

PARLIAMENT OF VICTORIA

**PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES
(HANSARD)**

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

Thursday, 9 August 2018

(Extract from book 10)

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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
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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	Naphthine, 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*): Dr Carling-Jenkins and Mr Gepp.

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, 9 August 2018**DOCUMENTS**

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

NOTICES OF MOTION**Removal**

The SPEAKER (09:33) — I advise the house that notices of motion 1 to 4 and 12 will be removed from the notice paper unless members wishing their notice to remain advise the Acting Clerk in writing before 2.00 p.m. today.

PETITIONS

Following petitions presented to house:

Drug driving

To the Legislative Assembly of Victoria:

We the undersigned citizens of Victoria draw to the attention of the house community concerns about people who drive while under the influence of drugs and in particular those who repeatedly offend.

The petitioners therefore respectfully request that the Legislative Assembly of Victoria calls on the Victorian government to legislate harsher penalties for drivers who have been found guilty of driving while under the influence of drugs and subsequently reoffend.

By Mr BURGESS (Hastings) (277 signatures).

Donnybrook Road bus service

To the Legislative Assembly of Victoria:

The petition of residents of Mickleham and surrounding areas draws the attention of the house to the absence of public transport connections for thousands of residents living in rapidly growing communities along Donnybrook Road.

The petitioners therefore request that the Legislative Assembly of Victoria funds and commences a bus service from estates along Donnybrook Road to Craigieburn railway station and Craigieburn Central shopping centre.

By Ms SPENCE (Yuroke) (97 signatures).

Tabled.

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

Tabled by Acting Clerk:

Parliamentary Committees Act 2003 — Government response to the Accountability and Oversight Committee's report on Victorian Oversight Agencies 2016–17

Planning and Environment Act 1987 — Notice of approval of amendment to the following Planning Scheme — VC151

Statutory Rules under the following Acts:

Electoral Act 2002 — SR 111

Magistrates' Court Act 1989 — SR 110

Subordinate Legislation Act 1994 — SR 108, 109

Subordinate Legislation Act 1994:

Documents under s 15 in relation to Statutory Rule 90, 110

Documents under s 16B in relation to the:

Gambling Regulation Act 2003 — Declaration of percentages of post-2022 new club and hotel venue Gambling Machine Entitlements

Renewable Energy (Jobs and Investment) Act 2017 — Declaration of renewable energy sources.

JOINT SITTING OF PARLIAMENT**Victorian Health Promotion Foundation**

The SPEAKER (09:35) — I have received the following communication from the Minister for Health regarding the membership of the Victorian Health Promotion Foundation. It reads:

The Victorian Health Promotion Foundation ('the foundation') is established under section 16 of the Tobacco Act 1987 (the act) to promote good health and advance disease prevention in the community.

Under section 21(1)(f) of the act, three (3) members of the foundation are members of either the Legislative Assembly or the Legislative Council and elected by both houses jointly.

Due to the resignation of Colleen Hartland, MP, from Parliament, there is one vacancy on the foundation.

I would be grateful if you could place this matter on the agenda for a joint sitting of both houses.

I have forwarded a similar request to the President of the Legislative Council.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

Adjournment

Ms HENNESSY (Minister for Health) (09:36) — I move:

That the house, at its rising, adjourns until Tuesday, 21 August 2018.

Motion agreed to.

MEMBERS STATEMENTS

Bellarine electorate sporting clubs

Ms NEVILLE (Minister for Police) (09:36) — On Saturday there were a number of great activities that occurred across the Bellarine that I was privileged to be part of in some way. First up, I was pleased to participate in a tree planting morning at the new \$3.5 million Drysdale sports precinct, a project I was proud to deliver in partnership with local clubs and a project I will continue to support for stage 2. The tree planting was organised by Bellarine Landcare and the sporting clubs, and it was great to see lots of kids enjoying the morning. I congratulate all involved, including organisers Kate Lockhart, Paul Rawson and Ross Deearth.

It was then a privilege to pitch the first ball for the Bellarine Bears women's baseball team — I must say not very well — in its last home game of the season. The Bellarine Bears is a great club and very supportive of women's participation. In fact the club fields the only all-female side participating in the Geelong Baseball Association. Thanks to Daniel Harvey, president; vice-president, Matt Connell; and captain, Meg Fahy.

From there I was pleased to present a \$1500 state government athlete pathway travel grant to the Barwon Heads 13th Beach Surf Life Saving Club. The grant assisted the club's inflatable rescue boat (IRB) race team to participate in the Australian championships recently in New South Wales, and it is now aiming for the world championships. I want to congratulate all in the club and its successful IRB team, including president, Andrew McKinnon; secretary, Katrina Antony; and coach, Jake Pownall. Well done to that great club.

Burwood Highway–McMahons Road, Ferntree Gully, traffic lights

Mr WAKELING (Ferntree Gully) (09:38) — I was very pleased to have the shadow minister for roads and

infrastructure join me to announce that a future Liberal-Nationals government will deliver traffic lights at the intersection of Burwood Highway and McMahons Road in Ferntree Gully, something that is sorely needed in my community. It has been overwhelmingly supported by a recent survey, with over 90 per cent of residents in that area wanting the traffic lights. The Labor government has reaffirmed that it is opposed to the installation of traffic lights at this intersection, but I am pleased to tell the Ferntree Gully community that a Liberal-Nationals government will deliver these much-needed traffic lights.

Scoresby and Ferntree Gully football clubs

Mr WAKELING — I was pleased to join with the member for Rowville to present the annual Wells-Wakeling Cup to the Scoresby and Ferntree Gully football clubs. This year it was won by the Scoresby Football Club, but I want it noted that the mighty Ferntree Gully Football Club will be back to win it next year. I congratulate both clubs

Ferntree Gully electorate sporting clubs

Mr WAKELING — I had the opportunity to visit a number of local sporting clubs, including the Wantirna South Football Club, the Knox City Football Club and the Fairpark Football Club as well as the Ferntree Gully reserves, who are all going to participate in funding upgrades of over \$50 000 each, which are sorely needed and which are part of a Liberal-Nationals coalition commitment of \$600 000 to local sporting clubs.

Wantirna College

Mr WAKELING — I would also like to take this opportunity to congratulate principal Kevin Murphy, the students and the staff at Wantirna College for the recent presentation ball. It was a fantastic event, and I would like to congratulate all of the students that participated in this very important event.

Kindergarten funding

Ms KILKENNY (Carrum) (09:39) — Every child should have the best start in life, with access to safe, quality early childhood services and support to learn, play and grow. I want to acknowledge all the wonderful kinders in my electorate — their staff, the educators, the volunteers, the families and particularly the kids at Banyan Fields kinder, Belvedere Park kinder, Bonbeach preschool, Botany Park preschool, Bowerbird kinder, Carrum kinder, Patterson Lakes kinder, Riviera kinder,

Rowellyn kinder, Seaford kinder, Seaford Heights kinder and William Road kinder.

Eighty thousand little Victorians rely on four-year-old kinder each year, and parents and teachers know just how important kinder is: kids who go to kinder are better prepared for school. There are social benefits too — how to be resilient, how to work in groups, how to share, how to socialise. Kinder sets up our kids for life. But all this is at risk if the Turnbull Liberal government has its way. The Turnbull Liberal government plans to withdraw its share of funding for four-year-old kinder under the national partnership agreement. It is all there in black and white — framed as a saving of \$440 million in this year's federal budget.

This is not just mean; it is unfair. So many families and so many little Victorians in my electorate rely on four-year-old kinder. To the federal Liberals and their Victorian counterparts we say: this is not just about numbers; this is about our kids' futures. The Liberals need to come out now and commit once and for all to continuing to fund four-year-old kinder for all Victorian children, so all kids will still have the opportunity to achieve this important learning and life milestone.

Campaspe College of Adult Education

Mr WALSH (Murray Plains) (09:41) — I raise the concerns today of Campaspe College of Adult Education in Echuca and particularly the impact its closure would have on the adult students of Echuca. Campaspe College of Adult Education has been delivering adult education into that region for 39 years now, and many of the young people in Echuca owe the employment opportunities they have to courses they have done at that particular college. There is a huge cost if those students have to travel out of town to go somewhere else to have an education opportunity.

The free TAFE courses have had a huge impact on the local learning networks right across Victoria. A number of local learning colleges have closed and the Campaspe college in Echuca is now at risk of closure. Karen Hagan has been working with the department to try to get a satisfactory outcome to keep the college functioning. Their student enrolments are starting to improve, but they do need the support of the government, they do need the support of the department to make sure they stay open to continue to deliver those very critical services, as I said, to the students and the adults of the Campaspe region.

I am very concerned that there have been questions to the Minister for Training and Skills in the upper house that do not appear to be resonating with her. She does

not seem to be supportive enough of the local learning colleges and the networks there. The concern is that the minister is more interested in covering up the rorts affair than in doing her job.

Mary Day

Mr WYNNE (Minister for Planning) (09:42) — It is with sadness that I reflect upon the passing of my friend and true believer, Mary Day. Mary had two great passions in life: her beloved Hawthorn Football Club and the Australian Labor Party. As a life member she will be remembered as a stalwart of the ALP, having served as a staffer for two federal ministers, Gerry Hand and Lindsay Tanner, who relied very much on her political acumen. Mary was a great role model for Young Labor. She shared her knowledge with young party members coming through the ALP and empowered all those she touched. She mentored and promoted young women activists, including of course many of my female colleagues, both ministers and members, in the Parliament today. Mary was a woman not to be messed with, known to many as a 'fixer', a warrior and a great problem solver. She gave so much to the labour movement. She was a great character — loyal, principled, selfless and very caring.

Mary always strove for a better society for others and believed in the people around her and the collective of the ALP. Her passing, which was too soon at only 67, is terribly sad. She will be mourned and missed by many, but especially by her son, Nick, and his partner, Tonyia, her siblings Pat, Kerry, deceased, Des, Maurine, Terry and Phil, deceased. Vale, Mary Day. We thank you for your contribution to the labour movement. A celebration of Mary's life will be held in the near future.

Gembrook electorate crime

Mr BATTIN (Gembrook) (09:44) — I rise today to talk about some of the issues of concern to the residents of Casey and Cardinia and particularly around crime. Crime in Casey and Cardinia is totally and utterly out of control, and the newspapers recently have been reporting two carjackings involving guns on the streets in Casey and Cardinia. A crime where seven youths took a gun and stole a car in daylight, at 2.54 in the afternoon, in Pakenham is unacceptable anywhere, and something needs to be done about it.

I have raised the issues with local police, who do a fantastic job in our local community. They are out there when they can be, but they are struggling under the pressures of a rising population throughout Casey and Cardinia, with six to seven families moving into the area per day. As we see the population rise through

these areas, in one of the fastest growing corridors in the state, we need a state government that supports the growth of police numbers so they can get back out on the beat and ensure we can have proactive policing throughout Victoria, particularly in the areas I represent in Casey and Cardinia. We do not want to see gun crime on our streets become normalised; we want to stamp it out and get rid of it now.

Jarrold Lyle

Mr BATTIN — I also want to put on the record my condolences on the passing of Jarrod Lyle, who passed away last night. Jarrod Lyle was a person in the golfing world whom we all know was a very proud person. He stole the hearts of all Australians during his third battle with cancer. We wish to pass on our condolences to his family.

Federal kindergarten funding

Ms HUTCHINS (Minister for Industrial Relations) (09:45) — I rise to speak on the federal government's anti-preschool education agenda and what a national disgrace it is. Budget documents reveal the federal coalition government plan to withdraw funding for four-year-old kinder. This puts preschools at risk, including the 31 preschools in my electorate. We know that the flow-on effect of this will effect almost 80 000 preschoolers across Victoria. The independent *Lifting Our Game* report concluded that short-term agreements only hamper future planning and cause uncertainty in the kinder sector. We know that the outcomes that are delivered through our primary school and preschool systems really deliver for our kids.

It was only last year that we had a significant achievement in closing the gap here in Victoria for Aboriginal kids by achieving a rate of parity between the enrolment of Aboriginal children compared to non-Aboriginal children across the state in kinders. This is a major contribution and achievement towards closing the gap, but with further kinder cuts coming that achievement is certainly put at risk. This is not the first time that preschools have been under attack by a Liberal government. We saw kinder funding cut by 20 per cent in the Kennett years. It is completely outrageous that the member for Bulleen and his frontbench are not standing up for Victorian families, taking on the challenge and standing up for little kids.

National Energy Guarantee

Mr SOUTHWICK (Caulfield) (09:47) — As we know, the cost of living is completely out of control in this state, and the Andrews Labor government have an

opportunity to fix that by signing the National Energy Guarantee (NEG) tomorrow at the Council of Australian Governments (COAG). We have the Minister for Energy, Environment and Climate Change at the table today, and we hope that you, Minister, will sign at COAG and not play politics with our power prices. Every Victorian is suffering under your government, Minister. It is time for you to stand up for Victorians, not for your green mates and the Labor Party. This is crunch time, Minister. This is crunch time for you to actually do something to fix energy prices.

The SPEAKER — Order! Through the Chair.

Mr SOUTHWICK — The National Energy Guarantee says that power prices will reduce by \$550. Do you want Victorians to be paying more, Minister, or do you want to continue to play politics with power? This is your chance, Minister, to stand up and do something, rather than continuing to do what you have been doing, putting ideology before politics. We have only seen now in the 24th hour that you want to back away from the NEG. This is an absolute disgrace, Minister.

The SPEAKER — Order! Through the Chair.

Mr SOUTHWICK — Politics before power prices; that is what you are doing, Minister. The minister is asking that we regulate power prices federally in one state. Yet you legislate with the Victorian renewable energy target (VRET), Minister. This is hypocritical. You want to legislate VRET in this state and you want the federal government to regulate and not legislate. What do you want, Minister? You are missing in action and you have no idea when it comes to lowering power prices in this state.

Automated external defibrillators

Ms HENNESSY (Minister for Health) (09:48) — I intend to address my comments through the Chair, as is appropriate in the context of members statements. Can I please place on the record my appreciation to Altona Youth Club Calisthenics and the Point Cook Football Club. I was delighted to talk to them this week and confirm that they were successful in their applications for defibrillators and training at those sporting facilities. These are important platforms for us to try and get greater access to automated external defibrillators (AEDs).

We know that every second counts when it comes to things like cardiac arrests, and being able to use the important platforms of sporting and other recreational facilities is a fantastic program. I am absolutely

delighted that they were successful in their applications for defibrillators through the sporting clubs and facilities program, and I was delighted to be able to advise them of their success this week.

Can I also acknowledge the wonderful St John Ambulance, the contracted trainer for the purposes of this program that will be supporting people in terms of the rollout of those AEDs. They will of course be registered with Ambulance Victoria, so they will also be able to direct any triple zero caller to the nearest AED should anyone be in the very challenging situation of being required to need one.

Mary Day

Ms HENNESSY — Could I also place on the record my condolences to the family of Mary Day. She was a lion of the Labor Party, and she was a wonderful human being. Vale, Mary Day.

National Energy Guarantee

Ms SHEED (Shepparton) (09:50) — For some time now electricity prices have been steadily growing, and I am hearing widely throughout my community that this is causing distress. While Victoria has initiated its own ambitious targets for renewable energy and energy security, at a commonwealth level years of political infighting and public posturing have left us with an absence of any long-term framework to support industry and consumers. The policy vacuum means businesses who want to invest in renewable energies will not, because making a 15-year business decision on a moving feast of political whims does not make sense.

Rising costs are seriously affecting families, and as I go about my community I am hearing from people and having people come into my office who are facing cut-offs of electricity in their homes. In a country such as Australia this is an indignity that should not happen to people.

A framework for renewable energy is now on the table in the form of the National Energy Guarantee (NEG). Businesses need this security and the sustainable development for our communities, and that financial relief that is supposed to come with the NEG is desperately needed. While the NEG in its current form may not fulfil everyone's ideals of a perfect system, there are worse positions to come from than the middle ground. Feedback from my community suggests that this is finally a way forward, and there is a keen desire to see us just get on with it. Governments are meeting tomorrow, and I would urge the government to put politics aside and make a decision.

Marymede Catholic College

Ms D'AMBROSIO (Minister for Energy, Environment and Climate Change) (09:51) — Last month I had the pleasure of dropping into Marymede Catholic College's new early learning centre in South Morang. I was particularly excited because Marymede's early learning centre had received a government funding support grant of \$650 000 through the Andrews Labor government's children's facilities capital program, and I was very, very keen to see the results. The building is sleek, modern and exceeds the expectations the community has for teaching our kids. It is clear that Marymede is wasting no time in getting the most out of these new facilities.

I would also like to thank Marymede students for giving me a comprehensive look into their Tiptoe through Our World project, a project that gets young kids to look at ways we can tackle global issues. The year 1s dealt with topics ranging from investigating how and why we need to preserve the environment for future generations and how we can maximise our re-using and recycling efforts to sustain our environment.

I saw a range of interesting and thought-provoking responses. I saw art and gifts made out of recycled materials and even a fully fledged study into how much waste classes were producing. I was nothing short of impressed. I would like to thank the teachers and staff for having me at Marymede, and I look forward to seeing these young minds grow to be the leaders of tomorrow.

Mary Day

Ms D'AMBROSIO — I also want to add my condolences to the family of Mary Day. Mary Day was known to me for decades. She was a true champion of the Labor movement and was a loyal stalwart, one who everyone could rely on, and did rely on. She will be sadly missed. My condolences to her immediate family and the broader Labor family.

Homelessness Week

Mr D. O'BRIEN (Gippsland South) (09:53) — It is Homelessness Week and I rise today to congratulate Sale Central Rotary Club and in particular Michael Page and his team of volunteers for their outstanding work in running Monday Tucker at Sale Memorial Hall, feeding local people who are hungry, homeless and down on their luck or just in need of some company. I went and helped out at Monday Tucker last week.

It is a great display of selfless community spirit, with volunteers feeding on average 60 people a week. That means over the past seven years they have provided around 23 000 meals. Supported by local businesses with donations of food and run entirely by volunteers, Monday Tucker supports people in need, including the elderly and those just seeking a bit of company. Well done to Michael and his crew on a great community effort.

Chairo Christian School

Mr D. O'BRIEN — Congratulations to Chairo Christian School in Leongatha, which celebrated its 40th anniversary last weekend. Originally starting out as South Gippsland Christian School, the campus is now part of a wider school in Gippsland and provides a Christian-based school environment for preps to year 10 and next year is introducing its own kindergarten. I visited principal Anthony Collier last week and wish the school community a happy anniversary and best wishes for the future.

Wooreen Avenue of Honour

Mr D. O'BRIEN — Congratulations to the Wooreen and Hallston communities in South Gippsland, which recently celebrated the centenary of the Wooreen Avenue of Honour.

Gippsland South electorate roads

Mr D. O'BRIEN — Wooreen is in the same vicinity as the Strzelecki Highway, where it runs between Berrys Creek and the Tarwin River bridges. Some roadworks have recently been undertaken on this stretch of highway, and it is fair to say it is pretty poor — most particularly the middle of three bridges over the Tarwin River has a deep and dangerous drop-off on one side. I call on the Minister for Roads and Road Safety to get this bridge and the accompanying roadworks fixed as quickly as possible.

Youth Empowerment Conference

Ms WILLIAMS (Dandenong) (09:54) — Last week I was thrilled to officially open the Youth Empowerment Conference, which was held at the Drum Theatre in Dandenong. This annual event is a wonderful day organised by young people for young people. Three years ago local students frustrated by the cost and travel barriers of attending student conferences in the city put their heads together and came up with the idea of organising their very own youth conference. They wanted to provide local students with an opportunity to get together, be inspired and get

engaged, and they did not want cost to be a barrier to this experience. Every year since that first year the conference has gone from strength to strength. This year it was attended by students from 12 local primary and secondary schools. The students heard from a range of inspiring guest speakers, including Bombers great Simon Madden, about leadership, community and teamwork, generating ideas and encouraging community engagement.

I would like to congratulate Wooranna Park Primary School for its lead role in organising the conference, in particular principal Ray Trotter and Lucia Hetherington. It was again a fantastic showcase of the enthusiasm, energy and engagement of our young people, and I look forward to the next conference.

School cleaners

Mr BURGESS (Hastings) (09:55) — Union organisers were sent to visit all Victorian schools to try to pressure cleaners into joining. Only 12 of those many hundreds did. The union told the cleaners that if they did not join they would lose their jobs. Now it is clear for everyone to see who is really running this state, because true to that promise every one of those many hundreds of metropolitan cleaners were sacked.

What a shining example of the utter incompetence of this Labor government the Minister for Education is, and what an embarrassing mess this minister, whom others refer to as Lord Farquaad, has made of school cleaning in this state. He wiped out hundreds of small businesses and crushed the hopes and dreams for the future of hundreds of Victorian families that stand behind those businesses. The minister took a healthy industry that sustained hundreds of small family businesses and employed hundreds more people — an industry that kept our schools clean and comfortable for our children, and businesses and workers that went the extra mile to ensure their school communities had everything they needed when they needed it — and in just a stroke of Lord Farquaad's mighty sword reduced it to just six businesses, including companies that had previously been convicted and fined for underpaying their employees.

Filthy schools, no flexibility of cleaners or cleaning, closed businesses, no jobs at all and cleaners being underemployed, underpaid or not paid at all — these are just some of the problems this minister imposed on Victorian metropolitan schools. Just 38 days after sacking hundreds of these businesses and causing so many problems for so many families, now this incompetent minister has decided to carry out an audit. If he had bothered to get this audit done earlier, he

would have known what the facts were. He must not roll this out to regional schools.

Green Gully Soccer Club

Ms SULEYMAN (St Albans) (09:57) — I was thrilled to officially open the Cavaliers room at the Green Gully Soccer Club in my electorate. The club was initially formed in 1955 by a group of Maltese migrants who wanted to bring football to Victoria and in particular to the western suburbs. Sixty-three years later the club has achieved so much. They are now in the National Premier Leagues, are nine times Victorian champions and continue to successfully grow. I have seen firsthand the massive contribution of this club, and I would particularly like to thank for their contributions club president Mr Dennis Venes and club manager and good friend Raymond Mamo.

Migrant Resource Centre North West Region

Ms SULEYMAN — On another matter, I would like to congratulate the Migrant Resource Centre North West Region, which last week celebrated the contribution of their own members. The centre has over 200 volunteers providing vital support services for newly arrived migrants and multicultural communities throughout Melbourne's north-west. Their contribution is very important work in supporting migrants and our multicultural communities.

Consul General of Turkey

Ms SULEYMAN — I would also like to thank the outgoing Consul General of Turkey, Mehmet Küçükşakalli. The Consul General concludes his post this month. He has contributed to building stronger ties between Turkey and Victoria. I wish him all the very best in his future endeavours.

Battle of Amiens centenary

Mr T. SMITH (Kew) (09:58) — I rise today to recognise that yesterday was the centenary of the Battle of Amiens. The Battle of Amiens was a coordinated attack by four Canadian divisions, five Australian divisions and 10 British divisions which saw an 11-kilometre hole punched in the German line — the biggest advance in one day in World War I. Ludendorff described it as the darkest day for the German army. It led to the 100-day campaign from the end of August through to November which precipitated the end of that terrible conflict, World War I.

It was so significant that King George V knighted John Monash in the field on 12 August. I commemorate today Sir John Monash's enormous contribution to this

country's safety and security and indeed our freedom here in Victoria and our energy security. John Monash laid in state in this Parliament after he passed away.

It is incumbent upon this Parliament and the national Parliament to recognise that enormous contribution by Australian forces — the only time all five divisions of the Australian Imperial Force fought together on the Western Front, which led to an enormous Allied victory and the end of World War I.

Brett Goodes

Ms KNIGHT (Wendouree) (10:00) — I would like to thank Brett Goodes, who has done such a great job in his role as the Bulldogs Ballarat engagement manager. He has been a real asset to Ballarat and is such a delight to work with. Brett has approached his job like the true local boy that he is: forming relationships and just getting on with the job. He has been a terrific ambassador for the AFL in Ballarat and has backed that up with hard work. But I think the most profound part of Brett's job has been the stuff that is not front and centre. It has been the work he has done with men's health programs and it has been establishing Daughters of the West in Ballarat — they have both been incredibly well attended. I had a participant of the men's program come to my office. This man had experienced lifelong trauma, and for the first time in his life he had found a group of friends that were safe, that he trusted and that he could go fishing with. I look forward to hearing equally inspiring stories from the women's program.

Brett has established leadership groups and of course Ballarat Reads, where kids have books read to them by their footy heroes. Recently Brett organised for some players to go to Yuille Park Primary School for a visit and a bit of a kick of the footy. It became apparent that there was no Auskick in that community and never had been. And guess what? Auskick started up there at the school on a Friday afternoon, and the kids just loved it.

Brett will do brilliantly in his next role with the club, and I hope that he has a real sense of pride about all that he has achieved for the Bulldogs and for the community in Ballarat. I know that we all do. Thank you, Brett.

Mount Waverley legal awards

Mr GIDLEY (Mount Waverley) (10:02) — Today in the Parliament I rise to congratulate Glen Waverley's Sharrock Pitman Legal on being named boutique law practice of the year at the Victorian Legal Awards for their work in commercial law, serving the needs of the

business sector and those in the not-for-profit sector. I note the practice has also been named as a state runner-up and national finalist in the National Australia Bank professional services awards. These achievements reflect the success the firm has had in delivering real value and benefits to clients and, importantly, the wider community. I congratulate the practice on these milestones and their contribution to Glen Waverley and Monash generally over the last 50 years.

Jesse Lang

Mr GIDLEY — I rise in the Parliament today to congratulate Jesse Lang on being awarded the Queen's Scout Award. The Queen's Scout Award is the highest youth award achievable in the scouting movement in the commonwealth realm. To be recognised as a Queen's Scout, Jesse successfully committed himself to a range of significant and substantial projects across the development areas of adventurous activities, community involvement, leadership development and personal growth. I congratulate Jesse and those who have supported him in his endeavours on such a significant achievement as the Queen's Scout Award.

School cleaners

Mr GIDLEY — I am sad to say that I have been contacted by many, many schools and parents who are completely dissatisfied with the Andrews Labor government's school cleaning changes. Schools and parents have indicated that students are being forced to use uncleaned classrooms and toilets because of the cleaning cuts of this government. Worse still, not only have many schools experienced substandard cleaning services, they have lost their choice of cleaners — some cleaners were at a school for many, many years — and hundreds of successful, high-quality small and medium-sized businesses have had their cleaning contracts terminated. This week's announcement by the Andrews Labor government acknowledging the problem and that they will undertake an audit into the school cleaning shambles is simply too little too late. The damage should never had been done in the first place. Victorians deserve so much better.

Country Fire Authority Edithvale brigade

Mr RICHARDSON (Mordialloc) (10:03) — On Saturday, 4 August, our community celebrated the opening of the Edithvale Country Fire Authority (CFA) station. This is a journey 10 years long, and it started back with a lovely gentleman of our community 88-year-old John Hennessy, who gave up his land next door to the CFA when volunteers came knocking and said they needed the site next door. Instead of selling it

to developers for hundreds of thousands of dollars more, he decided to support the volunteers that support our local community. So on the weekend we celebrated this incredible outcome with hundreds of people and the 130 volunteers that underpin the Edithvale CFA. Volunteers, integrated brigades and career staff came together for this incredible milestone. To John Hennessy, we thank you for your generosity.

It was former member, Jenny Lindell, who in 2009 secured the land with a \$950 000 grant. It was the member for Williamstown, the then shadow minister, who joined me for that very announcement and committed to rebuild the Edithvale CFA. On the 90th anniversary we celebrated with the former Minister for Emergency Services, the member for Brunswick, where we unveiled the exciting and wonderful plans for this station, and it was under the current Minister for Emergency Services when we demolished that station. It is a Labor government that has supported the Edithvale CFA through this journey to the opening of their new station. I pay tribute to Graham Fountain, the captain, and all the volunteers.

Bail law reform

Ms BRITNELL (South-West Coast) (10:05) — I rise to condemn the Andrews Labor government's weak law and order policies which have resulted in a lack of justice for a teenager in my electorate. On 28 July, in a behind the play incident, Sam Lambevski copped an elbow to the face. He was left with a jaw broken in two places, a broken eye socket and a concussion. The player responsible is on parole following a conviction for armed robbery and assault-related charges. He has since been charged with recklessly causing serious injury, recklessly causing injury and breaching parole, but he was granted bail and is free to walk the streets.

The victim's father is rightfully disgusted and distressed, and has been in touch with me to raise his deep concerns with the flawed and broken system. Parole is a privilege and not a right. This man has proven he is not worthy of that right. I think the community expects that if someone commits a serious offence while on parole, they will go back to jail, but not in Premier Andrews' Victoria.

It is baffling to think this young man is back in the community on bail after being charged with a violent assault while on parole — after serving prison time for a series of violent crimes. His actions have proven he has not been rehabilitated, and he should be back in jail. The Liberal-Nationals will take the tough approach that has been missing from law and order policy to restore

the community's faith in the judicial system and make sure victims receive the justice that they deserve.

RESIDENTIAL TENANCIES AMENDMENT BILL 2018

Statement of compatibility

Ms KAIROUZ (Minister for Consumer Affairs, Gaming and Liquor Regulation) tabled following statement in accordance with Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006:

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

In my opinion, the Residential Tenancies Amendment Bill 2018 (Bill), as introduced to the Legislative Assembly, is compatible with human rights protected by the Charter. I base my opinion on the reasons outlined in this statement.

Overview of the Bill

The Bill amends the Residential Tenancies Act 1997 (Principal Act) to implement a comprehensive set of reforms relating to residential tenancies, including the modification of premises, the regulation of pets in rented premises, compensation, notices to vacate and protections for renters against unlawful discrimination. The Bill strengthens existing penalties for non-compliance (including the introduction of a pecuniary penalty scheme), and contains measures to implement recommendations of the Royal Commission into Family Violence. These measures include enabling victims of family violence to leave a tenancy where a co-resident is a perpetrator of that violence and to reasonably modify the rental property in order to improve security. The Bill also provides a mechanism for the apportionment of liability so that victims of family violence are not held liable for debts attributable to perpetrators of the violence.

Human rights issues

The human rights protected by the Charter that are relevant to the Bill are:

The right to recognition and equality before the law (section 8);

The right to privacy and reputation (section 13);

The right to freedom of expression (section 15);

The right to family (section 17);

Property rights (section 20);

The right to a fair hearing (section 24);

The right not to be punished more than once (section 26).

Right to equality

Section 8(3) of the Charter provides that every person is entitled to equal protection of the law without discrimination

and has the right to equal and effective protection against discrimination. 'Discrimination' under the Charter means discrimination within the meaning of the *Equal Opportunity Act 2010*. Under section 8 of that Act, direct discrimination occurs if a person treats, or proposes to treat, a person with an attribute unfavourably because of that attribute.

Clause 49 of the Bill amends section 64 of the Principal Act to provide that a residential rental provider must not unreasonably refuse consent to modifications made by the renter that are reasonable alterations within the meaning of section 55 of the *Equal Opportunity Act 2010* (that is, that are required by a person with a disability to meet their special needs) and that are assessed and determined to be required modifications by an accredited occupational therapist or a prescribed practitioner. Equivalent provisions also apply in relation to other types of tenure. Renters may also modify properties for other reasons, for example, to obtain access to telecommunications services or take security measures, without an external assessment that the modifications are necessary. By imposing an additional requirement that people who require modifications due to disability obtain an external assessment that the modifications are necessary, clause 49 engages the right to equality under the Charter. To the extent that this could be viewed as unfavourable treatment and therefore a limit on the right to equality, in my view any limitation will be reasonable and demonstrably justified. It is reasonable for a residential renter provider to require some evidence that the proposed alterations are required and undergoing an assessment by a relevant practitioner will not be an onerous threshold to meet as it is the usual procedure for people with disabilities to undertake in order to ensure that the modifications to their home are appropriate for their particular needs. Further, if a residential rental provider has refused the request of a renter with a disability to make reasonable alterations, the renter is entitled under new section 91ZB to terminate the residential rental agreement early and will not be liable to pay any form of lease break fee.

Accordingly, I consider that clause 49 is compatible with the right to equality under the Charter.

Right to privacy and reputation

Section 13(a) of the Charter provides that a person has the right not to have their privacy, family, home or correspondence unlawfully or arbitrarily interfered with. Section 13(b) provides that a person has the right not to have their reputation unlawfully attacked. An interference will be lawful if it is permitted by a law which is precise and appropriately circumscribed, and will be arbitrary only if it is capricious, unpredictable, unjust or unreasonable, in the sense of being disproportionate to the legitimate aim sought.

Entry of rented premises

Clause 75 amends the current grounds for entry of rented premises in section 86 to include a right of entry to conduct an open inspection of the premises for prospective renters or buyers. The right of entry to conduct inspections for prospective renters may only be exercised after a notice to vacate or a notice of intention to vacate has been given and within 21 days before the termination date specified in that notice. The right of entry to conduct inspections for prospective buyers may only be exercised 14 days after the renter has been given a notice of intention to sell, and the residential rental provider must make all reasonable efforts to agree with the renter on days and times for the property to be

available for inspection. The amendments to section 86 provide that open inspections may take place up to twice a week and for a period of no longer than one hour unless agreed with the renter. A protected person under an intervention order or safety notice residing at the premises may require that any inspections be by appointment. The Bill substitutes section 89 to enable a renter to apply to VCAT for an order specifying or limiting when entry to the premises may occur.

Clause 75 also introduces a right of a residential rental provider or their agent to enter rented premises to produce advertising images and video of the property in certain circumstances. New section 89A, which reflects the recommendations of the Victorian Law Reform Commission report on this subject, provides that the residential rental provider must give the renter seven days notice and must make a reasonable attempt to agree with the renter on a suitable time for entry to the premises. A number of safeguards apply to protect the privacy of persons residing at the property. The residential rental provider must not take or produce images or videos if the renter gives a written objection on the basis that the image may identify a person residing at the premises who is at risk of family or personal violence, or shows a possession that directly identifies or reveals sensitive information about an occupant, would increase the risk of theft at the premises, or would be unreasonable to expect the renter to remove or conceal. The renter may further request that they review the images or video before they are advertised, in which case the images or video may not be advertised without the renter's written consent. The residential rental provider must also obtain written consent from the renter to use an advertising image or video that displays a possession of the renter more than 12 months after the image or video was produced, or if the image or video was produced for a purpose other than advertising.

In my view, while the exercise of these powers of entry may interfere with the privacy of an individual in some cases, any such interference will be lawful and not arbitrary. The purpose of these entry powers is to enable residential rental providers and their agents to showcase their properties to prospective renters and buyers through inspections and advertising, provided that doing so does not place any occupants at risk. I consider that the safeguards described above strike an appropriate balance between enabling a residential rental provider to effectively advertise their property while protecting renters' right to privacy. Accordingly, these provisions are lawful and not arbitrary, and are compatible with the right to privacy.

