

**Thursday 11 April 2019**

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

## **QUESTIONS**

### **Government Finances - Special Deposits and Trust Funds**

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

[10.02 a.m.]

Yesterday, you were at pains to claim that you will not raid Government trust funds to fix your budget mess and plug your \$560 million black hole. Can you confirm that you are, in fact, going to raid special deposits and trust funds including the housing fund, the Infrastructure Tasmania fund, and the hospital capital fund and roll them all into consolidated revenue because you are on a desperate cash grab to plug the \$560 million hole in your budget?

## **ANSWER**

Madam Speaker, I believe the member might be talking about the new Financial Management Act. If that is the case then that is the legislation that was largely developed under them and for which they voted in this House. It will allow for different management of a range of different matters, including the entirety of the public account, which I am presuming that they have been briefed on recently.

I say that it is a long overdue reform. It moves us to a single public account which, I think, was brought forward under Mr Bacon. For the media's benefit, setting aside the language that has been used in terms of 'raiding', this is a change to the way that the finances of the state will be managed in their presentation. It is nothing more than that. We will not be raiding trust funds to prop up the budget. What we will be doing is introducing legislation that was originally developed under those on that side of the House -

**Mr Bacon** - What you said yesterday, when was that developed?

**Mr GUTWEIN** - Again largely when the former failed finance minister was in the chair. What we have here is an Opposition that is bereft of ideas. They are bereft of any policies. They are trying to create fear and loathing in the general population in terms of legislation which was largely crafted under them.

We will not be raiding trust funds. I make that perfectly clear. We will be introducing the new financial management act, if that is what the member was talking about.

That brings me back to the point that I was making yesterday. This is their opportunity in the sun. On the Tuesday after I bring down the state budget they get the opportunity to release their alternative budget and explain their priorities to Tasmanians, where they would spend, where they would introduce savings, and how they would manage the finances of the state.

**Mr O'Byrne** - You know you are in Government, don't you?

**Mr GUTWEIN** - Mr O'Byrne chiming in. They have spent the week attempting to create fear and loathing in the Tasmanian community. They have spent the week attempting to frighten Tasmanians.

In terms of the budget challenge we face, we will work through this sensibly, responsibly and we will balance the budget across the forward Estimates. Importantly, we will ensure that we continue with our record \$2.6 billion infrastructure.

**Mr O'Byrne** interjecting.

**Mr GUTWEIN** - Again, the member chimes in. I had a look last night at every single budget that was brought down when he was here in the last term and guess what, he was cutting every year if his logic stands up.

Infrastructure is lumpy and ours is a very lumpy program: \$2.6 billion worth of roads, bridges and affordable housing. Coming back to the member's initial question, I make the point, in terms of raiding trust accounts, no, we will not be doing that.

There is a new act that is being introduced. They will play games as they normally do, but Tasmanians can rest assured that we will manage the budget responsibly.

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### **Recognition of Visitors**

**Madam SPEAKER** - Honourable members, I welcome our friends from grade 6 at The Friends' School. Welcome to parliament.

**Members** - Hear, hear.

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### **Government Finances - Special Deposits and Trust Funds**

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

[10.07 a.m.]

You have confirmed that you will be raiding the trust fund -

**Members** interjecting.

**Madam SPEAKER** - Order.

**Ms WHITE** - You have. You have confirmed that you are taking money from the housing fund, the hospital capital fund and the Infrastructure Tasmania Fund and putting it into consolidated revenue. You tell me I am wrong. You are taking money from those trust funds and putting it into consolidated revenue.

You are raiding trust funds in a mean-spirited and desperate cash grab because of your incompetent budget management. This is right. How many other trust funds does the Treasurer

plan to raid and is it not a fact that you are raiding these funds in a desperate attempt to plug your \$560 million blackhole?

## **ANSWER**

Madam Speaker, I thank the member for the question. They have obviously set her up. What we have here is Mr O'Byrne, supported by the shadow treasurer, working out how they can get rid of you. That is what is going on here. That is the silliest question that I have heard in all the time I have been here.

The financial management act is being introduced, largely a construct that was developed under them. I make the point that a single fund model will replace the current dual fund structure. The single fund public account will comprise the receipts of the general government sector and any specific purpose accounts established under the act. Money held by the government in trust will be clearly accounted for in agency trust accounts as determined by the Treasurer and will not form part of the public accounts.

That was the briefing they were provided with.

**Ms O'Byrne** - How many?

**Mr GUTWEIN** - This is a conspiracy theory running internally within Labor on that side of the House. This was your idea. You know this was your idea, backed by Mr Bacon, to destabilise you, to destabilise the Leader of the Opposition.

**Ms O'BYRNE** - Point of order, Madam Speaker. If the Treasurer would like to address the question, rather than doing anything but talk about the fact that he is raiding trust funds -

**Madam SPEAKER** - Thank you, Ms O'Byrne, that is not a point of order. Please resume.

**Mr GUTWEIN** - I have answered that question. They are being silly. They understand how the legislation works. We will not be raiding trust funds. As I have said consistently this week, we will manage the state's finances responsibly and sensibly. We will do what Tasmanians would expect of a Liberal Government and that is to respond to a challenge. That challenge is around \$560 million worth of lower revenue across two tax lines. We will balance the budget across the forward Estimates. We will ensure that our economy is protected because we will continue to spend our record investment in infrastructure.

## **Bushfire Preparation and Response Capability**

**Dr WOODRUFF question to PREMIER, Mr HODGMAN**

[10.11 a.m.]

This week a very hot bushfire at Dolphin Sands on the east coast started from an out-of-season planned burn-off. Fifty-six hectares of land and one building were burnt and residents were forced to flee their homes. The visiting Prime Minister yesterday skited about how successful the federal response to Tasmania's bushfires was, despite 6 per cent of the World Heritage area being burnt. He thinks the luck of a wind change that saved towns and irreplaceable iconic wilderness was all we need up our sleeve. Also, yesterday, 23 fire chiefs, including the former head of the Tasmanian

Fire Service, Mike Brown, spoke up about the reality of climate change and fire, including the idea that a fire season is now a thing of the past. The fire manager, Bob Conroy, called on political parties to understand that climate change is upon us, it is perilous and we need to do more about it.

Premier, do you agree that the Liberal Party has lost touch with reality? This coming summer is predicted to be an El Nino scorcher. Will you take a stand for your community against the tide of your coal-loving party and put substantial resourcing into this budget for climate change adaptation, for bushfire preparation, and response capability?

## **ANSWER**

Madam Speaker, I thank the member for the question. I am pleased that the emergency warning for fire in Dolphin Sands has been downgraded to advice level. Around 128 hectares was burnt and there was no immediate threat. However, fire under these conditions can be difficult to control. I urge Tasmanians, especially those in the region, to follow the advice of the Tasmanian Fire Service and to stay informed. I also inform the member that fire investigators have determined that the cause of the Dolphin Sands fire to be an escaped hazard reduction burn being conducted by a landowner on private property.

The fuel reduction program initiated by this Government is significantly increasing its scope. It has reduced fuel loads across our state. It has helped protect communities that were under threat during the most recent fire season. It has been a massive investment by this state and this Government, \$55 million, an unprecedented nation-leading approach to reducing that fuel load. It is a program that has often been selectively criticised outside the fire season by the party the member represents in this place.

**Ms O'CONNOR** - Point of order, Madam Speaker. It is a complete misrepresentation of the Greens' position. What we rail about is forestry burns, not genuine and scientifically grounded fuel reduction burns.

**Madam SPEAKER** - That is not a point of order, but I will take it as a point of clarification.

**Mr HODGMAN** - I can say to the member who asked the question, who obviously was not listening when she asked the same question last time we sat, that this Government takes climate change very seriously. It is an important issue for all Tasmanians, particularly younger Tasmanians concerned about their future. We understand that and we are taking action to deal with it.

We are a leader in so many respects in tackling climate change. In the areas of renewable energy, for example, in climate science, in research, Tasmania is leading the way. We, this Government, not the Greens, produced Climate Action 21, our action plan for 2017 to 2021 that sets out our agenda for action on climate change through to 2021. I am sure the students and all young Tasmanians would like to know that Tasmania has become the first jurisdiction in Australia to achieve zero net emissions.

**Ms O'CONNOR** - Point of order, Madam Speaker. It is important that the Premier understands this is because of the forest we protected under the Tasmanian Forest Agreement. That is the science.

**Madam SPEAKER** - That is not a point of order either.

**Mr BARNETT** - Point of order, Madam Speaker. The member is regularly abusing standing orders and interrupting the Premier.

**Madam SPEAKER** - I thank you for your contribution, Mr Barnett, but I am in charge here.

**Mr HODGMAN** - While there is much more we can do, Tasmania has achieved a lot and we should be proud of the fact -

**Dr Woodruff** - No, we have to do everything we can. This is a terrible crisis.

**Mr HODGMAN** - that under this Government Tasmania has become one of the first jurisdictions in the world, certainly in Australia, to be zero net emissions.

**Ms O'Connor** - Because of the forests that were protected.

**Madam SPEAKER** - Order, could I ask the Greens to please calm down.

**Mr HODGMAN** - Our Tasmania First energy policy will allow Tasmania to be 100 per cent renewable energy powered by 2022. That is a massive investment in our wonderful renewable energy sector, which is again nation-leading.

Our Government has allocated additional funds for a number of initiatives under the climate action plan that I referred to, into research, into improving energy efficiency, reducing transport emissions, supporting business, local government and communities to take action. It includes, for example, not only long-term reduction targets, supporting the roll out of electric vehicle charging infrastructure in our state, providing for the Power\$mart home and business programs, which provide financial support to Tasmanian households and small businesses to improve energy efficiency and reduce power bills.

We have, as we have said, a comprehensive targeted fuel reduction burning program, the Tasmanian Energy Efficiency Loan Scheme, we have modernised and upgraded our renewable hydroelectricity assets, invested in our infrastructure, in our irrigation networks as well to provide greater surety for farmers who are tackling issues relating to climate change.

**Dr WOODRUFF** - Point of order, Madam Speaker, relevance, standing order 45. The Premier has not addressed the question. It is about this coming budget, climate change adaptation this summer and bushfire preparation. You have not mentioned anything to do with this summer and the bushfires. Will you put the money into the budget?

**Madam SPEAKER** - Thank you, Dr Woodruff, it is not a point of order, and standing order 45 is completely useless to me.

**Mr HODGMAN** - When you talk about denial, the Greens are the climate change action plan deniers in this place. You will not accept that these things I am talking about are real actions to tackle issues of climate change, to assist our communities, are budgeted for and are being delivered. There will be ongoing commitments in the upcoming budget. Unfortunately, the Greens are being led in this instance by a Liberal Government that is taking real action on the issues of climate change. It is a serious issue and no matter how often the Greens want to stick their heads in the sand and deny what we are doing with climate change, our record speaks for itself.

## **Government Finances - Education Staffing**

**Ms O'BYRNE question to MINISTER for EDUCATION and TRAINING, Mr ROCKLIFF**

[10.19 a.m.]

When you came to government in 2014 you immediately cut two teachers from primary and high schools and four teachers from every college -

**Mr Ferguson** - You are not the shadow minister any more.

**Ms O'BYRNE** - If Mr Ferguson will allow me to continue. Your colleague, the Treasurer, has stood next to you and said 10 times over the past two days that he will, and I quote, 'cut the cloth' in this year's Budget, which we know is shorthand for cutting the jobs of teachers and support staff and cutting the services that are provided to parents and children. In the fallout of the Treasurer's budget incompetence and mismanagement, where do you intend to cut teachers and support staff jobs and services to help plug the Treasurer's \$560 million budget black hole?

**Opposition members** interjecting.

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### **Recognition of Visitor**

**Madam SPEAKER** - Honourable members, I acknowledge the presence in the gallery of Mr Slipper, former Speaker of the House of Representatives. Welcome to the Chamber.

**Members** - Hear, hear.

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### **ANSWER**

Thank you, Madam Speaker, and I acknowledge the former spokesperson for Education as well who asked the question. From my recollection, between 2010 and 2014 under a Labor-Greens government, I think there were 100 fewer teachers than when you started.

**Members** interjecting.

**Madam SPEAKER** - Order.

**Mr ROCKLIFF** - When we came to government our objectives were to balance a budget, which we did very effectively, and that allowed us, along with our policies, to grow the Tasmanian economy, and more people were employed in the private sector. In education, since 2014 and since you were in government, Ms O'Byrne, we have 142 more teachers in our schools than we started with, which highlights the importance of balancing budgets, growing the economy and investing in essential services, particularly frontline services such as health, community safety, police and education.

**Opposition members** interjecting.

**Madam SPEAKER** - Excuse me, Mr O'Byrne and Ms O'Byrne, please calm down. If we could have just a little less chattering. It is hard to hear. Thank you.

**Mr ROCKLIFF** - Madam Speaker, our policies have been very clear that we took to the March 2018 election and that is that we will begin investing further in our teachers over the course of the next six years. There will 250 more teachers in our classrooms over the next six years and 197 of those will be delivered over the next four years. In fact, a few weeks ago I was at Taroona High School celebrating with three new teachers, and they are part of the 70 teachers who have already started as a result of the 250 teacher commitment we gave.

I hope the member welcomes as well the fact that during our negotiations with the Australian Education Union we have on the table the opportunity for 95 more specialist teachers in our classrooms, which would also reduce workload. I find it extraordinary that the Australia Education Union would not support that and welcome the contact hours reducing from 22 hours to 20 hours in our primary schools, which they have been calling for decades to balance the primary school and high school contact hours.

