC and the education department it was important that there was a worthwhile outcome for three individual groups: the school, the MCC and the local community. I look forward to tenancy arrangements and engagement with local groups being coordinated into the future.

In addition to a range of other matters that pertain to the budget, as articulated by the shadow Treasurer, Victorians will be asking themselves, ‘Compared to four years ago am I better off? Under Labor has my cost of living gone down or up? Has my trip to work become easier or harder? When I get home at night do I feel safer or less safe?’. The answers to those questions are that people are battling with their rising living costs and certainly with their wage packets being gouged by increasing electricity prices. Our roads are becoming more congested.

We have seen the example of the cancellation of the east–west link, which was not meant to cost more than \$1 but ended up costing some \$1.3 billion to the state of Victoria. Think of what that could built in terms of hospitals, schools, the provision of ambulances and the provision of increased security and resources through protective services officers or Victoria Police. What that money could have provided is no longer available. This does not represent fiscal prudence and the wise prudential management of taxpayer resources. In answer to the question ‘When people get home at night do they feel safer or less safe?’ and the other questions I put, the resounding answer amongst people in my community when there has been an increase in serious crime, an increase in major crime, an increase in home

invasions and an increase in carjackings — before unprecedented — is no, no and no.

I asked a constituent recently how he thought the state of Victoria was progressing. He did not confine his answer to just one word in terms of, for example, the east–west link being cancelled and costing the Victorian taxpayer \$1.3 billion. He said that was wrong, wrong, wrong. Angst, pain, annoyance and disempowerment are being felt by many Victorians as things which were previously within their reach and affordable when there was a civil and safe society are now not there. There is major concern about the erosion of those particular elements.

In the future the coalition will use the budget wisely and well to advance a number of initiatives. We have seen already the announcement made by the shadow Minister for Emergency Services, the member for Gembrook, and Brad Rowswell, the Liberal candidate for Sandringham, that there will be a \$2 million reinvestment in the Mentone Lifesaving Club. We have seen the announcement of similar collaboration between Life Saving Victoria and local government by the coalition, the member for Gembrook and Brad Rowswell for reinvestment in the Black Rock Life Saving Club. We have seen a commitment by the coalition not to narrow Beach Road, which would deprive large numbers of foreshore users and foreshore club members of much-valued long-term parking. This ensures our foreshore areas remain accessible for all Victorians.

We have seen an announcement in relation to the future grade separation of the Nepean Highway and Lower Dandenong Road and also South Road and the Nepean Highway, which will improve traffic flow. We have seen the great announcement made by the member for Gembrook, together with Geoff Gledhill, who serves as a councillor in the City of Kingston, at the Mordialloc Life Saving Club regarding coalition investment in drones to improve water safety. A number of years ago almost 70 people lost their lives along Victoria’s coastline and in inland waterways through drowning. It is important that we eliminate that very tragic outcome, which especially impacts culturally and linguistically diverse community members.

The coalition in the late 1990s invested in an important program to reinvest in lifesaving club infrastructure and water safety messaging. The use of drones involves the use of technology to deliver through the air a flotation device that is able to be dropped near the swimmer in distress. That will also enable people who have an interest in serving their communities in an important emergency service to do so not only as a swimmer but

by using their good technical skills. That might be an individual strength people have, enabling them to play an important role in water safety.

We also have an announcement in relation to police setting up in shopfronts in shopping centres, where there is a massive volume of people passing and where there have been concerns regarding antisocial behaviour and theft both within shopping centre precincts and from shopping centre car parks.

The most important asset within the Sandringham electorate remains Sandringham Hospital and its emergency department. When the viability its 24/7 emergency department was threatened to be cut back to 12 hours a day the Leader of the Opposition stood outside the hospital and said, ‘A future coalition government will keep it open 24/7’.

Ms SPENCE (Yuroke) (12:17) — I am delighted to speak on this year’s budget, which certainly builds on the foundations of our three previous budgets with a massive investment in education, infrastructure, public safety, health, jobs and transport.

For the Yuroke electorate this budget provides the biggest local investment that the electorate has seen, and it has been enthusiastically welcomed by local residents. As parliamentary secretary for public transport and for roads I know that in my electorate and across the state our investments in this area, in both this budget and previous budgets, will make a real difference to the lives of many people into the future and for many, many decades to come.

As we see the investment in the CityLink-Tullamarine Freeway widening project really taking shape now, it is great to see that major roads planning and investment is continuing with the incredibly important north-east link — the missing link in Melbourne’s freeway network. I know that that is of great importance to you, Acting Speaker Ward.

But it is not just the major roads that will keep our city moving. I am thrilled that this budget invests almost \$2.2 billion in suburban road upgrades in Melbourne’s northern and south-eastern suburbs, building on the western road upgrades funded in last year’s budget. In Yuroke this means that Craigieburn Road will be duplicated from Mickleham Road to the Hume Freeway, with shared pedestrian and cycling lanes on both sides of the road, safety barriers and intersection upgrades. This is a massive relief to the Craigieburn community. It resolves one of the most significant local problems, and it is certainly a long-awaited outcome. When I was first elected to Hume council in 2008 this

was an issue that we were advocating for then as a council. Since that time local sports clubs; residents; retailers; public transport operators; local schools; emergency services, including the State Emergency Service, the Country Fire Authority, Victoria Police and the community emergency response team have all raised this as an issue.

At the time that the road started to be problematic there were 21 000 people living in Craigieburn. There are now around 51 000 people. The road is incredibly overused and to say that the community is relieved is an understatement. So there is still a need to look at other roads in the area. Both Somerton and Mickleham roads do need duplicating, and I will continue to fight for those works as I have for Craigieburn Road. By way of comparison, the former Liberal government’s investments in road duplications in Yuroke was zero, so this is very significant.

In regard to public transport, this budget has provided a massive investment in solving the other significant issue in Craigieburn and that is parking at the local station. In 2014 there were 267 spaces at the car park, which was completely inadequate for this growing community. Since then this government has invested in incremental improvements, with an additional 55 spaces created onsite and around 100 spaces created or underway in Potter Street nearby. Now this budget has provided a much-needed 745 additional spaces. Once completed, this will bring the total for the station to around 1165 spaces. No doubt they will still all fill every morning, but it is an incredibly huge boost and the community is quite thrilled that this has finally happened. Again, for the record the former Liberal government’s investment in additional parking at Craigieburn station was also zero.

The Yuroke electorate is benefiting not only from this investment in transport infrastructure; we are also delivering for future generations by making education and new schools a top priority. In 2017 the \$12.2 million Newbury Primary School opened. It is now well and truly up and running, and it is great to visit and see the kids all proudly wearing their new uniforms. I do congratulate the principal, Michelle Bromfield, and her team for the great work that they have done to make the school a success.

There is no doubt that our local schools are terrific. We have some wonderful schools, but the community is continuing to grow, and we need to provide and plan for the new schools in those areas. This budget provides the investment to ensure that local infrastructure keeps up with that growth. We are building on previous investments in education in this budget. Last year

\$13.8 million was provided to start construction of the Aitken Hill Primary School in Craigieburn; this budget provides an additional \$6.78 million for stage 2, and that will ensure that the school is ready to open its doors for the 2019 school year.

The budget also provides funding of \$24 million to deliver stage 1 construction of the new Craigieburn South secondary school, and that will open in 2020. This school will also be an inclusion hub, so that will provide inclusive education for students with disabilities in Melbourne's growing northern suburbs and is very welcomed by the community.

In addition to these there is still demand for more schools, particularly in the growing Mickleham area and the Greenvale area that is continuing to grow. This year's budget provided funding to acquire land for the proposed Merrifield West P-6 in Mickleham, and last year the funds were provided for the acquisition of land for the future Greenvale North West primary school. I will continue to work with the minister on the delivery of these and other new schools that are needed. By way of comparison in regard to education, the funding for schools in Yuroke under the previous Liberal government was \$5.4 million, and so far under this government it has been \$106.3 million.

Along with the new facilities it is also great to see our fantastic existing local schools that have benefited from programs that ensure every child has the same opportunities. Five local schools are now operating school breakfast clubs, both of the government secondary schools will have an in-school doctor service and thousands of families are benefiting from our programs to help with the cost of school excursions and sporting equipment and to help them buy those essential items like school uniforms.

I mentioned in my inaugural speech in this place that as a single parent on a low income I was acutely aware of the strains on a household budget that arise from these education expenses and how frustrating it can be when, as a parent, you only want to do what is best for your child but some choices in reality just do not exist. So I am really proud that this government recognises that no child should miss out on fully participating at school because of a tight family budget. These initiatives are really important. They matter, they really matter. They make a difference to the lives and the education experiences of those who most need our support.

While we all adore our children and enjoy almost every minute of raising them, I am sure that like me many parents look forward to when our little darlings can take that great step into home ownership. The Yuroke

electorate is the third youngest electorate in Victoria, with an average age of 31, and it is a community of choice for first home buyers and young families. However, with property prices continuing to rise, it is all the more challenging for people to get into that housing market, especially younger Victorians. This government has been helping to provide access to first homes, with 427 applications received for the first home owner grants in the Hume municipality from 1 July 2016 to 28 February 2018. In addition to this, we continue to support stamp duty exemptions for first home buyers purchasing properties with a value of up to \$600 000; there has been a particularly strong uplift in these purchases in Hume. From the period July 2016 to February 2018 there were 1458 stamp duty exemptions in the Hume municipality and a reduced rate for another 121 purchasers. I spent a number of years renting, so I do understand how very challenging it can be to be able to get your first home.

Another area where we have been able to assist local residents with the cost-of-living pressures has been through the very much welcomed short-term registration payments. Residents of Frankston, Pakenham and Craigieburn have been amongst the fastest to take up short-term vehicle registration. Craigieburn has the second-highest number of three-month registrations with 3296, just behind Pakenham. It also has the highest number of six-month registration payments — just over 2500 people have taken up this option. It has been most popular among the 26 to 35-year-olds in that area. It does not surprise me and I am really glad that people have taken up that opportunity. It certainly does provide a huge relief to a household budget when you are not suddenly having to come up with that massive \$800-odd amount in a single hit. Being able to spread that has been very warmly welcomed and we can see that by the fact that people are heading in droves to make that choice.

Saving is not the only challenge, though, that first home buyers face. With a changing employment market and the exit of the automotive industry, they pose some significant challenges for job seekers. As we know, a job is much more important than just a pay cheque. Unemployment has so many negative impacts. I know I am not telling you, Acting Speaker Ward, anything you do not know. I know this is definitely a passion of yours. The impacts include social isolation and mental health issues and they can have a detrimental impact on your physical wellbeing. There are too many to talk about.

That is why it is very important for us to keep creating and protecting jobs. In Yuroke that has been a very strong focus. Last week I was thrilled to attend, along with the Minister for Industry and Employment, the

opening of a facility and the 100th birthday of Dulux in my electorate. We got to meet Penny the sheepdog, and she was a real treat. That was a great day.

Mr R. Smith — Did you paint the town?

Ms SPENCE — I will leave it to the member for Warrandyte to paint the town.

The facility is a very modern design. Its size is larger than the playing area of the MCG. It is huge. The water tanks outside have been painted to look like paint tins, so it is very impressive — and of course the sheepdog is on the wall. That facility will manufacture of all Dulux's water-based paints and new technology-based paints, producing about 50 million litres of water-based decorative paint a year for the Australian market. It is huge. But even better, it is providing jobs. It is starting by creating 67 new full-time jobs.

It was great to talk to workers there. I met a couple of workers there, Barry and Wish. They now have this wonderful lifestyle. They live 5 minutes from where they work, so they have got zero commute, effectively. With the way the facility is operating they are doing two shifts. They have been able to select shifts that enable them to do other things that are important to them. Wish is a mum and she is able to do the morning shift, which means she can be home in the afternoon when the kids get home from school. That is terrific.

Across our state, one of the main ways that the government supports jobs is through the infrastructure projects that we have going on, and there is certainly no shortage of works right across our state. That is why we need a workforce that is able to do these jobs and the 30 free priority TAFE courses and the preapprenticeship courses are so important for these for these high-demand industries. There are plenty of people in Yuroke who are ready to take up that challenge. Around a quarter of Yuroke residents welcome these opportunities to study at TAFE. We have seen that the number of people who go on to post-secondary education, to either TAFE or vocational studies, is around 30 per cent, which is really quite terrific.

By way of contrast again, while I am talking about TAFE, you cannot overlook the fact that while we are investing in 30 free priority TAFE courses the federal Liberal government have slashed \$60 million from TAFE. I just find their priorities quite astounding. Our priorities, on the other hand, are right. In addition to the TAFE courses and the preapprenticeship funding, the budget is also investing \$26 million to enhance vocational education in schools and \$50 million to deliver up to 1700 Head Start apprenticeships and

traineeships at 100 secondary schools. This will ensure that students can finish secondary school with an apprenticeship or traineeship qualification, ready to work in high-demand areas.

Another aspect of this budget that I am also very pleased about and that goes to our continuing investment in infrastructure is the inclusion of another \$50 million in the Growing Suburbs Fund. I note that the current and former ministers for local government are in the chamber at the moment. I thank both of them for continuing this incredibly important investment in Yuroke. This has meant contributions to the Livvi's Place inclusive play space, the Aston Recreation Reserve development, the Annadale Interim Community Centre and the Arena Recreation Reserve pavilion. It brings investment in Yuroke to over \$5 million. We are incredibly grateful for that and I am really pleased that this budget now allows for support of even more of these fantastic projects. So thank you to both the ministers who have been responsible for that.

Emergency services also got a great boost in this budget. The community is eagerly awaiting a new Victoria State Emergency Service unit and a new ambulance station in the northern Craigieburn area. This year's budget also provided \$13 million for a new Craigieburn Country Fire Authority station. The current brigade has completely outgrown the station. We are looking to have a new one that will have additional fire trucks. This one will be home to five fire trucks and have better accommodation for 12 firefighters. Our local firefighters do an outstanding job, so I am really pleased that they will be able to have the facilities that they need to do the best job that they can. This budget helps Yuroke in so many ways. I am very pleased to support it.

Mr R. SMITH (Warrandyte) (12:32) — It seems strange to be rising in this house to talk about the budget because I would hazard that we are probably the only people in the state of Victoria who are still talking about this budget. The budget has sunk into obscurity and barely a person knows what the government is actually offering in this election year. Those who are still talking about it probably do not believe it, because the government have ended as they started, with a whole pack of lies. No-one believes a word they say, no-one believes that they are going to deliver on what they say. The Premier has told so many untruths, hoodwinked so many Victorians, that people just no longer believe him or his ministers — including his Deputy Premier who, I may say, has been the subject of affidavits brought into this house from his community saying how he has lied to them.

This government has no credibility about what it is going to do for Victorians, none whatsoever. They said that there were shovel-ready projects, those that never got off the ground. Those that have got off the ground are going to be just barely able to be started before the next election, so that the government can actually point to something.

The public expected the government to keep them safe. Well, the crime rise that we have seen over this government's term has been incredible. There is not a person that you can talk to in this state who is not concerned about crime. The minister at the table, the Minister for Consumer Affairs, Gaming and Liquor Regulation, interjected moments ago that I should get out more. I can tell the minister that if she got out to her community more, indeed to the whole of western Melbourne and western Victoria, she would find that everyone is very concerned about the incidences of crime. They are talking about home invasions, they are talking about carjackings, they are talking about crime being up by 22 per cent and they are talking about patrols that they are having to put out in their own communities to deal with crime issues. They are very concerned about crime. I have to say that if the government wants to continue to put the blinkers on, I welcome it — because that means that when Victorians get to the election, they will point to the government of today and say, 'These people did not protect us and these people will not even admit there's a problem'. Incidences of carjackings and home invasions — crimes that we had not seen before this government came to office — have become prevalent and people, as the police minister herself has said, are scared in their own homes.

The cost-of-living issues for business and households have been raised in this place over the last few days in question time. Time and time again people are talking about business costs and energy costs rising by 10 to 20 per cent — sometimes 100 per cent, sometimes 200 per cent — and the pressure on household budgets is just extraordinary. But this government and the Premier who presides over it have been completely uncaring in the way they have addressed these issues. It does not help these businesses or these families to have the Premier get up and say, 'Oh, well, we'll do an assessment for you' or 'We'll give you some financial assistance'. Even if that was true — and I am not so sure it is — how did it get to this situation?

How did it get to a point where power bills under this government's watch have risen by multiples of 10 per cent over the course of this government? How is that possible? How is it that the government thinks it can sail in on a white horse six months before the election

and say that it will fix all the problems — problems that it created itself? We should not be in the position where people are being bribed with a \$50 payment to go to a website to have a look at other ways that they can have their energy supplied; \$50 is not anywhere near enough to actually support these families and the kinds of imposts that they are now having to face each and every day.

The government recently ditched its slogan 'Getting things done and making things fairer'. It might be the first sign that the government are actually being truthful, because they are neither getting things done nor making things fair. And if I can make a comment about their most recent slogan, 'Delivering for all Victorians', I will give a tip to the government and I will give a tip to the Premier: the people in the electorate of Warrandyte are part of Victoria. This budget has not a dollar, not a dime, for those people, and the electorate has had barely a cent over the last four years. This government is one of the most political that has ever sat on the Treasury benches.

In the course of the previous government my electorate received over \$72 million. There was a new police station, a new railway station, an \$800 000 new kindergarten and major funding to four schools in my electorate. There were grants. Two sporting clubs were rebuilt. In stark contrast to the \$72 million that the previous coalition government was able to use to support the residents in my electorate — residents who pay their taxes and work hard to pay their taxes but are seeing nothing back from this government — this government has delivered over four years a scant \$2.5 million. There was funding to Heatherwood School, which is very welcome, and funding to one of my other primary schools, but that is it for four years, and it is shameful of this government to come in here and pretend that it is delivering for all Victorians when I have never seen such a political bunch in my life.

There is nothing here for local schools. We talked about many local schools in question time in the previous sitting. How many schools are falling down around the students' and staff's ears is just extraordinary. I have raised issues about two of my schools — Beverley Hills Primary School and Wonga Park Primary School — just in the last few days in this place, but they are not the only ones that have been craving attention for many years. In fact this government really needs to step up and do something about them, but of course because they are so political in nature, so mean and so cruel, they will never direct money to the seat of Warrandyte. The people of Warrandyte know that, and they will never, ever trust this government, because there is nothing there for schools.

The member for Yuroke talks about TAFE: ‘Isn’t it great that there are free courses at TAFE?’. Did you stop to think for a minute how that might affect community houses and neighbourhood houses? Did you stop for a moment to think how these focal points of our community — the neighbourhood houses and learning centres — are going to be affected? How do they compete with free courses? How do they possibly compete with this government’s policy? But this government does not worry about consequences. It puts out a media release, it pats itself on the back and it trumpets to the world how awesome it is, but the reality is that the consequences are there for all to see. The community houses in my area are going to face some very difficult times ahead because this government has disregarded them entirely.