Disclosure of personal information

Clause 292 inserts new section 420C into the Principal Act, which provides that VCAT may order the Residential Tenancies Bond Authority to disclose a renter's email address, residential address and facsimile number to a residential rental provider, rooming house operator, caravan owner, caravan park owner or site owner (as the case may be). Such a disclosure is only permitted for the purpose of facilitating the service of documents on the person. Further, new section 481, inserted by clause 315, provides that in any proceeding, VCAT may make an order requiring an agent of a residential rental provider to provide the residential rental provider's full name and address for the purposes of the proceeding. Compliance with this provision is mandatory. New sections 420C and 481 engage the right to privacy in

section 13 of the Charter. However, in my view, any interference with the right will not be unlawful or arbitrary as only limited information may be disclosed in clearly confined circumstances. Further, an individual would have a limited expectation of privacy in the context of residential rental providers or VCAT having access to contact information, and a penalty applies in relation to section 420C if information is disclosed for a purpose other than serving documents. Accordingly, I consider that these provisions are compatible with the right to privacy.

The Bill amends section 331 of the Principal Act to provide that when considering an application for a possession order on the basis of non-payment of rent, VCAT may refer the renter to a financial counselling service or other prescribed service and require the service to assess and report on the ability of the renter to comply with a payment plan in relation to any outstanding arrears of rent. A referral may only be made for the purpose of VCAT determining whether satisfactory arrangements can be made to avoid financial loss to the residential rental provider, in which case VCAT may adjourn the application and make an order that the renter comply with a payment plan. While requiring an investigation into a renter's financial position may engage the right to privacy, in my view, it will be neither unlawful nor arbitrary. Any assessment will be carried out by a specialised financial counselling service and may assist the renter by ultimately leading to the dismissal or adjournment of the application for a possession order.

Non-compliance register and public warning statements

New section 439P requires the Director of Consumer Affairs Victoria to establish and maintain a register of certain residential rental providers, to be known as the Rental Non-compliance Register. Providers to be listed on the Register are those who have committed an offence under the Act, or who VCAT has ordered to remedy a breach, pay compensation or refrain from committing a breach. The Register must include certain information, including the provider's name, address of the premises in respect of which the order was made or the offence was committed, the provision of the Act that the person breached and any other information the Director determines is relevant. The Register will be publicly accessible and may be published in any manner or form that the Director considers appropriate.

Under new section 510K, the Minister or Director may publish a public warning statement identifying and giving information about premises offered for residential occupation, or persons who have engaged in conduct contrary to the Act if satisfied that it is in the public interest to do so.

To the extent that natural persons are named in the Register or a public warning statement, the right to privacy and reputation will be engaged. However, any interference with the right to privacy and reputation occasioned by these provisions will be lawful and not arbitrary. Publicising information about providers who have contravened the Act or who are subject to a compliance or compensation order from VCAT serves the important purpose of enabling renters to identify providers who have breached their obligations under the Act, and also deters future offending. Further, a number of safeguards apply to the listing of personal information on the Register. If satisfied that it would be unfair in all the circumstances to list the making of a compensation or compliance order on the Register, VCAT may order the Director not to list the order on the Register. A person's personal information may not be

listed on the Register unless the Director has given the person a copy of the information and at least 14 days to review the information and make submissions objecting to its entry on the Register or about its accuracy or completeness (unless the person cannot be located after making reasonable enquiries or the information is contained in publicly available court or Tribunal records). Finally, a listing on the Register expires after three years, and a person may apply to VCAT for an order requiring the Director to remove or amend information about that person in the Register in certain circumstances. For these reasons, I consider that these provisions are compatible with the right to privacy and reputation.

Right to non-interference with a person's home

Section 13(a) of the Charter provides a right to protection from arbitrary or unlawful interference with a person's home. The Bill provides for renters, residents of rooming houses and caravan parks, and site tenants to be issued with notices to vacate the relevant premises in particular circumstances, which may have the effect of interfering with a person's home.

Under various relevant provisions a notice to vacate may be issued to a renter, resident or site tenant prior to the end of a fixed term agreement in a number of circumstances which may involve no wrongdoing on the part of the renter. For example, a notice to vacate may be issued if a visitor of the renter intentionally or recklessly causes serious damage to the premises, or has endangered the safety or seriously threatened or intimidated certain persons, or if the renter has permitted the use of the rented premises for an illegal purpose. If a person has been given a notice to vacate the rented premises, the residential rental provider, rooming house operator, caravan owner, caravan park owner or site owner (as the case may be) may apply to VCAT for a possession order.

A renter, resident or site tenant issued with a notice to vacate on any of the above grounds may, on or before the hearing of an application for a possession order, challenge the notice in VCAT on the basis that the relevant act or breach for which the notice was given was caused by the act of a person who has committed family violence or personal violence. If VCAT is satisfied that the applicant has been, or is being, subjected to family violence or personal violence, and that the relevant act or breach was caused by the person who subjected the applicant to violence, VCAT must make an order that the notice to vacate is invalid. Further, in making a possession order under section 330 of the Act, VCAT must be satisfied that it is reasonable and proportionate to make a possession order in the circumstances, taking into account the interests of, and the impact on, the residential rental provider, renter, any co-tenants and any neighbours or other persons who may be affected in making the possession order.

The circumstances in which renters may be issued with notices to vacate are clearly set out in the Bill and are appropriately circumscribed. The provisions are necessary for the proper operation of the residential tenancies scheme, and seek to balance the competing objectives of respecting an individual renter's rights to occupy a rental property, and the broader protection of residential rental providers, contractors and neighbours. For these reasons, and given the safeguards described above which protect victims of family or personal violence from being evicted on the basis of acts of the perpetrator and the factors VCAT must consider, I am of the opinion that these provisions are compatible with the right in section 13(a) of the Charter. Further, to the extent that a notice to vacate or possession order may constitute a deprivation of

property pursuant to section 20 of the Charter, any such deprivation will be in accordance with law and therefore compatible with the right to property.

Freedom of expression

Section 15(2) of the Charter provides that every person has the right to freedom of expression. Section 15(3) of the Charter provides that special duties and responsibilities are attached to the right to freedom of expression and that the right may be subject to lawful restrictions reasonably necessary to respect the rights of other persons and for the protection of national security, public order, public health or public morality.

New sections 30E and 30G may interfere with the right to freedom of expression by prohibiting a residential rental provider or their agent from inducing a person to enter into a residential rental agreement by making a false or misleading representation about certain facts (such as the location and characteristics of the premises), and from making a false or misleading representation in relation to rent when advertising rented the premises. New section 30F also prohibits a residential rental provider or their agent from advertising premises unless the rent is offered as a fixed amount.

I consider that these provisions are necessary to protect members of the public and to ensure that they can reasonably rely on the truthfulness of information provided to them. Therefore, to the extent that the freedom of expression is engaged, these provisions fall within the exception in section 15(3) of the Charter, as reasonably necessary to respect the rights of other persons.

Protection of families

Section 17 of the Charter provides that families are the fundamental group unit of society and are entitled to be protected by society and the State.

Clause 248 inserts new section 332A into the Principal Act, which enables VCAT to dismiss an application for a possession order in certain circumstances and make a compliance order instead. The effect of such an order will be that the person will not be at risk of being subjected to a possession order requiring them to vacate the premises, but instead may be required to remedy the breach of duty or to refrain from committing a further or similar breach. If VCAT finds that the breach of duty to which the application for the possession order related was caused by a person other than the renter, VCAT may order that the renter does not permit the person who caused the breach to enter or remain in the rented premises.

Where an order of the Tribunal under new section 332A compels the exclusion of a family member from the renter's premises, this provision may interfere with the right to the protection of families. It may also interfere with the excluded person's right to non-interference with their home. However, it may also promote these rights (for example, where the person is a perpetrator of family violence). Further, a number of safeguards apply to the making of such an order, including that VCAT must have regard to whether it is reasonable and proportionate to make the order, and whether it is appropriate to do so. Further, section 332A will only apply in circumstances where a notice to vacate has been issued on the basis that the person has intentionally or recklessly caused serious damage to the premises or endangered the safety of

certain persons. Accordingly, the provision serves an important protective purpose and any limitation on the right to family will be reasonably justifiable. In my view, new section 332A is compatible with the right to family.

Right to property

Section 20 of the Charter provides that a person must not be deprived of their property other than in accordance with law. This right requires that powers which authorise the deprivation of property are conferred by legislation or common law, are confined and structured rather than unclear, are accessible to the public, and are formulated precisely.

New section 386, inserted by clause 268, clarifies that when dealing with goods left behind by a former renter, resident or site tenant, the owner of the premises may remove the goods from the premises and store them in a safe place. New section 391 also allows the owner of the premises to sell or dispose of the stored goods if the person entitled to possession of the goods has not reclaimed them within 14 days, or a longer period by agreement or by order of VCAT. These amendments extend the time period for collection and permit the owner of the goods to apply to VCAT for an order requiring the owner of the premises to store the goods for a longer period. To the extent that any of these provisions may result in deprivations of property, I consider that any such deprivations will be in accordance with law and compatible with the right to property under the Charter. The owner of the premises must take reasonable steps to notify the former renter that the goods have been left behind and must store them in a safe place for 14 days. The goods may only be sold or disposed of if not collected and the rightful owner may request the proceeds of sale (minus the relevant fees) if the goods are sold. The provisions are clear and confined.

Fair hearing

Section 24(1) of the Charter provides that a person charged with a criminal offence or a party to a civil proceeding has the right to have the charge or proceeding decided by a competent, independent and impartial court or tribunal after a fair and public hearing.

The Bill inserts a new scheme whereby a person who is a party to an existing residential rental agreement or is residing in rented premises as their principal place of residence has been or is being subjected to family violence by another party to an existing residential rental agreement, or who is a protected person under a personal safety intervention order made against a party to an existing agreement, may apply to VCAT for an order terminating the current residential rental agreement and requiring the relevant provider to enter a new agreement with the applicant (and any other persons specified in the application) on the same terms. This scheme also applies in respect of fixed term rooming house agreements, agreements under section 144, and Part 4A site agreements. In such a proceeding, the person who subjected the applicant to family violence or against whom the personal safety intervention order was made may not cross-examine the person subjected to violence unless VCAT gives leave. If leave is granted, the person may only cross-examine the person subjected to violence in relation to certain matters, such as the hardship they would suffer if compelled to leave the premises and their ability to comply with the duties of a renter. This reflects clause 73A of Schedule 1 to the *Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal Act 1998* which provides that in a proceeding under the Principal Act, a respondent to a

family violence intervention order may not personally cross-examine the protected person unless VCAT gives leave to do so. The Bill also amends this provision to extend it to personal safety intervention orders.

These provisions may interfere with the right to a fair hearing by limiting the opportunity of the alleged perpetrator of violence to cross-examine another person. Consequences of such a proceeding may include the termination of the alleged perpetrator's rental agreement and being found liable for outstanding charges in relation to the property. However, in my view, the right to a fair hearing is not limited by these provisions. The purpose of the prohibition on direct cross-examination is to protect victims of violence from being subjected to further trauma, and reflects current practice in intervention order matters. The person will still be able to conduct a cross-examination through a representative or if VCAT gives leave, can introduce contrary evidence and make relevant submissions, and will not be at risk of a finding of guilt or significant penalties. Accordingly, I consider that these provisions strike an appropriate balance between the right to a fair hearing and the protection of victims of violence, and are compatible with the right in section 24 of the Charter.

Right not to be punished more than once

Section 26 of the Charter provides that a person has the right not to be tried or punished more than once for an offence in respect of which they have already been finally convicted or acquitted in accordance with law.

The Bill introduces a pecuniary penalty regime, providing for a graduated series of sanctions under the Act. Under new section 498AH, the Director may commence a proceeding in the Magistrates' Court for the recovery of a pecuniary penalty on behalf of the State where a person has been involved in the contravention of a pecuniary penalty provision. These proceedings will be civil proceedings, to be determined on the civil standard of proof.

Criminal offences may also apply to the same conduct. However, I do not consider that the parallel operation of civil and criminal penalties limits the right not to be punished more than once for the same offence. New section 498AE of the Bill provides that the Court must not make a pecuniary penalty order against a person who has been convicted of an offence constituted by the same conduct. If a criminal proceeding commences against the person for an offence constituted by the same conduct as that alleged to constitute the residential rights contravention, the proceeding relating to the pecuniary penalty is stayed. Therefore, in my view, the pecuniary penalty scheme is compatible with the right in section 26.

Marlene Kairouz, MP
Minister for Consumer Affairs, Gaming and Liquor
Regulation

Second reading

Ms KAIROUZ (Minister for Consumer Affairs, Gaming and Liquor Regulation) (10:08) — I move:

That this bill be now read a second time.

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

The Residential Tenancies Amendment Bill is the culmination of a four-year, broad-based review of the Residential Tenancies Act 1997 (RTA).

The review represented a once-in-a-generation opportunity to revisit the regulatory settings that have been in place since 1997, and to ensure they meet the needs of participants in today's modern rental housing market.

The review delivers on the Andrews Labor Government's commitment to ensure Victorians who rent have access to "fairer, safer housing".

The Bill is a watershed moment in Victoria's regulation of the residential rental market. It implements a package of over 130 reforms to ensure that the RTA meets the existing needs of residential rental market participants while remaining adaptable to future change.

The Bill overhauls the RTA to better deal with the range of issues that arise during a rental relationship. In keeping with this forward-looking approach, the Bill adopts explicit purposes and up-to-date terminology befitting of a modern regulatory framework. Gone is the feudal language of landlords and tenants, to be replaced by 'residential rental providers' and 'renters'.

More broadly, the reforms are framed around the reality that a growing proportion of Victorians are priced out of home ownership and likely to rent for longer periods of time. There is, consequently, a need to rebalance the market through additional protections for a highly diverse population of renters.

A number of the reforms were foreshadowed as part of the Andrews Labor Government's 'Rent Fair' campaign in October 2017. These include:

- allowing animals to be kept in rented premises;
- allowing renters to make prescribed minor modifications to a rental property;
- bolstering security of tenure by ending 'no fault' evictions by removing the 'no specified reason' notice to vacate and restricting the use of 'end of the fixed term' notices to vacate to the end of an initial fixed term agreement;
- establishing a non-compliance register 'blacklisting' residential rental providers and agents who fail to meet their obligations;
- providing for the early release of bonds with the consent of both parties to the tenancy agreement;
- restricting solicitation of rental bids by residential rental providers and agents;
- providing for yearly, instead of six-monthly, rent increases;
- providing for faster reimbursement where tenants have paid for urgent repairs;

increasing the number of properties to which the statutory maximum cap of four weeks for bond and rent in advance applies;

enabling automatic bond repayments, which will be available to a renter within 14 days where the parties are not in dispute over the apportionment of the bond;

requiring mandatory pre-contractual disclosure of material facts, such as an intention to sell the rental property, or the known presences of asbestos; and

prohibiting misleading or deceptive conduct inducing a person into renting a property.

These protections are rounded out with other important changes aimed at improving the state of rented premises and ensuring that renters have a safe and sustainable living environment:

mandatory condition reporting to ensure the state of rented premises is accurately recorded at the beginning and end of a rental relationship;

mandatory safety-related obligations, notably electrical and gas appliance servicing every two years, and compliance with smoke alarm and pool fence regulations; and

the power to prescribe in regulations minimum standards for residential rental properties.

Minimum standards that would be prescribed include basic, yet critical requirements which no reasonable person could object to, such as:

- a vermin proof rubbish bin;
- a functioning toilet;
- adequate hot and cold water connections in the kitchen, bathroom and laundry;
- external windows that have functioning latches to secure against external entry;
- a functioning cooktop, oven, sink and food preparation area;
- a functioning single action deadlock on external entry doors;
- functioning heating in the property's main living area; and
- window coverings to ensure privacy in any room the owner knows is likely to be a bedroom or main living area.

This power to prescribe minimum standards has been flexibly designed, so that it can incorporate standards imposed under other Victorian legislation, such as energy and water efficiency requirements. A failure to comply with the standards will trigger a variety of responses, including a fine, urgent repairs to the premises, or termination of the parties' agreement before a renter has even moved in.

Importantly, the Bill implements each component of recommendation 116 of the Royal Commission into Family Violence to better protect and support family violence victims

living in residential rental housing. Consideration of family violence has also been interwoven with relevant provisions of the Act to avoid further victimisation of vulnerable renters while ensuring continuity of housing.

Specialised reforms have also been included for alternate tenure types such as rooming houses, caravan parks and residential parks.

The Bill allows for a new, tailored rooming house agreement to be developed for operators and residents wishing to enter into an agreement with a defined occupancy period. Parties who do not wish to enter into the new agreement will be subject to the ongoing residency right currently conferred by the Act. Use of tenancy agreements in rooming houses will only be allowed in respect of residents living in self-contained apartments that form part of the rooming house.

Importantly, the Bill responds to ongoing concerns about the procedural rigour, and impacts, surrounding park closures. Residents affected by the closure of a park will now have access to compensation in particular circumstances, and park owners will need to comply with stricter notification and permission processes before they can proceed with closing down a park.

While the main focus of the Bill is improving protections for vulnerable renters, and greater security of tenure, these reforms are offset, in a number of instances, by increasing clarity around renter responsibilities.

Residential rental providers will now be able to terminate a tenancy if a renter or any other person occupying or jointly occupying the rented premises has seriously threatened or intimidated the residential rental provider, their agent, or a contractor or employee of either.

Existing termination grounds have been fine-tuned to ensure they provide residential rental providers with effective tools for managing risks arising during a tenancy. For example, renters who intentionally or recklessly damage premises will no longer be able to avoid eviction on the basis of a prediction by VCAT that the conduct will not recur.

Termination for repeated non-payment of rent will now be underpinned by a more structured process. Tenants who receive four notices to vacate for being 14 days or more in arrears in any 12-month period risk being evicted the next time they receive another notice to vacate, unless they can pay the arrears, satisfy the terms of a payment plan (where such a plan is imposed by VCAT), or demonstrate that it would not otherwise be reasonable or proportionate to end the rental relationship.

This 'reasonableness and proportionality' test would also apply to other applications for a possession order to ensure that renters are not evicted for trivial or easily remediable reasons.

Tenants will need to comply with new safety-related duties to ensure they play their part in ensuring the safety of the premises. This also includes a prohibition on tampering with any safety devices, such as smoke alarms, unless it is reasonable to do so in the circumstances.

Rights of entry have been significantly clarified to ensure that inspections can be conducted in an orderly manner, while avoiding undue interference with renters' daily lives. For example, residential rental providers will have a clear right to

conduct at least two opens for inspection per week when re-letting or selling a property. Renters would have the right to refuse further inspections, and would be compensated for any inconvenience, as well as loss of property that might occur during an inspection.

The Bill also modernises the process for dealing with goods left behind by a renter, and empowers the Director of Consumer Affairs to issue guidelines clarifying the operation of the RTA.

The Bill implements the Victorian Law Reform Commission's recommendations about photography of premises, allowing residential rental providers to do what is necessary to re-let or sell their premises, while balancing the need for renters to impose restrictions on the types of photographs or videos that may be taken.

The Bill also includes a number of changes that will benefit both sides of the market by targeting inefficient or outdated processes, and strengthening incentives for compliance with the Act. These include:

- increasing existing penalties for non-compliance, and introducing a civil penalty regime for certain offences;

- a power for the Minister of Consumer Affairs, or the Director of Consumer Affairs, to issue a public warning statement about premises, rental housing providers or persons who have breached the Act, if it is in the public interest to do so;

- updating provisions relating to the provision of keys so as to cover devices that enable entry into secure buildings;

- enabling digital delivery of information and forms to bring the RTA into the 21st Century;

- enabling payment of rent via fee-free methods, as well as Centrepay; and

- facilitating free access to tenancy databases, and introducing restrictions on listings relating to family violence.

I note that the Bill is the first step towards the Andrews Labor Government's broader vision for the RTA. Work will continue next year to ensure that the suite of reforms in the Bill is supported by complementary, easily accessible and effective dispute resolution through VCAT, encouraging the parties to assert their rights in a non-adversarial manner.

As part of those reforms, the Victorian Government will work with VCAT and relevant stakeholders to significantly improve dispute resolution processes within VCAT for residential tenancy matters, by making greater use of informal methods of dispute resolution and introducing internal review for residential tenancy decisions.

The process will conclude with a re-write of the RTA to ensure its structure and language are as easily accessible as possible for the variety of audiences that rely on it to run their homes or their businesses.

In the interim, the Bill will modernise the RTA to cater for the contemporary Victorian residential rental market.

I commend the Bill to the house.

Debate adjourned on motion of Ms VICTORIA (Bayswater).

Debate adjourned until Thursday, 23 August.

**CHILDREN, YOUTH AND FAMILIES
AMENDMENT (YOUTH OFFENDER
COMPLIANCE) BILL 2018**

Second reading

Debate resumed from 26 July; motion of Mr PAKULA (Attorney-General).

Ms VICTORIA (Bayswater) (10:09) — I rise to speak on the Children, Youth and Families Amendment (Youth Offender Compliance) Bill 2018. The former coalition government introduced a broad suite of community safety initiatives, which we were very, very proud of at the time. They included the use of things like electronic monitoring devices to track serious adult offenders. The Andrews government, in contrast, has totally ignored the concerns of the community regarding violent and serious offending by youth offenders. It is interesting that on the eve of an election they have chosen to introduce legislation to cover their inadequate response so far to law and order in this state.

If you speak to anybody out in my electorate, and certainly from listening to other members in this house and in the other house, you would know that people in Victoria are very aware of the crisis that we have as far as law and order goes in this state. Young offenders statistics have only gotten worse under this government, and of course we can attribute that directly to a soft-on-crime approach. Taxpayers are now spending an extra \$64.8 million on youth justice in comparison to what they were spending in 2014. You have got to say, 'Well, with that amount of investment, you would hope that there has been a turnaround in statistics'. Of course when I talk statistics, I am talking about lives as well — those who are the perpetrators and where their lives are heading but also the victims of the crimes.

But the youth gang crisis seems to be getting worse, not better — in fact it does not seem to be, it is. There was a story on the news about an incident last night in Taylors Hill where some 100 or so youths were engaging in riotous behaviour. They were damaging property. They even got to the stage where they damaged a police car. There is no respect for the law or any sort of order here in this state. Even worse, it reminded me of something you might hear of in a war zone. We have all seen the movies; we have all seen the things on the news channels about people being told to stay indoors and lock their houses for their own safety.

This is Melbourne. This is Victoria. This is Australia. Traditionally we have been a safe country and our people have always been taken care of by the police force, but the police force are powerless when they are outnumbered by hundreds of youths who are running riot and not doing the right thing by the people of Victoria —

Mr Eren interjected.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr Carbines) — Order! Minister!

Ms VICTORIA — I do take up the interjection and say that we are not the safest state in Victoria. You only need to have a look at the statistics. The Minister is in denial.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr Carbines) — It is disorderly to respond to interjections. I ask the minister to assist the lead speaker for the opposition.

Ms VICTORIA — This state has been proven in statistics to not be the safest, and I very much expect the same statistics are available to all members of this house. I will just give you an example. If we look at my electorate, which again is a beautiful family neighbourhood, whether it be The Basin, Heathmont, Bayswater, Bayswater North, Kilsyth South, not to forget Wantirna and Boronia. These are beautiful areas where families have chosen to live, but crime has gone through the roof. The statistics do not lie, and it is not because of —

Ms Halfpenny — Give us an example.

Ms VICTORIA — I will give you an example: 53 per cent up in Boronia alone. Do you want more examples, because it is only going to embarrass this government if I go down that path? The people of Victoria deserve better. They pay their taxes, they expect to be protected and, even more so, they expect the government of the day will ensure that the laws are appropriate and that the courts can then go and impose appropriate sentencing on those who are offending. But a soft-on-crime approach will get nobody anywhere, except in jail and out on the streets offending against other innocent Victorians, like we saw in Taylors Hill last night — which is unacceptable.

This is Melbourne, as I said, which has been the world's most livable city for seven years in a row. I can tell you that we will not be holding that accolade for much longer. 'Soft on crime' is starting to get out around the world, and as the shadow minister for tourism, I can tell you that that is something that people

bring up with me when I am talking with them, not only locally but also overseas.

This government should be ashamed of what they have been doing — or not doing — on law and order. Not only has the youth gang crisis being costing taxpayers almost double what they spent in 2014, but Victorians are also picking up the tab for repairs to youth justice centres, and there is no denying what that cost has been. They have been trashed in over 50 riots under the Premier and his government. Under our government we built a beautiful school area in one of the youth detention centres. It was trashed beyond usage and is still not in use to this day. If a youth goes into detention and is not given the opportunity of rehabilitation through education, which we know gets them out of trouble, can anyone in this place say what hope is there for the future? There is no hope for the future.

This bill seeks to amend the Children, Youth and Families Act 2005. It is going to extend the electronic monitoring of certain young offenders out on parole. As I say, we introduced adult electronic monitoring, and this is an expansion of that scheme. It will establish a trial of an alcohol and drug testing regime for youth parolees. I will talk a little bit more about that later. It will require the Youth Parole Board to include in its annual report a statement of the purpose of parole and the general principles and factors the board takes into account when making decisions about parole. Of course there is a great deal of public expectation about who will and will not be let out on parole, the same as there is around bail. So many times we hear of somebody being out on parole or bail and reoffending, and I think it is very sensible that these statements will need to be included in the annual report.

The bill will require the secretary to have the trials evaluated and reports presented to the minister within two years of their commencement and tabled here in this place. It will make clear that family law jurisdiction conferred upon the Children's Court under the commonwealth Family Law Act 1975 will be exercised in the family division of the court and allow the Children's Court to make rules accordingly. The bill also makes amendments to the Bail Act 1977, the Children Justice Legislation Amendment (Youth Justice Reform) Act 2017, the Surveillance Devices Act 1999 and the Children Legislation Amendment (Information Sharing) Act 2018, which was introduced into this place this year.

Let me go through a couple of the main provisions. Clause 1 will amend the act in relation to parole together with some other matters; clause 4 requires the Youth Parole Board to include in its annual report a statement

of the purposes of parole, as I have said, but also the general principles and factors that they take into consideration; clause 5 gives the Youth Parole Board the power to impose special conditions on a parole order; and clause 8, specifically through new section 458A(2A) inserted in the principal act, requires the Youth Parole Board to attach an electronic monitoring requirement to a condition of a youth parole order when they are satisfied of the following conditions:

- (a) that it is appropriate to attach the requirement in all the circumstances having regard to—
 - (i) the person's risk of re-offending; and
 - (ii) the extent to which the requirement and the condition to which the requirement is attached may assist in reducing the person's risk of re-offending; and
 - (iii) the extent to which the requirement may have an adverse effect on the person's rehabilitation;
- (b) that the Secretary has available the appropriate resources and facilities to enable electronic monitoring of the person.

Clauses 9 and 10 establish particular consequences for the breach of parole while subject to an electronic monitoring condition. It is all about consequences. Our young people these days do not understand that if you do the crime you must do the time, no matter what that is. For everything that you do there is a reaction. Clause 11 concerns the removal of electronic monitoring devices and equipment. Clause 13 establishes an alcohol and drug testing regime for youth parolees. To actually say we are going to test them once they come out of jail is fine, but what has happened to them while they have been in jail — while they have been incarcerated — to actually help get them off drugs, alcohol or other substances?

The Liberal-Nationals are committed to ensuring violent young offenders are appropriately punished — there is no doubt about that; we have been in the media for the last three or more years talking about that — but we are also willing to deal with the threat of substance abuse and help young people to turn their lives around. We want these people to have a brighter future. That is why earlier this year we announced that if we are elected in November we will introduce mandatory residential drug and alcohol treatment for young people whose offending or risky behaviour is a result of substance abuse. We know that there are so many in our system that are there as a result of what they have been taking. There is plenty of talk on talkback radio about whether or not anybody made them take that. It is a choice they made. Young people do make bad

choices, but we need to be able to help them turn their lives around.

The new youth therapeutic order will enable mandatory drug and alcohol treatment to be ordered by the Children's Court for young people in the justice or child protection system. It will be delivered with a new \$30 million 36-bed secure drug and alcohol treatment facility which will cost about \$20 million a year to run. We are very, very proud of this initiative, and there are plenty of families out there who have written to myself and my colleagues, saying, 'Thank you. We've got a young person. We acknowledge they're off the rails and they acknowledge they're off the rails, but we cannot get them into treatment'. By making it mandatory for some of these people, it will turn lives around.

This will of course provide an alternative treatment pathway for young offenders who would otherwise be incarcerated without access to comprehensive drug treatment to assist them in turning their lives around. In Victoria the only drug and alcohol treatment available for young people is voluntary. If this treatment fails and offending continues, families are left to watch their children self-destruct in a system where neither the courts nor families have the power to ensure that children get the treatment they need to address their addiction and be free of it. Our initiative will give families hope, particularly those families dealing with young people addicted to ice, and keep the community safe. Importantly it will give young people the opportunity to turn their lives around so they can be drug free and live fulfilling lives.

The current system is clearly not working: 87 per cent of offenders have a history of drug and/or alcohol abuse, and 82 per cent have offended whilst under the influence. These are profound and alarming numbers, and I do not think anybody can deny that. Prevention is important, but a cure, like the youth therapeutic order, is absolutely vital to some of these young people's futures — if indeed they are going to have a future at all. The current government have had four years to deal with violent young offenders and have only now announced changes with an election looming. They have failed. Victorians have had enough. It is too little too late. We are sick to death of the news reports that happen on a daily and weekly basis — carjackings and people let out on bail who then reoffend. Things like last night in Taylors Hill should never happen. As of this morning there had been no arrests made — none — yet there was property damage. People locked themselves in their homes out of fear and on the orders of police. A police car was damaged and, as I said, plenty of property was damaged as well. This state is out of control.

What we will do is turn this around, and we have lots of positive policies. I would ask all Victorians to have a look at the Liberal Party of Victoria's website. Have a look at our proactive policing policies and our proactive approach to law and order, to justice, to bail and to parole — to all the things that are failing under the current government. We know that, because the statistics are going up and up and up. The other side can be in denial all they want; the statistics do not lie. This government have been too full of themselves getting into social meddling, and they have failed on so many counts.

There are solutions, and they live on one side of the house only. It is the Liberal-Nationals coalition that is providing solutions, not the failings of the last four years. In November the good people of Victoria, who are sick to death of being subjected to the law and order crisis in this state, will have a very clear choice.

Mr McGUIRE (Broadmeadows) (10:24) — It is important to outline the context of this bill. Youth offenders under community supervision were allegedly involved in a series of serious criminal offences in the latter part of last year. The parole reform measures contained in this bill reflect the government's commitment to improving community safety. They achieve this aim by reducing parolees' reoffending risk through a mixture of deterrence and incentives towards positive social behaviour and addressing their needs. Youth justice staff and other detainees should not be subjected to violence and abuse in a custodial setting. Where necessary, the Youth Parole Board transfers unmanageable youth detainees to prison. Such detainees should not return to youth justice custody simply because a new custodial sentence is imposed on appeal.

These are critical initiatives in this bill, and they go to a series of propositions. One is the trial of electronic monitoring and alcohol and drug testing. The strategy behind this is to have a trial and an evaluation to test the efficacy in improving community safety through reducing reoffending and improving young offenders' rehabilitation prospects.

I want to also place this bill in the context of the government's overall strategy. The bill is also in line with broader criminal justice reforms that are aimed at keeping Victorians safe, including strengthened bail laws in response to the review of the bail system by the Honourable Paul Coghlan, QC, following the Bourke Street tragedy in January 2017; the delivery of 3135 new police officers, with record funding and investment to make this happen; and also the funding of another 42 additional police youth specialist officers to work in local communities and divert young people from a life

of crime. So this is a strategy that has an overall vision. It has got the plan and then it has got the targeted response to address these concerns.

Despite an overall reduction in the number of crimes committed by young people in recent years, there are a small number of young people who enter the criminal justice system early and reoffend more often by committing serious offences that have a significant impact on the community. These reforms make clear that the government is committed to keeping the community safe by targeting violent young offenders and making the necessary investment across the criminal justice system. That is the key proposition within this bill. But, as I say, it comes as part of a suite of reforms to address these issues at their critical points.

The bill will expand the Youth Parole Board's existing annual reporting obligations to include a statement on the purpose of parole and principles and factors the board takes into account in making parole decisions. Extending the board's reporting obligations to these matters will improve the transparency and accountability of its operations and decisions. I think this is a really important initiative so that the media and the general public know what the facts of the matter are and what is the rational decision-making that goes on behind these decisions. I think that will help clarify to people what is going on. It also provides greater scrutiny, accountability and compliance. That is the balance that I think we are trying to make sure that we actually get in the best interests of the community, with the primacy being better community safety.

The Youth Parole Board has for a long time imposed special conditions on youth parole orders. As the board indicated in its most recent annual report, and I quote:

These conditions can arise from the offending history or from reports indicating specific problems that are likely to interfere with successfully completing the parole order.

They may involve, for example, a curfew, geographic exclusion zones or attendance at treatment counselling or programs as part of the parolee's supported transition back into the community. This is how the government is trying to address how you actually deal with these issues.

Whilst the board already has this power, the bill will provide the Youth Parole Board with an explicit power to impose special conditions on youth parole orders to put this matter beyond any doubt. That is important given the role of special conditions in the youth parole system in providing a managed and supported transition of young offenders from custody back into the

community, reducing young parolees' risk of reoffending and enhancing their rehabilitation prospects.

Ms Ryall — Acting Speaker, I draw your attention to the state of the house.

Quorum formed.

Mr McGUIRE — I am delighted to have a bigger audience to address. It was very good of the opposition to —

Ms Ryall interjected.

Mr McGUIRE — No, they are all listening. It is okay; they are all tuned in. The manager of government business is here. They are either in the house or they are tuned in, and they understand that this is what we are doing. We can do a number of things simultaneously.

I want to come to the issue of the electronic monitoring, which is one of the key aspects of this bill, and also just outline how this is going to be implemented. It will only be used for young offenders aged 16 years or older who are on parole after being in youth justice detention for committing a category A or category B serious youth offence. These categories were inserted into the Children, Youth and Families Act 2005 by the Children and Justice Legislation Amendment (Youth Justice Reform) Act 2017 and include certain death-related offences, intentionally causing serious injury in circumstances of gross violence and aggravated home invasion.

So that is the category that is being highlighted and targeted. These are of the worst nature, and for all offenders in this category the Youth Parole Board will be required to consider whether to impose electronic monitoring as a condition of parole. An electronic monitoring condition can be attached to any parole condition that the Youth Parole Board is required to consider following the changes made by the youth justice reform act. These include that a young person not visit particular places or areas.

