

**Thursday 14 June 2018**

The Speaker, **Ms Hickey**, took the Chair at 10 a.m. and read Prayers.

## **QUESTIONS**

### **GST - Revenue for Tasmania**

**Ms WHITE question to PREMIER, Mr HODGMAN**

[10.03 a.m.]

With the Prime Minister in Hobart today are you satisfied with the guarantee he provided you this morning around GST revenue to Tasmania?

## **ANSWER**

Madam Speaker, I thank the Leader of the Opposition for her question. Yes, it was fantastic to see the Prime Minister in our state again and to stand alongside him as the Leader of another Liberal Coalition government nationally which is doing a lot to invest in our state. We were announcing another example of that occurring. This time with respect to the Bridgewater bridge - a project which could have long been delivered had it not been a Labor state government that denied the opportunity to invest in that bridge. It did not use the funding that was provided by the then Howard coalition government to kick start the project but it will happen under this Government and we look forward to the opening by 2024.

I did not miss the opportunity to raise with the Prime Minister the issue of GST and I typically do. We have had this fight before. We have won it but as I have always said the war goes on. We will, as a state government, advocate very strongly on behalf of Tasmanians to ensure our fair share of the GST. We received another assurance today from the Prime Minister following guarantees from him and the finance minister that Tasmania will not be disadvantaged by any change to the GST. We are confident that that will occur.

I ask, rhetorically, if the Leader of the Opposition could say the same thing about her Leader. Only yesterday, Bill Shorten tweeted that if Labor was elected he would give Western Australia more of the GST, raising them to 70 cents in the dollar. As members opposite would or should know, if that happens, it will disadvantage Tasmania. I ask, rhetorically, have you been on the phone to Bill Shorten. Have you said to him, 'What you are doing is going to hurt our state and we will fight against it'?

**Members** interjecting.

**Ms WHITE** - Point of order. Given that I cannot hear the Premier's answer for the shouting. Madam Speaker, I draw your to Standing Order 45 which goes to relevance. The question was very short. It was specifically regarding whether the Premier is satisfied with the Prime Minister's guarantee on GST that he gave today.

**Madam SPEAKER** - Thank you. I do not know what the Premier is going to say next but I am sure he is getting to the point.

**Mr HODGMAN** - I have answered that point. Yes, we are satisfied. I asked the Labor Party, if they are satisfied with what the leader of their party, Bill Shorten said.

**Mr O'Byrne** interjecting.

**Mr HODGMAN** - The member for Franklin, Mr O'Byrne, said he has spoken to Mr Shorten about this. He is changing his story. This is the worry about Labor; you cannot trust them.

**Members** interjecting.

**Madam SPEAKER** - Order. I know it is supposed to be a bit rowdy here but I want to hear the answers and the questions.

**Mr HODGMAN** - Thank you, Madam Speaker. If you play the tape back, you will hear the member for Franklin saying he had spoken to Mr Shorten. This is the problem. You can trust the Liberal Party to deliver for our state as we are doing - state and Commonwealth governments. You cannot trust Labor. You cannot trust what they say or what they will do, as Bill Shorten tweeted yesterday.

### **GST - Productivity Commission Review**

**Ms WHITE question to TREASURER, Mr GUTWEIN.**

[10.07 a.m.]

Last night you were finally briefed by the federal Treasurer, Scott Morrison, on the Productivity Commission Review into GST. Did Scott Morrison give you an assurance that the GST distribution methodology will not change? Yes or no.

**ANSWER**

Madam Speaker, I thank the member for her question. I am in regular contact with Scott Morrison and have had a number of discussions with him on this particular matter. We have a guarantee on this side - not one dollar less, not one cent less. In my conversations with Mr Morrison, I believe it will be business as usual.

On this side of the House, we have a guarantee from the Prime Minister. On that side of the House, Western Australia has a guarantee from Bill Shorten. That is the difference. This is on the Facebook page. I listened to the interview this morning on what Bill Shorten had to say for 27 seconds. I do not think he mentioned Tasmania once. What he did say very clearly, is that only Labor will deliver a fair share of the GST for Western Australia.

On this side of the House, we have a guarantee from the Prime Minister: it will be business as usual. Regarding this budget I am about to bring down, we have more clarity this year than we have ever had in our GST.

**Members** interjecting.

**Madam SPEAKER** - Order.

**Mr GUTWEIN** - It is no wonder that side of the House does not want to bring down an alternative budget. They have no guarantee from Bill Shorten. That is why they do not want to bring down an alternative budget. They are not prepared to explain it to the Tasmanian people.

**Ms WHITE** - Point of order, Madam Speaker. Relevance, standing order 45. The question was whether the Treasurer had a guarantee the distribution methodology, HFE, would be assured. We did not get that guarantee from the Treasurer last night. Answer the question.

**Mr GUTWEIN** - Madam Speaker, I am happy to make the point again. On this side of the House we have a guarantee from the Prime Minister, not one dollar or one cent less. On that side of the House, Western Australia has a guarantee. That is the best they can come up with.

The Budget I bring down today will be a fantastic budget. It will deliver on our commitments and it will take Tasmania to the next level.

### **Dolphin Sands - Proposed Development**

**Ms O'CONNOR question to PREMIER, Mr HODGMAN**

[10.10 a.m.]

Your Government's open-for-business mantra has most recently manifested itself in a 3185 hectare mega-development proposal at Dolphin Sands on prime agricultural land on the east coast. The footprint of the Cambria Green development proposal is massive. It is unlike anything Tasmania has seen before.

Can you confirm that since the Beijing-backed and based developer visited you and presented you with a gift in April 2015, he and his project have been cosied along through the process by your Government and the Office of the Coordinator-General to where we are today? Can you understand the concerns of east coast residents? Thanks to the work of the Office of the Coordinator-General and Glamorgan Spring Bay Council this mega-development is through the first step of the planning process. Is this mega-development your vision for Tasmania's future?

### **ANSWER**

Madam Speaker, I thank the member for the question. Tasmania is open for business. My vision on coming into Government just over four years ago was to open our state to business, to investment, to development, and to job opportunities for Tasmanians, for growth in regional economies such as on the east coast. The Government strongly supports good financial management and strong economic progress. Tasmanians need progress in this state. Our state needs progress and development if are going to better fund things such as our health system, education system and housing system. We are able to do that because our economy is now strong and our budget is back in balance.

With the gift register, I would need to check the disclosures which we make as members of government in accordance with the rules to declare any gifts. It is not uncommon when visiting parties come to our state, including those who have an interest in our state, for them to offer a gift to government. I would need to check the register as to the specifics of that.

**Ms O'CONNOR** - Point of order, Madam Speaker. Standing order 45 goes to relevance. I have asked the Premier, is this development your vision for the future of Tasmania?

**Madam SPEAKER** - Thank you. I ask the Premier to proceed on that one.

**Mr HODGMAN** - Thank you, Madam Speaker. I am trying to go through each of the points you raised, the gift register being one of those. She is trying to draw some spurious connection that I categorically refute because it cannot be substantiated.

I am aware the Glamorgan Spring Bay Council has spoken in favour of rezoning part of the property at Dolphin Sands. It is a matter currently being exhibited by the council and will be put before the Tasmanian Planning Commission for their assessment and planning. The Government, the Minister for Planning, has had no direct involvement in the matter.

Some do not support ecotourism and developments of this nature. The Greens pick and choose as they see fit and also implicitly suggest anyone of a particular foreign persuasion or origin should not be able to invest in our state. This is a recurring theme we are hearing from the Greens, or at least the more protectionist element of the Greens. Senator McKim was more economically liberal, especially with respect to the sharing of accommodation.

The proponent has said the majority of the property will remain as agricultural land. The assessment of the proposal is following the standard rezoning processes under LUPA, the Land Use Planning and Approvals Act. The independent Tasmanian Planning Commission is the responsible body to assess and decide on rezoning applications. We have trust in this independent process. This is typical of the Greens. One day they want to support due process and independence of the TPC -

**Ms O'Connor** - Due process? In China they think it is a done deal.

**Mr HODGMAN** - but when there is something they do not like they try to undermine it and the people involved in making that independent investment.

**Ms O'Connor** - It is a done deal they reckon. They have had a signing ceremony.

**Dr Woodruff** - They signed the document three days beforehand in China.

**Madam SPEAKER** - Order. I am trying to show as much tolerance as I can, but we do need to show respect and the Premier is speaking. I will ask you to wind it up.

**Mr HODGMAN** - I will, thank you, Madam Speaker. We have faith in the independent planning process. It is essentially the same process that existed under the Labor-Greens coalition. We entrust the personnel in those planning approval bodies, including the Glamorgan Spring Bay Council in this case, to discharge their functions responsibly and independently.

With respect to our vision and my vision for the state, it is a Tasmania that is open for business, one that has a strong economy, one that is providing more job opportunities for Tasmanians wherever they live, not the exclusive, elitist nonsense we hear from the Greens.

## **Access to Parks and Wilderness Areas**

### **Mr SHELTON question to PREMIER, Mr HODGMAN**

[10.16 a.m.]

Can the Premier please update the House on the Hodgman majority Liberal Government's policies and investment in Tasmanian parks and reserves that are resulting in an enhanced visitor experience and contributing to the increased visitor numbers?

### **ANSWER**

Madam Speaker, this is another subject I am very happy to talk about and another one where there is a clear distinction between a majority Liberal Government and the Labor-Greens coalition. We are investing more into our parks, one of our great and precious assets, opening them up for more people to enjoy. It is supporting an extraordinary amount of growth in Tasmania's visitor economy. An area that we are doing more to support by way of infrastructure upgrades and support will be detailed in today's Budget.

We believe in providing more opportunities for people to access our wilderness areas. It is a fundamental element of our long-term plan to transform Tasmania into an eco-tourism capital of the world. In many respects we are already there. That is part of our vision. We remain committed to our policy of unlocking these areas for sensible and sustainable development that is robustly assessed, and that puts Tasmania at the front of the pack. If we stand still we will not continue to move forward. Tasmania will not continue to see the extraordinary unprecedented levels of growth in our visitor economy that are occurring under a majority Liberal Government.

This Budget will invest more. It will continue the investment that is supporting the growth in visitor numbers to our state. Members will be aware of the record numbers that continue to come to Tasmania from across Australia and across the world. They are staying longer and spending more. Of the 1.26 million visitors who came here from interstate and overseas in 2017, a record 534 000 or 42 per cent of them said they went to a national park. Almost half of them come explicitly to visit one of our national parks.

The Parks and Wildlife Service monitors visitor numbers across 13 national park reference sites. At these locations visitation increased by 6 per cent in 2017 to 1.5 million visits, which is more visits than ever recorded before. These are very special places. They are valued by all Tasmanians and are increasingly popular with visitors. That is why the Government opened up expressions of interest and a robust assessment process, opportunities for some of our great innovators and Tasmanian entrepreneurs to explore opportunities for sensitive development in these areas.

It has produced some amazing and highly acclaimed new tourism developments such as the Blue Derby Pod Rides, Maydena Bike Park, and new accommodation pavilions at the RACT Freycinet Lodge. These are some of the best tourism developments in the country, if not the world.