In terms of the bus services in my area, the government has re-signed contracts with Transdev. The government, over three and a half years, has not been able to deliver an efficient and reliable bus service. The amount of complaints I get about the bus service in my area just mounts day after day. I have sent letters to the minister, who comes back and says, ‘Well, we’re looking at services, we’re doing this, we’re doing that’, but the services never improve. For a community that is only serviced by buses, not trains or trams, the least that people could expect to ease the congestion on our roads is to actually be able to get on a bus, but the buses are completely unreliable. Under this government it has been just a completely botched mess.

There are no grants to sports groups in my area at all. Sporting clubs are the heart and soul of our communities. When I look at clubs like Warrandyte Football Club and Park Orchards Football and Netball Club — clubs that bring in children, give them great role models and keep them active and generating support for those clubs until those kids reach the senior divisions — not one dollar has come from this government to any of those sporting clubs. That is again, as I say, in stark contrast to the previous government, where we had major rebuilds in my electorate as a result of actually paying attention to all Victorians, but this government certainly does not want to do that.

Let us have a look at the way this government has conducted itself over the Public Accounts and Estimates Committee (PAEC) budget hearings. For a start, I do not know who the genius was to have it stretch out over so many weeks. Maybe it was a ploy to give the ministers time to actually get across their portfolios and understand what it is that pertains to their portfolios and their electorates. But, my goodness, the member for Essendon is sitting there, and if the

member for Essendon can look at me with a straight face and say that the Minister for Roads and Road Safety discharged his ministerial responsibilities in a decent way, he is kidding himself.

Mr Pearson interjected.

Mr R. SMITH — The guy looked at line items. He said black was white and he was not going to move from those discussions. It was unbelievable. If the member for Essendon thinks that the minister for roads did a good job, then the member for Essendon is setting a very low bar for those on the front bench. He should seek instead to bring his great intellect to the front bench. It is not going to happen until some of these people move, mate. You might want to actually highlight the ones that are doing a pretty poor job, because that was a disgraceful effort, overshadowed only by the Minister for Sport.

The Minister for Sport’s efforts today were laughable to the point where the Leader of the House actually sat him down in so many words, and the Minister for Sport was not even bright enough to pick up that he should not get out of his seat again because he was performing so incredibly poorly. You only have to sit on this side. The member for Essendon would not see all the faces that we see, sitting over here. When the Minister for Sport actually started his contribution in answering the question, if members opposite were not shell-shocked, they were studiously looking at some suddenly very important messages on their phones. It was a joke — an absolute joke — when I saw that minister today and indeed when I saw him in the PAEC hearings along with his esteemed colleague the Minister for Roads and Road Safety, who was just appalling in the contribution that he gave and the evidence that he gave to PAEC.

We can go on for the amount of people who this government has slighted over the three and a half years that they have been in government. The sky rail residents, who are furious at the lack of communication and consultation that they had from this government, were surprised one morning to find that they were going to get a significantly elevated railway through their backyards. They have not forgotten out there in Oakleigh. They have not forgotten all the way down that line the way this government ran roughshod over them, did not consult them, did not talk to them and in fact does not care that they have been living now for two and a half years with works going on at all hours of the night, constantly, without notification. If the government does not think that those people are going to go to the ballot box full of anger and ready to kick these guys out, then the government is kidding itself.

Taxidivers' complete disgust and frustration with this government is completely palpable. Bus company operators were threatened with not being able to provide any services for the people of Victoria unless they signed away their assets at the end of the contract. Gee, the government backflipped on that one when we could prove with documentation that what the minister was saying was not true was in fact true. The anger of those bus service operators has not gone away either.

For those who have driven on our country roads, this government has let them fall away. One billion dollars extra, additional to the usual funding, was promised by this government for the maintenance of country roads prior to the election, and not one dollar more has been spent. In fact roads are deteriorating in the country at such a rapid rate it is appalling to see. Those who do not want to go past the tram tracks should really get out and drive on those roads, because the best thing you can do to save country lives is to fix country roads. You can put all the wire barriers you want up, you can put all the signs up and you can lower speed limits, but fix the road and you will save lives out in those areas. Some of those out in South-West Coast and near Polwarth have just been some of the most disgraceful that I have ever seen. It is absolutely appalling that the government has let them deteriorate to the point that they have.

The member for Yuroke talked about jobs. Coming just recently from the Latrobe Valley in the Morwell-Moe area, where some of my family live, jobs are a huge issue. There is a 15.6 per cent unemployment rate in Morwell and Moe. Is the government doing anything about that? Yes, they are; they are building a GovHub. It is going to be ready in 2022. That should be helpful for those who are out of work! One thousand people were put out of work by this government's policies that closed Hazelwood power station and taxed them out of existence — taxed them to the point where it was no longer viable for them to continue. Those people were out of work overnight, to say nothing of the associated businesses — the cafes, the restaurants, the newsagents — who all relied on that employment. Those people who are now looking for work and are having significant problems and that unemployment rate are things the government should be absolutely ashamed of and should be moving a lot quicker to deal with.

The fact of the matter is that the cost-of-living issues that we are seeing now and the unemployment problems that we are seeing out in the Latrobe Valley are a direct result of this government's policies, and it is absolutely appalling that they have done all they can to remove 22 per cent of baseload power from this state to make us for the first time a net importer of energy and to take away our competitive advantage that we have

had commercially and industrially for so many years. That advantage is now gone, and the government should hang its head in shame. Not only has it contributed to that huge unemployment rate, but to put the burden on so many families, so many households and so many businesses is just completely unconscionable. The government, as I said, should hang its head in shame.

There are so many things that I could talk about in relation to the way this government has conducted itself — the lies, the mistruths and the misleading. It is just appalling. It is led by the Premier himself, who took this once proud Labor Party into the gutter during his years in opposition, wallowed around in that gutter during the campaign period and has really achieved not much more to highlight any redeeming qualities of himself or his government over the last three and a half years. People are suffering to an extreme level. People are less safe than they were three and a half years ago. People's bills are higher than they were three and a half years ago. People are sitting in traffic more than they were three and a half years ago.

While I hear the sycophantic backbenchers in here talk about how great the government's budget is, they might try getting out and talking to those who have been bashed — victims of crime and victims of serious assault — as the crime rate has escalated. They should talk to those who are sitting in their cars day after day on the Monash Freeway, on the Eastern Freeway, on the Western Ring Road and on the West Gate Freeway — those people who cannot move because this government spent \$1.3 billion to scrap a road project. It is just unbelievable. They should also get out and talk to those people in their homes who are struggling every day with growing bills and who are really concerned about how they are going to get by day to day. This is a poor budget coming from a poor government, and throwing out sweets at the 11th hour just is not going to cut it.

Ms KAIROUZ (Minister for Consumer Affairs, Gaming and Liquor Regulation) (12:47) — It is an absolute pleasure to rise today to make a contribution on the Andrews government's 2018 budget, and I start by commending both the Treasurer and the Premier on delivering an outstanding budget that gets things done, that makes things fair and that delivers to all Victorians, regardless of what the member for Warrandyte was saying. Let me just put on the record, member for Warrandyte, that we have been getting around and we have been talking to all communities, and let me tell you one thing: they have never mentioned you once. They have never spoken about you. In fact they do not even know who you are, so you are irrelevant.

But nevertheless, I am here to talk about the 2018 budget. I will start by talking about some of the fantastic initiatives that I have delivered in my portfolios, and I will also speak about the fantastic initiatives in my electorate of Kororoit and in the western suburbs. I will start with local government. Local government plays an important role in our state, and the sector delivers ratepayers with key health and infrastructure services. It also plays a vital role in planning and building control and waste and environment management. Our councils employ over 500 000 Victorians, and I am proud of the investment that the Andrews Labor government has made in the local government sector over the past four years.

There is so much to do, and I am absolutely pleased to say that with this budget we are getting things done. The budget provides an investment of \$70 million to help support two key projects: the Growing Suburbs Fund (GSF), which we have heard about; and the rural and regional councils transformation project, which is a new fund that I will speak a little bit about later.

Over the past four years the Growing Suburbs Fund has gone from strength to strength. The fund provides much-needed support for our 10 interface councils — Casey, Cardinia, Yarra Ranges, Nillumbik, Mitchell, Whittlesea, Mornington Peninsula, Hume, Melton and Wyndham — and it helps these councils build community infrastructure to support their rapidly growing populations. As the member for Kororoit, I know how much these projects help my community. This year the state budget provided \$50 million to continue the Growing Suburbs Fund, and this is in addition to the \$25 million committed for 2018–19 in the previous state budget, increasing the total funding in 2018–19 to a record \$75 million.

This additional funding is expected to enable about 40 community infrastructure projects to be funded across Melbourne's interface areas. Since its establishment in 2015 the Growing Suburbs Fund has supported 116 projects, representing a total infrastructure investment of \$362.1 million and creating more than 3900 local jobs. Currently 44 projects have been completed and 32 have now commenced construction, with the remainder due to begin before the end of the year. This is 116 projects more than were funded by those opposite, who did nothing for the suburbs for four years — absolutely nothing. We have already seen some wonderful examples of innovative community infrastructure being supported through this fund. I have been able to visit many of these projects and I know that other members have also seen projects firsthand. They have seen how these projects are

helping some very, very important communities that need government support.

Earlier this year we saw the Barry Road Community Activity Centre, for example, which was opened by the member for Thomastown. This centre is a \$3.7 million project delivered in partnership with the Whittlesea City Council and it will service the needs of so many in the Whittlesea community. It will enable the council to meet the growing demand for community meeting space and allow for an expansion of vital council community services. Another GSF project that I have had the pleasure of attending this year is the Williams Landing Reserve Integrated Sports and Community Hub. This is a \$3.8 million project which will be delivered in partnership with the Wyndham City Council. I look forward to the government being able to support many more important projects like these through the next round of the Growing Suburbs Fund, which has already opened with projects due to be announced sometime in the middle of the year.

I am absolutely delighted that this government has committed \$20 million to fund the rural and regional council transformation program. As the local government minister this program is very close to my heart as I understand the unique challenges that rural and regional councils face. Our rural and regional councils have lower populations spread across larger areas compared to their urban counterparts and as a result these councils face higher service delivery costs and greater pressures from their communities to fill service and infrastructure gaps. They are also key employers in their local communities so their long-term sustainability is absolutely vital.

Last year the state budget allocated \$1 million to the rural and regional councils sustainability reform program, and we used this funding to create a report which identified the barriers to sustainability and proposed options to deliver long-term financial operational sustainability for rural and regional councils. This work was completed under the guidance of an exceptionally qualified steering committee, and I would like to acknowledge and thank the members of the committee for their hard work and dedication. Thanks to their work we were able to use hard evidence and credible policy rationale to allocate \$20 million to progress regional service delivery and shared services in rural and regional Victoria. This kind of funding has never been available to rural councils before and I look forward to engaging with these councils to help them deliver exceptional services to their communities. I would particularly like to give a big shout-out and say thank you to Rural Councils Victoria for their advocacy in this area. Their

knowledge of the issues that face rural councils is unrivalled and thanks to their hard work projects like this one have been able to get off the ground.

I would like to now turn my attention to my consumer affairs portfolio. We have delivered our election commitment to work with stakeholders and introduce a mandatory statutory registration scheme for engineers, which was debated just recently in the Parliament. Under this scheme we are delivering on our commitment to work with other jurisdictions to deliver a nationally consistent registration scheme for engineers backed by \$2.8 million in funding for 2018–19 and \$3.1 million in funding for 2019–20. This government registration scheme for engineers will reduce the risk of engineering work being undertaken by unqualified engineers and ensure confidence in national and international markets in the qualifications and experience of Victorian engineers.

This scheme comes at an important time for Victoria as we continue to invest an average of \$10.2 billion a year over the budget and forward estimates in infrastructure projects for our cities, our towns and our regional communities. The scheme is also ensuring the biggest infrastructure pipeline in the state's history, supported by highly qualified and registered professionals. It is a big win for Victoria's consumers and engineers alike, and I look forward to seeing the commencement of this scheme in due course.

The budget for consumer affairs continues to work in supporting Victoria's consumers, with \$39 million going towards supporting the vulnerable in our community. Of this, \$8.8 million will go towards financial counselling, which will assist 32 000 people experiencing financial hardship. An additional \$1.5 million will fund family violence financial counselling. This is a specialist counselling program and is critical in supporting those facing financial abuse and is a key response to the recommendations of the Royal Commission into Family Violence. We have also committed \$4.4 million to support vulnerable tenants and consumers through the tenancy and consumer program.

We have budgeted \$25 million in funding for affordable housing grants from the Victorian Property Fund (VPF). These grants will help to fund community-led property projects, including affordable housing for people who are on low incomes or who are living in difficult circumstances, including women and children who are fleeing family violence. Grant applications for the VPF funding round are currently being assessed and I certainly look forward to announcing the successful applicants soon.

I will quickly turn my attention to my portfolio of gaming and liquor regulation. The 2018 budget provides an additional \$7 million to enhance the monitoring and regulation of gambling and liquor activities in Victoria. This includes \$6 million to the Victorian Commission for Gambling and Liquor Regulation (VCGLR), comprising \$5 million for the VCGLR to maintain and improve its regulatory services and interventions and \$1 million for it to conduct the sixth review of the casino operator and licence.

The \$6 million provided to the commission adds to the \$11.3 million delivered in last year's budget. This \$17.3 million is being used by the commission to enhance its ICT systems, risk-based decision-making and compliance and education activities, particularly in regional Victoria. I am happy to advise that thanks to this funding two VCGLR regional hubs have now been launched — one in Ararat and the second in Sale. Inspectors started working from these offices last month and have commenced visiting licensed venues and monitoring compliance by premises across eastern and western Victoria. Being locally based means that inspectors can build a strong relationship with local licensees, councils and police. The government has committed to fixing the botched merger of the commission before we came into office so the funding boost is helping them get back on track and restoring confidence in our gambling and liquor regulator.

In the time that I have left to speak I would like to turn my attention to my electorate of Kororoit. Since the election of the Andrews Labor government in 2014 the western suburbs and my seat have seen the largest investment in services and infrastructure ever seen in the west, and it is worth billions of dollars. Families in Kororoit can be safe in the knowledge that they have a good school close to home with nearly \$1.3 billion invested to build 28 new schools, upgrade 130 schools and purchase land for 19 new schools around the state. The building and planning work includes land acquisition for the new Grasslands primary school and the new Rockbank North primary school in my electorate. An additional \$5.6 million has been allocated to Burnside primary school for its stage 2 construction. This is on top of the \$13.2 million provided in the previous state budget, with the school ready to be opened at the start of next year. An allocation of \$500 000 has been made and provided to the Catholic Regional College and \$23 000 to Rockbank Primary School as part of the Inclusive Schools Fund.

This year's budget includes a \$644 million investment in skills, including making TAFE free, giving more Kororoit residents a chance to be able to train at TAFE

and get the skills that they need to get a good job. Thirty priority TAFE courses and 18 preapprenticeship courses will be free and 30 000 new TAFE places will be funded across Victoria. We are also seeing \$200 million being invested to build the new women's and children's hospital at Western Health. In addition to that, \$29.6 million has been allocated to build a new emergency department at Western Health.

Victorians will also be able to get home sooner with more and more services, better stations and improved public transport and of course better roads, particularly along the western suburbs. As we have seen recently, \$700 million has been invested to upgrade the M80 freeway between Sunshine Avenue and Calder Highway, and to upgrade the Taylors Road and Kings Road intersection and remove the roundabout so that residents and drivers will easily be able to navigate through the traffic lights. And we have seen Christies Road, Caroline Springs Boulevard and Western Highway intersection upgraded to provide easy access to transport and trains.

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

Ms KAIROUZ (Minister for Consumer Affairs, Gaming and Liquor Regulation) (14:02) — What we have also seen in the western suburbs is \$1.8 billion committed to the duplication and widening of western arterial roads stretching from Werribee to Footscray. We have seen the West Gate tunnel project being constructed to remove 9000 trucks from our local streets. A second river crossing from the West Gate Freeway to the city is being built to reduce traffic congestion, and there will be widening of the West Gate Freeway from eight to 12 lanes.

In public transport we have seen the construction of the new Caroline Springs train station — \$75 million has been invested in that; some \$1.1 million has been invested to upgrade the Deer Park train station; we are upgrading the Rockbank station and building a new car park; and \$518 million has been invested to duplicate a 17-kilometre section of single track between Deer Park West and Melton — this is to provide space for more trains to run more often.

Kororoit residents also are getting their share of the biggest investment in women's and community sport in the state's history — \$241.6 million, including \$100 million to improve facilities and access for women. I recently visited the Caroline Springs Football Club to announce \$500 000 in funding to build additional female change rooms. This is truly a Labor budget that delivers on the things that matter most to our state. It is a budget that delivers the things that are

most important to the people of the western suburbs. I am truly proud to be standing here, a member of the Andrews Labor government, supporting this budget. I certainly commend the Treasurer and the Premier on delivering one of the finest budgets this state has ever seen. This is a budget that gets things done and delivers for all people.

Mr M. O'BRIEN (Malvern) (14:04) — In rising to speak on the take-note motion I am able to address my local electorate issues as the member for Malvern rather than speaking on the budget as shadow Treasurer, as I did on the Appropriation (2018–2019) Bill 2018 —

Ms Graley — That was some time ago now.

Mr M. O'BRIEN — That was some time ago, member for Narre Warren South; you are quite right. I have 15 minutes to discuss all the things that this budget does for the electorate of Malvern, but I suspect I am not going to have to take that much time. In fact one very useful thing to do is to get all the budget papers — the Treasurer's speech, budget paper 2, budget paper 3, budget paper 4 and budget paper 5 — and put them all into one single PDF electronic document, and then you can use control-F on your computer and do a word search. I was taught to do that by one of my staff. I put in the names of the suburbs in my electorate. Throughout the entire 2018–19 —

Mr Richardson interjected.

Mr M. O'BRIEN — Well, I live in my electorate, unlike many of your colleagues, member for Mordialloc. In fact there is one thing that Liberal and Labor members both agree on, and that is that Liberal electorates are great places to live. I see the member for Narre Warren South smiling at that. She knows Liberal electorates are great places to live too.

Before I was rudely interrupted I was talking about doing a control-F word search of the entire set of budget documents. There were only two mentions of my electorate. One was in relation to building works going on at Malvern Primary School — \$3.9 million — which were funded by me in my last budget when I was Treasurer. The other mention was on page 83 of budget paper 4, and it was the Glen Iris fire station rebuild. This was a project that was funded initially under us. It was taken over by the Labor government and was botched. I am not going to attribute political blame to Labor, but the fact is that the project was badly botched. They built a new fire station, but some genius decided not to make the foundations strong enough to actually support fire trucks. So they had to pull the entire new fire station

down, jackhammer up all the concrete foundations that had been laid and rebuild it all.