To ensure that electronic monitoring is used to its full potential, this bill will include a curfew condition in this category of parole conditions. A curfew can already be imposed by the Youth Parole Board as a special condition. This amendment will ensure that a curfew is considered for all serious young offenders and, if a curfew is imposed, that it may be supported by electronic monitoring.

That is the trial that will be introduced and analysed, and its efficacy will then be considered as to how effective it is. This is, as I said, part of a suite of

different initiatives that the government has brought in to address the law and order issue. It is the way that we have to address how this happens over time with population growth and with different areas of disadvantage.

As the house will be aware, I have long called for the law and order debate to rise above the endless loop arguments over which political party is supposedly tougher on crime to a coordinated strategy that is smarter on crime, so let us get there as well. Such a shift requires focusing more on the causes of crime than on its symptoms. This is an issue that I think we need to continue to evolve and address, and also look at what the responsibility is for each individual crime, how that is delivered to the community and then how we look at what are also the bigger picture causes of crime to get a balanced proposition that will in the end make Victoria safer.

Ms THORPE (Northcote) (10:34) — I rise today to speak on the Children, Youth and Families Amendment (Youth Offender Compliance) Bill 2018. The Greens will not be supporting this bill. As we have heard this bill could result in children and young people aged over 16 years being forced to wear electronic monitoring devices and undergo drug and alcohol tests if living in the community on parole.

Trialling new technologies and practices often involves a balancing act of competing priorities and concerns. This is a clear example of that, but on this issue the government has got it wrong. There is no judgement of balance, only a thinly guided attempt to take the edge off the fear and anxiety that the opposition are intent on instilling in our communities. This bill is yet another example of the opposition setting the agenda in terms of justice legislation in this state. The reality is that mandatory drug and alcohol testing and electronic surveillance are highly likely to increase the levels of stigma that young offenders are already dealing with. This is not just the position of the Greens; it is the position of experts and people working on the front line with young offenders and their families.

A number of leading organisations have put their concerns about these trials very clearly on the record, including the Law Institute of Victoria; the Youth Affairs Council Victoria, the state's peak body for young people; Jesuit Social Services; and Youth Law. The Youth Affairs Council of Victoria has stated that:

Mandatory drug testing without access to treatment services doesn't support a child or young person to get healthy but rather risks setting them up to fail and returning them to prison.

It has also noted concerns raised in the USA about how intrusive and stigmatising it has been for children and young people there. The Greens and those working in the youth justice sector are concerned that increased testing and monitoring may have the effect of reducing support for young people.

There is a world of difference between being monitored by a real person, involving engagement and conversation, and having your data collected remotely. These kids need access to as much support, assistance and voluntary treatment as can be provided if they are to have any chance of being rehabilitated and avoid entering the adult criminal justice system. That must be the goal. The Greens have consistently acknowledged that we have a youth justice challenge that we must face up to, but increased monitoring and surveillance are not the answer.

I realise our arguments will be largely falling on deaf ears given the opposition's form on youth justice and the government's determination to make this a race to the bottom. My colleague in the other place will address the bill and our position in more detail.

Mr PEARSON (Essendon) (10:38) — I listened to the very brief contribution of the member for Northcote, and I do want to pick up on a number of things that the member said. You cannot look at this bill in isolation. You cannot look at this just as a single piece of legislation. What you must do is look at this bill in the context of the initiatives and the endeavours of the government.

A case in point is the investment we are making in the Education State and the fact that we are going to have free TAFE courses from next year. Providing better schools, better education options and free TAFE will provide an opportunity for young people to seek employment and to get the training and skills they need. That is the first observation I would make.

The second observation I would make is that the member has not been paying attention to some of the budget announcements of the Minister for Mental Health this year, when he indicated that we are making a significant investment in terms of drug and alcohol treatment in relation to rehabilitation and in relation to implementing the Ice Action Plan. So it is not a simple case of just saying that you are going to put on electronic tags and there is not support for young people. We are putting more money into these services and we are making sure that there are those opportunities available.

The other point I would make to the member for Northcote is that you want to try to make sure that the little mistakes that a young person makes do not become big mistakes that the adult makes. I think it is about putting an electronic tag on a parolee whereby if they do make a transgression, if they do make a mistake, there is an ability to identify that early and to seek rectification of that, rather than turning around and saying we are not going to have compulsory drug testing, we are not going to try to find out where you are or if you are breaking your curfew and we will leave you to your own devices. What I would say to the member for Northcote is that the problem with that is that if you do not have any visibility over these matters, then those mistakes become bigger mistakes. Those people will come into contact with the adult justice system, and that will lead to very poor outcomes.

This is a challenge I have often had with the Greens political party — that is, they will look at these items in isolation and they will use what the member for Northcote just did then, which is just a cheap line: ‘It’s a race to the bottom’, ‘It’s the government following the opposition’ or ‘All these groups have got these concerns about it’, and it is flawed.

Mr Walsh interjected.

Mr PEARSON — I listened to the interjection by the member for Murray Plains that we should follow his party more often. I think the lamentable example they gave the people of Victoria over four years demonstrates very clearly that the coalition in power is just a woeful example of public administration in this state. We will not be following their examples.

I think that is the problem with the Greens. They come to this place and they cannot speak for their allotted time. It is just laziness. They just do not do the work in terms of understanding and appreciating some of the endeavours that we are trying to do. These problems are really deep-seated and intractable, and if you are a young person and you have got these problems, then you have got the ability to try to turn it around.

Interestingly but very sadly for me, I have recently become aware that a friend of mine is in the grip of ice addiction. He very sadly is in his mid-50s and had never used drugs previously but got caught up and has made some very unfortunate choices. Recently he was placed in a secure mental health facility. I tried to go and see him, but I could not get in. It is very sad. This guy is in his mid-50s, and I really worry about what fate awaits him. I do not think it is going to end well. This friend, who is in his mid-50s, has had many opportunities, and up until this point in time he has had

a good life. He has lived a rich life and has been very fortunate. Before he started taking ice he could easily have fitted amongst us in this place. He could have comfortably sat in this chamber and would have been just like us, and he is lost.

It is very sad that this is the fate of my friend, but at least for my friend he is older and has lived a good life. He had probably 50 good years, I suspect, before he made some poor choices. This bill, though, relates to young people. Think about a person who is under the age of 18 who might be mixing with the wrong crowd, who might be taking drugs and who might have come into contact with the justice system. In making sure that we give them the support they need, we try to make sure that, yes, there is a punitive response to a transgression, that there is compulsory drug testing and that there is an electronic tag placed on them, but it might mean that, for argument’s sake, if they are using marijuana, if they are using a lesser form of drugs — if they are using speed, for example — then they might not progress and start taking ice or they might not progress and start taking heroin. It might prevent them from making poor choices.

Again, as I said at the start of my contribution, you cannot look at a bill like this in isolation, and that is unfortunately what the Greens political party are doing. When you look at this bill in the context of the investments that we are making in terms of the education system and TAFE and when you look at the additional services we are providing to our hospital system and our health system in terms of providing more treatment beds and more opportunities for drug rehabilitation, then it is a very good initiative.

What I would say to the member for Northcote is that if you want to play politics with this stuff, if you want to just throw around phrases like ‘racing to the bottom’ or if you want to just look at this in isolation without understanding what we as a government are trying to do, you can do that. You can do that, but it does not do justice to the issue and it does not do justice to the young people who you are purporting to speak on behalf of. You need to make sure that where there is poor conduct and behaviour you have got the carrot and the stick, for want of a better phrase. There must be a punitive response to ensure compliance with the law, but you have also got to provide ways in which young people have got the opportunity to see a different light, a different future.

In the brief time I have got left, one thing I will say is that I think as a state and as a nation we can get better. We collect an awful amount of data that unfortunately at times is siloed. One of the challenges we have got is

that a young person goes from a time of perinatal through to when they start school. They interface with the public sector numerous times, but unfortunately the datasets that are created by these engagements are isolated and they do not connect. I think we can get better as a society. For a lot of people in the youth justice system if you went back 10 years or 15 years and looked into their homes and saw their experience, I think you could predict with probably a 90 to 95 per cent confidence rating that they would come into contact with the youth justice system. That would be my guess. If we can get smarter and we can get better at linking up those datasets and making a predictive analysis of what we think might happen with those individuals, then perhaps we can have some early intervention. By having early intervention, maybe we do not need to look at having some of these initiatives, or the size and scale of some of these initiatives might be able to be significantly reduced. That is just an observation. I know the Victorian Centre for Data Insights is doing some great work around this, but I think if we could start thinking about how we can try and analyse that data more effectively it might give us some better insights.

It is really easy to just throw up cheap slogans in this chamber. It is really easy to take the low road when it comes to public policy. That is what the Greens are doing, and that is why they should be condemned. I commend the bill to the house.

Ms RYAN (Euroa) (10:48) — It is a pleasure to rise today to speak on the Children, Youth and Families Amendment (Youth Offender Compliance) Bill 2018. I have to say I do not often find much to agree on with the member for Essendon, but I do think that with respect to the Greens it is somewhat disappointing that they say they care a lot about this issue, yet the member for Northcote can only speak for a couple of minutes to an issue they say they are very passionate about. I would have thought that the Greens would have outlined a solid case for their position on this bill, but it seems that they are unable to do that or that they prefer to leave it to the debate in the other chamber.

Mr Pearson — They don't care.

Ms RYAN — As the member for Essendon said, perhaps they simply do not care enough about this issue. Those of us on this side of the chamber certainly do care about this issue. Concern around youth offenders in this state is something that we have been talking about for a number of years, and it concerns me that those opposite are now in a position where they are endeavouring to play catch-up. We welcome a number of the measures in this bill, but it is disheartening that

they come just four months before an election after those opposite have been doing almost nothing for four years. I think it will be evident to the broader Victorian public that this bill is basically an election measure and that their heart is not really behind trying to solve the problems that we have in this state with young offenders and the huge law and order crisis that is facing the state.

We had a very tangible demonstration of that yesterday. Last night there were gangs of youths in the western suburbs of Melbourne, and police told people to actually lock their front doors and shelter inside. Today's *Herald Sun* says terrified residents were forced to shelter in their homes last night as close to 100 out-of-control youths wreaked havoc in Melbourne's north-west. Police warned residents that the rampaging teens were there for war. The *Herald Sun* was told that dozens of heavily armed riot and plain-clothed police swarmed the scene telling locals not to leave their homes and blocking off main roads.

It is just extraordinary that Victoria is confronting these problems. We now have terms like 'home invasion' and 'carjacking', which I had not even heard of four years ago, but now it seems that they are a daily occurrence in this state, because we have a government that has allowed these issues to fester and has weakened the justice system instead of strengthening it.

If you have a look at some of the policies that we have released so far, I think it is clear that Victorians have a very clear choice at this election as to who will reinstate a law and order system here in Victoria. We have promised that we will overhaul Victoria's bail system and that we will reinstate the offence of breaching bail by juveniles, which those opposite abolished and are now desperately trying to find a solution to. We have said that we will explicitly enshrine in law the fact that community safety will be a paramount consideration when deciding whether or not juvenile offenders should be released on parole. We will actually name for the public the identity of those who commit serious offences while on bail. These are measures that those opposite have rejected. Whilst we welcome a trial of electronic monitoring for certain young people on parole orders who have committed serious offences, quite simply they have not gone far enough to address these issues.

We have also, of course, committed to introducing statutory mandatory sentencing for criminals who are found guilty of a second violent offence, including offences like murder, rape and aggravated home invasion. I believe that is what the Victorian public are now calling for. They want to see a tougher sentencing

system, and they want to know that they are safe in their communities. At the moment, quite frankly, I do not think people do feel safe.

We have also committed to a number of crime prevention initiatives, such as establishing police shopfronts in different shopping centres across Victoria to provide that visible police presence that people are asking for, and establishing the police in schools program, which I think is an excellent initiative that gives young people a positive first interaction with the police in their community so they see them as people who are there to help them, not people who are there to punish them. It will re-establish the respect that is required for our police force.

I have to say that in my position as the shadow minister for young Victorians I certainly recognise that the vast majority of young people in our community are doing fantastic things, but we have a problem with a core group of offenders in this state that the Andrews government has failed to control. I am always heartened when I talk to young people across Victoria and see the wonderful things that they are doing to shape our state and create a positive future for Victoria. These measures should by no means be seen as a reflection of all young people in Victoria.

I can think of a number of young people I have had the pleasure of meeting in my own electorate. One, Daniel Williams from Avenel, is just a fantastic young man. At 17 he is a qualified drone operator, or remote pilot operator, and he is halfway through his helicopter pilot's licence training. He has come to me seeking to find out how he can help give those skills back to other young people, to help train them in the skills that he has, to give them more employment opportunities. There is no question that the vast majority of young people in Victoria contribute very positively to our society, but there can be no doubt that we have a core group of young offenders who are creating some very, very serious problems in our state.

I want to touch briefly on some comments by the member for Essendon around TAFE and training in Victoria. I certainly agree that TAFE and training is a critical element of giving people opportunity and ensuring that they do not fall into a life of crime in the first place. But it is incredibly disheartening to me that those opposite have actually cut the guts out of the training budget in Victoria. In 2016 —

Honourable members interjecting.

Ms RYAN — Listen to the protests. Let us have a look at some of the statistics. In 2016, according to the

Productivity Commission, \$502 million was ripped out of the training budget. The training budget has been repeatedly underspent. The number of students enrolling in government-subsidised training in this state is down by more than 30 per cent. Community education providers operate at the very front line of a lot of these young people that we are referring to. They deal with a high number of people who are unemployed, they deal with adult students, they deal with high levels of refugee and migrant communities, and they deal with a high number of people with disabilities. More than 20 of those community education providers have closed since Labor came to government.

We now have, for example, Campaspe College in Echuca pleading with the government, telling us that they too are now on the brink of closure as a result of the policies that those opposite have put in place. Karen Hagan has described their policies as pure politics.

Ms Thomas interjected.

Ms RYAN — The member for Macedon says that we sacked 2400 teachers. I would encourage the member for Macedon to have a look at the TAFE annual reports to see how many TAFE teachers have lost their jobs under those opposite. They do not like to talk about it, but it is more than 1000. TAFE teachers have vanished from the training system, from TAFEs, since you were elected. Your record on TAFE is absolutely appalling.

Honourable members interjecting.

Ms RYAN — If you talk to anyone in the sector, they know, because you have ripped hundreds of millions of dollars out of TAFE in this state and you —

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr Carbines) — Order! The member's time has expired.

Debate adjourned on motion of Mr MERLINO (Minister for Education).

Debate adjourned until later this day.

PREVENTION OF FAMILY VIOLENCE BILL 2018

Second reading

Debate resumed from 7 August; motion of Ms HUTCHINS (Minister for the Prevention of Family Violence).

Mr RICHARDSON (Mordialloc) (10:59) — It is a pleasure to rise and speak on the Prevention of Family

Violence Bill 2018. At the heart of this bill is the notion of prevention — a core element of the approach by the former Minister for the Prevention of Family Violence, Fiona Richardson, to this very important issue. It is important that we pay tribute to her work, because we know that prevention was one of the key things that she desired to achieve to ensure that no family had to go through family violence, in the future, like her family did and like her story. On this day we pay tribute to Fiona Richardson and the work that she has done.

This very important bill will establish the prevention agency through Respect Victoria.

Business interrupted under sessional orders.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE and MINISTERS STATEMENTS

Youth violence

Mr GUY (Leader of the Opposition) (11:01) — My question is to the Premier. Premier, people in Melbourne's west, particularly Taylors Hill, are living in fear. Last night they were told by police to 'stay inside and lock the doors' while violent youth gangs stoned police cars, smashed windows and took control of the streets. Premier, is it still your government's and many of your ministers' contention that Melbourne does not have a problem with youth gang violence?

Mr ANDREWS (Premier) (11:02) — I thank the Leader of the Opposition for his question. In relation to the final element of his question, the fact that the government has funded and supported police to set up a gang task force would seem to answer the ridiculous position put by the Leader of the Opposition.

Honourable members interjecting.

The SPEAKER — Order! I ask the Premier to resume his seat for a moment. As I have said in the last few question times, there is too much shouting across the chamber. I reissue the warning I have issued at every question time: members will be asked to leave the chamber without warning if they continue to shout across the chamber.

Mr ANDREWS — As I was saying, Speaker, the government has provided to Victoria Police record resources, not just in numbers and technology but also in capability around dealing specifically with gang-related crime. That, I think, deals with the final elements of the Leader of the Opposition's question. But given that he asked me about Taylors Hill, I will make the following comments. Police responded with force, swiftly, in good time — and I want to thank those

members of Victoria Police for their swift response. I also want to make it clear to all of the local residents — of course they would have been very distressed to see such a police response — that they can be reassured that the Victorian government will continue to provide Victoria Police with all the resources, equipment, technology and capability —

Honourable members interjecting.

The SPEAKER — The member for Hawthorn!

Mr ANDREWS — to deal with gang-related crime and any other crime that is relevant to that local community.

The SPEAKER (11:03) — Order! Before calling the Leader of the Opposition I would like to welcome a former member of the Legislative Council, Andrew Elsbury, to the gallery.

Supplementary question

Mr GUY (Leader of the Opposition) (11:04) — Two and a half years ago, after the Moomba riots, Premier, you said you would smash these gangs, yet last night these gangs were smashing up another Melbourne suburb. Premier, you have been in office for four years. Victorians are now being told to stay inside and lock their doors in order to stay safe. Isn't it now a fact that Victorians have to change their behaviour in order to stay safe simply because your soft-on-crime government has lost control of our streets?

Mr ANDREWS (Premier) (11:04) — Well, I would have thought that those opposite would do better than to laugh at these matters. They are very serious matters, and that is why —

Honourable members interjecting.

Mr ANDREWS — Those opposite are laughing, thinking this is a funny matter — a matter for humour and mirth. Shame on those opposite!

The SPEAKER (11:05) — The member for Polwarth and the member for Ripon will leave the chamber for a period of 1 hour.

Honourable members for Polwarth and Ripon withdrew from chamber.

Mr ANDREWS — As I was saying, when given the choice between cutting police budgets and investing in more police, this government chose investment, not cuts and undermining of police —

Mr Pesutto — On a point of order, Speaker, the Leader of the Opposition's question was very clear. It was about whether Victorians and victims of crime now, in the face of this gang crisis, have to change their behaviour in order to stay safe. Can you please bring the Premier back to the question?

Honourable members interjecting.

The SPEAKER — Order! The Minister for Police will come to order. The Premier is being responsive to the question.

Mr ANDREWS — The behaviour that needed to change was the behaviour of the then government —

Honourable members interjecting.

Mr ANDREWS — You asked the question. The behaviour that needed to change was the conduct of a government that cut resources to Victoria Police — 350 staff gone from Victoria Police. That is the behaviour that needed to change, and that is why we are investing and we will keep investing every day we are in office.

Ministers statements: TAFE funding

Mr ANDREWS (Premier) (11:06) — I am very pleased to be able to update all Victorians, particularly those opposite, on the investments we are making in Victoria's TAFE system. Just last Wednesday I had the great pleasure of visiting Chisholm TAFE and speaking with students there who were very appreciative of the government's support for them, their skills, their careers and the life opportunities they will be able to enjoy because of a properly funded TAFE system. They were very pleased as well with the fact that 20 courses, already announced, will be fully free, with 10 more to be announced quite soon, and indeed 18 preapprenticeship courses will be free of charge from the beginning of next year.

Of course that sits in stark contrast with another approach — speaking of changed behaviour. If you had no regard for working people, their kids and their futures, if you did not have any major projects to build and therefore did not need anybody to build them, you could, for instance, cut \$1 billion out of TAFE. You could do that. You could cut \$1 billion out of TAFE. You could close 22 campuses.

Honourable members interjecting.

The SPEAKER (11:08) — Order! The member for Burwood and the member for Caulfield will leave the chamber for a period of 1 hour.

Honourable member for Burwood withdrew from chamber.

Mr Southwick — He's a crook!

The SPEAKER — Order! The member for Caulfield will return to the chamber. I have warned members in this chamber that I will not have members leaving the chamber shouting and defying the respect that the chamber deserves after they have been asked to leave. I ask the member for Caulfield to apologise to the chamber.

Mr Southwick — Can I ask the Speaker what I am apologising for?

The SPEAKER — For disorderly conduct upon leaving the chamber. I ask the member for Caulfield to apologise.

Honourable members interjecting.

The SPEAKER — Order! I have warned members that when they have been asked to leave the chamber they should not shout across the chamber as they leave, which is precisely what the member for Caulfield did. I have asked him to apologise.

Honourable members interjecting.

The SPEAKER — Order! I will hear a point of order after the member for Caulfield has apologised.

Honourable members interjecting.

Mr Clark — On a point of order, Speaker, if you are asking the member for Caulfield to apologise, you should indicate to him under what standing order you are requesting him to do so, whether you are asking him to apologise to you or to the member and what the basis for that is. That would put the member for Caulfield in an informed position to respond to your request.

The SPEAKER — Order! The member for Caulfield has behaved in a disorderly way in the way he left the chamber. I ask the member for Caulfield to apologise.

Honourable members interjecting.

Mr Southwick — Speaker, I do not apologise for calling the Premier a crook. I do apologise to you, but I do not apologise to the Premier for calling him a crook.

Honourable members interjecting.

Questions and statements interrupted.

NAMING AND SUSPENSION OF MEMBER

Member for Caulfield

The SPEAKER (11:10) — I name the member for Caulfield.

Honourable members interjecting.

Ms ALLAN (Minister for Public Transport) (11:10) — I move:

That the member for Caulfield (Mr Southwick) be suspended from the service of the house for the next four sitting days.

House divided on motion:

Ayes, 47

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

Noes, 36

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

Motion agreed to.

Honourable member for Caulfield withdrew from chamber.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE and MINISTERS STATEMENTS

Ministers statements: TAFE funding

Questions and statements resumed.

The SPEAKER (11:18) — I ask the members for Frankston, Bentleigh, Essendon, Warrandyte and South-West Coast to leave the chamber for 1 hour for shouting during that division.

Honourable members for Frankston, Bentleigh, Essendon, Warrandyte and South-West Coast withdrew from chamber.

Mr Guy — On a point of order, Speaker, you have named a member of this chamber and yet you have not named to him the standing order under which you sought to have him apologise to this chamber. When you did say that you wanted him to apologise to this chamber he came back and did exactly what you asked for. He gave exactly what you asked for, yet you have named a member and the government has now sought that he be removed for four days. Speaker, you are caught up in the protection racket of a bunch of crooks. You are one of those people in that report, and to this side of the house it looks like you are running a protection racket for thieves.

The SPEAKER — Order! I am not going to play this game.

Honourable members interjecting.

The SPEAKER (11:19) — The member for Footscray and the member for Gembrook will leave the chamber for the period of 1 hour.

Honourable members for Footscray and Gembrook withdrew from chamber.

Ms Ryan — On a point of order, Speaker, I just thought that perhaps the Premier would like to explain why he has cut \$502 million out of the training budget or perhaps why he is naming public buildings after a rotting former member for Northern Victoria, Steve Herbert.

The SPEAKER — Order! That is not a point of order.

Mr ANDREWS (Premier) (11:19) — I would encourage those opposite, if all they do is take points of

order on TAFE between now and the end of the year, that is fine by us. There are alternative approaches. You could cut \$1 billion out of TAFE. You could close 22 campuses. You could sack 2500 teachers.

Mr Clark — On a point of order, Speaker, the Premier is debating the issue and from a government that slashed its student numbers in TAFE it is a bit rich. I ask you to bring him back to making a ministers statement.

The SPEAKER — Order! I ask the Premier to come back to making a statement.

Mr ANDREWS — You could do all of that, or you could instead invest in TAFE, make priority courses absolutely free, rebuild and reopen campuses and put confidence, funding and support back into TAFE — not just repair the damage done by those opposite but make TAFE better than it has ever been. That is our agenda and that is our record.

Electorate office staffing entitlements

Mr GUY (Leader of the Opposition) (11:20) — My question is to the Premier. A deputy police commissioner is a Governor in Council appointment, and following yesterday's resignation of Mr Andrew Crisp, a new appointment will be made by cabinet. Six of your crooked ministers are under active police criminal investigation and your police minister's office is central to the red shirts scandal. Premier, will you require these ministers to absent themselves from any consideration of Mr Crisp's replacement at Victoria Police?

Mr ANDREWS (Premier) (11:21) — I do thank the Leader of the Opposition for his question. Whilst it is tempting to be invited and advised on caretaker conventions by people who were in caretaker mode for four years and did not do a thing, I will resist the temptation to be lectured on constitutionality. Constitutional lectures by this one over here — I do not think so. So the answer to your pathetic question is 'no'.

Honourable members interjecting.

The SPEAKER — Order! I will not hear frivolous points of order. If the Deputy Leader of the Opposition has a point of order, he should make it.

Mr Hodgett — On a point of order, Speaker, I would ask you to bring the Premier back to answering a very simple question about whether the ministers will be absent — instead of trying to attack in his usual pathetic way.

The SPEAKER — Order! I think the Premier had answered the question.

Supplementary question

Mr GUY (Leader of the Opposition) (11:22) — Now that your Attorney-General is subject to undertakings about his conduct and is part of a broader police criminal investigation into the red shirts scandal, Premier, will you guarantee your Attorney-General will make no further judicial appointments until the investigation regarding his conduct is concluded?

Mr ANDREWS (Premier) (11:23) — I think the Attorney-General — and I would understand why the Leader of the Opposition would not ask the Attorney-General any questions today after having been absolutely dispatched yesterday for —

Honourable members interjecting.

Mr ANDREWS — You did not ask me any questions yesterday, did you? How was your anniversary dinner last night? We will not be taking lessons on probity, constitutionality or any other matter from the Leader of the Opposition.

Mr Clark — On a point of order, Speaker, the Premier may well be very defensive and very agitated, but he should be answering the question. He spent the first part of his answer abusing anybody else he could think of. I ask you to bring him back to answering the question.

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

Honourable members interjecting.

Mr ANDREWS — If that is the best the Leader of the Opposition has got, the government will continue to do the work that is required to keep Victoria safe and to make the appointments that are appropriate. We will not be taking lectures on caretaker conventions, even though we should defer to your knowledge of caretaker. You never got out of caretaker.

Ministers statements: industrial relations

Ms HUTCHINS (Minister for Industrial Relations) (11:24) — I rise to update the house on two developments in the industrial relations portfolio. Firstly, I would like to welcome the working women's delegation that is here in Parliament today — women from across a range of sectors who are here to spread the message that gender equality is not negotiable. They are here to talk to all MPs in the Parliament across all

parties about the gender pay gap, about the superannuation gap that women face in the workplace and also about gendered violence in the workplace.

The second development I would like to talk about and update the house on is the launch of Victoria's wages inspectorate last Monday. The inspectorate is tasked with the provision of information and the enforcement of state-based legislation in the industrial relations area, from long service leave regulations through to child employment protections. We know it takes a Labor government to understand these reforms, because we care about working Victorians. We take action on the unfair workplace practices that are happening, and we are putting the protections in place to prevent exploitation. We know those opposite turned a blind eye to the exploitation of workers. It takes this government to take the real action because we know wages theft —

Mr Clark — On a point of order, Speaker, the minister is now proceeding to debate issues. I ask you to bring her back to compliance with sessional orders and making a ministers statement.

The SPEAKER — The minister had just started to stray from making a ministers statement. I ask her to come back.

Ms HUTCHINS — We know that wages theft is a critical problem, and we know this not only because of the conversations we are having in our own electorates but because the Fair Work Ombudsman —

Mr Pesutto interjected.

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

Honourable member for Hawthorn withdrew from chamber.

Ms HUTCHINS — The Fair Work Ombudsman in a recent report found that 50 per cent of the restaurants that they were investigating were exploiting workers here in Victoria. So, Speaker, if you go out for a coffee this weekend or for breakfast with your family, chances are the person serving you has been exploited or underpaid, unfortunately. It is only us that is taking action. We know those opposite are never happier than when they are cutting the wages of workers or not defending penalty rates.

Member conduct

Mr CLARK (Box Hill) (11:26) — My question is to the Attorney-General. Yesterday in question time the Attorney-General stated that undertakings exist to protect the integrity of the police investigation into him and other Labor ministers. I ask the Attorney-General: what are these secret undertakings, who drafted them and will he now make them public?

Mr PAKULA (Attorney-General) (11:27) — I thank the member for Box Hill for the question. Once again, like all of those questions from those opposite one needs to be very careful about the veracity of the question. As I recall, I referred to the undertakings that had been made by both the Premier and the police minister in previous answers about the fact that all investigations would be held at arms-length, and that is what I reiterate today.

Mr Clark — On a point of order, Speaker, my question related to undertakings which the Attorney-General told the house yesterday applied in relation to the red shirts rorts investigation. The Attorney-General has not responded to the question that I asked, and I ask that you require him to provide a written response to my question.

The SPEAKER — I will review *Hansard* and come back to the house.

Supplementary question

Mr CLARK (Box Hill) (11:29) — I again reiterate the point that the Attorney-General yesterday told this house that there were undertakings that had been put in place in relation to the police red shirts rorts investigation. I renew my question in relation to what the Attorney-General said yesterday. I ask him: when were these so-called undertakings given, entered into or established, and what arrangements are in place or has the Attorney-General put in place to ensure that they are monitored and complied with?

Mr PAKULA (Attorney-General) (11:29) — I am not going to be verbed by the member for Box Hill. I indicated in answer to the substantive question that both the Premier and the Minister for Police had given undertakings to the house about the fact that these matters would all be dealt with at arms-length, whether it be the actions of Victoria Police or indeed the actions of the Director of Public Prosecutions. I reiterated that in answer to the substantive question, and I do so again.

Honourable members interjecting.

The SPEAKER (11:30) — Order! The member for Bass will leave the chamber for the period of 1 hour.

Honourable member for Bass withdrew from chamber.

Mr Walsh — On a point of order, Speaker, on the issue of relevance, the Attorney-General is not being verballed, and I ask you to bring him back to —

Honourable members interjecting.

The SPEAKER — Order! Without the assistance of the Leader of the House.

Mr Walsh — He is not being verballed, and I ask you to bring him back to answering the member for Box Hill's question about when these undertakings were given and who is actually in place to make sure they are complied with, because we know those opposite are very good at rorting and not complying with things that they have actually agreed to do.

Honourable members interjecting.

The SPEAKER — Order! Without the assistance of the Deputy Premier. The Attorney-General is indicating that he has concluded his answer. I will review *Hansard* and report back to the house on the supplementary question as well.

Ministers statements: Homelessness Week

Mr FOLEY (Minister for Housing, Disability and Ageing) (11:31) — I rise to update the house that this week is in fact national Homelessness Week, which has come together around the theme of 'Ending homelessness together'. The sad truth is that 1 in 200 Australians on any given night are homeless, and the Victorian government knows that there is a lot that we can all do to combat that crisis. That is why the National Homelessness Conference, which this government funded, brought together over 800 people, both national and international — non-government organisations, service agencies and all states and territories.

But in fact when we talk about all people coming together, it was sad to see that the commonwealth government was not there. In fact they declined to participate, which was a very great shame, because what it highlighted was the fact that on offer at the moment to the Victorian government is a proposition that maintains real cuts from the Turnbull and Abbott years of budgets.

We know that homelessness is a real issue. That is why this government, with its billion-dollar Social Housing Growth Fund and its commitment to rough sleepers, stands in stark contrast to the federal government's cuts in this area — cuts that will see impacts on areas such as our Towards Home program. The Towards Home program houses chronic rough sleepers right across the state in regional and rural areas as well as in metropolitan Victoria. It is worth noting that that includes the district of Brighton where the opposition's contribution to this debate is to commit to sell those units and throw those chronic long-term homeless people back onto the street.

Mr Clark — On a point of order, Speaker, the minister is proceeding to debate matters rather than make a ministers statement. I ask you to bring him back in compliance with sessional orders.

The SPEAKER — Order! The minister has been making a statement, but just veered. The minister to come back.

Mr FOLEY — I contrast the efforts of this government, which has seen on the census figures our homelessness rate reduced to 0.5 per cent against the national average while New South Wales had a 27 per cent increase in homelessness.

Shepparton early childhood and parenting services

Ms SHEED (Shepparton) (11:33) — My question is for the Minister for Health. Minister, a KPMG report on the establishment of a mother-baby unit in the Shepparton district was commissioned and made available to your department many months ago. Could you please advise what has happened to this report and its recommendations? There has been strong advocacy in my community for more than 20 years for the establishment of a mother-baby unit in our district. So much work has been done to progress it with visits to Tweddle Child and Family Health Service and the unit in Ballarat. The evidence is strong in our region that access to this parenting service is needed and that interventions are taking much too long. Given that a report has been completed, I believe people in the Shepparton district deserve to know what is happening.

Ms HENNESSY (Minister for Health) (11:34) — I thank the member for Shepparton for her question. The issues that the member canvasses around early childhood and parenting services are important ones. Our government has worked incredibly hard to try and improve the capability of our acute hospital system and also to try and ensure we are better integrating and

coordinating community-based parenting services, right from the moment of early pregnancy through to birth, through to early infancy and the delivery of services in early childhood and beyond. I can confirm that the Department of Health and Human Services has received the report that Goulburn Valley Health commissioned in respect of early childhood services. They are currently working through the recommendations that it makes, and I am absolutely happy to offer a briefing to the member and indeed the community advisory committee in respect of the progress that we are making in considering those recommendations.

I would also like to commend the work in respect of the new redevelopment of the Goulburn Valley Health service that is also an important capital development that seeks to address this issue somewhat from the acute end. By that I mean it is about integrating children's and maternity services in the hospital. The member is right to point out that better integrated community-based services, particularly for those who are having challenging experiences, are important, and to that end we will provide an update as to where exactly we are at in considering those recommendations from the KPMG report.

Supplementary question

Ms SHEED (Shepparton) (11:36) — Minister, we have some of the highest teenage pregnancy rates in the state and we have very low levels of breastfeeding. We have high levels of disadvantage. Mothers and babies are often required to leave hospital only one or two days after delivery and they often find themselves unsupported and unable to cope. Minister, it has been 20 years that we have been lobbying for this. Will your government now commit to establishing a much-needed, seven-days-a-week residential mother-baby unit in Shepparton?