We are committed to our 250 teachers over the course of the next six years and reducing workload. I have said there will be 197 over the next four years and 70 have already been employed. We are delivering our commitment and as a result of the extra resources and the policies we have such as our high school extensions, the collectives we have - Rosny College collective, the Hellyer collective that also works now - we have better retention rates when it comes to years 11 and 12. The investments we are making as a result of strong budget management and indeed balancing the budget, as the Treasurer has committed to, means our education outcomes are improving and they will continue to do so.

### **Federal Election**

**Mr TUCKER question to PREMIER, Mr HODGMAN**

[10.25 a.m.]

Can the Premier please provide an update on how the Tasmanian and Australian governments are delivering on what matters to Tasmanians and is he aware of any alternative approaches?

### **ANSWER**

Madam Speaker, I thank the member for his question. Elections are really an important time and an opportunity for Tasmanians and indeed Australians to have their say about their next government. While our opposition parties in this place are still complaining about the results of the 2018 election and still wanting to talk about themselves, the facts are we were elected to continue to govern this state in majority, with a clear plan, and to keep our state heading in the same direction it has been for the last five years. Our plan is very much about the long term and delivering on what we promised and, most importantly, improving the lives of all Tasmanians - unlike the opposition parties, who still continue to be more focused on themselves and matters that are not as important to Tasmanians.

It will not stop us from continuing to work hard to keep our economy strong, with more job opportunities for Tasmanians, more investment into our health system, improving health care and vital services for Tasmanians, improving education standards for our students and building the infrastructure that our growing state needs. It is all possible, and only possible, because we have managed our budget well.

The federal election will similarly be about what is most important to Australians and who is best able to deliver. The national coalition government, led by Scott Morrison, has delivered a very strong economic foundation. The national government has been able to invest a lot more - and into this state, I hasten to add - than those governments we have suffered under Labor-Greens alliances, not only here but also in Canberra. Since the election of Liberal governments, Tasmania's economic fortunes have significantly improved. Our unemployment rate has dropped, Tasmanian businesses are investing more than ever before and are more confident about the future.

It is my intention to work closely with a re-elected Morrison government, as we have done over the last five years, to maintain this momentum. We have some very important investments in this state, whether it be in the renewable energy sector where we have the Project Marinus second interconnector, or the Battery of the Nation project which we are advancing with significant investments by both governments. We have also seen significant co-investments into some of our other areas of great competitive advantage such as tourism and what we will do in the north-west is put around \$100 million into the Cradle Mountain masterplan. We have co-investments in irrigation networks; City Deals in both the north and the south, the only state in the country that has got two of them; more money into public housing; and more money into health. These are the things that Tasmanians care about and the Morrison government will present a very strong and clear plan for our country and, like us, I know it will continue to focus on the issues people care about.

Mark my words, like we do and have done here, if we see another Labor-Greens alliance in Canberra that will send our country backwards, as it did last time. If we have another situation in Canberra like we do here, where the Labor Party is an entirely owned and operated subsidiary of the Greens, that will drive our state and this country backwards.

There is a very clear choice for Tasmanians and indeed all Australians at the federal election, and it is a majority Morrison government that will continue to deliver a strong economy, lower taxes, more investment into the things that Tasmanians care about and need, and also into protecting our special way of life here in Tasmania and averting the quality of life that Tasmanians suffered when there were last Labor-Greens governments here and in Canberra.

### **Government Finances - Health Services**

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

[10.29 a.m.]

We already know that the health and hospital system is chronically underfunded to the tune of more than \$100 million each and every year, but now that the Treasurer is cutting the cloth - in other words, flushing the jobs of nurses and slashing health services to cover up his mismanagement, where will you make further cuts in health to plug his \$560 million budget blackhole?

#### **ANSWER**

Madam Speaker, I thank the Leader of the Opposition for her question and the opportunity to say to her, we will not be picking up Labor's election policy which would have us spending \$200 million less on health.



This Government has committed to the biggest increase in health funding. It was in last year's budget. In last year's budget, we put in \$465 million of additional health funding into the health budget across the forward Estimates. It was a massive increase and that means that we are now spending almost \$2 billion more than the last Bacon budget in 2013-14 only five short years ago.

It is a big increase. We reversed all the O'Byrne cuts, we have opened all the wards, we have the Royal Hobart redevelopment nearly completed, looking fantastic and it is going to really support our health system. Recently we made an announcement that we are accepting all of the recommendations of the Clinical Planning Taskforce. We made a forward announcement that the budget will provide fully for stage 2 of the Royal Hobart redevelopment which is a \$91 million redevelopment which we are committing to in advance of the budget. We are doing all of this with 800 extra staff in our health system, compared to when Ms White was on the government side of this House.

Health is a top priority for our Government. I am thrilled to be able to welcome the Morrison Government's announcement yesterday of \$92 million more for our health system in Tasmania.

I conclude my remarks by making a very clear reminder to Ms White and to Tasmanians that no government can do any of these increases in health funding -

**Members** interjecting.

**Madam SPEAKER** - Order. This mumbling has to stop. It is constant. We have had a big week but we need to finish on a nice parliamentary standard.

**Mr FERGUSON** - Thank you, Madam Speaker. It is not possible for the federal coalition government and it is not possible for the Hodgman Liberal Government to have been able to make these extra investments without a strong budget and a strong economy which helps us pay for the health service Tasmanians deserve.

### **Housing - Action Plan**

**Mr SHELTON question to MINISTER for HOUSING, Mr JAENSCH**

[10.32 a.m.]

Could the minister please update the house on the Hodgman Liberal Government's action plan to deliver more homes to Tasmanians in need?

**ANSWER**

I thank the member for his question and his interest in this very important matter for Tasmanians. Madam Speaker, I know you care about this topic.

**Madam SPEAKER** - I do care about it and I would like to hear it.

**Mr JAENSCH** - The Hodgman Liberal Government is working hard to address housing stress for Tasmanians and meet the rapid growth in demand for housing. Our first action plan established under our 10-year Affordable Housing Strategy is due to be completed at the end of June this year.

The commitment made was to assist 1600 additional households including new supply of 941 affordable lots and homes by the end of June 2019 -

**Members** interjecting.

**Madam SPEAKER** - Order. Enough across the Chamber. Please proceed.

**Mr JAENSCH** - including delivery of an additional new 372 social housing dwellings. Today I am releasing the quarterly housing report for the March quarter which shows we are on track to deliver on these commitments. With three months left to go, we have assisted 1227 households, including delivery of 717 new lots and homes to meet a wide range of housing needs for Tasmanians. That is 717 out of 941 new lots and homes with another 224 to be delivered in this last quarter.

**Members** interjecting.

**Mr JAENSCH** - I get a lot of questions. There is a lot of media and concern raised about this housing issue and I come in here to give a report and I would like you to be able to hear it.

**Madam SPEAKER** - Order, please.

**Mr JAENSCH** - Thank you, Madam Speaker. Our main focus has been on new social housing with 281 dwellings now completed. We have more than enough houses in the pipeline right now to meet our targets for the final quarter at the end of June 2019. The numbers speak for themselves. As at the end of March 2019 we have assisted a total of 1227 new households; 335 households have been assisted out of rental stress into an affordable home of their own for the first time thanks to this Government. In addition, 240 affordable lots have been released, 281 social housing dwellings have been delivered, 260 households have been assisted into affordable private rentals and 111 new units of homeless accommodation have been provided.

I hear the noise from the others who are saying, 'a lot is not a home' and 'homeless accommodation is not a home'. They only recognise a home that looks like theirs. The truth of it is, across the spectrum of housing need in Tasmania, there are people who all they need from us to get out of rental stress is for us to make available a piece of land they can afford and assistance for them to get their deposit, to get them into a mortgage that costs them less to operate than their rent right now.

As a result 335 households now have a home of their own and they are off the rental treadmill that we are told is the big problem and that is thanks to this Government and this action plan. I reject the assertion that is not a home. It is a home for those 335 households and it is a home of their own that they could be proud of, that makes them immune to the rental increases that are going on. This delivery of 1227 new households, housing outcomes, builds on the support that our Government provides every day to Tasmanians in need. In Tasmania around 12 000 live in subsidised social housing and on average, around 200 households are assisted with affordable private rentals each month. Supply is the key to address the challenges we currently face in our housing market.

Despite what those opposite might say, we have more than enough homes under construction right now to meet our targets and many are in their final stages of completion. We will keep going through our targets and we will start delivering into our next set of targets under our next action

plan. Do not worry. At 30 June 2019 we will have reached our targets of 372 new social housing homes as part of the 941 and we will keep building. Over the quarter the Hodgman Liberal Government has continued to deliver on our commitments, especially with home ownership and with private rentals, keeping people in the market who can be in the market so they are not competing with low income families for social housing stock.

We have boosted the HomeShare assistance program which is available to eligible low-income earners from a maximum \$59 119 to \$81 255. This increase includes new homes and house and land packages and, when combined with the Government's first home builders' incentive, this potentially represents over \$100 000 in government assistance to help a family out of rental stress and into their first home for the first time. We are proud of that result. Tasmanians are taking it up. It is exactly what we need right now at a time when rental stress is pushing more people into their own housing stress and potentially pushing people into social housing.

Not everybody wants to go to social housing. Not everyone wants to be a tenant in a Housing Tasmania home and for those who can, we want to help them stay in the market and have a home of their own. We have also been delivering our Private Rental Incentive Scheme which is helping Tasmanians into secure rental accommodation. This sees new tenancies being delivered every week for Tasmanians who need them. As at yesterday, 77 households out of the expected 110 have been delivered. This assists to keep people in the market and reduce the number of people on the housing register who are competing for social housing. We have housed over 1000 families from the housing register since I became minister and we know we have more to do.

In winding up, I will reflect that we have also launched our new Affordable Housing Action Plan 2 which will assist another 1500 Tasmanian households into affordable housing over the next four years. It is a total investment of \$200 million in state funds, more than any other government has ever spent here before on housing.

### **River Derwent - Enterococci Readings**

**Dr WOODRUFF question to PREMIER as ACTING MINISTER for the ENVIRONMENT, Mr HODGMAN**

[10.41 a.m.]

Enterococci readings in the River Derwent must be less than 140 per 100ml to be considered safe for human health. In January 2019 the Derwent Estuary Program's tests of the most popular swimming locations from New Norfolk down to Blackmans Bay found seven of 18 spots had unsafe levels. In March, 10 of the 18 sites failed to pass the test and Kingston Beach recorded an astronomical 110 times the safe limit, which was the highest the Derwent Estuary Program had ever seen. Concerned residents heard at a public information session that some 67 per cent of faecal contamination source remains unknown, even after DNA questioning.

The Kingborough Council has repeatedly requested assistance from you and the EPA to investigate the source of contamination but there has been no action so far. Your Government seems happy to see a river become so contaminated it is unsafe to swim in, with southern beaches closed for the last two summers. Will you instruct the EPA to investigate the contamination at Kingston and Blackmans Bay beaches and accept that the water quality of the Derwent is ultimately your Government's responsibility?

## **ANSWER**

Madam Speaker, I thank the member for the question. We take very seriously issues such as this and seek to understand the causes and the impacts of circumstances that arise and to identify the source, but also to ensure that we have an ability to put in place things to prevent it occurring in future. However we are not of a mind to interfere with the operations of the EPA, which the member might be suggesting we do, because we respect and value its important and independent functions. We will ensure that it is fully equipped and as a government we will proactively do all we can to ensure that matters such as this are properly attended to.

With respect to the matters specifically and as to what the minister has done herself, I can take that part on notice but I know we have been very proactive in our operations. I will tell you that government representatives including the director of the EPA recently met with the mayors of Clarence, Hobart and Kingborough and the CEO of the Derwent Estuary Program and there were very positive discussions undertaken and an action plan formed, including improving post-testing protocols to better understand the sources of pollution, so to suggest that nothing is being done is completely wrong. We take these matters seriously and we are, as I have just said, taking action.

### **Salmon Industry - Sustainable Growth Plan Update**

**Mrs RYLAH question to MINISTER for PRIMARY INDUSTRIES and WATER, Mr BARNETT**

[10.44 a.m.]

Can the minister please update the House on how the Hodgman majority Liberal Government is delivering on the salmon industry's sustainable growth plan?

## **ANSWER**

Madam Speaker, I thank the member for her question and her strong support for the sustainable growth plan for the salmon industry. I can provide an update because it is a very important sector. In fact it is the highest value primary industry sector in Tasmania and we are getting on with the job of delivering on our Sustainable Industry Growth Plan and that is what I would like to update the House on today.

It is an important economic and social contributor -

**Ms O'Connor** - This is very closely connected to the last question because your Government wants to fill the Derwent Estuary with salmon poop.

**Mr BARNETT** - Despite the interjections of the Greens, it is an important economic and social contributor to our economy, particularly in rural and regional parts of Tasmania. In the one-year review that I released recently -

**Ms O'Connor** - Eighty thousand tonnes of fish poo.

**Madam SPEAKER** - Order, Ms O'Connor - warning one.

**Mr BARNETT** - on the salmon Sustainable Industry Growth Plan, I provided an update on the initiatives we are delivering to support the industry to achieve their \$2 billion a year growth target.

**Dr Woodruff** - What about those scientists who resigned in protest over the decision?

**Madam SPEAKER** - Order, Dr Woodruff - warning one.

**Mr BARNETT** - Those initiatives included working to achieve zero tolerance in terms of marine debris, improving environmental reporting, improved fish health, improved transparency, advancements in industry biosecurity planning, increased regulatory compliance and monitoring, with much more to come. We have established a regulatory regime that ensures the industry is sustainable as it is economically beneficial, particularly to regional Tasmania.

By having an industry managed in accordance with world's best practice, Tasmanians can be proud of it and have confidence in it.