The only two projects that are actually funded in this entire 2018–19 budget in my electorate of Malvern are projects that were initially funded under the former coalition government. So when I say that there is nothing in this budget for the people of Malvern except higher taxes, I am absolutely accurate.

What about the other schools in my electorate? What about Armadale Primary School? What about Lloyd Street School? What about Malvern Central School? What about Malvern Valley Primary School? They get nothing — no capital growth for them. There is not even any significant maintenance funding for them. I have got schools in my electorate that have toilets which, frankly, parents are very concerned about sending their kids to. I have had one school write to me noting in relation to the bathrooms that:

Bathrooms are over 35 years old, and are in a poor state of repair ... Unpleasant odours, grime and mould is now ingrained and cannot be removed, and partitions are damaged beyond repair. Assessment by a registered builder indicates full replacement ...

is required.

That school gets nothing — not a cracker — out of this Labor budget. It is actually quite ironic when you think that the Labor government have put more money into putting the Education State slogan onto numberplates than they have actually spent in this budget on my schools. They are far more interested in political spin and political advertising than they are in actually delivering for any of the schools in my electorate.

In the adjournment debate, I have previously raised with the Minister for Education the issues facing Malvern Valley Primary School, which is going through a period of growth. I simply sought some funding for the creation of a master plan to accommodate that school's future growth. It was not even asking for money straightaway to rebuild or to expand or extend — it was simply asking for money to undertake the planning work for what would be necessary. What do we get from the Deputy Premier? What do we get from the Minister for Education? We get a smarmy, politically laden response that does not address the issue at all and simply attempts to take pot shots at me and the Liberal Party. That is not the job of the Minister for Education. There are members in this place on both sides who raise real issues of importance to their communities and to the schools in their electorates, and they deserve the decency of an honest reply and a responsive reply, not something drafted by

some 22-year-old part-time uni student who thinks that taking shots at the opposition is an appropriate way to respond to an adjournment debate. That is not appropriate at all.

Of course this is the fourth and, God willing, the final budget of this Andrews Labor government, so let us look at what it promised before the election. When it came to my electorate there was only really one thing it promised. The government said, 'Oh, we're going to remove that Toorak Road level crossing. It's a terrible level crossing. It blocks up access to and exit from the Monash Freeway and delays cars. It's dangerous and we're going to remove it'. What has happened? A big fat zero is what has happened. There has been nothing — not a single bit of work has been done — to progress the removal of the Toorak Road level crossing. Labor made only one promise before the last election in relation to my electorate and they have failed to deliver even that.

Worse still, I asked the Minister for Public Transport about this project some time ago. I said, 'Can the minister at least give my community the assurance that she will rule out a sky rail for the Toorak Road level crossing removal?'. The minister would not even do that. She would not even rule out sky rail. My constituents face the prospect of sky rail being imposed on them, just as many other people around this state have woken up to find that what they were promised, which was a road-under-rail solution, is not being delivered. Rather this government has ripped them off and left them with a permanent blight on the community through ugly sky rail, which nobody voted for, instead of the promised removal of level crossings by putting the rail under the road.

While we are on the topic of the Monash Freeway, noise walls are perhaps great examples of how this government just keeps getting it wrong. Under the Minister for Roads and Road Safety, VicRoads decided to remove noise walls along the Monash Freeway. They said, 'Oh, they're really not up to standard. They're not great'. And we thought, 'Well, that's okay. I can understand that. Certainly there are problems with noise on the Monash Freeway and if the government is planning to put in new and better noise walls with better attenuation, that'd be a good thing'. And we waited, and there was an enormous gap in tackling the noise walls on the Monash Freeway. VicRoads had pulled the old noise walls down and nothing was happening.

Residents raised things with me, and I wrote to the minister and I wrote to VicRoads and asked, 'What's happening? Why have you not replaced the noise walls you took down?'. They said, 'Oh, we don't have the

budget to do it'. So they have got the budget to take down noise walls on the Monash Freeway on the basis that they could be better, but they do not have the money to actually replace them with better noise walls. They have made it worse. My residents would have been far better off if the old noise walls were just left there until the government worked out if it had the money to replace them with something better. To replace something which is not great with zero and then have a six-month, nine-month, 12-month gap until they did something about it is just ridiculous. This is what my electorate has to put up with because we have a government that does not care and does not have the capacity or the competence to get even the basics of governing right.

I have had to write to the Minister for Public Transport about the lack of tactile surfacing at Darling station and East Malvern station. These are very serious safety issues. We had a tragic event some years ago at Heyington station where a young man was running for a train and fell between the platform and the train and died. The devastation wrought on his family and his friends and the community was severe and ongoing. I have met with the parents of that young man and I have seen how they have suffered. I admire them in the courage they have shown, because they have made it a crusade, if you like, to say, 'We don't want any other family to go through what we have gone through, and we're going to fight to try and get that station fixed'. It took longer than ideally it should have, but the fix was put in place. The safety of Heyington station and the size of the gap between the platform and the trains was fixed and the barriers were relocated to try and discourage people from making that bolt for a train, which were the circumstances which led to this tragic death. We do know the consequences of problems in station safety, and they can be terrible consequences.

I have written to the minister regarding the lack of tactile services — that is, the plastic dotted surfaces on concrete platforms to provide better grip. They are also used by people with vision impairment. I note the minister said she would look into it. I think we need more than looking into it. I think when it comes to safety around trains we need to do more than look into it, we need to act on it and we need to act on it quickly because we do know the consequences of tragic accidents and nobody wants to see that happen at all.

Living in my electorate and being a part of it I am very involved with some of the local sporting clubs, more as a supporter and sponsor than a participant — people would rapidly come to that conclusion — particularly the junior clubs. We have a lot of great junior netball clubs, junior basketball clubs and junior footy clubs.

They are great clubs. In terms of AFL we have got the Glen Iris Gladiators, we have got the East Malvern Knights and we have got the Prahran footy club — even though it is named after the neighbouring electorate, it is actually located just on my side of the road so I will claim it as well. We have got three great junior footy clubs in my electorate but they do not get any support from the government. They are growing. They need better access to ovals. The girls' junior football is growing at a massive rate, and that is a fantastic thing, but they cannot get access to the ovals they need to be able to give the girls' teams a fair go.

When we go to government and ask for support for junior sporting clubs the government says, 'Well, we've just given \$225 million to the AFL to renovate Etihad Stadium', because they want to have a pillarless ballroom to host the Brownlow Medal. For this Labor government it is more important for the AFL to get a taxpayer cheque for \$225 million so they can build a ballroom at Etihad than it is for local junior sporting clubs to be able to get access to grounds, to be able to get access to decent change facilities and to be able to get access to lights on the grounds so they can get extra use. If anything sums up the fact that this government has got the wrong priorities and this budget has got the wrong priorities, it is that. If you wanted to sum up the essence of it, that is it. This is a government that thinks it is a better use of taxpayers money to hand out a massive cheque to the AFL to build a ballroom than it is to support community, grassroots junior sport to fix a change room.

As I said, my constituents get nothing out of this budget except for tax. Malvern contributes its fair share — some would say more than its fair share — to the tax revenue of this state. It is not unreasonable to expect that we get some sort of return. Well, we are not seeing any increase in police numbers in Malvern. We have seen crime go up, particularly in the 3145 postcode of Malvern East and the 3146 postcode of Glen Iris, which I share with the member for Burwood, where we have seen high double-digit increases in crime. Our community is not safer than it was four years ago, our community is not better than it was four years ago, our community is paying more than it did four years ago and our community is more congested than it was four years ago. If that is the test of a government and whether a government has done the right thing by a community, it is a test that this government has failed.

In taking note of the budget papers, I note that this is a budget that gives nothing to the people of my electorate other than higher financial burdens and higher household costs. It is a budget which has missed opportunities to look after the grassroots in favour of

the top end of town. It is a budget that does nothing to try to improve community safety. It is a budget that does not reduce congestion. It is a budget which fails those fundamental tests. I cannot commend this budget because, speaking as the local member, it is a budget which has let down badly the people of the electorate of Malvern.

Ms GRALEY (Narre Warren South) (14:19) — In what will be my last budget reply — or contribution on the take-note motion for the 2018–19 budget papers, as is the title of the debate here this afternoon — with the indulgence of the house I will reflect on some history and my experience of budgets in this place. I recall, in my very first term, the Bracks-Brumby governments allocating funding for some land and then building the Alkira Secondary College. The local community were very ardent in campaigning to get this school, and they were very fortunate that they had a Labor government that was buying land and building schools in Melbourne's south-east. In fact Alkira Secondary College was the ninth school that had been built in the Narre Warren South electorate, all of them by Labor governments. I have to say that Alkira Secondary College is now a great school. It has got terrific learning spaces and innovative pedagogical practices. It is a school of choice, and it is a terrific, proud community school.

I have to contrast that with the experience of being in opposition and watching those opposite. We have just heard the member for Malvern doing another audition to be Leader of the Liberal Party. But I remember when they were in power and the first budget from the member for Rowville, who is now one of these elder statesmen and who somebody called 'deadwood' in the *Sunday Age*. It was not me who called him deadwood but a member of his own party. I remember that when we did a check on what was in that budget, after we had worked out that they had slashed the education maintenance allowance and taken Free Fruit Friday out of schools, we discovered that not once did the member for Rowville — who was the Treasurer at that time — use the word 'jobs'.

What a contrast it is when we see a budget that is full-on about jobs for Victorians. Jobs were not worthy of mention during the dysfunctional, disunified, dithering years of the Baillieu-Naphthine governments, but in our budget they are front and centre. As I said before, not one new school was built in my electorate during the previous government, despite the growth and the baby boom in the area during that time. A school was earmarked for an area and could be found in the *Melway*, and it was being mentioned on estate developers billboards in an area that was surrounded by

primary schools — some of them with over 1000 students — but the previous government did nothing. It was only when we were elected back into government that funding was allocated for land and the building of the school, which has now opened in Cranbourne North and is a very good school called Tulliallan Primary School. It is a school that is really dedicated, as we want every school in Victoria to be, to making sure that it develops happy, resilient and responsible students.

The contrast is night and day, cheese and chalk. They did nothing, and we have had to come back into government and do the heavy lifting in rebuilding the state and putting jobs at the forefront of our policy thinking. Since coming to government Labor has invested more than \$3.8 billion to improve classrooms, upgrade facilities and build new schools across the state. It is really in stark contrast to the Liberals and The Nationals, who left our schools to crumble and decay while slashing \$1 billion from the education system. The Labor government's school building program, since it has been on this side of the house, has delivered more than 1300 school upgrades and 70 new schools, and not just in the electorate of Narre Warren South but across the state.

Another important aspect of building new schools is that it has created more than 5000 construction jobs for Victorians. The commitment by our government to education has another amazing effect in that it ensures young apprentices and tradesmen — the families of Narre Warren South — get up in the morning, drop their kids off at the new school and go to a job down the road to build another new school. So it is very important that we keep this going, and in this year's budget the message has been sent loud and clear.

Students across Victoria will have better classrooms in new schools and in growing suburbs and towns. This is the largest investment in school buildings in our state's history. The government is investing a record \$1.25 billion as part of this year's budget to build and upgrade schools across Victoria as part of our commitment — and I do talk about this a lot, but it is part of our commitment — to making sure that every child has a great local school to attend, and this \$1.25 billion does include \$353.2 million to plan and build brand-new schools across Victoria and \$180.8 million to plan and upgrade schools across regional and rural parts of the state. When some of those opposite come into this chamber and chant about the fact that we are not caring about rural and regional areas, there is a massive school building program going on out there right across Victoria. In my local area — not quite in my local electorate, but where some of the

kids from my electorate go — there will be new schools at Casey Fields (Five Ways) primary school and Clyde north-east primary school.

We know when these kids go to school that because of the commitments in this budget they will not go on an empty tummy; they will be able to access breakfast clubs. They will be fully kitted out because their parents will be able to get some support with the uniform fund. It is a sad day when kids sit in a classroom and have difficulty reading what is on the whiteboard or on their screens in front of them, so it is very important that the program provides glasses for children, which is greatly appreciated by parents who do face some very expensive costs in sending their children off to school, especially after the Christmas-New Year period and the holiday period. Their children can go to school, as I said, with a full tummy, kitted out correctly and with their glasses on if they need them. This is a tremendous education budget.

I recently took the time to re-read the 2017–18 Public Accounts and Estimates Committee transcripts and peruse some of the 2018–19 transcripts that are available online. I must say that I would not advise it if you were doing it just before you go to bed. You could nod off with the repetition of the member for Kew, who keeps on talking about Marxist ideology — that is constantly through the transcripts — but they are a bit alarming because what is obvious from the transcripts is that those opposite do not have a vision for education going forward. They are involved in this incredible cultural war where these crusaders are coming in from some fundamentalist churches and trying to take over their party. This actually means that they do not have a plan for the future education of our children in this state.

I do want to refer to a quote that I like. It is by the French economist — I know those across the table may not be as big a fan of him as I am — Thomas Piketty, who has written a book entitled *Capital in the Twenty-first Century*. I am sure the member for Essendon, if he were here, would be going, ‘Yes, him’. He actually talks about the fact that wealth and income inequality can create some serious social problems and serious social dislocation. He actually says, and this is a quote from his book:

The main force pushing toward reduction in inequality —

because an unequal society is not a prosperous society —

has always been the diffusion of knowledge and the diffusion of education.

That is my strong belief. Providing children with an education and providing parents with the knowledge that their children are receiving the best education in every classroom is the sort of investment that a government needs to make, but it is providing the impetus and the tools to address a whole lot of other issues that may confront them, especially in an increasingly globalised economy.

It is terrific to see in this budget that we have got a \$26 million commitment to enhance vocational education in schools, \$50 million to deliver up to 1700 Head Start apprenticeships and traineeships at 100 secondary schools and also some money in there to make, yes, TAFE free. I know that those opposite have gotten up and said, ‘There’s nothing for me in this budget, there’s nothing for my electorate in this budget’, but I reckon there would be some people even in Malvern sitting around thinking, ‘This is a really good opportunity for my son or daughter to go to TAFE, access a free TAFE place and get set on a course to skill them up and maybe do an apprenticeship’.

Some of these new training packages offer you a pathway not just to the coalface of a construction site or a workshop; they actually offer you a pathway to becoming a project manager on site or being a teacher in the future in the TAFE sector. I think these are the sorts of professions that maybe some of the people in Malvern and Kew and Hawthorn would like their children involved in. There is certainly nothing wrong with that, I can assure you.

It is very important that we invest in our TAFE system, but there are a lot of kids that are struggling in our schools, and that is because there are a lot of things happening in young people’s lives a lot of the time. One of the very important commitments in this budget is the extension of the rollout, with an additional \$144 million, of the Navigator system. When we came into government there were 10 000 students who we did not know where they were or what they were doing. We have all seen them hanging around street corners, although we do not want to sound patronising about that. This system is about getting kids back into schools, back into training and back into apprenticeships and providing them with a pathway to get a job in the future.

I have got to say there are some people who are highly critical of keeping kids at school. I am not one of them. You stay at school and you have a much, much better chance of a happy, successful, healthier and more prosperous life. I truly hope that if those opposite ever get over to this side of the house, they do not underfund

this Navigator program, because it is an amazing program. It has already got nearly a thousand students back into our school system and they are now on the right track to having good lives.

The next thing I would like to say is that this budget has a huge commitment to international education and inclusive education. Those two things are both about making sure that kids get extra support and extracurricular activities in great new classrooms that are set up to make sure that kids with special needs or a disability feel at home and are really ready to learn. In the international education space we actually provide students with experiences like the Victorian Young Leaders to China program; that experience will be extended to include the Young Leaders to India program. We want our kids who have aspirations to work in a global economy, who speak Mandarin, who speak Hindi, to actually go out there and work in the international relations area. These are very strong investments by this government.

As the Treasurer said when he was concluding his remarks, this is a budget that is a blueprint for Victoria's future. It is about making sure that we create jobs; it is about making sure that we invest in all Victorians. From where I sit and having looked at many budgets — I think this is the 12th budget that I have had the honour of talking about and being part of — this is a bonzer budget. I commend the work of the Treasurer.

Mr PESUTTO (Hawthorn) (14:34) — I am very pleased to be able to rise today and speak on the 2018–19 budget. As shadow Attorney-General I will focus mainly on justice portfolio issues, but I will also talk about the treatment of my electorate of Hawthorn under this budget and the preceding three budgets of this government.

What I can say about this budget is it is an admission of failure in the justice space. The Premier has a responsibility to keep Victorians safe, but this budget is an admission that he has not done that. In fact this budget proves yet again that along with his soft sentencing policies, his weakening of bail laws, his weakening of police powers and his ignorance of the need to support victims, this government has failed to keep Victorians safe.

What I will go on to argue is that the Liberal-Nationals coalition under the Leader of the Opposition will present a real alternative for the Victorian people at the next election. When we approach the next election we will be offering Victorians a choice. You can have a choice under this government. Under the Premier the choice is a government that will put the rights of

offenders first. Under the Leader of the Opposition and the Liberal-Nationals what we commit to doing is putting the rights of victims and community safety first.

This budget, when we look at the output initiatives, is an admission that the government is desperate to try and play catch-up on a system it has run down. When you look at all of the indices of how well we have been going over the last three and a half years, crime is up — we know that. Burglaries are up by over 60 per cent and assaults, up 31 per cent. The Premier has led a government that has put the rights of perpetrators first. Instead the Liberal-Nationals under the Leader of the Opposition will put your rights first and the rights of community safety and victims first.

If we look at some of the big-ticket items, for example, what it also shows is that the government has a split personality on justice issues. It always has. We know that the Minister for Police and the Attorney-General have often been at war over how to conduct justice policy. We know that. We are seeing it now. For all of the tough talk about how the government was going to crack down on violent offenders who assault first responders like paramedics and police — they were tough two weeks ago — only the Leader of the Opposition and the Liberal-Nationals will produce policies that genuinely put paramedics and police officers first.

The Premier is going soft on legislation which he promised to put before this Parliament so that paramedics and police officers could be better protected. I want to say directly to paramedics and police officers: the Liberal-Nationals under the Leader of the Opposition will put you first.

When we look at the output initiatives, the key ones really bear this out. Support for victims: very modest support for victims, only around \$10 million or less over the next two years. We know that our justice system under this government has let victims down. They are ignored in the trial process; they are treated sometimes disdainfully by people running trials, and I know that because I speak to many victims. Victims deserve to be put first.

But we need to spend a few moments looking at what the government has done in relation to prosecution services, where it has committed around \$22 million over four years; and police prosecutors, where it is promising to spend around \$90 million over those four years. Most of that money is back-ended, so very little money flows in year one or two of the forward estimates. But why did it get to this stage? It is because the government has not planned. Not only has the

government weakened the very system that it is trying to patch up, but it has not planned and is now promising to make a massive investment in prosecutors to try and beef up a system that it has let run down.

