

**PARLIAMENT OF VICTORIA**

**PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES  
(HANSARD)**

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

**Tuesday, 8 May 2018  
(Extract from book 5)**

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The Honourable LINDA DESSAU, AC

## **The Lieutenant-Governor**

The Honourable KEN LAY, AO, APM

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(from 16 October 2017)

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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)

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Ms Kilkenny, Ms Knight, Mr McGuire, Mr Pearson, Mr Richardson, Ms Spence, Ms Suleyman,  
Ms Thomson, Ms Ward and Ms Williams.

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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**

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*Parliamentary Services* — Secretary: Mr P. Lochert

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**FIFTY-EIGHTH PARLIAMENT — FIRST SESSION**

<b>Member</b>	<b>District</b>	<b>Party</b>	<b>Member</b>	<b>District</b>	<b>Party</b>
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McCurdy, Mr Timothy Logan	Ovens Valley	Nats	Williams, Ms Gabrielle	Dandenong	ALP
McGuire, Mr Frank	Broadmeadows	ALP	Wynne, Mr Richard William	Richmond	ALP

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

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

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

<sup>4</sup> ALP until 7 March 2017

<sup>5</sup> Nats until 28 August 2017

<sup>6</sup> Elected 14 March 2015

<sup>7</sup> Died 23 August 2017

<sup>8</sup> Elected 31 October 2015

<sup>9</sup> Resigned 2 February 2015

<sup>10</sup> 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, Ms Springle and Mr Wells.

**Standing Orders Committee** — The Speaker, Ms Allan, Ms Asher, Mr Carroll, Mr Clark, Ms Edwards, Mr Hibbins, Mr Hodggett, Ms Kairouz, Ms Ryan and Ms Sheed.

### **Legislative Assembly select committees**

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### **Joint committees**

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

**Dispute Resolution Committee** — (*Assembly*): Ms Allan, Mr Clark, Ms Hutchins, Mr Merlino, Mr M. O’Brien, Mr Pakula and Mr Walsh. (*Council*): Mr Bourman, Mr Dalidakis, Ms Dunn, Mr Jennings and Ms Wooldridge.

**Economic, Education, Jobs and Skills Committee** — (*Assembly*): Mr Crisp, Mrs Fyffe, Ms Garrett and Ms Ryall. (*Council*): Mr Bourman, Mr Elasmarr and Mr Melhem.

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

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

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

**House Committee** — (*Assembly*): The Speaker (*ex officio*), Mr J. Bull, Mr Crisp, Mrs Fyffe, Mr Staikos, Ms Suleyman and Mr Thompson. (*Council*): The President (*ex officio*), Mr Eideh, Ms Lovell, Mr Mulino and Mr Young.

**Independent Broad-based Anti-corruption Commission Committee** — (*Assembly*): Mr Hibbins, Mr D. O’Brien, Mr Richardson, Ms Thomson and Mr Wells. (*Council*): Mr Ramsay and Ms Symes.

**Law Reform, Road and Community Safety Committee** — (*Assembly*): Mr Dixon, Mr Howard, Ms Suleyman, Mr Thompson and Mr Tilley. (*Council*): Mr Gepp and Ms Patten.

**Public Accounts and Estimates Committee** — (*Assembly*): Mr Dimopoulos, Mr Morris, Mr D. O’Brien, Mr Pearson, Mr T. Smith and Ms Ward. (*Council*): Ms Patten, Ms Pennicuik and Ms Shing.

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

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**Tuesday, 8 May 2018**

**The SPEAKER (Hon. Colin Brooks) took the chair at 12.04 p.m. and read the prayer.**

### ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

**The SPEAKER (12:04)** — We acknowledge the traditional Aboriginal owners of the land on which we are meeting. We pay our respects to them, their culture, their elders past, present and future, and elders from other communities who may be here today.

### RULINGS BY THE CHAIR

#### Member conduct

**Ms KEALY (Lowan) (12:04)** — Last sitting week —

**Ms Allan** interjected.

**The SPEAKER** — Order! The member for Lowan, in silence.

**Ms KEALY** — It is interesting, Speaker, that there are comments like this as routine. I think this is a really serious matter. People know what this is about. We need to address it seriously. The sighs and the groans — this is a problem to be looked at. It is deeply concerning to me and other members of Parliament.

**Ms Allan** interjected.

**The SPEAKER** — Order! In silence. The member for Lowan has the call.

**Ms KEALY** — The interjections from the government continue. There is a lot of respect for women in this place, isn't there?

*Honourable members interjecting.*

**The SPEAKER** — Order! The member for Eltham!

**Ms KEALY** — Last sitting week, or on the parliamentary budget day, I raised a point of order in relation to an incident which occurred nearly six weeks ago in Parliament House. That incident related to a member of the government who verbally abused and bailed up a female member of Parliament within an elevator in this building. It was also —

**Ms Allan** interjected.

**Ms KEALY** — I am getting interjections from the Leader of the House that this is something that she somehow initiated, which is entirely inappropriate.

*Honourable members interjecting.*

**The SPEAKER** — Order! I ask for the assistance of all members.

**Ms KEALY** — This is a very serious incident. There were other witnesses to this event who were deeply disturbed by it. I understand that it may have been captured on CCTV. This incident was taken immediately to you for investigation, and last sitting week I asked that you either investigate the matter or provide an update to the house as to why the matter was not investigated, given the serious threat and the nature of this threat to not just a female MP, and how we treat women within this place, but also because we need to ensure that we have got a safe workplace for everybody here, whether you are a member of Parliament, whether you are a staff member or whether you are a visitor to the people's place, the Parliament of Victoria. I therefore ask you to provide an update to the house as to what investigations have taken place and if there have been any findings at this point.

**The SPEAKER** — The member should be aware — she may not be aware — but a meeting has been organised between her and me this afternoon. I have sought to meet with the member for South-West Coast today, although I note the member is not in the chamber. On the last sitting day, when the member for Lowan raised the point of order, I indicated that I would come back to the member after consulting with the member for South-West Coast. I intend to do that today, in good faith, and provide a report back to those members.

**Ms Kealy** — On a further point of order, Speaker, this matter is of importance to everybody in the house. I therefore ask that you not only provide an update to me, as the person who has raised the point of order, but I know that there are many other people who are concerned about this incident, whether they are members of Parliament or whether they are staff of this place, and I think we need to ensure that there is a final report provided to the chamber so that it is on the record, it is not hushed up and we have some transparency around the matter.

*Honourable members interjecting.*

**Ms Kealy** — There is always repulsion, isn't there, from the Labor government when we hear about transparency? It is something quite foreign to them. We need to do more to protect women within this place and make sure we have a safe working environment. That should have bipartisan support, and it is a shame we are not hearing that today.

**The SPEAKER** — With respect to in particular the member for South-West Coast, who initially raised the matter with me, along with the member for Clarinda, I think it is important to talk to her before I report back to the house.

## QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE and MINISTERS STATEMENTS

### Sports funding

**Mr M. O'BRIEN** (Malvern) (12:08) — My question is to the Treasurer. Treasurer, while you are handing out a \$225 million gift and free harbourside property to the AFL, community sporting clubs have been told by your government they can apply for a loan for repairing their clubrooms on which interest will be charged. Treasurer, where is the fairness in that?

**Mr Merlino** interjected.

**The SPEAKER** — Order! The Deputy Premier will come to order. The Deputy Premier and the member for Williamstown are warned.

**Mr M. O'BRIEN** — Treasurer, where is the fairness in that — multimillion-dollar gifts to the AFL but interest-bearing loans to community sport?

*Honourable members interjecting.*

**The SPEAKER** — Order! The member for Macedon and the member for Ringwood are both warned. The Minister for Police!

**Mr PALLAS** (Treasurer) (12:10) — I thank the member for Malvern for his question; I thank him for actually asking a question on the budget. I have become accustomed to not hearing any questions from the opposition on the budget. And it is a good budget; it gives us plenty of opportunity to talk about our investment.

*Honourable members interjecting.*

**The SPEAKER** — Order! With the assistance of the Leader of the Opposition. The member for Hastings is warned. The member for Essendon!

**Mr M. O'Brien** — On a point of order, Speaker, I have asked questions about the budget every single year. This is the very first opportunity to ask a question on the budget. I would have asked one last week except this coward shut down the Parliament.

*Honourable members interjecting.*

**The SPEAKER** — Order! The member for Malvern is warned about the use of that language in the chamber when referring to other members.

**Mr PALLAS** — I acknowledge that the member for Malvern has been asking questions — I am not sure to whom — but he has been baying at the moon for a long time. He is very unhappy that this government is running the strongest economy in the nation and that I am delivering the biggest surpluses ever delivered in the state of Victoria. But let us not worry about that; let us talk about sport. Because in the sports package that this government has delivered we are providing the biggest injection in funding to community and female sport this state has ever seen.

*Honourable members interjecting.*

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

**Mr PALLAS** — And we all know that everybody loves footy. Everybody loves footy, even those amongst us who unfortunately are Carlton supporters. Of course there is \$20 million from this government to upgrade Ikon Park in order to ensure that female sport is adequately catered for. In fact I got a phone call from a federal minister recently telling me of his great love of this contribution to female sport and wondering what would happen if the federal government did not make the contribution. Well, how typically negative and defeatist — they will not make a contribution to female sport, they will not make a contribution to increases —

**Mr M. O'Brien** — On a point of order, Speaker, the question was about fairness and the Treasurer offering multimillion-dollar gifts to the AFL but requiring community sport to pay interest on loans. The question is not about the federal government. I ask you to bring him back to answering the question.

**The SPEAKER** — Order! The question was fairly broad. I do ask the Treasurer to come back to answering the question.

**Mr R. Smith** interjected.

**The SPEAKER** — Order! I warn the member for Warrandyte not to reflect on the Chair's rulings.

**Mr PALLAS** — This government has invested very strongly in community sport facilities, and this is basically aimed at ensuring that women have access to appropriate change facilities. Over \$420 million has been contributed since November 2014 — cash grants — \$420 million. We were the first government in the nation to establish a \$10 million female-friendly

facilities program. So I do not think we need lectures from those opposite, who did nothing when it came to upgrading sporting facilities right across this state. We are upgrading elite facilities, we are upgrading female elite sporting facilities, we are making sure that facilities for female sport right across the state are adequately catered for. And guess what — we are ensuring that the grand final will stay in Victoria till 2057.

*Honourable members interjecting.*

**The SPEAKER** — Order! The member for Hawthorn has already been warned.

*Supplementary question*

**Mr M. O'BRIEN** (Malvern) (12:15) — Treasurer, given your colleagues did not pay back any interest on the near \$400 000 they rorted from taxpayers in their red shirts scam, why do junior sporting clubs have to pay interest on loans to fix their clubrooms? If they simply stole the money like the Labor Party did, could they also avoid paying interest?

**Mr PALLAS** (Treasurer) (12:15) — Well, Speaker, if I could refer the member for Malvern to budget paper 3, page 73, it shows that there is \$60 million provided for the Community Sports Infrastructure Fund. Indeed if essentially we have got the aspiring future Treasurer trying to work out why people should have to pay interest on loans, you have got to worry what their responsibility will be like when they try to administer this state if they ever got that responsibility.

**Mr M. O'Brien** — On a point of order, Speaker, I can refer the Treasurer to budget paper 3, page 80, which refers to the interest-bearing loans to community sport. He may not know his own budget papers — it appears I know them better than he does.

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

*Honourable members interjecting.*

**The SPEAKER** — Order! When the house comes to order. The member for Hastings is warned.

**Mr PALLAS** — If the member will go back one page from the one he has referred me to, page 79, he will notice that there is a Community Sports Infrastructure Fund. So on top of the \$60 million worth of grants, yes, there are those loans.

### Ministers statements: TAFE funding

**Mr ANDREWS** (Premier) (12:17) — I am very pleased to rise to mark, just a week on from the Treasurer delivering a great budget for Victoria, that the budget of course had at its centre the biggest shake-up — the biggest reform — to skills attainment, to TAFE, in the history of our state. Not cutbacks and closures, but investing in the skills we need so that we can keep building the road and rail projects that are so important for our future.

On Thursday I was out with local members from the community at the Melbourne Polytechnic, formerly known as the Greensborough TAFE. I say 'formerly known' because if you had visited there just a few years ago, under the insipid leadership offered by those opposite, there were padlocks on the gate. It was shut, it was closed, it was training nobody.

*Honourable members interjecting.*

**The SPEAKER** — Order! The member for Kew!

**Mr ANDREWS** — It was training nobody. It was a property development play from a group of people who cut and closed, slashed and burned our TAFE system. You can imagine the pride to be able to return to that campus with enrolments through the roof and to talk about additional funding for disadvantaged students, to talk about 30 000 extra TAFE places funded, to talk about free TAFE for the 30 priority courses, to talk about free preapprenticeship courses for the 18 most in-demand apprenticeships. It is only Labor governments that will back those who need the skills to build our state for the future.

*Honourable members interjecting.*

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

### Health funding

**Mr M. O'BRIEN** (Malvern) (12:19) — My question is to the Treasurer. Treasurer, last week you told 3AW that your budget could not afford to fund upgraded health facilities in Warragul, yet you are able to find \$225 million of taxpayers money to pay for the AFL, a tax-exempt business with multimillion-dollar profits, to renovate one of its many property assets, Etihad Stadium. Why do you think that renovating Etihad Stadium is a better use of scarce public funds than fixing Warragul's hospital?

**Mr PALLAS** (Treasurer) (12:20) — I thank the member for Malvern for his question, and I thank him

for the opportunity to talk about the great things that this government is doing when it comes to our investment in health right across the state. In health, this budget invests \$462 million in upgrading Ballarat Health Services and \$115 million in Wonthaggi hospital — but remember under the Regional Infrastructure Development Fund last year Warragul hospital got about \$9 million. Of course everybody under this government continues to make investments. We make investments because we are growing the state. We are making sure that everybody gets their share.

I also thank the member for the opportunity to reinforce exactly how substantial this government's investment in infrastructure is: \$13.7 billion, compared to \$4.9 billion for the 10-year average before. Let us put that into context: it makes your efforts look paltry.

**Mr M. O'Brien** — On a point of order, Speaker, the Treasurer was asked: why do you think renovating Etihad Stadium is a better use of scarce public funds than fixing Warragul's hospital? The Treasurer has not referred to either Etihad Stadium or Warragul in his answer. I ask you to bring him back to answering that question.

*Honourable members interjecting.*

**The SPEAKER** — Order! Members on my right will come to order. I understood the Treasurer had referenced Warragul hospital, but I do ask him to come back to answering the question.

**Mr PALLAS** — As I say, already we made the investment last year in a short-stay unit and operating theatre at Warragul hospital. The fact that this government is making investments all around the state should come as no surprise to anybody. The fact that this government is making some of the biggest investments in health that this state has ever seen should come as no surprise to anybody. In fact our continuing efforts and investment in health — \$4.2 billion, to be precise, in this budget — make sure that Victorians get the best care from the best professionals.

**Mr Clark** — On a point of order, Speaker, the Treasurer is now defying your order and proceeding to talk generally on the budget rather than answering the very specific question asked by the member for Malvern. I again ask you to bring him back to answering that question.

**The SPEAKER** — The Treasurer had strayed from answering the question. The Treasurer to come back to answering the question.

**Mr PALLAS** — As I say, we made an investment in Warragul hospital; we made it in last year's budget. In this year's budget — as if those phonies over there, who made no investment anywhere, aided and abetted by the National Party, who are a wholly owned subsidiary —

**Mr Clark** — On a point of order, Speaker, the Treasurer is defying your ruling and is proceeding to debate the question. I ask you to direct him to come back to answering it. If he cannot answer it, he should simply sit down.

**The SPEAKER** — Answers to questions are not an opportunity to attack the opposition. The Treasurer to continue answering the question.

**Mr PALLAS** — So \$1.2 billion is being used to expand and build hospitals right across our state so everybody gets their share. Whether it is in Warragul, Wonthaggi, Ballarat, everybody takes their turn, but everybody gets their fair share under this government. When we employ 500 more doctors, when we employ 2600 more nurses, I am sure Wonthaggi gets their fair share as well.

*Supplementary question*

**Mr M. O'Brien** (Malvern) (12:24) — Treasurer, your government is also gifting the AFL a large parcel of prime harbourfront Docklands property on which to build a new AFL head office on a 40-year, \$1-a-year lease. Treasurer, in today's dollars what is the value foregone to taxpayers of your 40-year harbourfront gift to the AFL?

**Mr PALLAS** (Treasurer) (12:25) — I thank the Treasurer — the shadow Treasurer. I thank the former failed Treasurer for his question. What is the cost? The cost is an opportunity cost, and let me tell you that those arrangements will fall away around about the same time that the grand final arrangements are up for review. Let us be very clear. We have locked in a deal to keep the grand final in Victoria until 2057, and we have also locked in a tenant who will be very much focused on keeping it here in perpetuity. That is the cost; that is the benefit of this investment.

**Mr M. O'Brien** — On a point of order, Speaker, under sessional order 9, the Treasurer did not answer the question at all. It was a very specific question about the value in today's dollars to taxpayers of the value foregone of a 40-year lease. I would ask you to require the Treasurer to answer the question in accordance with sessional order 9.

*Honourable members interjecting.*

**The SPEAKER** — Order! The Treasurer talked about the opportunity cost, but I will take the point of order on notice, consider *Hansard* carefully and report back to the house.

### Ministers statements: TAFE funding

**Mr MERLINO** (Minister for Education) (12:26) — I join the Premier in updating the house on the Andrews Labor government's historic reforms to TAFE as well as our Head Start apprenticeships and traineeships in secondary schools. The Premier mentioned Greensborough TAFE. It was not the only TAFE that those opposite closed down when they were in government. We all recall the padlock on the gate to Lilydale TAFE, which was closed down by those opposite and reopened by the Andrews Labor government.

This budget invests in vocational education like no other. Now the path to full apprenticeships and traineeships can start in school. We have invested almost \$50 million to enable students to start and finish their apprenticeship or traineeship. This means that when you finish school you will be fully qualified and ready to enter the workforce. Our investment will support 1700 Head Start apprenticeships and traineeships at 100 government secondary schools. It will mean that kids who want to work in areas such as construction, health care, education support and digital technology can start in year 10, have the option of a year 13 and finish fully qualified.

In addition to that, as the Premier spoke about, there will be 30 priority courses, free in our TAFE; 18 preapprenticeship courses, free in our TAFE; 30 000 additional places to support skills in projects such as the north-east link, a massive project opposed by the Leader of the Opposition and supported by the Turnbull government. We will support those students, we will support those skills and we will deliver those projects.

### Fire services property levy

**Mr M. O'BRIEN** (Malvern) (12:28) — My question is again to the Treasurer. Treasurer, you and the Premier promised not to raise the fire services property levy to pay for your election commitments on fire services. Of the \$229 million increase in the fire services property levy in your budget, how much of that slug on household budgets is directly attributable to your secret and undisclosed election deal with Peter Marshall and the United Firefighters Union?

**Mr PALLAS** (Treasurer) (12:29) — The answer to that question is none. I would draw to the member for Malvern's attention the fact that this government has put in place a freeze on the fire services property levy for two years. The member for Malvern may be looking at the budget papers and saying, 'In a year's time, that number goes back up'. Well, there is a note at the bottom of the budget papers that actually says, 'If we applied the legislation that those opposite put in place, it would go up'.

But ultimately how much it costs is a decision for the Treasurer of the day, and we will make it in the best interests of the community. We will certainly never, never do what those opposite did — they took \$66 million out of our fire services and gutted our capacity to deal with the threat to rural and regional Victoria. This government remains committed to ensuring adequately and substantially resourced fire services. The fire services property levy freeze remains in place for the two-year period that I have already announced.

### Supplementary question

**Mr M. O'BRIEN** (Malvern) (12:30) — Treasurer, under you, Victorian households now face the highest taxes in the country, and the cost of energy has also skyrocketed under your government. It was reported on 3 September last year that your government's renewables auction required a taxpayer subsidy of between \$250 million and \$350 million in order to prevent power prices rising even further. Treasurer, exactly how much did taxpayers subsidise your renewables auction?

**Mr PALLAS** (Treasurer) (12:31) — There are no new or increased taxes in this budget, let us be clear. But what there is is a very substantial reduction in taxes for businesses in regional Victoria — very substantial. In fact last year we gave a 25 per cent payroll tax cut to predominantly regionally based businesses. This year, again, we gave 25 per cent, totalling a 50 per cent reduction.

**Mr Clark** — On a point of order, Speaker, this was a very specific question about the costs of a renewables subsidy. The Treasurer has not even begun to address that issue. I ask you to instruct him to answer the question that was asked of him.

**Ms Allan** — On the point of order, Speaker, the reason why this supplementary has been allowed to be proceeded with is that it referenced broadly the budget and impacts on households. The Treasurer was being entirely consistent in his answer within the confines of

that policy basis on which the supplementary question has been allowed to stand. I would suggest that the Treasurer be allowed to continue to answer his question.

**The SPEAKER** — The question did reference a suggestion or a proposition by the questioner that Victorian households face the highest taxes and energy costs, and the Treasurer is entitled to respond to that in his response.

**Mr PALLAS** — We are in the process of an auction, and I will tell you one thing we will not be doing: we will not be of course naming a price in order to disadvantage the state. So the reserve remains something important to be preserved in the context of that auction process. But let me very clear: having substantially reduced business costs, we have also put in place, as a government, free TAFE. You could not think of a more substantial way to reduce people's costs.

### Ministers statements: employment

**Mr CARROLL** (Minister for Industry and Employment) (12:33) — I rise to update the house about how the Andrews government is supporting job creation and making major investments in our infrastructure program through our investments in TAFE. Since we were elected, over 333 000 jobs have been created under the Andrews Labor government. That is more jobs than any other state in either absolute or percentage terms. After a four-year public holiday there is a new normal in Victoria, and that is construction blitzes and getting on with the job of building the projects Victoria needs. From level crossing removals to the Melbourne Metro tunnel, our policies on local content are creating jobs and building young Victorians' futures.

Our unprecedented infrastructure program is generating significant demand for skilled workers. That is why we are giving the biggest overhaul to TAFE in decades. In contrast to those opposite, who cut TAFE, we are doing a \$700 million overhaul, including \$172 million for 30 free TAFE courses. That is also good news for those opposite — those opposite that Marcus Bastiaan calls 'B-graders' — because they will be able to get retraining and get valuable work. We are going to need them, because how many jobs are on the north-east link? Ten thousand.

We had the captain's call last week. He had been out in his sandpit trying to work out the north-east link's route, and then he said he would not sign the contracts — only to have the big captain in Canberra

overnight saying that we have got \$1.75 billion for the project! I quote that there is:

... \$1.75 billion for the north-east link. That is really the missing link in the M80 Ring Road, and so we are announcing a substantial funding commitment towards that project.

Who said that? That was Paul Fletcher, the federal Minister for Urban Infrastructure and Cities. North-east link, 10 000 jobs; West Gate tunnel, 6000 jobs; Metro Tunnel, 7000 jobs; 4500 for the level crossing removal program — we are getting on with it and doing the job Victoria needs.

### Bus contracts

**Mr GUY** (Leader of the Opposition) (12:35) — My question is to the Minister for Public Transport. After last week's bus rally, Minister, your government wrote to regional bus owners stating that you will not be taking country bus owners' assets at the end of their new contracts. Minister, if you are prepared to backflip and acknowledge that it is utterly unfair to take the assets of country bus owners, why does it remain your policy to seize the assets of city bus owners at the end of their new contracts?

*Honourable members interjecting.*

**The SPEAKER** — Order! Members will come to order. The member for Macedon has already been warned.

**Ms ALLAN** (Minister for Public Transport) (12:36) — I thank the Leader of the Opposition for his question. Clearly the Leader of the Opposition was not listening to the response I gave to the Deputy Leader of the Parliamentary Liberal Party last week, otherwise he would not have repeated the wrong information he has just provided to the house on the metropolitan bus contracting arrangements.

And if the Leader of the Opposition would like a briefing on metropolitan bus contracting, I would be delighted to give it to him and provide information also as to how the opposition, when they were in government and had the chance to make changes to bus contracting arrangements, brought in an operator and proceeded to cut funding and cut routes to the northern and western suburbs of Melbourne. I am happy to provide further information to the Leader of the Opposition.

The Leader of the Opposition in his question also asked about regional bus operators, and on that point he is correct. There has been a letter that has been sent to regional bus operators. There are around 1400 regional

bus operators, and the budget provided around \$5 million for the contracts under which the regional bus operators operate to be continued on their current basis. That was communicated very clearly last week following the budget, and it was felt important to communicate that message to regional bus operators because the Liberal Party and the National Party have simply been lying to them.

*Honourable members interjecting.*

**The SPEAKER** — Order! The Attorney-General and the member for Warrandyte!

*Supplementary question*

**Mr GUY** (Leader of the Opposition) (12:38) — The letter last week to country bus operators claims that city bus operators do not have a good track record of collaborating with the state government. The Sita family has operated Kastoria Bus Lines in the north-west of Melbourne for more than 50 years. Owner Dom Sita is facing the loss of two generations of family assets if he signs a contract to continue to do the work his family has done since the 1960s. Minister, are you prepared to meet Dom Sita at his Westmeadows depot to explain to him and to his staff why you believe they do not have a good track record of working with the government despite him having served his community for more than 50 years?

**Ms ALLAN** (Minister for Public Transport) (12:39) — I am delighted to meet with anyone within the confines of the probity requirements under which the bus contracts — probity, I know, does not mean much to the Leader of the Opposition. We know that. We know about kitchen table deals.

*Honourable members interjecting.*

**The SPEAKER** — Order! I warn the member for Frankston.

**Mr Guy** — On a point of order, Speaker, in relation to relevance, the minister was asked a very clear question about whether she would actually go to explain her decision to Dom Sita and his staff at his Westmeadows depot — some of the staff who will lose their jobs under her reforms. If she is not interested in standing up for these people's jobs, maybe she should say so or she should just sit down and stop being a complete disgrace.

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

**Ms ALLAN** — I answered the question directly at the outset when I indicated to the Leader of the Opposition — I know he is more interested in the sound of his own voice than others — that —

*Honourable members interjecting.*

**The SPEAKER** (12:40) — Order! The member for Kew will leave the chamber for the period of 1 hour.

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

**Ms ALLAN** — I did indicate that I am happy within the confines of the appropriate probity arrangements to meet with anyone to correct the lies and the misinformation that is being peddled by the Liberal Party and the National Party to bus operators in metropolitan and regional Victoria. I am happy to do that because they are simply wrong. We are proud to support a bus industry, particularly with over \$110 million in additional funding for bus routes across Victoria.

### **Ministers statements: road infrastructure projects**

**Mr PALLAS** (Treasurer) (12:41) — It gives me great pleasure to rise to update the house about the Victorian government's last Victorian budget delivering significant investments to reduce congestion. They are investments that are made possible by our strong economy and of course our AAA-rated economy. Our economy leads the nation. Our jobs growth leads the nation. In fact one in 10 jobs in the economy today did not exist more than three and a half years ago. Indeed nearly \$1 of every \$7 in the Victorian economy — the GSP of the state — did not exist three and a half years ago. That is what growth looks like.

For the past three and a half years we have been getting things done, including providing \$110 million to get the north-east link ready to go to market. Infrastructure Victoria describes the north-east link as 'the priority road project'. The Victorian Chamber of Commerce and Industry calls the project the missing piece of Victoria's transport puzzle. And of course RACV describes it as their top priority.

How bad it must feel then that the Leader of the Opposition has been so clearly out-positioned and undermined by the Prime Minister only days after he made his captain's pick to abandon this vital project and instead focus on a zombie road that does not stack up. We have already had one referendum on the east-west link. Victorians know exactly what happened when the member for Malvern tried to blackmail Victorians with

his shameful side letter. I do not know what makes the Leader of the Opposition think they will support it when it comes at the expense of this most urgently needed road. So I cannot wait. If they want a regurgitation of the last vote on east-west, then —

**The SPEAKER** — Order! The Treasurer has concluded his statement.

### Bus contracts

**Mr HODGETT** (Croydon) (12:43) — My question is to the Minister for Public Transport. The five and seven-year contracts you are offering to city bus operators contain clauses that state, ‘New buses procured in that term, non-managerial staff and intellectual property will be transferred to the government at the end of the contract term’. Last Tuesday you said that compulsory acquisition of bus operators’ assets was not happening. Now your contract options show clearly that it is. Minister, why did you lie to bus operators, and why did you deliberately mislead the house?

**The SPEAKER** — Order! That question contains an allegation which cannot be made other than by means of a substantive motion. I ask the Deputy Leader of the Opposition to rephrase his question.

**Mr HODGETT** — My question is to the Minister for Public Transport. The five and seven-year contracts you are offering to city bus operators contain clauses that state, ‘New buses procured in that term, non-managerial staff and intellectual property will be transferred to the government at the end of the contract term’. Last Tuesday you said that compulsory acquisition of bus operators’ assets was not happening; now your contract options show clearly that it is. Minister, why did you make false and misleading statements to bus operators, and why did you deliberately mislead the house?

**The SPEAKER** — Order! For the guidance of the member concerned, it is the last phrase in his question — ‘misleading the house’ — that is problematic. I will, for the last time, provide the deputy leader with the opportunity to rephrase his question. Allegations —

*Honourable members interjecting.*

**Mr M. O’Brien** — On a point of order, Speaker, my understanding of standing orders rulings from the Chair is that it may be unparliamentary to allege that a member has deliberately misled the house but it is not unparliamentary to say that a member has misled the house.

**The SPEAKER** — Order! The member for Malvern is correct, but I think the question did suggest that the minister had deliberately misled the house, which is inappropriate.

**Mr HODGETT** — In the interests of time I will just repeat the last sentence, Speaker. Minister, why did you lie to bus operators and why did you mislead the house?

**Ms ALLAN** (Minister for Public Transport) (12:46) — I thank the deputy leader for his question. The two allegations he has made are wrong — incorrect. I will repeat the offer I made earlier to the Leader of the Opposition: if he would like a briefing on these matters to stop his campaign of lies and information, I would be delighted to come and brief the opposition on the facts of this matter.

### *Supplementary question*

**Mr HODGETT** (Croydon) (12:47) — Minister, last Tuesday you told the house that any claims of compulsory acquisition of bus assets were completely wrong. However, on 28 February this year John Berger, the secretary of the Transport Workers Union (TWU), wrote a letter to your government pointing out that you are breaking an election commitment to an entire industry and to passengers by demanding that bus owners agree to the acquisition of their assets at the expiry of the next contract they sign. Minister, who is lying: the Transport Workers Union or you?

**Ms ALLAN** (Minister for Public Transport) (12:48) — In answering the question I am happy to inform the Deputy Leader of the Opposition that I had a meeting with John Berger from the TWU, and we had a very good conversation —

*Honourable members interjecting.*

**Ms ALLAN** — I am telling you about it, so it is clearly not secret. I had a meeting with John Berger from the TWU. We had a really good conversation, and it was an opportunity to provide John and his colleagues with information — factual information — about the metropolitan bus contracting arrangements. In that meeting the key concern of the TWU was that they did not want to see any repetition of the contract that was signed with Transdev by those opposite. They did not want to see any repetition of that lowering of contractual standards. I gave them the assurance — and it is reflected in the negotiations that are going on right now — that we have no intention of repeating that grave error made by those opposite.

**Ministers statements: north-east link**

**Mr DONNELLAN** (Minister for Roads and Road Safety) (12:49) — I rise to update the house on the Andrews government’s plans to build the north-east link — very much that missing link to give local roads back to local residents, which is so necessary. As part of the budget we have allocated \$110 million to get on with design and planning, so 100 days after the next election hopefully this project will be off and running.

I did note that we are not the only government that is keen to get on to do a bit of boogie on the roads. I notice that the federal government has committed \$1.75 billion for this great project — and why not? They know that we have got the record. We are the best horse in the race, and we will always have the best form in getting projects done. But if you wanted to look at what the alternatives are for the federal government, they are pretty hard to work out. We have got some suggestions that others may do a transport package for Melbourne and the north-east link may be included in that. You could do the north-east link and east–west link together, which would be a bit of a mouthful. You could have option C, which might go through the middle of Eltham, which has been widely welcomed down in that area, or you could say you are not going to actually sign the contract, full stop.

Let us be very clear: there have been more positions in this than the *Kama Sutra*. It is very difficult to work out what the opposition actually will and will not do. It is a bit like a B-grade soap opera — very much like *Days of Our Lives*. *Days of Our Lives* has been going since the 1960s; 1965 it came into being — Bo, Hope and Roman. But let us be very clear, that is about the time the Libs started planning the north-east link under the Hamer government, and 50 years later we still have not got there. They still have not committed, and like sand through the hourglass the Libs will never build the north-east link.

**Mr Watt** — On a point of order, Speaker, I raise a point of order with regard to question on notice 14 166. It was particularly a question to the Minister for Health around funding for Crohn’s and colitis. I am not sure whether people in this house understand that May is actually Crohn’s and Colitis Awareness Month. I have a constituent who has come to me with regard to his difficulties with having Crohn’s disease, and he has asked a very genuine question about funding that is being made available by the government. It is unfortunate that the question that I asked was due to be answered on 26 April. We are now past that date, and I know that my constituent is genuinely concerned about funding for Crohn’s and colitis. I would have thought

that in an awareness month for Crohn’s and colitis the government might actually be dignifying us with an answer to that.

**Mr Wells** — On a point of order, Speaker, I raised a constituency question on 6 February with the Minister for Roads and Road Safety — number 13 398 — which still has not been answered. It is an issue regarding roads in my electorate, and I ask you to follow it up for an answer.

**The SPEAKER** — We will follow that particular matter up.

**Mr Watt** — On a point of order, Speaker, it is interesting that the Minister for Roads and Road Safety also has a question of mine he has not bothered to answer. Ministers get elected to do their job, and it would be nice if the Minister for Roads and Road Safety would answer my question 14 162, which was due to be answered on 25 April. There are other questions, but I would really appreciate if the minister would actually answer this particular question. It would be nice if ministers could do their job properly and actually show some —

**The SPEAKER** — Order! The member for Burwood has made his point of order. Do you have further items, member for Burwood?

**Mr Watt** — I do. I also have a point of order with regard to question 14 161 to the Minister for Police. I notice that the Minister for Police is in the chamber. It would be nice if she actually answered my questions rather than ignoring them.

There is also a further question, a constituency question which I asked the Minister for Housing, Disability and Ageing, and this is a very serious question. A constituent has contacted me. I did actually take the time to speak to the minister separately outside of this chamber because it is a genuine question that my constituent needs answered, and I did not want to play politics with this question.

**The SPEAKER** — Order! The member will come to the point of order.

**Mr Watt** — It would be nice if the minister actually answered question 14 190. It was due on 26 April, and as I said, I did take the time to speak to the minister outside of the politicking of this chamber. It would have been nice if he had shown me and the chamber respect by way of answering the question — a very real question from a constituent of mine who is going through some tough times.

**The SPEAKER** — I thank the member for Burwood for that point of order. We will follow that matter up.

## CONSTITUENCY QUESTIONS

### Mornington electorate

**Mr MORRIS** (Mornington) (12:55) — (14 282) My question is for the Minister for Roads and Road Safety. In August 2017 I asked the minister in this house to provide traffic counts for Main Street in Mornington. Indeed he responded in October that the average daily two-way count was approximately 14 689 cars. The minister also indicated that VicRoads were investigating potential works to improve pedestrian safety in the southern section of the street and that the improvement was expected to be the provision of an additional pedestrian refuge island. While I appreciate that any works will be an improvement, given the volume of traffic, I am not sure this is going to help much. This is a problem that is not going away, and I would be obliged if the minister could provide further information, including: on what date or dates the traffic count was undertaken; whether a further traffic count has been undertaken since the question was asked, and if so, when that was and what the result was; and what the practical maximum daily two-way traffic capacity is for Main Street.

### Yuroke electorate

**Ms SPENCE** (Yuroke) (12:56) — (14 283) My question is to the Minister for Emergency Services. What is the latest information the minister can provide on the delivery of an additional Craigieburn State Emergency Service (SES) unit? We are very fortunate in Yuroke to have some outstanding SES volunteers. They are doing incredible work serving the residents in Craigieburn and across Melbourne's north. With massive population growth in the Yuroke electorate and surrounding communities this additional unit will ensure that our SES can respond quickly and effectively in emergency situations, where every second counts. I thank the minister for supporting our SES through this important investment, and I am sure that the Craigieburn SES volunteers will be pleased to receive any additional information that the minister can provide.

### Evelyn electorate

**Mrs FYFFE** (Evelyn) (12:56) — (14 284) My constituency question is to the Minister for Energy, Environment and Climate Change. Construction and demolition waste has been dumped near a public waterway in Coldstream. Asbestos was discovered

during an inspection by Environment Protection Authority Victoria (EPA). Melbourne Water have also inspected the site. The EPA issued a clean-up notice in June 2017. The EPA again inspected the site in January, but it had not been cleaned up. My very concerned constituents cannot understand why the EPA, who are quick to issue fines for littering, are being so lax with this serious issue. They ask that the minister intervene. The private property where the waste has been dumped runs behind several houses, and the occupants are fearful of opening the windows.

### Ivanhoe electorate

**Mr CARBINES** (Ivanhoe) (12:57) — (14 285) My constituency question is to the Minister for Health. I ask the minister to provide me and my constituents with an information update on when the new MRI linear accelerator service will be treating patients at Austin Health and in particular at the Olivia Newton-John Cancer Wellness and Research Centre. I was very pleased to join the Premier along with Olivia, her husband, Professor Jonathan Cebon and many others at the announcement today of the \$18 million funding boost to fast-track more research and better treatments for cancer patients at the Olivia Newton-John centre. I was also pleased that you, Speaker, were able to catch up with Olivia, the patron of that centre, who has shown great leadership in securing funding, leadership and support for those fighting cancer. Our researchers also do a sterling job providing hope and support for cancer victims.

### Euroa electorate

**Ms RYAN** (Euroa) (12:58) — (14 286) My constituency question is to the Minister for Agriculture. I would like to know when the government will provide more resources to control the increasing number of wild dogs in north-east Victoria. Terry and Jan Ring, who live at Upper Ryans Creek, tell me that the wild dog situation is the worst they have seen or heard about in 33 years of farming. They have a sheep property, and they have seen as many as 12 different dogs at one time.