**Mr O'Byrne** - Hear, hear.

**Mr BARNETT** - It is good to get a 'hear, hear' from the other side in terms of the Labor Party. We will come to that later and I will have more to say.

I am pleased to report that I have accepted the recommendations of the independent Marine Farming Planning Review Panel. I have approved an application by Petuna to implement a new Storm Bay north marine farming development plan. The Government welcomes the move by the industry into these more offshore sites that experience high wave energy and good current flow. In fact, I am informed that this will be the most remote -

**Dr Woodruff** - Norfolk Bay is not an offshore site and neither is Brabazon Point.

**Madam SPEAKER** - Dr Woodruff, warning two.

**Mr BARNETT** - This will be the most remote offshore marine farm in Tasmania. The panel's recommendation to allow the Storm Bay north plan was made after detailed consideration and comprehensive environmental impact statements, public submissions, representations and public hearings.

**Ms O'Connor** - Rubbish. You wouldn't listen to the Derwent Estuary Program.

**Madam SPEAKER** - Order, Ms O'Connor.

**Mr BARNETT** - We welcome the jobs that this will create, some 37 direct and about 130 direct and indirect jobs, in addition to the jobs created during the construction phase. It is not going to happen overnight. Although Petuna can now apply for a lease and a licence to operate, the company will need to demonstrate they can meet requirements in relation to engineering, emergency management and biosecurity before obtaining a marine farm licence. It is an industry regulated by an independent EPA, which was a key reform put in place by the Hodgman Liberal Government, and I acknowledge the former minister, Jeremy Rockliff. An environmental licence will also be required from the EPA and the company will need to comply with the authority's requirements in relation to environmental management of the site before any fish can be farmed.

There would not be many Tasmanian families that do not know someone working in this industry in one of the supporting sectors like boatbuilding, infrastructure, training, logistics and scientific services. The Hodgman Liberal Government is backing these businesses. We are backing the families, we are backing the regional communities, we are delivering stronger regulations and responsible and transparent growth and we are getting on with the job. We know the Greens want to shut down this industry. We know that for a fact and we urge Labor, those on the opposition benches in the Labor Party, to back Tasmanian jobs, back the proper process undertaken and give Tasmanians peace of mind that you also back this important industry and the regional communities that need their support.

### **Government Finances - Disability Funding**

**Ms STANDEN question to MINISTER for DISABILITY SERVICES and COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT, Mrs PETRUSMA**

[10.49 a.m.]

The Treasurer has repeated 10 times over the past two days that he will 'cut the cloth' to suit his circumstances in the coming budget now that his incompetence has resulted in a \$560 million black hole. In other words, that means cutting, slashing and axing services that are vital to Tasmanians. What areas of your portfolio that are supposed to deliver services to Tasmanians living with disability will you be slashing?

**Mr Bacon** - We're just trying to find the cloth you're going to cut. It's not in health, it's not in education, we're just looking for it. Tell us where it is.

**Madam SPEAKER** - Order, Mr Bacon.

### **ANSWER**

Madam Speaker, I thank the member for the question because obviously she did not listen to a word that was said yesterday because I clearly put on the record that, under this Government, the NDIS is fully funded. I do not know what the words 'fully funded' mean to them, because we know they left us a \$1.1 billion deficit. Fully funded under this Government is fully funded. The NDIS is fully funded.

I repeat, for the member's benefit, that under the Heads of Agreement, the states and territories agreed to make a capped, fixed contribution to the NDIS based on population share. It is only the Commonwealth contribution that fluctuates.

**Ms STANDEN** - Point of order, Madam Speaker. This was a straightforward question about disability services. We are not asking for a lecture on the NDIS. I draw the minister to the question.

**Madam SPEAKER** - That is not a point of order. Please proceed.

**Members** interjecting.

**Madam SPEAKER** - Order. How about some courtesy in here?

**Mrs PETRUSMA** - They do not like listening to the truth, Madam Speaker. As shown in the 2018-19 Budget, Tasmania has fully budgeted for its future NDIS funding requirements.

**Opposition members** interjecting.

**Mrs PETRUSMA** - Alright, I will go back a step. Under the National Disability Insurance Scheme that your government in 2013 signed up to under the Heads of Agreement, the Tasmanian Government's funding goes to the NDIS. It is a massive \$982 million in the 2018 Budget and the forward Estimates, including the \$878.7 million that goes to the NDIS. Our commitment is fully funded. Disability services is as it is in the 2018-19 Budget.

This Government wants to see the full roll-out of the National Disability Insurance Scheme. We are fully committed to fully funding the NDIS.

### **Education - Student Wellbeing**

**Mr SHELTON question to MINISTER for EDUCATION and TRAINING, Mr ROCKLIFF**

[10.52 a.m.]

Can the minister update the House on how the Hodgman majority Liberal Government will continue to support the wellbeing of students?

#### **ANSWER**

Madam Speaker, I thank the member for Lyons for his question. Access to a good education opens the door to opportunity and provides a pathway to a brighter future. Our Government is committed to ensuring that all Tasmanian students are able to reach their full potential.

Student wellbeing is one of the key enablers for students to be successful learners. Evidence demonstrates that students who have greater health and wellbeing are more likely to have better educational outcomes, more likely to have positive wellbeing throughout their lives and be more productive.

We have listened to principals, staff and students who have told us that poor mental wellbeing is the primary barrier to learning for children and students. In response to this feedback and the growing body of evidence on how the experience of trauma and emotional and behavioural challenges can affect students' capacity to learn, we have committed \$1.6 million over four years to establish a child and student wellbeing unit. This unit is responsible for implementing the child and student wellbeing strategy in our government schools.

A strategy was released last year to promote and extend efforts in schools and across the entire state government school system to support the wellbeing of children and our students. This year we are putting a spot light on mental wellbeing. To increase support for schools in addressing this important issue I am pleased to launch this week the Mental Wellbeing Action Plan.

This action plan demonstrates a collective effort, including broad consultations with students, Department of Education staff, parents and representatives from Youth Network of Tasmania, Commissioner for Children and Young People, Mission Australia, TASSO, Head Space and Life Without Barriers.

We are concentrating our efforts on key areas of concern as highlighted by students and staff, including cyber safety, resilience, depression, anxiety and respectful relationships. The action plan identifies 16 actions that promote the Government's ongoing commitment to wellbeing and a focus on mental wellbeing. Each action has been designed to ensure a universal approach to wellbeing for all learners is achieved.

Some of the key actions include developing a wellbeing web page, which will host a number of useful resources and will provide principals with a platform to share information and experiences in using wellbeing resources. Professional learning opportunities for teachers will also be a feature of the action plan.

The key to all this is the student voice. That is why through Action 1 of the plan the department will be surveying all students from years 4 to 12 on their wellbeing in 2019. The student wellbeing survey will provide schools and the department with vital data on the wellbeing of its students. This data will be in the student voice and will be used to plan and implement programs and professional learning to support the wellbeing of all students. This is an important initiative and I applaud all those involved in bringing the plan to fruition. The plan has been designed to be responsive, to improving the well-being and lives of our Tasmanian students. It will go a long way in supporting our students' wellbeing both today and the future.

### **Government Finances - Disability Services**

**Ms STANDEN question to MINISTER for DISABILITY SERVICES and COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT, Mrs PETRUSMA**

[10.56 a.m.]

You failed in your previous answer to guarantee how you will ensure the 93 000 people who are not eligible for the NDIS but are your responsibility in your portfolio will not have services cut to help plug the Treasurer's \$560 million budget black hole. Will you now update the House on how you intend to protect those people?

### **ANSWER**

Madam Speaker, I thank the member for her question. The only question that is left unanswered in this place is how will Rebecca White and Labor fund their proposed \$280 million cash splash on an unaffordable 3 per cent public sector wage rise?

**Members** interjecting.

**Madam SPEAKER** - Order, I am very surprised -

**Ms WHITE** - Point of order, Madam Speaker. The minister is showing a complete disregard for some of the most vulnerable people.

**Mr FERGUSON** - On the point of order, obviously the minister is getting under the Opposition Leader's skin. It is not a point of order. It is a debating point. I ask that the minister be allowed to continue.

**Madam SPEAKER** - I do not know what is about to fall out of the minister's mouth.



**Mr O'Byrne** - And neither does she.

**Madam SPEAKER** - Order, we will hear the answer in silence. Total and utter silence.

**Mrs PETRUSMA** - Thank you, Madam Speaker. I can only assume from the member's questioning that they are arguing that we need to cut the \$982 million we have committed to disability services across the forward Estimates, the NDIS that we have fully funded.

**Members** interjecting.

**Madam SPEAKER** - Order, I said total and utter silence. Other than throwing everybody in this Chamber out, I would like quiet for at least the answer to this question.

**Mrs PETRUSMA** - As I have said, Madam Speaker, under the Heads of Agreement, our commitment is fully funded. There is \$982 million across the forward Estimates that this Government is committed to funding.

**Ms O'BYRNE** - Point of order, Madam Speaker. I know you are limited under standing order 45, but previous speakers have asked ministers to at least try to address the question.

**Madam SPEAKER** - Order, please accept that that is not a point of order. I will ask the minister to try to be as relevant to the question as possible.

**Mrs PETRUSMA** - Thank you, Madam Speaker. We have committed \$982 million across the forward Estimates. It is the largest amount ever committed for disability services in this state. Under this Government that commitment is fully funded. The question is to fund their \$280 million ask for wage rises, what will be the quantum under them?

### **Government Finances - Child Safety Services**

**Ms HOUSTON question to MINISTER for HUMAN SERVICES, Mr JAENSCH**

[11.00 a.m.]

On your watch, child safety services have been badly under-funded and the effect has been devastating on vulnerable children whose safety has been put at risk. The protection of vulnerable children should be a government priority but the facts are the vast majority of investigations into reported cases of children at potential risk are not launched until 29 days or more after they are received. Only 20 per cent of reports are responded to within a week and just 20 per cent are completed within a month, with most taking three months or more.

Now that the Treasurer has told Tasmanians his budget will cut further and deeper, can you guarantee you will not make cuts to place children at further risk?

### **ANSWER**

Madam Speaker, I thank the honourable member for her question. This is a very important and sensitive area and, I agree, it is the Government's and my highest priority to ensure that children are not at risk of harm or abuse.

**Ms O'Byrne** - Twenty-nine days before you launch an investigation? That is your highest priority?

**Madam SPEAKER** - Order, please.

**Mr JAENSCH** - I need to address this fashion that there has been - and I heard it again yesterday in some of the contributions to the Premier's Address reply and I hear it reported in the media from time to time - where people talk about unallocated cases and children. Yesterday it was said 'living with abuse' waiting for our Child Safety Service to attend to them due to lack of funding. I believe that that is purposefully misleading, reckless and irresponsible.

I believe that there are members opposite who do understand how this service works, and that when a concern is raised about a child's wellbeing it is assessed immediately and assigned priority based on its risk rating. Any child assessed to be at risk of harm or abuse is seen on the same day. That is the policy and I am advised that there are no priority 1 cases waiting in Tasmania.

Children assessed to be at significant risk of harm or abuse are seen - not phoned - seen, by trained people on the same day. Lower priority cases which may be notifications about a concern of a parent's ability to cope, a child's appearance or state of cleanliness, other types of matters that are reported, predominantly in number through teachers and police. They are mandatory reporters who are passing on information that should be on file but which do not indicate a current urgent risk of harm and abuse wait until they are allocated a dedicated worker. While they are waiting, those cases have been assessed, they have been triaged, they are being overseen by a trained team leader who is able to escalate those cases as needed in response to any change in that information.

What has been reported over the last little while - it came out in the dashboard reporting - was that there was an increase in the December period in lower priority cases awaiting being assigned to a dedicated worker. I am able to report today to the House that was a spike at a point in time; it is not a new level across the board. The figure that was reported in the dashboard has now reduced to about half of that figure and is continuing to fall. The delays there in those cases being assigned to a case worker happened at the time -

**Members** interjecting.

**Mr JAENSCH** - Can I please be heard in silence, thank you?

That peak occurred during the period that we were introducing the new advice and referral line service which brought together the former Gateway notification process and the former Child Safety Service intake process. It resulted in some disruptions while that new merged process was being put in place which did result in some of those cases waiting longer than their recommended period, but still under supervision, still triaged to ensure that any child at significant risk of abuse or harm was seen on the day.

It is grossly irresponsible for people to characterise this as anything else and for there to be statements made that we have children languishing under abuse waiting for us to see them.

In last year's Budget an additional \$24 million was allocated largely to support the appointment of up to 25 new child safety staff and to support the implementation of the redesign. I am advised that the creation of new positions and the recruitment and appointment of new staff for 25 positions is now complete and, as of next Monday, 24 of those new staff members will be operating on the

ground around Tasmania in areas of greatest need. There is one further position and we understand that while there will be delay in them commencing their work there is an acting position in place which they will be replacing.

We have funded this. We have invested over \$75 million in this redesign. We have met our targets of appointing additional case workers. We are managing the transition to a new way of managing child safety in this state which I believe all parties in this place have supported and we are going to follow it through and we are going to look after these kids.

**Time expired.**

## **PETITION**

### **Reinstatement of Public Bus Services**

**Ms Dow** presented a petition signed by approximately 814 citizens of Tasmania praying that the House request the Government to reinstate public bus services between Strahan, Queenstown and Hobart.

**Petition received.**

## **SITTING DATES**

[11.11 a.m.]

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

That the House at its rising adjourn until Tuesday 30 April next at 10.00 a.m.

**Motion agreed to.**

## **MATTER OF PUBLIC IMPORTANCE**

### **Youth Week**

[11.11 a.m.]