We are not going to see any change for a long time. Our prosecution service does need to be toughened up. We know there have been very many public cases where victims and their families have been left traumatised by the trial process itself, where they have been ignored, where plea bargains have been done without any consultation with them. We have made a commitment that if we are elected we want to see a much tougher approach in our prosecution services.

We welcome the addition of resources, but those prosecutors and the investigators who support them need to understand that our justice system must put community safety and victims first. I do hope and trust that the new Director of Public Prosecutions (DPP), whom we wish all the best, the new chief Crown prosecutor and Crown prosecutors who will be appointed are able to operate within that environment independently. I cannot emphasise enough how important independence is for the DPP and the prosecutors who are there to support her and the Office of Public Prosecutions, which is supposed to support her. I just want to emphasise that independence is very important. I encourage Crown prosecutors and I encourage the DPP and the chief Crown prosecutor to assert their independence and not be guided by any influences that seek in any way to qualify or fetter that very important independence. That is very important.

In terms of police prosecutors, we welcome those, but again it is too little, too late. The system has been run down over four years. So in terms of output initiatives in the justice space, it is an admission that the government has not seen growth in volume before our courts, particularly the Magistrates Court, as needing urgent attention. We see that now. When we look at the output initiatives for courts we see an announcement that we welcome but criticise for being far too late: the addition of 18 magistrates, three for the bail and remand court and 15 for more general cases in the criminal division of the Magistrates Court; two extra County Court judges; and a Supreme Court judge. They are obviously necessary given growth in population and the skyrocketing crime rates we have seen over the last two to three years in particular. But what we really need to see with the addition of these resources is that delays are actually reduced in our court system.

The government has completely mismanaged volume in our system to the point where people are on remand for far longer than they should be. People are awaiting

trials for far longer than they should be. All of those things can be fixed. They should have been fixed three years ago, and yet the government is coming into this place for this year's budget saying, 'Oh, we recognise the problem'. But what I say is that as much as we welcome these resources, they have to result in a reduction in delays in our court system.

We know that many people offend while on bail, and we have seen that. Under this government we have seen figures as high as 25 per cent of secondary bail-related offences in 2016 alone. That is an enormous number of offences in Victoria that involve people breaching some aspect of their bail. That has to be fixed, and those extra resources have to produce results.

So the government talks a big game, but we will actually need to see some results on all of that. Not only do we need to see reductions in delays; we need to see an improved performance in the system, and that is what the government has completely mismanaged.

When we look at crimes against the person, we even see in this year's performance statement, in chapter 2 of budget paper 3, that the government will again fail to meet its target for crimes against the person per 100 000 population. It will do that. Perceptions of safety — the perception of the proportion of people satisfied with policing services — is down this year. In terms of those performance measures the government is failing, but it is also failing because when we look at other performance measures, and in particular the rate of return to prison within two years of discharge, that number is still higher than it was when the previous coalition government left office. Forty-two per cent of people leaving jail are reoffending within two years of being let out. We know that people on community correction orders and non-custodial orders are reoffending at much higher rates.

Nobody should be fooled by the change in accounting rules which has produced a reduction in the nominal figure on page 276 of budget paper 3 from 33 per cent to 16.1 per cent. The figure remains high. We know that anecdotally and also when we measure against past accounting rules. What I would say to the government is it is being very cute because it has maintained the figures for earlier years and only adopted the new accounting rules, which produce a convenient reduction in the nominal figure, for the current year and next year. They all need to be measured against the same accounting standards. It is a matter of great concern that for non-custodial offenders reoffending rates are going up and remain very high. We also know that for the completion of reparation orders and for the completion of supervised court orders the numbers of people

breaching them are increasing. So on all performance measures the government is failing and failing badly.

This budget simply builds on three earlier failed budgets against a government that weakened sentencing, weakened bail and weakened police powers. So what will we do? I want to say and make it very clear today that a Liberal-Nationals government under the Leader of the Opposition will fix our justice system. We will toughen sentencing. We will make sure that sentences fit the crime, particularly for those who are most violent. We will introduce mandatory minimum sentencing for our worst offenders, and we will make sure that concurrent sentencing is scaled back so that people serve time for every crime they commit. We will also make sure that drug dealers whose trafficking results in mass casualty events face the full force of the law.

In bail we will overhaul the system so it is not just a change in the law but a change in the culture. We are going to make sure that there is a real and genuine presumption of remand for our most violent people. We are going to make sure that we have a ‘one strike and you’re out’ policy. If you breach your bail, you will not get it again. We will make sure that juveniles who breach the conditions of their bail will be committing an offence, unless they have got a good reason for not complying with their bail.

We will make sure that victims are treated well in our justice system for the first time. Under this government they have been ignored. We will make sure that victim impact statements can be a real testament for victims to express their anguish and grief over the crimes their loved ones or they themselves have felt. We will make sure that prosecutors and investigators properly consult with victims, and we will make sure that victims are able to adequately access compensation from those who cause such harm.

When it comes to police we will make sure that police are given powers, whether it is for violent protesters, who this government, under this Premier, has given a green light to, or whether it is for gangs. Where this government weakened anti-consorting laws, we will put you first. We will make sure that those laws are toughened up, and we will make sure that police are properly resourced. We will also make sure that there is better respect in our courts so that those who appear before our judges and magistrates show respect. That is the justice system you deserve, that is the justice system you pay for and that is the justice system that the Leader of the Opposition and the Liberal-Nationals will deliver for you if we are elected later this year.

In the minutes I have got left, I will talk about my own electorate of Hawthorn. My electorate over the last four budgets has received only \$3.5 million for a school that we promised \$11 million for. Not one new dollar has been allocated to my electorate of Hawthorn. Hawthorn West Primary School is in desperate need of refurbishment. Auburn High School has leaking roofs. Its buildings are falling apart, and it has got nothing. I say to the people of my electorate that the Andrews Labor government has let you down. I will be fighting for you and making sure that in future budgets you will get the support you need. Those schools that are being run down while other electorates get tens of millions of dollars deserve better than that, and we will deliver that.

I can also talk about sporting clubs and community groups that have received nothing. I could have had more time to talk about my electorate.

Honourable members interjecting.

Mr PESUTTO — I do not begrudge the schools in marginal Labor seats that get so much money. I do not begrudge that, but why do my schools get punished? Why do the people I represent get punished? They deserve support too, and the kids who go to those schools deserve to be supported as well, yet this government has completely betrayed them. We have got schools where — you have to understand — principals are trying to build enrolments. How do they build enrolments in their schools when their buildings are being run down, when taps do not work or when there are massive and growing cracks in buildings?

As I said, Acting Speaker Williams, I do not mind that your colleagues on your side of the house have schools that are properly funded — more power to you — but why does that mean that our schools have to suffer? Why are we discriminated against, simply because we represent them? Remember, your supporters go to these schools too. For my schools, my community and the leaders who are trying to do everything they can to support their own communities to receive nothing — absolutely nothing — apart from one small allocation to a school, which was welcome but far short of the \$11 million I promised that school going in to the 2014 election, is a disgrace. So I say to the people of my electorate: you deserve better, and you will get better under us.

Ms D’AMBROSIO (Minister for Energy, Environment and Climate Change) (14:49) — I am absolutely delighted to speak on the take-note motion on the 2018–19 budget papers. We keep getting great outcomes from Labor budgets, and I am absolutely delighted that this budget continues to deliver for the

people in and around my electorate. We only have to have a look at the massive injection of funds for really significant infrastructure projects and also services that are so important for the thriving communities in the northern suburbs.

The north-east link is a significant investment. We are not just committed to the planning but we absolutely make a commitment that in the first 100 days of a re-elected Labor government work will start on actually building the north-east link. We have got a great record of delivering and doing what we say, and we certainly mean what we say. Our record of actually delivering on our commitments has been very well received by communities right across the state, and I am absolutely confident that the north-east link will be no different.

It is also about giving local streets back to the locals. In terms of a few of the smaller streets that are going to be seeing some very significant improvements, the Childs Road duplication in Mill Park will include bridge widening, the removal of roundabouts and the installation of traffic lights. This has come as a great relief to many people in my community who have to battle the stalled traffic along that road, and this has certainly been applauded. We are also funding the full development of the Epping Road Epping to Wollert duplication and, importantly, installing traffic lights along the way. This is an absolutely important road to connect to the Hume bypass and this will free up a lot of the traffic that is now stuck in the growing community that we have out that way around Wollert. All in all, these are just some of the examples of the \$2.2 billion of investment from this budget in arterial roads across Melbourne's north.

Of course I do not want to forget Plenty Road, which has received funding in previous budgets and continues to receive support. The duplication and widening of that road is now well underway and this again will make significant improvements to the time spent on our roads. At the end of the day it will free people up to spend more time doing the things they love at home with their families.

We also see in the budget additional train services, which will be necessary because of the extension of the train line from South Morang to Mernda. This is an absolutely fantastic project and it goes to show that the only above-ground rail extensions that have occurred since the 1930s have been under Labor governments. The last time there were major upgrades was the South Morang extension and of course now we have the Metro rail tunnel. It has been a long time since we had major upgrades. It is only really Labor governments that have delivered those in modern times. I am

absolutely delighted that my community has been benefiting from those great decisions.

Also we have planning underway with money put aside for the purchase of three pieces of land in the suburb of Wollert for two new primary schools and a new secondary college. This is about planning now and investing now for what we will need into the future. Good governments do that and our government is doing that. Our communities deserve to be sure that we are confident and we are clear about where our priority spend needs to go to ensure that we can actually provide the services and the infrastructure that growing communities need, and we are absolutely doing that for my community.

We also have in the school space \$200 000 to upgrade Epping Secondary College. I just want to mention that I was absolutely delighted to have been at Mill Park Heights Primary School last week to open the fantastic new permanent classrooms that have been installed following a commitment by our government going into the last election.

Free TAFE courses are absolutely vital for people in my community to give them the full options that need to be available so that they can get the best outcomes and good jobs. No matter whether that is a trade or industry learning pathway that they might want to pursue or indeed university qualifications, all forms of learning are encouraged, supported and valued by this government. We are also making sure that we have the skills needed as the workforce is joined by many young people so that we can actually match workers to the needs of our burgeoning infrastructure build. There are many businesses out there that are doing a fantastic trade creating thousands and thousands of jobs as a result of our government's commitment to growing the economy and spending on major infrastructure projects that are needed now and into the future.

In the few minutes that I do have left to speak, I want to touch on some of the initiatives that are relevant to my portfolio areas. As important as all these areas are, I do want to mention some of the highlights. These really just show you how committed we are as a government to ensuring that we are delivering and that we understand the issues right across government in all types of areas that need attention and we have actually got clear plans and are delivering on those.

In terms of the challenges of a changing energy system with ageing infrastructure that is owned by private businesses that are making decisions about closures of infrastructure that provides important supply of energy for us, it is absolutely incumbent on a responsible

government to understand that planning and action are required to ensure that Victoria continues to be able to enjoy a reliable energy supply right into the future. That is why to help meet the challenges that we are all confronted with across the country and also globally in terms of the change of energy mix that we are confronting, we are helping Victorians get the best outcomes they can in terms of prices on their energy bills. That is why we have put aside \$48 million that will go towards encouraging people to access the Victorian Energy Compare website. We know that when people go to this website, seven out of 10 Victorians will find offers on the market that will save them money on their energy bills. For us to encourage Victorians to do that is the objective of this initiative. We want to get them on the website to find the best deal. On average a household can be saving up to around about \$300 simply by being able to access that website. It is absolutely important in the market we have that we encourage Victorians to get access to those better offers to help reduce the pressure on their energy bills.

Important also is that we are continuing the successful Victorian Energy Upgrades program. This was under threat of being axed by the previous government. Why would they do that when we know that this program is actually benefiting 20 000 Victorian businesses? Today 20 000 businesses are saving money — on average, \$4700 a year off their energy bills. In fact some businesses are saving hundreds of thousands of dollars off their energy bills every year. There is a long list of these. One of them is one that I visited not all that long ago, Metcash in Laverton North. They are absolutely delighted that they have this program in place. We are absolutely committed to ensuring that we have got the programs and the real, tangible support that will make a real difference to businesses and also of course to households. Importantly also we have the continuation of other programs, including the Boosting Business Productivity program. Again that is where businesses are actually really eager to be involved, and again that is saving them significant dollars off their power bills.

These are just some of the ways that our government is putting together and making available real, tangible solutions and support to families in households and businesses to manage their way through what is a very difficult transition in our energy supply situation right now. Importantly there are significant funds that continue to be provided from government for the Victorian renewable energy target scheme. Ultimately we need to ensure that we actually have the replacement energy supply coming to our system so that we keep wholesale prices down as low as possible.

Ultimately they are passed on to consumers through their bills.

Growing the power supply in our state means that we need to not just plan now but take action right now. I am delighted to state clearly that under the effort of our government in three and a half years we see now either built and operating or under construction over 2000 megawatts of new energy supply in our state. That would not have happened if it were not for this government. There will be more to come. We have an auction that is now under consideration. It has been a very good auction process, with a lot of great bids coming through. Once those announcements are made in the coming months, we will see more energy supply being delivered for our state, again putting downward pressure on wholesale prices which then flow on to everybody, businesses and families alike, and of course there are thousands of jobs created from this.

In terms of the other area of my portfolio, the environment and Parks Victoria in particular, under the previous government Parks Victoria saw many, many lean years when many families were visiting a lot of parks for enjoyment only to find that they were confronted with a lot of dilapidated facilities and in some cases not even having park rangers there. Many cuts were suffered under the previous government, and we are taking steady and strong action to rebuild Parks Victoria. This budget is delivering \$70.6 million to help secure the benefits of parks for all Victorians.

We are also dedicating \$8.3 million towards protecting Port Phillip Bay and more money for the broader biodiversity that we need to protect, including \$1.3 million for the Good Neighbour program and tackling the effects of feral horses in our alpine regions. Up until recently we had bipartisan support for the strategy across the two states of New South Wales and Victoria. Unfortunately that has disappeared. Scientists have spoken loud and clear about who is doing the right thing in this area. I am absolutely delighted that this government is doing the right thing to get that balance right of ensuring that we protect what is the unique ecosystem that we have, as unique as the Great Barrier Reef and other places around the globe. We ought to be proud of that, we ought to celebrate it and we ought to protect it for future generations.

Climate change is an area that of course has received some additional funds this year. On top of very significant funds in previous budgets, there will be an extra \$1 million to maintain the momentum of climate change action in Victoria. There is also \$4.8 million towards building Barwon South's capacity to respond to climate change. I know for a fact that the

communities in the Barwon South region are absolutely delighted as this was a priority of theirs identified through the regional assemblies. It is one that we have acquitted, as we have many other projects — in fact, all but one project — identified right across all of the regional and metropolitan partnerships assemblies that have been held courtesy of our government's efforts.

Another of the things that I want to touch on in the short time that I have left is that \$14.5 million has been provided to support councils as they manage the transition in renegotiating their recycling contracts after a very, very difficult time with the decision of the Chinese government to restrict the low-quality waste that China is prepared to receive. This is an opportunity for us to provide a robust set of responses and actions to get the recycling industry onto a more sustainable footing. That is a commitment that we have made through a strategic plan.

Importantly I want to say that we also have \$9.1 million that will continue to be provided for the Illegal Dumping Strikeforce, which is run by the Environment Protection Authority Victoria in partnership with other agencies to stop the scourge of illegal dumping. This brings to a total of more than \$80 million what has been committed to waste reduction and resource recovery during our four years in government, making this the largest amount spent on waste compared to any previous Victorian government in our history. I am absolutely delighted with this budget — my community is delighted — and I wish it well and a speedy passage through the Parliament.

Debate adjourned on motion of Ms NEVILLE (Minister for Police).

Debate adjourned until later this day.

JUSTICE LEGISLATION AMENDMENT (TERRORISM) BILL 2018

Second reading

Debate resumed from 6 June; motion of Mr PAKULA (Attorney-General).

Mr NOONAN (Williamstown) (15:05) — I am pleased today to make some comments in support of the Justice Legislation Amendment (Terrorism) Bill 2018 and at the outset set some context, I suppose, in relation to this particular bill. I think we are very lucky to live here in Victoria and Australia because by global standards we are a safe and peaceful nation. But of course we all know that the world changed really fundamentally back in 2001 when there were terrorist

attacks on American soil which are all burnt into our memory. Since then there has been the creation of a new generation of extremists, and sadly many of those have been younger and younger.

We all understand that unfortunately here in Australia we are not immune from terrorism. When you look at the report of the expert panel, which was led by former police chief commissioner Ken Lay and supported by retired judge Justice David Harper, you see some key findings in relation to where we sit. The one that caught my attention is the remark on page 14 of that report, which states:

In Victoria since September 2001, 39 people have been charged with terrorism offences, 19 of whom have been convicted. Victoria Police is currently monitoring approximately 300 'persons of interest' who have been identified as posing a potential security risk.

The panel also makes reference to the fact that:

... there have been five terrorist attacks in Australia, and 13 significant counterterrorism disruptions.

The panel members go to some of those very serious events, including the very serious incident involving Numan Haider, who was only 18 when he stabbed two policemen in Melbourne. It also talks about a 17-year-old who became the subject of a very significant and serious investigation as that individual was planning to detonate homemade bombs in Melbourne on Mother's Day in 2015.

I remember, as the Minister for Police at the time, the events which ultimately led to the arrest of Sevdet Besim, who had very serious plans to run down and behead a police officer at the Anzac Day service in 2015. Victoria Police — and we give them much credit — and other intelligence agencies across Australia worked very diligently to ensure that event did not happen. We know that Mr Besim was subsequently sentenced to 10 years in prison for that, but I think the remarks of the presiding judge in that case serve as a sobering reminder of the need for us to remain vigilant. The judge said in terms of the sentencing:

That Mr Besim was planning such an outrageous and gruesome act of murder must terrify law enforcement officers across this country, their loved ones and right-thinking members of the community.

As a result of that experience and some subsequent discussions we had with Victoria Police, I was very pleased to lend my support through this government's investments to a very significant increase in counterterrorism resources for Victoria Police. That package of resources, valued at \$49.4 million for

Victoria Police, was announced on Wednesday, 25 November 2015. That investment has allowed Victoria Police to hire 88 additional counterterrorism specialists, including 40 dedicated sworn officers as well as intelligence experts and forensic analysts. The reality of this challenge for law enforcement is that it requires a different type of specialist to perhaps what was needed 10 years ago. It also requires particular equipment, so part of that package was committed to improve resources in this area for Victoria Police. Overall, the government effectively doubled the resourcing available to Victoria Police to do their very complex work in terms of preventing, wherever they can, terrorist attacks happening on our home soil.