*Honourable members interjecting.*

**Ms RYAN** — I note the interjections from those opposite about big cats, which shows that they have no concept of how destructive and devastating wild dogs are to farming communities. Our wild doggers do a fantastic job, but they are stretched. They have few resources, and it is time that the government provided more support for wild dog control in north-east Victoria.

### Frankston electorate

**Mr EDBROOKE** (Frankston) (12:59) — (14 287)

My question is to the Minister for Public Transport, and it is in relation to the demolition and rebuilding of Frankston station and the level crossing removal, which is a fantastic project down in Frankston. I ask that the minister provide an update on the expected completion of works in order to keep my electorate informed. At the moment of course people are taking buses from Frankston to Carrum, and that is going very, very smoothly, but there is some concern among members of the community; they would like to know on what date this is going to finish. We know that this is now the gateway to the peninsula, and it is the gateway to Frankston. It is a magnificent project, and Frankston is seen in such a positive light, which we have not seen for many, many years.

I also thank the Minister for Public Transport for her faith, her investment and her commitment to Frankston with these projects. It is a huge investment, and it shows so much passion for our community, passion we just have not had before.

### Ripon electorate

**Ms STALEY** (Ripon) (13:00) — (14 288) My question is for the Minister for Public Transport. What steps have been taken to expand the size of the bus supplied for the Ballarat High School to Miners Rest 3.25 p.m. bus service? The current bus is inadequate for the number of children on it. There are many, many children standing up and they exceed the number of children allowed on the bus. So my question is: what steps has she taken to expand the size of the bus supplied?

### Eltham electorate

**Ms WARD** (Eltham) (13:01) — (14 289) My question is to the Minister for Training and Skills in the other place. My community is lucky enough to have our own TAFE, Melbourne Polytechnic in Greensborough, which was closed in 2013 by the Liberal government and reopened last year by the Andrews government. This campus has expanded opportunities for so many in my electorate and beyond, with over 400 students enrolling in the year since it was reopened. Minister, how will free TAFE for priority courses such as diploma of nursing, certificate III in civil construction and certificate II in engineering pathways, among others announced in last week's budget, help prospective students in my electorate?

### Melbourne electorate

**Ms SANDELL** (Melbourne) (13:01) — (14 290)

My question is to the Minister for Education. Minister, when will Docklands get a high school so that city kids can go to school in their local neighbourhood? After a long and hard-fought campaign led by local parents, which I was very proud to support, this year's budget finally saw funding for a much-needed primary school to be built in Docklands. Kids do grow up though, and I and many others are wondering where the kids from Docklands Primary School will go when they graduate from grade 6. University High School is already overcrowded and still growing very quickly. I urge this government to give primary school parents in Docklands some certainty and to commit to a high school this year so that it is built in time for when their kids graduate from grade 6 and they can go to a high school locally.

### Cranbourne electorate

**Mr PERERA** (Cranbourne) (13:02) — (14 291) My constituency question is for the Minister for Education. I was very pleased that the recently announced Victorian budget 2018–19 concentrated on either buying land for new schools or building and updating schools across the state, including in my electorate of Cranbourne. In this year's Victorian budget \$271.7 million was allocated for land acquisition for schools across the state. This included funding to buy land for a Cranbourne West secondary and special school. Could the minister please provide an update on the time frame for land purchase for the recently announced Cranbourne West secondary and special school?

**Ms Ryall** — On a point of order, Speaker, in relation to the constituency question raised by the member for Frankston — he asked for an update. I would refer to *Rulings from the Chair* from Speaker Languiller back in 2015, stating that an update is an action that constitutes an adjournment request rather than a constituency question.

**The SPEAKER** — I thank the member for raising that point of order. There were a number of members on both sides of the house today who I think used similar language, so I will consider on receipt of *Hansard* all of the constituency questions raised today and provide some guidance to the house on the correct way to phrase constituency questions according to previous rulings.

**RULINGS BY THE CHAIR****Questions without notice**

**The SPEAKER** (13:04) — Last Tuesday the member for Warrandyte took a point of order regarding the responsiveness of the Premier's answer to the member for Gembrook's question, number 3. Having reviewed the transcript I rule that the answer was responsive.

**SERIOUS OFFENDERS BILL 2018***Introduction and first reading*

**Ms NEVILLE** (Minister for Police) (13:04) — I move:

That I have leave to bring in a bill for an act to provide for enhanced protection of the community by requiring offenders who have served custodial sentences for certain serious sex offences or certain serious violent offences and who present an unacceptable risk of harm to the community to be subject to ongoing detention or supervision, to repeal the Serious Sex Offenders (Detention and Supervision) Act 2009, to consequentially amend other acts and for other purposes.

**Motion agreed to.**

**Read first time.**

**NATIONAL REDRESS SCHEME FOR INSTITUTIONAL CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE (COMMONWEALTH POWERS) BILL 2018***Introduction and first reading*

**Mr PAKULA** (Attorney-General) (13:05) — I move:

That I have leave to bring in a bill for an act to refer certain matters relating to the national redress scheme for institutional child sexual abuse to the Parliament of the commonwealth for the purposes of section 51(xxxvii) of the constitution of the commonwealth and for other purposes.

**Mr PESUTTO** (Hawthorn) (13:05) — I seek a brief explanation of the bill.

**Mr PAKULA** (Attorney-General) (13:06) — I am happy to advise the member for Hawthorn that the bill refers power to the commonwealth in relation to the national redress scheme for institutional child sexual abuse, allowing Victorian government institutions and participating non-government institutions to be covered by the scheme. I should indicate to the house that the New South Wales Attorney-General introduced a

similar bill — in fact probably an identical bill — to the New South Wales Parliament last week.

**Motion agreed to.**

**Read first time.**

**ELECTORAL LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL 2018***Introduction and first reading*

**Mr PAKULA** (Attorney-General) (13:06) — I move:

That I have leave to bring in a bill for an act to amend the Electoral Act 2002 and the Public Administration Act 2004 and for other purposes.

**Motion agreed to.**

**Read first time.**

**FAIR PRESUMPTIVE RIGHTS FOR FIREFIGHTERS BILL 2018***Introduction*

**Mr BATTIN** (Member for Gembrook) (13:07) — I move:

That I have leave to bring in a bill for an act to provide a rebuttable presumption for career firefighters and volunteer firefighters suffering from specified forms of cancer for the purpose of claiming compensation under the Workplace Injury Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 2013 and for other purposes.

**House divided on motion:**

*Ayes, 35*

Angus, Mr  
Asher, Ms  
Battin, Mr  
Bull, Mr T.  
Burgess, Mr  
Clark, Mr  
Crisp, Mr  
Dixon, Mr  
Fyffe, Mrs  
Gidley, Mr  
Guy, Mr  
Hibbins, Mr  
Hodgett, Mr  
Katos, Mr  
Kealy, Ms  
McCurdy, Mr  
McLeish, Ms  
Morris, Mr

Northe, Mr  
O'Brien, Mr D.  
O'Brien, Mr M.  
Pesutto, Mr  
Ryall, Ms  
Ryan, Ms  
Sandell, Ms  
Sheed, Ms  
Smith, Mr R.  
Smith, Mr T.  
Southwick, Mr  
Staley, Ms  
Thompson, Mr  
Thorpe, Ms  
Victoria, Ms  
Wakeling, Mr  
Wells, Mr

*Noes, 44*

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

**Motion defeated.**

## NOTICES OF MOTION

### Removal

**The SPEAKER** (13:15) — I wish to advise the house that notice of motion 11 will be removed from the notice paper unless the member wishing their notice to remain on the notice paper advises the Acting Clerk in writing before 2.00 p.m today.

## PETITIONS

**Following petitions presented to house:**

### Flinders Street reserve, Rye

To the Legislative Assembly of Victoria:

The petition of the residents of the Mornington Peninsula draws to the attention of the house the need to protect, in accordance with the state government biodiversity 2037 plan, a valuable bushland reserve with very high conservation significance located at 50 Flinders Street, Rye. This petition therefore requests:

1. the state government retain the land for public use; and
2. protect this bushland reserve from future housing subdivision being a significant remnant of native vegetation in an otherwise highly urbanised residential area.

**By Mr DIXON (Nepean) (55 signatures).**

## Mornington Peninsula planning

To the Legislative Assembly of Victoria:

The petition of the residents of the Mornington Peninsula draws to the attention of the house the need to protect the Mornington Peninsula from inappropriate development by:

1. removing 'as of right' approvals which now allow three-storey developments and buildings up to 11 metres high within our general residential zone;
2. repealing recent changes which have expanded the scope of VicSmart planning applications, removing residents' rights to be aware of future developments in their neighbourhood;
3. ensuring our existing design development overlays, which prohibit three-storey developments within general residential zones, are protected in perpetuity;
4. implement mandatory controls to strengthen and enforce the intent of our 2014 Mornington Peninsula localised planning statement to override, in unambiguous language, any changes to the planning scheme, thereby providing a clear direction for decision-making;
5. protecting and strengthening local council control within the green wedge zone and rural conservation zone by limiting or, where necessary, preventing commercial and industrial developments on rural land, including accommodation complexes.

**By Mr DIXON (Nepean) (229 signatures).**

**Tabled.**

**Ordered that petitions be considered next day on motion of Mr DIXON (Nepean).**

## SCRUTINY OF ACTS AND REGULATIONS COMMITTEE

### *Alert Digest No. 6*

**Mr J. BULL (Sunbury) presented *Alert Digest No. 6 of 2018 on:***

Appropriation (2018–2019) Bill 2018

Appropriation (Parliament 2018–2019) Bill 2018

**together with appendices.**

**Tabled.**

**Ordered to be published.**

## DOCUMENTS

**Tabled by Acting Clerk:**

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

Boroondara — C292  
 Cardinia — C230  
 Casey — C233  
 Glenelg — C82  
 Greater Bendigo — C221, C223  
 Greater Geelong — C353  
 Kingston — C153, C158  
 Latrobe — C109  
 Macedon Ranges — C123  
 Maribyrnong — C141  
 Melbourne — C281, C318, C333  
 Wangaratta — C72  
 Wodonga — C105

Statutory Rule under the *Road Safety Act 1986* — SR 47

*Subordinate Legislation Act 1994*:

Documents under s 15 in relation to Statutory Rules 39, 41, 47

Documents under s 16B in relation to:

*Domestic Animals Act 1994* — Code of Practice for the Keeping of Racing Greyhounds

*Kardinia Park Stadium Act 2016* — Event Management Declaration for Kardinia Park Events.

## BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

### Program

**Ms ALLAN** (Minister for Public Transport) (13:17) — I move:

That, under standing order 94(2), the orders of the day, government business, relating to the following bills be considered and completed by 5.00 p.m. on Thursday, 10 May 2018:

Appropriation (2018–2019) Bill 2018

Appropriation (Parliament 2018–2019) Bill 2018

Liquor and Gambling Legislation Amendment Bill 2018.

In making a short contribution to this motion, I indicate that whilst there are three bills on the program one of them relates to the handing down of the Victorian state budget that occurred in this place last Tuesday, and we want to allow as much time as possible for members to debate and consider this bill. In that light — and I have already communicated this to the manager of

opposition business — the government intends to move a take-note motion, as has been the practice in previous years, on the passage of the bill to the Legislative Council, which will, in all hope and optimism, occur at 5.00 p.m. on Thursday.

It is understood that there is a need and a desire for a large number of members to make their contributions to this debate. It was a terrific budget so I am sure that there will be plenty of people wanting to make a contribution supporting the fantastic budget that was handed down by the Treasurer a week ago. We will be allowing for that debate to continue beyond the end of this week if the house supports the take-note motion, and given that it has happened in previous years, I am hopeful that the house will support that motion. With those few short comments, I commend the motion to the house.

**Mr CLARK** (Box Hill) (13:19) — The principal business proposed in this program is of course debate on the budget, as well it should be. It is a debate that should have started last week, except that the government, in accordance with its desire to avoid scrutiny, shut down this Parliament and scuttled away. Then today the Treasurer had the temerity to complain because the first question of the day asked him about the budget. As the member for Malvern rightly pointed out, if it had not been for the government running away from its own budget, those questions could and should have been asked last week. We could have had two weeks of debate on the budget bill prior to it needing to go to the upper house for debate. In fact we are only going to have one week of debate and then the take-note motion referred to by the Leader of the House.

The opposition opposes this government business program. We oppose it because yet again the government is failing to deal with the elephant in the room — the roting and abuse-of-office allegations that have been so prominent over recent months. The government just does not seem to get the gravity of it. We have had an Ombudsman's report find that upwards of 20 Labor MPs were involved in what the Ombudsman termed as an artifice to misuse public moneys for political campaigning purposes. The government is just trying to say, 'There is nothing to see, let's move on. It is fine; we paid the money back and therefore there is nothing more to say about it'. As the Leader of the Opposition has rightly pointed out, if someone steals money from their employer, they cannot then just turn around and say, 'Well, I have paid the money back now I have been caught out, therefore everything is okay'. It is not okay, and it is something this house should be dealing with.

It is clear that some members of the Labor Party realised an improper scheme was being proposed to them and they refused to take part in it. How then could other members of the Labor Party say that they naïvely thought there was nothing wrong with it? Members need to be responsible for the way they conduct and manage the electorate allowances that are made available to them. That was certainly the standard that was applied to the member for Frankston in the previous Parliament. He was found derelict in his duty in that regard. It would seem on the facts known to date that the rotting members of the Labor Party are in exactly the same position. It is up to this house to deal with it, and the government is again refusing to do so.

We are seeing almost daily press reports about aspects of this abuse, including in this morning's papers, and it is quite clear that the public likewise cannot believe that members of Parliament could engage in the sort of rotting that the Labor MPs have engaged in and then blithely dismiss it and do nothing about.

It is not just backbench MPs who have been involved with this; it is senior ministers, including the Attorney-General and the Minister for Police. This house should be dealing with it. It is a disgrace that the government has not been prepared to deal with it. We have sought to establish a select committee that could take evidence in public to get to the bottom of what is going on and then make appropriate findings. If its investigation confirmed what seems to be the case on the public record so far — that there has been contempt of the Parliament in the way members have handled their allowances — appropriate sanctions could be recommended to this house and adopted by this house, and procedures could be put in place to make clear to members that they are not to engage in that sort of conduct in future.

That is the sort of standard that was expected to be applied in the previous Parliament and was applied in the previous Parliament in relation to the member for Frankston when the serious allegations that were raised about him were referred to the Privileges Committee and were extensively investigated and reported on by the Privileges Committee. This house acted on that report. The Labor Party were adamant that something needed to be done about the \$6000 or so that was involved in the allegations against the member for Frankston, but somehow they seem to have no interest in holding their own ranks to account over the more than \$400 000 that has been misused in relation to the red shirts rot affair nor indeed over the many, many tens of thousands of dollars in relation to the allegations against the former Speaker and former Deputy Speaker. In the

absence of the government dealing with this matter on the business program, we oppose that program.

**Mr McGUIRE** (Broadmeadows) (13:24) — In Australia's fastest growing state, record investment and strong financial management are the key drivers defining Victoria's economic leadership, creating lifelong learning, skills and jobs. Free TAFE courses highlight the human factor in this year's *Getting Things Done* budget, delivering life-changing opportunities for youth who think with their hands — crucial skills in building our state and its prosperity. These are just a sprinkling of the high points in the Appropriation (2018–2019) Bill 2018, which has won widespread community support and is the main focus of debate in this week's government business program. I look forward to the contributions across the chamber and to the ongoing take-note motion which the Leader of the House has offered. This is one of the most significant and substantive debates that we have in any year, and it is even more significant in an election year.

The next item is the Appropriation (Parliament 2018–2019) Bill 2018. This is important obviously for funding this chamber — the Legislative Assembly — the Legislative Council and the Department of Parliamentary Services as well as the Auditor-General and the Parliamentary Budget Office. The Parliamentary Budget Office is a really important new initiative. It has a public interest benefit because establishing this office will help ensure that non-government parties have the expertise and skills they need to develop good, robust public policy. This goes across a whole range of different aspects, including preparing election policy costings, pre-election reports and post-election reports, preparing costings of other policies or proposed policies at the request of a member of Parliament — that means each individual member will be able to seek their own independent source of costings — and providing advisory services to members of Parliament on financial, fiscal and economic matters. That is a clear-cut public interest proposition and a substantive initiative that will help the Parliament function.

The third bill is the Liquor and Gambling Legislation Amendment Bill 2018, and at its core this bill has amendments that provide a power to require wagering service providers to comply with harm minimisation and consumer protection requirements. It will allow the Victorian government to implement the national consumer protection framework for ongoing wagering.

In summing up, we have crucial bills. One of them goes to how we have the vision and plan to finance the evolution of Melbourne and the state of Victoria and how that impacts right throughout all of the

communities that are represented in this chamber. To get the debate up and running, I wanted to make a succinct contribution and commend the government business program to the house.

**Ms STALEY** (Ripon) (13:27) — I rise to support the manager of opposition business in opposing the government business program. I do so for three reasons. The first is that we should have started debating this budget in the last sitting week. This government has yet again trashed a longstanding convention of this house and refused to allow the opposition their traditional, longstanding right of reply to the budget in budget week. Instead we will see that kick off today. As a result, there are only three sitting days to debate the budget. I know we will go to a take-note motion so that members of this place will have the opportunity to speak about the budget, but they will not have the opportunity to speak on the budget because this government has chosen to take away that right from them.

The second reason that I oppose the government business program is what happened just a moment ago — the shameful use of the government's numbers to deny even the first reading of a bill that would bring in presumptive rights legislation for firefighters. This government is very keen to make sure that suggestions by anybody other than them are not even brought onto the floor of the Parliament to be debated, and that was a poor use of their numbers in this Parliament.

The third reason is of course that we have seen yet again that the government has no intention of dealing with the ever-increasing rollcall of rorts and allegations against them that they are facing. For a long time those of us on this side of the Parliament have called for a proper investigation by the Parliament, by either the Privileges Committee or a select committee, into the actions of the member for Tarneit and the member for Melton, the former Speaker and Deputy Speaker of this place, both of them having been found to have ripped off — to have rorted — the second residence allowance to the degree of hundreds of thousands of dollars.

Of course, joining that we now have the Ombudsman's report into the red shirts rorts. The government, having done everything in its power to stop the Ombudsman, even taking this to the High Court, has now seen this report come out. That report finds that the actions of the Labor members, many of whom are still in this Parliament, crossed the line and were not in accordance with the proper use of our electorate allowances. Yet what do we see? This government has utterly refused to even understand that they did something wrong. They are so bereft of ethics that they do not understand.

**Mr Paynter** interjected.

**Ms STALEY** — Absolutely, member for Bass; they have no moral compass. They just do not understand that what they did, in the Ombudsman's words, crossed the line and was wrong. Until we see debate in this place that holds them to account by taking them to the Privileges Committee or a select committee, then the government business program is incomplete. It is wrong for the Leader of the House to once again come in here and put forward a government business program that fails the fairness, decency or probity tests. For those reasons, we oppose this government business program.

**Mr CARBINES** (Ivanhoe) (13:31) — I am pleased to rise to support both the member for Broadmeadows and the Leader of the House in supporting the business program for this week, particularly the opportunity to debate and discuss the Appropriation (2018–2019) Bill 2018, which relates of course to the budget, a budget that again maintains and affirms the AAA credit rating of our government, the AAA credit rating of our state, one that the previous Liberal government inherited from the Bracks-Brumby governments and one which has gone from strength to strength under the leadership of the Premier and the Treasurer. Can I say in relation to the appropriation bill that the opportunity to expand on the investments in the Ivanhoe electorate is something that I am looking forward to. Perhaps I had best leave my further conversation and remarks to that debate.

Also of course the Appropriation (Parliament 2018–2019) Bill 2018 provides an opportunity for members to talk about appropriations for the operations of the Legislative Council and the Legislative Assembly and the Parliament itself. It is also an opportunity to reflect on and affirm not only some of our support for that work but also the ongoing improvements to provide to the Victorian community access to and understanding of the democratic processes in this place. There is also the Liquor and Gambling Legislation Amendment Bill 2018.

Can I just touch very briefly in my contribution on this. When people oppose seek to talk about conventions in either this place or any Parliament in our country we can reflect, if we want to go back far enough, on conservative parties and their trashing of conventions in relation to the blocking of supply in 1975. If you want to talk about the way in which conservative governments or parties operate when they like to cloak themselves in the rituals and traditions of the past, they are always the very first to trash history, to trash conventions and to trash the trust of people. The example of what happened in 1975 is only one example of very many. When you

choose to trash the conventions of the Parliament in relation to pairing arrangements, as we saw on Good Friday, all that does is not only undermine trust and confidence in the community but also diminishes the capacity for members of this place to access those opportunities that the pairing arrangements provide and the trust that they provide for people to either be with their families or attend significant occasions in their electorate or provide a decent working place for all legislators. That is undermined when people on the other side seek to betray the confidences and the opportunities that the pairing process and conventions provide. People need to reflect on and think about that and the way in which this workplace operates for the benefit of all legislators, their families and their communities and the way in which democracy and justice are best served in this place.

We will not be copping lectures from anybody opposite in relation to conventions in the Parliament and the way in which they are provided, affirmed, supported and adhered to in this place or in any Parliament across Australia. History will only affirm my view and the view of many others about the way in which conventions in the parliamentary democracies in both our states and our federal Parliament are constantly trashed by those opposite. It is in their DNA to constantly do that. It is those opposite who trash conventions at the very moment they are talking about dusting off those ancient traditions and the way we are meant to respect and adhere to them. You can always bet on that happening when your back or your mind is turned, when you think that in good faith you are affirming those, as the Labor Party has done time and time again — unfortunately perhaps to our detriment at times. Be that as it may, that is a cost we will always be prepared to pay.

People on the other side will always understand that that may be an opportunity open to them. It shows a weakness in their moral character that when the opportunity is there they choose — they cannot help themselves — to trash the conventions of democracy time and again. They will stand condemned by the Victorian people and also by other members that follow in this place in the decades to come for the way that they have treated the conventions of this place. We will not be lectured to by those opposite, and we look forward to the support of the Parliament to conduct our business on behalf of Victorians under this business program this week.

**Mr KATOS** (South Barwon) (13:37) — I rise to oppose the government business program. As has been outlined by some other members on this side of the house and as the member for Ripon quite rightly said,

we should have debated the budget last week. We should not be having this ridiculously truncated debate where we sit for one day and then come back the following week. We should have sat all of last week and debated the budget and given every member in this house an opportunity to speak on it.

The other main reason that the opposition opposes the government business program — as we have said, we are actually starting to sound more like a broken record every week — is the failure of this government to deal with the rorting members for Tarneit and Melton. If they were in any other workplace, they would probably be up on fraud charges as we speak. It absolutely sickens me and other members, certainly on this side of the house, that they continue to sit in this house and have not been punished for what they have done. To say that you live in Point Lonsdale when your actual home is in Footscray, to say, as the member for Melton did, that you live in Ocean Grove in a demountable caravan as your primary residence when you were actually at the time living in Mordialloc — not even living in his own electorate; even his real residence was not in his own electorate — is the sort of thing about which you often hear the saying, ‘You couldn’t make this stuff up’. This is what is happening here. This government is continuing to protect these two rorting members, and they are not being dealt with — whether it is by the Privileges Committee or whether it is by the motion on the notice paper in the name of the member for Bulleen to establish a committee to investigate the rorting of these members.

Then you have got the red shirts rorts, which this government is continuing to try and hide. It is also trying to obstruct investigations into the rorting members. Four hundred thousand dollars is the tip of the iceberg of what has gone on with these rorts, as clearly members of this house have also been rorting their allowances to have staff — red shirts — out there on the campaign trail, as we have said on many occasions here in this house.

Quite frankly, as we have said, we oppose the government business program. I am looking forward to make a contribution on the budget, even though there was not a lot in it for the Geelong region. There was smoke and mirrors in it for the Geelong region — a lot of promises of some very fanciful things, but this is not the place to debate the Appropriation (2018–2019) Bill 2018, here in the government business program debate. I look forward to doing that in my contribution on the appropriation bill, and obviously on the Appropriation (Parliament 2018–2019) Bill 2018, a very important bill that funds this house, and on the Liquor and Gambling Legislation Amendment

Bill 2018. With that, as I have reiterated, the opposition parties oppose the government business program.

### House divided on motion:

*Ayes, 44*

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

*Noes, 39*

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

**Motion agreed to.**

## MEMBERS STATEMENTS

### Box Hill electorate sporting facilities

**Mr CLARK** (Box Hill) (13:46) — Local sporting clubs across the Box Hill electorate need important upgrades to their facilities. To name just a few of many, the Box Hill Hawks at City Oval are seeking a major upgrade, including urgently needed separate changing rooms for women's VFL teams. They have a fully developed venue improvement plan and are truly

shovel-ready. Blackburn Football Club also have fully developed plans and need additional funding to ensure a facility that will serve the community well for generations to come. At Surrey Park the under-12 girls took out the premiership flag last year, but their clubrooms also need proper changing rooms for women and girls, and the Box Hill Rugby Union Football Club has traditionally hosted the state rugby finals, but their grounds and clubrooms need upgrading to meet growing pressures. With the government planning to give \$225 million to the AFL for Etihad Stadium instead of to grassroots sporting facilities, it is providing very little for the many needs of community sport. The government must at least ensure there is a fair and open process that provides opportunity for all community sporting clubs to apply, considers all applications on their merits and allocates funding based on needs and not on politics.

### Box Hill development

**Mr CLARK** — It is now more than two months since my colleague David Davis in the Council presented a petition of more than 3500 signatures calling for the Minister for Planning to act on inappropriate high-rise development in Box Hill. I delivered a similar petition in person to the minister on 29 March. However, to date the petitioners have not even received an acknowledgement of their petition, let alone any considered response or action. The minister needs to work with Whitehorse City Council to draw up, consult on and implement a proper new master plan for Box Hill. If we act now, we can have a Box Hill activities centre that will serve the community well for generations. If we fail to act now, central Box Hill risks ending up being a wilderness of towers and wind tunnels.

### Gerry Callahan

**Mr NOONAN** (Williamstown) (13:47) — I rise to pay tribute to one of Williamstown's most legendary and revered figures in Gerry Callahan, who passed away peacefully last month aged 89. Gerry Callahan was a player and coach and was without peer at the mighty Williamstown Football Club. His honours are extraordinary, including captaining five premierships in 1954, 1955, 1956, 1958 and 1959 as a player and serving as captain-coach in the 1958 and 1959 premiership years. Gerry played 171 games in total and won the club's best and fairest on two occasions, in 1951 and 1957. He also coached the club for a total of 10 years, from 1958 to 1967.

Gerry played for and coached the Victorian Football Association in interstate football and was selected at centre halfback and named captain of the Williamstown

team of the century. Williamstown's best and fairest is named the 'Gerry Callahan Medal' in honour of a bloke that most affectionately knew as 'the Monster'. On his passing, former president of the club Tony Hannebery summed Gerry Callahan up magnificently by saying:

He led by example and men followed.

He was a hulking man with a big heart and extraordinary charisma. I was so fortunate to meet Gerry and his wife, Peggy, at many club functions. They greeted me warmly and always made me feel good about my contribution to their beloved club. As the member for Williamstown I salute Gerry's contribution to our proud community. He will always be remembered as one Williamstown's favourite sons. Vale, Gerry Callahan.

### **Bairnsdale rail services**

**Mr T. BULL** (Gippsland East) (13:49) — Football fans from across East Gippsland who attended the recent Anzac Day game at the MCG and were returning home on the Bairnsdale service found themselves squashed like sardines when travellers heading back to the Latrobe Valley surged onto the train at Richmond. The train's conductor was powerless to prevent this. Clearly what is needed is to schedule the sprinter services to arrive ahead of the long-haul train, to have sufficient staff available to manage the passenger numbers and to broadcast clear public announcements. My office receives constant complaints about inadequate communication of service changes, especially from Southern Cross station, in light of the current level crossing removal project. It is time for the government to have greater consideration for long-haul passengers.

### **Hope Restart Centre**

**Mr T. BULL** — I was pleased to see that the state budget included funding for a residential drug and alcohol rehabilitation facility in Gippsland. Considering the Hope Restart proposal for Bairnsdale has already demonstrated that it can be built and be operational well ahead of any other proposal, I am disappointed the minister has not taken the next step to give it the green light. It is a stand-out, and these are the reasons why: the Hope Restart project has unrivalled community and philanthropic financial support; the commonwealth has pledged \$3 million for the project if it is built in Bairnsdale; it will leverage the expertise of the highly regarded Odyssey House; and the East Gippsland Shire Council has issued planning approval. All that it needs is for the one remaining tier of government to commit to it.

### **Warrnambool Racing Club**

**Mr T. BULL** — I wish to congratulate the Warrnambool Racing Club on the success of its May carnival held over three days last week, which I had the pleasure of attending. It was great to catch up with the club members, the greyhound club members and also the Terang Harness Racing Club members.

### **Broadmeadows electorate employment**

**Mr McGUIRE** (Broadmeadows) (13:50) — About 50 new jobs will soon be available in Broadmeadows. The world's highest selling food manufacturer, Nestlé, will expand its production range at its plant in Campbellfield, which has operated for more than half a century. A new medicated lozenge production line will within months produce Quick-Eze, Butter-Menthols and Soothers, adding to confectionery lines including Smarties, Kit Kats and Violet Crumbles. Permanent production operator positions will be available, and I will inform the Minister for Industry and Employment to alert ex-auto workers, especially from the nearby Ford Motor Company, to these opportunities. This will be done in my role not only as the MP for Broadmeadows but also as chair of the Broadmeadows Revitalisation Board, given that Nestlé already employs more than 350 people at its factory in Campbellfield. I have also discussed with Nestlé how it might play a role in the future with the development of a large number of small and medium-sized food manufacturing companies throughout Melbourne's north to help increase local jobs for local people.

### **Olivia Newton-John Cancer Wellness and Research Centre**

**Mr McGUIRE** — I was also delighted today to join the Premier and the Minister for Health for the announcement that more Victorian cancer patients will be able to access the world's best game-changing technology at the Olivia Newton-John Cancer Wellness and Research Centre to target and treat this deadly disease. The \$18 million funding boost will help fast-track research and treatments. It will be a lifesaver and make a real difference for hard-to-treat cancers with poor survival rates, such as brain, head and neck, pancreatic and liver cancers.

### **Mornington Peninsula planning**

**Mr MORRIS** (Mornington) (13:52) — I rise this afternoon to congratulate the Mornington Peninsula shire on the strong campaign they have launched against this government's reckless disregard for our peninsula, its disregard for the amenity of peninsula

residents and its disregard for the enjoyment the peninsula gives to the many thousands of people that visit each and every year. The villages and towns of the peninsula are under threat from as-of-right 11-metre height limits and a three-storey housing policy with no advertising and no opportunity for community input.

On 22 March the mayor launched a campaign to reverse what he termed the ‘three-storey McMansion threat to Mornington Peninsula villages’. He was right to do so because good planning, even planning that is undertaken over decades, can be overturned by stupid decisions in the blink of an eye. For decades there was bipartisan agreement on appropriate development for the peninsula, but that agreement was lost when Labor decided that Melbourne 2030-style policies should apply across the board. In government the Coalition reversed the worst excesses of this flawed scheme and put in place the *Mornington Peninsula Localised Planning Statement*. Yes, damage had been done, but the situation was a long way from irretrievable. Unfortunately in a little over three years Labor has undone most of that good work.

On 8 June last year the opposition announced that if elected to government in 2018, it would restore the residential zones and restore the protections that Labor has stripped away. There is a clear choice: the Liberal Party will return the sensible controls removed by amendment VC110; under Labor we will see the unique character and livability of the peninsula overrun by urban development and lost forever.

### Dandenong South roads

**Ms WILLIAMS** (Dandenong) (13:53) — I have spoken many times in this place about the congestion that exists in Dandenong South. Dandenong South is the largest manufacturing precinct in the country, accessed by over 45 000 vehicles every day, and it is routinely brought to a standstill by congestion and a lack of access options over the Cranbourne railway line. The Abbotts Road level crossing is going — thank God for that — and now, thanks to the Treasurer and the Minister for Roads and Road Safety, a major upgrade to connect Pound Road West and Remington Drive with a four-lane road and overpass is on its way. Let me tell you, for our business community in Dandenong South and their workers this is huge.

When I was elected in 2014, the Committee for Dandenong, the City of Greater Dandenong and local industry leaders spoke to me about the desperate need for upgrades to Dandenong South roads. They particularly spoke about the need for a road crossing over the railway line to connect Remington Drive with

Pound Road West, a connection point that was always meant to be there but was never quite arrived at. I promised I would do all that I could to ensure that the project was delivered, and I have been working ever since to make this overpass a reality. It has been the subject of many discussions with the Premier, the Treasurer and the Minister for Roads and Road Safety, and I am so proud that we can officially say that the Andrews government is getting it done! You see, this is not just a bridge. It will transform the precinct. It is about local people getting to and from work faster, it is about slashing congestion and boosting productivity. Ultimately this is not just a bridge; this is about jobs.

### Vermont Secondary College

**Mr ANGUS** (Forest Hill) (13:55) — Last Wednesday I was pleased to attend the Vermont Secondary College open night. As part of the night, I was delighted to participate in the opening of the college’s new maths and science wing. This \$2.7 million project was funded by the previous coalition government in the 2014–15 budget. It comprises dedicated physics, chemistry and biology laboratories, a science preparation area, two general purpose classrooms and a staff room. I congratulate all those involved in this fantastic project, in particular college principal Tony Jacobs and assistant principal Mike Stevens, as well as the builders and architects responsible for the great outcome. This building will serve the needs of Vermont Secondary College students for many years to come.

### Anzac Day

**Mr ANGUS** — During April I had the honour of attending numerous Anzac Day commemoration services and laying wreaths on behalf of residents of the Forest Hill electorate. I congratulate the various organisations who organised these services, including the Rotary clubs of Monash and Whitehorse, the RSLs of Waverley and Blackburn, and the residents and staff from the Highvale Retirement Village. As always, these services provided a fitting opportunity to remember the service of all veterans, both past and present.

### Electorate office budgets

**Mr ANGUS** — The recently tabled Ombudsman’s report entitled *Investigation of a Matter Referred from the Legislative Council on 25 November 2015* provides a detailed analysis of the systemic rorting undertaken by the Labor Party in the lead-up to the 2014 election. The comment in the report that says there are gaps in the evidence of which Parliament should be aware clearly shows that more work must be done to get to the

bottom of the extent of the systemic sorting undertaken by Labor prior to the 2014 election. On page 12 of the report there is a list of the 23 current and former Labor MPs that have been revealed as being involved in this scheme to date. The total amount identified so far as being sorted is noted on page 12 as being \$387 842, but in all likelihood —

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER** — Time!

### **Anzac Day**

**Ms SPENCE** (Yuroke) (13:57) — It was my honour to attend the 2018 Anzac Day service in Craigieburn and to lay a wreath on behalf of the government of Victoria. I joined more than 2000 of my local residents at ANZAC Park to commemorate this sacred day. For the first time, the Craigieburn War Memorial and Remembrance Committee (CWMRC) hosted two services, adding a dawn service to complement the already popular 10.00 a.m. service. The response from the community was tremendous, with over 1000 people attending the inaugural dawn service.

I would like to extend a heartfelt thanks to Kevin O'Callaghan, ESM, and the members of the CWMRC who contributed countless hours to ensure the success of the two services. I would also like to congratulate Kevin on being a recipient of an Anzac of the Year Award from the RSL. The RSL offer up to seven of these prestigious awards each year. This year there were only two, and he is one of only two recipients nationally.

As always, the response from other community organisations was sensational, with participation from the emergency services, churches, community groups and schools. It was inspiring to see so many young people not only attend the service but also actively participate in it. I would like to acknowledge the singers, including Lyla Digrazia from Mount Ridley College, Chelsea Sharp from Craigieburn Secondary College and Lynda Chu-Shing. I would also like to acknowledge both Joseph Marasigan and Molly Robinson from Aitken College, who participated in the service by doing a reading. Finally, the loudest applause of the day was rightfully reserved for when local World War II veteran Robert Stokes laid a wreath on behalf of veterans. It was an honour to see that. Once again, thanks to all who made this commemoration possible and so special. Lest we forget.

### **Western Victoria public transport**

**Ms KEALY** (Lowan) (13:58) — Today I experienced firsthand the frustration of many western Victorians who are fed up with poor public transport

under this city-centric Labor government. It took over 5 hours to travel 300 kilometres from Horsham to Melbourne on V/Line, including a 50-minute wait for a connecting train at Ballarat. I finally arrived in Melbourne 17 minutes late.

Labor's Minister for Public Transport has stated that all passengers deserve reliable and punctual services no matter where they live. My experience on V/Line services in western Victoria could not be described as reliable or punctual. When it comes to public transport in western Victoria, all we have seen from Labor are longer travel times, cancelled services and terrible connecting services due to botched timetable changes. Unlike The Nationals, Labor have no plan to bring back passenger rail for western Victoria region, with Labor's budget badly failing western Victoria yet again. Only The Nationals will deliver a better deal on public transport for western Victoria.

### **Borong Highway road safety**

**Ms KEALY** — I have been inundated with complaints from constituents deeply concerned by the latest botched rollout of centre-line rumble strips on narrow and crumbling country roads. Trucks are forced to drive up the centre of the road along the Borong Highway between Dimboola and Warracknabeal because the sides of the road are so badly damaged that trucks simply do not fit between the crumbling edge and the rumble strips. I have also had reports of rumble strips flying off the road when struck by a vehicle and causing damage to other vehicles. Only a Labor road safety initiative would force heavy vehicle drivers either off the road or to drive up the centre of the road and cause vehicle damage. A better solution would be to fix the roads — something that seems totally lost on Labor. I ask the minister to immediately halt the rollout of rumble strips until a full investigation has taken place.

### **Dale Russell**

**Ms KEALY** — Congratulations and thank you to Dale Russell for 32 years of dedicated service to the Country Fire Authority, including 20 years as district 17 operations manager. Thank you, Dale, for your outstanding service to the community and to fire services. Enjoy your retirement.