In addition to facilitating increasing numbers of visitors to our natural areas we are investing significantly in providing new infrastructure and upgrading existing assets in our parks and reserves. It will ensure that the visitor experience remains world class and that we stay ahead of our competitors.

We have committed \$21.8 million, for example, to develop the supporting infrastructure for the gateway precinct at Cradle Mountain, including a new visitor centre, new commercial retail area and a new viewing shelter at Dove Lake. This is in line with additional commitments from this Government and also the Turnbull Government into the master plan at Cradle Mountain, with infrastructure upgrades that will pave the way for contemporary and world-class experiences at this extraordinary destination and will have it stand proudly and irrefutably alongside Uluru and the Great Barrier Reef as one of our nation's iconic tourism destinations. The Commonwealth Government has done its bit by providing a \$30 million commitment, meaning there is around \$60 million available now to progress this exciting opportunity and proposal.

We are also going to do much more to invest in infrastructure. I do not have time now to go through the investments we have in our parks and roads and, importantly, into our great personnel who are working within our Parks and Wildlife Service and we will be employing more of them. I know there are calls from Greens members and environmental groups for us to invest more into infrastructure and more rangers and personnel to work with the PWS. That will happen under this Government. It will be more than what was invested under the former Labor-Greens government. This Budget will demonstrate our commitment stronger than ever - around \$200 million - by the Government including into the coming Budget, more investments into one of our greatest assets, more support for our parks and the people who work in them.

### **GST - Model of Distribution**

#### **Mr BACON question to TREASURER, Mr GUTWEIN**

[10.21 a.m.]

Do you still believe that the current system of horizontal fiscal equalisation is the best distribution model for the GST, yes or no?

#### **ANSWER**

Madam Speaker, I thank the member for that question. The system has stood the country in good stead for a long time. In terms of horizontal fiscal equalisation, it has ensured that the smaller states have been able to receive the revenues they require to provide an equal level of services and I am confident that will continue.

The question though, rhetorically, that I want to ask the shadow finance minister is, does Bill Shorten believe that? It appears he is more focused on Western Australia at the moment than he is on Tasmania. For some reason it appears he has given up on Braddon. He is more focused on those elections he is running in Western Australia than what he is in Tasmania.

**Members** interjecting.

**Mr GUTWEIN** - Oh, here we go, we have the two of them there, B1 and B2. Look at them. It is unbelievable, Madam Speaker.

**Mr Bacon** - You want to have a look in the mirror, mate.

**Mr GUTWEIN** - We know you vote on the same ticket when you dress identically.

Horizontal fiscal equalisation has stood this country in good stead for a long time and I expect it will continue to do so into the future. The question that needs to be answered is, what does Bill think? Quite clearly -

**Ms WHITE** - Point of order, Madam Speaker, on standing order 45 going to relevance. The Treasurer has not answered the question as to whether he believes HFE is the best model for distribution of GST.

**Mr FERGUSON** - On the point of order, this is repeated behaviour by the Leader of the Opposition, who is consistently disorderly in raising points of order which are only ever raised when she hears something she does not like. It is disorderly in the extreme.

**Mr BACON** - On the point of order, I seek some clarification about specific, short questions requiring a yes or no, and whether, in the past, the ruling has been that there is a requirement that those questions be answered.

**Madam SPEAKER** - I am happy to clarify that because I have standing order 45 right in front on me:

In answering any such Question a Member shall not Debate the matter to which the same refers, and answers shall be relevant to the Question.

Let us proceed, Treasurer, but I think it is time to wind up.

**Mr GUTWEIN** - Madam Speaker, as I have said on a number of occasions this morning, HFE has stood this country in good stead and it will continue to do so into the future.

### **GST - Revenue for Tasmania**

#### **Mr BACON question to TREASURER, Mr GUTWEIN**

[10.25 a.m.]

Economist Saul Eslake has said that Tasmania is in real danger of losing \$367 million in GST revenue in just one year because we do not have a voice in the federal Cabinet room where crucial decisions are made. Mr Eslake said the Prime Minister has said that Tasmania will not be one dollar worse off under any new GST arrangements. While that sounds like he is being generous, I think he is being disingenuous. The key decision-makers here are from New South Wales - the Prime Minister and Treasurer - and Western Australia - the Minister for Finance - the two states which stand to gain the most from the commission's recommendations at the expense of Tasmania and South Australia. Have you taken advice from Treasury about Mr Eslake's modelling, and is it right or wrong?

#### **ANSWER**

Madam Speaker, I thank the member for his question and his commentary on what might occur within the federal Cabinet room. The point that needs to be made is that Saul Eslake is free to commentate as he sees fit, and he does on a wide range of subjects. On this side of the House, the Prime Minister has made it perfectly clear that we will not lose one dollar less. We will not lose a

cent. He reiterated that again this morning. From the contact and discussions I have had with Scott Morrison I am of the view that, regarding our revenues, it will be business as usual. We have made that point over and over again. They keep standing up and leading with their chin. On this side of the House we have a guarantee from the Prime Minister. On that side of the House Western Australia has a guarantee from Bill Shorten. They need to explain Bill's position in terms of Tasmania. We know what the Prime Minister's position is, but what is Bill's position in terms of GST and Tasmania's position? They need to outline that next week in their alternative budget. The country would be of the view at the moment, as far as Bill Shorten is concerned, that Tasmania does not exist. He is quite happy to be in Western Australia making -

**Ms O'BYRNE** - Point of order. I can answer the Treasurer's question right now. Labor's policy does not change the formula at all. He knows that, but telling the truth in here is not something any of them on that side like to do.

**Madam SPEAKER** - Order. A little bit of discipline, please.

**Mr GUTWEIN** - Madam Speaker, Ms White -

**Mr Bacon** - Don't run the Premier's lines. He told you to say this - don't say it.

**Mr GUTWEIN** - It is a fair point. Why did the Leader of the Opposition, Ms White, not meet with Bill Shorten when he was on the north-west coast and ask him the question herself?

**Ms White** - Because it's not at risk under Labor. It's at risk under the Liberals.

**Mr GUTWEIN** - It is not at risk? He has made a guarantee to Western Australia, not to Tasmania.

### **Dolphin Sands - Rezoning of Agricultural Land for Development**

**Dr WOODRUFF question to MINISTER for PLANNING, Mr JAENSCH**

[10.29 a.m.]

The mega Cambria Green development on the east coast requires rezoning of agricultural land and is one of the largest planning scheme amendments and tourism developments ever proposed for Tasmania. The Tasmanian Planning Scheme that your Government rushed through in 2015 provides a loophole. This development enclave would use a specific area plan. The master plan for that specific area plan requires suggestions and concepts for further development within it that are vague and open to interpretation. It, effectively, will make a whole new mini-planning system within the Tasmanian Planning Scheme on that site. The bottom line is, if the specific area plan is approved this mega Cambria Green development would make massive changes in land use with impacts on the local community, on water availability and on local biodiversity. There would be almost no ability for the community or other people to appeal or for a formal consultation process about most of those changes.

Is this your idea of a good planning scheme to guide Tasmania's future?

### **ANSWER**

Madam Speaker, I am aware of the proposal for a new tourism development on the east coast. I am aware that the Glamorgan Spring Bay Council, the local planning authority for that area, has



voted in favour of a rezoning request for part of the property at Dolphin Sands. As the member who asked the question knows, this is a matter currently being exhibited by the council and will ultimately be put before the independent Tasmanian Planning Commission for their assessment and decision.

The Government and the Minister for Planning - that is me - have no involvement in that stage of the process at all. I reject suggestions of complainers out there, and the Greens, who say that this development will affect our brand and identity. This is typical of what is becoming a habit of the Greens to be selective, depending on who is doing a development and whether they like it.

The assessment of this proposal is following standard rezoning processes under the Land Use Planning and Approvals Act 1993. The independent Tasmanian Planning Commission is the responsible body to assess and decide upon rezoning applications. We trust in the independent process and supposedly the Greens do too. Their planning policy states:

The Tasmanian Greens believe that an independent fair and accessible planning system is crucial in guiding sensible development and resource management, protecting conservation values and the public interest. An impartial and well-resourced arbitrator is crucial to the success of any planning system, as is the encouragement of public participation.

The Tasmanian Greens support a state planning authority, with comprehensive powers of investigation and review. It should be independent of both government and prospective proponents of development, allow public representation, integrate with local government, other planning bodies and tribunals, and have a transparent process of appeal.

**Ms O'CONNOR** - Point of order, Madam Speaker. I draw the minister's attention, when he talks about the independent planning scheme, to a signing ceremony that makes Cambria Green agreement an apparently done deal.

**Mr JAENSCH** - Madam Speaker, I have given my response.

**Madam SPEAKER** - I rule it is not a point of order.

### **Wage Increases for Workers**

**Mr BACON question to TREASURER, Mr GUTWEIN**

[10.34 a.m.]

The Governor of the Reserve Bank, Philip Lowe, says Australian workers need a pay rise. Mr Lowe said in his address to the Australian Industry Group yesterday:

In my judgement, a return over time, to a world where wage increases started with a three rather than a two is both possible and desirable.

Why are you so determined to deliver an unfair wage increase to Tasmanian workers who are struggling with the cost of living at the same as they are the lowest paid in the country?

## **ANSWER**

Madam Speaker, I thank the member for his question. Let me start where he finished.

Other states, Western Australia, for example, has a \$1000 cap on wage increases. What that means is that if you are a public servant earning \$50 000, you get a 2 per cent wage increase. If you are a public servant earning \$100 000 you get a 1 per cent wage increase. South Australia is at 1.5 per cent. Our 2 per cent wage increase is fair and reasonable. It is what we can afford and it is in line with the cost of living increases.

What surprises me in the way the Opposition approaches these matters - and I have made the point in past days, that complaining is not a policy and whingeing is not a platform - they call for wage increases above the rate of inflation for the public sector, yet they claim to be concerned about our revenues. You cannot have it both ways. On that side of the House, everybody understands that they cut a deal with the unions before the election that they would give them a blank cheque post-election if they were on this side of the House.

**Mr O'Byrne** - It is called bargaining in good faith.

**Mr GUTWEIN** - Bargaining in good faith, he says; writing a blank cheque is what that stands for.

Our wage increase is fair, reasonable and affordable. Importantly, it keeps pace with cost of living. In the most recent wage price index in Tasmania, our private and public sectors are growing broadly in line with wages across the national economy.

We are seeing jobs being created in the economy and investment flow into this state. What we are seeing from that side of the House is an all-care, no-responsibility approach. On one hand, they have taken significant time this morning raising questions about revenue. On the other hand they want to talk about increasing wages and the cost to the public sector. You cannot have it both ways. This all-care, no-responsibility approach of the other side has to stop. They need to commit to providing an alternative budget to explain to the Tasmanian people what they stand for, what their policies are and, importantly, how they would pay for them. They cannot go in with this blank cheque approach.

### **Access to Reproductive Health Facilities**

**Ms WHITE question to MINISTER for HEALTH, Mr FERGUSON**

[10.38 a.m.]