Of course much has been spoken about in relation to the Brighton siege that occurred last year and the establishment of this panel in response to that. What we have before us today by way of a bill is really the government acquitting the recommendations made by that panel. It is very important because it is very difficult to strike the right measured balance, and this is what this bill seeks to achieve by way of implementing the recommendations that have been made to government.

I just want to go through some of those, and I am conscious that I may not be able to get through all of them. Ultimately the panel made 42 recommendations, and the government accepted each of those in principle. The bill gives effect to all the recommendations from report 1 and recommendations 18 through 21 and recommendation 24 of report 2. Some of those recommendations are to amend the threshold test for preventative detention for an imminent terrorist act to specify an act that is capable of being carried out and could occur within the next 14 days.

The bill also strengthens precharge preventative detention laws in terrorism situations through the establishment of a two-stage preventative detention framework applying both to adults and children 14 years and over. A police detention order will afford authorised officers the ability to take a person into custody without a court order or warrant for up to four days for an adult or 36 hours for a child. These reforms, importantly, will afford Victoria Police the ability to respond very quickly and effectively to threats that may emerge with little or no warning, and I think that that is important in the context that many of these attacks are lone-wolf attacks and a lot of the intelligence may actually come to our law enforcement officers very quickly.

The bill also makes a series of changes to our current bail and parole laws. As it currently stands, those who pose a terrorism risk will not necessarily be charged with a specific terrorist offence. This means that

potentially dangerous individuals may still be eligible for bail under our current laws. The bill will amend the Bail Act 1977 so that an accused who has not been charged with a terrorism offence but who may still pose a terrorism risk will be subject to a presumption against bail. That is all about keeping the community safe. There are also new presumptions against the granting of parole in this bill as well, which are an important feature.

The bill also instigates a number of key reforms which increase efficiency within our institutions to respond to terrorism acts or threats. The bill establishes a single process for the protection of counterterrorism intelligence in substantive applications under the act, allowing counterterrorism intelligence to be used in court applications under the act while protecting it against disclosure.

The threat of terrorism calls for an integrated response where different jurisdictions, departments and bodies work collectively in order to defuse potentially tragic circumstances and prevent them from occurring. The dissemination of information between different jurisdictions is of crucial benefit in mitigating terrorism activity. The bill builds upon the authorisations established in the Corrections Act 1986 by clarifying instances in which relevant persons can share information for counterterrorism purposes. The bill also affords power to the department, the Youth Parole Board and members of the joint terrorism teams to share information as it relates to the risk of terrorism and children involved in the youth justice system.

Dangerous and high-pressure situations require swift police action and in some instances may require the use of lethal force in order to avoid further harm occurring. These are obviously incredibly difficult conditions for police to work under, and I think we do need to ensure that they have a level of power to make quick decisions and are confident in the action that they employ, but I would not underestimate the complexity in relation to this aspect of the bill and of course the decision-making that will need to occur. It will need to be very careful.

In conclusion, I do want to refer to the Attorney-General's comments when he introduced this bill. He did indicate that our counterterrorism laws need to be 'effective and agile'. He also said that the laws need to remain 'proportionate and measured', and I think that has been achieved in this legislation. I think we all understand that the threat of terrorism is ever evolving and we must remain vigilant. That is why this legislation will ensure that we can equip both our law enforcement officers and our justice system with the

tools they need to minimise the risk to our community. I commend the bill to the house.

Mr McCURDY (Ovens Valley) (15:15) — I rise to make a contribution on the Justice Legislation Amendment (Terrorism) Bill 2018, otherwise known as the terrorism bill. We know the main purpose of this bill is to implement a range of changes to laws relating to terrorism, which have arisen primarily from recommendations out of the Expert Panel on Terrorism and Violent Extremism Prevention and Response Powers, also known as the Harper-Lay review.

The bill will authorise police to take an adult or a child aged 14 years or above into custody and detain them without charge under a police decision for up to four days — for a child it is 36 hours — which is in addition to what already exists for the Supreme Court in terms of preventative detention. In relation to review of police detention decisions, it provides for the involvement of the Public Interest Monitor; for notification of decisions to the Ombudsman, IBAC, certainly in the case of a child the Commission for Children and Young People and obviously the Department of Justice and Regulation; for the entitlement to contact a legal representative; and for oversight by the Victorian Inspectorate. It also provides requirements for when a person should be released.

The bill also removes the prohibition on questioning of detainees so as to allow questioning during both police and court-ordered detention on a similar basis as currently exists under the Crimes Act 1958 in relation to caution, legal representation, recording and other areas. Again I think that is a commonsense approach in this terrorism bill.

Most importantly it enables the Chief Commissioner of Police — or deputy — to make an interim authorisation of the exercise of special powers under the Terrorism (Community Protection) Act 2003 without the Premier's approval if the Premier or the Premier's delegate is unable to be contacted. We have seen in recent days in national newspapers regarding the Bourke Street tragedy — obviously it is before the court, so I will not be saying very much about it — that it is critical that our communities can be confident that decisions around community safety become the highest priority and that decisions can be made in the absence of senior figures. I think that is very important, and these subtle changes will certainly help in that respect.

The bill also extends the application of special police powers to protective services officers and, where special police powers apply, creates an express power for police to take control of an affected area and make

directions as to the use of that area. Furthermore, the legislation replaces the threshold for preventative detention with the commonwealth threshold — that it is capable of being carried out and could occur within the next 14 days. It also provides for authorities to seek from the Supreme Court a counterterrorism intelligence protection order, which if granted will allow the applicant to rely on protected intelligence information when orders are sought without the information being required to be disclosed to the respondent or their legal representative. It will provide for closed court hearings in relation to applications for a counterterrorism intelligence protection order and for the appointment of special counsel to represent the respondent's interests at such hearings.

The bill provides for Victorian Inspectorate oversight of the use of police powers under the act, including search warrant powers, special police powers and police preventative detention powers. It also amends the Bail Act 1977 to create presumptions against bail for people considered to pose a terrorism risk and to require bail decisions for such persons to be made by a court — again another commonsense approach to detaining people where there is obviously a risk, not just a perceived risk but a chance that that risk could take place.

It also provides that only a court can assess terrorism risk information and determine whether a person poses a risk of committing a terrorism or foreign incursion offence or can grant bail for a commonwealth terrorism offence. It introduces presumptions against parole and in favour of the cancellation of parole, which is I think critical in this area for prisoners who pose a terrorism risk. It will provide for such decisions on parole to be made by the serious violent offender or sexual offender parole division of the Adult Parole Board of Victoria under the two-tier decision-making process, with similar presumptions against parole under the Children, Youth and Families Act 2005 for young people who also pose a terrorism threat.

We on this side of the house are not opposing the bill, but we need to be very careful that we do not invest excessive time in counterterrorism — which is extremely high in the priorities; do not get me wrong — at the expense of crime and violence in our communities. We have been seeing an increase in crime and violent crime over the last three years in our communities because the crooks can beat the system very easily. Committing a violent crime or home invasion should be treated far more seriously than we are currently treating it.

Certainly in Wangaratta and the Ovens Valley the crime rate continues to grow, and police tell me that they are under-resourced and hamstrung by the processes. So there certainly are some failings in this area and, as I say, we need to focus on terrorism but also violence in other parts of our communities as well. We know that enough is enough — we need to toughen up on violent crime. Jail should mean jail.

I am aware that consultation has taken place with the Law Institute of Victoria, the Victorian Bar Council, the Criminal Bar Association, Victoria Police and the Police Association Victoria. I do have concerns that the bill was promised a while ago and many of the recommendations of Harper and Lay in the report still remain unaddressed. The bill leaves unresolved the issue of whether more measures can and should be taken to facilitate the deradicalisation of young adults accused of terrorism offences, who currently cannot be engaged in deradicalisation moves until they have been convicted. So there are some problems there. There is uncertainty about the scope of special police powers to direct people in an affected area and uncertainty about how courts will apply the provisions intended to protect terrorism risk information.

In Cobram, my home town — I was talking about violence and crime — there has certainly been a spike in burglaries, and I continue to meet with local traders who certainly want more action from an under-resourced police force.

Police powers and terrorism laws are very important, but what is more important is that they can be used in a timely matter and not after the fact. Feeling safe is as important as being safe because you need to live your life feeling safe and secure, not petrified, whether that is in your own home or whether you are about to jump on an aeroplane to go somewhere else — or a train or a bus. For those who do get on a plane, train or bus, terrorism is a real risk all over the world, but as Victorians we are also mindful that just going to bed in your own home at night should not leave you with the same fear you have of international terrorism. With those words, I certainly hope this bill will better equip the government and the community to tackle terrorism and that that will flow through to other violent attitudes and behaviours in the community.

Mr PEARSON (Essendon) (15:22) — I am delighted to make a contribution on the Justice Legislation Amendment (Terrorism) Bill 2018. The bill that is before the house reflects the troubling times that we are living in. I am of an age where, as I was growing up, terrorism was associated with acts perpetrated by the Irish Republican Army (IRA). You would be aware

of various instances of terrorism, but you did not see much of what was happening in Northern Ireland in terms of the bombings themselves. As I recall, growing up as a kid in the late 1970s and the early 1980s, you often saw more about what had happened on mainland England. Invariably the primary objective for the Irish Republican Army at that stage was to cause economic damage to the United Kingdom — to look at crippling the economy or damaging the economy in such a way as to highlight the cause of Irish Republicanism — and invariably people were killed. A lot of innocent people lost their lives in both England and Northern Ireland, but it was almost a by-product of the act of terror. It was different. I am not suggesting for a moment that it diminished the loss or the pain and suffering of the victims of the terror and the troubles experienced, but it was very different to the world in which we live now.

I compare and contrast that to more recent events, as the member for Williamstown indicated. I recall I was due to lunch with the Consul General of the United States of America on 12 September 2001. Because of the time delay, the terrorist attack had occurred late on the night of 11 September. I remember arriving at work that morning and trying to work out what was the protocol in circumstances like this. Clearly America was under attack. Do you reach out to the consulate and say, 'We'd better reschedule', or do you wait for their call? They called and said, 'We need to reschedule'. When we did reconvene for the lunch some time later, there were a couple of Australian Federal Police officers in another room to protect the Consul General. I think that moment in time really represented a complete change in the way in which we lived and the way in which we appreciated the world in which we live.

It is interesting. I remember that as I was growing up my parents would tell me about how Melbourne was not safe like it had been in the 1950s and 1960s, that there was far more violence and the streets were not safe, that there were serial killers or people would be killed when they were just having a night out. Melbourne in the 1970s and 1980s, in my parents' minds, was not the safe, welcoming environment that it was in the 1950s and 1960s. It is concerning that I think we would all now say in the 21st century that, in light of terrorist incidents that we have seen committed on our own soil, this is a very different world to the world of the 1970s and 1980s. It is important that a bill like this is brought before the house so that as legislators we can try to get the policy settings right to tackle terrorism, because there will be instances where a coordinated cell or group of people will seek to cause as much damage and as many casualties as they can. There are probably instances where people with a mental illness or through teaching, ideology or religious

fervour commit their acts in a less coordinated way, but nonetheless in an incredibly damaging and devastating way for their victims.

As legislators we need to try to get that right, particularly if we are looking at people who may have an illness or have a chance of being rehabilitated. We need to have the sort of pre-emptive laws in place to try and stop them committing a horrendous act, deradicalise them and provide them with opportunities. I think that is a really important aspect.

I listened to the contribution of the member for Ovens Valley. I suppose one of the concerning things that you hear from some of those opposite is a heavy focus and a heavy emphasis on punitive measures. I think the member for Ovens Valley said, 'Jail means jail', and that, in his words or in his mind, is where we should go as a society and as a community. If you do the wrong thing, you go to jail — and jail means jail. In the very brief time I have been here I have probably developed a more nuanced approach. Will locking up a young person in a correctional facility for a lengthy period of time actually make us safer? I am not quite sure that it will. I think you need to try to develop a whole raft of policy measures and introduce them to try and tackle this issue.

Yes, the terrorism bill that is before the house is a really important step, because it is making sure that we can keep our streets safe and our communities safe in the face of global terror. It is an absolutely important step. But you must also think about saying when you have to invest in education. You have to make sure that a child who starts school at the age of five is not reading and writing at a level far below their peers. You have to make sure that they live in good housing. You have to make sure that when they go to secondary school they have a fantastic experience and that there is an opportunity for them to get training and qualifications behind them so they have the opportunity to lead fulfilled lives and that there is a job for them.

If you do all those things, then the need for and the requirement to rely on a bill like this is significantly reduced. Idleness is the devil's handmaiden. If people do not have enough things to do to occupy themselves — if they are not learning, if they are not earning — then it is far more likely that they will end up being the subject of a piece of legislation like this. It is all well and good to talk about punitive measures — 'lock them up', 'throw away the key', 'life is life', 'you can't have a soft-on-crime approach', 'you have to have a hard and brutal approach to people who commit hard and brutal acts'. I do not think I am saying anything that I have not heard in this chamber in the very brief time I

have been here, as have you, Acting Speaker McGuire. I appreciate the fact that you have been here far longer than I have. But, as we know, life is far more complicated than that. Those knee-jerk, simplistic responses are relatively easy to elicit, but they rarely work. You need to have a more holistic approach to the way in which you tackle those sorts of issues. It is about making sure that kids have good housing, a good education and that they get appropriate skills for a modern dynamic economy and there is a job for them at the end of the day.

The bill is quite comprehensive, as I am sure others have mentioned in their contributions today. I draw the attention of the house to division 5, clause 78, new part 6, 'Role of Victorian Inspectorate', where there is a requirement for annual reporting. This is an entirely appropriate measure to try and get a sense of how this piece of legislation is being administered.

I also refer the attention of the house to part 5, division 1, 'Information sharing'. What we know from the terrorist attacks in America in 2001 is that the disparate justice agencies had all the information to pull together a picture to understand what could happen or what was likely to happen but they were not sharing their information. The fact that they were not sharing their information effectively was a contributing factor in terms of the terrorist attacks that occurred in 2001. I think that finding ways in which we can encourage agencies to share their information is a really important step and initiative to ensure that we do our very best to reduce the prospect of a terrorist attack.

A bill like this takes an enormous amount of time to draft. It is really important to balance the rights and freedoms of individuals with the need for effective community safety. I think the Attorney-General has done a fantastic job in getting the balance right. I commend the bill to the house.

Mr SOUTHWICK (Caulfield) (15:32) — I rise to make a contribution to the Justice Legislation Amendment (Terrorism) Bill 2018. We have heard contributions from people on both sides of the house now, and certainly a bill like this is really important. It goes to the absolute core of what we do as members of Parliament in ultimately keeping us all safe. Certainly we know that September 11, 2001 changed the world for all of us. It is a date that I will remember. My son was only two weeks from being born. We had visitors from the UK with us. They got on a plane to go back to the UK, and then a short time later we found out the attack had taken place. They were not involved, obviously, and it did not affect their flight, but it was

certainly concerning that they were in the air around that time.

When you take into account my electorate of Caulfield, it really does bring it home to us because we face threats each and every day. Any members of Parliament that have visited the electorate of Caulfield would know that, particularly around many of the Jewish facilities, the synagogues, the schools and the community centres, there is a different level of security there than in any other electorate in Victoria. That is deliberately so, and it is probably the most unfortunate thing that we have to deal with. It is quite surprising initially to many people that are not from the area or of a Jewish background. I can tell you that anyone of a Jewish background would much prefer not to have to deal with that — not to have to deal with going through security monitors, being scanned, having their cars scanned et cetera. It is a significant realisation.

We have organisations like CSG, the Community Security Group and JEMP, the Jewish Emergency Management Provider, that bring people together to establish a terror plan should something happen. The volunteers do a fantastic job, and they work with Victoria Police in ensuring that we have all the systems in place. In fact CSG provide a lot of intelligence to Victoria Police. When I was assisting the minister as the parliamentary secretary for police I had an understanding from the Victoria Police perspective but also from CSG's perspective, and the information that was shared by both organisations was so important.

One of the things I saw then and one of the things I see now is probably a lot more than what most Victorians get to see and experience every day. The fact of the matter is that there are people being radicalised. There are people that are being deliberately preyed upon to carry out the kinds of attacks that we have witnessed globally. The Brighton siege was just down the road from my electorate. Many people were being picked up from the Jewish day schools in the vicinity, and parents were put in the unfortunate position of not knowing what to do and not having a plan. The Brighton attack was very important because although Victoria Police did a fantastic job — and it was distressing to find that police were wounded as a result of that attack — it also showed that we could do better in terms of our systems. We can always have better systems to ensure that the Victorian public are protected and informed.

That is why, as important as it is that this bill is in place — and certainly we are not opposing it — we should always look at trying to do more. We should do whatever we can do to keep people safe. If someone is being radicalised, we need to ensure that we get on it as

soon as we possibly can. If we can deradicalise them, we should do that. If we can educate them, we should do that. But ultimately if we cannot, we need to make sure that they are properly detained and the community is properly out of harm's way.

Interestingly enough the terrible and unfortunate situation of the Bourke Street massacre, which we all recall, involved a car ramming where somebody deliberately took the lives of people, deliberately ran people over and deliberately targeted and killed people. This kind of situation is not something that was just dreamt up overnight. This kind of stuff goes on each and every day. You only have to look at the kinds of things that happen in Israel, the car rammings where people have been taken out while innocently going about their lives. Terrorism attacks have evolved in the Middle East and in Israel. They have moved from what were initially bombings to suicide bombings and now to car rammings and attacks using vehicles as weapons.

For people to see the kinds of things that are happening overseas and say, 'We're now going to look at doing those kinds of things back here in Victoria' is very, very confronting. What it says is that we need to make sure that our state and all Victorians are kept safe, no matter what. Of all the duties that a member of Parliament has, the fundamental duty is to keep our Victorian public safe. We can go on and provide all kinds of preventative stuff, which is very important — I am not taking away from that — but at the end of the day we fail in our duty if we do not have the kinds of laws that protect our citizens.

I have people say to me, 'Oh well, you're not being too tough on this kind of issue or question', but I will tell you what: the overwhelming majority of people that I come into contact with in my electorate of Caulfield would say that we are just not tough enough in this state. That is why the current debate is just so important. That is why crime has become such an important topic. The types of crimes that are being committed now are very, very different types of crimes from those that were committed before. People would not put themselves in the front and centre when they were committing a crime. It would be petty theft. They would rob a house when no-one was home. They would steal a car when no-one was near the vehicle. They would never actually ram a car. They would never take hostages in a home. They would never threaten people in their home while they robbed them.

I have given this example before in this Parliament of how in 2011 or 2012 in Caulfield South a family — and I went to school with the father — including two young children under 10 years of age, were at home and in the

middle of the night people came into their home and threatened the kids with a knife. They detained one child with a knife while the other child was locked in a room. They said, 'I will cut your throat if you make a noise and if you tell your parents that we were here'. Those kids have to live with that for the rest of their lives. The damage has been done to those children for the rest of their life.