### **Richard Bastow**

**Ms KILKENNY** (Carrum) (14:00) — For so many people Richard Bastow was a fixture at Seaford beach. Nearly every morning, until recently, Richard could be seen at Seaford beach having a chat with locals, picking up rubbish along the beach, wandering along Seaford

pier or just sitting on the bench near the pier with his good friend and local artist Clive Sinclair. We all knew him as Richard, the grey-haired, behatted man in his 80s who was there to greet us each morning and only too happy to have a chat, especially about how lucky we are to live in this beautiful part of the world.

Richard passed away recently. His absence is now a really stark reminder of the kind of presence he had in our community. Every place has a sense of community, but the strength of that community depends on the people within it and the genuine connections they foster. In this case the connection was Richard. Indeed what so many of us now have in common and what so many of us share are our interactions with Richard, the older, softly spoken gentleman who adored Seaford beach and our beautiful Seaford pier.

We have organised a beach clean-up and get-together to celebrate Richard's contribution to our local community. Most of us, I dare say, will be meeting for the first time, but what we all share is our friendship with Richard and our wonderful memories of a beach treasure. Whilst Richard will not see the restoration of Seaford pier, which will take place later this year, I think it will be very fitting to acknowledge Richard when we reopen the pier to the public.

### **Anzac Day**

**Mr NARDELLA** (Melton) (14:01) — Today I want to thank Mayor Paul Tatchell of the Moorabool council, the family of Private William Valrent Cole of the 23rd battalion of the First Australian Imperial Force, the Bacchus March Community Bank branch of Bendigo Bank, Rotary and the RSL for organising the unveiling of the People's Flag, a World War I red ensign, which is recognised as an Australian war memorial, in the community hall on Anzac Day. This piece of history is now displayed for all to see and reflect upon.

I also want to thank everyone that organised the local RSL events for Anzac Day, especially the Coimadai Avenue of Honour Restoration Association, which holds its day at the Lake Merrimu memorial. It was attended by many local people, including Coimadai Primary School students. Thank you to Cherrison Lawton, David Childs and Bruce Lawton from the Bacchus March RSL along with the Coimadai Avenue of Honour Restoration Association members and volunteers, including Ken McDonald, who is the chair, Bruce Hudson, Rick Cassar, Susan McDonald, Heather Rogers, Edna Lebner, Beryl Ham, Glenys Kay, Bernice Clarke, Kathy Cairns, Mandy McDonald, Tim Feetham, Braden McDonald and Doug Lebner. They put together the event on Anzac Day. These people,

along with the community, have, from scratch, built the memorial to recognise our fallen soldiers. I really do congratulate them for the continuing hard work they all put in for Anzac Day and beyond.

### **Anzac Day**

**Mr PEARSON** (Essendon) (14:03) — I was delighted to recently join Andrew Seymon, president of Flemington Kensington RSL, for Anzac Day and for the laying of the wreath at the dawn service. Andrew Seymon does a fantastic job supporting veterans in my community, and it was a truly wonderful service.

### **Rosa and Nick Rotunno**

**Mr PEARSON** — I was delighted to attend the early Mother's Day lunch yesterday hosted by the Italian Seniors of Ascot Vale. There were over 150 people who attended this great event. A big thankyou to Rosa and Nick Rotunno, who hosted the lunch. You are a truly formidable team. At every one of these events, you can be sure that Rosa and Nick will be working tirelessly on behalf of the community. To you both, I say thank you for everything that you do for your community.

### **African-Australian community**

**Mr PEARSON** — I was really pleased and delighted that in last Tuesday's state budget we saw funding available to implement the African action plan. It is so important that we ensure the various African communities are not left behind. The plan has been carefully co-designed with the communities and will play a critical role in providing real opportunities for members of our African-Australian communities. We need to ensure that a child born today has the same opportunities regardless of the colour of their skin, the God they worship or the community they live in.

### **Ascot Vale Primary School**

**Mr PEARSON** — I was pleased to attend Ascot Vale Primary School yesterday, when the school opened its new sensory garden funded by the Andrews Labor government. Sue Osborne is the principal of this great school, and she does a fantastic job.

### **Public housing**

**Mr PEARSON** — The federal member for Melbourne, Adam Bandt, continues to oppose the redevelopment of the public housing estates in my community. My community needs modern public housing in a mixed community. Keeping public

housing tenants in obsolete, inefficient public housing is not the solution.

### Energy Compare

**Mrs FYFFE** (Evelyn) (14:04) — The Andrews Labor government has offered every Victorian household \$50 if they go onto the Energy Compare website between 1 July and 31 December this year. This is all well and good if you have a computer or access to one, but what provisions are being made for those households in parts of Evelyn, which number up to 15 per cent, that do not have, for various reasons, a home computer, access to one or anyone to help them? Will they just miss out on the \$50?

### Killara Road–Maroondah Highway, Coldstream

**Mrs FYFFE** — The Andrews Labor government and VicRoads are again ignoring the calls of the Coldstream community and the Coldstream Country Fire Authority brigade for lights to be installed at the intersection of Killara Road and Maroondah Highway. I have called for action on numerous occasions both by letter and in this place. The increase in tourism traffic and heavy vehicle traffic makes it dangerous for motorists and the CFA. Even with their lights on, the CFA are finding that they are delayed by very valuable minutes trying to exit onto Killara Road.

Mark Varmalis, Yarra Ranges council environment and engineering director, has said that council has spent years putting requests in and pushing for an upgrade, so I was very pleased that the hardworking Liberal candidate for Evelyn, Bridget Vallance, and the shadow minister for roads and infrastructure met with a number of residents recently at the intersection and have promised to work with the community to get this resolved.

### McKinnon Secondary College

**Mr STAIKOS** (Bentleigh) (14:05) — I had the pleasure recently of seeing McKinnon Secondary College's senior school play, *Jasper Jones*. Admittedly I had not read the book and therefore did not quite know what to expect. It is a story set in a small Western Australian town against the backdrop of the Vietnam War. Anyone who is familiar with the story would know that it covers some pretty heavy themes, which were handled brilliantly by the students. In fact the program read:

Warning

This production contains mature themes and language which some may find disturbing. Recommended for those over the age of 15 years.

So I just made it in.

Congratulations to director Carly Thurgood and assistant director Tahli Edwards along with the cast: Asker Hohwy-Barclay, Lucas Banim, Chelsea Parish, Helena Manoussios, Rony Olesh, Zoe Manning, Jordan Kellaway, Phoenix Loquet, Eli Schwedes, Gabby Etlis, Kate Collier, Cailyn Harris, Anna Rhind, Minh Anh Go, Eriks Stepanuks, Keelan Armstrong, Chad Azicowitz, Jack Hodgson and Kiara Mizan. This production was totally student led, and each of them excelled. Within the space of a week, I went to three productions at three different local secondary schools, and I am incredibly proud of their creative talents. Well done, everyone.

### National Volunteer Week

**Ms STALEY** (Ripon) (14:07) — National Volunteer Week occurs from 21 to 27 May. As part of that I want to talk today about the Ripon volunteer awards, which I have now been running since 2015. I particularly want to pay tribute to three women to whom I have handed one of these awards recently because I think they embody a whole lot of what goes on around volunteering across Victoria and across Australia. Beth Wood is now 91 years old; she joined Save the Children when she was 19 years old. She has had a lifetime of helping children — an absolute lifetime. She was there with her family and her church, and she was overwhelmed to get an award. The way these awards work is that it is for their community to honour them. I turn up with the award, but it is really the group honouring the person. Another award recipient was Barb Adam. She has been the secretary of the Clunes and District Agricultural Society for over 20 years. That society exists because of her. Finally, Janet Egan has been involved with Maryborough basketball since 1968. This year's theme of National Volunteer Week is 'Give a little. Change a lot'. These three women absolutely embody that.

### Hurstbridge line level crossing removals

**Mr CARBINES** (Ivanhoe) (14:08) — I rise to congratulate the local community on their perseverance, support and hard work in seeing two level crossings removed on the Hurstbridge line and the reopening of train services last Friday. The \$395 million project has seen the level crossing removed at Lower Plenty Road, over which some 25 000 cars a day travel. The Grange

Road level crossing at Alphington has also been removed, over which 17 000 cars a day travel. A big part of this project was also clearing the bottleneck between Heidelberg and Rosanna, which we campaigned for long and hard. It was a \$140 million project in its own right.

I want to thank the 1000-odd workers who worked through that six-week construction blitz. They included people from the motor vehicle industry transition workforce who have found employment on our projects. I also thank the Rosanna Village traders. I thank all those construction workers who, day and night, took the time to engage with the community and explain the work that they were doing — they are proud of the job that they did — but also acknowledge the perseverance of the local community.

We are not done yet; there are lots of civil works and rats-and-mice jobs to complete. We will do that in good faith, but it was exciting to be back on the train and knowing there will be two extra peak-hour services in the new timetable from August. This is transforming the Hurstbridge line for commuters in the north-east. This will add value to people's commute and value to our communities for many decades to come. Congratulations one and all.

### Northcote electorate schools

**Ms THORPE** (Northcote) (14:10) — Today I would like to speak about school funding in my electorate of Northcote. I have called on the government to honour the funding promises it made to schools in Northcote, Alphington, Thornbury and Preston during the by-election. I am very pleased to see this got results in the 2018–19 budget, but there is still more to be done. Wales Street Primary School has been completely ignored so far, despite the school having a collapsing roof; Thornbury Primary School is in desperate need of upgrades to its aged 1920s buildings and playgrounds; and Westgarth Primary School is bursting at the seams. Northcote and Thornbury high schools need long-term investment to finally do away with the portables and get the quality school buildings and sports facilities they deserve. There are also asbestos problems remaining in many of our schools. I will keep advocating for these and other schools in my electorate to ensure we get the quality education facilities our children deserve.

### Mount Clear College

**Mr HOWARD** (Buninyong) (14:11) — It was fantastic to have the Premier and Deputy Premier visit Mount Clear College to announce \$3 million to

complete the second stage of the school's major upgrade. The Andrews Labor government has already funded a \$2.42 million modernisation of the school's technology wing, which is well underway. This rebuild will feature specially designed spaces for metalwork and woodwork, robotics, mechanics, manufacturing, 3D printing, design, fabric and home economics, and it is supporting local jobs with Nicholson Construction delivering the upgrade. Mount Clear College is a terrific school led by principal Lynita Taylor and supported by other fantastic staff and students who have a clear vision for the school.

Built in the 1970s Mount Clear College featured a very modern design for its time. However, having operated for over 40 years now, some of the facilities clearly need upgrading and renewing. The modernisation will follow on from earlier works to rebuild science classrooms and other learning spaces and add to the earth science centre and language centre provided by previous Labor governments. The new works will make what is already a great school even better, ensuring all students at the school can enjoy modern, flexible learning spaces where they will gain the skills they need to keep pace with advances in technology, preparing them for the future.

Under the Andrews Labor government over \$21 million has already been invested in upgrading secondary schools in the Buninyong electorate, delivering facilities that will inspire students to achieve their best.

### Bass Valley Primary School

**Mr PAYNTER** (Bass) (14:12) — On 16 April this year the Premier came down to Bass Valley Primary School and with great fanfare announced that there would be \$80 000 in funding for new electronic speed zone lights outside of the school. Somehow he had planned to put them in between the primary school and the new preschool adjacent to the primary school. I might add that an upper house member in the region said that bringing in a 40-kilometre limit and new flashing speed signs is what the community really needed.

The problem with all that is that they already have electronic speed signs. I would have thought that politics 101 would dictate that the Premier and also his local government representatives need to actually get to know their community. They do not need new electronic speed signs; they have already got the speed signs. What the community has called for and what I have called on VicRoads to do many, many times is for the speed limit to be reduced. Quite simply the

electronic speed sign needs to be plugged into a computer and changed from 60 to 40 — quite simple — and the permanent signs that say 80 need to be changed to 60.

That is what the community have asked for. If you listen to the community, they will tell you what they need. These parents are dropping off their students in a dangerous situation. The school zone speed limit needs to be reduced, not new signs. Reduce the speed limits.

### **Emergency services workers**

**Mr RICHARDSON** (Mordialloc) (14:14) — I rise today to pay tribute to emergency services workers across my electorate and our community, be they paid career staff or volunteers, who each and every day put themselves before others to protect our community. Some of those very volunteer organisations received funding in the Victorian budget, including Aspendale and Mentone lifesaving clubs. It goes with our investment in previous budgets of funding for Edithvale Life Saving Club, Chelsea State Emergency Service unit and of course the soon-to-be-opened Edithvale fire brigade on Station Street, which is a fantastic volunteer brigade in our community.

It shows the values of this government — that we support our emergency services — and it is why we have invested in more paramedics and more police to keep our community safe. There are over 450 more paramedics coming into our community. Last budget saw a substantial increase in police resourcing — more than 3000 more police officers on the beat — and then in this budget we increased that funding to support their technology and support the work that they do each and every day. I was proud to meet some of those officers who started in my community recently. It is about the government getting on with supporting our emergency services, and I am proud that is being played out in my community in Mordialloc.

### **Meadowvale Drive–Pioneer Road, Grovedale, traffic lights**

**Mr KATOS** (South Barwon) (14:15) — I just want to put on the record the farcical situation of the set of lights at the corner of Meadowvale Drive and Pioneer Road, Grovedale, which were funded in the 2014 budget. It has taken this government four years to deliver one of our commitments. They have actually been ready since Christmas, yet it is now almost halfway through May and they still have not been switched on. People in Meadowvale Drive have not been able to turn right out of their own street for six months. This is absolutely ridiculous. VicRoads blames

Powercor; Powercor blames VicRoads. Will someone please take some responsibility and turn them on?

## **STATE TAXATION ACTS AMENDMENT BILL 2018**

### *Statement of compatibility*

### **Mr PALLAS (Treasurer) 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* (**Charter**), I make this Statement of Compatibility with respect to the State Taxation Acts Amendment Bill 2018.

In my opinion, the State Taxation Acts Amendment Bill 2018 (Bill), as introduced to the Legislative Assembly, is compatible with the human rights as set out in the Charter. I base my opinion on the reasons outlined in this Statement.

#### **Overview**

The Bill introduces a number of budget measures that operate beneficially for Victorian taxpayers, and it makes technical amendments to the *Duties Act 2000* (**Duties Act**) and the *Unclaimed Money Act 2008*.

The majority of the amendments made by the Bill do not engage the human rights listed in the Charter because they operate beneficially in relation to natural persons. However, the following amendments to the Duties Act have been identified as engaging human rights contained in the Charter:

revising the duty exemption that applies to property vested in an apparent purchaser to ensure that it applies only when the real purchaser has paid, or will pay, all of the purchase money; and

clarifying that the acquisition of a partnership interest in a partnership that holds land is liable to duty.

#### **Human rights issues**

##### **Right to property: Section 20**

Section 20 of the Charter provides that a person must not be deprived of his or her property other than in accordance with law. This right is not limited where there is a law that authorises a deprivation of property, and that law is adequately accessible, clear and certain, and sufficiently precise to enable a person to regulate their conduct.

*Duties Act amendment — Exemption from duty for real purchasers.*

Property is sometimes vested in an ‘apparent purchaser’ to hold on trust on behalf of the ‘real purchaser’ who has provided the purchase money for the property. Accordingly, where duty was paid on the initial vesting of the property in the ‘apparent purchaser’, then no further duty will be paid on the subsequent transfer of that property to the ‘real purchaser’. The purpose of the exemption is to avoid double duty being imposed where a transfer occurs without any change to the beneficial ownership of the property. The exemption is intended to apply only where the real purchaser has made all

contributions to the purchase price paid for the property or to the loan financing the purchasing.

However, the exemption as set out in the Duties Act in its current form can be applied more broadly to situations where the real purchaser has in fact made no contribution to the purchase price (for example where a third party has provided the purchase money in the interests of, or as a representative of, the real purchaser).

The Bill therefore amends the provision of the Duties Act that provides the exemption to ensure that it applies only where the real purchaser has paid, or will pay, all of the purchase money in relation to the property subject to the transfer. The amendment restores the intended policy outcome that the exemption applies only where the real purchaser actually provides all funding for the purchase of the property subject to the transfer.

The amendment may therefore engage the right to property to the extent that the exemption from duty will no longer apply to a real purchaser transferee who has made no actual contribution to the purchase price either directly or indirectly (via mortgage repayments). However, the amendment is not an arbitrary deprivation of that natural person's property; the amendment ensures that the exemption is precisely formulated to ensure that tax is paid by transferees who have not made a direct or indirect contribution to the purchase price of the property being transferred, and that exemption from duty is enjoyed only by those transferees who have made direct or indirect contributions to the purchase of the property. This amendment constitutes an integrity measure to ensure that the exemption operates fairly and reflects the exemption's intended policy outcome.

*Duties Act amendment — Acquisition of a partnership interest.*

The Duties Act charges duty on changes in beneficial ownership of dutiable property. Until very recently, a partner in a partnership was considered to have a beneficial interest in each asset of the partnership, which meant that when a person acquired a share in a partnership that person was considered to have acquired a beneficial interest in the partnership assets commensurate with the share in the partnership acquired. If the partnership held land, then duty would be payable on the basis that there had been an acquisition of a beneficial interest in that land, or a change in the beneficial ownership of that land. However, as a result of litigation relating to an assessment of duty by the Commissioner of State Revenue in relation to a change in beneficial ownership of land flowing from the acquisition of a partnership interest, the Court of Appeal has found that the parties who acquired a partnership interest did not acquire a beneficial interest in land held by the partnership. Rather, all that was acquired was a right to a proportion of the surplus assets of the partnership on a future dissolution of that partnership. This characterisation meant that nil duty was payable on the arrangement.

The Bill therefore amends the Duties Act to bring to duty acquisitions of partnership interests in order to restore the position as it was understood prior to the recent decision by the Court of Appeal. This means that a person who acquires an interest in a partnership will be deemed to have acquired a beneficial interest in any land held by the partnership commensurate with the share in the partnership acquired, and they will therefore be liable for duty on the acquisition of that beneficial interest in the land.

The amendment will therefore engage the right to property to the extent that duty will be payable by natural persons who make such acquisitions. However, the amendments are not an arbitrary deprivation of a natural person's property; the imposition of duty in these circumstances is precisely formulated to ensure that tax is paid on indirect acquisitions of interests in dutiable property.

Each of these amendments to the Duties Act will be administered under the *Taxation Administration Act 1997*, which establishes the Commissioner's powers and obligations, taxpayers' rights of objection, review, appeal and recovery, and provides a framework to protect the confidentiality of tax related information. Therefore affected taxpayers will not be deprived of their property other than in accordance with the law. To the extent that there is any limitation on the right to property with respect to these amendments, that limitation is reasonable and justified.

For the above reasons, in my opinion the provisions of the Bill are compatible with the right to property in section 20 of the Charter.

Tim Pallas, MP  
Treasurer

*Second reading*

**Mr PALLAS** (Treasurer) (14:18) — I move:

That this bill be now read a second time.

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

I am pleased to introduce this bill which amends Victoria's taxation and revenue laws including the *Duties Act 2000*, *Payroll Tax 2007* and the *Unclaimed Money Act 2008*.

This bill delivers Budget initiatives that will continue the Victorian Government's commitment to delivering greater benefits to regional Victoria. The bill also makes a number of other amendments to Victoria's taxation and revenue laws to ensure they continue to reflect the underlying policy intent and are easy to apply and understand by correcting drafting defects and closing loopholes.

As part of the 2017 State Budget, the Andrews Labor Government recognised the importance of allowing businesses to grow and to have a positive impact on employment, especially in regional Victoria by reducing the payroll tax rate paid by regional Victorian businesses by 25 percent to a rate of 3.65 per cent. The 2018 State Budget reduces the payroll tax rate for regional Victorian businesses even further to 2.425 per cent, ensuring the lowest payroll tax rate anywhere in Australia. This rate will continue to apply to regional Victorian businesses where at least 85 per cent of payroll goes to regional employees. Whilst the Andrews Labor Government has already overseen strong regional employment growth, this measure will encourage even more regional employment opportunities.

The Government is a strong supporter of the Victorian agricultural sector. To this effect, this bill will deliver even more important benefits to regional Victoria by supporting our farming communities by increasing the duty exemption threshold for the young farmer duty exemption from \$300,000 to \$600,000. This change aligns the young farmer

duty exemption threshold with the exemption threshold for the first home buyer duty exemption. This will increase the maximum value of the duty exemption from \$13,070 to \$31,070. A duty concession will apply for purchases valued between \$600,001 and \$750,000.

The Government will introduce an exemption from the first home buyer duty concession/exemption residency requirement for Australian Defence Force personnel. Currently, an applicant for the first home buyer duty concession/exemption must reside in their property for a continuous period of 12 months commencing within 12 months of becoming entitled to possession of the purchased property. Whilst an applicant can apply for a variation to the residency requirement, due to the nature of employment of Australian Defence Force personnel, there are instances where they will be unable to do so within the required time frame or may not be able to fulfil the varied residency requirement due to a work assignment. These changes will align the first home buyer duty concession/exemption policy with the policy for the First Home Owner Grant for Australian Defence Force personnel by providing the legislative basis to exempt Australian Defence Force personnel from needing to meet the residency requirement at all.

The bill introduces an exemption from the foreign purchaser additional duty for foreign purchasers that jointly purchase a principal place of residence with their spouse/domestic partner who is not considered a foreign natural person (e.g. is an Australian citizen). One of the objectives of the foreign purchaser additional duty provisions was to ensure a fair and equitable contribution is made to state revenue by foreign buyers who otherwise may not pay tax in Victoria. This exemption recognises that in some circumstances temporary residents, who are foreign purchasers and who jointly purchase a home with their Australian spouse/domestic partner, have been living and working in Victoria for a number of years, meaning that they have been making a contribution to the Victorian economy and are sharing in the tax burden. Importantly, for the exemption to apply, the property must be the principal place of residence of the foreign purchaser and their spouse or domestic partner.

The bill also extends the duty exemption relating to certain equity release products. These are financial products that enable existing homeowners, usually older Australians, to obtain a current financial benefit (i.e. a lump sum payment or an income stream) from a lender by trading equity in their home. The exemption from duty currently only applies to equity release products that are offered by financial institutions, which are subject to various prudential standards and consumer protection regimes. The duty exemption is being expanded to encompass a larger range of 'permitted providers', which will include a body regulated by the Australian Prudential Regulation Authority. This will ensure that these entities are subject to the same or similar prudential oversight as financial institutions. The expanded exemption will encourage new participants/capital providers to provide equity release programs, thereby supporting more senior Victorians to fund their retirement lifestyle, particularly those that may be asset rich but cash poor.

This bill also makes a number of amendments aimed at improving the general operation of Victoria's revenue laws by correcting technical or drafting defects, removing anomalies and inconsistencies and addressing unintended outcomes.

The *Duties Act 2000* (Duties Act) charges duty on a transfer, or change in beneficial ownership, of dutiable property (e.g. land or an interest in land), unless an exemption applies. To this effect an acquisition of a partnership interest where the partnership held land was considered to be a dutiable transaction. However, the Court of Appeal recently handed down a decision in *Commissioner of State Revenue v Danvest Pty Ltd [2017] VSCA 382 (Danvest)* that had the effect of overturning this long-held taxation position. The consequence of the *Danvest* decision is that an acquisition of a partnership interest in a partnership that holds land (e.g. via a nominee) is no longer liable to duty in Victoria.

The *Danvest* decision can also give rise to other inconsistent and unintended taxation outcomes by making certain partnership transactions liable to higher duty compared to before the decision and in some instances missing out on the corporate reconstruction exemption. This bill makes the necessary amendments to restore the taxation position under the Duties Act to what it was understood to be before the *Danvest* decision and will ensure that Victoria's position remains aligned with all other jurisdictions.

This bill will also clarify the application of the duty exemption for transfers of real property between spouses and domestic partners where the transfer is their principal place of residence. Currently the exemption applies where the transfer is made for no consideration. Under the Duties Act, "consideration" can include all encumbrances, including a mortgage over the property that is the subject of the transfer. To ensure that the exemption continues to operate as intended, the bill makes an amendment to allow the exemption to apply when a mortgage is being assumed for the subject property by the transferee, being one of the spouses/domestic partners.

The bill makes technical amendments to the apparent purchaser duty exemption to ensure that it operates as intended. Property is sometimes vested in an 'apparent purchaser' to hold on trust on behalf of a 'real purchaser' who has provided the purchase money for the property. Where duty was paid on the initial vesting of the property in the 'apparent purchaser', then no further duty is payable upon the subsequent transfer of that property to the 'real purchaser'. The intention is to avoid double duty being imposed in situations where a transfer takes place without any change to the beneficial ownership of the property. The amendments made by this bill will ensure that the exemption continues to only apply to exempt a transfer where the Commissioner of State Revenue is satisfied that the real purchaser has paid all of the purchase money, including the deposit and all mortgage repayments.

A second amendment to the apparent purchaser exemption will ensure that where a real purchaser ultimately acquires a greater interest in the property than their beneficial interest under the trust, duty will only be payable to the extent of the interest acquired that is greater than the beneficial interest under the trust.

The bill will also ensure that the interests of all foreign persons and their associates are to be taken into account when determining whether a foreign person has a controlling interest in a corporation or substantial interest in a trust for the purposes of the foreign purchaser additional duty. For example, this can include where the shareholders are foreign but not associated with each other. This amendment will maintain the integrity of the foreign purchaser additional duty

provisions by ensuring that entities that are majority foreign owned are charged foreign purchaser additional duty by aggregating the interests of all foreign persons (whether they are associated or not).

The Duties Act provides for a concession from duty for a transfer of property in certain circumstances. For example, under the landholder duty provisions, the duty charged on a relevant acquisition in a *public* landholder is 10% of the duty otherwise payable. Similarly and consistent with this concession, where a conversion of a private entity to a *public* entity occurs, landholder duty is charged at 10% of the duty otherwise payable. The intention of the foreign purchaser additional duty provisions is that where there is a concession from duty for a transfer of property, the concession does not apply to the calculation of foreign purchaser additional duty. That is, the concession only applies to the general rate of duty. Accordingly, the landholder duty provisions currently provide that the concession relating to a relevant acquisition in a *public* landholder does not apply to the calculation of the foreign purchaser additional duty chargeable. However, currently there is no equivalent exclusion in relation to the conversion provisions. The bill will make an amendment to clearly reflect the intention of the foreign purchaser additional duty provisions, so that the concession in the conversion provisions does not apply to the calculation of foreign purchaser additional duty.

Under the *Unclaimed Money Act 2008* (Unclaimed Money Act), the Registrar of Unclaimed Money may pay a claim upon being satisfied that the claimant is the legal owner of unclaimed money. A significant number of owners of unclaimed money listed on the Unclaimed Money Register are deceased estates. Currently, unclaimed money applications lodged by executors and administrators of deceased estates for which grants of probate or letters of administration have been sealed (or re-sealed) by Supreme Courts of other Australian States or Territories are not able to be accepted in Victoria. This bill will make amendments that will recognise executors and administrators of deceased estates as representing those owners of unclaimed money under the Unclaimed Money Act, where a grant has been sealed or re-sealed by a Supreme Court of any Australian jurisdiction.

The passage of this bill will ensure that regional Victoria will continue to benefit from the Andrews Labor Government through the further reduction in the payroll tax rate for regional employers and the increase in the young farmer duty exemption threshold. Other Budget measures contained in this bill will provide valuable support to Australian Defence Force personnel who are first home buyers, by allowing them to fulfil their deployment obligations without it impacting on their eligibility for a duty concession/exemption. Finally, this bill expands a number of tax exemptions and makes a number of other amendments to Victoria's taxation and revenue laws to ensure they continue to reflect the underlying policy intent and improve the operation of Victoria's tax system.

I commend the Bill to the house.

**Debate adjourned on motion of Mr M. O'BRIEN (Malvern).**

**Debate adjourned until Tuesday, 22 May.**

## APPROPRIATION (2018–2019) BILL 2018

*Second reading*

**Debate resumed from 1 May; motion of Mr PALLAS (Treasurer).**

**Mr M. O'BRIEN** (Malvern) (14:19) — I am pleased to rise to speak on the Appropriation (2018–2019) Bill 2018. Budgets are about choices. Budgets reflect the priorities and the values — in some ways they actually reflect the soul — of a government. What we see in Labor's budget is that Labor choose their mates over the vast majority of Victorians — Victorians who work hard, Victorians who find it harder to get to and from work, Victorians who find it harder to pay the household bills than they did before and Victorians who feel less safe now than they did four years ago.

This Premier and this government look after their mates with special deals. Big government, big unions and big business — that is what they care about. Everybody else is at the back of the queue. The happiest person in this state with this budget would have to be a United Firefighters Union member who has got shares in Etihad Stadium. This budget reflects a series of budget cons that makes this document about as believable as a Labor electorate officer's time sheet. This budget is based on a series of cons that makes it literally unbelievable, relying on a population Ponzi scheme that takes all the short-term revenue of population growth without any of the provision of infrastructure or services that is required. Labor has no plan for decentralisation — none. They rely on unsustainable population growth concentrated in Melbourne to generate short-term tax revenue. That is all this budget is built on. That is no way to run a budget, and it is no way to govern a state for this generation or for those that follow.

In George Orwell's book *Nineteen Eighty-Four* he coined the phrase 'doublethink' to mean the capacity to hold two mutually contradictory thoughts at the same time without acknowledging the contradiction. This is a budget that is based on doublethink.

This budget requires you to believe that private sector wages will strongly grow so that payroll tax will strongly grow. But it also requires you to believe that public sector wages will restrain so that expenses will restrain. It is an absolute joke. It is literally unbelievable. They want you to consider wages up for higher payroll tax but wages down to hold back expenses at the same time, in the same document. This

is a doublethink budget that literally relies on Orwellian deception to make its numbers appear to add up — or to put it in modern cricketing terms, this Treasurer is the Dave Warner of budget assumptions, not for his prowess with a bat but for his tampering skills.

We turn to the claims the government makes about this budget, and let us look at infrastructure. The government likes to boast about the size of its infrastructure spend, but what we see when we look at this document and at this government's track record is that they actually regard cost blowouts on infrastructure as a positive. Why spend \$9 billion on Melbourne Metro when you can build the exact same project for \$11 billion and say you are spending more money? Why say you are going to do level crossing removals for \$5 billion when you can do them for \$8.3 billion — the same number of level crossings, mind you — and claim it as a win?

Let us have a look at some of these other budget blowouts that this so-called record infrastructure spend relies on. Labor came to office claiming the West Gate tunnel was going to be a \$500 million project. It is now \$6.7 billion. You can look at the Victorian Heart Hospital. It was supposed to be \$150 million. Now it is \$543 million. You can look at the Hoddle Street upgrade — a promised cost of \$60 million, now \$109 million. Again no extra value, just pure cost blowouts, a waste of money and nothing for taxpayers at the end of the day. That is what we get from Labor.

Of course who could forget the greatest of all cost blowouts, the zero cost, which was the cost of ripping up the east–west link contracts, which turned out to be a \$1.3 billion cost to taxpayers. We all remember the contract was not worth the paper it was written on and it would not cost a dollar to rip it up. But \$1.3 billion later Victorians are still stuck in traffic. The end of the Eastern Freeway is worse than it has ever been, and this government only has a plan to make it even worse by building the north–east link before they fix the end of the Eastern Freeway by building the east–west link. It is absolutely ridiculous.

This government also likes to boast about its jobs. It will not tell you this: for 18 of the last 19 months Victorian unemployment has exceeded the national average. We have been worse than the rest of the country, as measured by the average, for 18 of the last 19 months. We lag behind New South Wales consistently, and why would that be? We are the highest taxing state in the country. We have got a higher cost of energy than New South Wales. We have got a higher cost of doing business. We have got more red tape. We have got more green tape. If you are a

business looking to set up shop in Australia and you are comparing a New South Wales government that actually welcomes business and a Labor government down here that wants to tax you and regulate you, of course you might look to go north. This government's record on jobs is absolutely nothing to be proud of. I would remind members opposite that when we were last in office, Victoria created more jobs than any state in the country because we know how to grow the economy and we know how to grow jobs.

Let us look at education. This government are great at playing politics with children's education. They fund schools based on margins, not on merit. We see no improvement in standards and no improvement in outcomes. If anything was iconic about this government's approach to state education in Victoria, it would be the proposal to establish an ice injecting room 37 metres from a state primary school. Nothing could better sum up Labor's commitment to ideology over the interests of our kids.

When it comes to training, there are a lot of pats on the back and spin about this budget's measures. How many more or how many fewer students are enrolled in government-funded courses since the Premier came to office? That is the test, because all Labor's spin and all Labor's rhetoric is exposed when that simple question is asked and answered. The answer is that there are 151 000 fewer students in government-supported training now than when Labor was elected. It is an absolute record of failure on the part of Labor, and all the spin doctoring and all the free TAFE courses cannot turn around that simple failure: 151 000 fewer young Victorians and older Victorians in training now compared to when those opposite came to office.

When we look at health in this budget, there is nothing for a new hospital in Warragul. The coalition knows there is a great need in Warragul for that new hospital. The coalition is serious, and it talks about decentralisation. That means providing infrastructure and services to people who live in regional cities and towns right across this state. Labor cannot find a dollar for a new Warragul hospital, but it can find \$225 million to give to the AFL to renovate Etihad Stadium. Labor can find funding for a new ballroom to host the Brownlow Medal but not a new operating room to save lives. That is their legacy, and that shows their values.

When we come to sport, as we exposed in question time today, this is a Labor government that provided \$225 million as a free kick to the AFL and Docklands harbourside land at an unknown cost because the Treasurer refused to answer the question. This is a huge free kick to the AFL, but if you are a community

football club, netball club, soccer club or hockey club, you may, if you are lucky, be able to take out a loan with interest that has to be repaid. Nothing could sum up more this government's appalling attitude towards the community. Nothing could sum up more this government's appalling attitude towards sucking up to the big end of town and letting the grassroots of the community suffer as a consequence.

It is almost worthwhile reviving Malcolm Turnbull's comments about Bill Shorten knocking knees with billionaires, because that is the way this government does business. If you are big business — if you are a company like Transurban, and you have made \$6 billion in revenue over the last three years but have paid not a dollar of corporate tax — Premier Andrews has got a deal for you. If you are the AFL — a multimillion-dollar profitable business that does not pay corporate tax — those opposite have got a deal for you. If you are the East Malvern Knights footy club, bad luck. That is the way this government does business.

Let us come to tax. It is hard to talk about tax in this budget without reminding the house of the solemn promise made by the Premier the night before the election.

*Honourable members interjecting.*

**Mr M. O'BRIEN** — I am glad you asked. It was on Channel 7 news on 28 November 2014. He was being interviewed out the front of this place by Peter Mitchell. This is the quote:

Peter Mitchell: Daniel Andrews, all the polls say that 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?

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

What a complete lie that turned out to be. We have seen not one, not two, but 12 new increased taxes and charges. We have seen the tripling of coal royalties which led to the closure of Hazelwood and which led to power prices going up. We have seen new stamp duty on off-the-plan purchases. We have seen the new so-called vacant home tax, which actually hits farmers who have got an apartment in Melbourne. We have got the new annual property valuations to increase land tax; new stamp duty on property transfer between spouses; the new Uber and taxi fares taxes; the new city access tax for the West Gate tunnel; the new point-of-consumption gambling tax; the new land tax, subsequently tripled for absentee owners; the new stamp duty surcharge, subsequently increased for foreign purchasers; and the increased fire services levy.

That does not even get onto the increases in the growth areas infrastructure contribution, the increase in property transfer fees or a whole range of other gouges that we have seen under this government.

There has been a \$6.2 billion increase in taxes since the election, a 35 per cent increase. I cannot think of too many people in this state, those who get their bills in and worry about paying them, who have seen a 35 per cent increase in their incomes over the last four years. But the Premier thinks Victorian taxpayers are a bottomless pit, and he just takes money out of them left, right and centre.

This all has a consequence, because Victoria is now clearly the highest taxing state in the country, based on state taxes as a ratio to gross state product. This is a government that genuinely believes it can spend Victorians' money better than Victorians can. It is arrogant, it is reckless, it is careless, it is wasteful. Well Premier, you have made Victoria the highest taxing state in Australia. That is not a badge of honour; that is a mark of shame.

Before we hear members opposite talk about their minor tweaks to payroll tax in the regions that will cost the budget a piddling \$40 million a year, let me remind the house that this Treasurer is taking out in payroll tax alone an extra billion dollars a year compared to when he was elected. Payroll tax is up by \$1 billion or 20 per cent; stamp duty is up by 60 per cent; land tax is up by 77 per cent. As I said before, this is a budget based on a population Ponzi scheme concentrated in Melbourne but relying on unsustainable growth in Melbourne without decentralisation.

Despite all these new taxes, despite the massive increase in GST that has been received under this government, the extra \$14 billion, despite all the money that has been flowing in from asset sales — including \$9.7 billion on the port of Melbourne, \$2.1 billion on selling off Victoria's share of Snowy Hydro, potentially \$2 billion on the land titles office — despite all that extra money, this budget sees an extraordinary increase in borrowings and debt. In 2016–17 Victoria's debt was \$15.7 billion. By 2021–22, in just five years, that debt doubles to \$31.4 billion. There have been record taxes, record GST, record asset sales and now there will be a doubling of debt in just five years. Who knows how much further it will go?

You might ask, 'Where has the money gone?'. While taxes have risen by \$6.2 billion, employee expenses have blown out by over \$7 billion in the same period. That is a 38 per cent increase in the public sector wage bill. Public sector wage policy under this government

basically involves ringing up the union and asking, 'How much do you want?'. We know this government lies about where the money goes. They claim it goes into frontline services, but the Victorian Public Sector Commission report tells us the truth. This government is presiding over a massive blowout in highly paid bureaucrat executives. There were 162 extra executives last year alone, a 23.4 per cent increase, with an average salary of over \$213 000 each. Under this Premier the proportion of executives to the rest of the public service is now the highest in recent history. The Premier is the fat cat's friend, there is no doubt about it.

But the trouble is that all the new authorities and all the new agencies created by this government, at great expense to taxpayers, are not improving the lives of Victorians. Despite Labor funding Public Transport Victoria, Transport for Victoria, VicTrack, Active Transport Victoria and the Level Crossing Removal Authority, the Premier still cannot get the trains to run on time.