**Ms O'CONNOR** (Clark - Leader of the Greens) - Mr Deputy Speaker, I move -

That the House take note of the following matter: Youth Week.

We recognise today is Youth Week. Youth Week is a celebration of our young people but also an opportunity to make sure we are cross-checking with ourselves that we are listening to the views and concerns of young people and taking every possible step to empower them.

Earlier this week, the Youth Network of Tasmania organised a launch of Youth Week for Tasmania and I thank YNOT for the incredible work it does representing young people in Tasmania no matter where they live and to recognise that YNOT provides us an excellent window into the lives of young Tasmanians and the matters that concern them.

We had two speakers at Youth Week. Here was Matt Etherington, a very impressive young man who works for Red Cross on its youth advisory committee and immigration support program. One of the things he said was that we are often told young people are the leaders of the future but we are actually the leaders of now and it is important that the older people among us support young people in showing that leadership.

I want to read into *Hansard* the contribution from Bronte Scott. This is straight from Bronte, who gave the most incredible speech that morning -

It's so nice to see so many friendly faces here at this ungodly hour of the morning

My name is Bronte. I am a 19 year old Marine and Antarctic Science student studying at UTAS. I chose to study marine biology because I have always been fascinated by, and very passionate about, the ocean. It is so big and so beautiful, and it is home to so many of my favourite species. It is the key to life here on this planet, our planet. But at the end of the day, the main reason I chose marine biology was because I want to play my part in protecting our oceans from the growing number of threats they are facing. It is such a special place, and I want my kids and grandkids to experience it in the number of ways I have.

I run a business with my close friend Bridget called Two Aussie Mermaids. Our mission through our business is to educate, inspire and advocate for the ocean and all living creatures within. We translate scientific papers into a format that everyone can understand.

For example, on Tuesday the 19th February 2019, Norwegian oil giant Equinor, released their 426 page Environment Risk Plan for their proposal to drill in the Great Australian Bight. The fact that it was 426 pages full of hard-to-read graphs and tables is just so dodgy in itself. It was made to be that long to ensure that no one would take the time to read it. But I did. And my goodness did I have a lot to say about it.

The Great Australian Bight is a large stretch of open bays spanning over 45,000km<sup>2</sup> off the southern coastline of Australia. Finishing the document, I can't even begin to explain how I felt. My favourite place in literally the entire world was at risk of being completely wiped out. More than anything, I was just terrified. Terrified that this decision was being left up to a bunch of people who sit in air-conditioned offices all day. People that actually think the money made from big oil drilling in the Bight could possibly outweigh the irreparable damage caused to a place so unique that over three quarters of species living there exist NOWHERE else on the planet. People so ignorant to every single issue affecting our environment and climate. When I finished the risk plan, my first thought was the fact that I am so small and the world is so big. That I am so young, that I have no hope of fighting this. Because it is so hard to want to make a difference without even knowing where to begin. But then I thought to myself, I didn't spend an entire week reading this huge document for no reason. I wanted to simply spread awareness and get people educated. Make people aware that these are real issues. Issues that affect us and will continue to affect us if we do nothing about them. So I wrote a response of sorts. I took the key points of that 426 page

document and summarised it into a small post to share on Facebook. The response I received was beyond overwhelming.

Recently I read a quote that said, 'the people who are crazy enough to think they can change the world are quite often the ones who do'. Us young people are living in such a powerful and progressive time. We have so many empowering youths to look up to across the globe. Take Greta Thunberg as an example. At just 16, she quickly rose to prominence for starting the first school strike for climate, outside the Swedish Parliament building in August 2018. Only months later, on March 15th 2019, a global strike for climate took place in over 2000 cities worldwide. On that day, I stood among 8,000 other young people at Parliament Lawns in Hobart, along with an estimated number of 1.4 million pupils worldwide. Every single day youth are discouraged from speaking out, having a voice and making an impact. But it was on that day that I truly understood the power of youth, and that together, we can move mountains. We are a force to be reckoned with.

Together, we stood united, because climate change does not discriminate. It's a universal problem with universal repercussions. Every single day we are faced with more global issues directly associated with climate change. Every single day we wake up to a slightly more chaotic world. But instead of being disheartened by this, we use it as motivation. Because after all, what good is a fire without fuel? While we can not change what our ancestors did, we can change the future, and I'm not sure about you, but that gives me a lot of hope.

Yes, we might still have a really long way to go. But just look how far we have come. We are the future of this world. We WILL stand up for what we believe in and we will stand up for change, because change IS coming, and if they won't do something about it, WE will. We are the first generation to grow up understanding the implications of OUR actions on this planet we call our own. We are the last generation that can do something about it.

The people around me this morning are so inspiring and I am so grateful for this opportunity and to be standing here with them.

So this morning, I'll leave you with a quote from a very wise man. Dr Seuss once said, 'unless someone like you cares a whole awful lot, nothing is going to get better, it's not'.

Madam Speaker, I read that into the *Hansard* because it was such a fantastic speech and for the people who attended the YNOT launch it was emblematic of the hope that we have in young people. Happy Youth Week to everyone and particularly to all the young people we are elected to represent in here.

[11.18 a.m.]

**Mrs PETRUSMA** (Franklin - Minister for Disability Services and Community Development) - Madam Speaker, I genuinely thank Ms O'Connor for bringing this up as a matter of public importance because I totally agree with her. Our young people are the leaders of today but they are also the leaders of the future. Ms O'Connor is a mum of four and I am a mum of four and a grandparent of four. Our young people astound me every single day, what they talk about,

and what they are passionate about. I really enjoyed listening to Matt Etherington and his passion in regard to mental health, but also listening to Bronte Scott and what she had to say about our oceans and our planet. I live near the ocean and walk all around it every day of the week. To me it is the most magnificent of God's creations and I passionately believe we need to play our part in making sure we do what we can to make sure it is there for our future generations as well.

The Tasmanian Government loves supporting Youth Week. On Monday it was wonderful to join Ms O'Connor and other members of parliament for the launch of Youth Week for a cup of inspiration, because Youth Week is a week of fabulous events for what is the largest and most significant week of celebration of the life and contributions of our young people in Tasmania. I want to especially thank, for Youth Week, Colony 47 which, for over 40 years now, has been supporting and encouraging our young people and generously hosted the event. Also, one of the significant aspects of the event was the Young Humans of Tasmania series which was a photo board that featured Matt, Bronte and some other young Tasmanians who are making a difference in their own particular field.

For 19 years now, Youth Week has been a significant event that celebrates young people in our state. What I have always loved about Youth Week when attending events is that it is a chance for our young people to share and celebrate youth, express their ideas, but also highlight and celebrate their successes and the magnificent contributions they make to the wider community, education and the workforce.

Youth Week is aimed at young people aged between 12 to 25 years of age to showcase their talents and skills, to build their capacity to engage with the broader community, and to develop practical skills through their involvement in planning and delivering the Youth Week events. It is on from 10 April to 17 April, with the theme of 'Our future. Our voice. Our impact'. An inspiring program of 13 events will be held around Tasmania for our young Tasmanians.

We are delighted to support Youth Week, to support YNOT in hosting the events and providing the funding for the Youth Week grants program, which provided funding for these 13 events. Last year 2700 young Tasmanians attended the Youth Week events, but more importantly 300 young people were involved in planning those events. We are hoping that there are even more young people taking part in the events this week.

Youth Week would not happen without our partners, which include local government, schools and community organisations and Aboriginal community organisations. I especially commend and thank YNOT, the Youth Network of Tasmania, for organising the events and organising the grants programs. Tania and all her staff have done a fabulous job with Youth Week again this year. Most of all I thank all the young people involved. Our young people underpin the overall success of Youth Week Tasmania. I want to encourage all Tasmanians. It does not matter what your age you can attend a Youth Week event or otherwise just reflect on and celebrate the value that our young people offer to Tasmania.

Further to what the Tasmanian Government is doing for our youth, in the 2018-19 Budget the Government has significantly invested in Communities Tasmania. We have invested additional funding of \$2 million over three years to further support the Youth at Risk strategy, which is a whole-of-government strategy. We also put in \$7.3 million for a redesign and upgrade to the Ashley Youth Detention Centre, extra funding into out of home care and the Child Safety Service. There is also \$900 000 over three years to improve processes and systems for the transfer of guardianship and adoption. There is more funding for the wonderful Create Foundation to support young people

leaving the out of home care system, but also \$2 million into Levelling the Playing Field to encourage more girls to participate in sport and \$3 million into Ticket to Play.

The aim of Ticket to Play is to get 30 000 young people in this state aged between 5 to 17 years of age participating in sport and recreation, as well as cadets or guides or scouts. We want to see more young people, especially those who are disadvantaged, partake in sport. The uptake has been fabulous. More than 700 different sporting organisations right across Tasmania are heavily promoting Ticket to Play. I was talking to Trisha Squires from the AFL last week and she said Auskick has had up to a 25 per cent increase in young people taking it up just through these vouchers. These \$100 vouchers help young people to pay for their registration costs and to get into sport and recreation. We thank all the state sporting organisations and the other organisations involved in helping us to get more young people into sport and active recreation.

In regard to Levelling the Playing Field, sadly statistics show Australia-wide only one in two women take part in sport. It decreases over time, so we want to get more girls playing sport. One of the biggest barriers to playing sport is inadequate facilities, especially toilets. If you are playing football, half-time can go for a long time. If 36 players all want to use the one toilet half-time can end up going for 40 or 50 minutes.

We found that toilets are the secret to success so we are building a lot of toilets. As you can appreciate, Madam Speaker, toilets can determine a lot of outcomes. I am delighted to say that Round 2 is open now, so we are encouraging state sporting organisations to take part in Levelling the Playing Field, Round 2. In Stage 1 \$5 million was available and we have managed to leverage over \$10.1 million in investment.

[11.25 a.m.]

**Ms BUTLER** (Lyons) - Madam Speaker, I thank Ms O'Connor for bringing on the topic of Youth Week. Youth Week is a fantastic opportunity for young people to attend exciting events in their areas and have their achievements and talents recognised by the community. Youth Week allows Tasmanians to take to the floor on issues affecting them and have their voices heard. It is important that we listen to our young people and let their voices be heard. Our young people are very articulate, often well-educated and passionate. It is really important that we are listening to our young people here in Tasmania.

One young person with a particularly brilliant mind is a young Tasmanian by the name of Toby Thorpe, who recently attended the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change in Poland. Twenty-three thousand young people from around the world attended this UN convention. Toby recently spoke here in Parliament House about the recommendations passed at the convention. He asked that the following three recommendations be passed on to our Government to implement. I will read them out -

- (1) To support all schools in Tasmania in making the transition to renewable energy.
- (2) To reform the energy resource allocation to schools, to allow for renewable energy savings to be kept by schools.
- (3) To establish a youth climate council with state-wide youth representation of climate leaders.

I am aware that the minister, Mr Rockliff, attended this presentation, representing the Government. I would like to enquire as to the progress made in meeting the recommendations that Toby put forward. Was the minister listening? Will there be any action taken up on these recommendations?

The minister should be listening to young people. Last month, 8000 young Tasmanians attended to the Big School Walk Out for Climate Action. More than 1.4 million young people worldwide rallied together. They are concerned about the future of the planet and their future. The planet is very much reliant on how we, as decision makers, manage the environment.

I am a mother of three and I was not surprised by the strength and the articulate arguments the young people put forward. They are very sensible, sensitive and very well thought through. Their messaging is clear and they have a much better understanding of social media, a much better understanding of networking than us.

I will be attending Youth Week events. There is one in the Derwent Valley that I will be attending on Saturday morning. It is called The Event. I am looking forward to that. This year's Youth Week will include busking competitions, twilight markets and festivals, skate park expos and robotic workshops. They will be used to showcase local talents and to celebrate the powerful impact that young people have in our communities.

We are not doing enough to support young people in Tasmania. We need to do a lot more to build careers for our young people and not leave them with the highest youth unemployment statistics in the country. We need the energy, skills and future society that young people can offer us. We need to have individual-based need management of a lot of young people, especially young people who are facing unemployment. We know that young people in south east Tasmania have the sixth highest unemployment rate in Australia - a rate of 17.8 per cent. Tasmania's overall rate of youth unemployment is 15 per cent and that rate does not include the percentage of young people who are marginally attached to the labour force. The true rate is, in fact, a lot higher.

We have an odd culture in Tassie towards our young people. There is a mentality almost through a lot of our work which has to do with teaching young people a lesson of sorts. There is a lack and disregard for a lot of the input and information that young people can offer us. We also know that, on average, if a young person is not in training, any form of education or has not had a job by the age of 24 that they have a 90 per cent chance of never working. That is huge and we are not doing enough to tackle that as decision-makers.

Young adults are not valued enough in our society and Youth Week is a great opportunity for young people to show us how we can better assist them in the direction that they want to travel as a group of people. I congratulate YNOT for pulling this together. It is a fabulous event. It has been running for 19 years and I congratulate them on this and it is very important. We are in a brave new world and we must do what we can to support young people in our community.

[11.31 a.m.]

**Mr TUCKER** (Lyons) - Madam speaker, I thank the member for Clark for bringing this on.

The Youth Network of Tasmania has done a fantastic job in organising Youth Week Tasmania 2019 and the Government's grant program this year is supporting 13 different youth-focused events across Tasmania that celebrate our young people's successes and the contributions that they make to the wider community, education and the workforce.



Out of the 13 projects receiving funding, five of those were in my electorate of Lyons. Number one, SCAMJAM, organised by the Break O'Day Council, my local council, has been running for three years. I was officially the person who opened the first event and my kids have been involved with the two events. What a success that has been in getting our young people involved with doing activities and exercise.