We see all kinds of situations. We should not apologise for being tough when it comes to crime. There are certain things that you must do in terms of showing leadership in this job, and I think that is one of them. I know my electorate of Caulfield expects to have a local member that will do whatever they can in that situation. Whether it is petty theft or all the way up to the kinds of serious offences like the Brighton attack, which happened next door to my electorate, they are all the kinds of situations where we need to make sure that people are protected and kept safe. For those who seek to do harm we need to ensure that we have laws to take that into account. That is why we need to ensure that that takes place.

There are further things that this bill could do, which have already been mentioned. When somebody is arrested it could do more in terms of deradicalising that person and looking at how the court process will take place. It could also do more in terms of the work we do to capture the knowledge and the intelligence so that we can break these kinds of groups and individuals that seek to radicalise others. It is a deliberate attack to radicalise others and we need to make sure that does not happen here and that we do not let this get away from us. Unfortunately, if we do, then we will see the kinds of things we have seen in France and Europe, Israel and the Middle East. These are the kinds of things we need to do, and the only way to stop this happening is to be tough, to make sure we have the right kinds of laws and to make sure that we will not stand for this kind of stuff.

Ms RYALL (Ringwood) (15:42) — I rise to make a contribution on the Justice Legislation Amendment (Terrorism) Bill 2018. The purpose of the bill is to amend laws that relate to terrorism. As the member for Caulfield has outlined, nobody can underestimate the impact that terrorism has had on society as a whole globally and on society within Victoria and Australia. It is something people fear. When I look back probably one of the most profound moments for me and my awareness of terrorism is that I remember exactly where I was on September 11. I know where I was, I know what I was doing, and I know the fear that it created in me that something like this could even happen. It was beyond belief and beyond comprehension. From that

time forward we have seen, heard and witnessed ongoing terrorism attempts and terrorism attacks on a global scale. I recall Barcelona. I recall the fear created by the siege in Brighton and the fear from the Bourke Street rampage. When things happen here that we have perhaps heard about happening in other countries, things such as people running down pedestrians and so forth, we immediately become fearful that in fact it may well be a terrorism event.

Something that we constantly need to be aware of as legislators in this place is to be continually evaluating where we are and what we need to be doing to better protect Victorians and keep them safe at all times. That is our job; that is our responsibility, and as part of that we have the report of the Harper-Lay review. The review's recommendations have come from an expert panel which looked at terrorism, the prevention of violent extremism and our response powers. It is important that our police know and are aware of what they can do to deal with issues where they see the potential for violence or there is actual violence in relation to terrorism. It is important that our authorities have the capability and the legislative backing to make sure they too can respond where needed to protect Victorians and make sure they are kept safe. Anything that needs to be done to prevent terrorism attempts or even thoughts of terrorism escalating into acts should be undertaken.

A concern around this bill is the extent to which we are going down the track of making sure that those who can potentially be radicalised are in fact deradicalised and the extent to which we need to do that further. It is absolutely important that we prevent those who seek to impose radicalisation on others who are not at that point even thinking or contemplating being radicalised. The first point is to protect our citizens from being radicalised by those who seek to damage them and therefore create a state that is unsafe. We have a not-opposed position on this bill, and I will allow others to make a further contribution.

Ms D'AMBROSIO (Minister for Energy, Environment and Climate Change) (15:46) — I am very pleased to speak in support of this bill. The bill pursues a great agenda of this government to ensure that the community has all the protections in place that it needs in a world that is becoming increasingly difficult. With those few words, I commend the bill to the house.

Debate adjourned on motion of Ms HALFPENNY (Thomastown).

Debate adjourned until later this day.

**ADVANCING THE TREATY PROCESS
WITH ABORIGINAL VICTORIANS
BILL 2018**

Second reading

**Debate resumed from 6 June; motion of
Ms HUTCHINS (Minister for Aboriginal Affairs).**

Motion agreed to.

Read second time.

Consideration in detail

Clause 1

The DEPUTY SPEAKER — The Minister for Aboriginal Affairs and the member for Northcote both seek to omit ‘Aboriginal Victorians’ from clause 1, line 5. I propose to test both amendments by calling the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs to move her amendment. After debate, the first question I will put will relate to the omission of ‘Aboriginal Victorians’ from clause 1, line 5.

If the words are not omitted, the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs will not be able to move her amendments 2, 4, 5, 7 to 18, 21 to 23, 25 to 30, 34, 35 and 37 to 39 as they are consequential, and the member for Northcote will not be able to move her amendments 1, 2, 4, 6, 8 to 19, 22, 23, 25 to 27, 31 to 34, 36, 37, 39, 41 to 43, and 45 to 49.

If the words are omitted, I will then put the question to insert the words proposed by the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs. If the words proposed by the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs are inserted, the member for Northcote will not be able to move her amendments I have just referred to, as they are consequential. I therefore advise the member for Northcote, when talking to the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs’s amendment, to talk about the principles of her amendments.

I call the minister to move amendment 1 in her name.

Ms HUTCHINS — I move:

1. Clause 1, line 5, omit “Aboriginal Victorians” and insert “traditional owners and Aboriginal Victorians,”.

Ms THORPE — I would like to respond to the government’s amendments to add ‘traditional owners’ to ‘Aboriginal Victorians’. The Greens also sought to amend this clause to ensure that the clans and First Nations of Victoria are at the heart of the treaty process. By changing ‘Aboriginal Victorians’ to ‘clans and First

Nations’, it is specifying that the clans and First Nations are the key party with which the state must advance the treaty process. If this clause remains as is, then the treaty process would be open to any Aboriginal person to negotiate and make agreement with the state, whether they are a senior representative of their clan and First Nation or they came to Victoria yesterday.

There is extensive international law and precedent as well as academic literature to suggest that a treaty must be negotiated between two sovereign parties. It cannot be negotiated and agreed to with just anyone from the Aboriginal community. The clans are the sovereign first peoples of Victoria; thus it is appropriate that they be specified in the purpose. We have also included ‘First Nations’ in recognition that some clans choose to organise themselves on a First Nation level.

The Greens believe all other Aboriginal Victorians should be included and should benefit from the treaty process, particularly the stolen generation, who have suffered so much. This could be specified in the treaty negotiation framework, for example, but we believe it is important to specify that the purpose of this legislation is to advance treaty making between the first peoples and the state.

The Greens are disappointed that the government has chosen not to recognise the first peoples of Victoria, the clans and First Nations, as the key parties to the process in its amendments. We had amendments to this effect, and it is disappointing we will not get to move them now. However, we do see the addition of the words ‘traditional owners’ as an improvement as it specifies that these people must have a specific place in the process as differentiated from other Aboriginal Victorians, because nothing in this bill excludes the treaty process from being a clan or First Nation-led process. We will accept this change as an improvement to the current language.

I have a number of questions. Minister, what do you see as traditional owners’ special place in the treaty process that caused you to distinguish them as separate from other Aboriginal Victorians in your amendment? What aspect specifically within the process of advancing treaty does the government intend on negotiating and agreeing to with Aboriginal Victorians as a whole? Does the government intend on negotiating the treaty or treaties with Aboriginal peoples whose traditional lands are not in Victoria? Finally, does the government hope or intend to negotiate a treaty with representatives of the Aboriginal representative body rather than the clans and First Nations themselves?

Ms HUTCHINS — I thank the member for her questions. What I might do is take the first question, because four questions were a lot to comprehend in one go, and then perhaps go back to the other questions.

Firstly, I think the bill does not presume who treaty is with, and that is by intention. It is not the role of the Parliament to create an exclusive definition of how this state's first peoples are collectively associated. That is generally not the role of this Parliament, and that is why we have kept the definitions in the original bill very vague in terms of filling that space so that post this process Aboriginal Victorians will be able to determine who it is that represents them. Quite frankly, if we were to do the opposite and narrow the definition, or put in a narrow definition, then it would go against our policy of self-determination. We think that the bill allows for all possible outcomes. There could be a clans-based treaty or there could be a First Nations-based treaty as a result of negotiations down the track. It is something that I know the community will continue to work on with the commissioner.

Ms THORPE — The second question is: what aspect specifically within the process of advancing treaty does the government intend on negotiating and agreeing to with Aboriginal Victorians as a whole?

Ms HUTCHINS — Just to put that question into context, it is really important that I put on the record that in relation to the working group the government has worked with over the last two and a half to three years, primarily all of the representatives are traditional owners, are Victorian and have been offering advice. This is a new process, a new way forward, a new pathway for any state, let alone the commonwealth. I guess there has not been a formula. We have done our best to try and consult. I know that there have been over 30 regional forums and city-based forums as well as treaty circle meetings along the way. The recommendations that have come through our working group and through the many voices that have been consulted are to keep the definition one that is focused on traditional owners and are in line with the definitions that we use in our other acts.

Ms THORPE (*By leave*) — My next question: does the government intend on negotiating the treaty or treaties with Aboriginal people whose traditional lands are not in Victoria?

Ms HUTCHINS — As to who government ends up sitting at the table with in terms of an Aboriginal representative body, that representative body will be decided upon by Aboriginal Victorians. There have been recommendations to date from an assembly that I

know the member for Northcote does not give much weight to, but certainly the community assembly that did a power of work on this question has a preference for only traditional owners being elected. That is work that the treaty advancement commissioner will continue to work on with Aboriginal communities going forward. I am not going to pre-empt who sits at the table, but certainly the call from community has been that it is traditional owners.

Amendment agreed to.

Ms HUTCHINS — I move:

2. Clause 1, line 9, after "of" insert "traditional owners and".

Amendment agreed to; amended clause agreed to; clause 2 agreed to.

Clause 3

The DEPUTY SPEAKER — There are a number of amendments to clause 3, including amendments that renumber parts of the clause in anticipation of amendments to add new clauses. In order to assist in the process of determining what renumbering is required should some or all of those new clauses be agreed to, I would like to suggest that the house defer consideration of clause 3 and consider the new clauses in the order in which they will be inserted into the bill. Then I suggest that the house return to consider clause 3 and subsequent clauses.

Clause postponed.

New clause AA

Ms HUTCHINS — I move:

40. Insert the following New Clause to follow clause 3—

“AA Appointment of Victorian Treaty Advancement Commissioner

The Minister must not recommend a person for appointment as Victorian Treaty Advancement Commissioner unless the person is an Aboriginal Victorian.”

Ms THORPE — I would like to speak to the government's amendment specifying the commissioner be an Aboriginal person. The Greens welcome this change. It is culturally appropriate that this role be held by an Aboriginal Victorian. I must say it is interesting that this kind of thing was not specified in the bill from the start. Clearly when drafting this bill the government had not duly considered section 19 on cultural rights in the Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities. It is a positive thing, and I congratulate

them on conceding that improvements can be made in this respect to Aboriginal cultural rights in this bill.

Mr WYNNE — Just responding to the member for Northcote briefly, obviously in the framing of this bill the charter of human rights was part of the centrality. It is a requirement, as you would know, member for Northcote, that any bill must conform to the charter or, where it does not conform to the charter, there must be an explanation as to why it does not. In the spirit with which the minister has in fact undertaken her negotiations with you and with the Greens political party and more generally, I think the amendment that is being made here clearly recognises the centrality of obviously an Aboriginal person leading this process.

New clause agreed to.

New clause A

Ms THORPE — I move:

38. Insert the following New Clause to follow clause 3—

“A Act does not affect sovereignty

A treaty between the State and a Clan or a First Nation is not an act of cession by the Clan or the Clans the First Nation represents and does not diminish or displace the sovereign status Clans assert.”

The Greens believe this amendment is an essential addition to this bill. Even though Victoria is not a sovereign body, we have legal advice to suggest that an agreement called a treaty between the first peoples of Victoria and the state could have the legal effect of ceding the sovereignty of the clan or First Nation if not otherwise stated. So it is crucial that the bill specify that sovereignty is not ceded so clans are not inadvertently and unknowingly stripped of their sovereign status. Also, it is crucial to ensure that they can participate in a commonwealth treaty process should it arise.

We do not accept the government’s argument articulated in a recent letter to the Greens regarding why they will not recognise the sovereignty of the first peoples of Victoria. It is disappointing that the government would not even take the step of acknowledging the first peoples’ sovereignty in the preamble let alone in the body of the bill. We note the letter indicated the government is confident the bill as it stands and the treaty processes to follow will not jeopardise the ability of Victorian clans to participate in a commonwealth treaty process. We hope this is correct.

Nevertheless, in our opinion, recognising the sovereignty of the first peoples is more than just a legal necessity; it is a moral responsibility. After 162 years of

the Parliament of Victoria and so much injustice against Aboriginal people, it is the right thing to do. Such a statement would send a powerful message that the government is truly committed to a meaningful treaty process that seeks to set right the injustices against the first peoples of Victoria and empowers grassroots community with economic and political rights.

Ms HUTCHINS — This is a debate that was had in one way or another when the federal government sat in this place over 100 years ago when it discussed what sovereignty was for this state. Certainly we have included in the preamble our recognition that Aboriginal Victorians have never ceded their sovereignty. The work that has been done by the treaty working group and the many conversations that we have had to lead us here today were quite conscious of the fact that we needed to find a way of dealing with this issue. That is why we refer to it in the preamble, and I think that is a great place to have it.

I note the member says the treaty should be between two sovereign states. The problem we face with that is that Victoria itself is not a sovereign entity. I know that we think we could do better than Canberra. We know on this side we think we can do better than Canberra in so many aspects, but we are not sovereign, so it is just not possible.

I do know that the Turnbull government does not believe in treaty or has not opened the door to this process as yet. They have not indicated they are prepared to go down this road, and we are doing the best that we can in leading the way in bringing such a piece of legislation to the Parliament when this has not been done or attempted to be done in another state, to my knowledge. Quite frankly today is about getting on with that process. I believe the bill that is before the house does advance the treaty process for all Victorians in a manner that really embeds self-determination.

Ms THORPE — The minister stated that the bill acknowledges first peoples’ sovereignty whereas in fact the bill does not acknowledge first peoples’ sovereignty. The bill states:

Victorian traditional owners maintain that their sovereignty has never been ceded ...

That is not the government acknowledging that Aboriginal people have sovereignty.

Ms HUTCHINS — I think this question is one of the key areas on which the member for Northcote and I disagree. We have included it in the preamble and I included in my second-reading speech my recognition of what the views of Aboriginal Victorians are in regard

to not ceding sovereignty. That is where the government stands today on this matter. There is more work to be done going forward in terms of forming an Aboriginal Representative Body and the work that they do in the lead-up to treaty.

House divided on new clause:

Ayes, 3

Hibbins, Mr
Sandell, Ms
Thorpe, Ms

Noes, 79

| | |
|----------------|----------------|
| Allan, Ms | McLeish, Ms |
| Andrews, Mr | Merlino, Mr |
| Angus, Mr | Morris, Mr |
| Asher, Ms | Nardella, Mr |
| Battin, Mr | Neville, Ms |
| Bull, Mr J. | Noonan, Mr |
| Bull, Mr T. | Northe, Mr |
| Burgess, Mr | O'Brien, Mr D. |
| Carbines, Mr | O'Brien, Mr M. |
| Carroll, Mr | Pakula, Mr |
| Clark, Mr | Pallas, Mr |
| Couzens, Ms | Paynter, Mr |
| Crisp, Mr | Pearson, Mr |
| D'Ambrosio, Ms | Perera, Mr |
| Dimopoulos, Mr | Pesutto, Mr |
| Dixon, Mr | Richardson, Mr |
| Donnellan, Mr | Riordan, Mr |
| Edbrooke, Mr | Ryall, Ms |
| Edwards, Ms | Ryan, Ms |
| Eren, Mr | Scott, Mr |
| Foley, Mr | Sheed, Ms |
| Garrett, Ms | Smith, Mr R. |
| Gidley, Mr | Smith, Mr T. |
| Graley, Ms | Southwick, Mr |
| Green, Ms | Spence, Ms |
| Guy, Mr | Staikos, Mr |
| Halfpenny, Ms | Suleyman, Ms |
| Hennessy, Ms | Thomas, Ms |
| Hodgett, Mr | Thompson, Mr |
| Howard, Mr | Thomson, Ms |
| Hutchins, Ms | Tilley, Mr |
| Kairouz, Ms | Victoria, Ms |
| Katos, Mr | Wakeling, Mr |
| Kealy, Ms | Walsh, Mr |
| Kilkenny, Ms | Ward, Ms |
| Knight, Ms | Watt, Mr |
| Languiller, Mr | Wells, Mr |
| Lim, Mr | Williams, Ms |
| McCurdy, Mr | Wynne, Mr |
| McGuire, Mr | |

New clause defeated.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER — Order! As the house has not agreed to the new clause, the member for Northcote will not be able to move amendments 3, 7, 20, 21 and 24 as they are consequential, and amendments 29 and 35 must be moved in amended form.

New clause E

Ms THORPE — I move:

40. Insert the following New Clause to follow clause 20—

“E United Nations Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP)

All processes engaged in or undertaken pursuant to this Act must ensure the treaty process proceeds in accordance with the Articles of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations on 13 September 2007 (resolution 61/295).”.

The Greens believe it is appropriate that the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* (UNDRIP) be recognised as a guiding principle of this bill. This declaration was achieved through years of consultation and deliberations and with the hard work of Indigenous people across the world, including Aboriginal Australians. It includes principles that articulate the fundamental rights of Aboriginal peoples in Australia. A treaty is a very significant legal process and is the very type of thing this declaration was designed to provide direction for. Given the government has taken the welcome step of including a section on guiding principles for the treaty process in this bill, it is appropriate that UNDRIP is included in that section.

Mr Hibbins interjected.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER — The member for Prahran will wait for the call before he speaks.

Mr WYNNE — In relation to the amendment containing the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*, which the member for Northcote has quite eloquently articulated, that is exactly the reason why in fact it is included in the preamble. The preamble to a piece of legislation sets the context within which the bill should be in fact judged, and it is an articulation of the broad principles that actually underpin it. In that respect I think there is little distance — in fact I do not think there is any distance — between us in relation to ensuring that the principles of the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* are in fact upheld and respected in the bill and indeed in the process of treaty itself. So I do not think there is any point of departure between us in terms of the acceptance of that UN declaration, and that is why it is so prominently put in the preamble to the bill.

Ms HUTCHINS — I will also add that legal advice was given to government, as it was to our working

group, that the complexities of incorporating international law into domestic law, particularly at a state level, would potentially render this bill inoperable down the track. We do acknowledge and can see that the principles are something that we absolutely abide by, but we think that the right place is the preamble.

New clause defeated.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER — As the house has not agreed to the amendment, the member for Northcote will not be able to move amendments 29 and 35 as they are consequential.