You have to wonder about a budget forecast that assumes that after years and years and years of public sector wage blowouts, they will finally get religion, they will finally get budget discipline and they will keep those increases down to a reasonable level in the future. Unless medical science can create a backbone transplant for this Treasurer, there is no chance of that happening, and taxpayers as always will be the ones to pay the price.

There is a better way. This government's belief in bureaucracy is so enormous that it ripped up and destroyed one of the great agencies of this state that relied on private sector expertise to help Victoria achieve its goals. The Victorian Major Events Company (VMEC) was created by Joan Kirner, who appointed Ron Walker, former Liberal Lord Mayor and Liberal Party identity, as its inaugural chair. No doubt that was a decision that caused a lot of raised eyebrows on the Labor side. But the knowledge that we needed to encourage private sector expertise to put Victoria on the map, to bring in, attract and keep the major events that keep this state ticking over was understood by the former Labor government. It was maintained and expanded by the Kennett government. It not only survived but thrived under the Bracks government, the Brumby government, the Baillieu government and the Napthine government. This was a great body that did great things for this state.

When you look at what the VMEC achieved, it is hard to understand why anybody would not be supporting it. Look at some of the events the VMEC has brought to Victoria: the Australian Formula One Grand Prix,

White Night, Presidents Cup golf, Liverpool versus Melbourne Victory at AAMI Park, the Melbourne Winter Masterpieces series at the National Gallery of Victoria, the Grace Kelly exhibition at Bendigo, State of Origin rugby at the MCG, the Cadel Evans Great Ocean Road Race, *Wicked* and *The Book of Mormon*, just to name a few. Victoria is better off because of the VMEC, because we had people from the private sector and from the business world who were prepared to put their time, their effort, their contacts and their connections to work for the service of the state.

**Ms Asher** interjected.

**Mr M. O'BRIEN** — Indeed. The member for Broadmeadows's brother was a member of the VMEC. It was extremely bipartisan. But the Premier killed it off. He killed it off in favour of creating yet another government bureaucracy where the entrepreneurial spirit that underpinned the VMEC could be drained away. We have seen how that ended up when the VMEC was lost and Visit Victoria was created. When you cannot even keep the Logies in Melbourne you may as well just pack up and go home.

We have made it clear we will take a very different approach. We will re-engage and re-establish a revitalised Victorian major events company under a Liberal-Nationals government. Moreover, we will give a new VMEC a specific mandate to attract major events — major cultural events, major sporting events — to regional Victoria as part of our decentralisation agenda. We will make sure that Victorians the length and breadth of this state get the opportunity to see, to participate in and to work in the very best of what the world has to offer. We will make sure we get this done.

Labor's Treasurer said last week that of his four budgets this was the one of which he was most proud. I agree that in many respects it is a traditional Labor budget. We see over the four years taxes up 35 per cent, cost of living through the roof, debt doubling in just five years, public sector wage explosions, infrastructure cost blowouts and special deals for Labor mates. That does sum up what Labor is all about. In six months time this government will be in caretaker mode and the election campaign will be in full swing. Victorians will be asking themselves, 'Compared to four years ago, am I better off? Under Labor has my cost of living gone down or up? Has my trip to work become easier or harder? When I get home at night do I feel safer or less safe?'

These are the questions that will determine who forms the next government of Victoria, and with the Leader of the Opposition and our united team on this side of the

house we are giving Victorians a real choice. We offer Victorians a government that will be tough on crime, not because a focus group tells us to but because we believe in it. We will offer Victorians a government that will respect taxpayers and their money by taking as little of it as possible and using it carefully, not roting it to run our election campaigns. We offer Victorians a government that will be open for business, that will get our natural gas flowing again, that will get our traffic flowing again, that will get our trains working again and that will bring back the VMEC to get our major events crown back again. We offer Victorians a better alternative to the tired, incompetent and dishonest group of rorters that currently occupies the government benches. I am very optimistic that this will be the last budget that Victorians have to endure from the Andrews Labor government, and the sooner it ends the better off Victoria will be.

**Mr FOLEY** (Minister for Housing, Disability and Ageing) (14:42) — It gives me great pleasure to rise to speak on the Appropriation (2018–2019) Bill 2018. I will resist the temptation to take the honourable member for Malvern up on his suggestion as to how much better off the people of Victoria are after four years of hard work by the Andrews Labor government getting things done, particularly on the back of this most appropriate of budgets. This budget shows that we really are getting things done, that we are invested in the projects that our state needs and demands and, more importantly, that we are investing in people and communities so as to make sure that the quality of life of Victorians is improved. This budget continues our government's record investment, not just in more and better infrastructure and better quality services but indeed in transforming the skills and training of Victorians so as to make sure that in delivering those better services and in delivering that infrastructure they have a real investment in it — the most important of investments: jobs.

The honourable Minister for Industry and Employment, who is at the table, well and truly understands that this is a government that delivers jobs on the back of all of its programs, because that is what the Australian social contract is based on: that in return for a job and in return for support for employment you make a contribution to your community. I congratulate the honourable member here with me today for his outstanding leadership as part of this budget.

Amongst the rich array of pickings in this budget I wanted to focus particularly on a couple of corners in the portfolios that I have the honour to hold in this government. In particular I want to focus on mental health. I am proud that this budget almost doubles the

new investments that we have made over the previous budget and indeed the substantial increases that that in turn has built on mental health, be they our community-based consumers, families, carers and supporters all the way through to the acute end of the mental health spectrum. This budget shows that this is a government that is committed to supporting not just people with mental illness but addressing the drivers and causes of mental illness, be they alcohol and drug addiction, family violence or a whole range of other causes that lead to the sadly increasing rates that we see in mental health challenges, particularly amongst younger Victorians.

It is something that we have been working on for the entire term of this government. I wanted to give a particular shout-out to the member for Oakleigh, who chaired the Victorian government's 10-year mental health plan task force for over two years. This taskforce put together much of the public policy framework, including the groundbreaking suicide prevention work and a range of other measures that the honourable member for Oakleigh passionately led. He also delivered community support, stakeholder support and policy support.

When we came to government it was well and truly understood — as it was as recently as last night on *ABC News*, I noticed — that the mental health sector and particularly the community mental health sector was, to be frank, in tatters following the very unsuccessful, indeed botched, recommissioning of the community mental health sector that took place in 2014. That, in turn, was built on years of systematic underfunding of the sector. So this budget provides a rich array of support in the mental health area, and I would like to think important support, that will more than turn around a sector that is on its knees — it will take it to new heights.

To begin with there is the 9 per cent increase in this year alone in direct output funding for clinical mental health services, bringing that mental health service budget for 2018–19 to \$1.506 billion, as compared with \$1.38 billion last year; indeed it has grown under this government. There has been an application of the principle in the mental health funding and support in this budget that this government approaches service delivery as a key part of its mental health investment. That is why we have seen \$153.8 million of this record \$705 million investment allocated to continue the reform of community-based mental health services and deliver more intensive therapeutic services to those with the most severe mental illnesses.

I understand, particularly in the context of the national disability insurance scheme (NDIS) rollout, there is

some concern in the psychosocial field about how that is rolling out in our community. I understand those concerns, and we are committed to dealing with them, but this government's emphasis necessarily needs to be on dealing with the most acute cases and the most acute expressions of mental illness and trauma in our community whilst we do more across the whole ecology of mental health investment. That is why, as important as it is, our community mental health treatment continues to be at the core of that well-functioning, adaptable mental health system. This increased funding of \$153.8 million will be used to make sure that we are delivering to as many people as possible in as many different and better ways as possible in the community. I am pleased that stakeholders — whether they be the Australian Medical Association or a range of other stakeholder groups — have acknowledged that this support, particularly for outpatient services across the state, is an important achievement.

The next big mental health investment in this budget is our \$234.4 million response to the growth in demand that we are seeing across the sector. This speaks to all sorts of drivers that see more people prepared to deal with the stigma and discrimination that mental health continues to attract in our community. They are prepared to confront that and prepared to, on the back of that, step forward and deal with mental health challenges, given that one in two Victorians will have a mental health issue in the course of their life and for one in five of us that will be an acute mental health challenge. So this is about as mainstream a health and wellbeing challenge as you could get in our society. As those numbers continue to grow we must make sure that the support for that growth in demand is there. That is why there will be an investment as part of this package of 89 new and existing acute and subacute mental health inpatient beds. It is projected that will see a further 12 800 people get the care and treatment they need from these community-based services.

As well as ensuring people have access to better treatment, we know it is even more important for them to recover in the right environment. Every patient is unique when it comes to their particular needs, and we have to make sure there is that rich array of services that deliver on those needs. Particularly when it comes to young people, we know that it is important to have the right support, the right services and the right research behind that. That is why we are on schedule to deliver our \$60 million rebuild of Orygen Youth Health's mental health clinical research facility in Parkville, led by Professor Pat McGorry, former Australian of the Year —

**Mr Carroll** interjected.

**Mr FOLEY** — and an Essendon boy like the honourable member at the table — making sure that he and his team have the best possible facilities in which to perform the world-leading work they do. Construction is going ahead, and Orygen are looking forward to opening their new centre later this year. But research and the world-class research that Orygen and other researchers in Victoria do in the mental health space is not, of itself, enough; this government recognises that. Again in partnership with Orygen, we will be delivering a new 20-bed prevention and recovery care centre — a PARC as they are colloquially known — that will focus particularly in Melbourne's north and north-west a set of early intervention services to treat young people with mental illness.

We know that these facilities indeed change lives, as they provide that important step up, step down between acute and community service delivery in the mental health space so that people have the right environment and the right support to not just recover but to undertake those critical prevention activities to get them back on track, and that is why PARCs are a very effective part of this. To ensure those facilities are up to scratch we have provided \$28.6 million to improve the capacity of other PARC facilities to support not just the recovery of young people and not just women's PARCs but the number of PARCs that continue to grow across our state.

One of the main challenges and drivers of mental illness continues to be alcohol and drug addiction. That is why there is another \$10 million for renewal programs for existing mental health and alcohol and other drug facilities right across Victoria to make sure that they have the care they need in a safe and supportive environment in which to recover from alcohol and drug addiction. We know that some people find that road hard to navigate, and whether it is family violence, economic dispossession, alcohol and drugs or mental health, we know that there continues to be numbers of Victorians who lose their lives at their own hands.

In 2016 — the most recent figures — 624 Victorians took their own life. That is more than twice the road toll in this state, and that is why as part of stage 2 of our suicide prevention framework we last year committed to spend \$27 million on two suicide prevention initiatives to boost programs right across the state. On the back of those initiatives we have seen positive results, and this budget commits a further \$18.7 million to expand the hospital outreach post-suicidal engagement programs to a further six locations around the state. This will help a further 3000 people across the

state, particularly young people, deal with the challenge of mental health issues and suicide attempts, because sadly the most clear predictor of a successful suicide attempt is a previous suicide attempt. Ensuring that we have this program at hospitals where the data says this is a particular issue and in the communities surrounding those hospitals is a very important step. I know honourable members right across the chamber value these programs when they operate in their own communities across the state.

Sadly in the shocking 2014 federal budget the commonwealth government cut support for perinatal mental health services. At the time, this government stepped in and made sure that the one in 10 women who experience mental illness during the perinatal period had the continued support they need. That is why we have not only continued to fund those services that were cut by the commonwealth government but we are also investing another \$6.4 million to make sure that these mums and their babies get the support and care that they need at this most vulnerable and important part of their journey in life.

We know that people who work in this sector are particularly passionate and keen, and that is why we are building on the very important workforce components of our mental health strategy. I did note that sadly in question time today the former minister, who is now on the shadow frontbench, had a crack at workforce and TAFE investment by the government, but I can assure you that the government's \$32.5 million investment in strengthening our mental health workforce is a key component of our free TAFE plan and how we rebuild and re-deliver these important services in the community and particularly in the parts of the community that need it most.

In the area of mental health, I want to focus on the \$100.5 million investment in six emergency department crisis hubs. These hubs mean that at the six emergency departments where clients with mental health, alcohol or drug issues most often come into conflict with other patients or, sadly, first-line responders and other staff, these clients will have a dedicated crisis hub involving not just ambulatory services but short-stay units to make sure that they get the care and support they need to secure them in the best possible way. The rest of the emergency department can continue to deliver their important work, but perhaps just as importantly the staff in that service can feel not just confident that they are safe but also assured by evidence that they have support and structures in place.

Finally, in the mental health space this budget provides almost \$59 million to expand mental health and

complex needs initiatives so more people are able to access mental health supports.

There is much else in this budget that relates to not just my other portfolio areas but also my electorate of Albert Park, which will see important investments that build our future and build our community. This includes in the NDIS support and advocacy for people with disabilities to make sure that as we get to about the halfway point of the NDIS rollout in this state they have the support they need to make informed choices in a control-based environment. There are many, many important investments, whether it be in the equality area or the creative industries area. I well and truly commend this budget to the house, and I wish it a speedy passage through this place.

**Mr WALSH** (Murray Plains) (14:57) — I rise to make my contribution on this year's budget. From the point of view of regional Victorians this budget gives them a very, very raw deal. The state budget should be about how people are actually better off. It should particularly be about helping those in the community who have difficulty helping themselves.

I do not think the statement about a raw deal could be any more true than it is for the students, the families and the teachers of the Echuca Specialist School. There was a vision in Echuca for an education regeneration project where the Echuca South Primary School, the Echuca West Primary School and the Echuca Specialist School would all come together in what is now called the Echuca Twin Rivers School to the west of Echuca. The specialist school actually gave up some Building the Education Revolution (BER) money a number of years ago at the insistence — some would say at the bullying — of the regional office that they would get a better deal in the future. That has just not materialised —

**Mr T. Bull** — It didn't happen?

**Mr WALSH** — No, it just has not materialised. It is a disgrace. The Echuca Specialist School is all portables in what was a car park. Every time it rains, the sewerage runs backwards into the playground. It is a disgrace. Of all the schools I have ever been to, this would be the worst example of a school that needs a rebuild. Yes, there was money two years ago to shift the Echuca West and Echuca South primary schools to the new Twin Rivers school, but there was no money for a specialist school. I brought the three school councils and the principals down here to meet the Minister for Education two or three years ago to walk through these issues, but tragically that school has missed out on its funding.

An article in the *Riverine Herald* claims that:

School council president Scott Morrison said the funding snub was an even worse smack in the face because the school had declined previous funding to fix their current premises on departmental advice the money could — and would — be used for their new school.

A number of years ago they were advised to give up their BER money so they would get a better deal in the long term, and I am afraid that better deal has not materialised. ‘Disgraceful’, ‘shameful’ and ‘unforgivable’ are just a few of the words used by the school community to describe the news delivered by the Andrews government.

‘I would like to ask Premier Andrews where his government’s moral compass is,’ Mr Morrison said.

‘Because if they have one it seems to be pointing in the wrong direction’ ...

I think that is exactly right, that the Andrews government’s moral compass is pointing in the wrong direction. Mr Morrison said:

We’re talking about some of the most vulnerable and deserving kids here. This school services a huge area from Cohuna to Kyabram and it’s the only option for parents with special needs kids.

I’m astounded by the inequity and can’t believe the government has turned its back on these deserving students.

In the budget there is \$1.3 billion for new education initiatives and there is \$27 million for a new academy in Melbourne for the brightest students, but there is absolutely nothing in this budget for the Echuca Specialist School students. Fourteen million dollars is needed to build their share of the new Echuca Twin Rivers School. As I said, they are in an old car park with portable buildings that leak and, as I said also, the sewerage runs backwards when there is a major rain event because there is a drainage issue and a sewerage issue — and that is in their playground. As Scott Morrison, the president of the school council, said, if the Andrews government has a moral compass, it is certainly pointing in the wrong direction when it comes to this school.

The other thing in my electorate that I would like to touch on briefly before I get on to my agriculture and regional development portfolio is the Swan Hill hospital. It is a major regional hospital that services a radius of something like 150 kilometres around Swan Hill, and a population of 40 000 to 50 000 relies on that hospital. Again, there is no funding for that particular hospital. It did have money when we were in government. Again, with a Labor government in place that particular hospital is not getting any money. There

is a no-show from the Premier. Premier Andrews does not appear to want to take his cheque book past the tram tracks of Melbourne. Again that is something that has missed out badly in my electorate.

Briefly, as the shadow Treasurer responded, Victoria has a whole heap of new taxes, despite Premier Andrews’s commitment on the eve of the 2014 election that there would be no new taxes in this state and that there would be no increase in taxes. He looked down the camera to Peter Mitchell and solemnly said, ‘I make that promise ... to every single Victorian’, that there will not be new taxes, there will not be increases in taxes. We know all the new taxes and increases that we have had. A particular issue for regional Victoria, for both households and businesses, is the tripling of the coal royalties that happened a couple of budgets ago. There was a \$253 million increase in the coal royalties, and we have seen the flow-on effects, with Hazelwood closing early because of that increase in the coal royalties, the significant increase in power prices and the fact that instead of being a net exporter of power to other states Victoria is now a net importer of power on 70 days a year.

There was the increase in the coal royalties, the change to annual property valuations, the increase in stamp duty on cars, the vacant home tax, the point-of-consumption gambling tax, other new stamp duties and the increase in the fire services property levy. We know what is going to happen if the Andrews government gets its way with the fire services and the United Firefighters Union and the increases that will be there. There is the new city access tax for the West Gate tunnel. That list goes on.

I suppose from a country point of view most country communities do not want a lot out of government. They want schools and they want hospitals — they want those basic services that everyone expects to be well managed by the state government. They look towards Melbourne and they see the cost blowout in projects. We all hear about the billions and billions of dollars for projects. One of the reasons they are billions and billions of dollars is that there has been a \$25 billion blowout in capital projects, particularly those projects around Melbourne. Echuca Specialist School cannot get \$14 million to build their new school, but somehow we have got a \$25 billion blowout in capital projects — and a whole list of capital projects. It just defies logic that this government cannot manage those projects better.

On the agriculture portfolio, if you go to budget paper 3, it talks about the performance indicators for the department of agriculture or what there is of the department of agriculture that we have here anymore.

One of the key objective indicators is to lift the value of agricultural production and the value of Victorian food and fibre exports. If you look at the numbers over time, you see that the numbers have flatlined. There has not been a significant increase in the value of exports over the life of the Andrews government. That is effectively because they are not investing in agriculture anymore. If you go through the budgets, the Food to Asia program that was funded in our last budget when the Liberals and Nationals were in government has lapsed now, and the funding for export promotion is significantly less than it was in the past. I obviously watch the press clips by the current Minister for Agriculture. I can hardly recall her visiting any of our research institutes, and I can hardly recall her talking about the excellent research capability we have in this state. The minister appears to be more interested in talking about dogs, cats, puppies and puppy farms rather than talking about agriculture and the things that actually drive the economy here in Victoria, particularly the regional economy.

In the budget there are no new initiatives for research and development in agriculture at all. There is no funding for biosecurity beyond 2019. It defies logic, because biosecurity is just so important. If we were to have a foot-and-mouth outbreak in this nation, it is estimated that it would probably cost the economy something like \$50 billion, but there is no funding for biosecurity beyond 2019.

If you think about the Food to Asia program that I just talked about, one of the key recommendations that came out of the working groups in the development of that Food to Asia program was actually upgrading the railway lines here in Victoria. Out of that came the Victorian funding and then subsequently the commonwealth funding from our federal colleagues for the Murray Basin rail project. There is no new money to continue that work on the Murray Basin rail project. A few weeks ago I had the pleasure of being in Mildura with Peter Crisp, the member for Mildura, where we said that if we were elected we would put another \$80 million in to do the level crossings and to do the passing loops on that particular project so that you could get the 24-hour turnaround for freight trains out of Merbein to Melbourne, something that Kenny Wakefield up there aspired to do for a long time because that actually gives him efficiency for his trains over that time. That would then pave the way for passenger services to Mildura to be returned in the future.

If you think about local government and what is in the budget for local government from a regional point of view, one of the most successful and sought-after programs for rural councils when we were in

government was the country roads and bridges program, with \$160 million over four years, effectively \$1 million a year for each of those rural councils to help them fix their roads. There is a poor imitation of that in the current budget. There is two years of funding, with \$50 million each year, not \$160 million over four years. But the rules have changed, so now regional councils can also qualify for that particular fund.

Members probably remember the debate in this place a while ago when one of the Andrews government's regional road programs was used to fix up a bridge in Mulgrave, in the Premier's own electorate — and one probably in the member for Lara's electorate, just north of Geelong. A bridge there was also fixed up under their regional bridges program. Yes, there is a small sprinkling of crumbs off the table back into the budget for country roads, but the criteria have changed, so not many rural councils will actually get the money they need over that particular time.

The Andrews government has made a lot of noise about its regional assembly process. In my area there is the north-east Victoria regional assembly. Their top priority was to have a cross-border commissioner. They had been talking to the government for probably the last 18 months or two years about a cross-border commissioner. The minister actually said that she was going to do a business case around a cross-border commissioner. Again, I joined our member for Mildura in Mildura to announce that if we were elected to government we would actually have a cross-border commissioner and we would allocate \$1 million a year to make sure that commissioner had the resources to do their job well and we would base it in Mildura, which has a tri-state cross-border issue.

The air-conditioning company Deville's has issues with New South Wales, South Australia and Victoria in running its particular business. What do we see in this year's budget? Finally there is some money for a cross-border commissioner: \$300 000 in the first year and \$500 000 in the second year. Then what is in the forward estimates? Zip, zip, zip — there is no money there in the long term for a cross-border commissioner.

There is hardly enough money to get it set up and there is certainly not a commitment to actually base it in a regional town or a regional city where cross-border issues are to the fore. This will be some bureaucrat in Melbourne who probably will not leave Melbourne and who may get a few emails from regional Victoria, but will probably do very, very little about solving cross-border issues. It just defies logic that, after a regional assembly where people gave their time to come and do workshops, to come and write on

butcher's paper to identify their priorities and identified a cross-border commissioner as their top priority, the government gives them a slap in the face with a pittance of money, no long-term commitment and no commitment to put it in regional Victoria. It defies logic to me how that could ever work.

I suppose one of the concerns that I have about the budget is with the environment part, a new performance indicator from the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning, where they now set a target where they want to actually preserve 5000 hectares of native vegetation on private land. This is not about what is happening on public land. This is not about the fact that I do not think either government has ever managed public land well. This is actually putting a performance indicator on the department so that in the forward estimates they will actually make sure there are covenants put over an additional 5000 hectares of private land for native vegetation.

We know what a vexed issue native vegetation is. We know the challenges that farmers have around getting one tree taken out of their paddock so they can actually use the modern big equipment they have now. But now we have a department with a performance indicator saying that they are going to go out to talk to farmers and they are going to effectively make farmers lock up another 5000 hectares from native vegetation. That issue is a major concern to me, and I think it will be a concern to a lot of people in regional Victoria.

From a budget point of view it is extremely disappointing — a raw deal for country Victoria. The Premier has not taken his chequebook past the end of the tram tracks of Melbourne.

**Mr EREN** (Minister for Sport) (15:12) — I am delighted to rise today and speak in support of the Appropriation (2018–19) Bill 2018. I would like to begin by congratulating the Premier, the Treasurer and all of my fellow ministers, indeed all of the caucus on this side, who have made tremendous efforts in making sure that they collectively get what they got from the budget in terms of making their constituency happy with this government. Certainly there is a lot of hard work that goes on, and I know the caucus members on this side have worked really hard to liaise with their communities and got the message across to government that obviously investments within their electorates are very important. That is exactly what is happening right throughout Victoria.

I just want to start off with my electorate of Lara, which is one of those economic activity areas of Geelong. It has Avalon Airport, Viva Energy, the Geelong Ring

Road employment precinct and of course all the ports, which means that there are literally thousands of job that are created through very important activity that goes on in my electorate. Geelong has traditionally been the economic backbone, if you like — if Geelong's economy is strong, then Victoria's economy is strong as well, and we have seen that time and time again. It is a very resilient community, and even though Ford has now shut down manufacturing operations, they are still doing some research and development — the proving ground is still there and they still employ some people, but nevertheless the manufacturing side has been shut down. Of course Alcoa has shut down.

If you go back to the 1990s, if you predicted that that would happen in the 1990s, Geelong, you would have thought, would be a ghost town. We did not. We have not rested on our laurels in terms of what we needed to do and, through the Bracks-Brumby years, we certainly set up the economy of Geelong and diversified it in a way which protects Geelong. What we see today is a thriving, growing city. Geelong is a fantastic place to live, work, raise your family and of course have a decent job.

We have done that deliberately because we know the importance of the broader region, and the investment that is going on and continues to go on in Geelong. We are very proud on this side of the house of the wonderful investments that are going on right throughout the Geelong region. Education — I can certainly say the numberplate says it all, the Education State. Going back to the previous government, they were not into funding education or indeed health. Certainly there has been a dramatic turnaround in terms of the performance of not only my local schools, but indeed right throughout Victoria there is a new sense of enthusiasm in terms of the education system.

In terms of health, we have record investments in health because we understand the importance of health as well. We are proud as a government to be investing in those key areas which matter to the community, and education and health are two areas that matter to the community in which we will continue to invest. Some of the highlights that I want to reflect on in this budget are the investments that we are making. Not only did we save TAFE, but we have now boosted it with funding to ensure that it not only survives going forward but it trains the future jobs of the economy. What we had is the previous government threatening TAFE with funding cuts and so on and so forth, which was detrimental to the economy.

What we do in this state is build stuff. The construction sector particularly is extremely important. For those

students who were going through the education system, if they were not academically inclined, where else were they going to go? That is why we introduced tech schools and that is why we have invested heavily in the trade area. TAFE is one of those areas that obviously is very important for our economy because of the jobs growth that is going on in our state.

I am pleased that this budget includes \$172 million to make priority TAFE courses free. There will be 30 priority TAFE courses and 80 preapprenticeship courses which will be made free, while more than 30 000 new TAFE places will be funded across the state, which is fantastic. That means that more local students will also be able to finish school qualified and ready to work with the introduction of the Head Start apprenticeships and traineeships in 100 secondary schools. This initiative is fantastic for students — they will be ready to start work in a good job once they have completed it, which will be fantastic to see. Lara students will also get expert advice to help them make the right career choices, with career education in schools to be overhauled across the state. It will now start from year 9, and that makes sense. Of course you have got to get the career path started earlier than what it has been, and that is exactly what we are doing as a government.

There is also some investment that has been made into extending bus services from Geelong to the Lara Lifestyle Village as part of this year's budget, and that is great news for those, particularly the elderly, who live in that lifestyle village. They have written to me on a number of occasions because of a lack of services. I am certainly pleased now that buses will be helping those elderly residents living in the lifestyle village.

Neighbourhood houses, which are very important to my electorate as well as across the state, will get a boost in funding, including the Lara, Anakie and Vines Road community houses in my electorate, which are set to benefit from an unprecedented \$21.8 million investment from the Labor government to fund more houses and provide more services to families, and that is fantastic to see.

The coastline along Corio Bay will be better protected for the local community to enjoy, with additional sand provided to increase the beach width and make it more resilient to storms. That is part of an \$8.6 million initiative, and we are certainly taking advantage of that. The environment, sustainable tourism and jobs — I will get to that very soon — will be boosted with the implementation of stage 2 of the *Shipwreck Coast Master Plan* to help our state grow its fortunes going forward with the tourism sector.

There is also a \$689.5 million investment into building a new 700-bed maximum-security men's prison at the Lara prison precinct, and of course this will create hundreds of local jobs during construction and ongoing employment opportunities once the facility is complete. Through the Labor government's Local Jobs First program we will ensure Victorian contractors and workers are given the opportunity to build this new facility. Not only through the construction phase but also once it is built there will obviously be more people who will work within the prison system. We know that those prison officers frequent the Lara shops to buy their food and coffees and so on and so forth — it certainly drives the economy in that way — so this is a massive investment into my electorate.

In the time that I have left I want to talk about the record investment in my portfolio of sport. Unprecedented amounts of money have been invested. Roughly over \$1.2 billion in the time that we have been in government has been invested in sport and recreation. In this round of budget announcements there are record investments. There is some \$584 million that will be invested into the future of sport across Victoria, from the grassroots clubs — I want to make it very clear — to the state's biggest venues. Of course my term as Minister for Sport has seen some record investment into sport in Victoria. That has never been done before, which is fantastic to see. Thousands of clubs will benefit in this deal.

Under the opposition's plan of not funding and not working with the AFL they are risking the AFL Grand Final. We know that we have got that contract with the AFL until 2057 and that WA have made it very clear that they want to discuss the grand final. The new Premier of WA has been indicating that they would like to see the grand final played in WA. We know that this event is sought after. We have locked in the grand final. Under the opposition the grand final is under threat. There is no question about this, because they have made it very clear. The investment we are making in Etihad Stadium locks in the grand final until 2057, which means the Melbourne Cricket Club can actually access some money now — not through government means — because of that extension of the grand final being played at the MCG. They can spend up to \$1 billion on that iconic ground, which is the MCG. Of course we know that it attracts lots of events, not just footy. We have soccer played there, we have cricket played there, and certainly it draws big crowds. There have been 100 000-plus spectators come to view some of the events there. That is great for the MCG.

Etihad Stadium is an important piece of infrastructure for us. It is an investment that will systematically grow

the economy through the various events that we have there. You will not find a stadium like this anywhere in the nation — 55 000 seats with a roof. That means that we can have basketball games there, and we have announced recently that we are getting the USA Dream Team playing the Australian Boomers next year in two games. Tickets are selling fast already. People have indicated that they are interested and they are queueing up. The events we have there are tremendous — Ed Sheeran concerts, basketball, rugby, Rugby League, soccer — and it will be more rectangular friendly as a result of this investment. It will be more appealing to the public in terms of the external side of it when it is developed. This will bring lots of dollars to our state. It also inspires lots of young people. We know major events and sporting events particularly inspire young people — young and old — to get back playing the sport that they watch.

**Mr Katos** interjected.

**Mr EREN** — We have also locked in for 30 years eight to nine games to be played at GMHBA Stadium, another wonderful stadium that we invest in because we know the value of it. The member for South Barwon can yell all he likes and bellow all he likes, but he knows that GMHBA Stadium is an important asset. Every time we have an event there we attract some \$3 million worth of economic activity, and that is why these stadiums are so important, whether it is GMHBA, whether it is Etihad, whether it is the MCG. We have also locked in at Eureka Stadium for the next decade at least two premiership games for the Doggies. I was pleased to be there on Saturday when they clashed with Gold Coast and were successful. They won that wonderful game. Thousands of people were attracted to that game, which brings tourism dollars to Ballarat as well.

It is systematic investment into the MCG, Etihad Stadium, GMHBA Stadium and in fact Eureka Stadium which draws in lots of tourism dollars, which is fantastic. We have done all of this. The Liberal Party and National Party are saying that they will risk all of this. They will risk the 30-year deal with GMHBA and the eight games or nine games being played there, they will risk the grand final and they will risk the games being played by the Doggies at Eureka. That is what they are saying. If they want to do that, that is fine.

We have also invested some \$241 million in women's and grassroots community sports: \$20 million to redevelop Ikon Park — and that is conditional on the federal government matching that \$20 million; \$15 million for the Female Friendly Facilities Fund; \$30 million for stage 2 of the Moorabbin Oval; \$10 million to improve playing conditions at Casey

Fields and Whitten Oval; \$2 million for infrastructure upgrades at Victoria Park; \$64.6 million for major upgrades at the State Hockey and Netball Centre; and tens of millions of dollars in better infrastructure for women's sport. We are proud to say we are leading the way.

We have also invested heavily with \$12 million for the centre of excellence for Melbourne Storm — and congratulations to the member for Broadmeadows for advocating and lobbying for that very important piece of infrastructure. Who says that governments only invest in marginal seats? We are fair in terms of our application of the budget, with \$12 million for Broadmeadows for that centre of excellence for the Storm, where women are getting ready for their women's team. There is \$10 million for the member for Footscray in terms of Footscray Park for Melbourne Victory — and what a fantastic grand final that was. There is \$10 million for the academy, and of course that will mean that their women's team will be based out there and their juniors will be coming through the ranks. They will add another \$11 million to that for a \$21 million project. Broadly speaking, this is a budget that can accommodate both. It can accommodate the elite, which is important because you need that transition from grassroots to the elite. That is what we have done in this budget through my portfolio.

In tourism, again we are making record investments to make sure that we invest in the tourism sector. When we came to office, it was worth \$21.5 billion. It is now worth over \$25 billion, and 13 500 new jobs have been added in the tourism sector. It is a fantastic budget. When you look at it, it is the engine room of jobs in the nation, with 333 000 jobs. The economy is strong, with investments in health, education, sport and recreation. It has got it all. I wish it a speedy passage.

**The SPEAKER** (15:27) — Order! Before calling the member for Melbourne, I wish to acknowledge the longstanding relationship between the state of Victoria and Yangtze province in China and welcome a delegation of the Jiangsu Bar Association, who are travelling through Victoria with the help of Victoria University and the Sir Zelman Cowen Centre. Welcome.

**Ms SANDELL** (Melbourne) (15:27) — Today I rise to give the Greens' budget reply speech for 2018. The Victorian budget is about much more than just a set of numbers. A budget, especially in an election year, shows us exactly where the government's priorities lie. The government may tell us what they care about, but it is not until we see money in the budget that we know

for sure. In short, it is about governments putting their money where their mouth is.

So what does this 2018 budget say about the Andrews Labor government's priorities? Despite their rhetoric, the budget is clear. This Labor government prioritises toll roads instead of better public transport, new prisons instead of new public housing and privatising our public assets instead of keeping them in public hands, and it provides almost no new money for addressing climate change or protecting our environment.

At a time when Victoria is in such a strong financial position, this lack of vision is disappointing to say the least. As Victorians, we are proud of our state. We love living here, and we want our government to spend our money on things that make our communities strong. We do not want our hard-earned money propping up the profits of toll road companies or used just to shore up votes in marginal seats. We want it spent on addressing the problems we face in our community, and unfortunately this Labor budget does not do that.

Victoria is at a crucial time in history. Melbourne is growing at a faster rate than any other time since the gold rush. In the 1850s swollen gold rush coffers ushered in the era of Marvellous Melbourne. This wealth led to an explosion of civic and public works, like schools, libraries, art galleries, post offices, telegraph stations and even this very building, Parliament House. Today Victoria is once again flush with cash, largely off the back of population growth, high house prices bringing in extra stamp duty for the Victorian government as well as extra unexpected GST revenue and selling off the Snowy Hydro scheme to the commonwealth. This growth has brought our state wealth but also challenges — challenges that we all are feeling. We are feeling them in our crowded schools, when we cannot get on a train in the morning, when our kids cannot afford to buy or even rent a house, in the number of homeless people in our communities and of course in the impact it is having on our environment.

But instead of fixing these problems and instead of investing this profit into our communities to make sure Victoria stays a great place to live, this Andrews Labor government is giving billions of dollars of our money to toll road companies and brown coal projects and is selling off our public assets for private gain. On the surface, the budget might look good. The newspaper headlines tell us that Victoria is spending big on construction while also posting big surpluses, and the government boasts about record investment in schools. However, you do not need to look far for proof that our economy is simply not working for many Victorians and this government has its priorities out of whack.

Let us look at our public transport system, for example. It is at breaking point. Trains are bursting at the seams — three go by in the morning before you can get on in places like Kensington. Buses are unreliable and not well integrated with the broader network. Trams are seriously overcrowded and often late, and most are not even accessible to people with different abilities. The government knows that when the new Melbourne Metro is built it will be at capacity almost immediately, but instead of beginning to plan now for Melbourne Metro 2, this Labor government is locking in congestion across our city by prioritising two huge new toll roads which will flood our city with traffic.

Let us look at housing. Homes in Victoria are some of the most expensive in the world for renters and for buyers. For the first time ever, people do not see home ownership as an attainable goal, and there are more than 35 000 applicants on the public housing waiting list. But instead of funding a large-scale build of public housing, like we need, this government is selling public housing land to private developers.

Let us look at energy. Electricity prices are skyrocketing due in large part to successive governments which have carved up our electricity network and sold it to the highest bidder. We were promised a cheaper, more efficient network. What we got was the complete opposite. But instead of funding for climate action and instead of funding a plan to get out of coal and transition us to 100 per cent renewable energy, this Labor government is sinking over \$50 million of new money into the brown coal industry to try to keep it alive.

Let us look at our environment. Our native forests are being felled at a faster rate than anywhere else in the commonwealth. Our oceans, parks and waterways are being choked with plastic pollution, and all around the state recycling is piling up higher and higher because we simply have no plan for what to do with it. But instead of a plan to move logging to plantations or to fund the establishment of a sustainable recycling industry in Victoria, Labor continues to use taxpayer funds to log our precious native forests and does nothing about our recycling crisis. It is clear that this Labor government has its priorities wrong.

The Greens have an alternative vision for this state: a fair society, clean energy, a reliable public transport system, the opportunity to look for a job that you can count on, a safe and secure home, accessible health care, a healthy environment and a strong social safety net. These are the Greens' priorities, and we have a plan to get us there. Instead of spending billions on the West Gate Tunnel and north-east link toll roads, which only

go to propping up the profits of Transurban and do nothing to ease congestion, we would extend the Melbourne Metro project with upgrades to important stations like South Kensington and Caulfield, electrify the Melton line, extend the Cranbourne line to Clyde, build an interchange with South Yarra and increase services and then start planning for Melbourne Metro 2 to transform the rest of our rail network with new trains and high-capacity signalling.