Our Voice is also another event that has been organised. It's OK to be OK, organised by the Deloraine High School. The Our Voice - It's OK to be OK project provided a day of experiences and activities for young people led by peers and youth service providers. Activities focused on giving students exposure to new experiences and learning the importance of getting out there and trying new things. A key objective of the project overall was to look at ways that students can build confidence, resilience, perseverance as well as demonstrate inclusion. The Our Voice - It's OK to be OK project has targeted young people from Meander Valley schools, home school students and students from Giant Steps Autism Support in Deloraine. Activities included a martial arts demonstration, a remote-control car challenge, rock and water activities, creative arts activities, a student band, drama and dance performances, a graffiti wall and a human library.

Another one of these projects was the Cinema Under the Stars, the Kentish Council's Youth Week project. It affords an opportunity for the wider community to listen to young people and to acknowledge and celebrate the positive contributions that they make. The Kentish Council's Youth Coordinator has worked with young people from Green Room Youth Centre and Sheffield School to develop a short video that will be filmed for viewing by students, parents and the wider community. The focus of the video is about enabling young people to acknowledge issues and concerns that are important to them and to express their views for the wider community through the medium of the film. Importantly, the aim of screening the video to the community as a Cinema Under the Stars events is about encouraging discussions on the topics raised at the event and thereafter in an ongoing and open way.

Another two events were the Derwent Valley Youth Week 2019, organised by the Derwent Valley Council, and the Youth Okines Skate Park Pro organised by the Okines Community House.

As part of Youth Week Tasmania's program on 6 April, the Scamander skate park was abuzz with annual SCAMJAM event. SCAMJAM is a youth BMX and scooter competition, which this year included all ages of girls and skate competition. SCAMJAM included a free barbecue and giveaways to community members attending. It was a fantastic opportunity for participation and social engagement. Every year this event attracts a good turnout and has become known as a good, fun family day. Each competitor gets a 90-second run to show off their skills and if last year is anything to go by, there are certainly some talented young people in the area.

Break O'Day Mayor, Mick Tucker said of the event:

We are really proud to be able to partner with our youth and the state Government in bringing this event to Break O'Day every year. This is the event's fourth year and is organised and run by the youth of the area.

Mayor Tucker went on to say:

This not only provides an opportunity for our youth to host their own competition but to learn about running community events and establish connections with others in the community.

This exciting event was made possible by funding from the Tasmanian state Government as part of the Youth Week funding program.

With regard to Jen Butler, a member for Lyons saying we have not done enough, I will do a little bit of background on the whole-of-government action plan for young people.

**Time expired.**

[11.37 a.m.]

**Dr WOODRUFF** (Franklin) - Madam Speaker, I am pleased to make a contribution on Youth Week. What we have come to see as adults recently, is the enormous power of youth, the strength of youth and the great antidote that collective youth action is proving to be in the epidemic of anxiety and depression which so many young people in Tasmania are affected by.

Through the history of human societies, the antidote of collective action has been proven to be the one thing that can bring us together when we feel overwhelmed with environmental circumstances, social conditions and climate threats, to come together and work as a community to find solutions and to take actions and take back power into people's own lives and give people a sense of control.

The control that young people are so desperately trying to achieve is a sense of control of a planet which is in the throes of runaway global warming. It has been created by the burning of fossil fuels and is now at unsustainable levels. There is a cap, there is a limit. There is not an unending amount of fossil fuels we can continue to burn. The scientists have given us numbers and dates. Young people are incredibly smart and connected and they are aware of all of this information.

It may be that a lot of older dinosaurs in the Liberal and Labor parties continue to put their heads in the sand about the reality of what is happening with global warming and the relationship between burning coal-fired power, gas-fired power and the warming of the planet. Young people know that we cannot continue to put our heads in the sand. It is the voice of one single young woman, Greta Thunberg in Sweden. On Fridays she stood on her own in the snow, in Sweden, and went on strike from school because it was the only thing that she could think of to do. Her single action, that step and the incredible strength of that young person has been an inspiration, a flame of hope and action, for children and young people all across the planet.

Now today in Tasmania, we are all benefiting from that global collective action. More than 8000 young people went on strike and stood outside here, despite the fact that not a single Liberal politician was out there to speak to them. The Premier hid from those voices. He would not be seen. He could not be seen in public with the biggest strike ever, the biggest march that we can remember on Parliament Lawns, so large that it spilled all around the streets around Parliament House, yet the Premier was too gutless to make time in his diary. He knew it was coming. He knew when it was. It was well forecast and he was too afraid to stand outside and look into the eyes of those young people, because their clarity is absolutely catalytic to experience; there is nothing else I can say about it.

Madam Speaker, I know you were there. You hosted a wonderful event here in Parliament House which forecast the work of four young Tasmanians on behalf of Tasmania, and on behalf of Australia really, who went as our ambassadors to the Conference of the Parties. They were there and spoke the truth about the relationship between the Adani coalmine and the warming of the

planet. We must stop that mine and we will stop that mine. Bob Brown is taking a cavalcade from Tasmania, the birthplace of the Greens. He will be heading off from Tasmania in his little wagon, electric cars and even fossil fuelled cars, because we have not got everywhere yet. It is not perfect, but, hell, we are all going to get there together and we are going to head up to the Carmichael mine. We are going to make sure that everyone in Australia understands.

Young people will be there. Young people will be leading the charge and ending up at Parliament House to say to the Liberal and Labor parties, 'Do not support this Adani coalmine', because we cannot keep doing it. A study showed that 96 per cent of young people are concerned about climate change and know it is a serious problem, while 70 per cent of them feel disempowered. The antidote is collective action from young people, the school strikes for climate and children such as Imogen Viner from Cygnet who said in a speech she wrote and sent to all MPs:

There is one more thing I seen in the future, Prime Minister Morrison, one light amidst the gloom. And that is young people themselves, taking a stand for what they believe in. Young people willing to sacrifice their education, a basic human right, for action on climate change. Young people taking an interest in politics, taking an interest in the workings of the world, and making their mark. For we are the future, Mr Morrison.

I hope that the Liberal Party and the Labor Party listen to the young people of Tasmania when they make a decision about what their policies will be around coal, electricity production, gas, reducing emissions and protecting us from the bushfires that will come next summer and may indeed come on the east coast next week. Who knows, because we are in a forever changed climate world and young people are going to be our voice for the future.

**Madam SPEAKER** - There are only two minutes left for debate so we will declare that time has expired.

**Time expired.**

**Matter noted.**

## **CONSOLIDATED FUND APPROPRIATION (SUPPLEMENTARY APPROPRIATION FOR 2018-19) BILL 2019 (No. 9)**

### **Second Reading**

[11.45 a.m.]

**Mr GUTWEIN** (Bass - Treasurer - 2R) - Madam Speaker, I move -

That the bill be now read the second time.

The Consolidated Fund Appropriation (Supplementary Appropriation for 2018-19) Bill 2019 seeks to appropriate additional funding in the 2018-19 budget year of \$217.9 million. Of this amount, \$182.9 million was reflected in the 2018-19 Revised Estimates Report that was published in late January 2019. This additional funding relates to the vital government service delivery areas of health, children, corrective services and infrastructure.

The bill provides \$20 million in additional funding to support out-of-home care services provided through the Department of Communities to support vulnerable children with complex needs. These services include those relating to clinical psychology assessment, counselling, respite care, client education, childcare and health.

As a government, improving Tasmania's health system has been our highest priority. In order to continue this important task this bill provides additional funding of:

- \$105 million to meet increased demand for services across the state for the Tasmanian Health Service and Ambulance Tasmania; and
- \$52.4 million for the Royal Hobart Hospital redevelopment.

It should be noted that rather than represent a new allocation of funding, these funds reflect the bringing forward of funding previously included in the 2019-20 budget year to reflect current expected project requirements.

The bill also provides \$5.5 million of additional funding for the Tasmania Prison Service. This funding reflects the current prisoner numbers and associated operational costs.

In addition to this expenditure that has previously been highlighted in the 2018-19 Revised Estimates Report, the bill also includes an initial allocation of \$35 million to meet the significant costs that have been incurred in fighting the major bushfires that have occurred in a number of areas of the state in recent months.

Given the magnitude of these fires and the extensive firefighting resources that have been required to be deployed, the actual costs relating to the bushfires will not be known for some time. It is likely that the final costs will vary significantly from this initial allocation and that other funding will either need to be provided by way of a Request for Additional Funds in the current budget year or be allocated in the 2019-20 Budget.

As members would be aware, the Government is able to seek support from the Australian Government in relation to some of the costs that have been incurred in fighting the bushfires. This future Australian Government funding will ultimately offset some of the additional costs that are currently reflected in this bill.

The most recent budget update provided in the 2018-19 Revised Estimates Report showed that, following the achievement of net operating balance surpluses in the past two years, the net operating balance continues to remain in surplus over the budget and forward Estimates period. This outcome includes the impact of the provision of significant additional funding to continue to increase the level of services provided by the Government to the Tasmanian community in a range of critical service delivery areas, together with the impact of a substantial reduction in GST and state taxation receipts over the budget and forward Estimates period.

The Government is looking forward to the tabling of the 2019-20 Budget that will see the continuation of the implementation of the Government's important fiscal strategy that has, since the 2014-15 budget, supported the delivery of improved services to the Tasmanian community while maintaining a commitment to prudent financial management.

I commend the bill to the House.

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## Recognition of Visitors

**Madam SPEAKER** - Honourable members, I acknowledge the ladies sitting in our gallery who are from the Magra CWA.

**Members** - Hear, hear.

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[11.48 a.m.]

**Mr BACON** (Clark) - Madam Speaker, I know my colleague, the member for Derwent, would send his warm regards to the lovely ladies from the Magra CWA, so that is a very welcome acknowledgment.

It is my pleasure to speak briefly on this appropriation bill. I will make a number of comments and then ask a series of questions of the Treasurer. We have had a lot of talk this week about the state of the Tasmanian budget. The first cracks started to appear in the Government's rhetoric about the state budget when the Revised Estimates Report was released in late January this year rather than February, which is normally the case. It showed that it was heading us towards around \$340 million of net debt, a place this state has not been in since Labor paid off Tony Rundle's and Robin Gray's debt on coming to government back in 1998.

We know that since that time there has been a writedown of not only of \$280 million of GST, but also stamp duty of \$280 million. A \$560 million black hole.

This week there have been the first photographs taken by scientists of a black hole. A huge achievement.

**Mr Ferguson** - Is this your best effort?

**Mr BACON** - I have to give Dr Broad credit. I was going to suggest something about someone being denser than the black hole but that would not be parliamentary, so I will not do that.

**Madam SPEAKER** - Much appreciated.

**Mr BACON** - There is a \$560 million black hole that has come to light since the revised estimates report came out, which already had us heading into that \$343 million of net debt. The Treasurer talked this week about cutting his cloth due to this write-down in expected revenue. It is not insignificant to talk about \$560 million. A lot of talk about cutting the cloth. We have minister after minister get up today and give no detail about any cloth that is going to be cut in their portfolio. The ministers for Health and Education, the two largest and most important portfolios, did not give any indication about where those cuts will come from within their portfolios. There is reason for Tasmanian people to be concerned when the Treasurer talks about cutting his cloth.

Regarding the supplementary appropriation bill, we had a series of questions for the Treasurer. It is often difficult to answer these questions without the departments being present, but it would be handy if the Treasurer could give us all the information he has.

Is the \$20 million in additional funding to support out-of-care services provided through the Department of Communities for providing specialist care packages? If so, how many were

provided? Why have these cost blow-outs happened when the number of kids in care has been reasonably stable over the past year? Has any of that \$20 million been associated with splitting the Department of Communities out of DHHS, which occurred on 1 July last year?

We had some questions about the \$105 million that has been put into Health. We welcome that funding. There has been some talk about the Opposition's approach to that \$105 million. We support that provision to Health. It does not address the underlying structural problems with the Health budget in Tasmania. There has been report after report indicating that there is a black hole in the Health budget of \$100 million every year. The Treasurer said earlier this week that the \$105 million was to employ more nurses. If that is the case, can the Treasurer say whether that is recurrent funding, ongoing funding, or whether it is his expectation -

**Ms O'Connor** - This is recurrent, the \$105 million, to meet the current needs. It is not new money.

**Mr BACON** - If you used this money to employ new nurses it would have to be year-on-year funding. Does this mean that rather than take a cut of \$15 million to the Health budget, which is in the revised Estimates report, there will be \$100 million provided year-on-year to keep these staff employed?

There is \$52.4 million for the Royal Hobart Hospital redevelopment that has been brought forward. People have said to the Opposition that contractors at the Royal Hobart Hospital are not being paid at the moment because the Government is not paying its bills. Can the Treasurer give us an update on whether or not Tasmanian contractors and others are not being paid at the Royal? Can the Treasurer provide greater detail than what is provided in the bill, the second reading speech and the clause notes about that \$52.4 million? What effect will this have on the project and why has that funding has been brought forward?

There is an additional \$5.5 million of funding for the Tasmanian Prison Service. Not much detail is provided there, Treasurer. Could you could provide some details on those demand pressures and associated operational costs?

There is \$35 million for the bushfires. We support the Government in its endeavours in fighting those fires. It is hard to define exactly what the expected cost is. As the Treasurer said there may be a RAF later in the financial year or an allocation in the 2019-20 budget. If the Treasurer has preliminary advice on what the total cost of the bushfires is expected to be, we would appreciate that.