Ms HENNESSY (Minister for Health) (11:36) — As I said, the department is currently working through the recommendations made in the report. We are absolutely committed to trying to make sure that we better coordinate the community-based services for both pregnant women and new mothers. I think the evidence of our commitment to that can be seen in investments such as the Healthy Mothers, Healthy Babies program that is running in a number of regional locations, including Shepparton, and is having fantastic results. We have also made a \$30 million investment in the Cradle to Kinder program — and again there is a platform to that in Shepparton — which is having fantastic results. I am always up for advocacy and looking at what more we can do. I am very familiar

with the wonderful work that places like Tweddle and the Queen Elizabeth Centre do to that end, and that is why we are considering very carefully the recommendations made in the KPMG report.

Ministers statements: Regional Roads Victoria

Mr DONNELLAN (Minister for Roads and Road Safety) (11:37) — I rise to update the house on the establishment of Regional Roads Victoria, a dedicated country roads unit to deal with the record funding we have put into country roads in this year's budget. In this year's budget we have doubled road maintenance as part of the \$941 million we put into country roads, which is a record spend. You only have to look at \$333 million to boost road maintenance, \$100 million for fixing country roads, \$229 million being spent on road safety and \$261 million for upgrades across the state. The unit will be headed by the chief regional roads officer. It will be based in Ballarat and will be ready to go in September as we begin the start of the road building season — a record roadbuilding season.

I did note there were alternatives put forward in relation to this in the *Weekly Times* the other day by the shadow minister for roads and infrastructure. He indicated he would assess the value that Regional Roads Victoria are adding. We know what this is code for. The shadow minister is out there sharpening his axe like an agitated lumberjack. He has put his singlet on and he is about to chop, chop, chop.

Mr Clark — On a point of order, Speaker, I refer to the fact that the minister is both debating the question and defying your previous guidance about conforming to the standards of this house. Given your assertion of the standards of this house earlier in question time, I ask you to be very firm with the minister and not tolerate that sort of behaviour.

The SPEAKER — Order! The minister will come back to making a statement.

Mr DONNELLAN — And if you look at the maintenance levels over the four years of the Liberal-National party and the Labor Party it tells a very strong story of the commitment we have made to maintenance. If you look at 2011 to 2015 or our period, we have spent \$400 million more than the National and Liberal parties on maintenance — \$400 million more. And you have only got to look at the National Party. What happens every time —

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

Member conduct

Mr CLARK (Box Hill) (11:40) — My question is to the Minister for Police. I refer to the Attorney-General's previous answer in which he denied the statements he had made to this house yesterday, referring to undertakings that had already been made by the Minister for Police that already applied to himself. And I refer also to your statements on Monday, 6 August, in relation to the Labor rorts scandal on radio, and I quote:

... the only conversation I've had with the chief commissioner about this is ensuring that those protocols, procedures are in place to ensure that I can do my job ...

Minister, I ask, particularly given the Attorney-General's denial, what exactly are the undertakings, protocols and procedures that have been put in place? What do they require, and in particular, do they make clear that if a minister is arrested or interviewed by police in relation to this criminal investigation that they must then stand aside?

Ms NEVILLE (Minister for Police) (11:41) — Can I thank the manager of opposition business for his question. Let me go back to what I said yesterday. Firstly, let us be absolutely clear. The only people who ever intervene in police investigations that undermine their independence are those opposite. They have tried to do it in government, and they have tried to do it in opposition.

Mr Clark — On a point of order, Speaker, the minister is in flagrant breach of standing orders and is also avoiding accountability on this very simple and important question about the protocols, procedures and undertakings that are in place to safeguard the integrity of the justice system in this state while ministers are under police investigation. I ask you to bring her back to answering that question.

Honourable members interjecting.

The SPEAKER — The Attorney-General will come to order. The minister had only just started her answer, but she had not yet responded to the question. I ask her to come back to answering the question.

Ms NEVILLE — Firstly, I think it was Friday, 27 July, when the police announced an investigation which we are referring to today. I think the —

Honourable members interjecting.

Ms NEVILLE — You know more than me, because I do not know any details of that investigation.

Honourable members interjecting.

The SPEAKER — Order! When the house comes to order.

Ms NEVILLE — On that day the Premier indicated — on the Saturday publicly — that he had contacted the Secretary of the Department of Premier and Cabinet (DPC) who had contacted the secretary of justice who had then spoken to the chief commissioner to seek his assurance that he had, as in the chief commissioner, in place appropriate procedures and practices to ensure an arms-length investigation, he gave those assurances. And it was such a secret the Premier announced it the next day.

Secondly, as I indicated yesterday —

Honourable members interjecting.

The SPEAKER — Order! Members will come to order.

Ms NEVILLE — Secondly, as I indicated yesterday, I know that those opposite find the Victoria Police Act 2013 a bit pesky and annoying, but it actually is absolutely clear that the Minister for Police has absolutely no involvement in or access to details of any investigation or in any way influences any investigation.

Mr Clark — On a point of order, Speaker, I appreciate the background that the minister has provided, but my question was specifically about the content of the protocols, undertakings and arrangements that were in place. I appreciate her confirmation now that they do exist, despite the remarks of the Attorney-General, but I do ask you to bring her back to answering the question about what their content is.

The SPEAKER — Order! There is a significant preamble to this question. The minister is being responsive to the question that is asked.

Ms NEVILLE — Again can I say: Premier asked secretary DPC asked secretary of the Department of Justice and Regulation to seek assurance from the chief commissioner that the chief commissioner has the procedures —

Honourable members interjecting.

The SPEAKER — The member for Kew is warned.

Ms NEVILLE — The chief commissioner says to secretary, 'Yes', who says to secretary, 'Yes', who says to Premier, 'Yes', who announces it publicly, so it is a big secret. If those opposite are —

Honourable members interjecting.

The SPEAKER (11:45) — The member for Kew will leave the chamber for the period of 1 hour.

Honourable member for Kew withdrew from chamber.

Ms NEVILLE — If those opposite want to understand those procedures, perhaps they need to go and talk to the chief commissioner. And I can tell you, Speaker, I am not talking to the chief commissioner about any of the investigations. I am not involved in any aspect of those investigations. I can tell you, the only people who undermine Victoria Police each and every day are those opposite, and they proudly do so.

Supplementary question

Mr CLARK (Box Hill) (11:46) — I refer to the minister's statement during her answer that she is not aware whether or not she is under police investigation and that she does not talk to the chief commissioner about matters. But I refer also to the fact that yesterday in question time the minister stated that she had had conversations with the chief commissioner about her involvement in this rorts scandal and the criminal investigation, and she stated, and I quote:

... the chief commissioner ... said ... it is absolutely critical for me to ... do my role as police minister ...

So I ask: will the minister detail now to this house what conversations she has in fact had with the chief commissioner? Be fulsome and truthful about what was in those statements, and in particular whether in that conversation whether any assurances were sought or given that she would or would not be under police investigation given the minister's contradictory statements to the house on that issue.

Honourable members interjecting.

Ms NEVILLE (Minister for Police) (11:47) — Cluedo! Again, I sought assurances from the Premier, secretary, secretary, chief commissioner, chief commissioner, secretary, secretary, Premier — sorry, I did miss a spot. Back to the minister —

Honourable members interjecting.

The SPEAKER (11:48) — The Minister for Roads and Road Safety will leave the chamber for the period of 1 hour.

Minister for Roads and Road Safety withdrew from chamber.

Mr M. O'Brien — On a point of order, Speaker, the member for Box Hill's supplementary question was specifically and only about the discussions between the Minister for Police and the Chief Commissioner of Police. She is nearly halfway through her allotted time for answering that question. She has not referred to it at all. I ask you to bring her back to the discussions she has had, on her own admission in *Hansard*, with the Chief Commissioner of Police and her involvement in the red shirts rorts investigations.

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

Ms NEVILLE — The Premier at 5.02 p.m. — I think it was 5.02 p.m., I wrote it down — on 27 July assured me that the advice through those systems from the chief commissioner was that there was nothing to impede me doing my job. He announced all of that — nothing to impede me doing my job. In fact it is critical that I continue to do my job because we have got \$3 billion of record investment to deliver for Victoria Police to keep Victorians safe.

Mr Clark — On a point of order, Speaker, my supplementary question was about an issue that has become crucial to the probity of the police investigation and the government's conduct of it — namely, what conversations has the minister had with the Chief Commissioner of Police given her contradictory statements to this house that on the one hand she has not had conversations and on the other hand she has had conversations; that there have been some content in them and that there have not been content in them.

Ms Allan interjected.

The SPEAKER — Order! The Leader of the House!

Mr Clark — Given those contradictory statements, it is vital that this house and the community know the full and truthful answer to that question, and I ask you to ask the minister to provide a written response.

The SPEAKER — I will review *Hansard* and report back to the house.

Ministers statements: level crossings

Ms ALLAN (Minister for Public Transport) (11:50) — I am very pleased to rise to update the house on the ongoing program of works to remove dangerous and congested level crossings across Melbourne. I remind the house that 26 level crossings have gone in just three and a half years compared to seven in the previous decade when we came to government. The

member for Essendon would know, if he was here, that work is underway at Buckley Street to remove that level crossing; the member for Carrum knows that work is underway to remove the level crossing at Seaford; and of course the member for Dandenong knows all about the Abbotts Road level crossing. We are going to see some disruption in coming weeks as we get rid of these level crossings, and we thank commuters for their patience because they understand that it means we can get these level crossings removed to save lives, reduce congestion and give us the chance to run more trains. Those three level crossings will bring the total to 29 by year's end that will be consigned to history, which means there are 21 left to go from that commitment we gave in 2014 to remove 50 by 2022.

Now, there has been an alternative approach in the past, particularly on the Frankston line. The former government did not get rid of any level crossings on the Frankston line. Four are already gone, the fifth will be gone next month and 13 will be gone in total. Amazingly, on the Frankston line I was very disturbed to see that there has been some material — and I know it is disorderly, so I will not wave it around — circulated in the local community indicating that those opposite are going to keep a level crossing we have committed to remove. They are going to keep a level crossing. Not only are they wanting to not remove level crossings, but they are wanting to keep the ones that we have committed to improve safety around those crossings. We know and every Victorian knows that under those opposite, if they were to form government, the removal of the crossings would grind to a halt. Well, we take a different approach, and we are getting on with removing them.

Mr Burgess — On a point of order, Acting Speaker, I am still waiting on answers to two of my questions on notice: 14 488, about AGL's proposed Australian liquefied natural gas import terminal at Crib Point, asked of the Minister for Energy, Environment and Climate Change on 6 June; and 14 597, about changing the zone of the 320 hectares of port land in Crib Point from special use zone 1 to other land uses for the benefit of the community, asked of the Minister for Planning on 21 June.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Ms Spence) — I will ask the Speaker to follow those matters up.

Ms Ryan — On a point of order, Acting Speaker, I also have two questions which have not been answered: question 14 543, which I asked on 19 June this year of the Minister for Finance in relation to the old Seymour East Primary School site and its future — I know the

Seymour community are desperate for a response on that — and perhaps more extraordinarily, question 13 148, which I asked the Minister for Police as an adjournment matter on 21 September last year, asking her to visit the Euroa electorate to hear from people who are being impacted by the crime wave sweeping Victoria. I still have not had a response to that. I would hope the minister would take those concerns seriously enough to respond to me, almost a year later.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Ms Spence) — I will pass those matters to the Speaker to follow up.

Mr T. Bull — On a point of order, Acting Speaker, I have four unanswered questions that I wish to bring to your attention, seeking a response. The first question is 14 492, asked on 6 June of the Minister for Energy, Environment and Climate Change regarding domestic firewood collection. Questions 14 554 and 14 555 were asked on 19 June of the Minister for Health regarding bush nursing centre funding. I raised these in the last sitting week as well.

Question 14 599 was asked on 21 June of the Minister for Roads and Road Safety regarding Princes Highway works. There is actually a fifth one, too, question 14 600, asked on 21 June of the Minister for Housing, Disability and Ageing regarding recurrent funding for disability organisations. They are all important matters for my electorate, and I seek your assistance in getting some responses.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Ms Spence) — I will pass them over to the Speaker to follow up.

CONSTITUENCY QUESTIONS

Hastings electorate

Mr BURGESS (Hastings) (11:55) — (14 779) My question is to the Minister for Public Transport. I am seeking information on behalf of my constituents about matching funding from the Andrews state Labor government for the duplication and electrification of the Frankston rail line to Baxter, following last week's \$450 million plan jointly announced in Baxter by both the Prime Minister and the Victorian Leader of the Opposition. My community is very excited about this stage 1 of the electrification and duplication of the entire Stony Point line. It is critically important transport infrastructure.

This is great news for local commuters, because under the Liberal plan the Frankston line will be extended by 8 kilometres as an electrified, twin-track railway to

Baxter along the Stony Point line, with new railway stations at Frankston East, allowing improved access to Monash University and Frankston Hospital. A new station will also be built at Langwarrin, which is a wonderful outcome, and Baxter station will be upgraded. For the first time residents of Crib Point, Bittern, Hastings, Tyabb, Somerville, Pearcedale, Baxter and Langwarrin will be able to take a short drive to a park-and-ride located just north of Baxter and catch a train all the way through to the city without having to change trains.

Broadmeadows electorate

Mr McGUIRE (Broadmeadows) (11:56) — (14 780) My question is to the Minister for Gaming and Liquor Regulation. What impact has funding from the Victorian Responsible Gambling Foundation had in the electorate of Broadmeadows? The Andrews Labor government is trying to protect Victoria's culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) communities from the harm of gambling by funding new targeted prevention projects. Research shows that while CALD communities in developed countries like Australia tend to gamble less than the overall population, those who do gamble are more likely to experience harm.

The foundation is providing 12 grants worth a total of \$200 000 to Victoria's CALD communities to raise awareness about the risks of gambling and encourage people to seek help. It awarded \$12 500 to Victorian Arabic Social Services to develop a program to avoid the risk of gambling for people under the age of 30. The project will address social isolation, the challenges of resettlement, the impact of trauma and its relationship to gambling harm. The foundation will use insights from these projects to develop a more tailored prevention program for these communities.

Lowan electorate

Ms KEALY (Lowan) (11:57) — (14 781) My constituency question is to the Minister for Energy, Environment and Climate Change. Despite many representations to the minister Wimmera residents are still suffering from the impacts of a gas supply monopoly, with gas prices skyrocketing and locals unable to access pay-on-time or e-billing discounts. Minister, what have you done to break the Wimmera gas supply monopoly that is pushing up gas bills and hitting the back pockets of businesses and people living in my electorate?

Yan Yean electorate

Ms GREEN (Yan Yean) (11:58) — (14 782) My constituency question is to the Minister for Sport, and I ask: when will he be announcing the successful applicants in the Yan Yean electorate for round 5 of the defibrillators for sporting clubs and facilities program? The minister and I both know how vital this is in saving lives. The clubs in Yan Yean which have applied are the Diamond Creek Calisthenics Club, the Diamond Creek Women's Football Club, which I am proud to have sponsored for more than a decade now, the LEAP Seniors Golf Club and Plenty Tennis Club. I have my fingers crossed that they will receive good news.

I was pleased to see young Liam Birch last Saturday at the Wallan Football and Netball Club. He is recovering well after heart failure at only 17 years of age. He was resuscitated with a defibrillator that the club has. He has nominated Tony Freeman for a First Aid Champion Award. I look forward to hearing the answers on the successful applicants from the minister.

Ringwood electorate

Ms RYALL (Ringwood) (11:59) — (14 783) My constituency question is for the Minister for Roads and Road Safety. Why has the minister not addressed in his response to my adjournment matter 14 403 the request for the opportunity for cars to do a U-turn on Maroondah Highway between the EastLink off ramp and the Heatherdale Road and Dampier Grove intersection? My adjournment highlighted the need for it, but the minister has not referred to it in his response, and I would like to know why.

Ivanhoe electorate

Mr CARBINES (Ivanhoe) (11:59) — (14 784) My constituency question is to the Deputy Premier and Minister for Emergency Services, and the question I ask is for information in relation to the resolution to awarding tenders for the construction of the State Emergency Service (SES) headquarters in West Heidelberg. There is a \$3 million budget allocation for that project. It has been progressing very well, and we are looking forward to getting the first sod turned on that redevelopment. It is a great service that will cover Banyule, Darebin and Yarra local government areas.

The State Emergency Service headquarters currently located at Alphington are not fit for purpose, and the SES crews and volunteers are very keen to get into the new headquarters at West Heidelberg. It is a great service to come to West Heidelberg and provide an opportunity for local people to get involved and

volunteer their efforts to support the State Emergency Service. I look forward to information from the minister in relation to the contract signing.

Melbourne electorate

Ms SANDELL (Melbourne) (12:00) — (14 785)
My constituency question is for the Minister for Public Transport. Minister, what will the government do to ensure that trucks making their way to the Melbourne Metro Arden precinct construction site do not travel down Queensberry Street in North Melbourne, as has been agreed? Minister, residents in North Melbourne were advised that trucks would access the Arden precinct construction site via Laurens or Arden streets. This was also communicated to residents by the Melbourne Metro Rail Authority at the July–August construction update.

But constituents have contacted my office to tell me that numerous construction trucks carrying spoil from the site and materials to the site regularly travel down Queensberry Street, creating lots of noise and ruining the amenity of the area. My constituents are all absolutely in favour of the Melbourne Metro project, as am I, but it is crucial that the building contractors manage potential impacts on local residents and follow the agreed guidelines.

Narre Warren South electorate

Ms GRALEY (Narre Warren South) (12:01) — (14 786) My question is to the Minister for Creative Industries and concerns the upgrade and redevelopment of Melbourne's arts precinct. I ask the minister: what are the plans for the redevelopment of the new National Gallery of Victoria (NGV) contemporary and redeveloped arts precinct? The new-look arts precinct in Southbank will see 18 000 square metres of public space built or redeveloped. The project will also upgrade theatres and public spaces at the Arts Centre Melbourne and transform 1 City Road into a new creative hub in the heart of the city. We have the opportunity here to develop a world-class arts and design precinct. We have many arts and culture fans in Narre Warren South, and I know they really enjoyed the Melbourne Winter Masterpieces at the NGV and just loved the Triennial over last summer, so we are looking forward to see what will happen in this very new and exciting cultural and arts precinct down at Southbank. All Victorians are going to get a great experience.

South Barwon electorate

Mr KATOS (South Barwon) (12:02) — (14 787)
My constituency question is to the Minister for Police. When will the minister direct more police resources into the Geelong region and fund protective services officers (PSOs) at the Moorabool Street bus interchange? Once again I rise in this place to seek more police resources for the South Barwon electorate and the wider Geelong and Surf Coast communities, where I am hearing time and time again that people are worried about the levels of crime. An incoming Liberal government will introduce PSOs at the Moorabool Street bus interchange, but the minister's inaction means they are required now.

I continue to get strong support for my petition calling on the minister to give more police to the region. At my most recent mobile office in Torquay last Saturday I heard from residents that they are afraid in their own homes at night — at every bump in the night. My Facebook page gained yet another comment from a concerned constituent, Alison, who informed me that there have been numerous reports of people getting into fights at the Moorabool Street bus interchange and an incident of a lady being kicked by thugs at the Highton shopping centre. She went on to tell me that a family member of hers who is only 17 years old was approached by a man threatening to take his shoes. Minister, when will you take action?

Sunbury electorate

Mr J. BULL (Sunbury) (12:03) — (14 788) My question is for the Minister for Public Transport. Minister, what is the latest information on designs for the provision of an additional 300 new commuter car parking spaces at the Sunbury station? I was incredibly pleased to join the minister a few months ago to announce funding for these much-needed spaces, and I know my community is extremely keen to hear an update on this important matter. Those opposite have committed to a baseless plan that is fundamentally flawed. They have not even bothered to speak to local landowners. It appears that only the Andrews Labor government gets things done in my community. I ask for an update from the minister on designs for the provision of the additional 300 car parking spaces.

PREVENTION OF FAMILY VIOLENCE BILL 2018

Second reading

Debate resumed.

Mr RICHARDSON (Mordialloc) (12:04) — Just to round out the remarks that I was making before question time started, I was reflecting on the fact that one of the key anchors, desires and ambitions of the former Minister for the Prevention of Family Violence, Fiona Richardson, was to establish a prevention agency. I have said this before and will say it again: members in this place will reflect in years to come on their legacy and contributions to this house, but none will reflect more greatly in our community than the work of the former Minister for the Prevention of Family Violence. This ambition for the prevention agency will change lives. It might just mean that people who might have been subjected to family violence in the future will have that pathway diverted and that course of history changed because of work done at the early stages through education, through support and through the implementation of recommendation 188.

We just had a pretty extraordinary question time. Reflecting on some of the behaviour and some of the extraordinary things that are said across this chamber, one could only wish that one day we might have more energy put into the work that is done in this area. I note the Minister for the Prevention of Family Violence, who is also the Minister for Women, is at the table. She is doing extraordinary work to support women, children and men in our community to live free from violence. Imagine if we, as a Parliament, could put as much energy as we saw just a few minutes ago into doing the policy work that will protect Victorians into the future.

One can only hope that people reflect today on the conduct of some people and that they go back to their communities and remember why they are here and what they are here to do — that is, to serve people in the best way possible. Some of us will go back to our communities tonight and some will stay overnight and get back to their communities tomorrow, and we will think about this important work. It is beyond politics; it should be bipartisan. Over the coming 10 years we will work to address it. Each and every year we will have milestones implemented and year-to-year auditing, but let us lift the standard and let us focus on the work that is required to protect people in their homes.

I just reflect on a front-page story in the *Age* a few days ago which reported on four Victorian women who were murdered by an intimate partner — and this is the

tragedy that we live with. This is the biggest law and order issue in our state. People are losing their lives. We have a report that tells us what to do, and we can talk about the tough-on-crime rhetoric, but when you look through the Twittersphere and at what gets people agitated and what gets people talking, particularly parliamentarians, how many times did parliamentarians talk about those women and others, about the near-40 women who just this year across Australia have been killed by an intimate partner or someone who is meant to be close to them? How many times did Twitter go into meltdown then? How many times did people reflect on a family violence crisis in Victoria?

It does not get anywhere near the media coverage it should because it does not sell papers. You do not get CCTV footage each and every night of someone fearing for their life at the hands of an intimate partner. You do not see that, but we know it is present. We know the Royal Commission into Family Violence uncovered that and talked about those various things. We know that you can take a tough-on-crime approach, but our attitudes towards women and children and about how we raise young boys and young men in our society start at the cradle. It starts then, and if we are not to confront the very causes and only treat the symptoms of family violence, then we are going to be perpetuating for generations these issues again.

There was a prevention of family violence report in 2004 which made recommendations, and now we have had a landmark royal commission that was an election commitment of the Andrews Labor government. We cannot let another opportunity go, and I hope that the purpose that was shown by Fiona Richardson and that has been shown by the current Minister for the Prevention of Family Violence, who has carried on that work, is a legacy for all those who come next to make sure that we always treat with urgency the implementation of these recommendations.

Respect Victoria is an important landmark in our society. It comes broadly from the work of the royal commission and its recommendation 188. As we work through that prevention phase, I want to reflect a bit more on law and order and those discussions in our community. I have done a number of police forums in our local community, and I am always amazed at how shocked people are when you talk about family violence and its impact on our community and its impact on lives, the fact that it is one of the most critical pressures in the homelessness space in our community, with families and children fleeing for safety. People are genuinely shocked, because through a media prism, both on TV and in newspapers, you do not see it.

People do not see how serious this issue is for our state, because what they see on TV programs — like one of the major news stations going to a bulletin — is all about the visuals. It is all about what can fit into a 1-minute-30 or 2-minute story. That is what is put out into the media. It distorts the perception of what communities are confronting. It also subconsciously has the potential to distort what politicians focus on, potentially for political advantage as well. Everyone in this place would agree that family violence is a crisis in our state, but the focus on how we implement those recommendations in the work that we do gets narrowcast through the prism of what the TV grabs each night and what actually might or might not sway a political advantage.

If people are being true to themselves in this place and reflecting on that report, it is irrefutable that this is the biggest law and order crisis in our state. We are losing lives. We can do doorstops today about Taylors Hill, and that is a really important issue in a local community. It absolutely is, but how many doorstops will be done on the next person who is killed in their house? How many doorstops have been done? Too often we forget that these nameless people have a story to tell themselves. They are anonymous in the media, in the newspapers and on TV. We have an obligation as a Parliament and as parliamentarians to tell their stories, because when we forget, we are undermining the work that we are doing to try to protect those who in the future might be subjected to family violence and sadly lose their lives. Despite the work of the royal commission that commenced in 2015–16, we continue to lose lives each and every year, and the near 40 deaths just this year of women who have been subjected to crimes at the hands of an intimate partner show that we have a long way to go.

That is the purpose of this bill. It is about changing attitudes. We have to say and acknowledge that this is a gendered violence issue. That is not to say that men are not subjected to violence. Of course they are. They are subjected to violence at the hands of intimate partners. This debate sometimes gets narrowcast into, ‘You didn’t reference another group or segment in the community’. Of course men are also subjected to violence, but the overarching evidence through the royal commission shows that it is women who are substantially over-represented. Well over 80 per cent of those who are subjected to family violence and 87 per cent of those who are subjected to a sexual offence in our state are women. They are the figures, and we need to acknowledge that this is a gendered violence issue. We also need to acknowledge that prevention work will have the greatest benefit for our community.

We have hope that we can live in a society in future that greatly reduces family violence. We have seen the Towards Zero campaign of the Transport Accident Commission. Let us have a towards zero campaign to ensure that women, children and men are free from family violence in the future, that we call it out for what it is and work hard and double down in our efforts, because there can be no more important thing than being safe in your community and being in a place that you always think you will be safe in — and that is in your home, in your castle. Whether it is children, women or men, that is the base minimum of human rights in our society. This bill is critical to making sure prevention is always at the forefront. I commend the work of the former minister and the current minister at the table.

Mr CARBINES (Ivanhoe) (12:14) — I am pleased to follow the member for Mordialloc on the Prevention of Family Violence Bill 2018. In particular of course it takes me back to when we were in opposition, when the then leader, now Premier, the member for Mulgrave, outlined very clearly what the Labor opposition at that time wanted to engage in in a public policy sense. We came to government with the community’s support and an affirmation from Victorians to tackle the scourge of family violence in our community, to make that front and centre in looking at how we talk in our community about justice, how we talk about issues of community safety and crime, how we talk about people’s wellbeing and their confidence and capacity to contribute to family life in their community and have appropriate supports to do that.

That I think has been the critical change in the way in which we have chosen, now as a Labor government and previously in opposition, to pick up this issue. Many people have devoted their working lives to supporting particularly women who have been victims of family violence and their children. We took to the last election a very clear policy on what we intended to do to improve the lives of these people and also support those who work with people who are victims of family violence.

As we stand here some four years on, we can certainly see the significant investment by the government and the clear and determined strategies that have been put in place — those evidence-based strategies which are the heart of this particular bill. I think it has been refreshing, even though it has also been challenging and daunting as a Parliament, and certainly as a political party seeking the support of the Victorian community to govern, to face up to the scourge of family violence and to seek to find not all the solutions but the learnings and some of the solutions so that we can grasp them

and put them before this Parliament and work in the community to improve the lives of many victims and also to reduce the capacity for others — other families and other women — to be victims in the future.

Can I say also that in a local context I would like to acknowledge the work done by many organisations in my community, particularly the Banyule Community Health service, which does extraordinary work. They are very passionate people. My wife has the opportunity to serve as a board member of that community health service. Can I say to Mick Geary, who is the CEO, and to the team of people who work at the West Heidelberg and Greensborough campuses that right across Banyule there is a huge regard for the work that they do. We know the examples of many of the services that community health services such as Banyule provide, whether they be public dental services or housing services, perhaps they are services around drugs and alcohol, or perhaps they are services in relation to gambling. I also refer to the legal services and the magnificent job that they do as part of the West Heidelberg Community Legal Service.

The point that I would like to make is that there are many avenues through which family violence and victims of family violence come to the attention of health professionals in our community. I understand the work that Banyule Community Health have been able to do in not only identifying some of the broader health needs and challenges that people in my community face but also in recognising and acknowledging as health practitioners and professionals the other underlying causes of issues that lead to family violence. I want to acknowledge their work and particularly the individuals on the front line who devote their working lives to committing themselves to supporting people who are victims of family violence in my community.

There is also the work done more recently — the Orange Door work, if you like — in establishing community safety hubs. I am very pleased that across the north-eastern or eastern region of metropolitan Melbourne in my own community we have one of those community safety hubs, Orange Door. I know from conversations that our federal member, Jenny Macklin, is really impressed with the work that is being done to bring together the many services that will be of pointed benefit to women and children experiencing family violence. They have a way to go, of course. It is a great structure. I talk to people at Berry Street and in many of the organisations in my community who feel that it is working well. There is a great determination and goodwill from service providers to make it work well. I think we have seen that in Barwon in particular; they are a bit further ahead of the game in terms of

where they are at in relation to those community safety hubs. That is good news not only for service providers and the government but particularly for women and children who are facing challenges and experiencing family violence.

I am keen to have the opportunity to visit the service that is located in my electorate, servicing across that north-eastern and eastern region. I know in my discussions with Jenny Macklin, our federal member who has had many, many decades of policy development and experience in these areas as well, that she has been impressed with how the government has worked to get this together, how it is rolling out and the support that it is getting from many agencies. I am looking forward to learning more from those working at the coalface as to how we can continue to make sure that that service becomes a bedrock of what we want to provide when people coming through the door are victims of family violence.

That work is happening of course with this bill, that Respect Victoria work. We already have the CEO and board in place and an annual budget of \$3 million. It is really affirming what the government has set out over the past four years. And of course we have seen \$100 million in funding over that four years in prevention programs. It remains important to the government and to all parliamentarians who are spending Victorians' resources that we are making sure that it is an evidence-based approach that drives what we do, particularly when it comes to matters of community safety and matters of people's health and wellbeing. It is important that, for all the noise, we make sure that there is an evidence-based approach to the work we are doing. With the resources that we are allocating to family violence and the learnings that we have over time we want to continue to ensure that every resource that we can bring to bear is having the maximum benefit and effect. We are not only seeking to help victims. We are trying to ensure that if we can change practices and behaviour in our community we will have fewer victims in the future. That should ultimately be our goal.

I say again that across my electorate — whether it is through the work of the Banyule Community Health service, Austin Health, Berry Street and the many other services that provide housing, legal, health and community support in my community — I know that the organisations have always worked collaboratively in the best interests of local people. I do believe that community safety hubs are the next very important step in the way in which we collaborate and support organisations and their practitioners to provide the very

best services to those people who are victims and who are experiencing family violence.

I would like also to acknowledge the Respect Victoria work and that of the CEO and board. It is early days, but clearly they have strong support from the government and I hope strong support from all members of this place. We are effectively and appropriately resourcing them to do their work. I think it is important that we have the opportunity to review, evaluate and support how we can continue to grow their capacity and to build on that evidence-based approach to our work so that new ideas and new ways of supporting people facing family violence can continue to be at the forefront of the work that we are doing as a government.

We have come a long way in the public debates and discussions on these matters, both from an opposition standpoint and four years on, and I think we can point to a lot of great work that should give heart and confidence not only to victims and their families but to practitioners, on whom we rely so much to do such great work, that their government and their Parliament support them in their work and that we seek all the time to engage them, understand their challenges and work, and provide every support to ensure that they are successful in turning around the lives of victims of family violence. I commend the bill to the house.

Ms SPENCE (Yuroke) (12:24) — I am very pleased to rise today to make a contribution on the Prevention of Family Violence Bill 2018. In doing so at the outset I would like to acknowledge the great work of the Minister for the Prevention of Family Violence, who is at the table, and also the former minister, the late Fiona Richardson.

This bill will establish the new independent family violence prevention agency called Respect Victoria, it will ensure a statewide focus on primary prevention over the long term and it will deliver on recommendation 188 of the Royal Commission into Family Violence. Recommendation 188 is for the establishment of prevention architecture to oversee the prevention of family violence in this state, to provide policy and technical advice to the government and the community, to coordinate research to build evidence around all forms of family violence prevention and to build organisational and workforce capacity to ensure we can prevent family violence over time.

The royal commission recommended that the existing focus on crisis response and the justice system be matched by a similar focus on and investment in prevention and that this focus and investment be

dedicated and enduring over time. So the bill, in establishing Respect Victoria in legislation, will ensure that we do work towards a Victoria where all Victorians experience equality and respect in their relationships, are empowered and respected at home and everywhere and are supported in their relationships to reach their full potential. Establishing Respect Victoria as a statutory authority enshrined in legislation will set Victoria on the path to achieving the dedicated and enduring focus that is needed, and it aligns with the Victorian government's long-term prevention strategy, *Free from Violence*.

The Royal Commission into Family Violence made it clear that the family violence response sector is overwhelmed. This has also been made clear by victims and their families as well as the broader community. This pressure can be seen across all areas of family violence victim support. One local example of this pressure on the sector that I am very aware of is the increased demand for legal assistance. We often hear about the pressure in housing, in financing and in counselling, but there is enormous pressure on the legal sector in providing legal assistance.

In my community, the Northern Community Legal Centre (NCLC) provides a free intervention order support service on Monday and Thursday mornings at Broadmeadows Magistrates Court. This service, in 2015, was staffed by a family violence duty lawyer, and at the time they were funded for three days a week. This position and the services provided by the NCLC are vital to providing information to intervention order applicants and to providing legal support to those who lack the means to access commercial lawyers. However, there really is a concern that those in need are not all able to access this support and that the NCLC is not able to keep up with this increasing demand.

The family violence duty lawyer position there commenced in 2007, and at that time it was funded for one day a week. As a volunteer solicitor, I assisted that service on Friday mornings at Broadmeadows Magistrates Court. It went from providing services one morning a week at court with a one-day-a-week family violence duty lawyer to involving a three-days-a-week staffed lawyer position, with two mornings required at the court. I have spoken to the lawyers who are doing that work now, and they are absolutely flat out. There has also been such an increase in the number of people who are presenting to the service with family violence or related cases that these now comprise the greatest proportion of the centre's workload, and that is quite concerning.

There is much debate about this increase. It is quite a dilemma for me. There are more people presenting for assistance, and on the one hand people say that is great because that actually means that more people are coming out, seeking help and getting out of dangerous circumstances, and that is a positive — we are very pleased that that is happening — but on the other hand there is no way of knowing the quantum of increased incidents that make up that greater number of people presenting. I hope that over time that dilemma can be solved, because it is of great concern. We just do not know what the additional incidence is.

But what we do know is that addressing the drivers of family violence through primary prevention is the only way that the overall prevalence of violence, and therefore the demand for these response services, can be reduced, and this really must happen. This has been abundantly clear in recent times. We have all seen the daily news reports which include more and more instances of family violence and, frankly, its fatal consequences. But violence against women and children is not new. The understanding that this is a gendered issue is not new. The knowledge that family violence has its roots in flawed perceptions of privilege, entitlement, power, control and above all disrespect is not new. What is new is that we are prepared to confront this national disgrace head-on, to call it out for what it is, to investigate the extent, the effect and the appropriate response and to do all that we can to save the lives of women and children and create a cultural shift to zero tolerance of family violence.