Instead of spending \$53 million on a dodgy project that seeks to turn brown coal into hydrogen to export to Japan when really all it does is give false hope to the people of the Latrobe Valley that brown coal can last forever — which it cannot — we would plan to phase out coal and invest in 100 per cent renewable energy, including a plan to transition the Latrobe Valley to new jobs in battery technology, in offshore wind and in education. We would put solar panels and batteries on every Victorian school and roll out large-scale energy efficiency programs to save energy and save money. And we would start to bring the energy system back into public hands so Victorians do not keep getting ripped off and we can finally start to address climate change. Instead of caving to the Liberals' rhetoric on law and order and spending \$700 million on a new prison, we would fund a large-scale build of public housing on a scale we have not seen since the 1960s to ensure everyone who wants a safe, secure place to call home and a place they can get back on their feet when they need to —

**Ms Victoria** interjected.

**Ms SANDELL** — I notice the member for Bayswater is saying, 'That's crackpot stuff'. Say that to the people in public housing whose homes are falling down around them and need important maintenance —

**Ms Victoria** interjected.

**The SPEAKER** — Order! Without interjections.

**Ms SANDELL** — They are the 35 000 people who need a place to call home. Instead of spending \$35 million to find more ways to log our forests through new regional forestry agreements, we would create the great forest national park and the Emerald link to create jobs, to secure our water supply, to store carbon and to protect our endangered species and biodiversity. Instead of privatising Land Use Victoria and disability group homes, on top of the already privatised port of Melbourne and the selling off of public housing land, the Greens would fight to keep public assets in public hands, and we are the only party in this place that would do so. This is the alternative

vision provided by the Greens, and it is one that people can look forward to hearing a lot more of in the lead-up to November.

People might be saying, 'This budget sounds pretty grim. Is there anything good in there?'. Yes, of course. There are programs and projects that we support and welcome. For example, much has been written about record investment in schools, and this is good. It is a big investment — much more than the Liberal or National parties ever invested in Victoria's schools. But does it keep up with population growth? Unfortunately not. Does it fully address the huge maintenance backlog in our public schools? No. Does it end the ridiculous formula that Labor introduced whereby every time the government invests \$1 in our public school system it needs to put 25 cents into private schools, no questions asked, regardless of whether they need it or not? No. Does it fund schools based on need rather than marginal seat status? No. Many people have mentioned to me that they are pleased to see the much-needed improvements to TAFE in this budget, including several courses which will now be free. But before there is too much self-congratulation from the Labor members in this chamber, I remind members that it was Labor that sold off our TAFE system to for-profit corporations in the first place, and now they want a round of applause for giving back some of what was taken from a system that used to be the envy of the world.

One of the biggest gaps, and the most heartbreaking gap, in this budget is how little is being spent on our environment. When it comes to our natural environment, the only ray of hope is the 130 park rangers for Parks Victoria, which the Greens secured as part of our negotiations with the government. This would not have happened if it were not for the Greens in this place. Our parks funding was slashed by the Liberals in 2014, and Labor has not restored it in full. The Greens negotiated to restore funding for rangers to protect our parks from invasive species and feral animals. We are pleased, but it is far from what we actually need to protect our environment. We are of course bitterly disappointed there was virtually no new money to meet our climate targets or to reduce emissions. It is sad because this government has done some good work setting climate targets and putting them in law, but if there is no money in the budget to actually do the work to meet these targets, well, it is just more talk and no action while climate change keeps bearing down upon us.

Months before the budget the Greens laid out our priorities and entered into negotiations with the government, and we are pleased to see that some of our priorities have indeed been funded. On top of the

130 rangers, we were also able to negotiate \$22 million for safer cycling and better active transport infrastructure, although the government still is not spending the \$100 million that was earmarked for cycling in the budget — and it needs to. This money, along with the Sustainability Fund, cannot just sit there and prop up the bottom line. It is supposed to be used to actually protect the environment, to actually build bike paths, and that is what it should do. We negotiated \$5 million to upgrade Casey Fields, including facilities for women's sport and the AFL Women, and \$12 million to upgrade South Yarra station. A big congratulations to the member for Prahran and the local councils who have campaigned so strongly for this for so many years. Of course this is on top of other successful campaigns that were funded, such as funding for a Docklands primary school.

This was of course not everything that we asked for in our negotiations with the government in this budget. Unfortunately many of our claims ended up falling on deaf ears. We called for an expansion of the government's community revitalisation program in Flemington to other housing estates with high unemployment and underemployment, and for these jobs programs to be run by local community-led organisations that already exist. But it was not funded. We asked for proper funding for our medical research institutes to bring us in line with New South Wales, but this was not funded. We called for more funding for community legal centres for migration, refugee and asylum seeker support, because they are absolutely swamped at the moment, but they were not funded. We asked for the government to join with other states and finally ban duck shooting, jumps racing, greyhound racing, battery hen cages and sow stalls in Victoria — all incredibly cruel practices — but they refused. The Greens will keep fighting for these important policies now and in the lead-up to the election.

Victoria is at a crucial time in history. We are facing big challenges, from population growth to catastrophic climate change. But we have so much potential, we have the funds in the budget to invest in solutions and we are living in a time when interest rates are at record lows. We could have used this situation to create another marvellous era in Victoria. We could have used public funds to create a cleaner, fairer society in harmony with the natural world and powered by renewable energy. Instead what the Labor government has delivered is a cash splash to help them win outer suburban seats off the Liberals with hollow promises that try to convince people that we can build toll roads to ease congestion and build prisons to fix society's problems. As the saying goes, building toll roads to fix

congestion is like trying to fix obesity by loosening your belt: it simply does not work.

This Labor government desperately wants to win the next election, but what it is offering the Victorian people are false solutions and false hope. We do not need false hope. What we need is governments that do not just think about the next election but think about the next decade and indeed the next generation. That is what the Greens are fighting for, and we will keep fighting for it as long as we still have two major parties in this Parliament that care more about short-term votes than long-term vision.

With this term in government the Labor Party has shown what its true priorities are: toll roads, keeping the brown coal and logging industries alive, privatising our public assets, building new prisons, school and TAFE funding that does not match demand; and leaving the climate and environment for someone else to deal with in the future. Unfortunately the Liberal-Nationals coalition's plans are even worse.

So what to do? For the voters who want something more than this, who want a Victoria that actually invests in the future, that looks after people and the environment, your choice is now clear. If you want this positive vision of Victoria, you will not get it with Labor and you will not get it with the Liberals; this budget proves it. If you want this vision, put the Greens in the balance of power this November. It is the only way you will see it become a reality.

**Mr CARROLL** (Minister for Industry and Employment) (15:44) — It is my pleasure to rise and speak on the Appropriation (2018–2019) Bill 2018. The Treasurer ended his budget speech with a quote from the great Welshman Lloyd George, who said nearly 100 years ago, and I quote:

The finest eloquence is that which gets things done; the worst is that which delays them.

Every year as part of the Andrews Labor government it has been my privilege to be able to take the opportunity to outline what the budget means not only for the people of Niddrie but for those right across Victoria. It gives me special joy this year to also speak as the Minister for Industry and Employment about not only what it means for people looking for work but also industry support and making sure we have the policy settings right, through our Victorian Industry Participation Policy and our Major Projects Skills Guarantee, to ensure that every young person gets a chance to work on our record infrastructure spend and that we bring people along with us, whether they be Aboriginal Victorians, young people coming through

the criminal justice system or young people with disabilities. For anyone who wants to find a job, we want to make sure we can do everything in our power to help them do so.

As we know, the federal government's Jobactive program has not been the success that we would all wish. Through our review of jobs programs in Victoria we established the \$68 million Jobs Victoria program, which is doing everything it can through our 51 providers — from Jesuit Social Services to the Brotherhood of St Laurence — to make sure we help people find work, put them into employment and give them the dignity of work.

Every year I get to host the Treasurer for my annual budget breakfast at the Keilor East RSL. This year was no exception. In making his presentation the Treasurer borrowed a line from the famous former federal Treasurer Paul Keating to say that this budget was a 'beautiful set of numbers', and without doubt that is so true. Since the election of the Andrews Labor government in November 2014 more than 333 000 jobs have been created. In fact one in every 10 working Victorians is in a job that did not exist when this government came to power. We have delivered three times the number of jobs that the previous government delivered.

This budget also delivers in spades for my electorate of Niddrie. At the time of the last budget I made the point that there had never been a significant investment in the electorate of Niddrie — well, we have done even better this year. Recently the Premier joined me to announce \$7.3 million for capital works at the Western Autistic School's Niddrie campus. This much-needed funding will go to the heart of implementing the school's master plan and give students a greater opportunity to learn in state-of-the-art facilities, and it is specifically designed to meet their needs. I want to congratulate Mary Thomson, the principal of Western Autistic School, and Elizabeth Richardson, the principal of the Niddrie campus, for their great advocacy. I cannot understate just how important this funding is. There are few opportunities that can make you feel more proud as a member of Parliament, and to be delivering for the Western Autistic School's Niddrie campus will be one of my lasting legacies in my community.

The Western Autistic School is a recognised leader in autism education, and it is a vital part of my local community, providing intensive support programs for prep to grade 3 children who have been diagnosed with behavioural issues. The educators and staff work tirelessly to give these children the skills and confidence they need to succeed in the mainstream

system. The former Dousta Galla state primary school was built in 1954 as a mainstream primary school. The buildings used at the Niddrie campus of the Western Autistic School have remained untouched since the campus was moved to the site of the former Dousta Galla primary school in Teague Street, Niddrie, in 1996. The oval was sold off by the Kennett government, and the remaining buildings, mainly of light timber construction, have been there for some 50 years. The school has not been renovated since it was first built, but despite the physical infrastructure demands of the school and the decaying facilities, the special learning needs of students have continued to be met, and I could not be prouder than I am in being able to deliver this \$7.3 million redevelopment.

Even more special, for me to then be able to have the Premier come and deliver that news and to see the faces of the students, the parents and the teachers was one of the most humbling and special days in my career as the state member for Niddrie. Delivering the master plan to give the school the upgrade that it needs to ensure that students get the best education and opportunities at Western Autistic School will be one of my proudest legacies.

This redevelopment builds on the significant funding at Western Autistic School, but it also builds on the funding we have given to Aberfeldie Primary School, the primary school of Victoria's first and only female Premier, Joan Kirner, AC. I could not be more proud to make sure that this is a legacy to Joan and the leadership she showed in making sure education and the power of education gives every person the opportunity to succeed and make a real opportunity in their life.

The \$10 million redevelopment of Essendon Keilor College to build a STEM — science, technology, engineering and maths — centre fit for the 21st century in Airport West, where I grew up, is another lasting legacy that will meet the needs of the local community in the near future and well after I have left this place, because we are seeing now the power of STEM and the power of robotics. As the industry minister, I get to see that firsthand when I visit big companies like Boeing and Bombardier — whatever it be — and meet the engineering and other students coming through STEM. We are seeing more and more females now taking up the mantra and following a STEM education to become engineers. It is great to see in manufacturing and skilled engineering young people that are learning the skills at secondary school, then going on to university — and now through our major investments in TAFE — to get qualifications and have an important career.

The ABC series *Employable Me* has struck a real chord in the community, and I know firsthand through our \$68 million Jobs Victoria initiative the importance and the dignity of work. This series put on the map the strengths of people with neurodiverse minds and what they can achieve out in the workplace. I could not be more proud than to be working very closely with the Minister for Housing, Disability and Ageing and Minister for Mental Health to ensure that people with disabilities do get to participate in our economy — something that only a Labor government would do — and to launch *Every Opportunity: Victorian Economic Participation Plan for People with Disability 2018–2020*. This really does mark the start of making sure people with disabilities get every opportunity they can to succeed. This participation plan is backed by a \$2.6 million investment by the Labor government to address the discrimination, barriers and attitudes which prevent people with disability from getting to work.

I have seen that recently with my proud announcement at La Trobe University, together with the member for Bundoora, to officially launch Specialisterne Australia's Dandelion program. Specialisterne Australia, which was based in Melbourne, is one of the first companies in the world to highlight the benefits of a neurodiverse workforce. This company will work with small and medium-sized enterprises to make sure that they see the benefits of a neurodiverse workforce and employ adults with autism. It was established in Denmark by an entrepreneur who saw the skills and attributes of his young son who had autism but could also equally see that he was not getting the opportunities through an interview to get employment.

The great benefit of the series *Employable Me* was that it showed what people with autism and special needs have to offer. We want to do everything we can to make sure that they get every opportunity and a pathway to work. It was my pleasure earlier this year to welcome Specialisterne to La Trobe University through important funding supported by the Andrews Labor government — a \$200 000 grant through our Jobs Victoria program — to make sure we can build on the work and to make sure every Victorian with a disability has every opportunity to participate in our economic participation.

As employment minister I want to be known as someone who actually does look after everyone and who does not pick winners, and I want us to make sure everyone gets a fair go to find work. That is also why I was very happy to participate in the National Disability Services young Victorians and families launch of the Ticket to Work program, a new after-school project that is receiving \$250 000 from the Andrews Labor

government as well as funding from the Ian Potter Foundation and the Lord Mayor's Charitable Foundation to support 40 students with significant disability to find and sustain after-school work. I got to meet some young people with Down syndrome who spoke to me at the event, and they are now going to make sure they get every support and resource through the Andrews Labor government's partnership with Ticket to Work to ensure that they get the skills but also that they get the opportunities to find employment and have the dignity of work. Everyone deserves to have a job. That is why we are making sure as a Labor government that we do everything we can to make sure no-one is left behind. The Ticket to Work initiative will make a real difference to the lives of young Victorians with disability and allow them to continue to participate in the workforce after graduating. There could not be any more important role as employment minister than to support young people into the workforce.

I have always believed that when you invest in your education system and you invest in your local schools, you not only build young people's futures but you build great communities. With \$10 million for Essendon Keilor College, \$500 000 for Ave Maria College, \$522 000 for Keilor Heights Primary School, \$2.4 million for Keilor Primary School and over \$2 million for Aberfeldie Primary School, we are getting the job done in the Niddrie electorate and we are getting the job done right across the state of Victoria.

How many dollars for capital works did the previous Liberal government put into the Niddrie electorate? Zero. They did not run in the by-election in 2012, and I wonder why. The first question to the Premier of the day, Premier Baillieu, would have been: will you fund the master plan for Essendon Keilor College? He went on to lose his job, and then he went on to lose office under Premier Napthine. We have funded that master plan at Essendon Keilor College and we are funding several master plans right across the Niddrie electorate, making sure we build the Education State in Niddrie and making sure every person — young people and their families — gets supported and that the school community is supported to ensure that they get every opportunity to succeed.

I also, in my remaining moments, want to touch on the \$3 million investment that the Minister for Sport has announced for the East Keilor Leisure Centre. I spent my youth at the East Keilor Leisure Centre, in particular at the 50-metre pool, and through an advocacy program, particularly involving a local from East Keilor who I supported, Michael Gallus, we have not only saved the 50-metre pool but we are going to make the East Keilor Leisure Centre a valuable local,

regional asset for not only East Keilor but the whole Moonee Valley and wider region. It is going to be one of the biggest leisure centres in the state — a massive investment — but it is also going to produce a healthy local community and make sure young people coming through today will get to spend wonderful Sundays and their summers at the leisure centre just like I did when I was a young person, and I am very proud of that.

With the member for Essendon I was very pleased to announce \$1.2 million for a major refurbishment of the Essendon State Emergency Service headquarters, located at Aberfeldie, which will double the size of the building and provide volunteers with the space they need to store their equipment and quickly respond to call-outs. We are very proud to be providing emergency services volunteers and workers with the infrastructure and equipment they need to keep locals safe.

The Valley Lake estate was once going to be a toxic waste site, if former Premier Jeff Kennett had his way. My predecessor Rob Hulls fought the very good fight and made sure that that is now a beautiful housing estate. As the member for Niddrie I could not be more proud than to be delivering a bus service to the Valley Lake estate. It sits on the former Niddrie quarry site. It has been a Places Victoria success story, with over 400 residential allotments and medium-density housing. This site will accommodate many, many residences and locals for many, many years to come. I wanted to make sure that there was a bus service to ensure locals there, particularly young people going to nearby schools, could travel by public transport. With the Minister for Public Transport I am very proud to have been able to deliver a bus service to the Valley Lake estate. I thank the locals who have contacted me about the importance of having a bus service there and making sure that the needs of that community are serviced.

This budget invests in the people of this state. I could not be more proud than to be working in the cabinet with the Premier and my colleagues as the Minister for Industry and Employment. All of my caucus colleagues should be proud. It is the fourth budget of the Andrews Labor government. Our mantra is ‘Getting things done’, but we are also making things fair. Thanks to the Minister for Health and the Minister for Mental Health, and our investments in tackling ice, our investment in medicinal cannabis and our investment in tackling family violence, we are making the state a better place than what we inherited.

**Mr HODGETT** (Croydon) (15:59) — It is a pleasure to rise today to speak on the Appropriation (2018–2019) Bill 2018, otherwise known as the state budget. First and foremost, as the state member for

Croydon, putting Croydon first, I would like to use this opportunity to express my disappointment at the Andrews government’s lack of funding and commitment to the people of Croydon and the east. I would like to use this opportunity to highlight a number of projects that are in need of funding in my electorate that I have fought for and will continue to fight for until they are delivered. Then with any time remaining I will make some broader comments about the budget across the state and some broader areas, including my portfolios.

If I turn to a couple of categories in my electorate of Croydon, roads is always an important one. Congestion is an issue that is front of mind for people these days. It was disappointing to see no commitment by the Premier to build the east–west link. It is a major road project that would benefit my electorate of Croydon and indeed most of the seats in the outer east. People continually raise the need for the east–west link with me, including, I might say, Labor voters. I have attended many festivals, including last year’s Maroondah Festival, which vividly sticks in my mind. A tradesman walked past and declared himself a Labor voter and said, ‘Will you build the east–west link, mate? Because if you do, I’ll vote for you’. I use that point to highlight the importance of the east–west link to people in the electorate and certainly to tradespeople who travel by car and do not have the option to travel by public transport to and from jobs in new estates.

People want the east–west link built, and people clearly have not forgotten that the Premier wasted \$1.3 billion of taxpayers money to rip up the east–west link construction contract — \$1.3 billion to not build a road or an asset. People are still flabbergasted at the arrogance of the Premier, that he would do that and not give a stuff about it. He is just happy to move on and to have wasted that money.

Locally it would have been good to see a commitment to the upgrade of the intersection of Maroondah Highway, Kent Avenue and Yarra Road, Croydon. I have been working hard with the Maroondah City Council on this project to try to secure the funding for the upgrade to this intersection. Congestion is certainly getting worse in Maroondah, and local residents are sick and tired of being stuck in traffic. Yet intersections such as this one of Maroondah Highway, Kent Avenue and Yarra Road continue to be overlooked. If you are familiar with that area, it funnels traffic in and out. Certainly Luther College and Yarra Valley Grammar are further up the road, and the whole Croydon Hills estate is there, including Plymouth Road and Yarra Road. There is one major conduit out of that estate, and

that intersection is in need of an upgrade — not just for traffic, I might add, but for pedestrian safety too.

Indeed Dorset Road, from Hull Road through to Maroondah Highway, is an issue Maroondah council is starting to talk about. It would have been good to see a commitment or people starting to talk about that or some funding there. In the past I have had some success in getting funding to upgrade the intersection of Oban Road and Maroondah Highway, and indeed my federal colleague, the member for Deakin, Michael Sukkar, successfully got federal funding to upgrade the intersection of Bellara Drive, Dorset Road and Maroondah Highway — something I fought for at the last state election. It was great to see my great mate Michael Sukkar get that funding. That is another intersection we can tick off. I am firmly concentrating now on the intersection of Maroondah Highway, Kent Avenue and Yarra Road. It was disappointing that the budget overlooked such a road project.

The budget put some money into further planning for the north-east link — a project that we support on this side of the house, but only after the construction of the east-west link. The north-east link project, however, is 10 years off, with a current price tag of over \$16.5 billion. The Premier has still not told Victorians how he intends to pay for this.

I turn my attention to local police. I have two police stations in my electorate — Mooroolbark police station and Croydon police station. The budget says there will be more money for police; however, the government has given no guarantee and no indication that any of these police resources will be allocated to Maroondah or the Yarra Ranges, or indeed to Croydon police station or Mooroolbark police station in my electorate of Croydon.

I have called on the Premier — and indeed the government, and indeed the Minister for Police — to properly resource Mooroolbark police station so it can return to being open to the public 24/7. There is no guarantee that this government will not cut resources from Croydon police station. I have run a campaign to keep Mooroolbark police station open to the public 24/7. I know the arguments about the two-up policy and about putting cars out on the road and policing, but I would say that when I talk to people in my electorate, they say that if they were in an emergency or wanted to visit that station after hours, they would pull up there, go to the front door and expect to be able to get in and see an officer. As I understand it, there is just a button there that calls 000. I think my constituents would be quite alarmed, if they are not already aware of it, that that station is not open to the public 24/7.

I turn my attention to sporting clubs because I have a proud record of fighting for upgrades to local sporting grounds, whether it be for surfaces, scoreboards, lighting or clubrooms. I have got a proven track record of delivering, but of course demand always outweighs supply, so there is much work to do in my electorate. Again it is disappointing that more funding has not been allocated for the much-needed upgrades to our local sporting facilities, as has been said by previous speakers and indeed by my colleague and friend the member for Malvern, who pointed out the Premier has instead chosen to allocate \$225 million to the redevelopment of the AFL Etihad Stadium and has turned his back on local community sport.

I could easily name a dozen clubs putting their hands up for funding assistance for much-needed upgrades to their sporting facilities, whether it be for lighting, toilets, additional change rooms to cater for male and female sport, juniors and seniors, or upgrades to clubrooms. Many clubs are seeking funding assistance for upgrades and would be disheartened to see millions of dollars going into Etihad Stadium instead of into local grassroots sport.

In particular, Ainslie Park at Brentnall Road, Croydon, is a facility that is in need of an upgrade. I commend the council for having done the surface, the scoreboard, the lighting and the facilities there, but the clubrooms are very much in need of an upgrade. They are used by junior football and used by the Ainslie Park Cricket Club. I will be fighting for funding — disappointingly, not in this budget — and I will be looking at what we can do to get a funding upgrade there.

I was at the Eastfield Cricket Club presentation night recently. As we all do at this time of year, certainly over the past few weeks we have done the rounds of the cricket presentation nights of the clubs in our electorates. If you go down to Eastfield Cricket Club in Benson Oval at Eastfield Park in Croydon, it is in much need of an upgrade. The toilets open out into a very small area, which is called a club function room. As we know clubs, particularly cricket clubs that do not necessarily have huge gate takings, rely on being able to have functions at their local clubs or their canteen, or use facilities to generate income, which of course they plough straight back into the club and to develop the many teams they have. Eastfield Cricket Club is a terrific club, and again I will fight for the much-needed funding for the upgrade. I am pleased to see a little bit of money again from the federal member for Deakin, Michael Sukkar. I hope to be able to add to that at some point in time, but certainly not in this budget.

The Croydon Rangers Gridiron Club is getting an upgrade. There is Silcock Reserve, and I have fought for many years to get an upgrade to the facilities there. I have talked to South Croydon Football Club and South Croydon Cricket Club, and they need a cool room upgrade. A very small amount of money is needed for a new stove and they are after lights, but certainly the cool room would be lucky to cost a couple of thousand dollars, and it would make a huge difference to their functions and facilities. The Maroondah Rugby Club plays Rugby Union down at Griff Hunt Reserve and is in need of some upgrades down there, particularly to the lighting. It is very disappointing that more funding has not been allocated to the much-needed upgrades for local sporting facilities.

On public transport, after campaigning for the past four years there is finally a little bit of money allocated for car parking at local railway station car parks, but \$60 million is a joke and will not go far enough to address the problem. We all agree that we should be encouraging more and more people to catch trains and get on our public transport system to go to and from work or their appointments in the city. But when the car parks are full and overflowing by 7 o'clock in the morning commuters are frustrated and give up when they cannot get a car park at the local station.

It is a bit of an insult to just throw a little bit of money at the problem. It will not resolve it. We would be seeking to get a much greater allocation of money that would look to upgrade railway station car parks so people can drive down, get a car park and get on the train. Of course we have all heard the stories. It is one thing for commuters to get on the train early and come in to work, but you get university students, TAFE students, elderly people and others who want to go into the city for a specialist appointment and who go down to the station at about 10 or 10.30 in the morning but they cannot get a car park. Invariably they start parking in local streets. Councils come along and put up limited parking signs, pushing people further and further away from the station. Then because they cannot get a park, or indeed they cannot walk or are otherwise unable to get down there, they have got the choice of either catching an Uber or a taxi or giving up and driving into town. That is not the outcome we want, so we need more money for local railway station car parks, particularly in Mooroolbark in my patch and indeed Croydon station.

I was disappointed to see no new bus route servicing Maroondah or the Yarra Ranges. As our population grows and we encourage people to use our public transport system, the Premier should be investing in

new and additional bus services to cater for commuters in our local area.

For schools the only bit of funding that I could find for my electorate is the money announced for the stage 2 development of Melba Secondary College, which will see the completion of this much-needed school redevelopment project. I congratulate the school community, who have had to fight long and hard for the past four years to secure this stage 2 funding. Well done to all involved from the school community in securing that stage 2 funding, and of course I see a commitment to some sporting facilities there, including basketball, so that is a good result for that school community.

In summary, this budget is built on higher taxes and a higher cost of living. It does nothing to address cost-of-living pressures. The Premier and the Treasurer have so much money — billions and billions of dollars — and they should have done a whole lot better in my view. They have the money and they had the opportunity, but they wasted that opportunity in that they have not been able to address some of these things across Melbourne and across Victoria for our great state. Instead the Premier is continuing to neglect the east and in particular the issues of crime, law and order, roads, traffic congestion, cost of living and power bills. Cost of living, as we know, has skyrocketed under Labor.

Major projects have blown out. I think the member for Malvern in his contribution made the point that when Labor promises \$20.7 billion in major projects, it actually costs \$45.7 billion, so it is actually a blowout. It is inefficient management of major projects to not be able to deliver them on time and on budget, or according to specification in many instances, so we have a \$25 billion blowout. What does Labor say? 'Oh, look at all this money we are spending on infrastructure. We are spending more on infrastructure' — but they are the same projects. They are just cost blowouts. The same projects that should have cost \$20.7 billion actually cost 45.7 billion, which is a \$25 billion blowout.

I have a long list here but time does not permit me to go through all of the cost blowouts. But the one in particular that stood out to me was the Hoddle Street upgrade. Why did this stand out? Because it was promised as a \$60 million project and the cost has blown out to \$108.6 million — that is a blowout of \$48.6 million, nearly double. The reason this stands out to me is that this project only commenced on 7 January this year. They shut the road for a week to get the bulk of the work done, and of course there are ongoing works, but how can a project that started on 7 January

this year blow out by nearly \$48.6 million in barely four months? That sort of money could have built hospitals, ambulance stations, secondary schools and primary schools. It could have gone into a project like the east–west link.

Victoria is now taxed at the highest rate in the country. This is typical Labor: higher taxing and a lot of debt, a point that many of my colleagues have made and will continue to make here because it is such an insult. When the Premier, then Leader of the Opposition, promised there would be no new taxes, he lied to Peter Mitchell on Channel 7 when asked:

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 then Leader of the Opposition looked down the barrel of the camera and said:

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

And what have we seen? We have seen 12 new taxes. It was a lie, and Victorians have been ripped off.

Public sector wages have blown out by over 38 per cent, up to \$7.1 billion. I meant to check this fact before I came in here, but I will check it for *Hansard*. I think Neil Mitchell on his 3AW program last Wednesday morning, after the budget was handed down, was talking about public sector wages costing \$700 million per day, each and every day. It is up by 38.2 per cent, \$7.1 billion — that is \$700 million per day, which is extraordinary.

You have to ask whether Victorians are better off now than they were four years ago. Victorian families are paying for this budget with a higher cost of living, particularly in my electorate of Croydon. It is not good enough, and people have a choice to change this coming November.

**Ms HENNESSY** (Minister for Health) (16:14) — I too am very happy to rise to make a contribution on the Appropriation (2018–2019) Bill 2018. Acting Speaker, as you would know, this has been a really fantastic budget for health, particularly investment in regional health, and I will come to talk about some of the portfolio-specific contributions in my portfolio as the Minister for Health, but before I do so I would like to briefly reflect upon some of the fantastic budget outcomes for the communities that I represent in the seat of Altona.

Acting Speaker, as you may know, Altona is comprised of some traditional old industrial-based suburbs and significant areas of growth. As we are seeing lots of

developments grow, we need the services and we need the investment, but particularly we need to make sure that there is open space and that we do not forget that a good, clean environment is also as important as ensuring that we have got the school services, the health services, the emergency services and the like, so I am really delighted that in this budget there is a \$1 million allocation for the Greening the Pipeline project, which provides new parks and open spaces in suburban Melbourne. Effectively what that investment will seek to do is transform the main outfall sewer reserve, which is heritage listed and runs along the Federation Trail bike path. It will transform that into parkland, and that parkland will service a growing population particularly in Melbourne's outer west. That is an incredibly important investment from the perspective of my local community.

Community safety is an issue that is of concern to my local community. I am very pleased with the commitment and focus our government has put on investing for additional police resources. I know, as the Minister for Police outlines in this house very frequently, that the academy is full and certainly the cities of Wyndham and Hobsons Bay have been the recipients of some of the early graduates. We certainly look forward to more police graduating and those police resources being applied in the growing areas of Melbourne's outer west. But I am really delighted that this budget includes an allocation of funding to purchase and procure land for the purposes of building a police station in Point Cook — again, a very big growing community. We are currently serviced by both the Werribee and Wyndham North police stations, but ensuring that we start to put down some resources in the growing suburb of Point Cook is a really terrific and very welcome investment in my seat.

It has also been a really significant budget from the perspective of education. I am really delighted that the Sanctuary Lakes South P–9 school development, which is currently underway, received funding for the next stage. That is going to be a terrific school that is scheduled to open in 2019, but \$3.13 million of additional funding will enable the enhancement of the scope of what is already being built at the moment.

The pièce de résistance, however, in terms of education investment, is of course the need for an additional senior school in Point Cook. I am really delighted that in this budget our government is delivering a \$53 million investment to build another senior school in Point Cook. This is going to be a really significant education investment for our local community. This is going to be a vertical school. The school is proposed to be open by January 2020. The school is currently going

to be built for 1100 students, and the size and the nature of the school is testament to the absolute need we have in Melbourne's growing suburbs to ensure that we are able to meet the needs of people and that people are able to plan where their kids are going to go to school, that they are able to do that with certainty and that they are able to do that knowing that there is going to be quality, not just in the capital features of those schools but also in the teaching quality in those schools. I think that is incredibly important.

The TAFE announcements, which I am sure many have already reflected upon and I am sure many will in the future, have been rapturously received in my local community. That is for a couple of really obvious reasons. One of the great ambitions that most parents have is that their children are healthy and that they are able to be educated well enough to be able to get a job that is decently paying and that brings them professional fulfilment. I can think of no other greater symbol of the transformation of education opportunities in this state than the announcement around making TAFE free. Of particular interest to me of course is that some of these are not just areas that are sometimes focused on traditionally male industries — industries, can I say, that I am delighted to see are increasingly attracting female participants. But we also know that one of the fastest growing sectors in our state and in our country is the health and community services sector, so to see a pre-nursing qualification included in the list of free TAFE opportunities, I think, is also a fantastic opportunity and one that is warmly welcomed by the community that I represent.

As you would know, Acting Speaker McGuire, with automotive history also in your seat, the Altona Toyota plant has been an incredibly strong feature of employment opportunities but also community support for our local community. The changes that have occurred in the automotive industry have shown the absolute importance of ensuring that we are able to provide not just transition opportunities for those that have no longer got those opportunities in the automotive industry but also pathways for these communities. What are the jobs we are pointing to for the young people in our communities to be trained in for them to then have reasonable prospects of employment? So the TAFE announcement is particularly important in my local community, particularly for that purpose as well. I must say that I do agree with some of the comments that I have heard, particularly from the Minister for Training and Skills and the Premier. The concept of the snobbery that it is only a university degree that is of value and that delivers a decent job is not one that I necessarily agree with. I think sending a very strong message, as I have

heard you say, Acting Speaker, to be a state that is able to think with its hands as well is incredibly important.

I also really hope that this announcement, in placing importance on vocational education and training and making it genuinely accessible to people, is also the beginning of a cultural change as to how we view jobs and employment prospects and how we absolutely put a value on what it is that people learn and what it is that they do. I have no greater hope for my children other than that they remain healthy, that they are educated, that they are well employed and that they are able to be so in a fulfilling way.

I am absolutely hopeful that this TAFE announcement is going to provide those sorts of opportunities and those sorts of stories for many people in Melbourne's western suburbs for whom, particularly in lower income communities, the ability to afford TAFE — the ability to actually pay to go to TAFE — is simply just not within their family's means. I think that this is one of those announcements that potentially is going to change life outcomes for many people. I know that always risks overstatement, but it is absolutely critical — and I say that as a person that was the beneficiary of free education. My family certainly would not have been in a position for us to have had opportunities for higher education if there had have been a high price tag applied. It does provide those opportunities for people to pursue things that they ordinarily would not be able to, irrespective of what their parents' income is. So I welcome that with great gusto.

I would also just like to briefly reflect upon the neighbourhood housing funding. I have got a couple of really fantastic neighbourhood houses in my electorate. They provide a really important role — from playgroups to activities for seniors, art classes and the provision of community space. I know that in this budget the additional money that is being made available for neighbourhood houses to provide the opportunity for there to be five additional hours' funding really does make a difference. Many of these organisations are run off the smell of an oily rag, and they are often staffed, through the nobility and the free contribution of energy and love for an organisation, by those in the local community. I am pleased that we have been able to lighten that load ever so slightly, but I still do not want to diminish the incredible volunteering contribution that is made by so many.

Just to turn to some of the announcements in this budget with my portfolio hat on, one of the things that I am incredibly delighted with is that there is a \$1.2 billion investment in capital funding to build and

expand hospitals across the state. I am very conscious that many of our health services are in desperate need of capital investment. It is important to try to rebuild a pipeline after so many were neglected for so long, and I think that we are now getting to the point where we are starting to build a proper capital investment pipeline across our health services. We have certainly got more work to do.

Some of the highlights include the \$462 million to expand and redevelop the Ballarat Base Hospital. It is an extraordinary hospital, and I am delighted to see the member for Wendouree in the chamber. She is a warrior for Ballarat Health Services and high-quality health services not only for patients but for the staff that work there. They provide world-class care at the Ballarat Base Hospital. Some of the infrastructure there is challenging to say the least. This is one of the biggest capital investments that we have seen in Ballarat. It will not just build a world-class hospital; it will generate over 1300 jobs during construction and it will deliver over 1000 ongoing jobs in terms of healthcare jobs into the future when it is open. So I am really delighted that we have been able to deliver that.

There is \$124 million to implement an electronic medical record (EMR) system. This may not sound all that exciting on face value; however, the purpose of an EMR is to ensure that a patient who, for example, might be a patient at the women's hospital and who is then required to utilise the services at the Peter MacCallum hospital does not have to pick up a pile of medical files and walk them across the road. It means that there are real-time responses around diagnostic tests and that patients do not have to continually retell their story to every specialist or doctor that they go and see.

As you would well know, Acting Speaker McGuire, with your strong interest in medical research, the future breakthroughs around medical research are going to come from big data, and we will only have access to big data if we are able to leverage off things like EMRs in order to do things like make a judgement as to whether or not a patient might be eligible for a clinical trial or might well be best served by participation in a clinical trial that is occurring elsewhere. This is a real game changer, and I know that is a cliché in our line of work, but it is an absolute game changer when it comes to the experience of patients. Most importantly it will be a game changer when it comes to improving data through which we can get greater access to medical research for so many Victorians who desperately need it.

The \$115 million to rebuild the Wonthaggi Hospital will partially deliver a new emergency department and some additional infrastructure. Again, this is another

health service that is in desperate need of infrastructure investment and support. They were incredibly delighted with this announcement. Of course at the end of this investment Wonthaggi Hospital will be able to assume the status of a subregional hospital, with a very strong relationship with Dandenong Hospital. Again this is a fantastic health service, and we are delighted that we have been able to make the investment that we have announced in this budget.

There is \$29.6 million to expand and reconfigure the Sunshine Hospital emergency department. Sunshine — Western Health — provide fantastic services under extraordinary pressure when it comes to demand. We know from Sunshine Hospital, where we have got a very, very complex group of patients both from an alcohol and drug perspective and from a mental health perspective, that we want to design our emergency departments in a way that is in the best interests of the patients but also in the best interests of the workforce. At Sunshine, with the reconfiguration of the emergency department we will be providing a special children's section. We have got fantastic paediatric services there. This is a much-needed project and one that I am sure will make the experience not only better for patients but better for the workforce.

Of course we have also announced the six hubs across the state that will focus on specialised services for both alcohol and drug patients and mental health patients. Part of that is about trying to make sure that we are better able to respond to that group in our community upon arrival in our emergency departments. I know Minister Foley has worked long and hard in order for us to lift our capability when it comes to both mental health and alcohol and drug response, and those hubs that will be built in our acute hospitals will be a really important part of that response.

The budget adds \$50 million to bring our total Regional Health Infrastructure Fund from \$200 million to \$250 million. That has been an important fund to support smaller regional and rural health services in getting smaller capital works done, so I am delighted that we have been able to increase and improve that. And of course we have also added a \$218 million investment in order to do an elective surgery blitz.

I see my time is running out. There are really significant investments in both capital and operational expenditure. This is a budget that reflects our values: Labor governments value health. I commend the bill to the house.

**Ms STALEY** (Ripon) (16:29) — I rise to speak on the Appropriation (2018–2019) Bill 2018. This budget

is a missed opportunity to deliver for the Ripon electorate. It is also a missed opportunity to address cost-of-living pressures. On the one hand there are the kind of investments that you would have expected to see in Ripon that are not there, and on the other hand there is little to see for the \$500 a year increases in household power costs since this government was elected in 2014.

I will turn first to education, and I will begin with the Miners Rest Primary School. The Miners Rest Primary School is bursting at the seams, and that is why we have announced that should we come to government in November we will build a new school for Miners Rest on a greenfield site to properly accommodate all the children of Miners Rest. But inexplicably the government has chosen a different path and one that is not supported by the school community. They have announced that they will expand the school on its current site. However, once you look at the budget it is not even that. There is only planning money in the budget. There is no actual delivery of the school and no actual building of anything in the budget. Miners Rest under Labor is entirely dependent on more demountables, a compromise play space and not enough room for the community.

If I then turn to Lucas Primary School, it is four years late. The Liberals committed to building this school in 2014, and it is now 2018 and not a sod has been turned. This school is needed, and we knew that. The government has absolutely dragged its heels on this.