Yesterday you made a commitment to the parliament in the amendment that you moved that you would bring back to this House details for how you would adequately resource statewide surgical terminations of pregnancy in the public and private system. Given the short time frame of less than three weeks, can you detail who you will consult with and how that consultation will take place?

## **ANSWER**

Madam Speaker, I thank the Leader of the Opposition for her question, even though in her question she has miscommunicated what the Government has committed to. I am happy to clarify

for the Leader of the Opposition exactly what did transpire and the commitments we made as a Government. I will attempt to do that without reflecting on the vote yesterday, which we are not permitted to do.

Yesterday, Labor attempted to move in this place for a particular action. The House determined otherwise. In so doing, in the amendment that I brought forward on behalf of Government, we made a commitment around this in relation to what would be coming forward. If the Leader of the Opposition would care to look at the final motion that was agreed to by this House, she would be aware that I will be seeking support from the Department of Health and Human Services in providing that advice. I made a commitment to bring advice to this House.

In the way the question was asked, people might have thought otherwise. The Government's amended motion, that the House agreed to, was to provide advice to the House by 3 July. That is the same date that was originally in the motion, so there is consistency.

**Ms O'Byrne** - The question is, who will you consult with and how will the consultation take place?

**Mr FERGUSON** - I am answering the question. That advice will be from the Department of Health and Human Services following consultation with relevant stakeholders -

**Ms White** - Who are they?

**Ms O'Byrne** - Who are the relevant stakeholders?

**Mr FERGUSON** - If I may continue. It is like Annie and Laurel over there. That advice will be from the Department of Health and Human Services following consultation with relevant stakeholders including the Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Obstetrics and Gynaecology, GPs, and others on the provision of adequate resourcing to deliver statewide surgical terminations in the public and/or private system by 3 July. That is what the motion says. That is the amendment that I moved and that this House agreed with.

The member should not subject any public officials to scrutiny or suspicion on this point. There is nothing sinister in this. Senior public servants' reports will be implicit in this work.

**Ms O'Byrne** - The same doctors at the hospital who are terrified of you? Those same ones?

**Mr FERGUSON** - It gives everyone the opportunity to see the facts. I hope that you are not worried about or fearful of that occurring.

**Ms WHITE** - Point of order, Madam Speaker. Standing Order 45, relevance. The question was, who will be consulted and how will they be consulted? The motion, as the minister is aware, says 'other stakeholders' but it does not detail who they are. Given the short time frame I believe we have a right to know.

**Madam SPEAKER** - Minister, if you could endeavour to answer that, it would be great.

**Mr FERGUSON** - Madam Speaker, that was clearly not a point of order. I will continue. I am making a commitment again, as I did yesterday, to handle this sensitively and professionally on proper advice, just as we conducted ourselves and the House agreed yesterday. I, again, invite

members opposite to not try to create suspicion about the Health department officials who will be doing this work.

The question asked was misplaced. The Leader of the Opposition asked me how I would do it. You have misunderstood my role -

**Ms O'Byrne** - In the Westminster system you are ultimately responsible.

**Mr FERGUSON** - If I may be permitted to answer without rude interjection -

**Ms White** - Are you not the minister of your department?

**Madam SPEAKER** - Order, let us hear the answer.

**Mr FERGUSON** - My role is to bring that advice to this House. That is what this House has agreed to. I hope politics will not be played around the role of our Health department. The Labor Party has attacked public servants on numerous occasions. I do not want to see that happen.

**Ms White** - If you do not know the answer you can come back to the House later.

**Mr FERGUSON** - Unlike Labor we are not treating this matter as a political football.

**Ms O'BYRNE** - Point of order, Madam Speaker. Under Standing Order 45, relevance, the question is, who would be consulted and how will that consultation take place. The minister has said he has devolved his responsibility to people under his control. Could he come back to the House before the end of the day when he does have that information?

**Madam SPEAKER** - That is not a point of order. I am sure the minister will come to some sort of conclusion.

**Mr FERGUSON** - The member who just offered a point of order did not hear what I said, so I will repeat it. The Government's amended motion agrees to provide advice to the House by 3 July, not today. The advice will not be from me.

**Ms White** - I asked a question about who will be consulted.

**Mr FERGUSON** - Please listen to what I am trying to share with you. The advice will be from the Department of Health and Human Services following consultation with relevant stakeholders.

**Ms White** - Who?

**Mr FERGUSON** - Who? They cannot even allow me to -

**Mr Bacon** - Answer the question; who, is the question.

**Mr FERGUSON** - Following consultation with relevant stakeholders -

**Mr O'Byrne** - Who?

**Mr FERGUSON** - Interjection, who? Another one. Cannot even allow me - following consultation with relevant stakeholders -

**Mr O'Byrne** - Who?

**Mr FERGUSON** - Interjection, who, another one - including the Royal Australian -

**Members** interjecting.

**Madam SPEAKER** - Order. Please continue, minister.

**Mr FERGUSON** - Thank you, Madam Speaker - including the Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Obstetrics and Gynaecology, GPs, and others on the provision of adequate resourcing to deliver statewide surgical termination in the public and/or private system by 3 July.

When I said the word 'others' I heard the interjection 'who'. That will be a matter for the secretary of the department because the department will be conducting this work. Please do not try to scrutinise the secretary of the department during question time. That is not appropriate.

The Government commits to complying with that motion. I make a commitment today that following the work that will be professionally and appropriately done by the department I will bring back a report to this House. The irrelevant points of order and constant interjections indicate they want to cast a cloud over the integrity of people who will be providing this advice. That should not happen.

### **Tax Reforms**

**Mr BROOKS question to TREASURER, Mr GUTWEIN**

[10.46 a.m.]

Can the Treasurer update the House on the tax reforms being implemented by the Hodgman majority Liberal Government and is the Treasurer aware of any alternative policies?

### **ANSWER**

Madam Speaker, I thank the member for his question. One of the core commitments of the Government is to deliver a competitive state tax system with the aim of keeping taxes as low, fair and efficient as possible.

During the recent campaign we made a range of commitments to improve our tax system. These commitments will grow our economy, encourage further investment and create even more jobs. They will also reduce the cost of living and help improve Tasmania's housing market.

We will reform our payroll tax system. We will lower the payroll tax rate for all businesses that pay this tax on their payrolls up to \$2 million from 6.1 per cent down to 4 per cent. This will benefit all businesses but will be very beneficial for small to medium businesses, especially those that are entering the payroll system. It cuts the tax rate by around 35 per cent and delivers the most competitive state payroll system for businesses with payrolls up to \$4 million.

By providing a lower rate of tax, we will leave businesses with more money to invest in plant equipment and new employees and help them to take their business to the next level.

To promote job creation, we will extend our enormously successful payroll tax rebate scheme for apprentices and trainees for a further 12 months, focusing on areas of high skills demand, providing the assistance necessary to support more than 3000 more young Tasmanians to start their careers.

We also want our regions to share more of the growth in our economy. We will encourage interstate businesses to relocate to our regional communities and provide even more jobs for Tasmanians.

We will improve Tasmania's housing market. We will introduce land tax initiatives for both new builds and existing short-stay accommodation properties that are offered for long-term rentals to increase supply in the Tasmanian rental market.

We will be introducing a 50 per cent duty concession for first home buyers -

**Ms O'Connor** - Paying off the landlords. Party of the propertied class. They should have a full exemption on stamp duty and you know it. You just look after the top end of town.

**Mr GUTWEIN** - The member for Denison raises property. It is pleasing in Tasmania that we have the highest per capita home ownership in the country. That is something you should be proud of.

We will be introducing a 50 per cent duty concession for first home buyers of established homes and for pensioners downsizing. We will be extending the \$20 000 first home owner's grant for a further 12 months. There has never been a better time for first home buyers to buy or to build their first home, or for pensioners to find a home that better suits their needs in retirement while freeing up a family sized home for a young family.

These measures were part of the comprehensive plan we took to the election, which we will be delivering today, to build Tasmania's future. It will include all our commitments today. We were the only ones who took a comprehensive, credible plan to the election. It is no surprise that it was given a comprehensive endorsement by voters.

In contrast, I was asked if there are other plans. We know what the other side of the House's tax plan was about and that was taxing shacks - the shack tax. A shack tax to fund the raft of promises that they still are not going to explain how they would fund because they have not committed to introducing an alternative budget. It is no wonder that if you do not know what you stand for, if your only platform is whingeing, if your only policy is complaining, it is no wonder why they will not bring down an alternative budget.

### **Budget 2018-19 - Support for Rural and Regional Tasmania**

**Mr SHELTON question to MINISTER for PRIMARY INDUSTRIES and WATER, Ms COURTNEY**

[10.51 a.m.]

Can the minister outline why there has been a surge in Tasmania's rural confidence and the importance of supporting our state's farmers?

## ANSWER

Madam Speaker, I thank the member for the question. I know as a farmer Mr Shelton knows that there is no bigger supporter of rural and regional Tasmania than the Hodgman majority Liberal Government.

Agriculture is a key pillar of our economy with an annual farm-gate value of \$1.48 billion in 2015-16. Along with fisheries, it underpins the agri-food sector with a gross value of \$2.4 billion. The sector has shown strong growth as it deals with market and seasonal challenges often associated with primary production. This Government is improving the long-term agricultural outlook by cutting red tape, growing investment, growing markets and investing in irrigation, skills and research and development.

Tasmania's farmers are confident and we are here to support them. It is with this positive that it is no surprise that Rabobank's latest rural confidence survey shows our state has hit an 18-month high. There are strong price prospects in the sheep and dairy sectors and farmers are looking to an even stronger future.

I am also pleased to report to the House that Dairy Tas is confident that Tasmanian milk production will this year exceed 900 million litres for the first time. This comes on the back of an improved season, increased production from existing dairies, and continued conversion to dairy production. Dairy production in April is up 18 per cent on last year and indicative farm-gate milk pricing is looking good for our farmers.

The survey shows that 24 per cent of Tasmanian farmers are looking to increase investment in their businesses compared to only 19 per cent nationally. Plans for increased investment include more livestock, new machinery, adopting new technology and on-farm irrigation infrastructure. Furthermore, the survey finds that a third of Tasmanian farmers expect the sector to keep improving in the next 12 months. The Government is here to support them. It is our vision to grow the annual farm-gate value to \$10 billion by 2050. Our comprehensive, sustainable agri-food plan sets out how we are working with industry and other stakeholders to achieve our vision.

While time today does not permit me to detail all the things that we are doing -

**Members** interjecting.

**Ms COURTNEY** - I am more than happy if the House would like more detail. I could be here for a couple of hours. However, given the limited time - unless the other side decide that we have unlimited time to respond - we are delivering on our commitments.

We are providing \$900 000 in dairy extension grow-more make-more initiative, and \$1 million into the red meat sector, to work with farmers and processors to increase trade, marketing, value and sales. We are assisting our dairy farmers through an expanded livestock road underpass program and the cows out of creek Landcare project. Furthermore we are investing \$550 000 to assist fruit and vegetable growers to expand market and trade opportunities, which is in addition to supporting industry development in wine, hemp, organics and the wool industry. We are also committed to investing \$70 million for tranche 3 of the Tasmanian Irrigation Scheme which will see the continued transformation of agricultural production in our state.