Thanks largely to anti-violence advocates such as Rosie Batty, many others have found the strength to stand up and speak out. These conversations continue to grow and to come out of the dark spaces and into public spaces. Family violence is no longer discussed in hushed whispers. It is no longer the almost taboo conversation that I witnessed as a volunteer solicitor only a decade ago at Broadmeadows Magistrates Court. Family violence discussions are now heard loud and clear in the public outcries that enough is enough. While it is a massive leap forward that more and more people are talking about the need to address this scourge on our society, there is much more that needs to be done, and investment in prevention is a key priority.

The bill establishes Respect Victoria as an independent agency that can influence social norms, shape community attitudes and allow Victoria to be a role model for positive change in family violence prevention and gender equality. The bill puts in place the functions and roles for Respect Victoria to support the government to build evidence about what works to prevent family violence, and it will coordinate activities

and provide expert advice on best practice. It will drive communication and engagement with the community to change the culture that allows family violence to happen in the first place, and it will lead research into what works to prevent family violence before it starts.

This cultural change is vital. This was evident at the family violence community forum that I co-hosted with the member for Broadmeadows in 2015. The late minister Fiona Richardson attended that forum along with around 150 people representing the many culturally and linguistically diverse groups within the community. One strong message from that forum was that appropriate preventative responses to family violence need to recognise and address the causes of family violence, such as gender inequality and attitudes towards women.

It was disturbing to hear from several attendees at the community forum that gender stereotypes are still playing a major role for young people, with adolescent male culture dominated by macho attitudes and hitting out considered to be a manly display. Now, these are not my views; these are the views that were expressed to us at that forum. It was also reported by some attendees there that are involved in the education sector that some young men hold gender inequality views whereby men do not clean and cook or men are considered smarter and generally better at most activities. One male attendee at the forum remarked, 'Being violent is too easy as a young man'. These are incredibly disturbing sentiments to hear from members of the community.

These attitudes towards women, about what it means to be a man and about gender inequality need to change, and the response needs to be formalised. A cultural change needs to take place at home, at school, in the workplace and in the community. Family violence needs to be seen as a universally unacceptable and whole-of-community problem, but the response needs to be driven and it needs to be coordinated, and that is what Respect Victoria will do. While there is no quick fix and there is no single answer yet to prevent or respond to family violence — and there are many issues that need to be addressed — I believe that we are finally on the right track. So much is being done to finally address gender inequality and family violence. We cannot let the momentum stop. As others have previously commented, the late minister Fiona Richardson was passionate about prevention being key to preventing family violence and to getting prevention right. I hope that this bill has that effect, and I commend it to the house.

Ms HALFPENNY (Thomastown) (12:34) — I also rise to speak on the Prevention of Family Violence Bill 2018. I would also like to acknowledge the Minister for Women — she is just walking out of the chamber having done her duty — who has done so much work in this area following on from the former Minister for Women, Fiona Richardson, and of course many people have spoken about the foundation work that she did on family violence prior to her tragic passing.

I will only speak for a few minutes on this piece of legislation. I think this is another step that demonstrates the unwavering commitment from the Andrews Labor government in terms of not just addressing and supporting women who are subjected to family violence but also of course, most importantly, taking action and developing policies to change behaviour so that we can actually prevent family violence now and into the future, and hope that in the generations to come this will be completely a thing of the past.

Mr Katos — Acting Speaker, I draw your attention to the state of the house.

Quorum formed.

Ms HALFPENNY — As I was saying, it would be great to see a future where there was no family violence. I think there have been references to recent articles and that horrific and awful front page of the *Age* from a few days ago with photos of four women who all just recently lost their lives, it seems at the hands of partners or former partners. But even having this issue on the front page of a daily newspaper I think is a credit to the Andrews Labor government for bringing to the forefront such an issue so that people are thinking about it, worrying about it and, we believe and hope, doing something about.

When I look back to when I was a teenager in the 1980s family violence was a fairly regular thing around my area. I remember going to a friend's house when she came running out of her home and said to me, 'I'm so glad you came because my dad's got a gun and he's got it directed at us. Even at the time it seemed so surreal. Of course nothing happened when I was there. As a woman I feel terrible that I said to her, 'Well, why doesn't your mum leave?'. That was my first question, and of course that is not the right question. I think we have all come so much further in terms of our attitudes to this — that it is not the woman's fault. It is not the victim's fault or the survivor's fault; it is actually the perpetrator's fault, and there are no excuses.

Another occasion I remember, when I lived in Watsonia, was at the Greensborough shopping centre. The sister of a friend of mine — I actually worked with her; she was not a close friend — was murdered. She was working alongside a woman whose partner came into one of the shops at the Greensborough shopping complex — I think it was Brashs, the old record shop — and actually shot his partner and her friend, who was giving her shelter because she had fled from her partner's abusiveness and was living with her. When I look back, people were always saying, 'I wonder what that woman did? What happened? Why was this so?'. Again, we have come so far now when it comes to our attitudes to family violence.

This legislation is another tranche of the great work that is being done by the Andrews Labor government. It is a number one priority and a number one ticket on the agenda for the Labor government in Victoria, which really is leading the way. It is not just about, as I said earlier, providing resources, which is also very important for housing and supports, but now we are also talking about setting up the family violence protection agency, which is going to be known as Respect Victoria, and this will be an agency to look to the future and to prevent family violence occurring. I think this is something that really is a first in our state. So while we are spending a lot of money to support women and children, who are the main victims and survivors of family violence, we are also putting great effort, thought and resources into preventing family violence at the source. Of course the source is changing societal attitudes towards women so that women are respected and we do not have this gender violence continuing on in our society.

This legislation is groundbreaking. It is the result of a lot of work that has been done, particularly by those women that have been advocates and activists in the family violence area, whether it is the women who have been subjected to family violence themselves who have now become activists, who are not just standing back and saying, 'Oh, there's nothing we can do', but are actively, with a lot of courage and strength, working towards getting rid of family violence, or whether it is the many people that work in the sector and have to see some of the most horrific things and who support women and families after the trauma that they have gone through. This legislation is great legislation. I hope that everybody in the house will be supporting this, even though it is so sad and unfortunate. It really is a terrible indictment of the opposition that they have probably had only one speaker on the Prevention of Family Violence Bill. It really is testament to the attitudes, morals and values of the coalition in Victoria.

Debate adjourned on motion of Mr WAKELING (Ferntree Gully).

Debate adjourned until later this day.

DISABILITY SERVICE SAFEGUARDS BILL 2018

Second reading

Debate resumed from 8 August; motion of Mr FOLEY (Minister for Housing, Disability and Ageing).

Ms GREEN (Yan Yean) (12:43) — I take great pleasure in joining the debate on this very important bill, the Disability Service Safeguards Bill 2018. There was something in what the member for Thomastown just said: it really defines who you are and what your values are if you bother to actually make a contribution on bills before this house that deal with those who need the assistance of the legislature. The previous bill, the Prevention of Family Violence Bill 2018, deals with women and children who need our support. The disability community are no different. I think it is important to note that women with a disability are many more times likely to suffer from family violence than other women; it is just a cross that they have to bear in addition to living with a disability. I am referring to bills like the one we were previously debating and now this one, the Disability Service Safeguards Bill.

The bill before the house will implement a registration and accreditation scheme for the Victorian disability workforce that will protect the rights of people with a disability to be safe and receive high-quality services. It will enhance service quality by ensuring workers have the necessary skills, experience and qualifications, and it will enable people with a disability to exercise greater choice and control in their lives. It will also update the rights of people living in specialist disability accommodation to align them more closely with the rights of other tenants living in the community, to provide continuity of existing specialist protections and to give effect to the core tenets of the national disability insurance scheme (NDIS) — choice and control — by separating residency rights from service provision. It will ensure Victorian regulatory requirements do not conflict with those under the NDIS so that residency rights are enforceable.

I recall hearing Mitch Fifield at the national level saying that he thought that the skills shortage for the workforce going into the NDIS could be supplemented with 457 visas.

An honourable member interjected.

Ms GREEN — Yes, he would say that, wouldn't he? But we on this side of the house take a different approach, and we believe in a skilled workforce to deal with some of the most vulnerable people in the community. I know that the member for Eltham, being in the chair, understands full well how important this is.

Acting Speaker, under your stewardship we have seen the reopening of the Greensborough TAFE campus cruelly shut by those opposite. Melbourne Polytechnic have taken a great approach to the reopening of this campus. It is a specialist campus for health and community services, with a particular emphasis on disability. Given that it is right next door to the Diamond Valley Special Developmental School, it means that those students exiting that school can have further training for the workforce or can actually work with students there who are being trained to work in the disability sector so that those students can have an understanding of what the needs of people with a disability are in this new system — just being treated with respect. I think the practical approach that has been taken by Melbourne Polytechnic at the Greensborough TAFE campus will be an exemplar to disability training providers across the state. We have got St John of God Accord across the road and a number of other disability partner agencies, like Araluen. Araluen have a great partnership with Melbourne Polytechnic and are providing canteen services to Melbourne Polytechnic.

I think it is really important with the NDIS and given the workforce pressures — and we do need a trained workforce — that people with a disability can actually aspire to be part of that workforce themselves. I think we have had a poor record in Australia. We have one of the lowest rates of people with a disability in the workforce. I think we all, whoever we are, should actually have a right to the dignity of work. I know particularly that the people who attend Araluen get great benefit from either working part time or having a work placement, especially in the great communities of Hurstbridge, Diamond Creek and throughout the Diamond Valley, because there has been this great community connection with disability organisations like Araluen, St John of God Accord and previously Churinga and a lot of volunteering with the developmental school too. It is a very disability-friendly community. I am pleased that the six local government areas in the north-east were the first area to go on the NDIS after the Barwon trial site.

However, we know with the NDIS implementation that it is not without its problems and its challenges. As a

Victorian government, we want to make sure that the NDIS can be the best that it can be and that we do not take the approach of thinking that a workforce shortage can just be dealt with by 457 visa holders.

I commend the Diamond Valley Special Developmental School for the outreach that they do in the community. Brendan White, who was the principal there for many, many decades, is such a champion and an innovator. He and his leadership team actually identified that there were no specific AusVELS that covered disability, and it was senior people from the Diamond Valley SDS who were actually seconded to write those AusVELS for disability. Brendan White used to say to me that he felt the only way he could say he had been successful long-term was when special developmental schools did not need to exist anymore and we had a total mainstreaming of people with disability in education. I commend Brendan for that aspiration, and I hope we get to a place where we see it in his lifetime, if not in his work lifetime.

The Diamond Valley SDS has also established an outreach base room up in Whittlesea, which is great because a lot of students have had to come a very long way, and so to have something that supports the growth corridors I think is really important.

I am absolutely passionate about disability, particularly access all-abilities tourism. A word to businesses that want to actually grow their visitor economy: specialise in all-abilities tourism. You will never regret the visitors that you get, and they will support you. For each person with a disability who travels, as a visitor experience, they will have 3.5 other people travelling with them. Particularly for regional visitors this could very much be a way for businesses to go from being a seasonal concern of a family-owned business to actually employing people year-round. I am certainly seeing that in the alpine sector, where I have the privilege of working as a disability guide in some of my downtime, assisting people with disability to be able to fulfil their dreams and aspirations to be involved in snow sports. It is just amazing to see someone in a sit-ski or a visually impaired person being able to participate in this exciting alpine pastime.

The bill before the house will mean that people with disability continue to be treated with respect. There will be structures around them in the workforce to give people that respect, particularly in the way people with disability live their lives in the new system. I commend the bill to the house.

Mr NARDELLA (Melton) (12:53) — I am just going to say a few words in terms of the Disability

Service Safeguards Bill 2018. One of the things that this bill is part of is a huge consultative process that has occurred throughout the parliamentary committee inquiry, and the consultations that have been held throughout Victoria over a long period of time as well as with peak bodies and other commissioners involved in that process.

It brings me back to the year 2000 and the Honourable Christine Campbell, who was the Minister for Community Services at the time. A number of us were charged with the responsibility of going out and consulting for the 10-year disability plan. It was very interesting because it was the year 2000. The previous 10-year disability plan had in actual fact been undertaken in around 1988–89, and yet we had a situation where the Liberal government at the time, the Kennett government, did not believe that they had the responsibility, as per the legislation, of developing and updating the 10-year disability plan that was in the legislation. So that then required us as a Labor government, the Bracks Labor government, under the Honourable Christine Campbell, to go off and do that, and that was put in place quite shortly afterwards.

I remember going to Mildura, I remember going to Echuca and then going all the way over to Wodonga and having those consultations as well as some other consultations in Broadmeadows. One of the things that came out of those consultations was the same as some of the issues that have come out within this legislation — that is, that people want a right to choose. It was really interesting because it opened up my eyes back then in terms of the carers, the parents and the people with disability themselves, who were very, very clear about getting the services they wanted and getting the services they needed but getting them at the time they needed them — not afterwards, not down the track. It was about getting those services in a timely and speedy fashion. They wanted to make a choice. They wanted to have the choice, just like you and I have a choice, Honourable Acting Speaker Ward, in terms of the things that we need, in terms of the things that we require and in terms of the speed at which we require those services.

The disability plan and the legislation before the house is about providing that choice, that speedy choice, to members within our community to work with the national disability insurance scheme (NDIS), to work with disability commissioners, and to build on the great work that the Honourable — and hopefully soon it will be the Right Honourable — Bill Shorten, did in government in developing the NDIS. We are following through on our part of taking responsibility for putting in

place these changes that need to be put in place to fit in with the NDIS that is being implemented at the moment.

It is interesting. There are a range of factors and issues at the moment in terms of the responsiveness of the scheme. It goes to the training of people within the NDIS. Unfortunately it is not up to standard. But certainly at the Victorian level this legislation is about that.

In the limited time I have got left I just want to say that this type of legislation is I think for us — for people on the left, for people from the Labor Party, for people on the progressive side of politics — our bread and butter. We are genuine about looking after disadvantaged people within our society and within our community. Making sure of the standards and the quality of service that people with a disability get is what we are about. It is not about audit committees, it is not about slashing funding, it is not about economic rationalist Friedman economics. It is about how you actually help people to live their lives as best they can, with the supports they need and with assistance provided to carers, to their parents and to their friends who look after them.

It is one of the legacies of Labor governments and of this government that we are all going to be extremely proud of and that we see as one of the shining lights that differentiates us. You can strip away the rhetoric, but this differentiates us, the progressive side of politics, from others within our society. On that basis it is a very important piece of legislation because it gives rights to people who we take for granted. Tenancy rights that we take for granted are being bestowed, being changed and being given to people with a disability in this legislation. I think the legislation is extremely important, and on that basis I wish it a speedy passage through the Parliament.

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

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

Debate adjourned until later this day.

BUDGET PAPERS 2018–19

Debate resumed from 7 June; motion of Mr SCOTT (Minister for Finance):

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

Mr BURGESS (Hastings) (14:02) — It is a pleasure to rise and speak on the take-note motion on this year's budget. It is typical of the last three budgets that this government has produced. It is a boom-bust budget

with revenues just slightly in front of expenditure but of course built on a false base of immigration. Without that immigration we would be in real trouble in this state. It is a very similar scenario to where we were in 1988 moving on from the Cain-Kirner years. The last time they were re-elected things looked like they were okay because there was revenue that would substantiate the overlying figure, but in the end we saw that that revenue was built on sand, as the revenue at the moment is built on immigration. If that immigration starts to falter, which projections from the Housing Industry Association says it will, then while the revenue will drop considerably and suddenly, the expenditure that this government has built up certainly will not, and that will leave us in a very dire situation.

The revenue for the year is just under \$70 billion, which is up about \$6.2 billion, and obviously expenditure is just slightly lower than that. Of that expenditure \$25 billion is on public service wages and costs. That is the biggest cost to the budget. It is a 38 per cent increase and a \$7 billion blowout. This is projected to rise to \$28.3 billion in three years. One only needs to look at the Premier's own department, at his advisers, to see that we are in a situation where this government has just expended money hand over fist to support a failing Premier and his government. They have now got more people advising this Premier than the Prime Minister has got, which is an incredible situation and one that I have not ever seen before. The Premier has 63 advisers while the Prime Minister has got 54. The Prime Minister is running the whole country while the Premier is running just one state. There are 268 ministerial advisers, averaging over \$125 000 per person, which is an enormous number of advisers for a government that appears to have very little talent at the top level and is just relying on continuing to employ more and more people.

This is a plan with no economic productivity plan. It is a budget that takes us nowhere in a big hurry. It is built completely on immigration. It has got the same failings that the last government had with blowouts all over the place and a failure to plan for anything moving into the future. The people who put this budget together are the same people that put the last three budgets together, which left us with the wonderful Myki, the desal plant, the north–south pipeline, the IT project budgets that were blown to pieces — all of those pieces of infrastructure or projects that were such a mess that the government that took over in 2010 had to address them over a period of time. These are exactly the same people. It is an unusual situation when there is a one-term government; you get back the same people that were 11 years in government before that making the same mistakes and building this budget up to an

unsustainable level where the revenue and the expenditure do not match.

Of particular interest to small businesses, but also to Victorians across the state, is the massive increase in the cost of energy in the state, which has tripled for some businesses. The increase is \$300 on average per Victorian across the state in energy costs, which is a massive increase, with no real cause other than the government's own actions. The government forced the closure of Hazelwood by tripling coal royalties and then dispatching the Treasurer over to see Engie in France to make sure that they closed the generator down at Hazelwood. That, combined with the ban on looking for gas in Victoria, has really put pressure on energy prices right across the board.

If you put energy prices under pressure as far as electricity is concerned and then you ban gas exploration as well, of course electricity prices are going to go through the roof — and that is exactly what they have done. Victorians are paying the price every day for an incompetent government.

Our policy, of course, is to take the pressure off electricity prices and off gas prices by allowing the exploration of gas throughout Victoria again — not fracking, as some people would have you think, because fracking was banned by our government while we were in government. What we are talking about is traditional gas exploration. By doing that, by allowing that to open up by giving a veto to the landowner and a share of royalties and having a state retention on any gas that is found so that the states' needs are met first before anything else can be done with that, that will take the pressure off the cost of energy. We will have more to say about the costs of energy as we get closer to election.

As we all know now, and as we have heard many times in this house, the Premier started off the night before his premiership in the way he is finishing it. Over four years he has told untruth after untruth, and the night before the election he told one of the boldest. That was when he spoke to Peter Mitchell. Peter Mitchell said to him:

Daniel Andrews, all the polls say you will be Victoria's next Premier. If you are, do you promise Victorians here tonight that you will not increase taxes or introduce any new taxes?

And of course the Premier looked down the barrel of the camera and said:

I make that promise, Peter, to every single Victorian ...

Since that time he has broken that promise many, many times — 12 new and increased taxes, and 13 if we look

at the piece of legislation that is going through at the moment about container deposits. One of those was the new city access tax to fund the West Gate project — a charge of \$7.74 billion extra in tolls, with a capacity that even those that are behind the project are saying will probably be up to its extent by the time it opens or very close to it. Those involved in the planning have also questioned the plausibility of this project.

There has been the tripling of the coal royalties, which I have already mentioned; taxes on fares for taxis and Ubers; an increased tax on new cars; new stamp duty on off-the-plan purchases; new annual valuations for land tax, which have of course pushed land tax up and also had an effect on rates; a new stamp duty on transfers between spouses; a new point-of-consumption gambling tax; a new land tax surcharge for absentee owners, which has since tripled; a new stamp duty surcharge on foreign purchases, which has since tripled; and an increased fire services levy. And there are more to come. Obviously we are debating another one of those new taxes in the house this week. That makes Victoria Australia's highest taxing state by quite a distance.

Over this term payroll tax and vehicle registration fees have gone up by 20 per cent; stamp duty on property transfers has gone up by 60 per cent; duty and rego transfers are up 36 per cent; and land tax is up a massive 77 per cent. Even with all these taxes it is difficult to see where any of that money is being spent for the benefit of the community, and that is not surprising. There has certainly been an increase in the cost of infrastructure. The government is acting as quickly as it can to make it look like they are doing things, but the point here is that if you look at where the extra money has gone — and there is an enormous amount of extra money; I detailed earlier the extra revenue that is being generated through taxes in this state — you do not have to look past the blowouts that this government is foisting on this state through its failed infrastructure projects. The government says its projects are going to cost us all one thing, and then when we look more closely they cost us something completely different.

I think on the one hand Victorians will accept taxes. They certainly accept their share of taxes, but they would like to know — if their taxes are going to be increased as dramatically as this government has increased them — what value they are getting for them. To be absolutely straight, they are getting zero value for that extra tax. If you go through each of this government's projects, you see that the extra tax has been completely burnt up in blowouts on projects as we have moved through.

For the Metro Tunnel the promise was \$9 billion, now \$11.7 billion — a blowout of over \$2 billion. Level crossing removals were promised to be \$5 billion, now \$8.3 billion — a blowout of \$3.3 billion. The north-east link was promised to be \$5 billion, now \$16.5 billion — a blowout of \$11.5 billion. The east-west link of course was cancelled, but it nevertheless cost us \$1.3 billion because of another of the Premier's untruths. The Victorian Heart Hospital was promised to be \$150 million and cost \$543 million — a blowout of \$393 million. The Seaford-Frankston line stabling project was promised to be \$187 million but has cost \$236 million at this stage — a blowout of \$49.3 million. Hoddle Street was promised to be \$60 million, now \$106 million — a blowout of \$48.6 million. The Casey Hospital expansion was promised to be \$106 million but cost \$139 million — a blowout of \$33.5 million. The Ballarat line upgrade was promised to be \$516 million but cost \$549 million — a blowout of \$32.8 million.

This list just continues, and you can see where this extra tax and other taxes have been burnt by this state and why it really is a frustration to Victorians that they are continuing to pay higher costs only to pay for the blowouts that this government creates. The Frankston station upgrade was promised at \$50 million but cost \$61 million — a blowout of \$11.8 million. V/Line fleet maintenance was promised at \$12.5 million but cost \$23 million — a blowout of \$10.5 million. The Huntingdale station car park was promised at \$4.8 million but cost \$11.5 million — a blowout of \$6.7 million. That is \$25 billion in waste. That is just waste in these last four years. That would have paid for 25 new hospitals or 1500 new police stations. That is something about which this government should hang its head in shame. It has taken all this extra money off Victorians, and what has it done? It has just burnt it.

In my portfolio there has been damage done to small businesses literally all over the state. Everywhere I go there is more damage being done. The Kananook stabling has destroyed seven businesses. It destroyed Page Bros RV, a 50-year-old business which has just spent \$2 million on upgrading its premises, and they are going to be just tossed out. Businesses in the Latrobe Valley have been left out in the cold because of Labor forcing Hazelwood to close. Patties Foods in Bairnsdale laid off staff because of ridiculous energy costs, and that is reflected all over the state. For Optec in Morwell there has been a significant knock-on effect from the loss of Hazelwood, and their contracts have gone. Of course now those business owners are having to pay out of their own pockets and their own assets to try and survive.

That just goes on all over the state; I could talk about that for ages. There literally are hundreds of them. The government said that its small business regulation review was one of its greatest signature policies. Well, where is it? What have we seen? We have seen words. We have seen little booklets come out every now and then going on about what would be the case, what they are going to get rid of and what regulation they might attack, but we have seen nothing being attacked. We have in fact have had a net increase where we were promised a 25 per cent reduction in red tape. That just has not occurred. This government has not been able to keep any of its promises. It has done more damage to Victoria's small businesses than any government has ever done before.

On the promises of what the Labor Party was going to do just for small businesses, we only have to look at what they have done to school cleaners. I detailed that earlier, in my members statement this morning. School cleaners have been wiped from the face of Victoria. In the metropolitan area we had hundreds of school cleaners and many hundreds of employees that the government just sacked at the end of the financial year without showing any reason for doing so, and then it replaced them with companies that in fact had had major problems in their paying of staff before. Now we have had over 200 complaints about that.

In my electorate we have been starved of funding. My schools have had very little funding. In fact only one school has had anything significant. On police, law and order, Somerville police station is not open but crime is up: in Baxter by 42 per cent, in Bittern by 34 per cent and in Tyabb by 8.7 per cent. On sporting club funding, \$225 million is going into Etihad Stadium and nothing —

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr McGuire) — The member for St Albans.

Ms SULEYMAN (St Albans) (14:18) — I rise to speak on the take-note motion on the budget today. It gives me great pride to speak on this motion before the house. For the electorate of St Albans we have seen a fantastic budget. This is the fourth budget, of course, for the Andrews Labor government, and I can tell you what we have seen in the seat of St Albans. Just this year we have seen close to \$30 million in investment by the government in redeveloping the emergency department at Sunshine Hospital. What that means is that in Melbourne's west we will see more cubicles in the emergency department area, a separate section for children and of course a medical imaging suite and an expanded administration area.

This is on top of the \$200 million for the Joan Kirner Women's and Children's Hospital that we are seeing being constructed currently in the electorate of St Albans. At the last election we promised to build the women's and children's hospital, and once in government we wasted no time in commencing this vital project for the people of St Albans and also for the people of the west. We will see the women's and children's hospital precinct becoming an integral health precinct for the west, with the new hospital having 20 labour delivery rooms, 39 special care nursery cots, 64 women's inpatient beds, 32 children's inpatient beds and four new operating theatres. That will be on top of what we have with Sunshine Hospital.

There is no doubt that everybody knows that only Labor delivers for health in the west. Just recently, as I was coming out of an advisory meeting about the Joan Kirner Women's and Children's Hospital, I happened to walk past the display of plaques for previous extensions to and investments in Sunshine Hospital. All the names listed were former Labor premiers, ministers and MPs. They were the names of fantastic premiers, such as former premiers of Victoria John Cain and Steve Bracks, and a former Minister for Health, John Thwaites. So we can see that it is truly Labor that delivers for health in the west. I am very proud to be part of the building of the new hospital and also the investing of a further \$29.6 million to rebuild the important emergency department at Sunshine Hospital to meet the ever-growing demand there.

We are also providing free TAFE. Those courses are the foundations for proper education, and we need those proper foundations. There is a record investment in education. From next year, 30 priority TAFE courses and 18 preapprenticeship courses across the state will be free. That will allow young people to actually have the option of going to university, taking up a trade — and I know how important it is to take up a trade — or entering a TAFE course.

We have seen record investment in Sunshine and St Albans. We are investing in the Victoria University (VU) Polytechnic in the heart of St Albans. Recently we announced a new TAFE with VU Polytechnic, because we understand the importance of training and making sure that we have skilled workers who are able to take up jobs with the infrastructure projects and other investments that we have made across the state — projects such as the West Gate tunnel, the Metro Tunnel, the level crossing removals and hospital building. We have been able to create 6000 new jobs on the West Gate tunnel alone. Let me say that 500 or so of those positions are dedicated to apprentices and trainees. This is about getting young people into work.

On top of that there has also been an investment of \$10 million to create a brand-new skills hub in Sunshine. This skills hub supports the development of industry partnerships, creating access and making sure that vocational education is in the heart of Melbourne's west.

Furthermore, we are investing \$800 000, again at VU Polytechnic, to purchase new equipment, including paramedic pods and health simulation equipment. I had the honour quite recently of visiting the new simulation centre at VU. It is a world-class facility, designed for paramedics, nurses and midwives at Victoria University in St Albans. Let me say that they are doing a tremendous job in making sure that they are skilled, trained and ready to meet the workforce.

We have also of course seen the recent fantastic announcement of the airport rail link. We are continuing to invest in the public transport system. I need to add that it is the one-year anniversary of the removal of the most dangerous level crossing in this state, the Main Road level crossing in St Albans. It was this government, the Andrews Labor government, that removed that level crossing along with the Furlong Road level crossing in St Albans. There are also the brand-new stations at Ginifer and St Albans, which are the pride of our community. We are now seeing a much more effective traffic flow between both stations, but most importantly we have made it safe again for people to travel there. It took a Labor government, which is the only government that can do that, to make sure that we have safety at those level crossings.

As I said earlier, we now see an investment of \$5 billion in making the airport rail link a reality and making sure that Sunshine becomes the hub of the transport network in Victoria when it comes to accessing the airport. This means that there will be an opportunity to make sure that Sunshine will be the super-hub, but it also is a game changer for Melbourne's west, providing much more opportunity for Melbourne's west. I am very proud to have advocated for this project. I commend the Minister for Public Transport and the Premier for taking the lead role and making sure that once and for all we will have an airport rail link and that the appropriate route will be taken — that is, the Albion line, going straight through Sunshine. I am looking forward to the consultation process and to seeing the project commence under our government.

I am also extremely happy with the investment in education. Recently I had the opportunity to visit the people at St Albans East Primary School. For a very long time they have been advocating and lobbying for a

new toilet block at their school. It is a small project, but it means a lot to the people at St Albans East, particularly the students and their parents. The students had taken the opportunity, as part of their project, to show their writing skills and to advocate and lobby for the new toilet block. I thank the Minister for Education, who has been able to facilitate that investment. It is a very small contribution, but it means that they will have a new toilet block at St Albans East Primary School.

There are also places like Monmia Primary School in Keilor Downs. I have had the opportunity to visit the primary school on many occasions and talk to the principal and the students. For a very long time they were advocating and lobbying for a new rebuild of their library. In this budget, again thanks to the Minister for Education and our government, we were able to invest a small amount, but it will go a long way to rebuilding a new library at Monmia Primary School in Keilor Downs.

When we look at what we have invested in the electorate of St Albans, let me say it has been this government in the last four years that has contributed to the electorate of St Albans. We have never seen this amount of investment with the removal of level crossings, both Main Road and Furlong Road, and the building of a new women's and children's hospital, again a first — a women's and children's hospital dedicated not only for the electorate of St Albans but also for the people of the west. It has taken a Labor government to invest, most importantly, in education and to make sure that we have the right foundations when it comes to education, because we all know that to succeed and to grow in a community, one of the pillars is to have the right education. It does not matter which postcode you live in. It may be St Albans, Keilor Downs, Ardeer, Albion, Kealba, Sunshine North or Sunshine. We deserve investment in education to make sure that our schools have the appropriate infrastructure so that our kids can get opportunities to reach their full potential in life.

There is the fact that at the St Albans campus of Victoria University we are seeing a rebuild and a real opportunity with a regeneration of courses and free TAFE. We are working with the polytechnic centre in Sunshine and working hand in hand with our secondary colleges to make sure that kids can choose to go to TAFE or choose to go to uni, and it is all available in the west.

I am really proud and happy with what we have achieved in our fourth budget. It is a budget that delivers to Melbourne's west, and in particular to St Albans. I know that my community is extremely

thrilled with the changes that have come about since the Labor government has been elected. In the last four years we have seen much change in St Albans, and I would say there is a real sense of faith in the Labor government, because I can tell you that the previous coalition government did nothing for St Albans. In St Albans they made cuts to transport, to education and to the hospital system. So we are going back into those places, in particular St Albans and Melbourne's west, and investing in infrastructure for the community, because we know that we are the only government that delivers for the people of the west.

I conclude on the take-note motion by thanking the Premier for his leadership and thanking all the ministers who have contributed to making sure that yet again St Albans has received its fair share when it comes to this year's budget. I am looking forward to the airport rail link. I know that it is going to be an enormous opportunity not only for my electorate of Sunshine but also for the people of the west. I am sure that this will be an absolute game changer.

It is only the Andrews Labor government that has invested and will continue to invest, and I know that the St Albans community understands that. We are very excited. In the next few months we will see the opening of the new Joan Kirner Women's and Children's Hospital. We have already seen the cranes. The building is up. At the moment there is orange and pink paint outside the construction sites. I have never seen that number of cranes in St Albans, and I have been a resident all of my life. It really says so much. In the last four years we have seen so many cranes and so much work.

I have a limited time left for my contribution, but in the next few months we are also going to see the duplication of Sunshine Avenue to the E. J. Whitten Bridge, making it safe to get onto the Tullamarine Freeway. That has also been a very important infrastructure project, again creating local jobs but most importantly closing the gap of travel time to and from work. That is extremely important to families who travel to town and back for work or study, so thank you. This budget has been fantastic.

Mrs FYFFE (Evelyn) (14:33) — I rise to speak on the take-note motion. I do so with some reluctance because there is very little in this budget for my electorate, in fact what a contrast to the previous speaker. Evelyn does not seem to exist on this government's horizon. I could in fact re-table my previous budget responses for 2015, 2016 and 2017, which show very little consideration has been given by this government to the needs in Evelyn, yet we pay

higher taxes; we pay more taxes. The budget reaches deep into the pockets of the residents in Evelyn, and yet where does this money go? I look at it and I think, ‘Is it all going to Labor mates?’. We look at the cost of the West Gate tunnel, which is supposedly blowing out to \$6.7 billion. Well, just wait until it is finished. It will be like the desalination plant. I understand that every worker is getting a minimum of \$150 000 each annually. What about the \$11 billion Metro Tunnel project? What is that going to blow out to when it is finished? Of course we will not know. It will take years and years before we know, but everything this government have touched has blown out in their budgets because they give in to their union mates and their demands and their costs.

I look at the announcement that was made for Etihad. I shake my head in disbelief at this: giving \$225 million to build a hotel and a ballroom at Etihad, a business that is profitable and if they wished could have done it by themselves. We have not seen a proper business plan or justification as to why this has been given over.

At Mount Evelyn special school I have children who are walking in the rain to classrooms, if they can walk. Many are in wheelchairs or need assistance, and they are transferring to other classrooms in the rain. When they get into the classrooms they are shivering because the buildings are inadequate. They are over 40 years old and heating is inadequate. And yet this government has given \$225 million to an organisation that by comparison is very wealthy.

I look at the Lilydale car park, which is a hazard with potholes and water everywhere. There is not enough parking, and people are struggling to get in and out on cold, wet nights and in the mornings, and having to arrive an hour earlier than they need just so they can get a park. We have nothing for that, and yet I look to the seat of Monbulk and at the Belgrave car park. How proud the member for Monbulk was to make an announcement of the multilevel car park plan. I have been asking for years for a multilevel car park, not only for Lilydale but also for Mooroolbark. Yes, the land is limited, but there is nothing to stop it going up. Yet we have this Belgrave car park plan, which the member for Monbulk was very pleased to announce, but there is no suggestion of one coming to other areas. It is the same region with the same demographic and the same needs.

In relation to Mount Evelyn special school, there is an article in the *Lilydale and Yarra Valley Leader* this week where one of the parents is rightfully very angry. She has three children at that school and she has said that the pleas for help are being ignored. The article states that the education minister has:

... promised a re-elected Labor government would commit \$7.1 million to build Monbulk Primary School a library ...