I want to highlight a few things from the revised Estimates report. The Treasurer said earlier in the year that he was committed to a surplus this financial year. That has gone out the window. On page 20 of the revised Estimates report you see the underlying net operating balance and the expectations for the next four years. We are talking about significant deficits there year on year - \$160 million until we get to the year 2021-22, which is \$140 million. These are not insignificant. The Government has no plan to address these ongoing deficits. The Government is strong on rhetoric but not strong when it comes to meeting its fiscal targets.

I would like to highlight one thing on page 73. This shows the combined cash deficits of the general government and government business, which are averaging \$530 million a year across the forward Estimates year on year. This is the true state of what is going on with the management of Tasmania's state finances. The Treasurer has been misleading the Tasmanian people for five years.

The cracks are starting to emerge. He is having to face up to reality and he has finally realised that. He talked this week about cutting the Government cloth to keep the net operating balance in budget across the forward Estimates. He will need to have that conversation with his Cabinet colleagues in each portfolio.

He probably should start with the minister who is sitting next to him because we have a health system that is in crisis. We have seen comments this week that we have people in their 90s who are ramped for hours at the hospital in ambulances. Talk to anyone in the street about the state of the Tasmanian health system and they know it is in crisis. We know it is underfunded by \$100 million a year. The expectation is that even without the \$560 million black hole the Government plans to spend \$15 million less on the health system next year. That is a funny way to try to fix a crisis.

Now the Treasurer has realised he has to cut his cloth, it is time for him to talk to his colleagues, and it is time for them to be upfront with the Tasmanian people. They have had the opportunity this week to talk about where they are going to cut their cloth. Now it is time to be upfront. It is all well and good to tell us to wait until 23 May, but the Tasmanian people deserve to know exactly what is going on with their vital Tasmanian public services.

[11.59 a.m.]

**Ms O'CONNOR** (Clark - Leader of the Greens) - Madam speaker, here we are again as we are every year at around about this time dealing with supplementary appropriation. This is a substantial supplementary appropriation in the order of \$218 million, a very large proportion of which, again, is going into the Health budget, because every single year the Health budget is underfunded in order to make that year's budget look better than it is. We want public servants to keep being paid and make sure quality public services continue to be delivered so we will support the Consolidated Fund Appropriation (Supplementary Appropriation) Bill for 2018-19.

But it has been interesting to see the change in the Treasurer's attitude in this parliament in recent weeks. We had to put up, in this place, with nearly five years of intolerable hubris from this Treasurer who talked about things like the 'golden age' which turned out to be a 'golden minute'. He talks about his sound financial management and yet here we are dealing with a shortfall in recurrent funding across a number of agencies and looking forward, there will be a projected \$560 million less to allocate towards public services in Tasmania.

What we know - and it has been pointed out by commentators such as Saul Eslake, John Lawrence and Greg Barns - is that there has been no structural reform by this Treasurer and this Government. In fact what happened is that the Liberals came into government and got lucky. Part of the reason for that was the global financial crisis, the recession, had come to an end. In the previous term of the parliament between 2010 and 2014, we had a Labor-Greens government that had to make some really hard decisions, and we pulled the budget back into line and cut our cloth to fit our sail. For that, every day in this place during that period of time we got beaten up, but it was certainly laying the groundwork for Mr Gutwein's first four years in which he made no significant structural reform.

The projected shortfall in stamp duty sits on Mr Gutwein's head. He was prepared to ride that wave of surging stamp duty revenue without thinking about the future or considering, for example, increasing the level of stamp duty so we can put some of that revenue back into increasing the supply of social and affordable housing. We have now a lazy approach to budget management which is much more about spin than it is about the substance of the state's finances, and it is really

easy to be Treasurer in the good times, but not so easy - as Mr Gutwein is discovering now - to be Treasurer when revenues are shrinking nationally and when the forecast revenue coming in from stamp duty turns out not to be so terrific after all.

I have a couple of questions for the Treasurer. I see here that there is \$20 million in additional funding to support out-of-home care services and acknowledge the answer made by the minister responsible for children this morning in relation to new appointments to child safety. Is that an extra \$20 million recurrent, so \$5 million a year recurrent extra into Child Safety Service? Is that what we are looking at here, or given that it is a supplementary appropriation, is it backfilling funds? In this portfolio I would like to understand that better.

In the context of additional funds into Risdon Prison, \$5.5 million extra is going into the Tasmania Prison Service and the Treasurer's second reading speech talks about current prisoner numbers. We know that Risdon Prison is bursting at the seams and part of the reason, in fact nearly all of the reason, I am certain, is because of this Government's approach to law and order. On the previous government's watch, we had recidivism rates going down and the number of people incarcerated at RPC going down as well. Something has happened in the past five years and it sure looks like a reflection of government policy that seeks to lock more people up and is not dealing effectively with recidivism rates in Tasmania. Could the Treasurer please detail to the House what is the current population of prisoners at Risdon Prison and at Launceston Remand? Perhaps he could tell us, for example, what the numbers were in 2014 when this Government came into office.

In the supplementary appropriation bill there is also an initial allocation of \$35 million to meet the costs of the major bushfires. That money is welcome but there is an element of fiddling while Rome burns, quite literally, about the way fire management and managing the accelerated impacts of climate change is dealt with not only by this Government but by their federal colleagues. There is persistent denial about the accelerating impacts of climate change and the increase in frequency and intensity of bushfires. We have now seen on the east coast, at a time of year which normally falls well outside the fire season, a planned burnoff escaping, getting into a tinder-dry landscape and threatening homes and lives.

As the former fire chiefs told the country yesterday, what we used to understand as the fire season no longer exists. We need a whole new approach to landscape protection and making sure we are properly resourcing our firefighters with well-resourced remote firefighting capacity. We must consider the possibility of doing things a different way.

**Mr Shelton** - More fuel reduction.

**Ms O'CONNOR** - If Mr Shelton thinks he is being smart and provocative by interjecting on the question of fuel reduction burns, I do not know how many times I have stand up in this place and make it clear that Greens policy, as evidenced by our position when we were in Cabinet, is to support strategic fuel reduction burns. What you people consistently do is conflate strategic fuel reduction burns with forestry regeneration burns and they are two different things. Even when you are doing strategic fuel reduction burning in the landscape you have to be careful, Mr Shelton, as your community in Lyons at Dolphin Sands found out the night before last.

I understand from an answer that was given this morning that it was a private landowner who was undertaking a burn, as was the beginning of the Dunalley fires, who was a private landowner at Forcett, but as a government you cannot say that was a private land owner so it has nothing to do with us. It does, because there is a set of policies and regulations in place around permits for



burnoffs and clearly they need to be relooked at, because why is a private landowner burning on the east coast when we know that the soil moisture has almost completely disappeared? It has not rained on the east coast in any meaningful way for months and months. We can tinker around in supplementary appropriation bills and toss money here and there at bushfire management and fire recovery, but unless you step back and have a look at the science and take it seriously and commit to properly resourcing fire management, we are going to be back here each year having to make extra top-up allocations to the TFS, or Parks and Wildlife, or Forestry Tasmania because we have had another horrific fire season.

We still have not had any comfort from the Premier about this coming fire season because the Bureau of Meteorology has confirmed that this year we will enter an El Niño weather phase and that means hot, dry conditions. If we thought last summer was bad, if El Niño comes to bear, this summer is going to put last summer's fires in the shade, so we really need to see in this year's state Budget a proper allocation towards bushfire prevention, management and recovery and it must be through the lens of accelerating climate change.

If the Treasurer could address what the thinking is in terms of not having to go back through supplementary appropriations to deal with bushfires as they happen in each year and have a more systemic approach to protecting our people, communities, wilderness and our towns he should reveal that to the Parliament.

This is business as usual in the Treasury portfolio. If the Treasurer could answer some of those questions, that would be helpful. We do not need to go into committee. We will support the bill.

[12.11 p.m.]

**Mr GUTWEIN** (Bass - Treasurer) - Madam Speaker, I thank members for their support of this bill, both speakers, the shadow treasurer and the member for Clark -

**Ms O'Connor** - The Leader of the Greens will do.

**Mr GUTWEIN** - The Leader of the Greens. I do not mind calling you that.

**Ms O'Connor** - In this term of the parliament.

**Mr GUTWEIN** - It must be a strange old ballot, but anyway -

**Ms O'Connor** - How many members statewide do the Liberals have?

**Mr GUTWEIN** - I am sorry. I did not realise members voted for you.

**Ms O'Connor** - I am talking about the size of our parties. I would be interested to know.

**Mr GUTWEIN** - I am not sure. I am not attempting to incite you. It was a reflex action.

Ms O'Connor made the point that this is broadly business as usual and it is. When I look back to 2007-08, there has only been one year that a supplementary appropriation bill has not been brought in and that was in 2014-15 when I first became Treasurer.

Every year back to 2007-08 there has been a supplementary appropriation bill brought in and they vary from year to year in terms of the impact they have as a proportion of total revenue or as a proportion of the Consolidated Fund.

What is interesting - and not to engage in politics too much - but the largest supplementary appropriation bill in percentage terms as a proportion of total revenue was in 2010-11. In 2007-08 the largest supplementary appropriation bill, which was almost two-and-a-half times larger than the one we are dealing with today, was brought in. I will be fair and admit that was as a result of the sale of an asset at that particular time.

I will do my very best to provide what information I have to the questions asked.

I will start with the specialist care packages. I thank Mr Bacon for not providing Treasury with an out, but we do not have all the information that the department has and they are not with us today. It is more so a question for Estimates.

The out-of-home care costs associated with the material basics providing safe rostered care for children with challenging behaviours: they have been applied to staffing, the staff salaries for team members, the roster model. I do not think that anyone watching this debate would realise that out-of-home care actually means that we run a roster, sometimes it is run over 24 hours with shifts. An example is of two staff members to one child depending on whether they are active or awake, overnight management as well. It covers the costs of staff supervision of the care team, accommodation and other material requirements, housing, food, clothing, transport, medication and other health expenses.

**Mr Bacon** - The \$20 million above budget.

**Mr GUTWEIN** - I will get to that. My understanding is, and I think you made the point, that the number of children that are being managed is relatively level. My understanding is it is a matter of more complex needs. Needing more intensive management would be a reasonable way to put that.

**Mr Bacon** - Does this go directly towards specialised care packages?

**Mr GUTWEIN** - As I just said it is for out-of-home care. Of the \$20 million, \$16 million goes directly into the packages themselves and \$4 million into the department to manage the packages I think would be the best way of putting it.

**Mr Bacon** - Is there a number of packages that \$16 million covers?

**Mr GUTWEIN** - I do not have that information here. It would be fair to say that over time the costs of the special care packages have increased as a result of the more complex needs but that is probably one for Estimates.

I have Ms O'Connor's notes here in front of me so I will deal with those as we go and I can cover some of the matters for Mr Bacon at the same time.

In terms of the prison, I do not have a breakdown of how many north and south including the Launceston Remand.

**Ms O'Connor** - Do you have the statewide number?

**Mr GUTWEIN** - Statewide number by mid-March was 679 accommodated prisoners.

**Ms O'Connor** - And in 2014?

**Mr GUTWEIN** - I do not have a 2014 number.

**Ms O'Connor** - Can you bring that back to the House at some point?

**Mr GUTWEIN** - I am sure that can be provided to the upper House debate. Would you be happy with that?

**Ms O'Connor** - Will you make sure it is given to the upper House for the debate?

**Mr GUTWEIN** - If I make a commitment on this today it will be provided I am certain.

I want to make the point though that whilst the member made a reference specifically to Tasmania, the increasing of the prison population is an Australia-wide occurrence. Without getting into the debate about policy settings -

**Ms O'Connor** - I am sure that ice use has a fair bit to do with that as well.

**Mr GUTWEIN** - I am certain there are a lot of challenges that are being managed, member for Clark.

I wanted to touch on the bushfire allocation - \$35 million. We will not know the total impact of the bushfires on the state budget until we receive the final response regarding the natural disaster relief and recovery arrangements. It will be significant. There is no two ways about that but until we have been through that process and receive the allocations from the federal government the impact on the state budget will not be fully understood.

**Ms O'Connor** - Treasurer, that was not my question. The question was about preparedness and projections for a hotter, drier summer this year and in future.

**Mr GUTWEIN** - What I can speak to is the Government's response in terms of its fuel reduction management program. It is reasonable to make the point that we have committed more than \$45 million over the period 2017-18 to 2020-21 to the whole-of-government program to significantly decrease bushfire risk. This follows three years of initial set-up funding of nearly \$20 million, \$19.5 million. Again, that was an initiative of the new government. There was not a statewide program that was being run under previous governments. You can provide us with some credit there. Through the program, Tasmania is leading Australia in taking a strategic risk-based approach that encompasses both private and public plans. It is tenure blind. There is a whole-of-government approach as far as implementation with Tasmanian Fire Service, Parks and Wildlife Service and Sustainable Timber Tasmania. There are a few notes here that we are one of the most bushfire prone areas in the world. We understand that in this place.

**Ms O'Connor** - Increasingly so. I do not think I have ever heard you say the words 'climate change'.

**Mr GUTWEIN** - I do not think you have heard me say it in this response but now that you are trying to force me to say it, I do not think I will say it, other than to say that I acknowledge there is a significant change in our climate and it is something we need to manage.

**Mr O'Byrne** - I think you just did so.

**Mr GUTWEIN** - In a roundabout way I did but -

**Mr O'Byrne** - You only put a couple of words in between the words 'climate change.

**Mr GUTWEIN** - I did not say exactly what she wanted me to say so I think I win, if there is a win.

**Mr O'Byrne** - We are all losers then.

**Mr GUTWEIN** - Again, I come back to the bill before us. The impact of the bushfires on the state budget will not be known until we have the outcome in terms of the NDRRA.