I will mention one other school that is not actually in Ripon; it is in the seat of Wendouree, but many of the students from Ripon go to the school — Ballarat High School. The government has committed \$4 million to Ballarat High School; however, that is \$6 million short of what the school says it needs, and it is certainly not the \$10 million that was committed to by the Liberals in 2014.

I will now turn to health. I note that there is no new capital funding announced for any health service in Ripon. There is funding announced for the Ballarat Base Hospital, which, as the Minister for Health has just said, is in the seat of Wendouree but it does service the region covered by Ripon. But this expansion is on the never-never. Building will not start until 2020 and it will not be finished until 2024. That is two elections away. This is a mirage.

Turning to water, we have welcome funding for the East Grampians pipeline, which is a project that that community has been advocating for and which I strongly support, as do my Liberal and National Party

colleagues. However, this vital project is one that the Premier is playing politics with. In the media release announcing this project prior to the budget the government said that the federal government now needs to step up and provide its share of the funding. It is yet another case where it is the feds' fault that something is not there. The federal government is waiting for the state government's paperwork. Minister, get on with it and make an application. They cannot fund something you have not asked for. I think it is particularly harsh to use farmers who are doing it tough as a political football. We need to see that paperwork in and that project getting going.

If we turn now to roads, the single-largest project in western Victoria — the Western Highway duplication — has previously been a bipartisan project under both federal and state governments. It has effectively been cancelled because VicRoads has not asked for the cash it had previously requested to progress this project. Instead we only have \$8.5 million in this budget, and that is for the Buangor to Ararat works, which had been stalled through court cases, through process and through the government having forgotten to reapply for the planning permit. That means the whole of the works from Ararat to Stawell are still to be done. That will cost about \$415 million, yet the budget has only got \$157.3 million of remaining expenditure and that can only be spent after July 2020. It is clear that in this budget Labor has abandoned Stawell and the key road safety and economic benefits that come from this vital project. Labor has not funded or built a single centimetre of the Western Highway since coming to power in 2014. They finished a project started by the Liberal-Nationals government, but they have not moved forward from there.

While I am on roads, Labor's failure to renew the coalition's country roads and bridges program has now stripped \$28 million from Ripon's local roads. That is \$28 million for Ripon's local roads that Labor has taken away, so no wonder our roads are crumbling. If we move to what has been announced, the Ararat and Beaufort bypasses have no actual construction money, and more importantly there is no money for these communities to plan for their bypassed future.

Lastly on roads, there is no money in the budget for the next stage of the Ballarat link road, something that the Ballarat City Council has noted with dismay. That is despite Jaala Pulford of the other place being very keen to tell us at the opening of stage 1, which, I may add, was entirely funded by the Liberal-Nationals government, that she and her government were committed to building that road. That was more empty words, wasn't it?

If I move to public transport and rail freight, the government is not returning rail to Donald; only the coalition will return rail to Donald. There is no funding for it in this budget. There is nothing in this budget that will return passenger rail to Donald. Instead the budget toys with the people of Dunolly because it suggests, under the government's flawed approach, that at some point this would pave the way for rail to Dunolly but not to Donald. There is no additional rail service in this budget to arrive in Ararat by 9 a.m., which is something that community has been asking for for a long time and something that we are committed to if we come to government.

I have really serious concerns over the Murray Basin rail project. Again, this has been a bipartisan federal-state project until now. Stage 5, which is the stage that connects Maryborough to Ballarat and would allow freight to go from the north of the state through to Geelong, is not mentioned, is not funded. This is a crucial segment of this project. I note that even in the budget that is understood. On page 38 of budget paper 3 it says that some works are needed to be done 'to manage the interface between the Murray Basin rail project and the Ballarat line upgrade'. But there is no funding there to do this. How do we finish the Murray Basin rail project, the key transformative project for agriculture in north-west Victoria, if section 5 is not funded?

Similarly, there is no funding for the planning or business case to return passenger rail to Stawell and beyond. That is something that we will deliver in government. Labor's fourth and last budget tells us all we need to know about infrastructure and connectivity. It tells us Ripon does not matter.

I now turn to the courts, prisons and public safety. A notable omission in this budget is that there is no upgrade for the Maryborough courthouse. Other rural courthouses do have upgrades funded, yet Maryborough is abandoned again. I find this deeply disappointing and really cruel, because Maryborough has some of the highest levels of family violence in Victoria and the Maryborough courthouse is the place where people, mostly women, go to get intervention orders as the first step through the legal system in extricating themselves from family violence. Yet they are forced to mill around outside with their alleged perpetrators and then to go through the same door with those perpetrators, because there is only one door. Security guards have been put at that courthouse for exactly that problem. However, the courthouse needs to be upgraded. I am not the only one calling for that. The local legal aid community has also strongly advocated for it. Prior to the budget on multiple occasions we

made it very, very clear to the government that this needs to be a priority, and yet there is no funding there.

Similarly, there is no funding for a new police station in Creswick, despite the fact that the police station in Creswick was built in the early 1980s when Creswick was probably a quarter of the size it is now. Just on population growth alone, it needs a much bigger station.

There is one thing that is peculiar, I suppose, to the seat of Ripon because we have two large prisons. I am disappointed that there were no announcements made in the budget to fund any programs to tackle the violence against prison officers. The number of assaults against prison officers particularly in the Hopkins Correctional Centre was extremely high in 2017 and the highest on record. The government refuses to admit it has a problem. I believe that it needed to put some funding into looking at how the levels of assaults against prison officers can be reduced. Everybody deserves a safe place at work.

There is something in the budget that I saw over and over again, and that was the use of business cases. We are getting a Grampians cycling plan and budget paper 3 says we are going 'to develop business cases for priority projects'. There is going to be a 'premium produce business case'. The silo art study is going to — and this is a doozy — 'develop a business case for the development of an arts trail'. I think somebody had too much development. The Ararat and Beaufort bypasses planning 'will be undertaken to inform a business case', so they will be only an entry into a business case.

In summary, if this is an election budget and this is the best Labor can do, then it is further proof that the people of Ripon do not matter to Labor. If we look more generally at the budget, we see some of the reasons why perhaps we are not seeing the kind of investment in Ripon that we need to see. That is because we have seen cost blowouts of \$25 billion. That is not extra funding; that is not extra projects. That is simply for the same amount of projects but for a lot more money. That \$25 billion that is now being sucked up into Labor's mismanagement of projects could have funded the duplication of the road to Stawell. It could have funded upgrades and a full new school for Miners Rest. It could have funded many of the other things that I have mentioned in this contribution today. Instead, those of us in Victoria are left being taxed the highest of any people in the country. This is now the highest taxing state — and it is taxing us to pay for Labor's massive cost blowouts.

All of Victoria needs infrastructure, not just Melbourne. We cannot accept \$25 billion in cost blowouts for no

new projects, because what misses out? It is country Victoria that misses out, as Labor's Premier for Melbourne continues to pour more and more billions of dollars into propping up the projects that his ministers cannot manage properly, that are not costed properly. That \$25 billion would bring a lot of infrastructure to this state and that is how much Labor has admitted to blowing. This is not a good budget for Ripon.

**Ms KILKENNY** (Carrum) (16:44) — As a member of the Andrews Labor government and the member for Carrum, I could not be prouder to rise today to speak on the Appropriation (2018–2019) Bill 2018, because what a great budget this is. This is a budget for all Victorians, with all Victorians sharing in this state's success. Those opposite know this is a good budget. Even people in their own camp are saying this is a good budget — and they are absolutely right.

This budget is good for business and business confidence and great for jobs. This budget is about strengthening our communities and making them safer and healthier. And this budget is about giving our kids and our young people the opportunities they rightfully deserve and the skills they need to get the jobs of the future so that we can continue to build this great state. This is a budget that is positive. It is sound, and it continues and builds upon the extraordinary momentum we are driving here in Victoria. And it is fair — it is for everyone, from the regions to the suburbs and from the old to the young. And this is a budget that is getting things done.

Government infrastructure spending will reach \$13.7 billion in 2018–19 and average \$10.1 billion over the budget and forward estimates. This is more than double the average spend from 2005 to 2014. By any measure, this is astounding. Look at our jobs record. More than 330 000 people now have the security and dignity of a job since the Andrews Labor government came to office in 2014.

Training and skills development has received a massive boost, with funding and investment of more than \$800 million. This will include an extraordinary initiative, one I am extremely proud of — that is, free TAFE for 30 priority courses and 18 preapprenticeship courses. We are also investing in students who want to complete their apprenticeships at school. Under the new Head Start apprenticeships and traineeships program students will have the option to undertake an additional year of high school and graduate with an apprenticeship or traineeship, finishing school and ready to work in a high-demand or high-growth industry. We are repairing the damage that was done to the TAFE system by the coalition, and we are recognising the importance of our

TAFE teachers and their absolutely critical role in building Victoria's skilled workforce.

On health, the Andrews Labor government is making a record investment in mental health with \$705 million in funding to make sure that Victorians who are facing mental illness or an addiction get the specialist treatment they need. More than \$1.2 billion will go towards building and expanding our hospitals right across the state. We are continuing our incredible work of investing in our amazing paramedics and improving ambulance response times to the best we have seen in years and years.

Combined with all of our work on renewable energy, including our legislative renewable energy targets which are working to bring more energy supply into the market and driving down energy prices, we are directly addressing cost-of-living pressures. Every resident who uses the independent energy comparison website, Victorian Energy Compare, will be eligible for a \$50 energy rebate. Drivers can now elect to pay their car registration in quarterly payments instead of the one-off \$800 renewal fee. These are all issues that are important to members in my community and of course to Victorians across the state. I want to congratulate the Treasurer and the finance minister and their respective teams, and I congratulate the Premier on an outstanding budget — a budget that builds on the extraordinary amount of work we have already done and a budget that will position all Victorians for a future full of opportunities.

What does this mean for the people in my electorate — for the people in Carrum? It means a very great deal. In just over three and a half years as the member for Carrum, I have delivered more than \$36 million in school upgrade funding alone. In this budget six local schools will be rebuilt or modernised: Bonbeach primary gets \$6.2 million, Seaford primary gets \$5.3 million, Rowelwyn Park primary gets \$5.7 million, Carrum primary gets \$1 million, Patterson Lakes primary gets \$2.2 million, Belvedere Park primary gets \$1.4 million, and I have not finished yet. This is about investing in our young students and all the students to come. To keep our kids safe at Skye primary we have funded \$600 000 to install pedestrian lights at the school crossing on Ballarto Road.

We have fast-tracked the long-awaited upgrade to Thompsons Road, and we are now removing the much-maligned roundabout at Frankston-Dandenong Road and Thompsons Road and upgrading it to a fully signalised intersection. My Facebook feed went absolutely wild when I made this announcement, because it means no more running the gauntlet at this

roundabout. In a massive win for the local community and local businesses, we are duplicating Lathams Road in Carrum Downs all the way from EastLink to Frankston-Dandenong Road, building a new bridge over Peninsula Link and upgrading several intersections with traffic lights. This road is absolutely crucial to the Carrum Downs industrial estate, which is now more economically important to Frankston city's economy than Frankston CBD. More than 1500 jobs have been added here in the past five years. The duplication of Lathams Road will provide a massive boost to the precinct's productivity, creating more and more jobs as well as improved safety for all road users who just want to get home sooner and more safely.

In another huge win Carrum Downs will be getting a brand-new bus service: a service that will finally link Carrum Downs with Seaford railway station and Cranbourne. This is so important on many levels. Parts of Carrum Downs and Skye have no public transport, and where transport is available it diverts back to Frankston rather than to the closer railway station at Seaford or to the major shopping and residential areas in Cranbourne.

I know that many students want part-time jobs, but without a bus service they have to rely on someone to drive them. This new service will help those students gain independence and get part-time work and, importantly, valuable work experience. For so many others this service will provide an important option for people wanting to get about their local area or to the railway station. This will be the second bus service that I have introduced for residents in Carrum Downs.

In other tremendous news Seaford pier will finally be restored. For more than two summers the end of the pier has been closed to the public for safety reasons. The community was ecstatic when I was able to announce more than \$900 000 in this year's state budget to restore this icon — this wonderful piece of history that has such sentimental value for so many.

My community, along with the communities of Frankston and Mordialloc, celebrated the sensational announcement that the Mordialloc bypass will now be the Mordialloc Freeway. This means one continuous freeway all the way from Frankston to Clayton, saving on that all-important travel time and improving safety — no traffic lights, just a straight run all the way. The construction of the on ramp to the Mornington Peninsula Freeway at Thames Promenade in Chelsea will have huge benefits for Bonbeach residents, who will not have to travel back through Carrum and Patterson Lakes to get onto the freeway. And of course, how can I not mention the new bridge over the

Patterson River, extending Station Street and finally connecting the communities of Bonbeach and Carrum? This has to be one of the most highly anticipated infrastructure projects for the local communities of Bonbeach, Carrum and Patterson Lakes. People have been asking for this bridge for more than 60 years, and it is being built right now. It is all part of the massive upgrade and the revitalisation works taking place at Carrum with the level crossing removal project.

There are upgrades, projects and new services happening all across the Carrum electorate. Local traders are seeing huge sales from all the workers on site — particularly at the Seaford Road level crossing where works are taking place 24/7 at the moment. Just further down the train line where the Carrum electorate meets the Frankston electorate, work is powering along to remove the level crossing at Skye and Overton roads, dubbed one of the worst in metro Melbourne. I could talk and talk and talk about all the things that are happening in Carrum and all the investment that is taking place — literally hundreds of millions of dollars of funding and investment in the Carrum electorate, all because we want to improve the lives of and the opportunities for everyone who lives in this wonderful part of the world.

Let me finish with TAFE, because TAFE is a very crucial part of my community, where more than 16 000 residents proudly have a TAFE qualification. I say 'proudly' because TAFE-qualified people are the very people who actually build this state. I want to acknowledge them and thank them for their extraordinary contribution in making Victoria the great state that it is today. We know that our jobs of the future are very much going to depend upon a TAFE qualification, and that is whether it is building our infrastructure projects, building hospitals, building schools, removing level crossings, caring for older Victorians or for people who are living with a disability or nursing us when we are sick. More than ever the skills that we need to continue to build and strengthen our state are learned at TAFE, and we need to support our TAFEs.

We need to provide those opportunities for our young people to enter into TAFE, and that is exactly what this budget is doing, with more than \$800 million going into the TAFE system. We want to make sure that our young people — our young Victorians — are best placed and, might I say, first in line for the new jobs that are coming, the jobs that we are creating with our massive infrastructure projects and the jobs that we need for our future — so that is the jobs in aged care and in nursing as well as in educational support. That is why this budget will fully fund TAFE for 30 priority

courses and 18 preapprenticeship courses. These courses will not cost anything, so we are removing this prohibitive cost barrier for many, many young people in my electorate. We are breaking down that barrier for those people to get a TAFE qualification, and it is a TAFE qualification that will enable them to walk into one of these jobs.

We are restoring confidence in our TAFE system. Let us not forget this is the very system that the coalition, those opposite, absolutely gutted. No-one will ever forget what the Liberals did to Victoria's TAFE system, and nor should they. We will never let them forget what they did to our TAFE system. By ripping out the guts of TAFE, by closing TAFEs all over this state, the Liberals let down a whole generation of Victoria's young people.

**Mr Noonan** — And The Nationals.

**Ms KILKENNY** — Let me not forget The Nationals in all of this as well. Letting down that whole generation of young Victorian people is to their everlasting shame, and we will not let them forget that. We are restoring confidence in our TAFE system because a strong public TAFE system will give Victorians accredited, quality skills that lead to good jobs, and these are the jobs that we are creating and the jobs that our state needs.

In conclusion I have to say that this is a very proud Labor budget. It is a budget that is delivering for all people in my electorate and for people across Victoria. It means that we are sharing in this state's success. We are removing level crossings, we are building roads and we are addressing the needs in our health care, particularly in mental health. I was stopped at the train station at Seaford recently by a person who wanted to commend the Andrews Labor government on the budget. I thought for a moment that they might have been referring to the removal of the level crossings or the investment in our TAFE system or investments in our local schools, but no — she wanted to stop and talk about our significant, our historic, our record investment in mental health. For her it was so important that this issue was finally put back onto the agenda and is receiving the kind of funding that is absolutely crucial and critical to support so many people in our community. She is absolutely right. There are many, many governments who would not put this kind of investment into something as crucial and important as mental health, and I am extremely proud it is the Andrews Labor government that has taken it upon itself to properly fund this area of our community.

This is another defining Labor budget — a budget that is fair and a budget that is certainly getting things done. We believe in taking action, making change and improving the lives of and the opportunities for all Victorians, and I am very proud to commend the bill to the house.

**Mr CRISP** (Mildura) (16:59) — I rise to talk on behalf of the electorate of Mildura about a budget that is a disappointment to Mildura and to regional Victoria. For the rest of Victoria this is a tax-and-spend budget. There are 12 new or increased taxes, which has seen the tax take go up by 35 per cent in four years. There is the trebling of the brown coal tax; new annual property valuations; a stamp duty on property transfers between spouses; increased stamp duty on new cars; a new stamp duty on off-the-plan purchases; the vacant home tax; a point-of-consumption gambling tax; new land tax surcharges for absentee owners; a stamp duty surcharge for foreign purchasers; a new city access tax for the West Gate tunnel; Uber and taxi fare taxes, let us not forget those; and of course the fire services levy, which is predicted to rise by \$200 over the next two years — all of this after the Premier assured everybody on the eve of the last election that there would be no new taxes.

Really it is no wonder that families are feeling the cost-of-living pressures. The cost of energy has risen \$300 in the last year, but next year that can be \$50 less if you visit a website. This is not going to cut it with those families that have got an electricity bill on the table and are trying to work out how they are going to pay it. When we delve into the budget we see that wages are up by 35 per cent within the government sector since the last election, there has been a 24 per cent increase in executive bureaucrats and the cost of wages next year is predicted to go up by 10 per cent — all of this when we have a period of inflation of around 2 per cent. The capital for projects in this state is being eroded by the difference between the rising cost of wages and inflation. Cost blowouts and what we could have done with that money come to mind.

When we look at a number of these projects we see the West Gate tunnel was promised at \$500 million, and it is now \$6.7 billion; the Metro Tunnel was \$9 billion, now \$11.7 billion; level crossings were \$5 billion, now \$8.3 billion — and that is from the Auditor-General; the north-east link was \$5 billion, now \$16 billion; the east-west link was zero, but it was \$1.3 billion to cancel it; the Victorian Heart Hospital was \$150 million, now \$543 million; and so the list goes on and on. It all comes to \$25 billion blown out on these projects. That could have delivered 25 children's hospitals, 125 000 ambulances, 900 secondary schools and a couple of thousand primary schools, 125 women's and

children's hospitals, 1500 police stations, 42 suburban rail extensions, 2500 new cath labs — something Mildura has on its radar — 1700 trams, 1300 trains and 1100 special development schools. The mind just boggles at where we are with this.

What could that money have also been used for? It could have been used to fight crime, it could have been used to do something about the cost of living and it could have been used to support our Country Fire Authority (CFA) rather than trying to trash it.

What did we want out of this budget? We wanted a plan for decentralisation. We need to be a state of cities, not a city state. Melbourne's growth rate is such that it will not retain its most livable city ranking if it continues this way. There are a number of things that can drive decentralisation. Connectivity is a key driver of decentralisation and also services to give people the comfort and confidence to live in rural areas. That is what we did when we were in government to make Mildura a better place. In the health area to give people confidence in their health system we doubled the size of A and E; we expanded oncology, and Mildura Base Hospital, to their credit, found an oncologist to service that ward; we enlarged the special care nursery; we delivered another birthing suite for our rising birth rate; mental health was put under one roof; we delivered medical staff accommodation to continue to attract those key specialist staff we need from time to time; and we delivered a prevention and recovery care unit, which was very important for mental health care as a step-up, step-down facility. That gave people confidence in the health area.

In livability, the Mildura Riverfront project was a state government initiated project, with \$12 million from the state, \$5 million from the Feds and a small contribution from Mildura Rural City Council. It only happened because Peter Ryan, Frank Tierney, John Kelly and I stood at the rowing club in Mildura on that riverfront in 2010 and committed to that project and the vision.

The Murray Basin rail project to standardise the line to Mildura with a 21-tonne axle loading at 80 kilometres an hour was a \$440 million investment between the state and federal governments. We put our half away in our term in government, and it is now being delivered. That is vital for our exports. Our fresh horticultural product needs to get to port as quickly and efficiently as possible, so too do almonds, grains and mineral sands when the mines are working. All of this was to service strong and expanding markets.

At the end of the drought water security was also an issue, and I will talk about that later. The Australian

dollar was high. It has now settled to a level that makes exports from my area very competitive. The negotiation of free trade agreements by the federal government has increased markets and confidence in Mildura about our horticultural industries and our agriculture. We need reliable and cost-effective freight movement, and the Murray Basin rail project is delivering that, but there is still more work to be done. There are other projects that looked at livability in my area, such as shade in the mall, the Merbein library and a host of CFA sheds.

What did we want from the budget? We wanted recognition that cost of living is an issue, we wanted livability investment to attract the people we need for our economy to continue to grow and the infrastructure to support a growing economy. In health, the Mildura Base Hospital has 165-plus beds, but only 64 ward beds — two 32-bed combinations of wards. This is not enough for the hospital. The front of the house has been fixed, with what we have done. We now need to do the back of the house, which is the heart of the hospital, which are those ward beds.

In rail, to facilitate the effective turnaround of our freight trains we need to address level crossings. We need to make those level crossings safe for both trains and people. As we look to facilitate the future for a passenger train from Mildura to improve our connectivity, we need to make those level crossings safe for the passengers that are in the train and the vehicles that are using the level crossings. In order to do that, with the member for Murray Valley we have committed \$80 million from a Liberal-National government to deal with the level crossings, and there are over 130 of them between Mildura and Maryborough that need some sort of treatment, and of course we need passing loops so that our freight trains can effectively pass and not be held up for long periods, and if and when the passenger train returns we can have the freight trains off the line to allow the passenger train to pass.

Mildura Future Ready is the council's plan for the future. They launched a proposal for a motorsport track in Mildura here in Parliament House back in November, and it was strongly promoted to the government. They are still waiting to get feedback from the government on that particular proposal. It is a strong proposal economically. A flat-track motorsport track will attract many of what we call the enthusiast groups, and of course they will bring their motor vehicles to Mildura to compete and to be social, but they will also stay in our motels, eat at our restaurants and enjoy our other tourist attractions. All of this builds an economy.

It is important that we have residential rehabilitation. We have had issues with drugs, as the rest of Victoria

has, and the ice epidemic did not pass Mildura by, but it is improving. However, we now have a non-residential rehabilitation program which is working well, and for 12 months we have been looking for a residential rehabilitation in north-west Victoria. There are three in the budget, but none are in north-west Victoria. This leaves a very big gap. A lot of work has been done to produce a paper to make the case for a rehab program. I would like to thank Gary Castleman, Rotary and the Royal Flying Doctor Service for the funds to make that happen. Their contribution has produced an outstanding document.

Roads are important too, particularly the C-class roads in my electorate that have become roads of economic importance. In particular there is the Hattah–Wemen road. Fifteen kilometres of that road has had the shoulders widened, but there is still 15 kilometres to do. There is also the Robinvale-Sea Lake Road, which is important too. Both of these roads are narrow and are seeing large amounts of traffic. On the Hattah–Wemen road 150 000 tonnes of almonds move across it in a three-month period, as well as wine grapes and citrus. Similarly, as table grapes are strong exports, they are moving to the Calder Highway via Robinvale-Sea Lake Road. There is also a need for a couple more passing lanes on the Calder Highway.

These are not big asks. The projects that we need would have a budget of around \$25 million to \$30 million. The budget overrun is \$25 billion. All Mildura asked for was 0.12 per cent of the budget overrun to satisfy our needs and to assist us with our decentralisation, particularly in the livability area. If you add in the commitments to make rail safe, it is still less than 1 per cent, not of the Victorian budget but of the Victorian budget overrun.

What did we get? We got a cross-border commissioner. However, the Liberal-Nationals had announced that they would also have a cross-border commissioner that they would fund for four years for \$1 million and that it would be based in Mildura. Labor is delivering \$300 000 in the first year and \$500 000 in the second year, only two years, and is silent about where it would be based. It will be hard to find someone to match the credentials of the New South Wales cross-border commissioner without job security of greater than two years.

We also have jobs in Mildura, and the challenge is to find people to fill those jobs. Mildura is already a fly-in fly-out town, with one particular contractor bringing in a 737 once a week carrying workers to work on a project in Mildura. So there is a need for that. The TAFE college has been given additional funds. We

have the jobs identified from the work that was done by the skills commissioner. The government has provided the money. We had better get those people into those jobs for us all to benefit from, because if we do not our economy will suffer. It is going to be a very stressful period. I do not want Mildura to be a fly-in fly-out town or a drive-in drive-out town with the jobs that we have available.

There is also a research centre to be based in Mildura, but the community are looking for more detail on this. Information on this is a little bit of a scarce commodity in terms of how that \$1.6 million will be spent and what benefits the community will have in terms of a supplement to our research centre. So there are some difficulties there.

Water is a key driver of confidence in Mildura, as I said earlier. I think we can welcome the federal government's \$300 million investment today in the projects that are going to allow for the 605 gigalitres of water to remain in our farming economy but also deliver what the environment needs to make the flood plains in our river system healthy. These are extraordinary sustainable diversion limit offset projects. They need to be built by 2024. Mildura's economy is going to be strong with that investment from the federal government.

The budget is in fact a lost opportunity for regional Victoria. We could have received enough money to make Victoria great, but money has been frittered away with cost overruns. It just leads us back to that old adage that Labor cannot manage money. They cannot manage it, and it is at regional Victoria's expense that we are left with this. So much could have been done with the wasted money to make Victoria and my electorate wonderful places. But Victoria is a victim of that waste, and we will suffer without the investment we need.

**Mr RICHARDSON** (Mordialloc) (17:14) — It is a pleasure to rise and speak on the Appropriation (2018–2019) Bill 2018, the fourth budget of the Andrews Labor government and of this Parliament. There is quite a partisan nature to the speeches that are made on the budget each and every time. It is a shame to see those opposite give not one compliment on the budget — not one skerrick across the \$60 billion-plus budget. There is just not one thing they could take out of the drawer and say, 'Geez, that's half good; that's half decent'. It is always negativity and partisanship. But that is all right. I will share with those opposite, with my colleagues and with those back home in the Mordialloc electorate some of the brighter sides of this budget and the positivity that comes with that.

Budgets are all about values. Budgets are all about the priorities you set for your community and what you will prioritise in your agenda when you have the great honour of representing your state. The time period from when the Andrews Labor government was elected until the end of this term is about 1461 days, and each day we have an obligation on behalf of our community to work as hard as we can to leave the state in a better position than it was the day before or indeed the term before. I think this budget — the last budget of this Parliament and this term of the Andrews Labor government — delivers on those key things.

If you look at my community in particular, we are seeing generational change and generational investment — investment that has been asked for for many years across a range of different governments — finally come to fruition and finally be delivered for our local community. I could not be more proud of that outcome, because when you get the opportunity to govern you make the most of the time you have got and focus on the projects you are going to deliver. That was probably the most disappointing thing I heard, particularly in the shadow Treasurer's contribution today. It was all about negativity and criticising what is being spent rather than the forward vision this sets for the state. I think that is a missed opportunity, and I think we were hoping for something more than just the traditional speech we have heard for the last three years. But never mind; you cannot expect everything, can you? Our particular budget looks towards the challenges of a 10 million-person state by 2051. Those generational projects are so very critical.

We can think about the city loop as it is today and how transformational that has been for our city and the way we travel. Construction first started in 1961 and was completed in 1985 with the opening of Flagstaff station. Today it is a critical piece of infrastructure in the heart of Melbourne. The Melbourne Metro rail tunnel will be as significant in how it transforms our city and how we get around. I am so very excited about another iteration of that, funded over the forward estimates, for which the budget is very critical. The Melbourne Metro rail tunnel could have been finished in a couple of years. Had the Baillieu government just kept the planning money and kept the infrastructure agenda on track — that planning money that was left by the Brumby government — we could be opening that tunnel in two or three years time. That shows the politics of planning and why Infrastructure Victoria and Infrastructure Australia are so critical in assessing those projects.

You can look at one of my local projects that is so critical for our community, the Mordialloc bypass. This has been talked about since Hamer was in government.

The land was put aside by the Hamer government when Aspendale Gardens and Waterways were many years away. It was forward-thinking planning, but it took an Andrews Labor government to fully fund this — no more commitments, no more promises, no more planning. This is being delivered, and regardless of the election outcome thankfully my community has the certainty that the Mordialloc bypass will be built and it will be built to a freeway standard.

This will take tens of thousands of vehicles off local roads, bringing local roads back to local people. I could not be more proud of that, with intersections separated and bridges all the way from Chelsea Heights through to Cheltenham. It is going to be a fantastic investment for our community. Those on and off ramps leading into Chelsea and Chelsea Heights that I fought so hard for have been set aside for many years. They will be delivered under this project. People have been calling for this for years and asking for those things to happen. They are happening because of this very important budget. Every intersection will be bridged all the way through to the Dingley bypass. Every \$1 invested in that project will deliver a \$4 economic advantage and return. If you think of how critical that number is, it is astronomical. When you think about what the east–west link delivered — 45 cents in the dollar — the Mordialloc bypass by comparison is \$4 for every dollar invested, which is an extraordinary economic benefit to my local community.

When you think also of the level crossing removals throughout our area, we have about 210 trains that run up and down the Frankston train line each and every day and capacity is a real challenge. The Melbourne Metro rail tunnel will hugely benefit the running of more trains, but also signalling upgrades and the level crossing removals can help to open up more capacity. You can have more vehicle throughput. You can have more trains running closer together. The level crossings being removed are in Bonbeach, Edithvale, Mentone and Cheltenham. Those projects are so very important for my community, and they will start construction at the end of this year.

One of the more important projects that we have worked on is Yarrabah School. This school was provided with more funding in this budget. It is an extraordinary local school, a school that had to fundraise just to get ramps into their classrooms. That was the state that they confronted during the last term under those opposite. They were fundraising to get ramps into portables. Today we stand here on the dawn of a new rebuild for that entire school. The whole school will be rebuilt, and there will be a hydrotherapy pool delivered, which was part of this budget, giving

that school community, which has grown so significantly over the last 15 years, the building projects that it needs to support children with additional needs, and I could not be more proud. That shows the values and that shows the priorities of what we put forward.

When you look at the capital works agenda of this government and what it has put forward in supporting children with additional needs, there are a couple of things that you can point to that really, hand on heart, are the values of this government: the support for children with additional needs and capital works. That is such a proud moment, and Yarrabah School is one of the beneficiaries. It goes with our funding of \$4.5 million for Chelsea Heights Primary School, a wonderful community school. Chelsea Heights Primary School has not had capital works from the state for many, many years, and I joined the school community to make that announcement. I used to live in Chelsea Heights. I now live in Chelsea. To make that announcement was extraordinary. That school community has grown to nearly 500 kids, and to see the benefit that this building work will have on this school community is fantastic.

Master planning for Mentone Park Primary School has been a long time coming. This will provide the blueprint for Mentone Park so that they will know exactly what they need to do into the future to rebuild and then revitalise their school. Edithvale Primary School has got capital works funding, and it goes with a substantial allocation of funding to all our local schools, with increased equity funding, more funding for student needs in the classroom and then the capital works that we have initiated over three years for our schools.

One of the main features of this budget was the extraordinary announcement of free TAFE courses, which will include 30 priority courses. That will really give young people an opportunity to pursue the skills and training that will get them the jobs out in the market. This is about giving funding to TAFE, supporting our TAFE, investing in the future of our young people and changing the conversation around what TAFE means. Too often we still hear in our education system, 'If you're not going to go into academia, then go down to the Victorian certificate of applied learning', as if that is a secondary alternative. That changes with this budget because you can finish your apprenticeship within the school system. You can get that qualification. Rather than creating a new young working poor — with people struggling to make ends meet and struggling to pay their fees — we are providing that safety net and support for young people to get the qualification they need in those demanded skills. We know that by prioritising those courses we

give young people the best opportunity to find a job in their local communities. To announce those further 10 will be very exciting. I know there is a lot of demand from the TAFE sector, and it complements our values of investing in young people and investing in TAFEs.

If those opposite were elected for another term, we would not be talking about TAFEs. Let us be frank. Campuses were closing and land was going to be sold off. Where would our TAFEs have been had it not been for a Labor government not only restoring funding to TAFE and reversing those cuts but taking it further and investing in young people and giving them hope for a better life by cutting out those fees? That has been a barrier to so many people. You think of young people who are already struggling to make ends meet. They look ahead 15 years and they struggle to see that dream of potentially owning a house in the future because they are up against fees for courses running up into many thousands of dollars. Now they have got that hope and opportunity. We cannot wait to see the first beneficiaries of that funding and that investment. Then there is that extra year provided in high school to finish off a TAFE qualification. They will then be job-ready in that 13th year and be able to go out into a local community and pursue that employment. That is very important.

There are a couple of other really important macro things that have come out of this budget. There has been record investment in mental health support, mental ill health prevention and mental health hubs. This is really critical stuff. Each and every day every member of Parliament would hear from people who have suffered from mental ill health. One in three people will experience mental ill health across the course of their lifetime, and I am so very proud that this government is providing necessary, much-needed funding that will genuinely save lives and will genuinely help to treat an epidemic in our community and our society — that is, people suffering from depression and debilitating anxiety. We will save lives with this investment, and I could not be prouder of that investment in mental health and mental ill health prevention.

I am also really excited about our support for our emergency services, both career and volunteer, in my community. Aspendale and Mentone lifesaving clubs will be the beneficiaries of capital works funding, which is a record funding amount. When you look at our investment in Edithvale Life Saving Club in the last budget, the Chelsea State Emergency Service unit getting a full rebuild, which is very exciting, and the soon to be opened Edithvale Country Fire Authority fully volunteer brigade that has a wonderful four-base station, that shows our values for supporting emergency

services and investing in our local area. It goes with our commitment to provide more firefighters, based on the 2009 Black Saturday royal commission recommendations, and more paramedics after what we saw in the previous government when paramedics were vilified and there was a war against our paramedics. Now we have 450 more paramedics, our community is genuinely safer and response times are the best they have been in nine years.

When you think of the record investment in Victoria Police, that is absolutely having a benefit in reducing the crime rate in our community, with a 9 per cent drop in the Moorabbin district region and an 8 per cent drop in the City of Kingston recently. There has been a 20 per cent increase in the police force, but importantly this is based on population growth and based on areas of need.

I wanted to come quickly to the conversation that occurs regularly about decentralisation. It is a buzzword just like sustainability. We hear it all the time these days — decentralisation. ‘We have got to take people out of the communities that they live in’. It needs to be backed up with jobs and investment. If you do not have the jobs, all you are doing is creating communities of disadvantage. We hear the catchphrase ‘decentralisation’ — ‘Send people away’. All you are telling the next generation of people that live in my community is that they cannot stay in their area; they need to move kilometres out of our community and not have the opportunities in their community. That is a bad message to send. Why can’t they live in the communities that they have grown up in and have the employment outcomes that their parents have enjoyed and others in their community have enjoyed?

The notion that the only option is to send them somewhere else — to move the problem out and create communities of disadvantage — is something I challenge and I am absolutely opposed to. We should be investing in those communities. We can grow our local communities with proper investment in infrastructure. Infrastructure Australia years ago said Victoria had a backlog of nearly \$100 billion. We are addressing those backlogs with our investment in infrastructure — investment in those vital services, in health and in education and in training — giving people opportunity. That is why we are seeing hundreds of thousands of new jobs created. We are not telling Victorians, ‘Sorry, move somewhere else. Move out of Mordialloc. Move out of Chelsea. Too bad — you can’t live there anymore. Why don’t you go somewhere else, 50 kilometres away? You can no longer live in your community’. That is not a policy I support, and it is not a policy I subscribe to.

The Leader of the Opposition has to clarify for my community what decentralisation means — just move out of the local area, move out of the community? Without jobs and investment it means nothing because the reality is half the jobs are created in the CBD, and all it means is people are moving further and further away from their place of employment. It is about providing the services and infrastructure in their local community. My local community will grow by 10 per cent over the coming 10 years. Our plan is to support growth and investment in our communities and to provide the training and jobs for our local area. Our policy is not just to shift the problem somewhere else. This budget delivers in record numbers in roads, in rail, in education and in health, and importantly, it showcases the values of the Andrews Labor government and what we prioritise, which is not based on negativity, not based on opposition but based on hope.

**Mr ANGUS** (Forest Hill) (17:29) — I am very pleased to rise today to speak on the Appropriation (2018–2019) Bill 2018, the Victorian state budget. I note that the budget papers are entitled *Getting Things Done*. Once again this year I think there has actually been a typing error; the title should in fact have read ‘Getting Done Over’, because what we have here is a typical budget of spin from a Labor government, who we know cannot manage money, trying to con all Victorians. I want to focus my contribution on the following key areas. I want to make some general comments, give some specific examples from the budget and then look at the implications for the Forest Hill electorate.

This is a typical Labor budget. We have got record levels of taxation and record levels of spending. It is now a fact that Victoria is the highest taxing state in Australia. There are record levels of taxes and charges, hurting ordinary Victorians. At the same time, under the state Labor government the law and order crisis here in Victoria continues. People are no longer feeling safe in their own homes. The Treasurer is boasting about his surplus; however, Victorians have received nothing in cost-of-living relief, just new and higher taxes and charges. Labor has introduced or increased 12 taxes since the election, a clear broken promise from a Premier who promised all Victorians there would be no new or increased taxes and who now absolutely cannot be trusted. I will detail these taxes later on.

Despite a tax increase of over \$5 billion since coming to office, plus an almost \$14 billion windfall from asset sales and billions more in higher GST receipts, Labor is increasing state debt to record levels. I just want to touch quickly on the surpluses shown in the budget, because in its pre-election financial statement Labor

committed to delivering the coalition's surpluses. Budget paper 2, page 48, and the pre-election budget update show the budget surplus outcomes in 2017–18 for the coalition of \$3 billion, and the revised figure under Labor was \$2 billion. There we have a \$1 billion difference that indicates straightaway that Labor failed to match what it said it would at the time of the election in terms of the coalition's previously cast surpluses.