For goodness sake! Libraries are lovely, but being able to go in the dry from one classroom to another and to be warm when you are severely disabled — obviously to anyone who cares — would be far more practical than a library in a school that is functioning very well. There are 120 students at Mount Evelyn special school. I understand the parents being so angry. They were given \$500 000 in the 2017–18 budget to develop the master plan and everything else — we all know how much these things cost — and \$100 000 to progress it, but they need the capital works funding. It is an excellent school. The teachers achieve beyond belief with their children. I love going there. It is terrific to see the children develop and grow to their maximum capabilities, and yet money goes to Etihad Stadium and to schools that can manage.

This parent said:

If that (spending money at Monbulk) is not buying votes, I do not know what is ...

As I said, the multilevel car park is buying votes and nothing else. It is purely buying votes. Yes, argue and fight for your electorate, but not when there are other electorates and other communities that are disadvantaged. The saddest thing is that there are students whose families live in the electorate of Monbulk who go to the Mount Evelyn special school. How do you think they feel? They feel devastated that they are being left out.

We have not got money for roads either. We have York Road, and we have Killara Road and Maroondah Highway not coping with the increased traffic congestion and deterioration. We know that across the state one of the strongest complaints we get continuously is about the congestion on roads and the difficulty with roads, with potholes on some of the country roads. Some of the roads in the adjacent electorate of Eildon are deteriorating, the camber of the roads is wrong and the shoulders of the roads need work, and yet nothing is out there.

We have a lack of adequate maintenance funding for many of our schools. We have some beautiful schools, lovely schools, but some of them are quite old. Some of them are 80 or 90 years old and they need extra funding just to be habitable and able to function — not to make them glamorous, but to actually make them safe and comfortable.

As I mentioned we have a problem with Killara Road and Maroondah Highway. The community has been

asking for traffic lights there for the last few years. The Country Fire Authority (CFA) has asked for lights. It is a very difficult intersection to exit, particularly at the weekends when tourist traffic is high. It is very hard to come out of Killara Road onto Maroondah Highway and turn right over the weekend, and if the CFA has to make an emergency exit, it is even worse. We will keep campaigning for that and hope that common sense comes.

As I said, the parking at Lilydale and Mooroolbark stations is difficult. Quite seriously, if you get there much after 7.00 a.m., you do not get a car park.

We have still got in this state the costly, unnecessary and unasked for grand final public holiday, leaving businesses a choice of either closing or paying a surcharge, and in a tourist area like I have in Evelyn it is something that they have to seriously consider. The cost of wages for them is too high. We have a lot of complaints now about workers being abused with their pay.

I look at that and I think about what this government has done to the school cleaners. School cleaners in my schools, and I assume it is the same right across the state, are more than just cleaners. The cleaners at the little school down the road from where I live, the Wandin Yallock Primary School, do more than clean the school. If there is a special event, they will come in early. They will make a point of telling the teachers and principal if they notice anything wrong. They talk to the children who might come early if they are cleaning then or later. They pass on the concerns. They care. They are more than just cleaners. Now they are being forced into this new situation, where they are having to work for these larger contractors, if they keep their jobs, and they only keep their jobs if they join the union, which is appalling in a democracy like this — to have the fact that if you are not in union, you will not get work, or ‘We’ll make your life so unpleasant that you’ll leave’. They are receiving less pay, they have less hours to clean, and the schools are looking worse.

Is it the intention that we become like Cuba or parts of China where students clean the classrooms? Because that is the way it will end up. I can see on a Friday afternoon the teacher saying, ‘Come on now, we have got to clean the classroom. We have got to tidy up and put everything away’. Is that what this government wants? When I started school in postwar England we did a lot of work around the school because there was not the money, but everybody accepted that. But when you have got a government that is rolling in money like this one, to have cut back and to have hurt so many cleaners is unbelievable.

One of my schools had contractors who were from the Chin community, and what a wonderful thing that was. It really made the people in the Chin community feel they belonged. They were so proud of the fact that they could get the work they had, and they were beginning to work for other schools. They cared passionately, and their children enjoyed the school and were proud to see their parents working. They have lost their jobs, and there are not a lot of jobs out there for them to take on.

We have got such a rapidly expanding population. We all know that; it is there in front of us every day. I am not against an expanding population; I think Australia needs to take its place in the world and absorb people, but the planning for it does not seem to exist. We need more decentralisation. We need to grow cities in the countryside. It happens around the rest of the world, but boy, are we slow to do that here.

We have got increasing crime in Yarra Ranges. We do not hit the headlines, as with the riots and so forth last night. We have got — you cannot say quieter crime, because crime is bad wherever it is — car thefts from farms, we have got machinery thefts from farms. We have got a huge amount of domestic violence and abuse, and yet we often do not have a police van in the Yarra Valley. A couple of Saturdays ago from 8 o’clock in the morning until 6 o’clock at night there was not a divisional van in the whole of the Yarra Valley. Why? Because there were not enough officers to man it. Why were there not enough officers to man it? Because officers were seconded to other duties and on maternity leave, which is fine, but part of their enterprise bargaining agreement is that if an officer is off on maternity leave, another officer will be provided.

It is not happening in the Yarra Valley. We could have to wait for a vehicle to come from Knox or at the quickest from Mooroolbark if there was an incident in the centre of the valley, and that is not the way to be. The load it is putting on our State Emergency Service and CFA, which are the first responders when there is a car accident, is huge, because they can arrive quite a long time before the police. Our officers are stressed. They cannot cope anymore. The amount of sick leave that is being taken is the highest I have ever seen in the time that I have been there. They are great. Some of those blokes know everything about the valley. They know everybody in the valley, and they help and they do all they can, but they are frustrated because there are not enough people stationed at Lilydale and Mooroolbark to cover the area.

Of course they cannot speak out publicly. This freedom in this country that we have, this heavily censoring government that we have that censors everything — I

mean censoring a TV station at the railway stations is unbelievable. That is what I expect to happen in Saudi Arabia and Abu Dhabi — in other countries.

Mr T. Smith — In North Korea.

Mrs FYFFE — In North Korea, yes. I tried to contact my son, who is working in one of the Arab countries, and I could not on a certain program because it is censored. This is not the Victoria that I am proud to belong to. This is not Australia when a television station is censored because of one interview on one program. I did not see it. I do not know much about it. I understand someone has lost their job somewhere, but I wish I knew a hacker. If I knew a really good hacker, I would say to them, 'Please hack into the programs that are shown at the railway stations and put the television channel back on'. Honestly, it is so much like a few years ago when I had a lovely time in Cuba. I had three weeks in Cuba. It is what one would expect in Cuba, in North Korea, in China and in other countries, but not in Victoria.

This government has had a lot of money pouring in, and they have done a lot of good things, including on domestic violence, which I think has been excellent. There has been bipartisan support on a lot of the changes in funding that while I have been here. In fact the last speech I made in 2002 before I lost my seat was about domestic violence, and my first speech when I came back in 2006 was about domestic violence. There has been huge change since that time and it is supported by everybody, but there is still a lot to do. No-one can stop it. It is the same with child abuse. It is still happening, as we are still hearing, and more and more has to be done with that.

There is no honesty in the cost blowouts. There are no details given out. You cannot give money to the AFL without telling the community exactly what it is for. Why did you do it? Was it just a deal done over dinner by the Premier, by the Treasurer, by Eddie McGuire and by the CEO of the AFL? Was it really, as I am told, decided just over dinner? I am told that is what happened; I do not know. I was not there, but obviously it would have been a beautiful dinner with beautiful wine served. Was that deal really done then? If it was not, show us the business case. Show us why and how. We know our youth get into trouble because they are bored, because they are unoccupied, and we need to get our local sporting clubs going. We really do, and spending that — I am just appalled by that.

So in four years Victoria has become the highest taxing state in the country. As I said, making this speech has been a bit pointless because it is exactly like the one I

would have made in 2015, 2016 and 2017 — and here I am in 2018 bewailing the fact that Evelyn got so little.

Mr DONNELLAN (Minister for Roads and Road Safety) (14:48) — I very much look forward to making a more positive comment in relation to the budget, and I guess in many ways you have only got to look at the very, very positive comments — things like from the City of Casey, with 'Casey welcomes budget spend', and 'Decades of funding drought for regional roads ended', from the Victorian Farmers Federation (VFF). So obviously they would disagree with the member for Evelyn and say it was actually a very positive budget. I would note that the mayor of Whittlesea actually described it as a 'roads party', and I guess we would have to be the party animals of the house because we have done more for roads than anyone else.

You have only got to look at how strong the budget is and how positively it has been received, and this is in stark contrast to the four years of indolence of the last lot, when I do not think you would ever have got that kind of response from the VFF. They certainly did not say that at the time and nor did the City of Casey or the Hume City Council or the Victorian Transport Association or so many others. It just highlights what a positive contribution we have made in upgrading the infrastructure of this state.

I was sitting at a bridge in Beaufort in recent weeks, and a guy called Joe, who had worked under the Country Roads Board many years ago in the 1960s, was back there building bridges 50 years later. They were upgrading this bridge into Beaufort so it can accommodate higher productivity vehicles. Joe said he had not seen so much activity since the 1960s, and this was the most active he had seen the economy and the construction industry across the whole of Victoria — ever. That very much highlights that 50 years later we are doing what needs to be done, and that is upgrading the infrastructure from one end of this state to the other. We are doing it in record time, and we are doing it very, very quickly.

You have only got to look at the projects we have currently got out for expressions of interest, whether it be the upgrades in the north or whether it be the upgrades in the south-east. These are monstrous, million-dollar upgrades. When you come to the south-east, if you are looking at the roads we are upgrading, for argument's sake, roads which will provide great benefits to the freight industry, we are upgrading Golf Links Road. Obviously that will link the poultry processing industry directly into Peninsula Link, so it will very much get them straight onto higher order arterials and deliver those goods to market.

We are also obviously upgrading Lathams Road in Seaford, and that is very much that industrial part of Seaford which is growing very well, with jobs, employment and so forth growing by many, many, many times what they used to. This is very much again about linking industry directly onto Frankston-Dandenong Road, Narre Warren-Cranbourne Road and the South Gippsland Highway into Cranbourne and very much getting them there more quickly to do the work they need to do.

Then last of all, for argument's sake, in relation to major improvements in the freight industry we are also upgrading Pound Road West and Remington Drive, and that will very much provide greater access to that industrial sector in Dandenong, that powerhouse of employment. That is why we have done that — so we can get the higher order, higher productivity freight vehicles into those areas. For many years I know the member for Dandenong was very much a great advocate for that, and I know also the South East Melbourne Manufacturers Alliance and the local industry down there had been waiting for that for some time.

Separately in the south-east we are also upgrading Healesville-Koo Wee Rup Road; Hallam North Road, including the upgrade of the intersection of Heatherton Road; and Thompsons Road, where we are upgrading the intersections at Frankston-Dandenong Road and Narre Warren-Cranbourne Road. That is over a \$1 billion investment, and that is being done as a public-private partnership to bring those benefits forward today and spread the payments over the longer term — over a 20-year period. I know that was incredibly well received, as Casey council said — as I indicated just a minute ago — which was reported in the *Berwick Star News* in an article headed 'Casey welcomes budget spend'.

If you look at the RACV after we released the budget, it said: 'Victorian budget a win for roads and public transport'. You could not really do more than we are doing at the moment, for argument's sake. We are also upgrading in the north, and again we are looking to duplicate Bridge Inn Road between Plenty Road and Yan Yean Road. We are also including stage 2 of the Yan Yean Road upgrade, increasing that to four lanes between Bridge Inn Road and Kurrak Road. Again there are more upgrades — Craigieburn Road, Epping Road and Fitzsimons Lane. We are upgrading intersections there and reopening all lanes of traffic, including for the bus lanes.

Childs Road in Mill Park will be duplicated, as will Sunbury Road, again addressing major pressure and major growth in those areas. In many ways our model

is about trying to bring those benefits forward to today, recognising that enormous growth in the outer suburbs. Overall that is a \$4 billion commitment to the outer suburbs. Whether it be in the west, where we are spending \$1.8 billion, which includes the maintenance package as well, in many ways this is about trying to get these things done more quickly and trying to deliver the benefits sooner.

We are also upgrading the Mordialloc bypass to a freeway, as we indicated in the budget, with another \$75 million allocated there to deal with the grade separation. What you will have now is a 7.5-kilometre link between the end of the Mornington Peninsula Freeway in Aspendale Gardens and the Dingley bypass in Dingley, which again will relieve pressure on Springvale, Wells and Boundary roads as well as sections of the Nepean Highway around Cheltenham and Mordialloc. So there will be enormous benefits for the logistics industry and enormous benefits for the employment zones around those areas, whether it be Monash, Braeside or Kingston — enormous benefits not only for freight but also for the community to get around.

We are also not to forget that in many ways this was also a budget focused on the whole of Victoria with the \$941 million — the record spend — we are spending on country roads. We know that that will upgrade more than 1000 kilometres of road across this state, and that will be the record spend.

You have only got to look at the comparator, as I said earlier on today, between 2011 to 2015 and 2015 to 2019 in terms of country road maintenance. An extra \$400 million over the last four years has gone into country road maintenance. They are the record levels and the highest levels —

Honourable members interjecting.

Mr DONNELLAN — If we want to look at the south-west coast and areas like that, we have just finished spending \$301 million on the South-West Coast. I was with people from a couple of the councils from down there today, and they were saying that is the best spend they have ever seen. You cannot actually get bigger or better than the best spend they have ever seen. Whether you speak to the Shire of Glenelg or whether you speak to any of the shires along there, there is general recognition now that there were four years of indolence, four years of sitting still and actually doing very little, by the Liberal and National parties. So really in many ways that highlights why the National Party fails in its duties to stand up for country roads when they are in coalition, because every time we know there

are cuts, cuts, cuts. What happens is the National Party are a bit like a palm tree in a cyclone: they just flip over straightaway, and the Liberals come in and cut, cut, cut, cut, cut.

Let us be very clear: the budget figures do not lie. They are there for all to see. You might have the member for Warrandyte suggesting that people are lying. I would suggest he learn to read his budget papers and actually have a look, because they are just basic facts and figures. So let us be very clear that that is a record spend in that space, and it is generally recognised that that is a very positive outcome for those communities.

One of the councils that was in today indicated very clearly that the most positive thing they had seen was the narrow sealed road widening and that was very much delivering benefits for the dairy and related industries and doing that work that needed to be done — work that was never undertaken by the Liberal Party. The Liberal Party and the National Party never did a narrow sealed widening of roads in the South-West Coast, whereas we did. They are just basic facts of life.

Honourable members interjecting.

Mr DONNELLAN — The Liberal and National parties may want to squawk as much as they like, and I welcome them squawking like a pack of banshees, but the basic fact is the budget figures do not lie. At the end of the day they are saying we are \$400 million up on what the last lot spent, and that is a basic fact. So you can squawk as much as you like, but the basic figures are there.

We on this side of the house are very proud to continue that work and do what needs to be done. I look at these maintenance figures and there is a progression straight up, whereas when the last lot came in it went straight down. So it is very nice that they are all coming in here to learn a little bit about the record spend that the Labor Party is undertaking in regional and country Victoria on outer suburban roads, because their lot would not even know what it is about, because they have never undertaken it. You are a pack of lazy, useless twits who have never undertaken the work that needs to be done.

Honourable members interjecting.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr McGuire) — Order! There is too much audible commentary from the opposition.

Mr DONNELLAN — What we had from the last lot was the four pillows policy of sleep, sleep, sleep and indolence — simply not getting anything done. But

what I found the most amusing was when I would go to parties with the Old Xaverians — and there were a lot of Liberal voters — there was not one who would defend the indolence of the Liberal Party in the last four years. You would be surprised how many Liberal-voting people were desperate to get rid of your lot and were very happy to point out the fact that everything had sat still for four years. Let us be very clear: they carried through with it!

Mr T. Smith — On a point of order, Acting Speaker, could this ranting, rorting minister channel his comments through the Chair, please?

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr McGuire) — The minister, through the Chair.

Mr DONNELLAN — Well, I think you have got to be pretty self-centred, member for Kew, if you think I was channelling it through you. I was channelling it through the microphone, so there you go. At the end of the day I do not know why you think I would be channelling anything that way. But let us be very clear —

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr McGuire) — Through the Acting Speaker.

Mr DONNELLAN — there was not a mug who used to vote for the Liberal Party during their term who would defend that lot, because it was a very slow time. I mean, let us be very clear: growing the economy at 0.8 of a per cent was like falling asleep! We have not seen the economy grow at 0.8 of a per cent for a long time. And what did your lot do? Delivered 0.8 per cent growth, abandoned the marketplace — no capital spend, and you sat still. You have got nothing to be proud of, because that is probably the least this economy has grown in a long, long, long, long time. You have only got to look at the jobs growth during that period to know that there was none — because your lot did not care about jobs for that community. We know how important —

Honourable members interjecting.

Mr DONNELLAN — We know how important jobs growth is. I think we had better —

Honourable members interjecting.

Mr DONNELLAN — The banshees have got out —

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr McGuire) — Order! There is too much audible noise across the chamber. The contribution is nearly finished.

Honourable members interjecting.

Mr DONNELLAN — The truth hurts. Let us be very clear: there is a lot to look at over that side of the house. There are people over that side of the house who have got a lot of questions to answer.

Mr Gidley — On a point of order, Acting Speaker, this member seems almost obsessed with talking about the past. He has very little to say about the present and nothing to say about the future. If the member has nothing to say about meeting the challenges of Victorians and the out-of-control violent crime in the state, he should sit down.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr McGuire) — There is no point of order.

Mr DONNELLAN — What a waste of time that was. What a gratuitous comment from a second-rater who sat there while that government was in doing nothing — absolutely nothing. If we are going to keep growing at 0.8 of a percent, then where will we end up? Your hopeless lot delivered very little. You have only got to look at your capital spend; it was ordinary. And let us be very clear: not a major project was started and finished during your term.

Honourable members interjecting.

Mr DONNELLAN — We have got a change of Acting Speakers. Acting Speaker Richardson, you might have to stop this lot getting so sooky, because there is nothing like the truth to get a pack of sooky-la-las going. I have never seen a greater pack of sooky-la-las in my life.

Honourable members interjecting.

Mr DONNELLAN — Look at the pointing banshees. They are all demented. It is about time the Liberal and National parties apologised for their appalling effort in the last term of government. Nothing happened, nothing went anywhere and this place came to a standstill. That is a shame which you should all wear around your necks for the rest of your lives, that you sat there for four years and you relaxed.

Mr GUY (Leader of the Opposition) (15:03) — Fifteen thousand seven hundred and seventeen dollars, that is how much the member for Narre Warren benefited from the crooked Labor rorts scheme — \$15 717. One thing we can say about this budget and one thing we can say about the future since this budget is that we never saw anyone else mentioned on pages 12 and 76 of the Ombudsman's report like the

roads minister, like that one, did we — rorting \$15 717?

An honourable member — Stolen!

Mr GUY — Stolen, rorted, thieved, taken, cheated — whatever it might be. He can think of all the names he likes, but he keeps forgetting those things about himself. As he says, the truth hurts. There on page 76 under 'ALP candidate in assigned district' it says 'Donnellan, Luke' — \$15 717. Victorians have to ask themselves: are they better off than they were four years ago; are taxes lower than they were four years ago; is crime lower than it was four years ago; is the cost of living lower than it was four years ago; are Victoria's roads less congested than they were four years ago; and is the government of the day a cleaner government with more integrity than the government of four years ago? Certainly not.

When it comes to taxes Victoria is now under a government which is the highest taxing in Victoria's history. As the shadow Treasurer pointed out in his budget reply to this Parliament some months ago, 12 new or increased taxes have seen bills rise for the average Victorian family by 35 per cent. That is how much the Labor Party cares about families in this state: 'We'll run a surplus and tax you 35 per cent so you'll pay for it'.

Contrast that with what the now Premier said the night before the state election in 2014. When asked whether there would be any new or increased taxes under a government he leads, as the shadow Treasurer will remind us all, the now Premier gave that promise to Peter Mitchell: 'I make that promise, Peter, to every single Victorian'. He told that lie to each and every Victorian. Everyone was lied to.

Taxes are now up by 35 per cent under his watch, the highest in Victorian history. So Victorians will ask themselves: are they better off? Are taxes lower? Are taxes and the cost of living in this state now more affordable under this government than they were four years ago? They are right to ask themselves whether our state is a safer place than it was four years ago because New South Wales is safer, Queensland is safer and lots of other places are safer. Is Victoria? When the Crime Statistics Agency shows that violent crime is the highest it has ever been we know we have got a problem.

I have just come back from Taylors Hill in the north-west of Melbourne and speaking to locals who, looking at this budget and looking at the government's last four years, know this government is crooked. They know there is something wrong in the state of Victoria

when even the basic responsibility of a government — to keep people safe — cannot be met by this government. They can ban Sky News, but they cannot even stop crime. They are more focused on paying political retribution to news outlets than they are on stopping crime.

Well, Victorians are not going to forget. They know what is happening on their streets. The residents of Taylors Hill and Caroline Springs know that seeing the mounted division of Victoria Police on their local streets is not something they should have to accept. It is not the norm. It is something that they do not deserve — this city deserves better, this state deserves better — but it is what we have got under this government because violent crime is through the roof. Parole must be reformed; bail must be reformed. Only the Liberals and Nationals have a plan to do both. Only the Liberals and Nationals have a plan to reform our sentencing regimes for mandatory minimum sentencing for repeat violent offenders because our system, our criminal justice system, should be protecting those who obey the law, not protecting those who break it. It is protecting those who break it under this government, and with reckless abandon while we are at it.

Here we have today the terrible circumstance of Patrick Cronin's parents asking their local member of Parliament, the member for Eltham, whether they can get help as to why their son's one-punch killer, after serving just two months, is seen as an educator for high school kids. Of course there was no response from the member for Eltham — zero response. She did not even get back to them. There is no problem, she says.

Well, there is a massive problem. There is an enormous problem, and the people of Eltham certainly deserve a lot better, as do the people of the whole state — certainly Patrick Cronin's parents and every parent. Everyone deserves better than that atrocious situation that is now seen as the norm — making excuses — under this wretched government in the state of Victoria. That is why we are going to reform the criminal justice system. That is why Nick McGowan as the member for Eltham will be a part of reforming the criminal justice system. That is why we are going to change Victoria and make our state safe again, and not leave Victorians exposed to this type of criminal behaviour.

While we are speaking of criminal behaviour, can I segue to something which is certainly not mentioned in this budget but should have been mentioned as a repayment scheme from the Labor Party. The member for Narre Warren North and his re-election campaign benefited from \$15 717. The Ombudsman found that no other political party behaved like this — no-one else.

Every other party leader was interviewed apart from one leader — the leader of the Labor Party. Exclusive cognisance, he said, 'I'll not be interviewed', despite telling this chamber that he would, as he said, cooperate fully with an Ombudsman's inquiry. Well, that was a lie in itself.

The taxpayer was ripped off by John Lenders by \$44 732; by Liz Beattie by \$24 773; Margaret Lewis, \$24 358; John Pandazopoulos, \$21 757; Joe Helper, \$21 148; Joe Scheffer, \$21 148 as well; the same amount for Minister Jenny Mikakos, who still occupies that position; Brian Tee, \$21 148; the member for Footscray, \$21 148; the same amount for Nazih Elasmari; Minister Gayle Tierney, \$20 559; Gavin Jennings, the minister responsible for integrity and IBAC — the beard, the eminence walking around the chamber — \$20 539; Lee Tarlamis, \$19 931; can you believe it, Matt Viney, Jo Duncan, Adem Somyurek, the member for Ivanhoe, Candy Broad; and dare I say the minister at the table, Minister D'Ambrosio, \$5364.

While we are on that, I ask the minister at the table: where did that money go? Maybe you would like to help me, Minister, by way of an interjection. Where did the money that your office rorted from the taxpayer go?

An honourable member interjected.

Mr GUY — That's right, to the member for Yan Yean. It did not go to Mill Park; it went to the member for Yan Yean. Victorians deserve so much better from their government. It has come to red shirts rorting and chauffeuring your dogs in your car. Can you believe, as the member for Euroa made clear to the house, that this government then named a TAFE building after Steve Herbert? Of all the people who have worked in the education field — all the people who have worked in tertiary education, irrespective of their political background; everyone who has done so much for education in this state — they named it after the man who resigned for rorting the system and chauffeuring his dogs in a taxpayer-funded vehicle. That says it all about the attitude of the Andrews Labor government: find a way to rort the system and we will name something after you. What, I ask you, Acting Speaker, sounds better? Should a new wing in a prison be called the John Lenders wing? Should a new wing be the Gavin Jennings rehabilitation wing? I do not know, but we are going to name it after the obvious. We are going to name it after somebody; it is going to cover one of the two. The presiding officers — three out of three. Can you believe this? Three out of three, with Khalil Eideh.

I think when it comes to this budget, and looking at the failures of this government to deliver a single thing

which goes to the heart and integrity of this government, Victorians are going to look back and say, ‘This was a dark four years, which we disposed of — a dark four years of roting, of taxation, of corruption, of cost-of-living increases that we have disposed of’. What should be ushered in is a government that focuses on common sense: building the east–west link; starting a north-east link; removing our congested intersections in Melbourne and Geelong; increasing our rail capacity to Shepparton and reintroducing it to Donald; fixing up the Warrnambool services once and for all; making sure we fully and properly extend and duplicate the railway lines from Greensborough to Eltham, from Cranbourne to Clyde, from Frankston to Baxter; actually having a plan to grow our city that does not involve ripping off the taxpayers, that does not involve extorting the taxpayer for their hard-earned work, that actually says our city is growing at record levels. We are about to add the population of Brisbane to Melbourne in less than 25 years, and we need a government that says, ‘One rail tunnel and a dozen or so level crossings is not going to cut it when it comes to putting that size population on top of 5 million people’.

That is why the Liberal and National parties, unlike this government’s budget, are committed to decentralising our state, focusing on growing a state of cities, not a city state; focusing on growing all of Victoria, from Wodonga to Warrnambool, Sale, South Gippsland, the Latrobe Valley, Shepparton, central Victoria, and our major centres like Geelong, Ballarat and Bendigo; having a plan that involves our first minister for decentralisation in 37 years; having the first-ever minister for Geelong, who will sit in the cabinet to actually draw attention to our second-largest city at the cabinet table, not as an add-on to one or two ministers or a drop for a local newspaper. These are serious policies to grow all of Victoria.

What those policies will replace are those four, dark roting years of the Andrews Labor government. We have seen over the last four years a government that is obsessed with thinking and has an attitude of ‘What the taxpayer has is mine’. There is a whole cabinet table of these little dictators, running around acting with impunity to put in place whatever they see fit, whether it is a second office 200 metres from your electorate office in Bendigo, whether it is living in Fitzroy but your electorate is Narre Warren North, whether it is treating sky rail residents with contempt, whether it is trying to destroy the lives of hardworking taxi families, whether it is the Country Fire Authority, which has been treated with thorough disrespect by this government. What Victorians want is a government that governs for all Victorians, a government that does not steal their money, a government that does not come

into office and think, ‘What the taxpayer has is really the Labor Party’s’ — because it is not.

The police, I hope, will go about an investigation without interference from this government, without interference from anyone, to do their job, to find the truth as to exactly why the Premier did not want to be interviewed by the Ombudsman. He sat in those campaign committees and knew that this system was not just an artifice; it was corrupt. He knew it was wrong. He was a part of those meetings. He has been misleading this Parliament, he has been misleading question time, he has been misleading Victorians, and what we do know is that the truth will come out.

Ms THOMSON (Footscray) (15:18) — This will be my last budget contribution in this house, and in so doing I would like to refer to the fact that for the last four years we have had budgets that have delivered for Victorians in every area that you could seek a government to take a role in supporting the community.

In saying that, I would like to make mention of the contribution and the rant by the Leader of the Opposition in this place on this take-note motion. He used that to extract what he saw as his pound of flesh, but he does not come to this place with clean hands, and my electorate has suffered at the hands of his decisions. My electorate suffered when he was Minister for Planning by him giving us developments well beyond the height limits that were thought anywhere near reasonable to our community, ones that will overshadow the Maribyrnong River, which should have been protected. He actually said as planning minister that he would protect them and failed to protect them. It has been left to us as a government to take action on that front.

He is a man who we know has associations with people who are of ill-repute — that is now recorded — a man who likes his lobster, likes his Grange. We now have an Ombudsman’s inquiry into printing expenses by those opposite. So they do not come to the table with clean hands. They are grubby, and they have always been grubby. They have not cared about my community. For four long years they did nothing, and they certainly did nothing in the western suburbs of Melbourne in communities that needed it most, in communities that are diverse.

What did the opposition do? Instead of supporting these diverse communities, they gave lip-service to the issue of multiculturalism — they gave absolute lip-service to it. It would be interesting to see, if we had a look at where their grants went during that time, which organisations got those grants. It would be interesting to

know. They have come into this place time and time again and talked about African gangs as if that is the only area of issue that we have. They have brought upon communities in my electorate the incapacity to walk down the street at certain times because they get spat at, abused, because they happen to be of African descent. But they are as Australian as anyone in this chamber. That is a travesty — to see the debate sink that low. Instead of lifting the debate up, those opposite have decided to take it lower than the gutters. They are now in the sewers.

I am proud of this Labor government, and I am proud of the four years of achievements of all our budgets. This is not a one-off. This has been four years of a big-spending government that has spent money on the infrastructure that this state needs now and into the future, so it is able to take the growth and remain the most livable city in Australia but also support our regions and support our country towns.

In my own electorate of Footscray and the broader area of the western suburbs we have seen this government recognise that the western suburbs of Melbourne are the fastest growing in Australia. We are now the fastest growing, and in order to support those communities we need to make sure that we are putting in place not only the infrastructure but also the policy settings that support those communities. On domestic violence, for which this government has put money into every budget since we have been elected to ensure that women and children are kept safe in their homes or have the support they need if they are not safe in their homes, only the Andrews Labor government has tackled it not just in talk but in fact in deed. The new safety hubs that will be rolled out will look after and protect women and children when they most need it, when they are the most vulnerable, and are a sign of the way in which the Andrews Labor government is protecting those women. They will be a place for them to go to get what they need, when they need it, without them having to chase around to try and get that support.

But we are not only talking about the issue of what happens to women when they are victims of family violence; we are talking about what we need to do to prevent it. That is what this government has been all about. Deal with the problem that you have got now by all means, but think about what you need to put in place to ensure you stop it — and family violence is an area that we need to try to stop. I am not a dreamer; I understand the realities of the world. We are probably never going to see the end of domestic violence, but we can certainly see it minimised. This government will be doing everything it can to make sure that if we can help any woman, any child, avoid family violence, we will.

Respect Victoria and the authority that is being put in place to work on the prevention of family violence that we are about to vote on this week is just a symbol of the actual intent of this government to make sure that we tackle family violence prevention and that we actually do something about it. You can have all the legislation in the world, but unless you back it up with the money and the finance to actually make it work, it does not work.

Let us talk about the biggest issue in my electorate and in the west, and that is jobs. I see the Minister for Industry and Employment is in the chamber. I have got to tell you that this government has done more on this front than any government before it. More than 340 000 jobs have been created since November 2014, and they have not just been any jobs. We know that we have to make sure that those who are most vulnerable get their share of those jobs, and so on those big projects that we have been running in the west, the West Gate tunnel and now the Metro Tunnel as well, we are putting on the apprentices who most need it. We are making sure the disadvantaged are getting access to it. We are making sure that those people who fell out of the auto industry through no fault of their own are getting supported back into work. That is what Labor governments do. That is what we are about. We are about making sure that the whole community is lifted up, not just those in the very top percentile. That is what makes me proud to be a Labor member in this Parliament.

I also want to talk about business, because I was very fortunate to have been the Minister for Small Business in the Bracks years. They are the heart of our employment, and they are the heart of our communities. You cannot not support them. You need to support them. In order to support them you need to understand what they need most, and in order to do that you need to talk to them and you need to understand how you can best help them. Now, we do not have many financial levers at our hands as a state government — most of that resides with the federal government — but we do have payroll tax. As more and more small businesses grow and employ more people, you want to make sure that, if you can, you keep them out of the payroll tax regime. That is why we have reduced the payroll tax rate for regional businesses from 3.65 per cent to 2.525 per cent, the lowest rate anywhere in the nation. This is what will help our rural communities, because small business is the heart of those communities. This is what will encourage other businesses to think about establishing themselves in regional and rural areas. That is how you grow your regions and grow your rural areas.

We actually do understand what we need to do as a government to support the economy. It has been there, writ large, for the last four years. It is why we are only one of 10 sub-sovereign governments in the world that maintain a AAA rating. That is no easy feat. It comes with good economic management. We have a Treasurer, a cabinet and members of Parliament here who understand the real importance of strong economic management but who have a great social conscience and a preparedness to take the community with us on this ride. No-one should miss out on the economic growth of this state, and that is what we are committed to ensuring.

I do not have much time left — I could go on for hours, but I will not — to talk about what we have been able to achieve as a government. I know others have taken that opportunity, but I would like to talk to my own community's advantage in this budget and over the last four years because up until then, from 2010 to 2014, my community suffered at the hands of the Liberal government. I saw schools that were desperately in need of money not getting it. Some of the most disadvantaged kids in the country were not getting access to the proper facilities that they deserved. We are rectifying that, and I am very proud of that.

Our health services were deplorable, except for the one shining light of Sunshine Hospital, built by a Labor government. Its growth came from a Labor government, and its new facilities are from a Labor government. The Joan Kirner Women's and Children's Hospital will be done by a Labor government. There is \$29.6 million for a new emergency department at Sunshine Hospital. That will boost the capacity for the hospital to take care of 59 000 patients per year. Mental health is a big issue for us in the west. Sunshine Hospital will be the site of a mental health crisis hub — a 24-hour short-stay unit. Money has been set aside for the new Footscray Hospital, a much-needed boost to the health facilities in the western suburbs.

Dinjerra Primary School in Braybrook, which has the sweetest kids you could ever, ever see — delightful children, a very multicultural community — will get \$7.4 million to rebuild their school. Finally they will get the money to rebuild their school, and that is being done by a Labor government. This is a big shout-out to the Minister for Education, who visited the school as a shadow minister at the time, prior to the election, and gave a commitment to Dinjerra that we would rebuild their school. We are meeting that commitment. We will rebuild that school.

Glengala Primary School in Sunshine West is to receive \$4.3 million for their new north wing to enable them to

fully complete their school. Those children will be the beneficiaries of that. That is another delightful school with amazing children, amazing teaching staff and an amazing community. I have got to say that as a member of Parliament my favourite thing to do of all time is to go and visit kids in schools, because they remind you of the role you are meant to play as a member of Parliament. They also ask the question you wish they would never ask — they are very up-front!