The \$105 million into health: the shadow treasurer made the point about the inclusion of that funding in the RER and he is correct. In the RER I am certain he is aware that we place the provision across the forward Estimates of \$50 million per year. I want to outline my thinking in doing that.

There is no doubt that the demand that impacted on the health system in 2017 was unprecedented as a result of the flu epidemic. We all recognise that through 2017 demand rose. The reason we have put additional funding into the budget is largely because that demand did not abate. That demand has continued and has meant that rather than the system flexing up and then flexing down to meet that demand and, reasonably, the expectation being that we would have seen an abatement in demand once the flu season had been worked through, has not occurred. We are seeing similar levels of presentations.

Of the \$105 million, \$95 million of that funding was allocated across the THS, primarily to address the cost of additional demand for all health services above that projected at the start of the year. That included \$10.6 million in relation to additional activity delivered throughout the year above the level originally funded, \$84.4 million was provided to address significant cost increases as a result of demand. There was an additional \$5 million for the Royal Hobart Hospital Emergency Department to increase staffing levels to assist in relieving pressure on the hospital and \$5 million was allocated to Ambulance Tasmania to address additional staffing demands.

Regarding your questions about K Block, the expenditure reflects the practical completion time frame of K Block of August 2019. It is based on the managing contractor's latest cashflow and progress claims. That is why that money has been brought forward.

**Mr Bacon** - Do you expect to put more money in the next budget?

**Mr GUTWEIN** - No. The funding that is there for the hospital is sufficient. It means it is a matter of meeting the cashflow of the latest progress claims.

That covers the notes and questions I had taken. I thank members for their contributions and their interest in this matter, which as the member for Greens has said is largely a routine machinery matter that occurs each year.

I commend the bill to the House.

**Bill read the second time.**

**Bill read the third time.**

## **MOTION**

### **Section 19 Return for the September Quarter 2018**

[12.27 p.m.]

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

That the House approve, in accordance with subsection 12(4) of the Public Account Act 1986, additional Works and Services expenditure in 2018-19 for the purposes detailed in the Section 19 Return for the September Quarter 2018.

The motion relates to the section 19 return for the September quarter 2018. It seeks parliamentary endorsement of additional expenditure which has previously been approved in accordance with the requirements in the Public Account Act of 1986. Whilst the act provides the Treasurer with the power to approve additional expenditure during the course of the financial year, it also provides for parliament to subsequently approve this expenditure. This requirement is stated in subsection 12(4) of the Public Account Act.

The September quarter 2018 section 19 return includes two requests for additional funds totalling \$885 000. Approval for this expenditure has been given under section 12(1) of the Public Account Act. These requests for additional funds relate to the following items -

- \$258 000 for Legislature General to replace audio equipment that has failed due to the age of the equipment and the heavy rains that occurred in May 2018.
- a request for additional funds of \$258 000 for this purpose was approved in late 2017-18 but due to contractual delays, these funds were not spent by 30 June 2018. A breakdown of these capital items is summarised as follows:
  - \$132 000 for the audio refurbishment of the House of Assembly and the Legislative Council chambers and \$126 000 for storage of the parliament's audio system; and
  - \$627 000 for the Legislative Council Chamber Occupational Health and Safety Issues and Disability Access project that was not spent in 2017-18 due to delays relating to heritage sensitivities. This amount is offset by savings in 2017-18.

These RAFs were approved by her Excellency the Governor in August 2018. As I have previously said, this motion seeks parliament's approval for the additional works and services expenditure that has been approved under the provisions of the Public Account Act for the quarter ended 30 September 2018. It is a routine budgetary procedure. I call on the House to support the motion.

[12.30 p.m.]

**Mr BACON** (Clark) - Madam Speaker, the Opposition is happy to support this motion on the section 19 return. I have a couple of quick questions largely related to the \$625 000 for OH&S in

the Legislative Council. My understanding is that this project was done over two stages and there are some very worthwhile things that are done here such as disability access and the like, but we want to know a little bit around the reupholstery of members' couches and armchairs, Treasurer, and exactly what it has cost the Tasmanian taxpayer to reupholster the couches and armchairs in the Legislative Council. That is the only question we have. Apart from that, we are happy to support the motion.

[12.30 p.m.]

**Ms O'CONNOR** (Clark - Leader of the Greens) - Mr Bacon, are you suggesting that our colleagues upstairs should not have their chairs refurbished, or is it just a question about the expenditure?

**Mr Bacon** - Just about the expense of what that cost.

**Ms O'CONNOR** - How many metres of red velvet were used?

**Mr Bacon** - We know he is very keen to cut the cloth over there but we didn't know he was up there doing the upholstery as well.

**Ms O'CONNOR** - Madam Speaker, I rise to make brief contribution on the return under section 19 of the Public Account Act 1986 and to get to the bottom of this, pardon the pun. We will support the section 19 return and recognise that there is an allocation made to both the Houses and some of it is carried forward.

There has been an exchange of letters and quite early in your time in the Chair, I raised with you the issue of opposition members having access to Parliamentary Counsel so that we can make sure the legislation and the amendments we bring into this place are robustly drafted. I point out to any member who does not know this that in most parliaments in the Westminster system there is a provision for opposition parties to have access to the parliamentary drafters so that the parliament is dealing with robust legislation. Obviously there is no allocation in the section 19 return because we are dealing with right now and not next financial year, but it would be good to have some indication, if the Treasurer knows, where that capacity might sit. For example, it could sit in the Parliamentary Research Service, I would have thought, but it would be nice to have some update on the request for the Council, and I thank you, Madam Speaker, for your advocacy on that issue.

I wanted to speak briefly about the audio refurbishment and first of all thank everyone who works in the IT section for the extraordinary service they provide and for their patience and forbearance. This section 19 makes a provision for a total of \$258 000 for audio upgrades and I am going to say this because it is my responsibility to do so. I urge our IT department, when it invests in the equipment for audio, to not invest in Hikvision. This building is riven with Hikvision cameras, the company which supplies the security cameras in East Turkestan that spies on the Uighur people and I think, as a parliament, we should not have that equipment in our building. There have been issues raised by security agencies around Hikvision equipment being used in Australia. I strongly ask IT to think about what sort of equipment they purchase, where it is built and to look at this through an ethical lens, because personally I find it appalling when I look at the cameras in this place to know that they are exactly the same cameras that have been used to spy on and persecute the Uighar people in East Turkestan. We had two of them in our offices. They are now gone and I hope we can source the equipment that we use for audio, preferably from an Australian-based company but certainly a company that has a strong ethical foundation and is not

profiting from the oppression and misery of people who are being oppressed because of their culture and religion.

[12.35 p.m.]

**Mr GUTWEIN** (Bass - Treasurer) - Madam Speaker, I will deal with the easy one first in terms of budget requests. All budget requests are being dealt with through the budget process and the Budget will be brought down on 23 May. That process is underway at the moment.

I must admit until that other matter was raised I was not aware of the reasons that had been undertaken nor to the extent it had, but I am advised by Madam Speaker that the changes were to ensure that for the furniture which is not of a contemporary style as we would understand, there have been inserts and additions to make the seating more ergonomic. In terms of the cost, I do not have that figure and I have checked with Treasury but that would probably be a matter that could be explored upstairs when they deal with the section 19 return. I thank members for their support and commend the motion to the House.

**Motion agreed to.**

## **PREMIER'S ADDRESS**

**Resumed from 10 April 2019 (page 83)**

[12.37 p.m.]

**Ms COURTNEY** (Bass - Minister for Resources) - Madam Speaker, I will continue where I left off yesterday evening when I was talking about the forestry industry. Our target remains to double production from hardwood plantations by 2022 and it is very pleasing to see that our plan is working. We are strongly supporting sustainable value-adding products and as a result production, exports, investments, jobs and confidence are all increasing.

The other major pillar of my resource's portfolio is mining. When combined with mineral processing, mining is responsible for over 50 per cent of Tasmania's exports and employs more than 6000 Tasmanians, many of them in regional areas. We are supporting the industry with key initiatives including the mineral exploration investment attraction plan, the exploration drilling grant initiatives and the geoscience initiative program which is helping a mining resurgence, particularly on the north-west and west coasts.

The relocation of MRT staff to Burnie is an important component of the Government's Mining for Tasmania's Future policy. The move is strongly supported by TMEC and we are pleased to be working with the council as a key stakeholder. Positions and resources have been progressively moved to Burnie over the previous term of the Government as part of a four-stage implementation plan. There are currently 11 full-time equivalent staff located in the Burnie office with further recruitment to occur.

I am delighted that the industry is again looking up, with a number of major ventures underway and restarts on the horizon. The Hellyer tailings project involves the reprocessing of the base and precious metal rich tailings produced from the former Hellyer underground mine which closed in 2000. NQ Minerals has refurbished existing infrastructure at the Hellyer mine site and made its first shipment of concentrates out of the Burnie port earlier this year. The company is now waiting on final approvals to construct a new tailings storage facility. This project demonstrates the

economic value that can be generated from previously discarded tailings and should also lead to improved environmental outcomes for this site. The project employs about 50 staff, many of whom worked at Hellyer and live in the region.

Furthermore, I am confident that the owners of the famous Mt Lyell Mine, Copper Mines of Tasmania, is committed to a restart. Having spent more than \$1 million keeping the mine in care and maintenance mode, the company is looking at a further \$80 million to \$100 million in new works to facilitate a potential restart.

The Tasmanian Government is committed to working with the company to assist with the reopening of Mt Lyell and has provided a \$9.5 million assistance package, largely for on-site works aimed at accelerating a decision to restart the mine. In November 2015 the Government also announced a \$25 million assistance package to be made available once mining operations recommence.

There is the Renison Bell Tin Mine employing more than 250 people at Waratah. This long-running mine is now setting monthly production records. Further long-term continued success has been demonstrated at the Rosebery Mine, with production of more than one million tonnes of ore containing zinc, copper, lead, silver and gold. This success feeds success with the zinc mined at Rosebery being sent to the Nyrstar smelter in Hobart, supporting more workers and more families.

Our state's biggest mine at Savage River supports more than 550 employees and hundreds more contractors in the Tarkine, an area that should be celebrated as a multi-use area for our future. Mining can coexist with other activities, including tourism, along with the values of the Tarkine area, just as it has done for generations. Savage River has a confirmed mine life of at least 20 years and further development opportunities are being explored at depth.

I contrast the Hodgman Government's support for the industry with the dark days of the former Labor-Greens government. The 2012-13 Fraser Institute Survey showed that under Labor and the Greens the Tasmanian mining industry had one of the world's highest uncertainty ratings because of the threat of land lockups.

We have come a long way and we have more to do. I look forward to the continued positive trajectory for Tasmania's proud mining industry.

Before I move onto some other areas I will reflect on Dr Broad's contribution yesterday as the shadow minister for resources. While I may have missed it, I think Dr Broad failed to talk about the mining and minerals portfolio areas, which is surprising considering the number of jobs they create across Tasmania, particularly in his electorate of Braddon. It would be very disappointing for those families who are supported by the industry.

I also note some of the erroneous comments he made around STT. He discussed the proceeds that Labor would like to raid from STT after their plantation sale. Dr Broad has not done the maths. Along with the special dividend there was repayment of debt. There is also the need to have working capital, as well as provision for liabilities and a number of other aspects of running a healthy business. Dr Broad is eyeing off the money in this GBE, but the Government is focused on supporting the industry. The member went on to erroneously claim that STT's firefighting capability had been decimated. I am pleased to advise the House that he was wrong. STT advised me that its staff contributed more than 20 000 hours of firefighting effort in the most recent fires and a further 10 000 hours were contributed by contractors.



**Mr O'Byrne** - You know it went for six weeks; he was not saying they did not do any work.

**Ms COURTNEY** - More than 70 per cent of STT staff were involved in the bushfire response -

**Mr O'Byrne** - He is not saying they did not do any work.

**Ms COURTNEY** - either on the fire front or with the incident management team.

**Mr O'Byrne** - Given the deployment was over six weeks you would want those hours to be done, would you not?

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** - Order.

**Ms COURTNEY** - In combination with contractors STT has more than 200 personnel trained and available for deployment for fire management.

I was heartened to hear Dr Broad recognise that the industry wants there to be a long period of stability so the forest industry can rebuild. We completely agree and Tasmanians know that the only way we can deliver that is by having a Liberal government in Tasmania and a Coalition government in Canberra. I asked Dr Broad whether he supports his federal colleagues. I suspect he might, because I know there were a number of state members attending the ALP conference when they announced their policy to sign up for the TFA, have more lock ups and create a duplicated environmental protection agency, which will trample over more forestry jobs in Tasmania.

I urge Tasmanian voters, as we look towards the federal election, to understand that if we want a stable forestry industry, if we want to secure these jobs in regional areas, the safest way to do this and the best way to create certainty for the forestry industry is to ensure that a coalition government is elected in Canberra.

As a proud member for Bass, I want to outline how northern Tasmania is flourishing. The Treasurer has outlined this week the strength of the Tasmanian economy. It is wonderful to see that so strongly in northern Tasmania. There is a feeling of optimism in our community. Over the summer period in particular, people have been out and about at a number of exciting events that are supporting businesses, supporting small businesses, retailers, cafes and accommodation providers across northern Tasmania.

As patron of Cycling Tasmania, the Christmas carnivals are particularly special to me. I know a number of Tasmanians who have participated in these for generations. These events remind me of the hard work put in by volunteering groups and the dedication of our cyclists, coaches and support crews. The Government understands the importance of the Christmas carnival series and the participation of local, national and international riders. We delivered on our election commitment to increase funding for the Sports Carnival Association of Tasmania to \$200 000 per year for three years. This allowed for the continued operation of the carnivals and promotion of the series. SCAT ensures that all sections of the carnival series are looked after, including the range of cycling events and the always popular wood chopping.