Postponed clause 3

Ms HUTCHINS — I move:

3. Clause 3, line 27, omit “10” and insert “11”.
4. Clause 3, page 5, line 6, after “with” insert “traditional owners and”.
5. Clause 3, page 5, line 11, after “to” insert “traditional owners and”.
6. Clause 3, page 5, line 27 omit “17” and insert “18”.
7. Clause 3, page 5, after line 27 insert—

“traditional owner, in relation to an area in Victoria, has the same meaning as in Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006;”.

Ms THORPE — I would like to respond to the government’s amendment inserting the definition of ‘traditional owner’. We welcome the government proposing the amendment to acknowledge the specific role of traditional owners in the treaty process. We accept the definition of ‘traditional owner’ as stated in the Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006, as this definition recognises traditional owners’ connection to country, culture and clans.

Ms HUTCHINS — I think this is probably a rehash of a conversation that we had earlier in terms of the definition of ‘traditional owners’ versus the definition put by the member for Northcote around clans, but again, it is not the role of Parliament to determine who are the representatives of Aboriginal Victorians. We actually believe that, in faith with the UN declaration, we are engaged in the best process of self-determination that we could find a way through. Our answers were for an inclusive bill and one that allows Aboriginal Victorians to actually work these questions out rather than for the people in this chamber to be making those very detailed decisions. I do acknowledge that only this week we have as a government provided funding to the Victorian treaty advancement commissioner to work with community to

develop the Aboriginal Representative Body (ARB), along with community assembly recommendations for an ethics council comprising of elders. Also we have specifically asked the commissioner to do some work around the concept of an elders council.

Mr CARBINES — With regard to clause 3, it refers of course to many definitions, including the Aboriginal Representative Body. Can the minister advise why the legislation does not spell out how the ARB will be constituted, particularly in light of the minister’s comments earlier on the first peoples and how their voice to government will be constituted?

Ms HUTCHINS — I thank the member for his question. Just to restate for the purposes of the debate that is currently underway with the amendments, all working group members are prominent Victorian Aboriginals and traditional owners of country in Victoria. On the question around the Aboriginal Representative Body, the architecture of this bill has been built around facilitating what that body would look like in the future and giving as many options as possible for Aboriginal Victorians to try to shape that and form that, and also to facilitate a treaty or treaties through having that body formed. It has been a very full consultative process. We have seen a number of new initiatives that the government has undertaken in terms of whole-of-Victoria invitation forums for Aboriginal Victorians to participate in, but also a community assembly process, which is a new way of bringing together ideas in the same room from across different traditional owner groups, people from different parts of Victoria and different age groups to really have an open and consultative process around what an Aboriginal representative body should look like so that we can have an even playing field with government in terms of negotiations of a treaty or treaties down the track.

Mr T. BULL — Following on from the minister’s answers around the definitions in clause 3 that we know relate to the Aboriginal Representative Body but also the working group and indeed the negotiation framework, I note that the minister has commented that there will be an open and consultative process around the state. My hope is that the minister can provide a little bit more detail on that. I notice in some of the commentary the minister has outlined that around 7000 Aboriginal Victorians have been consulted on this. Given we have a population of around 30 000 over the age of 18, there is obviously a large number that are yet to be consulted, and I know that a number of people from my area of Gippsland know very little about this process. I am hoping the minister could provide a little bit more detail on how that consultative process will now unfold over the coming six to 12 months.

Ms HUTCHINS — I thank the member for his question. It certainly has been a long path to even get here. The conversations and the consultations have been very intense, but yes, you are right, only reaching 7000 out of a potential 50 000 people means we have still got a long way to go in terms of consultation. Certainly the bill today and this process is a further step in continuing that work going forward. There have been regional forums. We have tried to ensure that some of those were in the morning and some in the evening so that working people would be able to get to those forums to have their say. Different numbers of people have turned up, but the real way for us to go forward is for the Victorian Treaty Advancement Commission and commissioner to be empowered and funded to do the work going forward around those consultations. We would love to see more family-based conversations, a continuation of treaty circle discussions in homes, in workplaces and in community centres going forward, but the primary process from here until the representative body is formed rests on the shoulders of the commission at this stage.

Mr T. BULL — I thank the minister for her response and for outlining the consultation processes that are planned for our Indigenous communities. Given the treaty is obviously a treaty between the state, representing non-Indigenous people, and our Aboriginal Victorians, are there any consultation processes or plans with our non-Indigenous community here in Victoria, who obviously have to be a key part of such a process as it unfolds?

Ms HUTCHINS — I thank the member for his question. Certainly last Saturday we were able to launch our Deadly Questions campaign, which is an online-based campaign to promote Aboriginal awareness, culture and history here in Victoria but which also raises many questions around this treaty process and the treaty going into the future. Those questions are key questions that have come from all Victorians but are answered by Aboriginal Victorians. There is also a capacity there for anyone to get online and put in a question and receive an answer within five to seven days through that process. We are hoping that that will generate more conversations around this treaty process going forward. We have also as a government done some partnership work only recently with Reconciliation Victoria, partnering with them on how we promote the treaty across all of Victoria and work with them in partnership.

Ms THORPE — Minister, I would like to know how many of the 7000 people who have been consulted identified as Aboriginal. Secondly, how many actually attended community meetings?

Ms HUTCHINS — I do have a list of all of the forums, which I would be happy to provide to the member, and the times and locations of those forums. At no stage were officers of my department asked to or did they ask people to prove their Aboriginality at those meetings. It was an open invitation. If people turned up and wanted to participate, it was taken on board that they were Aboriginal and they identified in that way.

Certainly we know we have a long way to go. Some of those conversations happened through correspondence back and forth online. With our regional forums we had live streaming as well as the capacity to have questions asked and answered in real time as well between the city and the regions whilst that was happening. We even at the second statewide forum that we had had the capacity to have voting on various ways forward and were able to include those people who were in the regions so that they were able to vote within about a 30-second time frame in terms of getting back a collated response. So there may have been double-up conversations but the reality is that going forward we know we need to have more.

Amendments agreed to.

Ms THORPE — I move:

5. Clause 3, page 5, after line 14 insert—

“*Clan* means—

- (a) an Aboriginal Traditional Owner Group or Aboriginal extended family group that has—
 - (i) a traditional connection to a specific territory of land that is wholly or partly in the area now known as Victoria; and
 - (ii) shared Ancestors and Descendants, Aboriginal language, cultural heritage, beliefs, spirituality, traditions or customary law; or
- (b) an Aboriginal Traditional Owner Group or Aboriginal extended family group listed as a Clan in Schedule 1;

Clan Elders Council means a body that—

- (a) consists of a gathering of Elders from Clans and First Nations that choose to participate and for which each participating Clan and First Nation self-determines its representatives; and
- (b) exists for the purpose of providing advice and advocacy on advancing the treaty process;”.

This Greens amendment seeks to insert definitions of ‘Clan’ and ‘Clan Elders Council’. It explains that clans maintain a connection to traditional lands and to their

culture, including shared ancestors and descendants, Aboriginal language, cultural heritage, beliefs, spirituality, traditions and customary law. It specifies that the Clan Elders Council must be made up of representatives from the Victorian clans and First Nations that have chosen to participate and that Clan Elders Council membership must be open to all of these traditional owner groups.

Clans and First Nations must self-determine their own representatives — members cannot be appointees of the minister, as advisory bodies have been previously. Such a body would have cultural authority as it is made up of elders, the lawmakers and the people who are most respectful of Aboriginal culture. Such a body could be trusted to speak for the first peoples.

This addition, with subsequent amendments the Greens propose in relation to the Clan Elders Council, would mean that for the first time there would be a broadly representative body that was independent from the minister advising the minister and the commissioner for treaty advancement. The Greens are proposing to include the Clan Elders Council as a body with which the commissioner must work in partnership to come up with recommendations on establishment of the Aboriginal Representative Body.

Not everyone in this room will know this, so I must state it clearly. In Aboriginal culture there is no one leader and no one decision-maker. In Aboriginal culture decisions are made collectively. So having one person, one commissioner, making the final decision on recommendations to the minister on the Aboriginal Representative Body fails to adhere to our cultural protocols. I have a lot of respect for Jill Gallagher. This comment is not personal; it is about the process. It is about ensuring that the process for establishing the body is culturally appropriate and increasing the chances that it will be engaged with and accepted by Aboriginal communities across Victoria and that it will actually be representative. That is why we have suggested that Jill work in partnership with the Clan Elders Council to come to the final recommendations for the minister.

We welcome that the government has stated that it will write to the commissioner regarding establishing and resourcing the elders council and that the government believes its function should be to provide oversight of the Aboriginal Representative Body to help keep it culturally accountable to community. However, given that the minister envisages such a function for the body, we still believe that it is appropriate to incorporate the elders council in the legislation. All other bodies and roles, including the Aboriginal Treaty Working Group,

the treaty authority, the Victorian treaty advancement commissioner and the Aboriginal Representative Body, are recognised in the legislation. So too should the elders council be formalised and its functions laid out in the legislation.

Ms HUTCHINS — I thank the member for her question. Again it goes to, I guess, part of the disagreements between the government and the member for Northcote in terms of what this bill is aiming to deliver — that is, primarily self-determination and ensuring that we have many people as part of the process rather than narrowing down the process.

I did not make all of the decisions in this bill by sitting in my office alone. I in fact consulted very widely and took great advice from many Aboriginal organisations across this state, including the Federation of Victorian Traditional Owner Corporations and also the treaty working group, of which the chair, Mick Harding, I note is here. I just want to quote some advice from the working group that was provided to me in writing. It says that the group:

... does not consider that a proposed Clan Elders Council is a workable model to replace the role of the working group. The working group considers that for this proposed body to be properly constituted it would need the considered engagement of every clan in Victoria. Due to the devastating impacts of colonisation, the working group does not consider that each clan in Victoria is currently in a position to give appropriate, free, prior and informed consent to elect to participate in a Clan Elders Council.

What we have done, though, as I mentioned earlier in response to another question, is provide funding to the Victorian Treaty Advancement Commission to work with the community to develop options to assist the Aboriginal Representative Body with the formation of an ethics council to be comprised of elders or a group that would work with the commissioner and that could be otherwise known as an elders council. But that is yet to be determined outside of this bill and Parliament.

House divided on amendment:

Ayes, 3

Hibbins, Mr
Sandell, Ms
Thorpe, Ms

Noes, 78

Allan, Ms
Andrews, Mr
Angus, Mr
Asher, Ms
Battin, Mr
Bull, Mr J.
Bull, Mr T.
Burgess, Mr
McGuire, Mr
McLeish, Ms
Merlino, Mr
Morris, Mr
Nardella, Mr
Neville, Ms
Noonan, Mr
Northe, Mr

| | |
|----------------|----------------|
| Carbines, Mr | O'Brien, Mr M. |
| Carroll, Mr | Pakula, Mr |
| Clark, Mr | Pallas, Mr |
| Couzens, Ms | Paynter, Mr |
| Crisp, Mr | Pearson, Mr |
| D'Ambrosio, Ms | Perera, Mr |
| Dimopoulos, Mr | Pesutto, Mr |
| Dixon, Mr | Richardson, Mr |
| Donnellan, Mr | Riordan, Mr |
| Edbrooke, Mr | Ryall, Ms |
| Edwards, Ms | Ryan, Ms |
| Eren, Mr | Scott, Mr |
| Foley, Mr | Sheed, Ms |
| Garrett, Ms | Smith, Mr R. |
| Gidley, Mr | Smith, Mr T. |
| Graley, Ms | Southwick, Mr |
| Green, Ms | Spence, Ms |
| Guy, Mr | Staikos, Mr |
| Halfpenny, Ms | Suleyman, Ms |
| Hennessy, Ms | Thomas, Ms |
| Hodgett, Mr | Thompson, Mr |
| Howard, Mr | Thomson, Ms |
| Hutchins, Ms | Tilley, Mr |
| Kairouz, Ms | Victoria, Ms |
| Katos, Mr | Wakeling, Mr |
| Kealy, Ms | Walsh, Mr |
| Kilkenny, Ms | Ward, Ms |
| Knight, Ms | Watt, Mr |
| Languiller, Mr | Wells, Mr |
| Lim, Mr | Williams, Ms |
| McCurdy, Mr | Wynne, Mr |

Amendment defeated.

The SPEAKER (16:43) — I take the opportunity to welcome former member Kay Setches to the gallery. I invite the Deputy Speaker to resume the chair.

Amended clause agreed to.

Clause 4

Ms HUTCHINS — I move:

8. Clause 4, line 12, after “of” insert “traditional owners or”.
9. Clause 4, line 17, after “of” insert “traditional owners or”.

Amendments agreed to; amended clause agreed to; clause 5 agreed to.

Clause 6

Ms HUTCHINS — I move:

10. Clause 6, line 4, after “representation of” insert “traditional owners and”.

Amendment agreed to; amended clause agreed to; clause 7 agreed to.

Clause 8

Ms HUTCHINS — I move:

11. Clause 8, line 4, after “of” insert “traditional owners and”.
12. Clause 8, line 9, after “of” insert “traditional owners and”.

Amendments agreed to; amended clause agreed to.

Clause 9

Ms HUTCHINS — I move:

13. Clause 9, line 12, after “of” insert “traditional owners and”.
14. Clause 9, line 19, after “of” insert “traditional owners and”.
15. Clause 9, line 21, after “with” insert “traditional owners and”.
16. Clause 9, after line 21 insert—

“() All elected members (however described) other than employees of the Aboriginal Representative Body must be traditional owners.”.

Ms THORPE — I would like to respond to the government’s amendments, which specify that the Aboriginal Representative Body must be made up of traditional owners. In discussions with the government the Greens proposed that some broad parameters regarding the Aboriginal Representative Body be set. As it stands the bill does not even specify that the Aboriginal Representative Body must be made up of Aboriginal people. We propose that, given it is the clans and First Nations who are the sovereign peoples of Victoria and whom a treaty must be negotiated with, it is appropriate that those people should sit on the Aboriginal Representative Body and lead the process for setting up a treaty negotiating framework.

Traditional owners from Queensland, South Australia or New South Wales should have an opportunity to be represented in any treaty process and negotiations that involve their traditional lands. However, in Victoria it must be Victorian traditional owner groups. I have said previously other Aboriginal Victorians should be part of the process and benefit from treaties. Indeed I believe it is critical that the stolen generation and other Aboriginal Victorians are engaged and benefit from the treaty process, but in respect to who leads it, it must be culturally appropriate and we suggest it should be self-determined representatives of the first peoples of Victoria. While the government has not specified that clans and First Nations should sit on the representative body, in this amendment it has specified a

compromise — that only Victorian traditional owners can sit on the Aboriginal Representative Body. The Greens see that as an improvement from the current wording and thus will be accepting these amendments.

Amendments agreed to; amended clause agreed to.

Clauses 10 and 11

Ms THORPE — I have some questions for the minister. Will the minister accept the recommendation of the commissioner, or does the minister reserve the right to reject one or more recommendations and have the government proceed in a way it chooses?

Ms HUTCHINS — I just needed to check that it actually was declared in here. Of course I understand that the member who has asked the question may be concerned about ministers that might be standing in this place in the future that are not this minister. Certainly it is not just me in this position saying yes — that the commissioner must declare. It is actually pointed out in clause 10, which says that:

The Minister, on the recommendation of the Victorian Treaty Advancement Commissioner, must declare an entity to be the Aboriginal Representative Body.

I interpret that to mean the work that is done by that commission and the recommendations that are made will be taken on board by the minister that is standing here at that time.

Ms THORPE — Minister, why did you deem it appropriate to set up one person, the Victorian treaty advancement commissioner, with such significant powers to determine the Aboriginal Representative Body in stark contrast to Aboriginal culture, where decisions are made collectively?

Ms HUTCHINS — I thank the member for her question, but I would have to disagree with the premise of the question — that we actually have not been consultative or have not looked at a process that is collective. It may not be the process that the member for Northcote would choose, but it certainly has been a process that the government have chosen to take with as many Aboriginal Victorians as we can in terms of getting to this point of having a draft bill and a bill being debated in the house today but also in putting up some options going forward. The Aboriginal Representative Body and the details of that will not be decided here today in this legislation. This is about a process to go forward. There is still work and consultation to happen with Aboriginal Victorians, and that will happen in a collective manner.

Mr WYNNE — I draw the member for Northcote's attention to the process, as the minister has already indicated. The Aboriginal Representative Body will be a democratically elected entity representing all Aboriginal Victorians. The Victorian Treaty Advancement Commission will facilitate elections to the Aboriginal Representative Body. Only Victorian Aboriginal traditional owners will be eligible to stand for election to the Aboriginal Representative Body. In order to ensure that the Aboriginal Representative Body represents the diversity of Aboriginal Victorians, all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people of voting age living in Victoria will be eligible to vote in the elections. I do not think you could have a clearer or more transparent process around this.

Mr McGuire — Or more democratic.

Mr WYNNE — Or, as the member for Broadmeadows says, more democratic.

Ms SANDELL — Minister, as it is drafted there are no explicit obligations in the bill as to how the treaty advancement commissioner might come up with her recommendations. For example, there is no obligation that it be done in a way that is culturally appropriate. Could the government please outline the obligations of the commissioner in this respect?

Ms HUTCHINS — I thank the member for her question. Certainly a reading of the entire bill reveals we have enshrined a number of principles that must be undertaken and committed to in both the process of reaching a treaty but also the consultation work that needs to happen around the treaty process. The bill enshrines these things and, quite frankly, if the treaty advancement commission were to turn its back on the bill, there would be a question about whether in fact they were doing their work. Some of those things include self-determination and empowerment, fairness and equality, partnership and good faith, mutual benefit and sustainability, and transparency and accountability. These are the guiding principles going forward, not only for an Aboriginal Representative Body but also for the state to take on board in this process.

Clauses agreed to.

Clause 12

Ms HUTCHINS — I move:

17. Clause 12, line 23, after "with" insert "traditional owners and".
18. Clause 12, line 29, after "supporting" insert "traditional owners and".

Amendments agreed to; amended clause agreed to; clause 13 agreed to.

Clause 14

Ms HUTCHINS — I move:

19. Clause 14, line 29, omit “13(1)(c)” and insert “14(1)(c)”.

Amendment agreed to; amended clause agreed to.

Clause 15

Ms HUTCHINS — I move:

20. Clause 15, line 4, omit “13(1)(b)” and insert “14(1)(b)”.

Amendment agreed to; amended clause agreed to.

Clause 16

Ms HUTCHINS — I move:

21. Clause 16, page 13, line 4, after “with” insert “traditional owners and”.
22. Clause 16, page 13, line 9, after “all” insert “traditional owners and”.
23. Clause 16, page 13, line 21, after “support” insert “traditional owners and”.

Amendments agreed to; amended clause agreed to.

Clause 17

Ms HUTCHINS — I move:

24. Clause 17, line 32, omit “16” and insert “17”.

Amendment agreed to; amended clause agreed to; clause 18 agreed to.

Clause 19

Ms HUTCHINS — I move:

25. Clause 19, line 10, after “different” insert “traditional owners and”.

Amendment agreed to; amended clause agreed to; clause 20 agreed to.