It is well worth noting the list of Labor's new and increased taxes on Victorians. When doing this, it is important to note exactly what the Premier said on Channel 7 news on the eve of the election on 28 November 2014. I quote Peter Mitchell:

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?

The Premier said:

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

What a lie that has turned out to be. I want to for the record again look at the 12 new and increased taxes foisted on Victorians under this Premier. We see a tripling of the energy tax on coal royalties, and we can see the result of that very quickly by looking at the closure of the Hazelwood power station, the loss of hundreds of local jobs, the flow-on adverse impacts on countless other local businesses and of course the result of higher electricity prices. We can see the taxi fare and Uber tax; the land tax surcharge for absentee owners, introduced at 0.5 per cent and then tripled to 1.5 per cent; the stamp duty surcharge for foreign buyers, introduced at 3 per cent then increased to 7 per cent; the fire services property levy increase; the increase in stamp duty on new cars — 1 per cent of the cost of motor vehicles; new stamp duties on off-the-plan property purchases; and new stamp duties on property transfers between spouses — as I noted last year, a perfectly legitimate taxation and business-planning tool. We have got new annual property valuations to increase land tax. We have got the vacant home tax, and it will be the Treasurer here in Spring Street deciding whether or not you are using your property. We have got a new point-of-consumption gambling tax and a new city-access tax for the West Gate tunnel.

One of the key issues I want to note in my contribution is just how inaccurate Labor budgets are. History proves this, and I can give the examples in my contribution now as to how a Labor budget is nothing more than an annual wishful thinking exercise each May. In Labor's first budget in 2015, they forecast the following for taxation revenue: in 2015–16 they said it would be \$19 billion. It was actually \$19.9 billion, so it

was only a 4.7 per cent difference. For 2016–17 they said \$19.8 billion. It was \$22.3 billion, a 12.3 per cent difference. For 2017–18 they said \$20.4 billion, and it was \$22.5 billion by the latest estimate, a 10.3 per cent difference. For 2018–19 they said \$21.3 billion, and the revised figure is \$24.1 billion, a 13.2 per cent increase, so there is a significant difference there.

I note in passing that one of the important aspects of this is that it is a total 26.8 per cent increase in tax revenue over four years, and that is obviously running way ahead of inflation and wage increases here in Victoria.

In Labor's first budget, their 2015–16 budget, they forecast the following for employee expenses — and I note at the outset that in the 2014–15 final coalition budget the figure was \$18.5 billion — \$19.9 billion, and it ended up being \$20 billion, which was pretty close, with a difference of 0.5 per cent. In 2016–17 they said \$20.6 billion, and it ended up at \$21.5 billion — 4.4 per cent over. In 2017–18 they said \$21.5 billion, and the latest revised estimate is \$23 billion, so that is 7 per cent over. In 2018–19 they said \$22.4 billion for employee expenses with a revised estimate of \$25.6 billion — so 14.3 per cent over. We can see that that is slipping out of their control very quickly.

We can also see that there has been a 29 per cent increase in employee expenses in four years and a 38 per cent increase since the coalition was in office — a \$7.1 billion increase. I can assure the house that local people in my electorate of Forest Hill are not getting 38 per cent pay rises in five years. Clearly, as other members have noted, in many cases this is payback to the Premier's union mates.

It is also worth noting the annual expense growth. From 2000–01 through to 2009–10 under Labor, the expense growth rate was 8 per cent. From 2010–11 to 2013–14 under the coalition it was 3.1 per cent. From 2014–15 to 2017–18 under the coalition forecast it was 2.6 per cent. From 2014–15 to the 2018–19 budget under Labor it is back to 8 per cent again.

Interestingly from 2019–20 to 2021–22 on the forward estimates the government has got an annual expense growth rate of 1.9 per cent. I think all Victorians can see that is an absolute joke. One thing we know about Labor is that they cannot manage money, and they certainly cannot manage expense growth. History is there in black and white for everyone to see — that is a fact. It looks like this Labor government will be on track to eclipse their previous high rate of expense growth, and that is indeed a terrible outcome for all Victorians.

It is a risky budget, in my view, with much of the revenue based on the property market and subject to factors well outside this government's control. For example, page 19 of budget paper 5 shows that over the forward estimates the government is budgeting on land tax increasing by 25 per cent and stamp duty increasing by 10 per cent. This represents an increase of 77 per cent for land tax and 60 per cent for stamp duty since the coalition left office.

Let me turn to the issue of state debt. In Labor's first budget, their 2015–16 budget, they forecast the following for net debt levels. In 2015–16 they said it would be \$16.9 billion. The latest figure is \$22.3 billion, so there is a not insubstantial difference of 32 per cent. In 2016–17 they said \$19.3 billion. The latest figure is \$15.8 billion. That has actually gone down 18 per cent. In 2017–18 they said \$19.5 billion, and the latest figure is \$19.6 billion. That is 1 per cent. In 2018–19 they said \$19.8 billion, and the latest revised figure is \$24.3 billion — a 23 per cent blowout. We can see there that we are starting to track out of control, which is not uncommon under a Labor government.

Overall we can see a 44 per cent increase in net debt in four years. I note that over the forward estimates the net debt is budgeted to reach \$31.4 billion in 2021–22 — a staggering increase from the amount that Labor inherited from the previous coalition government. That represents an increase of 86 per cent in just four years. Debt will almost double under this government, and that is despite the massive proceeds from asset sales, such as \$9.7 billion from the sale of the port of Melbourne lease, \$2 billion from the sale of Victoria's share in the Snowy Hydro scheme and an estimated \$2 billion from the sale of the land titles office.

I note that on page 57 of budget paper 2 there is a graph of state debt. I think it is one of the most amusing graphs in the budget papers because it unbelievably shows debt magically plateauing at 6 per cent of gross state product in 2020, 2021 and beyond. To me that is just an unbelievable, fanciful graph because we know the way the Labor government spends money and increases debt, that trajectory will just continue to go north.

Labor is so hopeless it cannot get any of its forecasts correct — for example, the level of infrastructure investment. Budget paper 2 shows the following budget outcomes: in 2015–16 Labor said \$5.2 billion, and it was actually \$4.8 billion, so they were down 8 per cent. In 2016–17 they said \$6.5 billion, but it was actually \$9.1 billion — up 40 per cent. In 2017–18 they said \$4.5 billion, and it ended up being \$11.6 billion — 258 per cent out. In 2018–19 they said \$5.1 billion, and it ended up at \$13.7 billion — 268 per cent out. Even

on this measurement the government is hopeless at estimating the correct figures.

Page 48 of budget paper 2 shows that this infrastructure investment is set to decrease over the forward estimates and that we are going to have record levels of taxes and debt and yet infrastructure investment will be declining. What we have got here is a typical Labor budget — high taxing, high spending, both at record levels — and we see an ever-increasing size of government with increasing staff levels in the back office rather than in front-line personnel.

Let me turn now to the Forest Hill electorate. This is the shortest part of my contribution today, looking at what will be the positive impacts of this state budget for the residents of Forest Hill. The answer yet again is effectively nothing. Once again Forest Hill schools have largely missed out. Fast-growing schools like Vermont Primary School, Orchard Grove Primary School, Livingstone Primary School and Highvale Primary School, despite their well-identified needs, have been completely neglected by this government. Schools like Vermont Secondary College, a very high-achieving school with around 1500 students, has only got a single gymnasium that was built in 1976. In stark contrast we have Upwey High School, with around 700 students but in the Minister for Education's own electorate, that already has a double gymnasium and has now received funding to demolish this facility and build four new basketball courts.

This neglect of schools in the Forest Hill electorate stands in very stark contrast to the pork-barrelling that has been going on in the minister's own electorate of Monbulk. In the four budgets since he has been the minister he has allocated \$40.8 million to 11 of his own or adjoining schools. In addition to this he has allocated over \$30 million to 13 schools in the Premier's electorate of Mulgrave. Between them the Premier and the Deputy Premier have allocated a largesse of over \$70 million to their own electorates at the expense of my very needy schools in the Forest Hill electorate. It is a disgraceful situation that Forest Hill schools in urgent need of capital investment have once again been neglected by the state government.

Similarly I have got fantastic sporting clubs that are in desperate need of funds to renovate, upgrade and expand their facilities. This is particularly so in light of the massive expansion of female football in the electorate of Forest Hill. The government has ignored my local football clubs and funnelled hundreds of millions of dollars into elite football. In my electorate of Forest Hill I have got three Eastern Football League clubs: East Burwood, Forest Hill and Vermont. All

those clubs have got facilities that need upgrading. Certainly in relation to numbers at those clubs they need additional changing rooms for, as I said, women's football, but also for the umpires rooms. A very simple thing at the Forest Hill reserve, on a wet day or on any day if there is mixed company on the umpiring panel: one of the umpires has to stand outside while the others get changed inside, so they are out in the rain or the weather. Similarly that goes on as the other gender gets changed as well. It is clearly an inadequate situation that this government has failed to address in any way. I could spend another half an hour talking about the deficiencies in terms of funding for important assets within the electorate of Forest Hill.

In conclusion this is a bad budget for Victorians. It is a bad budget for Forest Hill residents. It adds to cost-of-living issues rather than addressing them, and that is one of the fundamental flaws and one of the fundamental things the people opposite do not seem to understand at all. They are adding to the woes of the people out in my electorate of Forest Hill. They are not assisting, they are making things worse. It is a typical Labor budget. It is a very high taxing and a very high spending budget — record levels of both. We have got a budget from a roting government — a budget which does very little to help residents in my electorate of Forest Hill.

**Ms COUZENS** (Geelong) (17:44) — I am pleased to rise to speak on the Appropriation (2018–2019) Bill 2018. This really is an outstanding budget for my electorate of Geelong. I want to thank the Treasurer, the Premier and the ministers for their commitment to my community of Geelong.

Geelong is a growing community, and this budget is certainly looking after local families, ensuring they have jobs, better roads, transport, better health care and a new emergency department for the crisis hub at the Geelong hospital, addressing addiction and mental health issues that are hurting local families. It will make sure that people get the treatment they need. Our palliative care funding ensures people have dignity of choice in their end-of-life decisions.

This budget is about first-rate education from first-rate kindergartens and schools to providing students with the support and education to enter the workforce job-ready. This budget helps revitalise Geelong city, supports local business and creates good local jobs, and provides funding for roads around the Geelong region. There are more complaints about roadworks than there are about road conditions these days.

The budget really does meet the needs of the Geelong community. The feedback that I have had since the budget announcements over the last week or so has been fantastic. People are really excited about what is being committed for Geelong. We have delivered over the last three years, and people know that what we have committed to in this budget will be delivered.

I am proud to be part of the Andrews government, which is getting things done. We have committed \$153 million to the city deal in Geelong for the Geelong Convention and Exhibition Centre, the Geelong Waterfront Safe Harbour project, Revitalising Central Geelong project and the *Shipwreck Coast Master Plan*. What this does is provide jobs in Geelong, and provides and builds on the tourism that Geelong really needs, through to the Shipwreck Coast. This is a really important project for Geelong, particularly the convention centre, which has been on the agenda in Geelong in excess of 20 years. For people to hear that commitment last week from us to ensure that the convention centre is built is really significant for my community. Obviously, we need to get the federal government to commit their share to the convention centre, the safe harbour, the central Geelong project and the *Shipwreck Coast Master Plan* — we are expecting that announcement tonight hopefully. I know the people of Geelong are very keen to hear that announcement tonight because that will not only create the construction jobs now, but it will create jobs in the future. We do need that federal commitment tonight to the city deal in Geelong.

We also have the commitment to \$689 million to extend the Barwon Prison to provide 700 beds. That will create 1000 jobs in construction and hundreds of ongoing jobs. These are jobs that Geelong needs. They are jobs not only for now, but going into the future, and people are really excited about the fact that their children will potentially have jobs, not only in the construction side but also the ongoing jobs that will be created at the new prison.

Speaking of the future, the commitment of the \$50 million detailed planning for the fast train integrated with an airport rail link proves that this government is serious about Geelong. They are serious about Geelong's future and serious about delivering the modern services that our community needs. We have also made significant commitments to upgrading the Geelong line. The \$110 million Geelong line upgrade will lead to improved train services with a second platform, new tracks and a pedestrian link at Waurm Ponds station. That includes upgrading Waurm Ponds station with a second platform and pedestrian link, an additional track at Waurm Ponds to enable trains to pass

each other, and Armstrong Creek transit corridor planning to consider future land use, environmental issues and development of the population plans. The Geelong line upgrade will prepare for more services to be extended to and from Waurn Ponds.

The second platform and additional track at Waurn Ponds station will create enough space for trains to pass each other, allowing services to recover more quickly from disruptions, and improving service reliability. Because we are growing very quickly in Geelong, more and more people are using our rail system. We know that these things need to happen now but we also know that we need to plan for the future, which is why we have started the planning and committed the funding for the planning of the new fast rail.

There will also be a new pedestrian link at Waurn Ponds station that will create a user-friendly, safe and accessible connection for station users, linking the station to new residential developments. Armstrong Creek transit corridor planning will help identify a preferred alignment for the Armstrong Creek transit corridor reservation. Over the last three years we have actually put on 357 more services on the Geelong line, and that is really significant. The number of commuters is growing almost on a daily basis. We are trying to keep up with demand. With more and more people moving to Geelong from the likes of Melbourne and choosing to commute, we need to meet their needs and ensure that they can have a reliable service.

There are those commentators sitting on the sidelines that are doing nothing and delivering nothing. We saw that under those opposite over four years in government, but we are getting on with it. The criticism about the fast rail announcement, for example, shows that they have no vision; they have no plan for meeting the population demands in our community of Geelong. We are a forward-thinking government and I am really pleased and excited that we are actually focusing on not only what we need to do now, but what we need to do in the future. I think the fast train is a fantastic project that has been very warmly welcomed by the people of Geelong.

We are not only focused on the now, we also want to plan for the future. We are building first-class education to ensure our kids get the best in our schools. Our massive commitment to infrastructure is creating jobs and our TAFEs can deliver on the skills required, now and into the future. The Gordon Institute of TAFE is a sacred place for the people of Geelong. A lot of faith is put into our Gordon TAFE. Under those opposite we saw it brought to its knees. Over the last three years we have been in government we have rebuilt Gordon TAFE to be an award-winning TAFE — this is really

significant for my community, to put new programs in place such as the Head Start apprenticeship and traineeship so students can learn trades and be job-ready. We also have the 33 priority TAFE courses for students. This is really significant for Geelong. We have many young people that will be able to access those courses.

We talk about affordability, and this is fantastic for many, many families in my community who could not otherwise afford for their children to enter the TAFE system. For many of us it may not seem like a lot of money, but for a lot of families who are struggling it is a lot of money. To have those free courses in place will make a significant difference. In fact it could be life-changing for many of those people.

There is our commitment to the Oberon South Primary School upgrade of \$1.2 million and our commitment to the Barwon Valley special school upgrade of \$2.1 million. Additional kindergarten funding for facilities, infrastructure and educators will have a significant impact on my community of Geelong.

The Geelong Project is an evidence-based project that is delivering significant results for young people in schools who are at risk. It addresses wellbeing, homelessness and disengagement. This program has been operating in Geelong for some years now. I am really pleased that we have committed the funds to enable this program not only to continue but to expand into other schools in Geelong. For young people who are on the edge of walking out of school or experiencing homelessness it has proved to be a fantastic opportunity for them to engage with the project and be supported through some quite challenging times, and at the end of the day they are remaining at school and that is what it is all about.

We are building first-class education to ensure our kids get the best at our schools, and we are providing support to those who need it. We have created a pathway for young people so young people in secondary school, particularly those I just mentioned who are facing many challenges, can get support from the Geelong Project and get help addressing the risk they are facing. They can access a tech school to help increase their opportunities in employment. They can enter free TAFE courses and move into a job. For some young people this pathway gives them job opportunities thanks to our significant infrastructure projects, including the new Barwon Prison — and not for a bed there but for a real job.

The accessible cities funding is something that I have been pushing for for some time. The community of

Geelong, which has WorkSafe, the National Disability Insurance Agency and the Transport Accident Commission, has a real insurance hub. We have many people with disabilities living in our community. They are not just people in wheelchairs but also people with other issues; they need assistance and they need to be able to access the city, and many cannot for various reasons.

I held a disability forum only last week and discussed the accessible cities proposal. The Minister for Housing, Disability and Ageing has given us \$250 000 to do a feasibility study on what an accessible city should be and what the cost would be to make it that. For many people at that forum it was very clear: they were saying that it is not just about doors and dunnies; it is about creating an all-abilities city and investigating the use of technology and the sorts of facilities and resources we might have so that people with disabilities can access the city from wherever they live, whether it be accessing buildings in the city, accessing education, accessing the waterfront or accessing restaurants. To have the accessible city that they deserve is a really important issue. I thank the minister for his commitment, which means that we can now look at the feasibility study and what the people of Geelong see as important to them in making our city an all-abilities city. We are looking at access to buildings, but we are also looking at other aspects of access.

Our sporting clubs have also been given a big boost in funding, particularly South Barwon Football and Netball Club — \$564 000. There is funding for St Mary's Football and Netball Club — \$1.17 million. This is all about giving the female-friendly facilities that those young female players deserve. It was great to go and meet some of the female football teams and netball teams and talk to them about what this means to them. They were extremely excited to know that in the coming months they will be involved in designing the female-friendly facilities they deserve.

Our Geelong Performing Arts Centre (GPAC) will receive \$5.42 million over the next four years for programming, education and IT upgrades. GPAC is another major facility in Geelong that inspires young talent and creates a great atmosphere for young people coming into the city to go to different performances. They are doing some amazing things. Under previous budgets we have given a significant amount of funding for the upgrade of GPAC, which is coming along very nicely.

Another one is Anam Cara House, to which the Minister for Health has committed \$1.1 million to provide respite for people and their families — people

who are facing their end-of-life period. Instead of having two days of respite they are getting five.

**Mr PAYNTER** (Bass) (17:59) — Acting Speaker, thank you for the opportunity to speak on the Appropriation (2018–2019) Bill 2018, its impact and what it means to the electorate of Bass and the people of Victoria. Amongst a myriad of taxes, in fact the 12 new and increased taxes that have been implemented since the Andrews government took power in 2014, are taxes that will have a major impact on families, including increased stamp duty; a new tax on the transfer of cars; a new tax on the transfer of property between spouses, of all things; and a new tax — would you believe? — on off-the-plan property purchases, which will have a major impact on young people, many of whom buy off-the-plan properties in new developments. This includes my daughter and many other young people who are getting into their first family home with their partners. A new tax on them will be implemented for an off-the-plan property purchase.

Income from taxes has increased in Victoria by over 35 per cent since the Andrews government came to power. In fact its budget is based on new taxes and increases in taxes, much to the disgust of the Victorian people. We can see that the budget has certainly been propped up by the level of taxes being implemented. Our taxes remain the highest in Australia. We are the highest taxing state in Australia, and I think that is a record that will go down in history with this Andrews government. That is on top of the record GST receipts that have been received and will be received in the future. The Liberal federal government has come to the party and is now distributing GST to the state of Victoria at record levels, and this Andrews government is continuing to throw it away on waste, which I will get to at a later stage.

The budget has obviously also been propped up by not just record GST receipts and not just record taxes but asset sales, including the sale of the port of Melbourne, the sale of our share of Snowy Hydro and the sale of the titles office — a total of over \$15 billion which will be flowing into the state government coffers over the years. On top of that of course this Andrews government does not only spend income but they are more inclined to borrow money. Debt levels will reach unprecedented levels in Victoria's history, with debt levels sure to double over the next five years. No household, no business, no reasonable Victorian would run their affairs like this Treasurer is intending to run our state's affairs. Nobody doubles their debt levels over a period of four to five years, but this government will do exactly that.

When you look at the way they actually spend money it is staggering the amount of waste that they will use Victorians' dollars on. The public servant payroll has increased by over \$7 billion — not \$7 million. That is \$7 billion to be spent on an increase in the public servant payroll. You try telling small business that and see the response you get, like I do every day. It is a shame that these members of the government do not get out and speak to their small businesses to fully understand the impact that the increase in public servant wages has on the state. Not only that but payroll tax has increased by over \$1 billion since Labor took power — \$1 billion of payroll tax. One of the most damning taxes in the history of the state of Victoria is being used by this government at record levels.

If you look at normal households, the everyday households like my own and those of hardworking families around Victoria, you will see them being crippled by the cost of electricity. In fact the average annual cost of electricity per household has risen from \$2000 to over \$2500. That is the equivalent of an extra registration for a vehicle in Victoria. That is an additional cost put onto families and households that work hard, save hard and now have to meet the increase in power costs as a result of this government. It just keeps going on. We have had an increase in construction costs that has far outstripped other states. In fact it is now nearly double the national average to build anything here in the state of Victoria because by the waste of this government.

When we get to the heart of the problem and the essence and the core of what this Labor government does, what it is and what it means, it is the unprecedented and confirmed rorting by the two members of this government and the condoning by this government of their actions. The member for Melton stole close to \$100 000 from the Victorian public and still sits in this chamber, and this government still accepts his vote. He has moved over to the crossbench. He has not moved out the door yet; he will in November. Thankfully for the whole state of Victoria he will move out of government, because he continues to waste and has not paid back the money.

**Ms Thomas** — On a point of order, Acting Speaker, it is pretty clear to me that the member is really straying into casting very serious aspersions on members of this house. I think that he is speaking in a way that is really unbecoming and unparliamentary, and I would ask you to return him to the point of the debate, which is to talk about the magnificent Andrews Labor budget.

**Mr Paynter** — On the point of order, Acting Speaker, the member for Macedon is wasting my

15 minutes. I have got a very important budget reply to make, and she continues to waste my time. Can you please get her to sit down and let me continue with my budget reply?

**The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr Pearson)** — Order! The member for Bass can continue, but I would encourage all members to use parliamentary language and not to cast aspersions on other members of this place. The member for Bass to continue.

**Mr PAYNTER** — I was speaking about the member for Melton, who misappropriated close to \$100 000 of Victorian taxpayers money and still sits in this chamber, and the member for Tarneit, who stole or misappropriated close to \$40 000 from the Victorian public and again still sits in this chamber and still votes daily on government matters — and his votes are accepted by this Premier. All of this has happened under the watchful eye of the Premier, who is yet to condemn these members for their actions and still accepts their votes. Amongst the unprecedented rorting of parliamentary salaries during the 2014 election, the Ombudsman found 21 Labor MPs, including 11 sitting Labor members —

**Mr Richardson** interjected.

**Mr PAYNTER** — The member for Mordialloc benefited from the rorting by the red shirts. The Attorney-General admitted as much on 3AW. The member —

**Ms Thomas** — On a point of order, Acting Speaker, again I think we find that the member for Bass is straying from the point of the debate. He is again casting aspersions on members of this house, and I ask that you draw him back to the debate.

**Mr PAYNTER** — On the point of order, Acting Speaker, I am referring to the Ombudsman's report. I am not casting aspersions on members; I am referring to the Ombudsman's report. The member continues to waste my time. Can you please sit her down or remove her from the chamber and stop her wasting my time.

**The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr Pearson)** — Member for Bass, the bill before the house is the appropriation bill, which relates to government expenditure across the forward estimates, so it relates to expenditure commencing 1 July 2018. I encourage the member to make his contribution as it relates to government expenditure that will commence on 1 July 2018 and not relate it to government expenditure that has occurred in the past.

**Mr PAYNTER** — This goes to the very heart of government waste and the government's conduct in terms of all parliamentary procedures, including this budget. That is what this speech and these points are about.

The continued rotting by this government has been condoned by the Premier. It has attacked Country Fire Authority volunteers and is walking hand-in-hand with the United Firefighters Union. It has waged war on small business — in particular the cleaning and the bus industries, in which it intends to take over the assets of small businesses and favour large multinationals over mum-and-dad companies that have served the community well for generations.

Shame on this government for funding the AFL to the tune of over \$220 million. I have local sporting clubs that are crying out for upgrades to facility upgrades, and yet this government is prepared to give the AFL over \$220 million to develop the Docklands area. If members get out to their communities, they will see that these sporting clubs are crying out for funds. I could name in Parliament tomorrow over 20 local sporting groups in my electorate that would certainly value even the slightest percentage of these funds, and if this government got out into their community, it would realise that that is the case. These small community sporting groups are crying out for money, and yet the government is prepared to give over \$220 million to one of the most profitable organisations in Australia, if not the most profitable. Our local sporting clubs could spend this money on such things as girls' changing rooms, canteens, lighting, juniors — the list goes on and on. If those opposite were members of their local sporting clubs, they would understand the difficulty that these clubs are going through.

Despite all this waste, despite all the thieving and despite all the lying while this government remains in power, it has finally acknowledged the long, arduous and committed campaign by the Bass Coast and my constant calls in this Parliament for it to fund the Wonthaggi Hospital upgrade. It has finally found its compass. It is looking outside of the Melbourne metropolitan area and has finally found that the Wonthaggi Hospital needed an upgrade, and it has finally received the funding that it so richly deserves and which the Bass Coast community has been calling for for many, many years.

This government has been in power for 14 of the last 18 years and not 1 cent has been spent on the Wonthaggi Hospital. In fact in the 2014 budget it cut \$25 million that was committed to by the Liberal government for the Wonthaggi Hospital. It disappeared

out of the 2015 budget, and yet seven months out from an election, lo and behold, it comes up with funding for the Wonthaggi Hospital. You can excuse the sceptical, albeit appreciative, faces around the town of Wonthaggi when the Premier comes down on his white horse and finally announces funds for the Wonthaggi Hospital upgrade. The upgrade would mean an enormous amount to the people of the Bass Coast and deliver the services and facilities that they so richly deserve. I congratulate the Bass Coast community and in particular the dedicated board and the CEO of Bass Coast Health, Jan Child, for their strong and committed lobbying for this project.

We know for a fact that only a conservative government, only a Liberal-National coalition, will deliver budgets based on strong economic growth; a population strategy that builds a state of cities, not a city-state; and delivers projects and funding based on merit, not politics, including upgrades to the roads in and around the Pakenham area. Our level crossings result in unbelievable congestion for the people of Pakenham on a daily basis, and yet not one cent has been promised or even spoken about for the level crossings that choke the rapidly growing suburb of Pakenham on a daily basis and have a severe impact on the community in and around Pakenham.

Pakenham residents who are trying to go about their business — dropping the kids off at school, meeting medical appointments, getting to sporting events — find roads are choked by these level crossings, and this government has done absolutely nothing for the people of Pakenham to relieve the congestion. There have been no upgrades of McGregor Road, which we have been calling for for years and years in this Parliament. In fact since I was first elected I have been calling for the McGregor Road upgrade. There has been not one cent on our level crossings, not one cent on Racecourse Road, not one cent on Bald Hill Road and not one cent on the intersection of those two roads and the connecting link to the Monash Freeway. As I said, there has been nothing for McGregor Road.

A couple of months ago the Premier, of all people, came out and announced a land purchase for John Henry secondary school, but lo and behold in this budget there is no money to build the buildings. Presumably the land is there but there will be no school despite the Premier's promise that in 2021 year 7 will start.

**Mr CARBINES** (Ivanhoe) (18:14) — I am pleased to make a contribution on the 2018–19 state budget. Can I say that, as usual, if you were to offer a \$10 note to members of the conservative parties, they would be the first to complain and ask you for two fives.

In talking about the Ivanhoe electorate in particular, I think we should start with education. In the term that we have been here in office, \$31 million in funding has been delivered for capital upgrades in the Ivanhoe electorate, compared to only a measly \$5.8 million over the whole time the Liberal Party were in government. In the last six months of the Liberal Party's time in office, in the Ivanhoe electorate they finally funded Rosanna Golf Links Primary School, the only school they put some money up for — in the last six months they were in government. Already in three and a half years our Labor government under Premier Andrews has funded some \$31 million in upgrades to schools in the Ivanhoe electorate.

As someone who went to school in the Ivanhoe electorate, at Viewbank College, where we are about to complete an \$11.5 million complete redevelopment with new facilities there and with further work to do, as the son of parents who taught at the then Banyule High School and at Ivanhoe Primary School, and with a daughter at Rosanna Golf Links Primary School — where they have started new prep classrooms for term 2, thanks to further investment from our government — I understand absolutely the ideals, desires and determination of parents in my electorate to make sure that across the government, Catholic and independent private schools in my electorate they have great choices and see investment in their schools.

That is why I was pleased yesterday to visit Mark Kent, the principal of Ivanhoe Primary School, for the announcement of the \$4.5 million investment for new classrooms at Ivanhoe Primary School, which has 620 students. This is on top of the \$2 million investment last year for four new prep classrooms. It was great to catch up with 50 staff during their curriculum day. Many of them had taught with my mother at Ivanhoe primary, and they are doing great work in the local community.

For Banyule Primary School a \$11 million master plan has been completed, thanks to the \$1 million we provided last year for that work. Not long ago with the Premier we accepted a petition from over 500 signatories to see capital works get underway. I am pleased to say that in the budget we secured \$3.47 million for those works. The principal of that school of some 700-plus students, Sharon Marmo, has been quoted:

Banyule Primary School principal Sharon Marmo said she was stoked about the funding. 'We now have all the money to build a gymnasium from beginning to end and put everything in it that we wanted', she said. 'We'll also have money to upgrade our power supply'.

Further funds are required at Banyule Primary School, but when you have got 700 students you cannot shut the school down and do it all at once. You have to decant and move kids around, and you have to work with families.

We have seen that at Rosanna Golf Links Primary School, where we have committed some \$6.28 million in redevelopment works. It has been a building site for some three years. As a parent there, I know that what people are looking forward to is the finish of those works and to get on with the education of our students. That work has been done, and there have been challenging times at the school.

In further announcements in an education sense in particular, Olympic Village Primary School will have a \$6 million redevelopment, a complete rebuild of that school in West Heidelberg, thanks to half a million dollars in funding in last year's budget for the master planning works. That school will cater for some 175 students. It already has a student cohort of just under 100. The rebuild for primary students in West Heidelberg with \$6 million is a fantastic commitment. We will be turning the sod in September and they will be in there in term 4 next year. I know that the community in West Heidelberg, not only the school, will have access to the facilities, the library and the community facilities. That school will be opening its doors to everyone in West Heidelberg, and that is critical and very important.

I also want to touch on several other matters. They include the Northern Regional Trails Strategy. There is \$1 million across the northern region to upgrade further our Active Transport Strategy. We have just opened in the past week the missing link, if you like, in the bike pathways in my electorate from Sparks Reserve back over to Kew East. That has been a significant achievement in our electorate.

We have also seen the Burgundy Street pedestrian safety improvements with some \$2 million for traffic calming. It is a great shopping strip in the middle of my electorate. At the southern end we have just done the \$395 million Hurstbridge line upgrade to duplicate the track between Rosanna and Heidelberg and also to secure further peak-hour services on that line. For the Heidelberg community, particularly in managing the traffic around Burgundy Street to make sure that it continues to be a great and vibrant shopping strip, that \$2 million of safety upgrades is critical.

The Viewbank Tennis Club is a great club. I will be out there on Friday to celebrate with them the \$100 000 purely to resurface and light a couple of their courts,

courts 7 and 8. There are many people out there playing tennis and so many young people doing their training and having their tennis lessons. I look forward to catching up with the club on Friday. The people there are doing great work. It is the small things that matter to clubs and members of committees who volunteer their spare time to run what are effectively major organisations and businesses. The \$100 000 to upgrade those courts and light them so that they can run competitions and activate those courts in the evening is just critical.

The people who use De Winton Park in Rosanna have tolerated a lot of disruption works during the level crossing removal at Lower Plenty Road and the new station build at Rosanna. Last Thursday night there were well over 200 people there. With the Macleod Football Netball Club, the Rosanna Cricket Club, the Rosanna Tennis Club, the Rosanna Bowling Club and the scouts it was a great night. The \$400 000 contribution announced at the parma night at the footy club — catching up with so many familiar faces, including Kane Shaw, the 2015 Macleod Football Club premiership captain, and so many people who make up the lifeblood of that club — on top of the \$600 000 announced from Banyule City Council by local councillor and life member of the club Tom Melican means there is a very significant \$1 million upgrade of De Winton Park. On the weekend I went to the game against Montmorency, which we thrashed by 10 goals. People who played there in decades past came up and said that it is fantastic to see the government turn around and invest in their personal investment, the club that they have sweated blood for. That is something that is beyond words and beyond any financial contribution.

The upgrades to the bus services, route 517 to Northland and route 518, so extra services and peak hour services can be run on Sunday, are absolutely critical. Viewbank can be a bit of a black hole for public transport services. To be able to upgrade and muscle up our bus services on Sundays on top of the work we have already done to offer peak-hour services after school for Viewbank College students and others is absolutely critical. I am pleased that that is being funded in the budget.

On the Livingstone Community Centre I took in a stack of petitions, as many would have done, from Rosanna fire station, Olympic Adult Education and our fantastic neighbourhood houses, many of which I have dealt with since I was elected as a local councillor back in 2005. I talked to Susan McLaughlin at the Livingstone Community Centre about the funding for an additional 5 hours a week, which is 260 hours a year, for extra coordination, that the Livingstone Community Centre

in Ivanhoe is going to be able to provide services to the community. There is not a day goes by when you walk in there that there are not people engaged in activities, in fellowship, in support and in understanding of what they want to do in the community. You just cannot give them enough, but that additional 5 hours a week is a very big message that we have heard that they need more support. Record funding for neighbourhood houses is a critical development in this year's budget.

I was also at the Nets Stadium Banyule, which is getting \$1.5 million for additional netball courts. When you have got something like 95 teams playing each day over the weekend, it is absolutely huge. It is a massive stadium out there at Macleod. Those people have just devoted the spare time from their working lives for the benefit of others to get involved in netball and to be part of a club culture and part of a community. You cannot invest enough in this. This is something that people have invested in and worked in for a long time. I am thrilled for the committee. I was able to catch up with them in just the past couple of weeks and see all the activity of the young netballers and those for whom it is a passion in their life. I thank them for their advocacy and work. I know they will do great work with those funds with Banyule council.

We have a master plan for Olympic Park, which is used by the Heidelberg United Football Club and the Olympic Colts Cricket Club. The \$2 million funding announcement from our government and the \$3 million from Banyule council means that there is already \$5 million going into redevelopment at Olympic Park down there in West Heidelberg. Thanks to Steve Tsalikidis and the team there and also to a former member in the other place, Lee Tarlamis, for his passionate work in securing funds, along with Jenny Mikakos, the Minister for Families and Children in the other place, and many others who have worked hard to secure these funds.

A lot of the sporting clubs in my electorate are respected and have earned every cent they get from our government. They are respected in the community, they continue to work hard in their spare time on behalf of others to provide enjoyment and a place of fellowship, engagement and involvement for people in the community, whatever their age and whatever their ability. There is always a place in the Ivanhoe electorate for people to be engaged and involved and to participate in our sporting clubs. There is always a role and always a task. For our government to invest so heavily in sport and recreation — \$4 million across a range of sporting organisations just in this budget — and to leverage so much more funding from Banyule

council shows the work we can do in partnership when we focus together on what needs to be done.

I met also with the Premier and Resolve Rosanna Road, a local organisation in my electorate, to secure another \$3.12 million for traffic safety upgrade works, in particular the installation of new traffic signals at Rosanna Road and St James Road. We all know what it is like sitting in the middle of Rosanna Road to do a right-hand turn at St James Road — it is a horror. Pedestrian-operated signals will be installed along Rosanna Road at Yarra Street and Brown Street and electronic time-based, 40-kilometre-an-hour speed limits will be put along Rosanna Road between Darebin Street and Banksia Street.

If there is anyone who deserves a medal for bravery, it is the traffic supervisors — our school crossing supervisors — on Rosanna Road outside Heidelberg Primary School and Goodstart Heidelberg. I know about that because we used to take our daughter to Goodstart and we had our own rules about how to manage pick-ups and drop-offs and how to navigate Rosanna Road. I have had great feedback from our level crossing supervisors about these initiatives.

I had an opportunity to sit down with the Premier and have breakfast at the Pioneer Cafe in Rosanna. We had a detailed conversation about what more needs to be done. But it is not just about the long term; we have got to deal with some of the short-term issues as well. Everything that we have funded on Rosanna Road, whether that be traffic safety cameras being installed at Banyule Road and also down at Darebin Street, it has all come off the petitions list of Resolve Rosanna Road. I commend all of them for the work that they are doing.

We have not done everything, but we are working through the list and we are ticking everything off. In the meantime we are on our way back to go through and have a discussion with them so that we can inform the Premier about the further works that are required. This is off the back of a \$110 million announcement to fast-track and conclude the design and development works for the north-east link so that hopefully, when we are re-elected at the end of the year, contracts to start works on that project will be done and work will be underway. In the meantime we know that there are further works that we need to do, and to be informed of those and to discuss them gives us some further headroom on how we will address those issues as we head towards the election.

There has been \$160 000 for the Ivanhoe RSL. Today, with the Minister for Veterans, I met with its president, John Beezley, a Vietnam vet, and Frank Cullen, OAM,

who was president for 44 years and retired last year. They have got their insurance and the rebuild is about to begin, but there are always things insurance does not cover. We have chipped in \$160 000 and we are pressing the feds and the council to match us. We will fix up a deal to fund some of the gap. These are some of the small things that are big in the local community and that matter to local people.

I am very pleased to be part of a government that continues to get results in Ivanhoe, that works on local issues and that understands them. This is the place where I grew up. It is the place where I am raising my family. I am absolutely invested in where I live, and every time I step out the door I am accountable to my community, whether that is at Auskick, whether it is when I go out for a bite to eat, whether it is when I get the train — and thank goodness they are back, as of last Friday. We are thrilled with everybody who has stuck the course and been part of the struggle to get the solutions, because it is only through our continued hard work together that we will prosper together. I am confident this budget delivers on those commitments, and together we will continue to deliver results for the Ivanhoe electorate.