Planning and detailed design work is to begin to enable high-capacity metro trains for the Sunbury line. Let us not underestimate what the Metro Tunnel will mean for the western suburbs, because for the first time they will be able to take a train to Parkville and to the Victorian Comprehensive Cancer Centre, to the universities and to the medical facilities there. This will make a huge difference to the lives of the people in the western suburbs.

Not to forget sport: the Western Bulldogs Whitten Oval will be able to stage night games for the women's league and they will be televised. Melbourne Victory will have their facilities built near Victoria University to enable training for juniors and women, which will be a boon for all of those in the western suburbs who love their soccer.

I could go on and on forever about these last four years and this last budget. I have never been prouder to be a member of the Australian Labor Party.

Mr CLARK (Box Hill) (15:32) — This is a budget of high taxes, high spending, high borrowing and low results. In that sense it is a typical Labor budget, and like other typical Labor budgets it takes the state's finances to a point where they are unsustainable. It took the Bracks-Brumby governments 11 years to get to that point; the Andrews government has achieved it in four.

It is a budget that relies on money pouring in and money pouring out. The money has been pouring in from the massive increases in taxes over which the government has presided; the dozen or more new and increased taxes of the Andrews government, despite the solemn promise that now Premier Andrews made to all Victorians on the eve of the last state election. It is a budget based on massive slugs on Victorians who want to buy their first home or move to a new home. It also slugs people who have property investments to fund their retirement.

It is a budget that relies on huge influxes of GST revenue from the commonwealth; not due to any good management on the part of the state government but due to the solid work of the federal coalition

government in rebuilding the national economy after the global financial crisis and the destruction of the Rudd-Gillard governments, and due to the ebbs and flows of the mining boom. In terms of how the GST total national pool is allocated, it has meant now that Victoria is, for the first time in years, getting close to an even share allocation of GST revenue, whereas in the time of the Baillieu-Napthine governments the percentage was well below 90 per cent and seemed to be falling with just about every budget that we had to endure, rather than rising.

Due to this combination of a deliberate increase in the tax burden on Victorians and the windfall gains from GST revenue, this government has got the money pouring in, but it is pouring out just as fast and it is pouring out wastefully. We have seen it with the political advertising that is clogging our airwaves, encumbering our public transport system and appearing in our newspapers despite the complaints of the now Premier about the previous government — a government which in fact dramatically reduced the level of government advertising. That is yet again a demonstration of the hypocrisy of the Premier and his team.

We have seen it with the number of ministerial advisers that the Premier has — more than Australia's Prime Minister. That is the sort of profligacy with public money that we are seeing from this government. But when it comes to actually spending money effectively and in a way that will benefit the community, the government is comprehensively failing. They have failed to protect the community from crime. It is a combination of bad policy in terms of being soft on crime and it is a consequence of their having sat on their hands during the first part of their term of office, allowing the crime situation to spiral. Now they are desperately struggling to try to put the genie back in the bottle. The difficulty with crime is that once the message has gotten out that the system is soft on crime and criminals can get away with it, it is very difficult to reverse that view, and that is exactly what Victoria is suffering at the moment.

We are seeing the wastefulness and the poor priorities of the government in terms of their failures to tackle Melbourne's congestion problems, their failure to adopt a whole-of-Victoria population policy that will take the pressure off Melbourne suburbs and support country Victoria. We are seeing it in their failure to take effective action and well-directed priorities in education to restore the standards of education that have unfortunately slipped and lagged so badly in this state, as the member for Kew has pointed out time and time again. Despite all of the money that has gone into the

education system, standards are slipping. Whenever there is a new round of benchmarks Victoria seems to have fallen further and further behind.

In terms of examples of waste and profligacy, how can one go past the \$1.3 billion that the Premier poured down the drain to not build the east–west link. Families across the eastern suburbs and across my electorate of Box Hill in particular are paying the price for that profligacy, waste and indeed dishonesty day after day as they remain stuck in traffic queues at the end of the Eastern Freeway.

This is a budget that has got its priorities wrong. It is a budget that is not delivering good results for Victorians despite the huge tax slugs and despite the money that has been flooding in and flooding out of the Treasury coffers. When one looks at my own electorate of Box Hill one sees many of those problems repeated at that level. We see a community where across our residential streets there are population pressures and loss of amenity because of the government's winding back of residential protections that were put in place under the previous government, allowing three storeys in general residential zones and abolishing lot limits in neighbourhood residential zones. This is a watering down, I should say, that the Liberal-Nationals coalition have committed to reverse, and we will reinstate the protections that were put in place under the previous government if we are elected. The residential streets and suburbs across the Box Hill electorate — from Balwyn to Surrey Hills to Mont Albert to Box Hill North, Box Hill, Blackburn North, Blackburn and Nunawading — are all suffering from these population pressures and the flawed, destructive planning policies that have been introduced under the current government.

Then in central Box Hill we are risking becoming a wilderness of towers and wind tunnels because of the government's desire to see an unregulated and unplanned explosion of high-rise developments in Box Hill, occurring because the planning minister saw fit to impose height limits in central Melbourne and in Docklands of course people who want to undertake projects are thus looking to Box Hill to do so.

The government's expert panel trashed and criticised the efforts that Whitehorse City Council made to introduce changes to the planning regime to provide for a better planned central Box Hill, yet the minister has then stood idly by and offered no help, no assistance, no solution to Whitehorse council that will protect central Box Hill and make sure that it is properly planned for the future.

Probably one of the key challenges that the Box Hill electorate faces is that we urgently need a new master plan for central Box Hill to make sure that the developments that go ahead are appropriate for the area, and that the entire precinct is planned having regard to the level of development that is likely to go ahead in the future. We need more public open space. We need better pedestrian flow. We need to look at whether we can put a civic square at one of the principal intersections, such as at the corner of Whitehorse Road and Nelson Road.

We urgently need to be looking to resolve all of those things. How can we move the bus terminus? How can we reshape the transport interchange? As I have said, the Minister for Planning has allowed his expert panel to rubbish Whitehorse council's efforts to tackle these problems, but he has not lifted a finger to help them to get this urgently needed new master plan that is required. If we act urgently now, there is still a chance to head off the plethora of towers and wind tunnels and the jumble and lack of community facilities that we risk suffering, but if we do not act now we are not going to get a Box Hill that we can be proud of for the future.

The budget has done nothing towards these problems. The only funding for projects within the Box Hill electorate that was provided under the budget was a very modest indeed \$500 000 towards Box Hill High School in the government's final term. At least on paper that provided something so that the government could tick off and claim that it had honoured its promise that Box Hill High School would share in the funding that a Labor government would provide for it, but in contrast to the \$5 million or so that the school needs to cope with the population pressure that the area is suffering — and in contrast with the \$5 million that the previous coalition government had committed to the school — the Labor government has provided it with \$500 000, which is not going to provide the extra classrooms that it desperately needs to cope with growing student numbers.

That of course comes in a context where the government has ordered Box Hill High School to actually cut its enrolments, because it would not allow the school to continue with the enrolment level that the school said it was able to cope with, and it was not prepared to provide the school with the facilities that would allow it to continue to enrol the numbers of students that were seeking to come to it. A consequence of that is that the school's nationally acclaimed gifted student program has had to be slashed from about 75 students to 25 students. So when members on the other side of the house talk about excellence and achievement in education, they are actually trashing

and handicapping the gifted student program at Box Hill High School. Frankly, unless that can be reversed quickly, that program is in danger of folding altogether, which would be a tragedy of immeasurable proportions for families right across the eastern suburbs — including in the Minister for Education's electorate, residents of which are desperately looking to place their gifted children for whom local schools, despite what they might have to offer, are not appropriate, into a setting in which their child can flourish. Surely that is what all members of this house would want to see. Thus the Box Hill electorate has, like so many other electorates across the state, suffered as a result of the flawed priorities of the current government.

Crime is yet another example of that. We have seen in recent times the horrific explosion of gang violence that the Leader of the Opposition referred to earlier, including what occurred yesterday in Melbourne's north-western suburbs. But crime is also flourishing in just about every other suburb across Melbourne. Certainly violent crime, on the statistics, is continuing to rise. In suburbs such as Box Hill North, Mont Albert North, Blackburn North and down into Blackburn, the statistics are showing that crime such as motor vehicle theft, theft from motor cars, burglaries and aggravated burglaries are continuing to rise.

It appears that would-be offenders are concluding that these suburbs are soft targets, so they are walking along linear parks and looking over back fences to identify potential targets for crime and they are then engaging in it. That is affecting households that are being burgled, families who are being burgled, families who are being home invaded and it is also flowing through to community facilities such as local sporting grounds which have been subject to burglaries and violent break-ins. That is why the Liberal-Nationals have committed funding for improved fixed and mobile security cameras across the electorate so that we can act on that crime and help keep those communities safe.

On top of that, we do need to make sure that the amenity of suburbs across the electorate is properly preserved by means, as I said earlier, of ensuring that residential streets are properly protected, which this side of politics has committed to do. We also need to make sure that there is a proper long-term population policy for every part of this state so that the facilities — be it for education, community health or public transport or whatever it might be that suburbs like Box Hill are not receiving, despite the population pressures that have been placed on them — are provided for wherever in our state people may live. That is certainly a commitment that the Liberal-Nationals have — to establish that proper, long-term population and

infrastructure policy that our state needs. It is that sort of long-term vision and commitment to properly plan and provide for the state's needs that is required, and it is something that only the Liberal-Nationals are capable of delivering.

Mr NARDELLA (Melton) (15:47) — ‘Hallelujah!’. That is going to be the call cry at every single Liberal Party branch meeting from now on. ‘Under His eye’ is going to be what they are going to be saying to each other at Liberal Party branch meetings from now on. Gilead is here within the Victorian branch of the Liberal Party, because they have been taken over. They have been taken over by the fanatics within the right of the Liberal Party.

Mr Clark — On a point of order, Acting Speaker, the budget debate is a very wideranging debate, but it is a budget debate. It is not a debate on grievances, and I do ask you to ask the honourable member for Melton to relate his remarks to the take-note of the budget papers motion that is before the house.

Mr NARDELLA — On the point of order, Acting Speaker, the budget debate is very broad. I have listened to a number of budget debates over my 26 years in both houses of Parliament. They are very wideranging. In actual fact the performance of individuals and groups within our community in terms of the budget into the future is very important, and that is what I am talking about here today.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr Richardson) — Order! I listened to the Leader of the Opposition and others in the debate, and I do not uphold the point of order.

Mr NARDELLA — We had a situation that the Labor Party went through from the 1930s right through to 1955. If you read the book by Kate White, she talks about the Honourable John Cain, Snr, who was the Premier in the 1950s. It actually goes through the sectarian politics of the Labor Party at that time. We — that is, the Labor Party — actually had to go through a split in 1955 to get rid of the groupers, to get rid of that sectarianism within the Labor Party, and we have grown since then.

What we find today is that the Liberal Party and the traditions, the culture of the Liberal Party — the Beaurepaires of the world, the Baillieus of the world, they are missing in this.

Mr Clark — I draw your attention to the state of the house.

Quorum formed.

Mr NARDELLA — So we have the traditions of the Liberal Party that are trashed, the traditions of the Menzies of the world, who built up the Liberal Party since the 1940s after the United Australia Party disintegrated, being trashed. It is really interesting that they have just gone through a federal preselection process where no member of the Liberal Party got a vote. Not one single member of the Liberal Party got a vote, other than Bastiaan and Kroger and his cronies. Only they, through the administrative committee, got a vote in the federal preselections.

That is where we are today. And these people, they want to form government. They want to run the state of Victoria, these people who, within their own organisation, are kowtowing to the Bastiaans and the Krogers of the world, whose changes to the democratic processes within the Liberal Party are changing and will change the way that the Liberal Party has operated — certainly since my time here in the Parliament. The traditions of the Liberal Party members that I have served with are trashed, absolutely gone out the window. They will be at branch meetings and it will be ‘Under His Eye’. That is what they will be saying to each other. It will be ‘Praise be’ to everybody that walks into the Liberal Party branch meeting because the religious right have taken over. They have infiltrated the Liberal Party and have taken it over. I can just see what is going to happen to the traditions and the culture of the Liberal Party, the moderates of the Liberal Party, that will no longer be elected to this place here in Victoria.

Mr Clark — On a point of order, Acting Speaker, you have extended considerable latitude to the member for Melton to set a context that has some relevance to the budget in his remarks but to date he has failed to do so. Previously you drew a comparison with matters touched on by the Leader of the Opposition and others, but I do submit that those speakers related their remarks to the performance of the government. The so-called Independent member for Melton has made no attempt to relate his remarks to the performance of the government. It is not in order for him to run a commentary on what he thinks about a potential alternative government. He needs to relate his remarks in some way to the budget papers and to the performance of the current government, which the budget papers are funding. I do ask you to bring him back to compliance with standing orders.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr Richardson) — Order! I have been listening to the member for Melton and draw him to taking note of the motion before the house and the budget papers.

Mr NARDELLA — Blessed be the fruit, Honourable Acting Speaker. We have a Liberal Party that want to be in government. When they were last in government, one of the great institutions in Melton, Reg Geary House, looked after many senior people and disabled people in my community. Do you know what they did to Reg Geary House? They closed it — because that is the only thing that they can do, compared to the budget that we have before us today. All they do is put in place an audit committee and then they go and slash and burn everything that is good within our communities and within our society. That was one example, compared to what we have done, certainly within this budget.

I did some figures the other day because we have got the western region group of councils. They said, ‘Nothing’s happened in the west in this last budget. Werribee, Melton, Brimbank, Hobsons Bay and Maribyrnong — nothing’s happened’. Well, I did a bit of a tally — and it was \$4.3 billion just in this budget that the Labor government has put in place. If you have a look at the things that have occurred in my electorate, certainly since 1999, I have been going through them. I have got to page 19 of 25 pages of achievements. It is over \$1 billion that has gone into the seat of Melton in all its iterations in that period of time.

There was a period of time there, there was a lost four years — the Geoff Shaw government, the lost four years. Do you know how much they spent in my electorate? They spent \$1.5 million on a set of traffic lights at Ferris Road and the Western Highway. That was it: \$1.5 million. And they had the gall to not even buy a block of land in Bacchus Marsh in what is now in the honourable member for Buninyong’s area, for a primary school in the growth area of Bacchus Marsh. What happened was that the Catholics bought their block of land and we were supposed to buy the other part of the land out at Maddingley. But no, Bacchus Marsh Grammar came in and bought the government’s plot of land. We have not got a site for a primary school in the highest growing area in Bacchus Marsh.

That is what these people did. They did not spend one red cent in buying land for schools in any of our growth areas. They bought five in the honourable member for South Barwon’s electorate. The honourable member for South Barwon was very proud, saying that there had been five purchases of land in his electorate — and rightly so — in those four years. But in the growth areas throughout metropolitan Melbourne and certainly out at Melton and other growth areas, that did not occur, and we are trying to make up for those four slothful lost years of the Liberal government from 2010 to 2014.

Honourable Deputy Speaker, blessed day to you — because that is what they are going to be saying in the Liberal Party branch meetings, aren’t they? It’s going to be ‘Under your eye’. But anyway, we have talked about that.

The things that we have been doing and that certainly have been funded in this budget have been amazing, whether it is Halletts Way — and the honourable member for Buninyong is here — whether it is \$10.6 million for the Bacchus Marsh hospital, whether it is a new community hub in Melton, whether it is a \$518 million upgrade of the rail service to Ballarat, whether it is the new car spots in both Ballarat and Melton that have been funded over this time. It is only Labor governments that provide that funding and that infrastructure.

The Liberal Party — it is not in their DNA. They do not know what infrastructure funding is, unless it is a dud road tunnel through the middle of the city. The east–west link — that was a dud from day one. What was it? It was about 0.4. The return was about 0.4 of a dollar, 40 cents for every dollar invested. The really interesting thing is that those opposite actually had a look at the whole link from the west over to the east. The first stage, under the Eddington *Victorian Transport Plan*, was the western section. They were having a look at the western section in the Premier’s office: ‘Oh yeah, how much is that going to cost? It is going to link in to the Tullamarine and do a whole range of things’. And then somebody said, ‘Well, what about the east?’. They went to the east–west tunnel and they said, ‘We will sandbank our seats in the east if we put together the east–west tunnel’. So their business plan for this, if you remember, was triangles and squares on a newsletter that went out, because they were embarrassed that the return on investment was 40 cents in every dollar. They were embarrassed that it was such a dud, with such opposition, that they put out this glossy — it was really glossy — high gloss white paper, and it was squares and triangles. So, on my theme, ‘Blessed day’. Gilead lives.

The Labor government is the only government that really cares about the community, that really makes sure that all the communities that make up Victoria flourish, that they get their fair share, regardless of the whingeing and whining and putting down of Victoria at every opportunity by the Liberal Party and the National Party — and I have talked about the National Party in my past contributions. It really is only the Labor Party and the Labor government that do anything for Victoria to go ahead. So ‘May the Lord open, and have a blessed day’.

Mr BLACKWOOD (Narracan) (16:02) — Today I rise to deliver a response to the 2018–19 Victorian budget on behalf of my electorate, the electorate of Narracan. This truly is a budget which I believe can be summed up in one word: disappointing. This budget is consistent with what my electorate has experienced under the Premier and Labor for the last almost four years. West Gippsland has been largely ignored, only receiving the bare minimum, drip-fed funding paying lip-service to the real needs of Narracan. West Gippsland is one of the fastest growing regions in Victoria, but it continues to be ignored by the Andrews Labor government. The most glaring omission in this budget is funding for the most essential project, a project that has been called for repeatedly by my community, a new West Gippsland hospital. This project has enormous community support.

The Where's the Funding community group gathered over 10 000 signatures on a petition calling for a new hospital on the greenfield site. This campaign collected the signatures in just two and a half weeks, an amazing effort orchestrated by Rob Sinnett, Kerry Elliot, Ormond Pearson and Joan Kinder and supported by a very committed group of volunteers. The need for this particular project should be above politics. It should be receiving bipartisan support. This is about the ability of the West Gippsland Healthcare Group to continue to meet the healthcare needs of a population of 45 000 today that will climb to 80 000 by 2035.

The current hospital was built on 27 acres 80 years ago to service a fledgling population of around 15 000. It has undergone a number of upgrades to enable it to continue to provide the high-quality health care that it is renowned for. To expect staff, management and patients to endure another upgrade and cope with the disruption that comes with that on the current site is just not feasible and not fair, and I am very confident that the feasibility study undertaken clearly articulates just that. Maybe that is why the Andrews government continues to insult our community by not releasing the findings of the feasibility or business case. West Gippsland Hospital's needs continue to be given second place to the needs of the Latrobe and Casey hospitals. The rate of population growth in West Gippsland is exactly the same as that experienced by Casey and well and truly outstripping that of the Latrobe hospital catchment.

When it comes to this budget it is very clear that the focus of spending is blatantly in areas where Labor have to shore up their own vote or maintain the preference deals with the Greens they so desperately need to hold more than 25 metropolitan seats. We have seen Labor invest in a feasibility study and business case for the West Gippsland Healthcare Group on both

the current site and the greenfield site. Neither have been released. We have seen the Treasurer gloat about a huge surplus one day and tell a local constituent of Narracan the next day on 3AW that funding simply is not there to deliver the project. The messages from the Premier to my community on this project are not only mixed but they are completely misleading and insulting to our community.

Why has this project not materialised under Labor? Why was a business case and feasibility study completed if they intended to do nothing with it and, worse still, keep it secret from our community? The answer is appearing clearer and clearer in Narracan: Labor never intended to commit to a new West Gippsland hospital. The services plan was a smokescreen to appease the community at the 2014 state election and give false hope that it may be funded, and now we see that will not be the case. However, there is hope, and that hope has been provided by the Leader of the Opposition and the shadow Minister for Health, Mary Wooldridge, who recognised 18 months ago that the people of West Gippsland should not continue to be ignored.

The coalition, if elected in November to govern this great state, will fund the commencement of construction of the new West Gippsland hospital on the greenfield site in our first budget. In relation to the greenfield site, I must recognise the contribution, generosity and foresight of members of the West Gippsland community. The West Gippsland Healthcare Group board of management, led by CEO Ormond Pearson, took the brave decision in 2006 to search for a suitable site for a new hospital. The greenfield site between Warragul and Drouin was found and purchased in 2007 and partly funded by a bequest from a generous donor. The community will be eternally grateful for and appreciative of this foresight of the board and the generosity of the donor.

When it comes to education funding this budget has once again short-changed my electorate. As with the growing demand for health care being driven by population growth, so too is the demand being placed on our schools and the need for upgrades to improve the standard of infrastructure to cope with increasing enrolments and the obligation to provide equity in the school environment for our students. Two schools that come to mind are Albert Street Primary School Moe and Neerim District Secondary College. Both of these schools need urgent upgrades. Moe has been seeking funding to upgrade security at the school to reduce the incidence of vandalism and trespass, while Neerim district is in need of a major overhaul. Both of these schools were ignored by Labor, as well as the many

others that need investment in classrooms, investment in sporting facilities and more.

Investment in early education is also at a critical point of need, as many new families choose West Gippsland to raise their family, with over 1000 babies being born at the West Gippsland Hospital every year. At the moment there are only around 660 early learning places available in the Baw Baw shire. During our term in government, from 2010 to 2014, the coalition funded capital upgrades to Drouin Kindergarten in Adam Court and Oak Street Kindergarten in Drouin and funded early years hubs on the Yarragon and Drouin primary school sites.

This is in stark contrast to the efforts of the Andrews government, which has just provided funding for an early years hub at the Warragul Primary School site; funding that falls well short of the total cost of the project, with the Baw Baw shire having to cover the bulk of the cost — and this on a primary school site which is the responsibility of the state government. I am really not sure how that has come to pass. Once again the Andrews government has short-changed our community.

Talking about short-changing communities, at the moment we have a number of our timber communities at extreme risk of being enormously impacted by the lack of action by the Andrews government and in particular by the Minister for Agriculture in the other place. There is a group of sawmills called the G6, comprising Fenning's in Bairnsdale, Brown's in Noojee, McKinnell's in Murrindindi, the Fox family in Powelltown, the Reed family in Yarra Junction and the McNulty family in Benalla. All of those families have committed enormous investment into their particular mill sites. They have put in new technology, kept pace with the changes and upgrades in technology and invested heavily in value-adding to make sure they produce the best-value product they possibly can with the least amount of waste.

The Minister for Agriculture has to sign off on an allocation order every year to ensure that the timber release plan — previously endorsed, supported and approved — is able to be delivered. It was supposed to have been signed off in June this year, but to date it has not been signed off. For this coming harvesting season, which starts in September, this will mean that a number of harvesting contractors and haulage contractors will not be able to start work. Not only will it impact on those contractors, the repayments they have to make and the families they have to feed; it will impact on the ability of those G6 sawmills to continue to get resources to keep their businesses operating.

It is just not fair that this government can ignore for political purposes those communities across Gippsland and beyond. It is not fair that this government continues to put politics before these regional and country communities. It is not fair that this government is prepared to get into bed with the Greens instead of actually doing what it is supposed to do — and that is to keep Victoria ticking over and to support small businesses and these small communities in our country areas.

Part of the problem is that the government has refused to act on the exclusion zones that have been put in place to protect threatened species. This will mean that even if the allocation order is signed, beyond 2021 this group of G6 sawmills will not have access to resources. Their timber supply contracts allow them an extension of supply, which is an option for another three years beyond 2021. VicForests cannot deliver that in the current environment because there are too many areas of forest being taken out of production because this government has not acted in an appropriate and responsible way in that it seeks to protect the possum as well as maintain industry at its current level. That can be done if the government changes the way it manages threatened species. It has refused to do that, and it has refused to do that because it is in bed with the bloody Greens, and that is what is shutting down this whole state. Deputy Speaker, I am sorry for swearing, but I am quite passionate about this particular issue.

On another issue, the lack of investment in any core infrastructure for Narracan in this budget is truly astounding. Rail is another key example of how Narracan is missing out in this budget but bearing the brunt when it comes to commuter delays. Again this month we have Gippsland commuters piling onto buses due to ongoing delays with the sky rail project, and the minister has still not confirmed exactly how this project will improve frequency, reliability and speed for Gippsland services in the metropolitan corridor of the network between Pakenham and Melbourne. Last week commuters also learned that the Gippsland portion of the rail revitalisation project, which is funded primarily by the Turnbull government, will not be completed until late 2022, the last of any regional rail project delivered by the scheme.

The Premier and the Minister for Public Transport cannot blame the Prime Minister for these delays. The Minister for Public Transport herself described these projects as ready to go when they were announced previously, yet they will not be completed for another full term of government. Gippsland commuters are rightly furious following the three years of delays, cancellations and problems, thanks to sky rail, and

thanks to the Premier and the Minister for Public Transport it now seems these issues will drag on for four more years.

This budget fails Narracan in so many ways. Local sporting clubs are calling out for more investment in grounds and infrastructure, and while country sporting clubs are offered low interest loans, \$250 million is being given to the AFL with no strings attached. Upgraded sporting facilities are needed right across my region, including at Trafalgar Victory soccer club and Cora Lynn Football and Netball Club, to meet growing player numbers in almost every sport.

For 15 of the last 19 years Labor governments have been in power in Victoria. During those 15 years Labor has had plenty of time to give the residents of Narracan their fair share of state funding. During these last four years Labor has had record inflows of revenue, but still the residents of Narracan are ignored.

By contrast, in four years under the Victorian coalition we made a wide range of investments in Narracan, completed significant road and rail projects such as the Longwarry Sand Road interchange, Warragul railway station carpark and underpass and Lardners Track boom gates and traffic signal upgrade. We also funded the West Gippsland Hospital emergency department, enabling a doubling of its size. In education there was a new technology wing at Neerim District Secondary College and over \$3 million in early years funding, and the Regional Growth Fund supported a number of business expansions across Narracan and upgrades to community infrastructure.

A Liberal-Nationals coalition government will work to deliver for all Victorians. A coalition government will not direct funding based purely on political advantage, as has been the approach of the Andrews government. A government led by the member for Bulleen will govern for all Victorians.

Motion agreed to.

DISABILITY SERVICE SAFEGUARDS BILL 2018

Second reading

**Debate resumed from 8 August; motion of
Mr FOLEY (Minister for Housing, Disability and
Ageing).**

Motion agreed to.

Read second time.

Consideration in detail

Clause 1

Clause agreed to; clauses 2 to 8 agreed to.

Clause 9

Mr T. BULL — Clause 9 relates to the registration board and includes commentary around it monitoring the compliance of registration. Given the national disability insurance scheme (NDIS) will obviously be a massive scheme, and the disability sector more generally is a massive scheme, my question is: how will the board go about monitoring compliance, as this clause outlines, on the ground, given the massive number of disability sector workers?

Mr FOLEY — I thank the member for East Gippsland for his very constructive contribution to make sure this overwhelmingly bipartisan national effort on the national disability insurance scheme (NDIS) comes to fruition. I will directly address the honourable member's question.

In terms of the background to this, as set out in the second-reading speech, we got to the position very quickly based on the work done by the bipartisan parliamentary committee, of which you would certainly be aware, Deputy Speaker, as chair of that committee at the time. On the issue of how the workers registration scheme rolls out — if I understand the honourable member's question appropriately — the board and the commissioner will be put in place in the process that was foreshadowed in the nature of the draft bill, which is the current bill before the Parliament. The amount of work that has gone on through the industry transition task force that the government set up over three years ago and the subgroup of that group with all key stakeholders involved — be they the people with disability groups, the advocate groups, the carers or the national disability services, so, if you like, the non-government organisation providers and others. Once their piece of work in this space is put together and the rollout of the board occurs, the board would seek to, subject to this legislation passing and subject to at the same time aligning those provisions with the national quality framework that the NDIS is setting up as we speak, meet the goal of monitoring compliance through a combination of measures, including aligning their work with the national quality organisation. This will touch at least those NDIS-registered providers to some degree together with those organisations that are not registered in the national disability insurance scheme system and therefore are outside the quality and safeguarding framework.

On the protocols and processes, the workers registration board then ensures compliance through a complaints-based system and a direct monitoring-based system, as any similar organisation would do over time and in consultation with key stakeholders, particularly people with disability organisations, people with disability directly and the organisations registered under the NDIS quality and safeguarding framework — if you like, the nationally registered organisations, some of which will also be, depending on their work, Victorian-based organisations as well — in an iterative process developed over time and in consultation with key stakeholder groups but in line with the processes set out and the goals and tasks that are set out in the bill before the house.

I am not sure if that answers the question directly, but in terms of how compliance is established, like any new regulatory agency that operates at a state level in the sub-context of a national wider scheme, it will be, one, in partnership with the national quality standards framework organisation, two, in consultation and process with the key stakeholder groups at the state level, and, three, through the learned processes of the sector as set out in the processes in the bill before the house.

Mr T. BULL — My second question on clause 9 relates to the potential for duplications at the state and federal level. In my contribution in the second-reading debate I raised a number of the concerns that potentially exist around the duplication of both accreditations — predominantly accreditations — but also reporting and actions that may be taken as well. But on this clause I want to particularly raise the point around potential for duplication of competencies at the federal and state level as this clause relates to the registration process.

When setting up a registration process, as I said in my second-reading contribution, I would have thought there would have been a level of discussion with our federal commissioner before this bill came into the chamber. I was quite surprised when he told me he had had very, very little consultation other than basically being told that it was coming in. My question for the minister relates to the competency sets that will be put on workers. The federal NDIS quality and safeguards commissioner has recently said that his office will very soon be working on a set of competencies for workers. That was his verbatim commentary to me, word for word, and obviously we are going to have a Victorian board that will be focusing on a set of competencies for workers within this state.

My question to the minister is: how will he ensure and the department ensure that we will see no conflict in

differing sets of competencies required for workers who are working in the NDIS at the federal and the state level? The NDIS is complex enough without workers in the sector having to get their heads around the massive reform that the NDIS actually is but then potentially having to meet competencies that the federal commissioner has put in place for workers and the workforce more generally and also then having to consider the competencies that the state board has put in place. I guess I seek some guarantees from the minister but am also requesting how he ensures that we do not have a duplication of competencies when both sectors are working on that.

Mr FOLEY — I will answer the honourable member's question to the best of my capabilities, but given some of the commentary he made I would take issue with his reference to how the national commissioner might well see this particular issue. The national commissioner has been intimately involved every step of the way. I take the honourable member in good faith in terms of his expressed view that perhaps between cabinet endorsing the bill one day and the bill being introduced the next the federal commissioner had not seen the detail of that process, but I can assure the honourable member that the federal commissioner — the quality and safeguards national commissioner — was directly involved in at least two stakeholder forums that I personally was involved with. I chaired them, and at a departmental level his views and those of his staff have also been shared, to the point where, in more recent times, to assuage any concerns I wrote to the federal commissioner — and I understand copies of that correspondence have been shared with the honourable member — to make sure, as is not uncommon in jointly regulated state and commonwealth areas, that we need to be extremely cautious and extremely alert to the fact that we do not seek to, as the honourable member referred to, conflict with the federal system in competencies, in governance, or in any other aspects of the system.

The commonwealth regulatory side of things needs the support of the state and the state system needs the support of the commonwealth. At this level, whether it is at the disability reform council with the honourable federal Minister for Social Services as well as the commissioner for quality and safeguards, this has been the underlying thesis that has driven the process at a ministerial level, at an officer level and at a stakeholder level.

I am confident that this bill that reflects those complementary elements makes sure that that will evolve in a way that over time is particularly important. I stress that it is particularly important at the start of this

process because of course the national disability insurance scheme is an evolving feast. It is a process, as it rolls out area by area, that at the end of the 2019–20 financial year is meant to be fully implemented in the states, despite the significant shortfalls in the number of people that the NDIA is managing to get into the system — without commenting on the quality of the plans that the people get in the system — and in that context the expectation is that this ‘one day Victoria’s system is operating, the next day the commonwealth system is operating’ simply will not be the case. We have to have a complementary system for both those services and people moving into the national disability insurance scheme in a seamless way so there are no gaps created. That is the first set of issues surrounding this particular set of issues, not just in the Disability Worker Registration Board but equally in the standards — equally in both the positive and negative registration of providers as well. That covers, if things go the way they should, the 105 000 to 107 000 people who should be in the NDIS by the end of the full rollout in 2019–20.

But of course at current levels that is bumping along with less than three-quarters of the numbers of people who are meant to be in the system being in the system at the moment. If that continues, then there will be a substantial number of people essentially falling between cracks in that system. Those people will have an expectation that they will be in the national disability insurance scheme but they will not be, and they will be in some kind of limbo and either getting services or not getting services.

Then beyond the 107 000, or whatever number that should be in by full rollout, there is the wider disability sector that is not picked up and has never been envisaged to be picked up by the national disability insurance scheme and which needs to continue to be regulated in some sense. The Victorian government’s position is that that larger group is not to be excluded from the same set of principles. Some jurisdictions have taken the view that this is an invitation to exit this space completely. We have cautioned those jurisdictions that that is a recipe for trouble for particularly vulnerable people and that we need to, as a nation, continue to work on that system. I am confident that through the disability reform council that message is being heard.

At the same time, in that complex rollout of a very large and complicated process, we need to make sure that everything we do is complementary. So in that context we will work as closely as we possibly can with the federal commissioner to align their competency-based approach with our occupational-based approach when it comes to titles, when it comes to who can and cannot

be registered and referred to as an appropriate nominated worker in the Victorian system, so as to make sure that those align. Equally, the commonwealth, through the national quality standards, through the way it seeks to approach worker exclusion schemes, needs to work closely with the states and the territories to make sure that that negative component of the registration system is also dealt with appropriately on a consistent basis.

There is strong mutual interest for both the states and the commonwealth to work closely on this. Whilst we have significant disagreements with the commonwealth around some of the funding and areas of governance of the scheme, the scheme continues to be underpinned by a desire of all governments, at state and commonwealth level, regardless of political colour, to make this massive undertaking work. That is why this particular scheme and this particular aspect of the scheme is, as the honourable member correctly identified, not without its complications, but it is one that is in the interests of both the state and the commonwealth to get right. I am confident that within the policy positions of the Parliament itself, through its bipartisan report earlier in the life of this Parliament, overlaid with the extensive consultation with industry, with the sector, with people with disabilities and with the commonwealth and the new agency — and in fact other jurisdictions should they be interested, and they increasingly are — we will get the issue of competency aligned correctly and as closely and as accurately with the Victorian-based registration system, a system built around occupational titles. With them obviously go the commonwealth competencies, but the Victorian system will be much wider in its breadth. That is in the positive registration side of things.