We are backing the men and women who are the backbone of our rural industries by extending the AgriGrowth Loan Scheme with a further \$20 million, which now includes a specific Young Farmer Support Package.

Only the Hodgman Liberal majority Government has a strong vision and plan to grow a competitive, innovative, sustainable and profitable farming sector. I am looking forward to continue working with and supporting Tasmanian farmers who are leading the nation with their positive outlook.

### **Budget 2018-19 - Neighbourhood House Network**

#### **Mr BROOKS question to MINISTER for HUMAN SERVICES, Mr JAENSCH**

[10.55 a.m.]

My question, on behalf of the community, is for the Minister for Human Services -

**Members** interjecting.

**Madam SPEAKER** - Order. We will have respect when people are asking the question, on whichever side of the House they are.

**Mr BROOKS** - Thank you, Madam Speaker. I will start again, given those who obviously cannot abide by standing orders.

On behalf of the community, can the minister please update the House on the Hodgman majority Liberal Government's investment to ensure the future viability of the Tasmanian Neighbourhood House network?

#### **ANSWER**

Madam Speaker, I thank the member for his question on behalf of the community and his interest in and support for our fantastic neighbourhood houses right across Tasmania.

Tasmania's Neighbourhood House network is at the heart of our local community and communities across our state. Currently there are 33 neighbourhood houses funded by government in Tasmania. In 2016-17 the houses had 779 592 contacts by community members and the volunteers contributed an average of 168 hours per week per house. Each house worked with an average of 39 partner organisations on programs including driver mentoring, literacy programs, parenting support, community lunches, food co-op programs, youth programs, family violence support, employment pathways and housing support.

The Hodgman Liberal Government has long been a supporter of these vital programs. On behalf of our Government and parliament, I recognise and thank all the volunteers who staff our community houses and provide services in our local communities.

When I visit a community house over successive months and years, what comes across quite strongly is that often the people I meet there who are visiting the house to access support, programs and help, will, the next time I turn up, be volunteering or running the community house. People take the advantage but they give back. They reinvest themselves into their community through their



neighbourhood house. That is a testament to the value and the community development role that these excellent neighbourhood houses play in our communities.

We have been a supporter of these neighbourhood houses over many years. We have delivered on our commitments to provide additional funding for all those houses. In our last term, we invested \$6 million in new funding into the network. We provided \$100 000 for the establishment of food cooperatives, annual funding for grassroots mental health support throughout the house network, and the construction of a new northern suburbs neighbourhood centre.

We recognise that there is increasing demand for our support for our communities through our neighbourhood houses across Tasmania. To ensure the viability of this network and to continue to ensure our houses provide the opportunity to be part of their own solutions close to where they live, today's budget will include an increase of core funding of \$45 000 per annum per house for the 33 houses across Tasmania. This increase will provide each house with additional staff to assist in their vital work and continue in their communities.

For the first time King Island's Phoenix House will be recognised as a remote community Neighbourhood House, receiving ongoing recurrent funding in this year's Budget and ongoing certainty. I have been dealing with Phoenix House for many years and it has been supported largely through the goodwill of the council, local volunteers and their skills in securing projects and project funding to keep that organisation afloat from project to project. During the election campaign it was fantastic to visit the island and Phoenix House with the Premier, Deputy Premier, and other members for Braddon at the time, and to deliver them the certainty that says they are a part now of the network of community houses across Tasmania and that their work and contribution to their community is valued. Now they are less uncertain about where the next dollar is coming from and where they are going to be over the next 12 months. They work with the King Island Men's Shed and the community garden and they deliver a range of approaches to engaging the local community, improving access to services and building the capacity and sustainability of their community.

I am glad to bring forward this announcement and confirm the Budget's follow-through on our election commitment for our fantastic Neighbourhood Houses. I commend them for their work across our state.

### **Affordable Housing Action Plan**

#### **Ms WHITE question to MINISTER for HOUSING, Mr JAENSCH**

[11.02 a.m.]

Yesterday you committed to building 900 social housing dwellings by the end of June 2019. Four years ago you committed to building 430 social housing dwellings but so far have delivered only 37. Considering your appalling track record on delivery of social housing, how can Tasmanians in a housing crisis have any faith that you will deliver these 900 houses in just one year? Are these 900 homes a new commitment, or are you just reannouncing your previously announced housing action plan?

#### **ANSWER**

Madam Speaker, I thank the Leader of the Opposition for her question and her support for our Affordable Housing Action Plan, the first affordable housing action strategy this state has ever had.

It is a 10-year plan to which this Government has now committed \$200 million to deliver 2400 homes for 3600 households over the life of the strategy.

As the Leader of the Opposition knows, because she and everyone else can see the March 2018 quarterly report for our Affordable Housing Action Plan, as at the end of March 2018 we have in fact assisted 243 households in home ownership, which for the benefit those opposite means 243 low- to moderate-income families now own their own home for the very first time. We have provided 46 supported accommodation units, have assisted 101 families to escape family violence, and for the benefit of those opposite again, this means families having a safe and secure place to go to, a new home free from the threat of family violence. We have delivered so far -

**Ms WHITE** - Point of order, Madam Speaker, going to relevance under standing order 45. The question was whether the 900 homes announced yesterday was a new commitment, or whether it was just a reannouncement of existing policy. I ask you to draw the minister's attention to the question, Madam Speaker.

**Madam SPEAKER** - As you would be aware, I do not know what the minister is about to say so I am going to have to allow him to proceed, but we are nearing the end of question time.

**Mr JAENSCH** - Thank you, Madam Speaker, I will be brief. We will deliver 900 new homes to Tasmanians before the end of June 2019. What we must not allow is for the Opposition and others to continue to characterise this in an untruthful way. What the Opposition needs to recognise is that a home is not the same thing for every person. A family and a house, an older person living by themselves, a couple in a unit, and a young person in a supported accommodation facility all require different things. When we build our target, our plan and our strategy to deliver 900 homes to Tasmanians we look at the whole spectrum of need out there, from those who are fleeing family violence and those who are at risk of homelessness to people who are at a time of their life where they are downsizing and needing different sort of accommodation to meet their needs. For some of them this will be assistance to buy or build their own home, and for some of them that will be the home they have been renting from the state for some years.

Across the board our strategy has always been one about addressing this issue and how we meet all the needs of all the people in Tasmania who need assistance to have accommodation that is safe and secure. We remain committed to our target.

## **ADDRESS-IN-REPLY**

### **Report of Presentation**

**Madam SPEAKER** - Honourable members, I have the honour to report to the House that accompanied by the mover and the seconder I attended at Government House yesterday, 13 June 2018, and presented Her Excellency, the Governor, the Address-in-Reply agreed to on 24 May 2018. Her Excellency was pleased to reply as follows:

Madam Speaker and honourable members of the House of Assembly, in the name and on behalf of Her Majesty, The Queen, I thank you for your address.

C. Warner  
Governor

## MATTER OF PUBLIC IMPORTANCE

### Cambria Green Development Proposal

[11.08 a.m.]

**Ms O'CONNOR** (Denison - Leader of the Greens - Motion) - Madam Speaker, I move -

That the House take notice of the following matter: Cambria Green Development Proposal

On the morning of 21 April this year there was a signing ceremony between Beijing Lidaohengtong Culture and Art Company Limited and the Cambria Green Agricultural and Tourism Management Co. Limited at the Diaoyutai Hotel in Beijing. It was a signing ceremony for the joint development and construction of the Cambrian Culture and Art Town. It says here in a report in Chinese media at the signing ceremony that the chairman of Beijing Lidaohengtong Culture and the chairman of Cambria Green Agricultural Tourism signed a cooperation agreement that the cultural and arts town can be used as a featured town that integrates cultural, leisure and aged care.

On 24 April this year, the Glamorgan Spring Bay Council ruled that the submission for a specific area plan and other amendments, Cambria Estate Swansea, for an extensive tourism development on the outskirts of Swansea and including parts of Dolphin Sands -

... can meet the requirements set out in the Land Use Planning and Approvals Act 1993 (LUPAA) for a planning scheme amendment.

and that:

... the request be initiated with minor changes only.

Madam Speaker, we are talking about a development proposal the likes of which Tasmania has never seen before - 3185 hectares of prime agricultural and coastal land on Tasmania's east coast. What we do know from the scant detail that was provided to council before the dopey majority on council waved this through, is that there would be, maybe - there is no certainty about this - 139 villas and units, wedding and function facilities within the Cambria homestead precinct, 161 villas and units along the Meredith River, an 80-unit health retreat, and 150 room resort in the Hills Resort Precinct, 70 villas and 240 units of tourist accommodation, a major conference centre, an 18-hole golf course, and a 9-hole golf course with 20 accommodation units.

It is a fact that there is no requirement on the proponent to stick to their outlined project in any way and the council has little right or control over refusal of the project.

Let us look at the company that has put forward this development proposal. Cambria Green Trading Corporation Pty Ltd has 60 associated entities according to ASIC, all of which have exactly the same date of incorporation, 12 August 2015. Not long after Mr Lui Kejing visited the Premier of Tasmania and presented him with a scroll in April 2015, we now have a company that is a proponent which, on a single day, registered 60 separate entities. When you look at the purchase process for the parcels of land we are talking about here, another company was under this umbrella, Cambria Green Agricultural Development. It was listed in Victoria on 24 February 2015 and is one of nine companies under the Cambria Green umbrella that individually acquired 12 plots totalling more than 3000 hectares at Swansea and Dolphin Sands. Of the nine companies, only one, Cambria Green Agricultural Development, is registered in Australia. All the others do not exist in Australia.

We brought this matter on for debate because we recognise that on the east coast of Tasmania there is growing alarm that a proposal has been cosied along by Government for the best part of three years through the Office of the Coordinator-General oiling the wheels. On the east coast they are concerned about the scale of this proposal, the impact on their way of life and its impact on Moulting Lagoon. They are concerned about Tasmania's sovereignty and our food security. The re-zoning is to re-zone prime agricultural land at Dolphin Sands for a specific area plan which would create an enclave.

It is a fact, for anyone who understands the way the Chinese communist government operates, that if a Chinese company is to be successful overseas it has the tacit endorsement from a level of government in China, local state or national. Every company based in mainland China that is operating overseas has a level of backing from Beijing, the Chinese communist government. That is 100 per cent true.

**Mr Hidding** interjecting.

**Ms O'CONNOR** - Mr Hidding, you are naïve at best if you do not think that is the case.

This is a question of our sovereignty; it goes to the future of what we want for this beautiful island. It goes to the heart of a problem that we have in defending our shores from developers that come from all over the place with big money promises, get the wheels oiled. Very rarely do governments or councils ask questions that need to be asked. All the Glamorgan Spring Bay Council saw was the number - \$100 million. It is a fantasy number. There is nothing beneath it to confirm where that money is coming from. Of course there are concerns. On the north-west coast of Tasmania the company that bought VDL, Moonlake Investments, is now in deep financial trouble because the Foreign Investment Review Board, and ultimately Scott Morrison, did not ask the question about where the money is coming from. Where the money comes from is state-owned Chinese banks.