**Mr McCURDY** (Ovens Valley) (18:29) — I rise to make a contribution on the Appropriation (2018–2019) Bill 2018 and a budget that I believe could have delivered for all Victorians, a budget that included the proceeds of the sale of the port of Melbourne and Snowy Hydro. But that did not happen for regional Victoria. I thought it was a chance for us to finally share this windfall. I thought this government would look past the tram tracks of Melbourne and look to regional Victoria, where 25 per cent of Victorians live, and again look past Ballarat, Bendigo and Geelong. I thought this government might recognise Wangaratta, Shepparton, Wodonga and other great regional cities in Victoria and invest in the regions. Build it and they will come.

The Education State — what a great slogan that is. It is a pity this government poured the bulk of the windfall sales into Labor-held seats or the seats that they aspire to win. Never have we seen a more political government in Victoria. This is a budget built on margins, not on needs. Never have we seen such poor financial decisions, and never have we seen such rorting in the term that we have been through at the moment.

Let us hope on 24 November that Victorians send a clear message to this Labor government — enough is enough. We demand a tougher approach on crime, we demand the rorters be accountable and that the spin stop. This government has got away with so much spin, untruths and rorting. They actually do not know where

the truth lies anymore. Second residence roting, red shirts roting and ripping up a \$1.3 billion contract that was not going to cost a dollar, if you listen to the Premier — and these have not been paid back in full. That does not include that this government has been caught out spending \$1 million of taxpayers dollars fighting the Ombudsman to suppress the roting red shirts report and that it has increased public sector pay and jobs.

Let us look at the facts. Victoria, the Education State — that is a number plate slogan, not a fact. In this budget we see schools upgraded in Labor electorates, in Frankston, Monbulk, Ivanhoe, East Bentleigh and Ormond — millions upon millions of dollars. In fact \$1.3 billion of capital was spent on education in this budget. Let us look at what this budget has funded in Ovens Valley. We have got some planning for the Wangaratta District Specialist School that is in urgent need of an upgrade, and Tungamah Primary School got \$100 000. Now, how is that fair? How is it fair when you compare what has been spent in metropolitan Melbourne in Labor seats and when you look at Cobram Secondary College, which got absolutely nothing. Wangaratta High School got nothing, and it is the same with Yarrowonga College P–12.

Let us look at health. Sunshine Hospital, Footscray Hospital and Ballarat Base Hospital have all received funding. In the Ovens Valley Yarrowonga Hospital has received zero; Cobram, Northeast Health Wangaratta, Alpine Health, Myrtleford and Bright, zero — doughnuts, absolutely nothing.

If you are going to govern this state, you have got to at least try to be fair. Show some respect to the communities who provide the cheap food, the fine wine and the fibre that you wear. Understand that the energy that keeps you warm in the winter and cool in the summer and that keeps your lights on is generated by the fine communities that Labor choose to ignore — communities like Mildura, Morwell, Wangaratta and Shepparton. Labor has given a raw deal to Victoria.

The strength of our state is usually that we care for each other and we look out for each other — that we are fair — but this budget is clearly not fair. Of all the budgets and after two massive asset sales this should have been the one, but sadly we missed out again, as did our volunteers at the Victoria State Emergency Service (SES) and the Country Fire Authority (CFA). Let us go to the Macedon CFA, which got a \$1.6 million upgrade, or to the Essendon SES, which got a \$1.2 million upgrade. Let us go to Cobram, which does not even have a headquarters. They do not even have a shed. They do not have a building. They do not

have a home. All they were promised was the purchase of a bit of land. Is this a cruel hoax or just another slap in the face? We have seen how this Premier treats CFA volunteers, and we are getting a snapshot of what Labor will do if they are re-elected in 2018. Is the SES the next to be bullied, harassed and dismantled, just like what Labor has tried to do to the CFA? They do not want to bite the hand that feeds them — the union dollars, the union votes.

The budget sees a massive \$7 billion going to public wages. This is not all to the police, ambos and nurses, as they would have you believe; this is to bureaucrats. Some of these are the faceless people behind this unfair government. How are they going to fund this? They will fund it with the 12 new taxes, stamp duty and fines. They are even going to fund it by generating interest from loans to grassroots sporting clubs. Can you believe that? A government that wastes \$1.3 billion not to build a road and then gives a further \$225 million to the AFL is now going to charge interest when the Tungamah Football Club needs an upgrade or the Bright Tennis Club needs new courts or Myrtleford needs new lights for its netball courts. Tell me, Premier: how is this a fair budget? Victoria is the highest taxing state in Australia, yet our sporting clubs will need to borrow the money to fund their own progress. Premier, this is simply not fair.

Victorian debt is set to double over the next five years — yes, double. There has been the sale of the port of Melbourne, the sale of Snowy Hydro and the commonwealth government handing out more and more dollars than ever before, and yet this government will be doubling our debt in the next five years. It is a raw deal, and it is simply not fair.

Where is the money for new trains in the north-east? The Premier said if the commonwealth produced the dollars to fix the line, he would provide the new trains — another broken promise. We have this capital spend with windfall sales, and still the Premier will not commit to new trains and carriages. In December 2015 the Premier and Jaclyn Symes in the other place were saying, ‘It will be a new year’s resolution to get new trains and carriages’, and here we are in 2018 and there is still no commitment to new trains or carriages or rolling stock. The coalition has committed \$633 million to replace all of the long-haul trains — the entire fleet — throughout regional Victoria. They will be operating in the next term of government, not on the never-never like we hear from this government. They promise something and it will be a long time coming — if ever. Trains and carriages do not get made overnight. There is a lag time, so you need to order those trains now to match up with when the rail line is completed.

This budget does not fund the Myrtleford CFA. The way in which Labor have attacked the CFA, trying to dismantle our volunteers, is nothing short of disgraceful. CFAs like Myrtleford, Katamatite, Bright, Almonds, Peechelba or Killawarra proved again this summer that when the siren sounds, it is time to support the community. Another four years of Labor and it would not surprise me if they started taking the keys out of the fire truck. We all know the saying, 'It takes a village to raise a child', but somebody needs to support that village. Somebody needs to help the village to prosper and progress. Only The Nationals and the Liberals in government will support those villages. Our villages like Bundalong, Devenish, St James and Telford need assistance. They need to be treated fairly, and this government refuses to do so.

The cost of living is hurting all of us in Victoria. The number one issue I used to hear about all the time was the trains in the north-east, but certainly people have given up on the idea that this Labor government will ever commit to new trains in regional Victoria — certainly in the north-east. Now people are telling me that the cost of living is right up there as their biggest concern. It is hurting people in Whitfield, Greta, Edi and all the way from Boweya to Muckatah — especially power prices. Victoria has gone from being a net exporter of energy to a net importer, and all Victorians are paying the price. Since Labor tripled the tax on coal-powered energy without a replacement plan, our energy costs have gone through the roof. There is the new stamp duty tax on transfers between spouses, the stamp duty on new cars and the new stamp duty on off-the-plan purchases. People in the Ovens Valley do not want a raw deal; they want a fair deal.

Construction costs in Victoria are the highest in Australia. We know Labor cannot manage money. There is nothing new there. Labor committed to \$20 billion in projects over the four-year term. The problem is that this cost has blown out by a further \$25 billion, so instead of it being \$20 billion, it is now a \$45 billion spend. Let us put that in perspective: if somebody comes to me and says, 'Mr McCurdy, we are giving you a quote to build a house for \$300 000', and halfway through the job the builder says, 'Just for your information, that cost is now going to be \$650 000', who in their right mind would accept that? I would not, but obviously Labor would. Why should we treat it differently just because it is somebody else's money? It is no excuse.

If you cannot be accountable or do better than that, do the right thing: call an early election and stop the damage. Put your hand up and admit that Labor cannot manage money. Labor cannot manage major projects.

We know that Labor cannot even manage their own electorate budgets, and they certainly cannot manage their chauffeured cars. They will never be able to manage Peter Marshall. In the best interests of Victoria, Labor should end this mess. The chances of this Premier admitting to any type of failure are absolutely zero. The people of Wangaratta, who taught you, nurtured you, helped you and respected you, now say, 'Enough is enough'. You have turned your back on the north-east. At least have the decency to apologise.

We did not ask for the world in this budget. We just wanted a fair deal. We did not expect the universe, but we ended up with a raw deal. Where will Peter Marshall and his United Firefighters Union mates be five, 10 or 15 years down the track? I expect they will have ditched this Premier and moved on. But the people of Wangaratta will still be there. They will rue a missed opportunity — the four years that a local bloke had control of the chequebook of Victoria. Our grandchildren will say, 'They must have been great years for Wangaratta', but we will have to tell them that we achieved less with a local bloke than we did with complete strangers. What we thought was our time turned out to be Peter Marshall's time, and we will bow our heads in silence. This budget is not fair. It is not fair to all Victorians; it is only fair to those whom Labor calls friends. It is simply not fair.

**Mr DIMOPOULOS** (Oakleigh) (18:40) — It gives me great pleasure to speak on the Appropriation (2018–2019) Bill 2018. We are a government of values and we are a party of values. Nothing quite represents the values of a government more than its budget, both in terms of its scope across all areas of public policy and all areas of service delivery. Nothing quite as broad as that exists in any other legislation we consider in this chamber. Its depth is extraordinary — \$70 billion of expenditure. There is \$70 billion in the Victorian budget and it is all represented in the appropriation bill that we are debating tonight.

When you believe in something, you do something about it. You do not just sit in the corner of your office or at home and talk to yourself about it, perhaps think about it or perhaps attend a press conference and talk about values. You actually do something about the things you believe in. You put them into action. We believe in the power of our commitment to the Victorian people. We believe in the power of the promises we made and the delivery on those promises. We believe in the bonds between words and actions, and that is what this budget and in fact the last four budgets have represented in this Parliament under this government.

Those on the opposite side who are filled with sorrow and regret for an opportunity lost will characterise this budget as a cash splash before an election. If they want some lines to attack this budget, they should do better than that. For example, let me take you back to four months after the 2014 election. That was 31 March. It was a Tuesday morning. It was a beautiful autumn day and I made my way to Carnegie station to meet the Premier and the Minister for Public Transport to make a pretty major announcement. This is the journey we have been on. The announcement was that we would ditch the expensive, inadequate project that the previous government received as an unsolicited bid to remove only four level crossings on the Cranbourne-Pakenham line at a cost of \$2.5 billion, effectively privatising the line for 25 years. We said no, we were not going to do that.

There we were, on platform 1 of Carnegie station. The Premier and the minister for transport and I said, 'No, we have something better for the community and for the Victorian people on the busiest transport corridor in Victoria'. We announced that we would remove the crossings at Centre Road, Clayton; Corrigan Road, Noble Park; Heatherton Road, Noble Park; Chandler Road, Noble Park; Clayton Road, Clayton; Poath Road, Murrumbeena; Murrumbeena Road, Murrumbeena; Koornang Road, Carnegie, and Grange Road, Carnegie — nine level crossings.

**Mr Wynne** interjected.

**Mr DIMOPOULOS** — I am glad that the minister at the table, the Minister for Planning, just asked how they are going. This is four months after we were elected. Six weeks from today all will be gone. In fact I can tell you that Chandler Road, Noble Park, is gone; Heatherton Road, Noble Park, is gone; Corrigan Road, Noble Park, is gone; Centre Road, Clayton, is gone; Clayton Road, Clayton, is gone. That is the commitment we had to the promises we made to the Victorian people. We have four more to go and they are going in six weeks time. When people on that side talk about a cash splash and last-minute action before an election, the truth shows them up.

We started this journey in March 2015 — in fact way before that. We started with the election campaign. That is one example, and that project is one I am extremely proud of. It will boost capacity up to 42 per cent in peak hour on the Cranbourne-Pakenham line, an extra 11 000 passengers in the peak. We got straight to work. We put out an expression of interest and today we are here, a few weeks away from getting the last four crossings removed. In fact by the middle of June they will all be gone.

I will take you back to even before 31 March 2015. On 29 November 2014, on election day itself, I spent some time at the polling booth at Amsleigh Park Primary School with the volunteers, handing out for all parties. I looked to my right and I saw an A-frame with the words, 'Labor will rebuild Amsleigh Park Primary School'. I knew that of course, but I thought it was great that we were telling voters as they were going to the polling booths that that very school would be rebuilt. Sure enough, the journey started then. I went to that school about three weeks ago and met with the principal. We are almost done with that project. The old red brick building, which we all love, has been gutted. We are refurbishing that. But the new building to house the junior school is completely built, with I think eight classrooms, very modern spaces, inclusive spaces and a place you would be proud to call a school. There are outdoor spaces and theatres. It is a wonderful, wonderful commitment to what we promised that community.

Again, we start with consultation and a plan and we deliver it within four years. By contrast in my community, with schools as one example, under the four years of the previous government only \$544 000 was spent across all 15 schools in my electorate. In the three and a half years of this government, in the same electorate, in those same 15 schools I am talking about, how much do you think was spent by this government on improving the lives of students and the teachers' capacity to teach? Fifty-six million dollars —

**Mr Wynne** — How much?

**Mr DIMOPOULOS** — Fifty-six million dollars, Minister for Planning. We have gone from \$544 000 over four years on the same schools to \$56 million under our government. That is a commitment to education, that is a commitment to Labor values and that is also a commitment to the community we serve. That is 103 times more funding than the funding under the previous government.

In this budget alone, there is \$9 million for Oakleigh Primary School for a new gymnasium and a new fit-out of the old building, which was built in the 1970s and which has leaky roofs, rotten gutters and windows. We are going to fix all that. There is \$300 000 for Clayton North Primary School to extend their hall; \$400 000 for a new oval at Huntingdale Primary School and a new master plan; and \$1.9 million for Monash Special Developmental School. Other colleagues have talked about the profound effect that spending on special needs schools has, and there is now \$13.8 million for the Monash children's hospital school — \$13.8 million for a school that will teach 170-odd students who call Monash hospital their home for that period, with about

17 or 18 teachers. That is our record in education in one electorate in Victoria.

If you listen to those opposite, capital upgrades do not count. The shadow Minister for Education has left the chamber, but apparently capital upgrades do not count. But for us they absolutely do, and the parents, teachers and students tell us they do. As the Minister for Education says, you cannot have a 21st century education in 19th century accommodation.

That is the legacy of just two projects in my electorate — level crossing removals and schools — but there is so much more. The budget speaks to a lot of values that are not only dear to the Labor Party but are personally dear to me, and mental health is one of those. I thank the Minister for Mental Health for his very generous comments in relation to me, but fundamentally without his commitment and the commitment of the Treasurer and the Premier, the transformation of \$700-odd million spending on mental health would not have happened. This means an extraordinary amount to not only people who have led torturous lives in terms of their ability to live in a community and fully express themselves as human beings but also their loved ones, who have to care for and worry about them day in, day out, who have to have endless conversations with nurses and psychiatrists in and out of psychiatric wards and endure late-night phone calls. The daily lived experiences of thousands and thousands of Victorians are too easy to ignore. They are not as powerful as the top end of Collins Street in arguing for funding. We are making over \$700 million worth of investment in this budget for almost 13 000 more Victorians to get mental health beds. We are investing in the community and mental health sector and also in more drug and alcohol rehab services.

I wrote a story on Facebook the other day. A young man in Oakleigh rang me. His name was John, and he said, 'I'm 32, I'm an ice addict and I want to get help'. For anyone who has dealt with someone who is an addict, whether it be ice or anything else, the first powerful step for them is to say, 'I want help', and he could not get any. That was two years ago. He could not get any help. He was of Greek background — not that that matters — his name was John and he lived in Oakleigh. I had an affinity with who he was and his life. I am so proud that we are investing in more drug and alcohol rehab beds because it is not just about John's story, it is about the stories of his mum, his dad and his whole family who live lives of constant anxiety about where he will end up.

Another budget issue that speaks enormously to our values, as others have said, are the 30 TAFE courses. I saw some of the comments on the Premier's —

**Ms Thomson** interjected.

**Mr DIMOPOULOS** — That's right, member for Footscray — 30 TAFE courses. I saw some of the public, raw comments on the Premier's Facebook page about the life-changing event that this is for some people. There is one that most people saw which said something like, 'Wow, this now really does change everything for me. I have different choices. I need to rethink my choices', because some TAFE courses are literally \$15 000. This is not small fry. They are very expensive. There is a greater span of hours, giving students, whether they be younger students or older students, the capacity to learn during hours that are suitable to them regardless of their work commitments, so right into the evening and on Saturdays. It is giving people a real chance.

The other thing that speaks to our values as a Labor government is the social procurement stuff that the Minister for Industry and Employment talked about — investments in effectively creating a whole generation of apprentices by using the power of the Victorian government's chequebook to require 10 per cent of all jobs to be for apprentices and for 2.5 per cent Aboriginal employment targets. I went down with the member for Clarinda to the Clayton level crossing and saw 30 or 40 Aboriginal Australian workers on the project. I think we have reached over 100 now. Fundamentally they would not have had that chance if it was not for the policy matching the expenditure of this government and the values of this government.

There is a lot more I would love to say, but I do want to quickly pick up on a couple of things the member for Malvern and others have said on the other side. I do not want to waste too much of my time on them because, as the Premier says, they are really irrelevant to the goals and the achievements of this government. Fundamentally all they can argue — and it is false anyway — is that we are the highest taxing government. A, that is false. That is absolutely false. But they also say —

**Ms Thomson** interjected.

**Mr DIMOPOULOS** — That's right. As the member for Footscray says, it is absolutely fake news. But they talk about cost blowouts. I think the member for Malvern literally talked about the Cranbourne-Pakenham level crossing removal project and its cost blowout. What he failed to tell the chamber

is that from when we initially announced this project to where it is today we have added a whole measure of things to the project which has made it far better. We have increased the signalling and capacity of the whole line, not just where the level crossings are being removed but the entire line. The signalling upgrades mean we will now be able to run trains back to back safely. That is why we were able to, a few weeks ago, make the announcement that from 7.00 p.m. to 10.00 p.m. at night we will have trains every 10 minutes. In the morning it will be 'turn up and go'. Fancy that. That is like London or Tokyo — 'turn up and go'. It is absolutely incredible. They are the investments. That is what you get when you make such investments. They are not cost blowouts, member for Malvern. I would not call those cost blowouts; I would call them prudent investments.

When you talk about cost blowouts you also have to be cognisant of the fact that this government is delivering budget surpluses that are unparalleled, as the Treasurer said, in Victoria's history. There is \$2.4 billion on average in budget surpluses. Debt is down to about 4.5 per cent, from memory. We inherited 6 per cent. So there is lower debt, more budget surpluses, the fastest growing economy in Australia and the biggest employment growth. So the opposition's commentary about cost blowouts falls on absolutely deaf ears, because we get value for that investment and we also observe budget prudence and fiscal prudence in our budgets. I am immensely proud of this budget and I am immensely proud of this government, of the Premier's role obviously as the leader of this proud, proud government, of the Treasurer's role and of the finance minister's role. I commend the bill to the house.

**Ms VICTORIA** (Bayswater) (18:55) — I rise to speak on the Appropriation (2018–2019) Bill 2018. I hope that this is the very last appropriation bill from a Labor government that I get to speak on for a very, very long time. We all know in Victoria the mantra of 'getting it done' and 'being fair', and what I want to do is explain exactly to my constituency what is not being done in our area and what is not fair for the people of Victoria. We all know of course that Victorians are absolutely sick to death of all of the failings of this government and of the high-taxing government that they have in power here at the moment. They tell me this when I am doorknocking, when they come to the electorate office or when I am at the supermarket. Day in, day out there are complaints about the cost of living, about congestion, about crime. Many in our local area were affected by the problematic issues around the Country Fire Authority (CFA) and all the trouble that has been caused there. They come to me and talk to me about that as well. How is any of that fair?

The track record of this government is there for all to see. It is there on the record books. They change their ministers as quickly as Melbourne changes its weather. Whether they are kicked out for not toeing the line, whether they are kicked out for ferrying their dogs around in chauffeur-driven cars or whether they are kicked out for rorting — there is a good one; there are a couple of those — it is just an embarrassment, not only of course for the Labor Party but I think all Victorians are starting to feel as though this is not a party or a government that represents them in any way, shape or form. They have rorted the system so many times and they have asked us to forget, but we cannot forget.

As I said, we cannot forget things like the CFA, and shame on the government for not allowing the second reading today, for example, of the presumptive rights legislation that was brought in by our shadow minister on this side of the house, a Liberal member who is proud to be associated with the CFA and who wanted to bring in something. Of course that was thrown out by the Labor Party. The beautiful thing is that the CFA members in my community are all volunteers. They have been called volunteers but never called professional by the other side of the house, and I find that totally insulting, as do the CFA members in all three of my local brigades.

Unfortunately this budget offers so much of the same as what has happened in other budgets before. Victorians are really no better off, especially in the seat of Bayswater. Taxes continue to mount up without any relief in sight. The increasingly high cost of living, obviously in terms of electricity, is a direct result of the extra coal taxes that came in and the shutting down of Hazelwood power station. For the other side to say that it had nothing to do with them and that they did not close the power station is not true, and the people of Victoria will not be hoodwinked. Road tolls are up, public transport costs are up, housing affordability of course is completely unattainable for so many people, and in the area of Bayswater district it is becoming even more difficult. I hear this on a day-to-day basis.

The government attempted to place a bandaid fix on our energy crisis by saying to people, 'Here, have \$50 if you go to a website'. How is \$50 going to change the lives of people who are now paying hundreds and hundreds of dollars more, sometimes thousands of dollars more, per year? 'Here's \$50, but we'll grab your data while we're at it'. This is absolutely tokenistic and disgraceful, and it is not fair. I do not think the Premier even cares a damn about my electorate. Actually I do not think he knows where my electorate is, but I would welcome him to come out, have a talk to some of my people and hear it like it is, because he is certainly not

listening, his upper house representative is not listening to these people and my people are not being represented by this government in any way, shape or form.

I will continue to bang on as much as I can for the people of the Bayswater district and make sure that they get heard in this Parliament. They hate sitting in the cold and they hate sitting in the dark, and that is what they are telling me they are having to do because of the rising cost of energy in the state of Victoria.

**Business interrupted under sessional orders.**

## ADJOURNMENT

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER** — The question is:

That the house now adjourns.

### Melbourne Water landholdings

**Mr MORRIS** (Mornington) (19:00) — (14 292) I raise a matter this evening for the Minister for Water. The action I seek from the minister is that she direct Melbourne Water to cease any actions that may result in land owned by that organisation that is situated in the Mornington Peninsula green wedge or adjacent to it and less than 40 hectares in area being disposed of. As the minister is aware, Melbourne Water holds significant land on the peninsula. There have been indications that they are keen to dispose of land that is surplus to their requirements, but until now that has been confined mostly to residential areas. It now appears that there is an intention to dispose of land acquired as part of the construction of the south-east outfall that is outside the urban growth boundary and either in the green wedge zone or adjacent to it.

I am advised that in many cases these lots were acquired compulsorily from farmers. They are of course much smaller lots than would be permitted in the green wedge area, which has a minimum subdivision size of 40 hectares. It is quite reasonable that they should be severed from larger lots, given the purpose for which they were acquired, but apparently there is no longer a need to retain those lots and there is an intention to dispose of them. In March this year the Dunns Creek Landcare Group wrote to Melbourne Water seeking a lease on a particular allotment. I should indicate that the land I am about to speak of is not in the Mornington electorate; it is in fact in the Nepean electorate, but it is an issue that covers both. The group wrote:

Please find attached an application by Dunns Creek Landcare Group, Mornington Peninsula for an area of land PNT230164 at Moats Corner, on Dunns Creek Road, Dromana.

Supporting information is ... provided.

We look forward to receiving a positive outcome for this application ...

The response was:

On behalf of Melbourne Water we thank you for your application to license this land in Dromana.

Unfortunately this land is not available to license as this parcel is surplus land and is therefore on the Melbourne Water sales program planned to be sold within the next 0–3 years.

That response unfortunately was not particularly helpful. I understand the desire of Melbourne Water to rationalise their property holdings, but they should not be allowed to effectively circumvent the zoning provisions for the area, nor should they be allowed to dispose of compulsorily acquired land that was only able to be subdivided by virtue of that compulsory acquisition.

The impact of this on the peninsula is potentially significant. By some estimates there could be several hundred properties, which would significantly increase the number of vacant lots in the green wedge zone and have an impact on settlement density. I think it is important that all government agencies, including Melbourne Water, abide by the rules put in place by the government itself. They should not be allowed to use their special status as government enterprises to circumvent the rules that apply to ordinary citizens or ordinary companies. I do urge the minister to consider this problem urgently and to issue a direction that where allotments are below 40 hectares in area they will not be disposed of.

### Craigieburn ambulance station

**Ms SPENCE** (Yuroke) (19:03) — (14 293) My adjournment matter is for the Minister for Ambulance Services, and the action I seek is for the minister to provide an update on the additional ambulance station that is to be built in Craigieburn. I am proud to be part of a Labor government that supports our paramedics and volunteer first responders by providing the extra resources they need to respond even faster to life-threatening medical emergencies and save more lives. I thank the minister for this investment and her hard work to deliver better ambulance services for all Victorians, including residents of the Yuroke electorate.

### Cobram Secondary College

**Mr McCURDY** (Ovens Valley) (19:03) — (14 294) My adjournment matter is to the Minister for Education, and the action that I seek is that the minister accompany me for a visit to Cobram Secondary

College. I have had multiple visits to the school, and I will be there again soon. Cobram is a growing community, and it is blessed for schooling opportunities. However, the sign of good government is how well you look after your public sector in the education and health areas. To date Cobram has not received any assistance. I wrote to the minister in March inviting him to assist Cobram Secondary College with funding, and I am yet to hear back from him. I hereby request that he come to visit the school with me to obtain a better understanding of the needs of this fantastic school community.

### **Sunshine Plaza management**

**Ms SULEYMAN** (St Albans) (19:04) — (14 295) My adjournment matter is for the Minister for Housing, Disability and Ageing, and the action I seek is that the minister investigate whether the Sunshine Plaza management have breached the Equal Opportunity Act 2010 or any other relevant act of Parliament. Recently there have been local media reports that Sunshine Plaza management have begun charging disabled customers \$20 to use the disabled toilets. Centre management has fitted the toilets with a master locksmith access key after an alleged misuse of the toilets. This means that people with a disability now have to go to centre management, fill out a form and pay \$20 to be given use of these basic facilities. This is simply not on, and in my view there may be a breach of the Equal Opportunity Act 2010 and many others.

I am seeking immediate action from the minister. I am absolutely outraged, and I will not rest until this outrageous discrimination has been rectified. Furthermore, I am calling on Sunshine Plaza management to immediately apologise to all those who have been offended by this action. There must be a better way to stop the alleged misuse of toilets from recurring that does not involve unfavourable and discriminatory treatment of disabled customers — the most vulnerable in our community. I urge Sunshine Plaza management to immediately come to their senses and stop this blatant cash grab and disregard for basic humanity.

### **Maroondah Highway speed limits and signage**

**Mrs FYFFE** (Evelyn) (19:05) — (14 296) The matter I raise is for the attention of the Minister for Roads and Road Safety. I am calling for the revision of signage and speed limits on the Maroondah Highway from Lilydale to Healesville, in particular the stretches of road from the Coldstream township to Hill Road.

The Yarra Valley is seeing positive trends in tourism numbers. Domestic and international overnight visitation has increased by 25 per cent and 12.5 per cent respectively according to regional figures. The increase is welcomed by the community for the employment it brings. However, it has also brought with it, in particular with overseas visitors, issues of safe travel in unfamiliar surroundings whilst they are searching for their destination. The increased traffic is resulting in a higher frequency of accidents and near misses.

I believe it is a few years since this road was last reviewed as to the adequacy of speed limits and signage of road conditions and tourist attractions. A speed limit of 100 kilometres an hour on parts of the road is considered by some locals and tourist businesses to be too high when coupled with the lack of turning shoulders and in some parts inadequate vision, and that is all compounding the problems when mixed with residents driving to and from work and visitors who are unfamiliar with the area.

### **Seaford pier**

**Ms KILKENNY** (Carrum) (19:07) — (14 297) My adjournment matter is for the Minister for Ports, and the action I seek is for the minister to provide an update on the timing of works to upgrade the Seaford pier. My local community was absolutely ecstatic to get the news that funding to restore the Seaford pier has been included in this year's state budget. The Seaford pier is a local icon which means so much to so many. Now that the funding is available, my constituents are very keen for an update on the proposed timing of the works. Could the minister please provide an update on repair works at the Seaford pier?

### **Gippsland electricity and gas connections**

**Mr NORTHE** (Morwell) (19:07) — (14 298) My adjournment matter is directed towards the Minister for Energy, Environment and Climate Change, and the action I seek is that the minister intervene and urgently fix the electricity and gas connection debacle which is still impacting many Gippsland businesses and home owners. As it stands at the moment, many builders are unable to have electricity or gas connected to their properties in a timely manner. The impacts include builders having to resort to either buying or renting generators, and that comes at a considerable financial cost to these businesses. Using a generator is the only way they can commence construction on a home. We have even had examples where builders have had to ask neighbours to connect up with long extension leads to actually get these sites operating.

Of course this causes many consequences, such as noise from the generators operating early in the morning, and therefore we have neighbour complaints. Also, home owners are being delayed when moving into their dream home, and this is a significant cost to them. On the one hand they are commencing to pay a mortgage, yet they are not able to move into their homes, so they have to pay rent as well. This has been ongoing for months. I concede that previously this was due to an industrial dispute, but it now appears there is a system or a process problem that has come to the fore. My understanding is that the current process is confusing, slow and cumbersome and there is back and forth between retailers and distribution companies. Unfortunately it is the poor builders and their clients who are left out in the cold.

I note that on Friday, 4 May, the Treasurer put out a media release headed 'Fixing electricity connection times for new homes'. Within that, the Treasurer talked about taking action to reduce delays in connecting power to new homes and also a referral to the Essential Services Commission (ESC) to investigate these matters. But words in the media release such as 'taking action to reduce delays' and providing 'urgent advice' are just absolutely rubbish.

The Treasurer has asked for the ESC to report back to the government by 18 September. I can give the Treasurer and the government example after example where builders have multiple homes right now without electricity and gas connections, which is a massive concern to them and also to their clients, and to wait till 18 September to get advice back from the ESC is simply unacceptable for these builders and their customers. The Treasurer, the government and the minister for energy should be taking action now and finding out what the problem is. Whilst there is an inquiry into the distribution companies, my understanding is that it is actually the retailers that are causing the majority of the problems. Further to that, on 4 May in the *Herald Sun* there was a headline that read 'Victorian Treasurer Tim Pallas says the rising cost of major projects is keeping him awake at night'. The issue of what is happening with Gippsland builders and their customers should be keeping the Treasurer awake at night as well.

### **Kyneton Men's Shed**

**Ms THOMAS** (Macedon) (19:10) — (14 299) The matter I wish to raise is for the attention of the Minister for Families and Children in the other place, and the action I seek is that the minister visit my electorate to turn the sod on the construction of the new Kyneton Men's Shed. My good friend and active shed member

Brian Ward claims that the Kyneton Men's Shed was the first in Australia. I think the official record says it was the third, but the point is that it has been going for a long time and is a treasured asset in Kyneton.

In 2015 the Kyneton men were told they would need to find a new home, and after some anxious times a new site was finally found in partnership with Bupa Aged Care. With \$60 000 in funding from the Andrews Labor government, the shed will be built overlooking the Campaspe River, and it will feature an office, a lunch room and meeting room, a kitchen, a workshop, a library, toilets and a landscaped area which will include raised vegetable gardens. This is a great win for the Kyneton community.

Men's sheds continue to be a popular and important part of the social fabric of my electorate, with sheds also in Lancefield, Gisborne, Riddells Creek, Woodend and Daylesford and strong interest in establishing new sheds. Indeed only last week I attended a forum organised by Romsey Lancefield Rotary Club members to discuss building a men's shed in Romsey. There has been similarly strong interest in establishing a shed in Trentham, led by the Trentham Lions Club.

It is exciting to see the 2018–19 men's shed funding round open, with grants of up to \$30 000 for refurbishments and \$60 000 for new sheds available now. I am proud of the work the Andrews Labor government continues to do in supporting the 360 sheds across Victoria. Indeed since the Andrews government was elected more than 70 men's sheds have been built or refurbished, with even more on the way. Minister, I look forward to welcoming you to Kyneton to turn the first sod at Kyneton and to share with you the aspirations of the Romsey and Trentham communities for their very own sheds.

### **East Grampians pipeline**

**Ms STALEY** (Ripon) (19:12) — (14 300) My adjournment matter is for the Minister for Water, and the action I seek is that she work collaboratively with the federal government to apply to the federal government in the form that they require for funding for the East Grampians pipeline. I understand that the minister's media release said that the federal government has not funded this project. I also understand that the federal government is adamant that the state government has not applied for this project in the manner in which they require. I know that subsequently the minister's office put out a statement saying that the business case has been provided to the federal government; however, that is not an application form.

So my understanding is that the federal government is very keen on this project. They are prepared to fund this project, but they are not going to fund this project if the government will not put in the required information in the required way and in a timely manner. It is yet another case, could I say, of this government immediately flipping the switch to blame the federal government when in this instance the federal government is very interested in this project. They understand its benefit to the region's farmers. They understand why this is an important project.

In fact Dan Tehan, the federal member for Wannon, and I met with farmers in the East Grampians pipeline area just last weekend and reiterated our support for this project. All that is standing in the way of this project being fully funded is this state government getting its paperwork in order, and I ask the minister to do so.

### Frankston electorate schools

**Mr EDBROOKE** (Frankston) (19:14) — (14 301) My adjournment matter is for the Minister for Education — the fantastic Minister for Education — and the action I seek on behalf of some very grateful schools in my community is for the minister to visit Frankston again in the future and join me at these school communities to speak about the very important and history-making education budget for Frankston.

In the 2018–19 budget I successfully fought for and delivered funding for the following schools under the Frankston North education plan: Aldercourt Primary School, Monterey Secondary College and Mahogany Rise Primary School. I also fought for and delivered funding for Mount Erin Secondary College, Belvedere Park Primary School, Nepean Special School, Frankston Special Developmental School, Ballam Park Primary School, Kingsley Park Primary School, Karingal Primary School and Frankston Heights Primary School.

Across Frankston from Aldercourt Primary School in the north, which received funding to plan an amazing multimillion-dollar redevelopment and the addition of a kindergarten facility, to Mount Erin Secondary College in the south, which received funding for a new hockey field, this is an amazing record and one that I am obviously very proud of. Congratulations to all our school communities. Stay tuned for more great news for Frankston.

I also congratulate the Southern Saints on their first game at SkyBus Stadium last weekend. Congratulations also to Sheridan Howe on becoming the captain of the mighty Seaford Tigerettes division 3

team, which ran away with a huge win on the weekend. I am very proud to sponsor her as a player.

### Responses

**Mr FOLEY** (Minister for Housing, Disability and Ageing) (19:15) — I thank the honourable member for St Albans for her very important adjournment matter. Let me join her in condemning the operators of Sunshine Plaza shopping centre. This is the era of the national disability insurance scheme and of our record funding for advocacy and support for people with disabilities. I am sure I speak for all sides of this house when I say that attitudes towards people with disability and the need to include them as part of our mainstream society is one of the wider challenges we face.

I join the member in condemning here on the floor of the Parliament and in the Sunshine community the set of clearly discriminatory activities of Sunshine Plaza shopping centre. I will work with the honourable member for St Albans to make sure that this outrage is brought to account and that this blatant discrimination against people with disabilities is brought to an end as soon as possible.

I would encourage the owners and operators of Sunshine Plaza shopping centre to do the right thing and to end this discriminatory practice forthwith, prior to governments and other agencies having to look at what tools we have to deal with this matter. I thank the honourable member for her important work here and her support across her community for people with disabilities.

**Ms NEVILLE** (Minister for Water) (19:17) — In relation to the matter raised by the member for Mornington, I am not aware of this particular issue. However, I will say I would be very surprised if Melbourne Water were circumventing government policy, legislation or practice. I will, however, raise this matter with Melbourne Water. I will ask them to brief the member for Mornington about that particular issue, and I will inquire myself to see what the situation is.

I completely agree that we need to make important protections for our green wedges. At the same time the selling off of surplus land is about ensuring there is downward pressure on water prices for Melbourne Water customers as well. So it is about getting the right balance. I will inquire for my own purposes as well as ensuring that the member is directly briefed by Melbourne Water.

In relation to the member for Ripon's comment, I just find this extraordinary coming from a party that

invested zero dollars and opposed almost every single extension of the water grid. Wedderburn — they never went near it. Mitiamo — they never went near it. We funded the business case for East Grampians because we knew it was such a critical project and had the potential to play a really significant role in water security in that community. That business case was not completed under the stage 2 applications of the national water infrastructure program. When it was completed the department and I sent it to the federal department and provided detail to the community about the business case. In addition to that we have sought and have been pushing for a round 3.

The federal department made it very clear that we could not put in an application for funding that did not exist. So we did the next best thing we could, which was to provide all the business cases and ensure that the department representatives were talking and going through the details and the assessments that were made, which absolutely clearly show this is a critical project and will transform that part of the region. That is why we did the business case in the first place; we knew that would be the case.

In addition to that I have written to the federal minister responsible, Michael McCormack, indicating that we have also supported the project with \$32 million. I am not having a go at the federal government. I am saying, 'Look, this stacks up. Let's have a third round of the national water infrastructure project'. I will be very interested to see if anyone other than WA gets some money tonight in the federal budget out of the second round of the national water infrastructure project.

If there is a third round, absolutely we will put in an application. But I have also been in contact with the federal member for Wannon about this issue, and I have said, 'We would love to put in a formal process, but tell us how we do that, because the federal department have told us we can't because there's no such thing'. We will continue to advocate and work with communities. Our money is on the table. I have said we will commence the process right now because it is so critical. I have said that we will start the planning process, the cultural assessment and all that needs to be done so that this project can commence as quickly as possible. I urge all of us to be on the side of trying to secure that money. Certainly the member for Wannon was very cooperative and is doing his best to see if we cannot put in some formal process. Let us all work together to deliver a project that will transform a part of that region.

In relation to other matters, a number of members have raised a number of matters for other ministers, and I will pass those matters on to those ministers.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER** — Order! The house now stands adjourned until tomorrow.

**House adjourned 7.22 p.m.**