Equally the commonwealth are strongly motivated, because of their system of making sure that people who should not be working in this system are not working in this system — and successive governments on both sides of this chamber have legislated and regulated increasingly to make sure that abusive behaviours are not tolerated at all — and the commonwealth needs the states to get that right. Equally the negative, if you like, licensing provisions that go with that will serve as strong motivation for both parties to get this right. I am confident that in that complex array of relationships between the state and the commonwealth — between the state-registered providers and workforce, and the commonwealth NDIA and NDIS quality standards framework registered providers — there will be sufficient goodwill, mutual interest and shared values that will make sure that the issue of competencies and the occupational-based system align not just closely but in fact very closely so as to ensure both systems work. I

have every confidence, given the amount of work that has gone into it at the industry task force consultation level and at the officer-to-officer level, understanding that the federal commission was only appointed in March and, unless I am wrong, is still in the process of establishing both its Parramatta — I think, in the western suburbs of Sydney — head office and a Victorian branch office.

I am confident that whilst it is still early days, there is sufficient shared interest underpinned by a shared commitment to make sure the system works and picks up not just the national disability insurance transition process but in fact the wider Victorian disability sector, which will continue to operate well beyond the full and mature rollout of the NDIS.

Clause agreed to; clauses 10 to 45 agreed to.

Clause 46

Mr T. BULL — Clause 46 relates to referrals of NDIS workers to the NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission. Minister, you probably do not get too many Dorothy Dixers in the committee phase, but I hope this one is a Dorothy Dixer, simply to get this on the record. In my contribution to the second-reading debate I made some commentary around some confusion I guess that I saw, with due respect, Minister, in your second-reading speech, where you said that — I think the term was — NDIS workers may be referred to the federal quality and safeguards commissioner. In the bill briefing that I received from your ministerial and departmental staff I was very pleased to hear that on almost every occasion that will be the case and there would perhaps only be some very, very exceptional circumstances that might prevail where that was not the case.

The reason I raised this point both in the bill briefing and in my second-reading debate speech is that if we have an NDIS workforce across the country, I think it is of paramount importance that a person who unfortunately — and obviously we hope it will never happen, but it almost certainly will — has a complaint lodged against them is dealt with under the same regime that they would be in other states.

Think about a location like Albury-Wodonga or Echuca-Moama, where you would more than likely have workers on the border who are working for agencies on either side of the river. I think it is of absolute paramount importance that we clarify this and give people the opportunity to go on the record to say that in almost all circumstances anyone who has a complaint lodged against them will be referred to the

NDIS commissioner to have their situation dealt with, because I would hate to think that depending on whether their issue was in Albury or Wodonga they will be dealt with under different circumstances. As I said, I hope this is a Dorothy Dixer, Minister, and we can get you on the record absolutely clarifying that will be the case in relation to that referral process.

Mr FOLEY — I thank the honourable member for his question. I am more than happy that the record will show the following, and I thank the honourable member for forecasting his concerns in this regard. The NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission is responsible for dealing with complaints regarding the conduct of providers and workers delivering NDIS-funded services in this bill because that is what has to happen. The Victorian regulator will deal with complaints relating to the conduct of registered workers against those registration standards and against unregistered disability workers. We want to make sure that no complaints fall through the gaps and to ensure that the appropriate regulator deals with complaints. That is why — I think this answers the honourable member's question — the bill requires any complaint about an NDIS-funded worker to be referred to the national commission, full stop. It also allows the Victorian commission to deal with that complaint. This is expected to occur in very limited circumstances — for example, where the Victorian commission determines that there is a risk to someone's safety. That might well be a particularly important case in the transition period as we roll out to the full scheme.

To be equally blunt, given some of the trouble the scheme is having in rolling out the full scheme by its scheduled date in 2019–20 — to use the language of the NDIS itself, the scheme maturation may take a little longer — and given some of the horrendous evidence that was made available to numerous members and not least to the parliamentary inquiry into this issue, we are not prepared to risk simply sitting by and allowing those kinds of gaps to exist.

We will make sure there is the capacity at an immediate, state level to respond should the federal structures, for whatever reason, not be in place or not be in place to the level we reasonably require. So these two regulators will work together, as regulators regularly do in lots of fields across the commonwealth and state jurisdictions, to ensure that every complaint is dealt with and that no-one falls through the gaps. In doing so we will establish protocols with the NDIS commission to cover the circumstances where both the commission and the Victorian regulator are dealing with a matter.

These arrangements would not be dissimilar to some of the practices between the NDIS now and the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency, where registered health practitioners operate across both jurisdictions at the federal level but with input from the states as well. But to hit the nub of the question that the honourable member put, all registered NDIS-funded workers that are subject to a complaint will be referred to the national commission.

Mr T. BULL — I thank the minister for his brevity in answering the question. Given that, I will just ask a very, very quick follow-up. Does the minister envisage any other instances other than the one that he outlined — and I absolutely agree that in that situation immediate action would be called for — where we would see either the Victorian commissioner perhaps head down the path of investigation rather than referral or a joint investigation taking place?

Mr FOLEY — From the initial discussions, no, I cannot foresee any other circumstances. But then equally, given the many twists and turns that we have seen over the journey of the formation of the national disability insurance scheme and the drift that seems to have happened between the initial national agreements and the subsequent series of bilateral agreements, and even in more recent times the differences in agreements between the commonwealth and New South Wales and the commonwealth and South Australia, I would not rule them out. But of course it is our shared goal with the commonwealth to make sure that they are limited to the most urgent and specific circumstances such as those that I outlined in my earlier response.

Clause agreed to; clauses 47 to 72 agreed to.

Clause 73

Mr T. BULL — This clause refers to the ability to suspend disability workers — God forbid — and I am hoping again that this query may attract a response with some brevity to it; it is reasonably straightforward.

An honourable member interjected.

Mr T. BULL — I understand from reading the bill, Minister, that a worker who is suspended has the opportunity to appeal to VCAT, pending that it would not be successful. As I understand from reading the bill, a suspended worker can apply at some period in time for re-registration. I am seeking to have that confirmed, and my question is: is there any time frame before a suspended worker can reapply for registration?

Mr FOLEY — On the first question, the answer is yes. On the second part of the question, with the

indulgence of the chamber, I will wander over to the advisers on the issue of time frame and report straight back.

As the bill sets out, there is a difference between suspension and banning in the process, so we are talking about in the circumstance if someone is banned.

Mr T. Bull interjected.

Mr FOLEY — That is quite all right; that is what I understood to be the intent of the question. A suspension for access is different. But in terms of someone who is banned, which is a fairly serious measure, hence the VCAT processes in turn, there is no minimum or indeed any time frame set. It would need to depend on the circumstances. It would be an issue depending on those circumstances, depending on the development of the protocols. So it would be chiefly to make sure that things are, hopefully, aligned at the commonwealth and state levels — to make sure that those processes are set out and developed over time. But in terms of the specific question, for those who are banned as opposed to suspended, no specific time frame is envisaged in the legislation. That would be a process that would evolve through the commission process.

Mr T. BULL — I thank the minister for his response. Just as a follow-up question, if that scenario were to eventuate and we did have a reapplication for registration by a banned worker, is there provision for that to be heard by members of the board separate from those who heard the original case that resulted in the banning to ensure, I guess, a fair opportunity for somebody to mount an appropriate reapplication, if you like, to re-enter the workforce?

Mr FOLEY — Given that such a serious process of banning would go to a VCAT decision and process, equally to appeal such a move would not be subject to this bill but to the normal processes that VCAT would put in place for whatever the particular relevant list is, which I assume would be a dedicated disability list or some such similar list. So it would be a decision for VCAT to determine based on the circumstances of the case before it.

Clause agreed to; clauses 74 to 144 agreed to.

Clause 145

Mr T. BULL — This clause deals with the functions of the board, and one of those functions that is listed in this clause includes the registration process. Going to the heart of that registration process is the qualification requirements that will be required by workers in the field. I note in the minister's

second-reading speech — and if I can perhaps just quote that for the minister, although I am sure he remembers commenting on this — that he said:

It was ... clear that current disability qualifications do not meet the needs of a changing disability sector, and that more work is needed to ensure that qualifications provide graduates with the skills they require.

Given this clause relates to the board and that very registration process which will set those requirements, I am wondering if the minister can outline how these qualifications will be determined. I ask this question of the minister particularly in relation to our TAFE sector and our registered training organisations (RTOs) that exist around the state given, I think quite rightly, that the minister has raised in his second-reading speech that the current qualifications perhaps do not meet the needs of the NDIS. How are we going to ensure that we work with our RTOs and our TAFE sector and our training sector more generally to ensure that new qualifications or those courses that are registered meet the current needs and are appropriate qualifications for the modern-day sector?

Mr FOLEY — I thank the member for Gippsland East for his very astute question. The whole workforce standards and qualifications issue for the national disability insurance scheme and the wider disability sector is a massive issue. It is suggested that one in five new jobs that are expected over the next decade, according to the commonwealth and supported by the Victorian research in this space, will be a NDIS care-related position. We are already seeing that massive growth across the nation, to the point where the Reserve Bank of Australia recently commented that the growth in employment in some of our regional communities as a result of other projects — not so much in Victoria apparently, but elsewhere — is in fact almost totally due to the growth in the disability workforce. So the question is: how can consumers, participants in a market-based scheme, have confidence that the services and the qualifications that they are buying in through their individual packages reflect the choice-and-control questions that they as consumers and as participants need?

This issue has been at the heart of discussions through that industry transition task force that I referred to earlier for the last three-plus years, and in terms of at least the workforce side of things has been the subject of extensive negotiations and shared effort between, again, advocates, education providers, the Victorian skills commissioner, the Department of Education and Training and non-government providers to address, amongst other things but including, the precise issue that the member has raised. That is in large part where issues

in the state's most recent budget came from, such as to ensure that a number of TAFE courses in this space would in fact be free as of next year. An amount of work has gone in to make sure that precisely that outcome is delivered.

As well, there is both the growth in market interest from participants in the workforce and inquiries not just from self-managed participants in the scheme but employers, not-for-profit organisations and others, which has driven a huge amount of interest from private providers, TAFE providers, participants in the scheme and the state's TAFE authorities to the point where it has been a strong focus of the skills commissioner. I am sure, should the member be interested, that we could arrange a further detailed briefing for him with the skills commissioner to demonstrate that amount of work and to assure him that his well-identified point has well and truly been addressed here and now, let alone in the rollout, and that its links to the accreditation system have been identified.

Mr T. BULL — Just on the same point in relation to the training of workers to meet the modern-day requirements and so that the registrations will be in line with this, I guess I am seeking an undertaking from the minister. In a lot of areas of rural and regional Victoria not only do we have very thin workforce markets in relation to disability workers but we also can be a bit thin on the ground in relation to training providers in some cases as well, and at best in some locations in my electorate — take Mallacoota, for instance — that can only be offered as an outreach service. Whilst this may be a slightly difficult question for the minister to answer in the here and now, I ask: can the minister provide an undertaking that in his discussions with the skills commissioner and the board at the state level we ensure that in those more remote areas of our state measures are taken or steps are taken to have the appropriate training courses offered to them, and that this becomes an area of focus for both the board when it is in place but also in the minister's discussion with the skills commissioner?

Mr FOLEY — I can certainly give the honourable member that assurance. I can also reassure him that that has already been an issue of some centrality to the discussions, not just when it comes to accreditation and training standards but, as the honourable member correctly identified, the wider issue of, as it is sometimes called, thin markets generally. It is not just an issue of the workforce being potentially thin in the areas that the honourable member touched on but equally in a market-based system, as the NDIS seeks to introduce providers as well. So the notion of thin markets is at the forefront of our activity, both in terms of service provision and indeed the work that the state

is doing when it is considering what it does with its own current state assets — dealt with elsewhere in the bill. But equally, when it comes to the issue of thin markets, when it comes to the training provision particularly in regional and remote parts of Victoria. I can assure the honourable member that it is already central to the government's thinking, and should the honourable member wish, I will undertake through the skills commissioner to make sure that any briefing provided to him specifically addresses the thinking and the responses on the thin markets when it comes to training provisions. This is not just of course an issue that relates to disability training when it comes to technical and further education in regional and rural Victoria; it is a much wider matter of how thin markets in the regions apply well beyond disabilities.

Clause agreed to; clauses 146 to 165 agreed to.

Clause 166

Mr T. BULL — I realise this will probably be the final question relating to non-practising registration. This question is more one out of interest, but I will just provide some preamble to the question. With the different levels of registration that exist under this proposed scheme that has been laid out, I do want to express and put on the record a high level of satisfaction, partly because of the reason I outlined in my previous question about thin markets and the inability of training providers in some areas, that the registration process is voluntary. I know there was some discussion at some stage around it being mandatory. I really believe on the ground that would have provided an enormous level of concern and angst to families who were seeking services in rural and regional areas.

My question is actually a very simple one. I am interested in the non-practising registration qualification. Could the minister outline to me what purpose that serves in the process? I understand why we have a person who is registered, but having a non-practising registration, what role would that person play in the disability sector?

Mr FOLEY — Noting the time, I thank the honourable member for his question and the perfectly good faith in which it was asked, and in perfectly good faith it will be answered. The non-practising registration is envisaged for short-term coverage, such as maternity leave, such as extended leave practices. It would be the expectation from the work that has been done through the industry task force and industry consultations that it would be far from the preferred normal position but for short-term work.

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.

Clause agreed to; clauses 167 to 320 agreed to.

Bill agreed to without amendment.

Third reading

Motion agreed to.

Read third time.

VICTIMS AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL 2018

Second reading

Debate resumed from 7 August; motion of Mr PAKULA (Attorney-General).

Motion agreed to.

Read second time.

Third reading

Motion agreed to.

Read third time.

CHILDREN, YOUTH AND FAMILIES AMENDMENT (YOUTH OFFENDER COMPLIANCE) BILL 2018

Second reading

Debate resumed from earlier this day; motion of Mr PAKULA (Attorney-General).

The DEPUTY SPEAKER — The question is:

That this bill be now read a second time and a third time.

House divided on question:

Ayes, 79

Allan, Ms
Andrews, Mr
Angus, Mr
Asher, Ms
Battin, Mr
Blackwood, Mr
Britnell, Ms
Bull, Mr J.
Bull, Mr T.
Burgess, Mr
Carbines, Mr
Carroll, Mr

Lim, Mr
McCurdy, Mr
McGuire, Mr
McLeish, Ms
Merlino, Mr
Morris, Mr
Nardella, Mr
Neville, Ms
Noonan, Mr
Northe, Mr
O'Brien, Mr D.
O'Brien, Mr M.

Clark, Mr
 Couzens, Ms
 Crisp, Mr
 D'Ambrosio, Mr
 Dimopoulos, Mr
 Dixon, Mr
 Donnellan, Mr
 Edbrooke, Mr
 Edwards, Ms
 Eren, Mr
 Foley, Mr
 Fyffe, Mrs
 Garrett, Ms
 Gidley, Mr
 Graley, Ms
 Green, Ms
 Guy, Mr
 Halfpenny, Ms
 Hennessy, Ms
 Hodgett, Mr
 Howard, Mr
 Hutchins, Ms
 Kairouz, Ms
 Katos, Mr
 Kealy, Ms
 Kilkenny, Ms
 Knight, Ms
 Languiller, Mr

Pakula, Mr
 Paynter, Mr
 Pearson, Mr
 Perera, Mr
 Pesutto, Mr
 Richardson, Mr
 Riordan, Mr
 Ryall, Ms
 Ryan, Ms
 Sheed, Ms
 Smith, Mr R.
 Smith, Mr T.
 Spence, Ms
 Staikos, Mr
 Staley, Ms
 Suleyman, Ms
 Thomas, Ms
 Thompson, Mr
 Thomson, Ms
 Tilley, Mr
 Victoria, Ms
 Wakeling, Mr
 Walsh, Mr
 Ward, Ms
 Watt, Mr
 Wells, Mr
 Williams, Ms

Noes, 3

Hibbins, Mr
 Sandell, Ms

Thorpe, Ms

Question agreed to.

Read second time.

Third reading

Motion agreed to.

Read third time.

PREVENTION OF FAMILY VIOLENCE BILL 2018

Second reading

**Debate resumed from earlier this day; motion of
 Ms HUTCHINS (Minister for the Prevention of
 Family Violence).**

Motion agreed to.

Read second time.

Third reading

Motion agreed to.

Read third time.

Business interrupted under sessional orders.

ADJOURNMENT

The SPEAKER — The question is:

That the house now adjourns.

School cleaners

Mr ANGUS (Forest Hill) (17:08) — (14 789) I raise a matter of importance for the attention of the Minister for Education. The action I seek is for the minister to reverse his decision to sack school cleaners and to reinstate the previous school cleaning arrangements whereby a school could directly engage its own cleaner. I have been contacted by several of my school principals, school council presidents and parents lamenting the outcomes of the minister's recent policy change. Common issues that have been raised with me range from the poor quality of cleaning undertaken and rubbish bins not being emptied through to the almost unbelievable situation of a cleaner on site not holding a working with children check and thus placing students at that school at potential risk.

Let me highlight the specific example of one of my local schools, Livingstone Primary School. Livingstone Primary School is a very well run, high-achieving and growing primary school. The school has enjoyed a long and very satisfactory relationship with its previous school cleaners for over 10 years. I have been contacted by the school council president, and I have met with him and also spoken to him several times. He has updated me regarding the ongoing issues being encountered at his school, which include the following examples: at 8.45 a.m. one school day, four of seven female toilets did not have toilet paper in them, a totally unsatisfactory and very distressing situation for young female students; cleaning trolleys and equipment being left in corridors after the commencement of the school day in the way of both students and potential school parents on a school tour; bins being left without a bin liner; cleaning cupboards being left open overnight; and less cleaning actually being done — now 8 hours per day compared with the previous 13 hours per day — and the cleaning being done to a lower standard than it was previously. I have also seen photographs of various totally unsatisfactory situations, including photographs of a urinal that is in desperate need of a comprehensive clean.

I know that all my 21 school principals and their staff along with school council presidents and members are working hard to provide the best possible environment for their students. However, the minister's recent changes to the longstanding and totally satisfactory

cleaning arrangements at my schools have made that task much more difficult. It has resulted in a complete waste of manpower, both in numerous meetings to try to resolve these situations and also to try to make alternate cleaning arrangements.

An article in the *Age* newspaper yesterday about this terrible situation was headlined 'Audit on school cleaning shambles'. This article correctly noted that the current school cleaning situation is a shambles and that the government is going to initiate an audit by the Department of Education and Training to try to sort out the mess it has itself created. There are no details as to when this so-called audit will be completed or what it will entail. It is another smokescreen by a crisis-ridden government that thinks it can solve a problem through tokenistic lip-service.

I ask the minister to acknowledge that his decision to sack school cleaners was a complete mistake, and I ask that he apologise to my school communities, humble himself and reinstate the previous arrangements whereby school councils could directly select and employ their school cleaners. I look forward to hearing from the Minister for Education that these matters have been addressed.

Chris Lane memorial field

Mr PEARSON (Essendon) (17:11) — (14 790) I direct my adjournment debate tonight to the Minister for Sport, and the action I seek is that the minister join me at Boeing Reserve, Strathmore Heights, at the site of the proposed Chris Lane memorial field.

I have got to know Andrea Kane, who is the late Chris Lane's sister, and this is what Andrea wrote:

Chris was tragically shot and killed while out for a run on August 16, 2013 while on a baseball scholarship in the states.

After Chris passed, his baseball community and friends put a petition together for a ground in his honour, the first little league ground in Australia. Chris loved baseball, but it wasn't all about the game. It was about the friends he made while playing, the lessons he learnt and the opportunity it gave him. We want Chris's ground to be built to make sure his dreams and achievements live on. We would love to see lots of kids getting to play on a real little league ground. These kids can have dreams about playing MLB or in stadiums around the world. The kids might hear stories about older guys who got the opportunity to travel or go to college.

The loss of Chris has had a profound impact on Andrea and Chris's mother, and it would be wonderful if the minister could join me at the site of this proposed field.

East Gippsland proposed seismic survey

Mr T. BULL (Gippsland East) (17:12) — (14 791) I raise a matter for the attention of the Minister for Agriculture in the other place. The action I seek is for her to write to the National Offshore Petroleum Safety and Environmental Management Authority (NOPSEMA) — that is a mouthful — over concerns being raised in relation to the proposed seismic testing off the East Gippsland coast. There are currently four surveys planned in south-east Australia, but one in particular is causing great concern due to its size and its major overlap onto critically important fishing grounds. The French company CGG intends to undertake a 17 000-square kilometre survey in eastern Bass Strait in what would be one of the largest surveys seen in the country. The area proposed for survey is eight times the size of Port Phillip Bay. I am advised the company has no authority to extract oil or gas in Australia but simply intends to undertake the survey with the intention of onselling the results. No-one is asking them to do this.

Recent research off Tasmania has shown that after four seismic passes 20 per cent of scallops died and that after exposure to a seismic survey crayfish lost the ability to extend their tails and right themselves if turned upside down. Other research showed that a seismic survey produced a 2-kilometre dead zone where two-thirds of zooplankton died. This also raises concerns about the effects on fish eggs and larvae which float in the water column. International research shows that, understandably, fish swim away from large seismic soundwaves. Fishermen across the world report that following a seismic survey marine habitats become unproductive and catch rates drop for a year or longer. In certain cases seismic testing must occur of course, but the scale of this proposal over vital fishing grounds when no-one is asking for it to be done raises massive concerns.

The fishing industry is very concerned about CGG's plans, which will impact on rural communities like Port Welshpool in the electorate of Gippsland South and Lakes Entrance and Mallacoota in my electorate. Under this proposal the industry is being asked to leave fishing grounds for five months and then accept lowered catch rates for a year or more. I am advised that CGG has completed a study into the financial effect this will have on the fishing industry but refuses to release this information. The industry believes that the cost could be in the vicinity of \$10 million. Some fisheries, such as the Danish seine fishery in Lakes Entrance, will have all of their fishing grounds impacted by this.

The fishing industry in south-east Australia is proud of its history of working in partnership with oil and gas

companies — more than 10 surveys have been completed over the last 10 years — but this one has the alarm bells ringing. I ask the minister to take this matter up with NOPSEMA, as I intend to do myself.

Family violence

Ms GRALEY (Narre Warren South) (17:15) — (14 792) My adjournment matter is for the Minister for the Prevention of Family Violence and concerns family violence in the City of Casey. The action I seek is that the minister visit the City of Casey to discuss family violence prevention initiatives.

There continue to be alarming levels of family violence in the Casey area. For the past six years Casey has reported the highest number of family violence incidents in Victoria. Over 4700 incidents in Casey were reported last year alone. It is deeply disturbing that there are so many victims in our local community who have experienced extreme and unrelenting forms of violence, intimidation, control and abuse. They are mostly women. It is equally disturbing to hear that far too often victims of family violence feel that they cannot access support systems or the assistance they need in such difficult times. I hear reports of victims feeling that they have been left unseen, unheard and unprotected in our own system. Though we have taken great strides in creating a system that supports and protects victims of family violence, we still have a long way to go.

I am very proud to be part of the Andrews Labor government, which has taken a serious approach to tackling family violence in Victoria. I am pleased to say that we have implemented 90 of the recommendations made by the Royal Commission into Family Violence, and we are on the way to implementing the other 137. But as the commission's report says, the causes of family violence are complex. We know that family violence is deeply rooted in community attitudes and that its root cause is gender inequality.

Local government has always been the level of government closest to the people. It has the unique position of having significant reach, influence and access to people in the community, especially through the provision of facilities and services. I have long been advocating for a new community services hub in the Webb Street area where multidisciplinary agencies can provide support services to locals locally. This needs to happen.

Back in 2015 in this place family violence survivor Kristy McKellar said:

We should never underestimate the important role that each of us plays in changing lives, enabling individuals to live the lives they had imagined but just never thought possible.

We need a better understanding and an improved plan in the City of Casey so that the local government, in partnership with all levels of government, community agencies and local groups like schools and churches, can finally launch a concerted and united attack on family violence in the City of Casey. There is much all of us can do, but we are more likely to succeed if we do it together. I am very much looking forward to the minister's visit.

School cleaners

Mr THOMPSON (Sandringham) (17:17) — (14 793) The matter I wish to raise is for the attention of the Minister for Education. The action that I seek is for the minister to review the reinstatement of the original cleaning contracts in Victoria that saw local schools being cleaned by local cleaners. Local cleaners were conscientious, they took responsibility to do a good job and they understood the extent of works to be undertaken. Rather than cleaning contracts in Victoria being a union takeover to bring about change dynamics within the Labor Party, there should be the scope for people to be self-employed, to earn their own income, to work in concert with their local school communities and to do an excellent job.

I am familiar with the conditions of grounds within my electorate, the excellent work undertaken by people who had responsibility for ground maintenance, the extra skill, care, attention, responsibility and focus of local school principals, who take great pride in the condition of their local school grounds, and the contribution of the parent communities. I have had a number of stakeholder meetings with people over the years, and more recently this year, where people have been appalled at this state's unionised takeover of cleaning contracts whereby the actual cleaners being employed were being paid less, on my information, than the current people being employed. They were being paid less and were given less time to do the work.

Rather than being oligarchies of elites with the union movement and other stakeholders, it is my view that we should promote individual responsibility, self-reliance and the hard work of mum-and-dad school cleaners who do a great job in local school cleaning contracts — not the unionisation of a workforce, an inferior job being done and people being subjected to inferior work conditions. There have been reports in the press recently in which people have complained about the results of the work, including sewage running out of toilets where the job had not been done according to the

original standard. I also empathise that after 14 years of Labor government in the last 18 years, the run-down condition of many local schools within my electorate makes it much harder for the cleaners to do a great job.

I also wish to pay tribute to the many local school principals who have put in the extra hours of work to bring about improved learning environments. There is a correlation between the school environment and student learning outcomes. At the present time the reforms of the government have set Victorian education backwards.

Cyclist and pedestrian safety

Mr McGUIRE (Broadmeadows) (17:21) — (14 794) My adjournment request is to the Minister for Roads and Road Safety. The action I seek is a report on when local projects in my electorate will begin under the Andrews Labor government's \$100 million Safer Cyclists and Pedestrians Fund, which is aimed at protecting and encouraging cyclists and pedestrians right across Victoria.

The government has committed \$3.5 million to extend the Upfield bike path between Box Forest Road in Fawkner and the M80 ring-road as part of this year's state budget. The existing Upfield bike path between Princes Park and Box Forest Road will also be upgraded, with additional lighting and safety improvements. Once complete, the path will provide a safe off-road alternative to Sydney Road for cyclists and pedestrians all the way from the M80 ring-road to Princes Park.

Public transport

Mr NORTHE (Morwell) (17:21) — (14 795) My adjournment matter is for the attention of the Minister for Public Transport. The action I seek is for the minister to amend what I believe is a discriminatory public transport ticketing system whereby Latrobe Valley residents who have a Seniors Card are financially disadvantaged in comparison to their metropolitan counterparts and seniors in some other areas of regional Victoria when utilising public transport.

At the moment senior travellers in the Latrobe Valley are often required to pay much more when they utilise our train and bus networks, in particular when compared those to seniors in Melbourne but also, as I say, in some other regional centres. For example, Public Transport Victoria state that Victorian senior Myki holders are all eligible for free travel on Saturdays and Sundays. However, when you look at the criteria they also state that free travel is over two consecutive zones, and this

causes a massive disadvantage for senior travellers in my electorate. The free weekend two consecutive zone travel criteria essentially mean that a senior in the Latrobe Valley can travel from Traralgon to Morwell or Morwell to Traralgon and that is it — that is a total distance of 11 kilometres or thereabouts. If you are a senior in Melbourne, you can travel vast distances, close to 100 kilometres across two consecutive zones, whereas, as I say, in the Latrobe Valley it is 11 kilometres. Another example is of a senior who resides in Pakenham. They can travel to Melbourne on a weekend for free, whether attending an event or an appointment or to visit a friend. But if you are a senior who lives in the Latrobe Valley it will cost you \$21.42 on a weekend, and I think that is grossly unfair.

We all recognise that seniors who live in regional Victoria are often disadvantaged by public transport connectivity and the options they have available. However, under the current rules metropolitan seniors are able to travel many, many more kilometres for free than those in regional Victoria and particularly in the Latrobe Valley, and that is completely flawed logic, in my view. It is my understanding that seniors in some other regional areas, whether it is Ballarat, Bendigo, Geelong, Mildura or Warrnambool, can travel on the bus for free on weekends, and rightly so — but Latrobe Valley seniors cannot, and that is not fair. Even when you look at the cap on the concession rate on bus fares, Latrobe Valley seniors pay more than double what is paid by seniors in Ballarat, Bendigo, Seymour and Warragul. So I ask the minister to fix what is an unfair system with respect to Latrobe Valley seniors when using public transport.

Peter Lalor Vocational College

Ms HALFPENNY (Thomastown) (17:24) — (14 796) I wish to raise with the Minister for Education a matter regarding Peter Lalor Vocational College and the Head Start initiative. The action I seek is that the minister visit the school to see firsthand the great work done by the students, teachers and staff. Peter Lalor Vocational College has had many lives over time. It was first a technical school, then it was a general secondary school and now it is a vocational college taking students from around the area from year 10. In its current form I believe it has flourished and is really holding its own in the area and supporting a great need around the northern suburbs. Students come from all over, not just from the Thomastown electorate but from many suburbs, from Broadmeadows or further afield into the Doreen area.

As they are a vocational college they spend a lot of time on vocational work and vocational education and

training programs. For example, beauty courses and hospitality courses are being run at the school, and there are of course Victorian certificate of applied learning courses, which are about ensuring that kids who may not be particularly interested in school are able to follow their passion by learning in that area and also do that in conjunction with the formal parts of the Victorian school curriculum.

This school has been selected as one of the few schools to pilot the Head Start initiative, which is a program that will provide extra resources for up to 100 different schools across Victoria, to be used to pay for things such as a Head Start coordinator to provide employment and vocational pathway advice and to support the students, as well as to allow students to spend an extra year at school to actually complete an apprenticeship or a traineeship.

This school has been doing a lot of this work already. I have to say that the teachers and staff are so committed and supportive of students. I went to the graduation night last year. It was fantastic to see so many students graduating and all their families there to support them. Special congratulations to the principal, Rod Sheehan, and the assistant principal, David McKay, and on all the work done by the students as well as the staff to make this a school that really excels in the vocational fields and gives the students a lot of very important life skills as well as the training and support they need.

Hire-drive tourism

Mr RIORDAN (Polwarth) (17:27) — (14 797) My adjournment matter is for the Minister for Roads and Road Safety. The action I seek is for the minister to provide details of how he is going to improve the safety of people on the Great Ocean Road touring route, given the growing number of non-Victorian licence-holders who are regularly risking their and others' lives due to a lack of basic understanding of Victorian road conditions. These are just some of the dangers faced in the last week by road users in south-western Victoria. On 3 August the Warrnambool *Standard* reported:

Police officers ... were left shaken after narrowly avoiding a head-on collision when a Hong Kong national tried to overtake several cars across double lines on the Great Ocean Road.

A letter dated 4 August from the Timboon school principal to me in part reads:

I had a serious near miss [this week] ... a car was driving at high speed on the wrong side of the road heading towards Timboon ... (with a car full of passengers) —

he ran him from the road before correcting.

On 7 August, the Warrnambool *Standard* again reported another run-in with police cars:

Constable Cook said the Chinese national, aged in his 30s, failed to give way to the oncoming police car ... He said police were forced to brake heavily and narrowly avoided colliding with ...

an oncoming car.

This government has made much of its claims on road safety, but it refuses to acknowledge a problem VicRoads south-western regional director Mark Koliba earlier this year said accounted for 21 per cent of reported crashes on the Great Ocean Road. We do not need to ban non-Victorian licence-holders, but we can do more. Currently VicRoads recognises the driving licences from only 27 jurisdictions. All other licence-holders, should they wish to get a Victorian licence, must be retested.

With growing hire-drive tourism being encouraged and supported, this is a huge road safety issue. The government must insist on hire car companies using technology such as virtual reality to test for basic skills and understanding of the Victorian road rules and conditions. Better and more specialised GPS and auto-driving products must be supplied to people taking on the Great Ocean Road's 10-hour round trip. We cannot turn such a great industry as tourism, one that local and regional communities very much support, into an unnecessarily dangerous and deadly industry that communities do not support. It is easily remedied and can be done so much better.

Public transport

Ms WARD (Eltham) (17:30) — (14 798) My adjournment matter is for the Minister for Public Transport, and the action I seek is for the minister to come to my electorate and meet with the Diamond Valley Transport Association. Minister, I thank you and the Premier for coming to Eltham recently to announce that a re-elected Labor government would invest \$530 million in the duplication of the Hurstbridge line, allowing for 10-minute services from Eltham and Montmorency and 20-minute services from Diamond Creek, Wattle Glen and Hurstbridge. Speaker, you and I both know exactly how long our communities have been waiting for something like this.

This is an incredibly important announcement for my community that builds on previous investments by Labor for this train line. This includes the duplication of the line between Clifton Hill and Westgarth, modernising signalling and increasing power supply to the Clifton Hill substation, as well as the recent

duplication of the line between Rosanna and Heidelberg and the level crossing removal at Grange Road and Lower Plenty Road. Importantly this commitment also preserves the iconic trestle bridge as well as the neighbouring childcare centre, the cricket nets and the oval and clubrooms.

Minister, there is a great deal of interest and support in my community for this announcement, and I ask you to come to my community and speak with the Diamond Valley Transport Association regarding this announcement and other public transport initiatives of the Andrews government.

Responses

Mr PAKULA (Attorney-General) (17:31) — The member for Forest Hill and the member for Sandringham both raised substantially the same issue for the Minister for Education, being a review of the cleaning contract arrangements. The member for Essendon raised a matter for the Minister for Sport seeking that the minister join him at the Chris Lane memorial field. The member for Gippsland East raised a matter for the Minister for Agriculture seeking that she write to the National Offshore Petroleum Safety and Environmental Management Authority regarding some offshore works by CGG. The member for Broadmeadows raised a matter for the Minister for Roads and Road Safety seeking information about when local projects in his electorate will begin. The member for Morwell raised a matter for the Minister for Public Transport regarding the fairness of the ticketing system for Latrobe Valley residents. The member for Thomastown raised a matter for the Minister for Education seeking that the minister visit Peter Lalor Vocational College. The member for Polwarth raised a matter for the Minister for Roads and Road Safety regarding road safety on the Great Ocean Road. The member for Eltham raised a matter for the Minister for Public Transport seeking that the minister meet with the Diamond Valley Transport Association. I will pass them all on.

The SPEAKER — The house now stands adjourned.

House adjourned 5.32 p.m. until Tuesday, 21 August.