I expect to hear, when whoever responds to this gets to their feet, that we are being xenophobic. They are the talking points of the Chinese communist government when people raise questions about sovereignty and food security. It is the Chinese communist government's agenda to have critics labelled xenophobes or racists in order to dampen debate. I have said on a number of occasions that this is not about race or ethnicity. This is about politics and the strategic objectives of a Chinese communist government. President Xi Jinping did not come here in 2014 just to look at the place; he came here to case the joint. That was written by now Senator Nick McKim in an op-ed in the *Mercury* at the time. The time since then has proven that to be true.

We need to have this debate and we will make sure parliament is given a proper opportunity to do so in the weeks ahead.

**Time expired.**

[11.17 a.m.]

**Mr JAENSCH** (Braddon - Minister for Planning) - Mr Deputy Speaker, it is a bit alarming the Greens seem to know more about a ceremony supposedly held somewhere in China than the formal statutory planning processes that have existed for decades in Tasmania.

The Cambria project is, broadly, a master plan for the development of various properties located around two to 10 kilometres north of Swansea on the east coast of Tasmania. As I understand it, a master planning exercise for the site informed draft amendments proposed for the Glamorgan Spring Bay Interim Planning Scheme 2015. The council is in the process of prosecuting an amendment to the planning scheme in the form of a specific area plan under the standard statutory processes outlined in the Land Use Planning and Approvals Act 1993.

It is currently being exhibited and the council is receiving submissions from any who wish to make them under this independent statutory process. This is a key point: there is an independent statutory process which is currently exhibiting a proposal and requesting submissions. Will the Greens be making one?

**Ms O'Connor** - Yes, we have made one. We have it here and we are posting it off today. Do you want a copy?

**Mr JAENSCH** - Fantastic. We know that the Greens are the champions of proper statutory processes and submissions. I note they did not take the opportunity to make one when the TPC was examining planning directive 6 regarding short-stay visitor accommodation but chose instead to come in here at another time and propose amendments to planning rules without going through the process.

**Dr Woodruff** - It is because we had some excellent councillors on the Hobart City Council who would do that work on our behalf.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** - Order.

**Mr JAENSCH** - This is a pattern that is evolving that is deeply concerning.

**Dr Woodruff** interjecting.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** - Order. I officially warn Dr Woodruff for constantly interjecting.

**Mr JAENSCH** - Mr Deputy Speaker, the Greens' own planning policy is that:

The Tasmanian Greens believe that an independent, fair and accessible planning system is crucial in guiding sensible development and resource management, protecting conservation values and the public interest. An impartial and well-resourced arbitrator is crucial to the success of any planning system, as is the encouragement of public participation.

The Tasmanian Greens support a state planning authority, with comprehensive powers of investigation and review. It should be independent of both government and prospective proponents of development, allow public representation, integrate with local government, other planning bodies and tribunals and have a transparent process of appeal.

Yet again, having said that, they are quite happy to impugn or demean the local planning authority, the Glamorgan Spring Bay Council, which in Ms O'Connor's contribution just now said they saw the dollar signs and went gaga.

**Ms O'Connor** - They did!

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** - Order, Ms O'Connor.

**Mr JAENSCH** - She is quite prepared to dismiss the role of the independent expert Tasmanian Planning Commission and its role in overseeing this process and making decisions and the Foreign Investment Review Board. They are quite prepared to name up specific area plans or SAPs as some form of new invention of this Government to hide our sins and usher untoward investors through. The SAPs are not part of the new Tasmanian Planning Scheme because it is not formally in operational effect yet. SAPs have been around since 2003 and if you look on iPlan you will see several specific area plans.

**Ms O'Connor** - They've not been manipulated like this before.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** - Order, Ms O'Connor, I officially warn you for constantly interjecting.

**Mr JAENSCH** - It is on the public record that we have, at a quick glance, another four of them in the Glamorgan Spring Bay interim planning scheme already.

What I cannot ignore as Planning minister is when the Greens come in here and start speaking fast and loose about what the rules are, who has been given a free ride and what their motives are, and overlaying it with their xenophobic insinuations about the intentions of people. They are characterising a development which has not yet received official approvals. It has not been through the independent statutory process. It is currently out for public submissions. The Greens are attempting to flavour the environment in which those submissions are heard.

In some ways, whilst they claim free speech, this may be an attempt to influence the public's appreciation of this project and in some way to direct, fetter or influence what people may or may not say about it. That is entirely contrary to the clear, democratic, fair public participation that they call for in their own policies. It happens over and over again. It is going to happen more and we are going to have to crack down hard on it because development is happening in Tasmania now. Tasmania is roaring ahead. People from around the world are coming to visit.

**Ms O'CONNOR** - Point of order, Mr Deputy Speaker. I believe the Planning minister made a threat to people who are protesting or standing up against developments. Can I get some clarification?

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** - It is not a point of order, Ms O'Connor.

**Ms O'Connor** - That was a veiled threat.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** - It is not a point of order. I hand back to the minister.

**Mr JAENSCH** - Tasmania has become more popular, more sought after, more prospective as a destination for people and for investment, which we have not had enough of for decades. In the past there have not been enough jobs here and people have had to move away to seek their fortunes elsewhere and raise their families. They want to come home now. What we need to anticipate now is that the Greens are going to sit in judgment on every single proposal and development that comes across the books because they think they are somehow the only arbiters of not only what should go

where, but who is appropriate to do it. Regardless of the statutory processes and as Minister for Planning, I need to defend them.

**Time expired.**

[11.24 a.m.]

**Mr O'BYRNE** (Franklin) - Mr Deputy Speaker, the Labor Party is supportive of development, but not development at any cost. Tasmania has moved beyond the cargo cult time where anyone who wanted to come to Tasmania and spend any sort of money on anything was welcome. We are better than that now and have moved significantly in the last generation. Development is welcome but it has to be sustainable and appropriate. Any developer needs to work with the local community to ensure that their proposal fits within the views of not only the local community but that community's views of the future of that area.

For the minister to say this is just another development is wrong. This is a significant development. This is not just an aged care facility, it is not just a restaurant, nor is it just a golf course alone. It is all of those things and it is significant and needs to be given due process.

I will not be casting any aspersions on the developer. Appropriate foreign investment is welcome in Tasmania; it has been for as long as Europeans have put their foot on the sand. That is not to say it is a blank cheque. There has been some reference to the Foreign Investment Review Board and the member is right, they do not always get it right. There is a national debate that needs to occur in the federal parliament around how that is managed. There is much work to do because the nature of foreign investment and where it comes from is changing remarkably in the new economic times we face. It is no longer the traditional post-war establishment and has fundamentally changed. It needs to have an eye cast over it and some contemporary laws which manage the changing nature of global capital, where it is coming from and who is spending it.

The local community has raised significant concern about the scale of the project because it is effectively a new town outside a town from what I have seen in the media and what we have seen reported. There is local concern regarding the lack of infrastructure to support a development of this size. Fresh water has been a major issue for that town over many years. It is a town and a part of the coastline that I and many Tasmanians value. I have spent many a time in holiday places in Dolphin Sands and was married just north of Swansea at Freycinet Vineyard, so it is a very special place to me. I am keeping a close eye on this because the local amenity and the enjoyment of existing landowners, other Tasmanians and tourists needs to be maintained. A development of this size and scale gives rise for concern and some questions that need to be answered.

For the minister to stand up and say we have planning policies in place that will ensure the local community will have a say is wrong. There is a lack of statewide policies. Not one policy has been written in the term of this Government to underpin land use planning in Tasmania. Not one policy has given local communities the opportunity to say this is the kind of community that we live in, these are the kinds of developments we welcome, these are the kind of activities we want to be conducted in our community. There is not one policy which underpins that. There are no guidelines for councils to assess developments as large as this that are in keeping with statewide agreed principles, so you cannot use the current planning laws and guidelines as a defence for due process.

We have been raising significant concerns about the planning scheme because essentially it allows for density in residential zones to be the same in Dolphin Sands as in Hobart. That is the effect of the statewide planning system the Government has put in place without all the other local,

regional strategies being put in place, without the policy that underpins planning reform in Tasmania.

The minister says there is currently a process underway and the community is encouraged to make a submission to the TPC. We also encourage people to engage in the process but we are very concerned that the current land use planning laws in Tasmania are deficient. It places enormous pressure on a community in a very short period of time to be able to build a case and have their say on developments of this size.

We again make it very clear that we welcome investment. We welcome sustainable development in Tasmania, but it is disingenuous in the extreme to say that this is just another development that can be dealt with under the planning laws. This is a significant development. It is the largest in Tasmania for a very long time and leaving it to a single council raises great concerns with us. We respect the process that is in place, but the process and the lack of planning legislation to allow the local community and other developers to have their say is of great concern. A specific area plan may not be in keeping with the needs and the views of the local community.

**Time expired.**

[11.30 a.m.]

**Dr WOODRUFF** (Franklin) - Mr Deputy Speaker, this morning's *Mercury* had a piece about the Cambria Green project that said it was threat to Tasmania. That is what everybody who has looked into this project understands it to be. It is a threat to the social fabric of the east coast. It is a threat to the environment of the east coast. It is a threat to the water security of the east coast. It is fundamentally a threat to the future of Tasmania.

This project represents a fork in the road. This project is an essential building block for the Chinese Communist Party to take residence in Tasmania and to use it as a launch pad for its various strategic objectives. A primary objective is to use Tasmania as a stop-off on the way to Antarctica.

Australia's Foreign Minister, Julie Bishop, has grave concerns about what is happening in the South China Sea and grave concerns about Australian companies and governments incautiously jumping into arrangements with businesses which can only operate outside of China with the blessing and help of the Chinese Communist Government. A scholar from the University of Tasmania has made that clear. This is how business operates in China. This is not an issue of racism or xenophobia. This is a question of state sovereignty. This is a question of our ability to manage our resources for our children, for our security as a state, for our food and water supply, and for our ability to determine our future.

The Liberal Government has been glad-handed by one of the most powerful people on the planet. When President Xi Jinping came to Tasmania in 2014 this Premier, these ministers sitting in this House, fawned all over such a powerful person. They had wet dreams about the prospects for planning and tourism in Tasmania. I want to withdraw that comment because that was probably not parliamentary.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** - On a point of order, Dr Woodruff, if you could please.

**Dr WOODRUFF** - Thank you, I withdraw that for *Hansard*. It was exciting for them but a nightmare for others. When a government develops an overly cosy and incautious relationship with the Chinese Communist Government, a \$100 million project can go through a tiny local council.



The Planning Minister has refused to investigate complaints to the Director of Local Government about the corrupt processes of the Glamorgan Spring Bay Council and the misconduct of councillors. He has refused to investigate the complaints because he wants a lame-duck council to sign it off. The east coast community had four days to look at -

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** - Order. Dr Woodruff, there is a standing order that states you should not accuse a member, or a minister, of certain things unless it is a substantive motion. Be aware of what you say as far as accusing a minister.