Clause 21

Ms HUTCHINS — I move:

26. Clause 21, line 2, omit “Aboriginal” insert “Traditional owners and Aboriginal”.
27. Clause 21, line 4, omit “Aboriginal” insert “Traditional owners and Aboriginal”.

Ms THORPE — Can the government please explain why it did not believe it necessary or indeed appropriate to include in the guiding principles for the treaty process that they precede with the free, prior, informed consent of traditional owners?

The DEPUTY SPEAKER — Order! The time set down for consideration of items on the government business program has arrived, and I am required to interrupt business.

Amendments agreed to; amended clause agreed to; clauses 22 to 43 and the Preamble agreed to, and circulated government amendments 28 to 39 and 41 as follows agreed to:

28. Clause 22, line 13, after “for” insert “traditional owners and”.
29. Clause 24, line 27, after “for” insert “traditional owners and”.
30. Clause 24, line 31, after “of” insert “traditional owners and”.
31. Clause 27, after line 22 insert—

“() In the performance of its functions the Treaty Authority is not subject to the direction or control of the Minister.”.

32. Clause 29, after line 8 insert—

“() The Aboriginal Representative Body and the State must ensure that the treaty negotiation framework provides for the negotiation of a treaty or treaties that—

- (a) recognise historic wrongs; and
- (b) address ongoing injustices; and
- (c) help heal wounds of the past; and
- (d) support reconciliation; and
- (e) bring pride to Victorians; and
- (f) have positive impacts for Victoria; and
- (g) promote the fundamental human rights of Aboriginal peoples, including the right to self-determination; and
- (h) acknowledge the importance of culture to Aboriginal identity; and
- (i) enhance the laws of Victoria.”.

33. Clause 30, line 30, omit “27” and insert “28”.

34. Clause 35, line 9, after “supporting” insert “traditional owners and”.

35. Clause 35, line 13, after “empowers” insert “traditional owners and”.
36. Clause 36, line 29, omit “35” and insert “36”.
37. Clause 40, line 13, after “with” insert “traditional owners and”.
38. Clause 40, line 17, after “with” insert “traditional owners and”.
39. Clause 40, line 21, omit “Aboriginal” insert “traditional owners, Aboriginal Victorians”.

AMENDMENT OF PREAMBLE

41. Preamble, page 2, after “stages of the journey.” insert “In doing so, the State recognises the importance of the treaty process proceeding in a manner that is consistent with the principles articulated in the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, including free, prior and informed consent. By continuing to consult and cooperate in good faith, the State will endeavour to take each step forward on the pathway toward treaty together with traditional owners and Aboriginal Victorians.”.

Bill agreed to with amendments.

Third reading

Motion agreed to.

Read third time.

**EDUCATION LEGISLATION
AMENDMENT (VICTORIAN INSTITUTE
OF TEACHING, TAFE AND OTHER
MATTERS) BILL 2018**

Second reading

**Debate resumed from 6 June; motion of
Mr PAKULA (Attorney-General).**

Motion agreed to.

Read second time.

Third reading

Motion agreed to.

Read third time.

**JUSTICE LEGISLATION AMENDMENT
(TERRORISM) BILL 2018**

Second reading

**Debate resumed from earlier this day; motion of
Mr PAKULA (Attorney-General).**

Motion agreed to.

Read second time.

Circulated amendments

**Circulated government amendments as follows
agreed to:**

1. Clause 2, line 7, omit “110,” and insert “113.”
2. Clause 83, flow chart following line 10, omit “4AA(1)(c)” and insert “4AA(2)(c)”.
3. Clause 83, flow chart following line 10, omit “4AA(1)(d)?” and insert “4AA(2)(d)?”.
4. Clause 83, page 192, flow chart following line 3, omit “3AA,” and insert “3AAA.”
5. Clause 83, page 193, flow chart following line 3, omit “3AA,” and insert “3AAA.”

Third reading

Motion agreed to.

Read third time.

Business interrupted under sessional orders.

ADJOURNMENT

The DEPUTY SPEAKER — The question is:

That the house now adjourns.

**McMahons Road–Clyde Street–Burwood
Highway, Ferntree Gully**

Mr WAKELING (Ferntree Gully) (17:03) —
(14 530) The matter I wish to raise this evening is for the Minister for Roads and Road Safety. The issue that I wish to raise on behalf of residents within the Ferntree Gully electorate is the dangerous intersection of McMahons Road and Clyde Street at the Burwood Highway in Ferntree Gully. This is a significant intersection in my electorate. It services many residents, particularly those who live around the Fairhills Primary School estate, and it services a number of residents who enter and exit that estate at that intersection.

We know that it is an 80-kilometre-per-hour section of road on the Burwood Highway, and many residents have raised concerns with me about the fact that they find it difficult to both enter at and exit through that intersection. Pedestrians also cross at this intersection to access bus services. On top of the concerns that have been raised with the current housing development, particularly with dual occupancies that have been created within that community, at the former brickworks on Norvel Road at the end of McMahons Road there is slated to be upwards of 100 units constructed at that location. That is going to bring significant traffic into the community, putting vehicles at an already stressed intersection at McMahons Road and Burwood Highway. We know that on the other side Clyde Street is a combination of industrial buildings and private homes, and on the corner is a very active McDonald's store, which creates its own level of traffic within the Ferntree Gully community. Many residents have raised this issue with me and are seeking a long-term solution.

On behalf of the Ferntree Gully community I raised this issue with the Minister for Roads and Road Safety back on 9 June 2016 — so nearly two years ago — calling upon the minister and calling upon this government to take action and do something with respect to this important intersection. At that point in time I called on the minister to take action with regard to the intersection and to provide advice to my community on whether the government will be constructing traffic lights at this important intersection. The government has not listened to the concerns of the community and has failed to provide an adequate solution, so two years later I again call on the minister to provide an explanation to residents in the Ferntree Gully electorate as to what he will be doing in terms of providing for a long-term planning solution to the intersection at McMahons Road and Burwood Highway in Ferntree Gully.

Essendon electorate river and creek water quality

Mr PEARSON (Essendon) (17:06) — (14 531) I direct my adjournment to the Minister for Water, and the action that I seek is that the minister convene a follow-up meeting between the City of Moonee Valley, Friends of the Maribyrnong Valley, Melbourne Water and her department to discuss improving water quality in both the Maribyrnong River and Moonee Ponds Creek. There was a meeting that canvassed a number of these issues, and I welcome the opportunity for a follow-up meeting following the recent state budget and funding from the Andrews Labor government to continue improving the health of our waterways.

Omeo early childhood development centre

Mr T. BULL (Gippsland East) (17:06) — (14 532) My adjournment matter is for the Minister for Early Childhood Education in the other place, and the action I seek is for her to visit the Omeo early childhood development centre and meet with parents about some concerns they have.

Earlier this year I asked the minister in a constituency question about concerns parents had raised with my office on a range of issues in the lead-up to, and since, the centre's opening. Their concerns related to a lack of communication with parents and the fact that at the time of opening, a funding service agreement had not been finalised, lease arrangements were not, and are still not, in place and a memorandum of understanding had not been formalised.

More than a month overdue, the minister last week provided what both I and parents found to be an aggressive and completely out-of-touch response, given those raising the concerns were parents simply asking for help. In her first line she attacked the former government for an apparent four years of neglect, which I found somewhat ironic given it was the Liberal-Nationals who provided \$650 000 in 2014 to build this facility and who also upgraded many other kindergartens across East Gippsland. She then mentioned that her department had met with Swifts Creek primary school, which does not exist. I think she might have been referring to Swifts Creek P-12 School. She also stated that the centre delivers a long day care service, whereas parents have advised me that only occasional care is delivered at the present time. The minister failed to recognise that the centre would not have opened had it not been for the voluntary work of parents and community members the day before term 1 started.

Perhaps the most disappointing part of her response was the fact she said I had been peddling mistruths, which is an appalling accusation when I was simply raising the very concerns of community members. The minister has labelled members of the community liars, and I can assure you her response did not go over well when I passed it on. The minister has confirmed that a leasing agreement is yet to be formalised. The community would like to know when this will occur, and given the minister says a funding and service agreement is apparently already in place, they would like to know when it was signed. On top of this a memorandum of understanding between various stakeholders is, I am advised, yet to be formalised. I am sure the community would like this to be expedited.

This minister has a lot to answer for, and that is the reason I ask her to visit the centre and meet with parents so they can directly discuss the concerns that I have relayed for them. I hope she responds in a more respectful way to the community's concerns than she did in her previous correspondence.

Casey Tech School

Ms GRALEY (Narre Warren South) (17:09) — (14 533) My adjournment matter is for the Minister for Education and concerns the new Casey Tech School facility at Chisholm's Berwick campus. The action I seek is the provision of public transport connectivity so that students can easily get to the new tech school. It is expected that 21 000 students will attend the fabulous new school, and we must ensure that each and every one of them is assured of getting to that new school. We must make sure not only that this is an excellent place in which to learn but also that as many people as possible have access to this new facility. I know the minister is a big fan and a strong advocate for the tech school program, so I look forward to his response on this very important issue.

Country Fire Authority Shepparton station

Ms SHEED (Shepparton) (17:10) — (14 534) My adjournment matter is for the Minister for Emergency Services, and the action I seek is that he ensure a new, appropriately located site for the Shepparton fire brigade is found and any land transfers are completed as a priority to provide much-needed reassurance to the Shepparton Country Fire Authority (CFA) and the broader community and that he announce the chosen site and the time frame for commencement of this important project.

As the minister would no doubt be aware, discussions around a new site for the Shepparton fire brigade have been afoot for at least two years. The current fire station is on a small site in the centre of the Shepparton CBD and faces the challenge not only of having little room to expand, as is now required, but also of fire trucks negotiating the busy street and a highly patronised bus interchange when responding to call-outs. The current situation is not acceptable, and it is, I think, an unusual situation when funding for a new station has been allocated and is sitting in an account somewhere waiting to be spent on this really important project.

I wrote to the minister in January this year to express my concern about the considerable delay in this project progressing, and I was pleased to be able to facilitate a face-to-face meeting at my office in February between

the minister and the officer in charge of the Shepparton fire station, Mr Peter Dedman.

I am a firm believer in hearing directly from those on the ground when it comes to identifying not only community needs but also solutions, and I know it was valuable for that meeting to have taken place between the minister and our CFA officer in charge. However, I would say that it is disappointing to note that some four months later there has still been no announcement as to a final resolution, despite discussions having taken place between the parties in relation to the land usage and the relevant site and how best to accommodate competing needs. I hope that this project will not stall again.

City of Hume criterium cycling facility

Mr McGUIRE (Broadmeadows) (17:11) — (14 535) My adjournment request is to the Minister for Sport. The action I seek is in relation to the Hume City Council report *Criterium Cycling Facility: Feasibility Study*. Constituents in Melbourne's northern suburbs are seeking a facility for recreational cycling and club racing. Families and individual cyclists could use the criterium course, clubs could book the course for racing and training, and others could use it as a driver training centre. There could be other features as well, including BMX and cyclocross tracks. If there was a velodrome to match the sports complex at Casey Fields included inside the criterium track, this could provide a major sporting hub in the north. It could also be an initiative that provides sport and recreational activities and serves as a catalyst for other events.

An event I want to see come back onto Victoria's well-established calendar of major events is the cycling road race that the 1956 Olympic Games ran through the district. Reviving this could be a challenge that we could look at for the future, allowing people to come from within the state, interstate or even internationally to compete against the times that were run back then and to see how they compare and how far we have advanced. I think this could be a catalyst for a whole range of different events.

RALAC Lionsbrae

Ms RYALL (Ringwood) (17:13) — (14 536) My request goes to the Minister for Roads and Road Safety, and the action I seek is for the minister to implement a pedestrian crossing on Maroondah Highway close to the vicinity of Everard Road in Ringwood so that residents of Ringwood Area Lions Aged Care (RALAC) Lionsbrae and others in the area catching the bus on Maroondah Highway can do so safely.

RALAC Lionsbrae is a residential aged-care facility in East Ringwood, and it accommodates around 69 people. The closest bus stop to the residents of RALAC Lionsbrae is on Maroondah Highway, and obviously Maroondah Highway is a very, very busy road with many lanes. The closest pedestrian crossings in either direction, east and west of the location of the aged-care facility, are 750 metres away to the east and well over a kilometre away to the west. You can imagine that for a person in their senior years or a person with a disability that that is certainly a long distance to have to walk. To cross that road safely is a significant challenge. Obviously, if they are going to Eastland and back, they need to start on one side of Maroondah Highway and come back over from the other side of Maroondah Highway. Particularly at peak times they would obviously be dodging traffic. RALAC Lionsbrae is a specialised provider of aged care for those with a disadvantaged background or people who are at risk of homelessness. The residents do enjoy going out or taking the bus to the shops.

In terms of the minister's action I am sure that he would agree that walking the very long distances to intersections to cross the road either going to the bus stop or coming from the bus stop is enormously difficult, and in fact many people from RALAC Lionsbrae would not be able to go that distance walking. Also traipsing across many lanes of a very busy highway is not safe without a pedestrian crossing. I ask the minister to take this very, very seriously and provide this not just for the people of RALAC Lionsbrae but also for the people in its close vicinity who seek to catch the bus. It is something we want and we encourage people to do, but they need to do so safely.

Tour of the Great South Coast

Ms GREEN (Yan Yean) (17:16) — (14 537) I wish to raise a matter for the attention of the Minister for Tourism and Major Events, and the action I seek is for him to urgently consider providing funding to support the Shire of Glenelg, which is very much in danger of losing a fabulous event — the 2018 Tour of the Great South Coast road cycling classic. I met with the shire's mayor, Cr Anita Rank, and CEO, Greg Burgoyne, here in Parliament this week and they explained to me the absolute imperative to fund this.

I know that it is a great event. It has been running since 2012. It is one of 10 events on Cycling Australia's prestigious national road series calendar. The tour attracts up to 140 top-class cyclists from Australia and New Zealand, plus several international competitors. The race features about 20 teams competing in a similar format to the Tour de France. Sadly, the port of

Portland recently changed ownership and there has been a late withdrawal of funding. I am a little disappointed that the member for South-West Coast seems to have already left the Parliament and gone home when we have a matter of this significance before the house, which could drive a big hole in the events calendar and the economy of the Shire of Glenelg.

The Shire of Glenelg should really be commended. It has a great events calendar under the stewardship of the mayor, Cr Anita Rank, and CEO, Greg Burgoyne. It really is driving jobs and investment in the shire. It is a beautiful area, for those of you who have not been there or for people in the house who may want to consider going there. The event begins in South Australia in Mount Gambier on 15 August and then travels to Port MacDonnell. Stage 4 on 17 August is from Heywood to Casterton. On 18 August it goes around the beautiful Cape Bridgewater, one of the most beautiful and pristine bays in Victoria. Then it concludes in Portland.

The shire has planned a whole lot of entertainment and activities in the lead-up and on the foreshore for spectators to enjoy, so it really is going to be a magnificent event. I urge the Minister for Tourism and Major Events, who like me is no stranger to south-west Victoria and really understands how important this event is, to look under every rock and wherever he can in the next few days to find the important money that is needed to support this event.

Bass electorate sports facilities

Mr PAYNTER (Bass) (17:19) — (14 538) My adjournment matter is for the Minister for Sport. Minister, will you join me on a tour of the sporting facilities in the electorate of Bass and compile a list of the sporting groups that are in desperate need of facility upgrades? With massive growth in the number of junior players and in participation rates among women and girls, the current facilities, which are already run-down, are now bursting at the seams. We can start at the Pakenham senior and junior football clubs and then wander across to the Little Athletics ground. We can then jump in the car and head to Koo Wee Rup on the way to Phillip Island, Wonthaggi and Inverloch, stopping off at the Grantville tennis courts along the way.

I would be delighted to sit with you in your ministerial car so that we can have a chat about the lack of quality sporting facilities in my electorate along the way. During the conversation we can also chat about your decision to gift the AFL \$225 million to upgrade Etihad Stadium in addition to the gift of land at Docklands. I would be interested in your justification for the decision

to gift this money to an organisation that has wasted over \$200 million in the past eight years establishing the Gold Coast Suns, who have not been successful by any measure. We might also discuss the merits of your new loan scheme that will burden hardworking local, community-based sporting clubs with interest-bearing loans whilst you gift millions of dollars to the AFL, whose annual report in 2017 disclosed a net profit of \$60 244 000.

Minister, at each of the clubs I will organise groups of the volunteers who sweep the floors, turn the lights on and off, mark the lines, organise teams, attend meetings, run the canteens and man the gates for hour upon hour each week so that local community clubs continue to exist. You can explain to them why you have gifted the AFL \$225 million while their clubs have overcrowded changing rooms and shower blocks without doors and face the logistical nightmare of boys and girls sharing changing rooms and toilets and netballers changing in storage rooms, as well as no meeting rooms and poor lighting and plumbing. Our local sporting clubs are the very heart and soul of our communities, yet you have failed in your responsibility as the Minister for Sport to support them. The Bass electorate deserves answers, and we look forward to your visit.

Early childhood education

Ms WARD (Eltham) (17:21) — (14 539) My adjournment matter is for the Minister for Early Childhood Education in the other place, and the action I seek is for the minister to provide an update regarding her efforts to get the federal government to commit to an ongoing joint partnership with states and territories on the regulation of early childhood facilities. I commend the minister for this year's early childhood education budget, which includes a \$135.9 million boost to early childhood education and delivers a record \$42.9 million boost to build, upgrade and equip kindergartens right across the state. This builds on the \$123.6 million record investment by this government in kindergarten capital infrastructure over the last four years, including in my electorate of Eltham. This of course all builds on the Education State *Early Childhood Reform Plan*, which aims to create a high-quality, equitable, inclusive and accessible early childhood system.

Sadly, quality is not a value shared by the Turnbull federal government, and I was concerned to discover that they have chosen to walk away from the national partnership agreement on the national quality agenda. Only a Labor government recognises the importance of providing families with strong support in early

childhood so that kids are ready for kinder, ready for school and ready for life. I ask the minister to update me on what action she is taking to get the Turnbull federal government to reverse these cruel cuts and get them to commit to an ongoing joint partnership with states and territories on the regulation of early childhood facilities.

Ms Britnell — On a point of order, Speaker, I was accused today by the member for Yan Yean of going home early and not caring about the cycling issue in my area which I have actually spoken to the Minister for Sport, who is also the Minister for Tourism and Major Events, about today.

The SPEAKER — Order! There is no point of order but I think the point has been made.

Responses

Ms ALLAN (Minister for Public Transport) (17:23) — Ten honourable members have raised 10 honourable matters for a number of different honourable ministers, and I will refer them to the ministers for their action and their response.

The SPEAKER — The house is now adjourned.

House adjourned 5.24 p.m. until Tuesday, 19 June.