**Dr WOODRUFF** - Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker. I hope you stopped the clock since you do not have the standing order. I was not accusing anyone. I was talking about allegations that were made. People are catching on about what is going on here in Tasmania. Professor Michael Buxton, a planning expert, said this development does not benefit anybody except the developer and the investors. It is based on gaining large-scale private profits at public expense. It is a development on a monstrous scale for a place that is water scarce. The water requirements for this huge tourism development would need to tap into fresh water supplies -

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** - Dr Woodruff, if I could just interrupt there. Standing order 144 -

No member shall use offensive or unbecoming words in reference to any member of this House, nor attribute directly or by innuendo to another Member unbecoming conduct or motives; and all offensive reference to a member's private affairs ...

And so it goes on.

**Ms O'CONNOR** - Mr Deputy Speaker, I ask your guidance about whether that Standing Order will be applied to defend the Greens as well as the Liberals. Our character and motive is impugned daily in this place.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** - You were directing it at a specific minister.

**Ms O'Connor** - We cop that too.

**Dr WOODRUFF** - Mr Deputy Speaker, I would like clarification about how I have offended a minister by saying there has been -

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** - Order. It is in the standing orders. I have reminded you of the Standing Order and so I hope you take notice of that.

**Dr WOODRUFF** - I do not understand what was offensive about speaking the truth. The Planning minister has failed to act on complaints from east coast residents.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** - You were talking about the motives, or by innuendo of the motives of the minister. That is where I refer specifically to the section I read out.

**Dr WOODRUFF** - Mr Deputy Speaker, let us get back to the matter at hand which is important for Tasmania. This is all -

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** - Let us, but the member's time has expired.

**Dr WOODRUFF** - Oh really. There was no stopping the clock for the points of order?

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** - The member's time has expired.

**Dr WOODRUFF** - That is a novel way of shutting a member down.

[11.38 a.m.]

**Mr BROOKS** (Braddon) - That is something you have mastered. You do it continually. Standing Orders will be adhered to in this parliament. Some members think they are above the rules of this parliament when it suits them. This is highlighted by the constant interruptions and disruptions of the business of this House. Yet again we see the Honourable Ms O'Connor cannot abide by Standing Orders by continually interrupting: Standing Order 146, if she would like to look it up. They espouse the rules when it suits them but they cannot be bothered applying them to themselves unless it suits their purpose.

Mr Deputy Speaker, this is what this whole thing is about. They have picked a project they like but they are not willing to allow due process to flow through. This is a proposal -

**Ms O'Connor** - Due process? Three years in the Office of the Coordinator-General.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** - Order.

**Mr BROOKS** - Ms O'Connor continually and persistently obstructs the business of this House. She is in contravention of standing orders 146 and 148. I suggest you consider naming her for her persistent obstruction of the business of this House. It is typical of the green movement. They believe they are above the rules except for when it suits their political purposes. We all know it, we have seen it time and time again.

**Dr Woodruff** interjecting.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** - Order.

**Mr BROOKS** - We hear the constant whingeing and whining and complete disregard for the rules of this Chamber and for the rules of the community from Dr Woodruff, where we continue to see it.

**Ms O'CONNOR** - Point of order, Mr Deputy Speaker.

**Mr BROOKS** - Now we see Ms O'Connor run to the rules because it suits her.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** - Mr Brooks, point of order.

**Ms O'CONNOR** - The member has digressed from the subject matter which is Cambria Green development proposal. I ask you to draw his attention to the subject matter.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** - I ask the member to draw his attention to the subject matter.

**Mr BROOKS** - That exactly proves my point and the whole point of this motion. The members who brought this on are happy to use the rules when it suits them but abandon them when it does not suit them. They are not happy with an independent process about this.

**Dr WOODRUFF** - Point of order, Mr Deputy Speaker. Standing order 151 - the member continues to be irrelevant and continues to be tedious with his repetition, which is not addressing the topic at hand. It is an important issue for Tasmania.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** - Order, I will take the point of order. Mr Brooks shall continue.

**Mr BROOKS** - Yet again we see under standing order 148, continually obstructing the business of this House, but that is what they operate on.

There are stringent controls and requirements within the planning process. It is an independent process assessed outside the minister's direction and control.

**Ms O'Connor** - Oiled by the Office of the Coordinator General.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** - Order, Ms O'Connor.

**Mr BROOKS** - The reason for that is to allow people to let projects rise and fall on their merits through that process. Yet again we see some members of this Chamber say, 'How dare those rules apply to a project we have a pathological hatred for, or for proponents that we may or may not have a pathological hatred for?'

**Ms O'Connor** - We have a passionate love for Tasmania.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** - Order, Ms O'Connor. I will warn you.

**Mr BROOKS** - It is typical of the approach of the anti-everything brigade. They hate anyone having anything that could be deemed successful because ultimately their standard operating agenda is to shut down any proposal they do not fundamentally believe within their belief.

**Dr WOODRUFF** - Point of order, Mr Deputy Speaker. Standing Order 144 - I believe the member is impugning the motives of this member by putting a false assessment about her motives. It is very offensive.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** - Order. The member mentioned the Greens, he did not mention anybody in particular.

**Dr Woodruff** - He was trying to shut her down.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** - Order.

**Mr BROOKS** - Again we see the Greens running to the rule book to suit their argument but completely ignoring the other section of the rule book - Standing Order 146. You are above that from the way you continually interrupt and continually interject. You do not like hearing other people's points of view. You espouse tolerance, except for you. You are different. That is a classic example again with Ms O'Connor interrupting in contravention of Standing Order 146.

**Ms O'CONNOR** - Point of order, Mr Deputy Speaker. Mr Brooks is making a false statement. The reason we brought this debate on today was so that we could hear the points of view of other members.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** - That is not a point of order, Ms O'Connor. It is also highly disorderly to raise points of order to interrupt the flow of the Chamber.

**Mr BROOKS** - It is persistently obstructing the business of this House.

**Time expired.**

**Matter noted.**

## **SUSPENSION OF SITTING**

[11.48 a.m.]

**Mr FERGUSON** (Bass - Leader of Government Business) - I note that offensive words used during the MPI were withdrawn. I ask you discuss with the Speaker considering that they not be entered into the journals.

Mr Deputy Speaker, I now invite you to leave the Chair until the ringing of the bells which shall not be before 3 p.m. for the delivery of the State Budget.

**Sitting suspended from 11.45 a.m. until 3 p.m.**

**CONSOLIDATED FUND APPROPRIATION BILL (No. 1) 2018 (No. 16)**

**CONSOLIDATED FUND APPROPRIATION BILL (No. 2) 2018 (No. 17)**

**TAXATION RELATED LEGISLATION (HOUSING AVAILABILITY AND PAYROLL  
TAX RELIEF) BILL 2018 (No. 18)**

Her Excellency the Governor recommended expenditure for the purposes of the bills from the Consolidated Fund.

### **First Reading**

Bills presented by **Mr Gutwein** and read the first time.

**Madam SPEAKER** - In accordance with the resolution passed by the House on 13 June 2018 I now invite members of the Legislative Council to enter the Chamber to listen to the Treasurer's speech.

**CONSOLIDATED FUND APPROPRIATION BILL (No. 1) 2018 (No. 16)**

### **Second Reading**

[3.04 p.m.]

**Mr GUTWEIN** (Bass - Treasurer) - Madam Speaker, I move -

That the bill be now read the second time.

It is my privilege today to deliver the Hodgman majority Liberal Government's fifth budget and the first Budget of our second term in government.

Tasmania is a very different place today than it was five years ago. Today, Tasmanians are the most confident people in the nation. Our economy is now one of the fastest growing in the country and the conversations we now have are about what the opportunities are, rather than the lack of them.

For only the second time in our history, the election returned a Liberal government with more than 50 per cent of the primary vote. It was a resounding endorsement of our long-term plan and the results we have delivered and it provides the Hodgman Liberal Government with a clear mandate to keep implementing this plan for the next four years.

It is a plan for a strong economy, to help businesses grow and to create even more jobs for Tasmanians. It is a plan to take action on the cost of living and invest in our schools, to lift education standards and to give our kids every opportunity to be the best they can be. It is a plan to build a better health system and to keep Tasmanians safe, with more police on the street to tackle crime. It protects our way of life by keeping living costs affordable and ensuring that we are able to enjoy the outdoors and other recreational pursuits that are part of what makes our state great. It is a plan to deliver the infrastructure of the twenty-first century, massively increasing our investment into roads, hospitals, affordable housing, dams, bridges and schools.

It is also a plan that will see this Government deliver all of our election commitments, in full and on time. Our Government is committed to take Tasmania to the next level, grasp our opportunities and deliver enduring growth and prosperity.

Four years ago, I delivered the first Liberal budget in 16 years. We delivered our promises, in full and on time, and began the task of fixing the financial mess we inherited. That first budget laid the foundations for a brighter future for Tasmanians. Tasmanians have clearly recognised the benefits that a stable majority Liberal government has delivered. They have put their trust in us again, and we will not let them down.

In the current economic boom that Tasmania is experiencing, it is easy to forget that we have come a long way in four short years. When I delivered our first budget, Tasmania was in a very different place. The budget was in the red, our finances were unsustainable and confidence was at rock bottom. Our economy had been in recession, 10 000 jobs had been lost, and the unemployment rate had reached over 8 per cent. We had a job to do, so we rolled up our sleeves and got on with it.

Over the last term 11 100 more people were employed and our unemployment rate is now lower than Queensland and Western Australia. Compared to where we were in 2014, today Tasmania is almost unrecognisable. There is a buzz in the air, the confidence is contagious, and people are excited about what the future will bring. It was unthinkable then that we would now be able to set the responsible and achievable goal to have the lowest unemployment rate in the country by 2022.

Over the last term, we responsibly pursued our long-term plan. The Government's top priority then - as it remains now - was to maintain confidence through responsible, strong financial management. Over the course of our first two budgets we brought spending under control without causing economic contraction. It was important that we continued to fund appropriately essential

public services whilst increasing investment in job-creating infrastructure. As a result, we delivered a budget surplus four years earlier than forecast, the first surplus in seven years and the best outcome in a decade. This has been followed by a strong surplus last year and the expectation of an increased surplus for this current financial year. We have delivered on our commitment to fix the budget and restore confidence and, as a result, Tasmania can now keep moving forward into an even brighter and more confident future.

Our economy is growing strongly. Last week's National Accounts data reported that state final demand in the March 2018 quarter was 4 per cent higher than the year before and we now have the second strongest growing economy in the nation. Importantly, this result has largely been driven by increased household consumption and private investment.

People will move to where the jobs are and it is no surprise that our population is growing again, with the strongest growth rate in over seven years, and the highest rate of net interstate migration in eight years. With a state that now has opportunity in abundance, it is no wonder that people are voting with their feet.

Our export sector is booming, and on the latest data has increased by nearly 35 per cent, the strongest growth in the nation and well ahead of the national average of 10 per cent. Our tourism sector is the envy of the country, and this is underpinning significant growth in accommodation, restaurants, cafes and other services and importantly, across our broader economy.

The message is now out there that we are open for business and our door is open wide and the world is now walking through it. Tasmania is now a must-see, exciting destination to visit, and the statistics tell the story. In the last year, visitor spending increased by 8 per cent to a record \$2.33 billion. We have experienced tourism growth in every region and now lead the nation in international visitor growth at 18 per cent.

Tasmania is now in great shape, but the Hodgman Liberal Government believes that there is more that we can achieve. Central to our plan is strong financial management. We have delivered that and strong financial management will continue to be at the core of our decision making for the next four years. The 2018-19 Budget is the foundation of that commitment.

The Budget I am handing down today forecasts a surplus of \$161.9 million in 2018-19, and demonstrates that - true to our commitment during the election campaign - there will be surpluses in each and every year over the forward Estimates. This Budget forecasts revenue growth of 2.1 per cent from the 2017-18 estimated outcome over the Budget and forward Estimates period, whilst expenditure growth is forecast to be 1.6 per cent. We will continue to live within our means and we will remain net debt-free whilst putting our strong balance sheet to work to deliver our plan of record levels of investment into the job-creating infrastructure this state needs to future-proof itself.

A balanced budget delivering surpluses that provide an appropriate buffer is critical to ensuring we can deal with any unexpected events. Whilst Tasmania is in a very strong position, it would be reckless to do what others call for and spend every dollar that is earned.

During the last term we dealt with a prolonged Basslink outage, wildfires, the worst floods in 100 years and a GST downgrade that wiped \$500 million from our forecast revenues. While we have made it clear that we will fight tooth and nail to protect our revenue base, we must be prepared for unexpected events like natural disasters, as lightning does, and can, strike twice, which is why this Budget sensibly forecasts surpluses over the forward Estimates.

In recent weeks, those opposite have raised risks associated with the GST, whilst at the same time calling for public sector pay rises that run ahead of inflation. You cannot have it both ways. There is always a risk that future revenues may not turn out to be as high as expected. That is why we will not spend the surpluses forecast before we have received them - they are the Tasmanian people's insurance policy against adversity. This is also why we have a firm but fair 2 per cent wages policy.

The surpluses forecast in this Budget are modest in the context of total revenue and they will stand us in good stead should we need to face unforeseen events. They also underpin the delivery of record levels of job-creating infrastructure which will strengthen and sustain our economy into the future.

The centrepiece of this Budget is the record spend of \$2.6 billion that we are investing into job-creating infrastructure. This record investment will deliver on our commitments to build Tasmania's infrastructure for the twenty-first century and lays the solid foundation we will use to take Tasmania to the next level. This pipeline of investment is significant and will form the backbone of Tasmania's economic future.

Central to our infrastructure program is the investment of \$1.1 billion into roads and bridges right around Tasmania. In an export-focused economy we are heavily reliant on the efficient transport of freight and the safe movement of people. We will invest in our cities to deal with congestion whilst building the strategic freight links we need for the future.

The health of Tasmanians is a top priority of the Hodgman Liberal Government, and this Budget delivers over \$475 million into hospitals and other health infrastructure. This includes the commencement of more than \$87 million in capital upgrades at the Launceston General Hospital, the rollout of the \$35 million in upgrades to the Mersey Community Hospital, and the completion of the redevelopment of the Royal Hobart Hospital, together with the commencement of \$28 million in new capital commitments for ward upgrades.

Madam Speaker, it is well understood that the future workforce of Tasmania depends on having world-class education outcomes. Our Government understands this, and that is why we will increase our investment into schools to a record of nearly \$200 million. We will begin construction of two new schools and significantly upgrade others, we will further invest in extending all our high schools to year 12, invest in six more new early learning hubs and create centres of excellence for trade training.

Importantly, we are investing around \$200 million over four years to support housing and human services. This includes the largest-ever investment into affordable housing. This Budget delivers the first \$100 million of our new \$125 million stage 2 of our Affordable Housing Strategy to support Tasmanians who need a roof over their head and which will underpin the delivery of 1500 affordable homes assisting around 2000 families in need.

We are also investing over \$169 million into infrastructure to keep Tasmanians safe, including \$70 million for a new southern remand centre, the first stage of the new \$270 million northern prison and \$7.3 million to redevelop the Ashley Youth Detention Centre.

We will invest \$70 million into the new tranche 3 irrigation program to build more dams to support our plan to double the value of agriculture to \$10 billion. Tasmanian Irrigation has been a

clear success story to date - the partnership between the state and federal governments, together with irrigators, has delivered nation-leading results and will continue to do so.

This Budget invests \$2.6 billion; the single largest general government infrastructure program in the state's history. When combined with the significant investment occurring in local government and the private sector along with our government businesses, we have a pipeline of investment that will deliver economic growth and underpin our economic prosperity for decades to come.

Over and above this record investment, there are also projects of nationwide significance being progressed by the state's electricity businesses, which feasibility studies outline could lead to effectively doubling our capacity to generate electricity for the National Electricity Market. As these projects progress, billions of dollars in new infrastructure investment in Tasmania will occur over the next decade.

In order to manage this unprecedented opportunity along with our record levels of current infrastructure investment, the Government will this year:

- deliver a 10-year infrastructure pipeline detailing the major government infrastructure projects and spending proposed across inner budget agencies and government businesses; and
- deliver a 30-year infrastructure strategy to assist with long-term planning so that the next generation of Tasmanians can understand and importantly grasp the opportunities of the future.

We will initiate a construction sector round table led by the Deputy Premier and Minister for Infrastructure, Jeremy Rockliff, which will be convened during July to ensure the commercial sector and all levels of government collaborate to maximise this once-in-a-generation opportunity.

This process will deliver a whole-of-sector plan of the short, medium and longer-term objectives that need to be achieved to ensure that the sector is able to deliver the record infrastructure task in front of us. The program of works will create thousands of jobs that will make Tasmania a magnet for construction and engineering professionals who are attracted to the opportunity that Tasmania now offers. We are entering a golden age of investment in this state and the Government will ensure that we firmly grasp and deliver on the opportunity for our future generations.

To ensure we continue to build the workforce for the future, this Budget delivers investment into trade training centres of excellence as well as a suite of tax incentives to support jobs and to make businesses more competitive. We are extending the successful payroll tax rebate scheme for apprentices and trainees in areas with skill shortages to encourage employers to make that crucial down payment on skills and training.

If our businesses are more competitive they will be able to create more jobs, and that is why we are also cutting payroll tax. By reducing the rate of payroll tax on payrolls up to \$2 million by 35 per cent, from 6.1 per cent to 4 per cent, we will provide a tax saving of up to \$15 750 for all businesses that pay this tax. Our payroll tax will be the most competitive of any state for businesses with payrolls up to \$4 million.



This will be of particular assistance to small and medium-sized businesses enabling them to continue growing and employing more people. Small businesses that do not pay payroll tax will also benefit from \$7.5 million in targeted small business grants over the next three years to support the employment of more trainees and apprentices in areas of high skills demand. In addition, they will benefit from other measures, including packages to assist the agriculture, seafood, information technology, and hospitality and tourism sectors.

We also want the benefits of a very strong jobs market to extend fully to all regions of the state. We know that the eyes of the world are on us at the moment and we want to assist those businesses from interstate that want to share in and contribute to our successes. They will invest capital and bring skills whilst growing our population and we will provide a payroll tax concession for up to three years for interstate businesses that relocate and employ in regional Tasmania. In addition, the Coordinator-General will work with regional councils to help them to develop regional investment attraction packages.

By continuing to grow our economy we will build the future for all Tasmanians and ensure the continued and ongoing record investment into health, education, infrastructure and supporting our disadvantaged that Tasmanians expect and deserve.

Madam Speaker, it is because our economy is now running on all cylinders that today I can announce record spending into health, education, public safety and to support vulnerable Tasmanians. This Budget builds on our record levels of investment into our hospitals and health system. That has allowed us to employ over 300 more nurses, doctors and allied health professionals in the public health system than when we came to government four years ago.

Today recurrent annual spending in health is \$341 million per annum higher than it was when we came to government, and over the Budget and forward Estimates, the Government will invest a record \$7.6 billion into health. This Budget builds on our achievements and charts a course over six years to employ more than 1300 hospital and health staff and open up another 298 hospital beds. This Budget delivers the first stage of our commitments and over the next four years it includes nearly \$250 million in additional recurrent funding as well as more than \$120 million in new capital investment into our hospitals and health facilities.

We will recruit an additional 478 hospital staff, including nurses, doctors and allied health professionals and, importantly, we will progressively open 76 more hospital beds. The focus of this investment is increasing capacity on the front line, with more beds, more doctors, nurses and paramedics, new out-of-hospital services, new community mental health beds and support, alcohol and drug rehabilitation beds and better management of chronic disease.

In addition to our election commitments, we are investing a further \$20 million boost for elective surgery in 2018-19 to continue improvements made over the past four years in ensuring even more patients are seen within the clinically recommended time.

There is \$2.1 million to build a new antenatal clinic at the North West Regional Hospital, together with \$17.6 million to fund eight new acute medical beds, including four emergency department stay beds and four surgical beds for elective surgery patients who need to stay overnight.

Mental health is a key element of the Government's plan. We are investing additional funding to support 25 new mental health beds in the south, including \$11.8 million for infrastructure and almost \$16.5 million over four years for the opening of new beds. In addition, the Government is

providing \$6 million over three years to fund more drug and alcohol rehabilitation beds across the state and more than \$1.8 million in funding for the Rural Alive and Well program.

In Hobart, we have a private hospital co-located with the Royal Hobart Hospital which improves health outcomes for Tasmanians by enabling a seamless integration of services between the public and private health sectors. This sensible co-location option is not yet available in other parts of the state. Last year an unsolicited bid proposal was received from Calvary Health Care to develop a new private hospital co-located adjacent to the Launceston General Hospital. The proposed new hospital would constitute an investment by Calvary of well over \$100 million. Calvary has served the Launceston community well. However their current operations are dislocated from the public health precinct and are dispersed across two campuses. Calvary believes synergies would emerge from a co-location that significantly improve facilities and the sustainability of services offered, and would better serve the people of Launceston regardless of whether they are public or private patients.

The Government is of this view as well, and we have formally notified Calvary that we will progress their proposal to the second phase of the process which will be conducted over the next nine months. That process will involve the assessment panel and Calvary working together to finalise the appropriate location within the health precinct that meets both parties' needs and future plans, and ensuring that the co-location improves the services and health outcomes for both public and private patients.

Education is the key to unlocking Tasmania's true potential. As announced during the election campaign, the Government will invest a record \$324 million over six years into education. Over the course of the Budget and forward Estimates, we will invest \$69.4 million to recruit an extra 277 teachers and support staff. We will also invest more than \$192 million in education infrastructure to deliver the educational outcomes of the future. This investment will support the construction of two new schools in the growth areas of Legana and Brighton, the rebuild of existing schools such as Sorell School, Cosgrove High and Devonport High School, as well as our commitment to extend all schools to year 12.

We will invest more than \$31 million to provide free preschool to disadvantaged and vulnerable three year olds from 2020, and \$15 million to revitalise our kindergartens. In addition to the \$12 million we have already committed, we will invest an additional \$3.25 million into providing support for students with disabilities, develop six new learning hubs and invest in and redevelop our school farms.

Our police force protects us, keeps us safe and helps ensure that Tasmania remains the best place to live and raise a family. We have a plan to make Tasmania the safest state in the nation and have set a target to have the lowest serious crime rate. To achieve this we will support and invest in our first-class Tasmania Police Service.

In our last term, we invested and rebuilt our police service and employed 113 more officers after the previous Government sacked more than 100. The contrast could not be starker. During this term we will build an even better police service to keep Tasmanians safer. We will recruit a further 125 new frontline police officers over the next four years and will support them by implementing a range of new initiatives and investing in key infrastructure.

We will provide \$240 000 to further support a full-time special operations group, and because we understand the difficult job they do, we will ensure that police officers injured in the line of duty will continue to receive 100 per cent of their pay while they are on workers compensation.

We have allocated \$5 million for a new police station at Longford, \$5 million for a new police station at New Norfolk and \$12 million to build a new emergency services hub at Sorell.

In addition, we have initiatives to further address crime by cracking down on shoplifting by providing small businesses with a \$2 million no-interest loan program to install CCTV cameras in-store, and will provide \$400 000 to help deal with anti-social driving.

Tasmania has become the place to be, and people from interstate and overseas are keen to make our state their new home. However, in an expanding economy there will always be growing pains, challenges that need to be addressed, and in our case strong population and employment growth has led to a more competitive market for housing.

While house prices are now rising right around the state, Hobart in particular has seen much stronger price growth, and this has flowed through to its rental market, with rental vacancy rates at historically low levels. The market is responding to the increased demand, and the average monthly number of dwelling approvals is 28 per cent higher than a year earlier and residential building work done is up by over 18 per cent, but there is more that we can and must do.

Central to our response is stage 2 of the Affordable Housing Strategy, which will result in \$125 million being invested; the Government's largest-ever investment into affordable housing. This investment will mean that over the eight years to 2023 we will have invested more than \$200 million into improving stock levels and access to affordable housing. This significant commitment will result in an additional 1500 new affordable homes being built, that will provide assistance for around 2000 households. This will take the total number of new affordable homes to 2400.

We have also recently launched the Private Rental Incentives pilot scheme to encourage residential property owners to make their affordable rental homes available for low-income earners. In addition to this, we have announced a range of new tax measures to support housing. A three-year land tax exemption is now available for newly constructed homes rented on a long-term basis, and we are offering a one-year land tax exemption for owners of short-stay accommodation who opt to rent their property out on a long-term basis within the Greater Hobart area. Further, we are introducing a foreign investor duty surcharge on the acquisition of residential property by foreign purchasers to help level the playing field.

Looking after the most vulnerable in our society is a key responsibility of government and we must take steps to assist those affected by child sexual abuse. That is why this Budget contains the first tranche of our \$70 million redress commitment to assist survivors of these abhorrent acts. We are also investing record amounts in this Budget to assist children who do not have the stability we take for granted. The Budget includes additional funding of \$24 million to assist those in out-of-home care. Furthermore, this Budget commits an additional \$18 million to continue the nation leading Safe Homes, Safe Families initiative.

This Government is determined to deliver for all Tasmanians, which is why we have established the new agency, Communities Tasmania, to provide an even greater focus on supporting and strengthening our communities.

The Hodgman Liberal Government has made a strong commitment to take action on the cost of living. Last year, we implemented legislation that allowed us to limit power price increases for households and small businesses to 2 per cent, at a time when other states were experiencing double digit price increases. One of our key commitments is to provide Tasmanians with the lowest regulated power prices in the nation. As we progress removing the link between Tasmanian and Victorian power prices, we are already taking action on this issue by legislating to cap power price increases for the next three years to no more than the CPI.

We understand the cost of electricity is not just an issue for households and small businesses. It is also a challenge for larger businesses as well. Accordingly, we have extended the wholesale electricity price rebate scheme for commercial and industrial customers, committing \$10 million to limit future price shocks as a result of factors occurring outside of the state's control.

We will also deliver on our plan to accelerate water and sewerage infrastructure upgrades, improve the environment and keep prices lower to benefit all Tasmanians. Importantly for TasWater's customers, not only will our landmark agreement with local government and TasWater deliver an accelerated investment in water and sewerage infrastructure, it will freeze prices for regulated customers in 2019-20 and cap future price increases at no more than 3.5 per cent a year.

The Hodgman Liberal Government knows that a strong agricultural sector delivers jobs and opportunities across every region. This Budget begins the next stage of our program to support our ambitious Agri-Food plan. It will support our farmers on the land but also recognises the importance of strong farming families, support programs and investment into the future.

Key to our plan is a new \$70 million commitment towards the third tranche of irrigation schemes which will continue our successful partnership with the Australian Government and local farmers to deliver the water that farmers rely on to produce higher value food products. Over the Budget and forward Estimates period, we will invest around \$32 million into the agriculture sector across a range of initiatives and infrastructure.

Our focus on biosecurity is much enhanced with the establishment of the \$20 million Biosecurity Emergency Response and Research Fund in collaboration with the Australian Government. It will help meet the eradication costs of the recent fruit fly incursion and importantly boost our capacity to respond to future threats.

We will invest \$7 million in capital upgrades to modernise our research farms, \$5 million in building an agricultural centre of excellence, \$3.7 million into the Weeds Action Fund and \$1.8 million in competitive grants funding for the Landcare Action Fund.

One of our state's strengths is the aquaculture industry and we are unashamedly its strongest supporter. This Budget invests more than \$13 million for the aquaculture industry, including \$5.1 million to support an industry-led abalone industry productivity improvement program and \$5 million to develop the Government's fisheries integrated licensing and management system.

One of our major employers is the resources sector and our forestry and mineral exports are of significant importance to our economy. The Government has worked hard to get the forestry sector back on its feet and significant investments are occurring once again. For the mining sector the identification of new ore deposits is central to its future sustainability and the jobs that it supports. Exploration is key and given this, the Budget provides \$2 million for mining exploration grants that

will support up to 20 drilling projects to identify new mineral resources that will open up opportunity and underpin the future of mining in Tasmania.

We all know Tasmania's tourism sector is a runaway success. Be it MONA, the Great Eastern Drive, Cradle Mountain, the rugged beauty of the West Coast or the world-class vineyards of the north-east, Tasmania now has the world beating a path to our door. For a state that in the past has often been left off the map, we are now the destination that everyone wants to visit, and our accommodation sector is in overdrive to keep up with demand.

In recent years, the level of investment in visitor accommodation has been phenomenal, with new offerings around the state such as MACq 01, Ibis, Pumphouse Point and the recently completed Silos Hotel. There are hotels in planning or under construction in Hobart, Launceston, Devonport, the Tasman Peninsula and the east coast. It really is a very exciting time to be in the Tasmanian tourism industry. This Budget contains \$72 million to fully develop the potential that exists at Cradle Mountain to create what we believe will be an experience in the north that will be as important as MONA is in the south.

While our door is now widely open, we need to ensure we keep reminding the world just how good it is here, and this Budget contains an additional \$16 million to ensure that every region shares in the billion-dollar boom of Tasmania's visitor economy.

An additional \$12 million will be invested into marketing Tasmania as a premium destination and attracting higher yielding visitors and boosting flights into the state and \$4 million will underpin the attraction of more mass participation events. This will ensure we can build an even better events calendar right across the state and right throughout the year to help support regional economies.

To support the growth occurring in our tourism and associated hospitality industries, we will invest \$3 million to develop our hospitality workforce, along with the establishment of a dedicated unit within government which will spearhead industry and government collaboration to ensure that the sector continues to grow and succeed.

To underpin the unique touring experience that Tasmania offers, we will begin the rollout of our five-year \$72 million visitor economy roads package. This Budget contains almost \$58 million towards this plan to upgrade the roads that visitors use to reach the special and unique features of this state we are so proud of.

It goes without saying that one of our most important assets are our national parks. They are also one of our most visited assets, with demand increasing annually. This Budget recognises the need to invest in these fantastic natural assets and delivers \$16 million to improve statewide infrastructure as well as an increase of \$8 million towards ongoing maintenance and \$6.6 million for more rangers and frontline staff. A further \$20 million has also been committed towards the identification and development of our next iconic walk and this Budget delivers the first \$9 million to begin this exciting new development.

We know that to stay in front of the curve we must continually be updating the product we offer. We have a unique blend of city and rural, wilderness and six-star comfort, and breathtaking natural assets as well as heritage-listed properties that are the envy of the world. One such heritage asset is the Treasury building complex in central Hobart. In recent years there has been much public debate about the best use of this magnificent heritage-listed asset. It has served the Department of

Treasury and Finance for many decades. However the buildings are not well suited to modern office accommodation and we believe there are better options.

In another pair of hands these beautiful buildings will be able to be put to a better use, one that takes full advantage of its heritage character and location. That may involve a conversion to visitor accommodation, or for a combination of uses. Accordingly, the Government will begin work immediately and intends to seek proposals through an expression of interest process later this financial year for the divestment of the site.

Tasmanians are some of the most community and sports-oriented people in the country. We work together as volunteers for our communities both large and small, we embrace our junior sports, we celebrate our elite and we all benefit both socially and economically as a result. To support and strengthen our communities, this Budget contains \$11.6 million in community and regional election commitments that range from a couple of thousand dollars for a local hall or sports club up to \$3 million for a regional swimming pool.

We also recognise the need for investment into our larger community assets and for mass participation sports like basketball, netball and tennis, and this Budget provides \$10 million towards a new multisports facility in Glenorchy, \$2 million towards the \$4 million regional tennis centre in Launceston, as well as \$3 million towards a hydrotherapy pool in Hobart. Further, our Levelling the Playing Field policy provides a \$10 million investment to improve sporting facilities for girls and women across Tasmania with a priority on upgrading football and cricket facilities. These commitments will support volunteers, increase participation, and our community wellbeing as a whole.

Madam Speaker, the Budget I deliver today is framed not just for the next four years but it is framed to lay the foundations for our long-term future. It charts the path that the Hodgman Liberal Government will take over our second term - to manage our finances responsibly, to grow our economy and to create the revenues our growing state needs to invest in the essential services and public infrastructure which Tasmanians expect and deserve.

I believe that Tasmania is on the cusp of a golden age. We can now leverage the strong financial position that as a government we have worked so hard to achieve to build the infrastructure of the future whilst providing first class education, health and job opportunities for all Tasmanians.

We took a clear plan to the election. In delivering the 2018-19 Budget, this Government's commitment to the Tasmanian people is that we will deliver that plan, we will deliver our commitments, and we will make the most of the opportunity we now have to build Tasmania's future.

Madam Speaker, I commend the bill to the House.

**Debate adjourned.**

## **ADJOURNMENT**

**Mr FERGUSON** (Bass - Leader of Government Business) - Madam Speaker, I move -

That the House do now adjourn.

**The House adjourned at 3.43 p.m.**