The Tasmanian Christmas carnival series attracts world-class athletes, many of whom are Tasmanian. I am proud to support the growth and participation in these and other cycling events. There were a number of other cycling events supported by the Government through the Launceston

Cycling Festival, including the iconic Stan Siejka Classic, which attracted thousands of visitors as well as locals to the streets of Launceston.

**Mr O'Byrne** - A great event.

**Ms COURTNEY** - It is a great event, I agree.

Summer in northern Tasmania also means Festivale. Festivale symbolises the ongoing buoyancy of northern Tasmania. It is a wonderful way for us to celebrate the produce we have. The food, wine, beer, whisky and very talented entertainment we have, many of whom are local performers. This has an obvious flow-on effect for the economy and anyone trying to get a hotel room that weekend would be acutely aware of it. It is a great thing, attracting around 25 000 each year, many of whom go on to further holidays in our regions.

I extend my praise and admiration for the committee and volunteer hours they put in. I recognise past chair Lou Clark for the work she has done, and the new committee led by David Dunn for the work they do supporting their community.

We recently had an exciting event in northern Tasmania, with the Australian Tourism Awards coming to the Gorge. The Cataract Gorge was the backdrop for 800 of some of the most influential and celebrated tourism participants. It was wonderful to not only see this world-class event on a world-class stage, but what made it important to me was that we had so much collaboration across industry. It shows that a small city such as Launceston is world-class and we can hold world-class events. Through collaboration between schools, TAFE, various teaching facilities and almost every restaurant in Launceston it was marvellous. I applaud everyone involved with that amazing event as it was a great way to show off our iconic location and our world-class city.

The figures show that tourism continues to rise. We have a number of iconic destinations in northern Tasmania such as Bridestowe, the Derby mountain bike trails and a number of others, that are supporting 38 000 jobs around the state.

The Government's strategies are encouraging more people to visit regional areas. We are seeing more people visiting regional areas and spending more money there. We are ensuring that these jobs are being created across the breadth of the state.

We also continue to deliver across our communities in northern Tasmania. We continue to progress consultation for the \$20 million Legana Primary School development which I know that the community is particularly excited about. We recognise as a government the need for a new kindergarten to year 6 primary school and it is wonderful to be working so productively with the local West Tamar Council as well as community groups to ensure that we have the right fit for that community which we know will grow into the future.

Among health sector initiatives, the Launceston General Hospital Ward 4K development will provide a new 36-bed contemporary facility which will include Tasmania's first dedicated adolescent mental health unit along with a number of specialist clinics. We are delivering more nursing graduates and more paramedics for northern Tasmania.

We are focused on building stronger communities through clubs and associations. I am proud to be supporting projects that build up the strength of our local groups in northern Tasmania, such as the Launceston Mountain Biking Clubs All Schools Championships, which has seen participation

rise from schools all across Tasmania and it is particularly great to see so many girls participating in that event. There is also the Youngtown Rotary food van which we will all be able to try at Agfest in a few weeks' time and see the great work they do raising funds for the local community. The Scottsdale Bowls Club is getting a new fence. It is wonderful that in all the commitments the Government makes and the way we deliver to communities, it is sometimes the modest contributions that make some of the biggest differences. We see the work this bowls club does raising money for their community and creating a wonderful sense of place and community for many who live in Scottsdale. I am also delighted to be going to Flinders Island this weekend to see the playground we have supported for its refurbishment.

There are a number of other initiatives I would like to talk about but we know that Tasmania is in a better place than it was five years ago. We know that the Hodgman Liberal Government is delivering and we know it will continue to deliver alongside a coalition government in Canberra.

[12.52 p.m.]

**Ms DOW** (Braddon) - Mr Deputy Speaker, I am pleased to present my response to the Premier's Address, which seems like some time ago now. Last sitting the Premier stated that it is an exciting time to be in Tasmania and this is true. Tasmania is a great state with tremendous opportunities before us. Our cities and towns are very different from what they were 10 to 15 years ago, and this brings both opportunities and significant challenges which require a responsive, strategic and consultative approach to government in Tasmania. This requires courage, leadership, the ability to take a political risk, planning for the long term and setting measurable outcomes to meet shared community objectives.

I remind the House today that Tasmanian Labor is committed to working with all Tasmanians, whether they be from Gormanston on the beautiful west coast, Kings Meadows or Sandy Bay, to develop the policies that will address their individual and community's needs and improve the quality of life of all Tasmanians. Our commitment to rural and regional Tasmania and Tasmanians does not begin today with a glossy one-year agenda document. Our commitment to rural and regional Tasmania and its people has been ongoing because we believe in the future of our regions and our regional Tasmanians. We will passionately hold this Hodgman Liberal Government and its approach to government to account, highlighting their weaknesses and advocating strongly for the needs of our local communities. Glossy brochures are not a platform and lists are not a policy. It is a great time to be in Tasmania but I say to the Premier, it is not such a great time for your Government.

I take the opportunity this afternoon to talk a little about some of the challenges I see facing Tasmania's current Government. The first challenge is the Government's inability to move past glossy documents, be they agendas, lists of projects, studies or masterplans. Tasmania is crying out for strategic, coordinated and inclusive leadership. After five years of government this Government has made the following commitment, which I will quote:

Our plan for 2019 - across the whole of government, and by working with those outside of government - is to ensure Tasmanians are skilled up for the jobs of the future and they have the first opportunity to fill those jobs. This is why my Government is pursuing an agenda for strategic growth and developing policies and programs to achieve these objectives.

I ask the question: isn't that what good governments do? My question to the Government is why have you waited so long to make regional Tasmania and those Tasmanians being left behind a

priority for your Government? Right now we are seeing the result of this short-term approach taken by this Government, impacting on the quality of life that we as Tasmanians have enjoyed for generations.

Others before me have spoken of their concerns, and I reiterate those concerns, relating to housing affordability and access, planning for the provision of additional housing, access to health services, both primary and acute, and the ongoing pressure of the cost of living for many Tasmanians. These improvements will take time, cross-sector collaboration and significant investment. These challenges cannot be changed overnight or through a one-year agenda. They take time and many of those challenges are intergenerational.

The second challenge I see for this Government is their current budget position. Despite their rhetoric, things are not looking so golden. During the 2018 state election the Liberals made \$2.7 billion of election promises. Labor at the time warned that these promises were unaffordable, but we were scoffed at by the Liberals. When the state budget was handed down in June last year the Treasurer said:

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.

In December 2018 the Revised Estimates Report was prepared and released during the height of the Tasmanian bushfires. What a different story it has to tell about our golden age. The Revised Estimates Report reveals significant changes to the budget position. The projected surplus for 2018-19 has been reduced to \$7.3 million, a reduction of \$154.6 million in just seven months, leaving little room for unexpected events.

I recently took the time to look at the long-term fiscal principles which are embedded in the Charter of Budget Responsibility Act 2007 and outlined in the Revised Estimates Report. It is worth taking the time to read through those to the House today. These principles are: to manage the state's finances responsibly for the wellbeing of all Tasmanians; to provide for the future of the next generation of Tasmanians; to prepare for unexpected events by building a robust financial position; to improve services to Tasmanians by building a strong economy and efficiently allocating resources to gain the maximum community benefit; to formulate spending and taxation policies that ensure a reasonable degree of equity, stability and predictability; and to ensure transparency and accountability in developing, implementing and reporting on fiscal objectives.

Here within these principles lie a number of challenges for the Government, particularly given the constant demands on our health system and essential services, the recovery from our most recent devastating fires across our state, and those coupled with the changes to the GST and stamp duty revenue. Now, rather than the proclamation of a golden age we hear the catchcry 'cut the cloth', whatever that means.

Yesterday in question time the Treasurer could not guarantee a budget surplus this year or across the forward Estimates and has refused to rule out job cuts to the front line in the wake of his disastrous \$560 million budget black hole. My question to the Treasurer is what does this change in fiscal position really mean for Tasmanians? I believe that the Government has some very difficult decisions to make.

Our economic indicators might be nation-leading but so too are many of our poor socioeconomic indicators in Tasmania.

**Sitting suspended from 1 p.m. to 2.30 p.m.**

## **PREMIER'S ADDRESS**

**Resumed from above.**

**Ms DOW** (Braddon) - Madam Speaker, I will begin where I left off.

Our economic indicators might be nation leading but so too are many of our poor social economic indicators in Tasmania. There is clear dichotomy in Tasmania, the have and the have-nots and right now there is no greater need than to invest in essential services. Decreased revenue for our state will only compromise this further.

In reflecting on our recent fire events, I sincerely thank all of those who worked tirelessly: volunteers, local and interstate emergency service workers, our communities and to everyone involved during the recent fire events. Thank goodness nobody lost their lives in these fires, but homes and shacks in our beautiful world heritage area were threatened and, in some instances, destroyed. That is devastating and I cannot begin to imagine what it is like in those communities during the peak of these fire events.

I acknowledge our local government colleagues for their leadership during these traumatic events and thank local government and state department representatives for coordinating the recovery activities across the state. To you we extend our sincere thanks and gratitude.

In my electorate, the businesses of our beautiful west coast have been hit pretty hard by the necessary road closures during the periods of uncertainty during the fires. I spoke to the mayor about this only a few weeks ago. I encourage people to go back to our beautiful west coast and support our local businesses and their livelihoods.

The next challenge I would like to focus on for this Government is the chaos that surrounds it. We have seen the resignation of two Liberal members. Amazing when you think about it, and this Government has been shrouded in controversy in its second term.

I take the opportunity to wish Adam Brooks well in his future endeavours. I welcome back Joan Rylah, my colleague in Braddon, and new member, John Tucker from Lyons. I cannot help but wonder who will be next from the Government benches and I suspect neither can the Premier. The events of a couple of days ago in the House, further highlights the chaos of this Government.

The final challenge I will talk about is the morale of the Government's public sector workforce. What a brutal battle it has been negotiating with this Government. Considering the recent comments made by some about the productivity of nurses, I say to my colleagues on the other side of the House - and I may exclude Mrs Petrusma because she has worked as a nurse in the past - have you ever worked a day as a nurse in a public hospital? Have you ever faced a wall of fire in a local

emergency, or provided social support to an extremely disadvantaged and traumatised child in a local public school?

Our public servants provide important services to our people. They are our frontline responders. Our people are not benchmarks, business units or components in a manufacturing production line. People are complex and the increasing complexity of chronic disease, socio-economic disadvantage and an ageing population profile, put increasing pressure on our already compromised essential services in Tasmania.

Our nurses are not motivated by money. They are not paid nearly enough as it is and to say that they need to increase their productivity to warrant a pay rise is simply disgraceful. Having worked in the past on a very busy medical ward in Hobart, I share with the House a typical day for a medical ward nurse. It begins with handover at 7 a.m. or 7.30 a.m., followed by showers, bedpans, the pill round, doing your observations on your patients regularly throughout the course of your shift, maintaining their health status and wellbeing, accompanying doctors on their rounds, doing your dressings and the ongoing assessment of your patients. It concludes with filling out the accompanying streams of paperwork which is required of you as a health professional.

Today I extend a challenge to my Liberal colleagues to walk a day in the shoes of a nurse working in our heavily compromised public health system. You do not have the right to criticise the work nor the productivity of our nurses until you have a solid understanding of the work that they do each and every day. I value our public servants and the essential services they provide to our communities. They deserve nothing less than the respect and appreciation of their government and opposition parties, and shame on this Government for not providing this.

I am very pleased to have been provided with the opportunity to talk about my responsibilities as a shadow minister, including as shadow minister for planning which is an important community and government responsibility. Tasmania is experiencing unprecedented growth which is presenting opportunities for different types of investment and associated developments that we have not experienced before in Tasmania. It also comprises the provision of essential services, including transport networks, infrastructure and health and human services.

To date, the Government has not completed the work required on the overarching principles and policies which underpin land use planning in Tasmania. This is one example of a lack of long-term planning and principle setting by the Government. Planning is not just about regulation or a faster, simpler scheme against which to assess a development application. It involves making balanced decisions about the way in which land is used, developed and preserved.

Most people only encounter planning at a local level, for example, when they hear about a new development in their community close to where they live, or across a piece of land they might hold dear or have used as an important public space. They might become aware of a change to the planning scheme that might affect them, directly or indirectly.

At our local level, councils are responsible for planning in their local area. In my experience, as often happens in this House, the vast majority of applications go through a council without the local elected representatives receiving any representations or even having any knowledge about it. There are only those few that are often quite controversial in nature that lead to a little bit of disunity in the community, with different representations from different sectors of the community. That is when sometimes we hear negative stories in the press about the regulatory role of councils in

planning. There is a lot of negativity about planning regulation in this state and the rules about responsibility associated with planning.

Of equal importance is the state policy and planning to guide development and enable Tasmanian communities, councils and government to articulate a vision and a plan for what they want Tasmania to look like into the future, and then to set the rules of the local schemes and the state scheme to ensure that this is realised. I note the Government's key planning activities in its agenda for this year and in particular I look forward to the completion of the long-awaited local planning schemes for local government.

Through the feedback I have received, it appears the local government sector is experiencing planning reform fatigue and the inadequate resources available to it from the state Government to get the required work done has at times been frustrating. The Government must be cognisant of this as it moves to implement the next stages of its planning reform and provide additional support and resource to councils and the Planning Policy Unit in the upcoming state budget.

Planning is an important part of each area of government. It is essential to our future economic growth and it does require a coordinated approach across all levels of government.

We have seen the development of a population growth strategy in Tasmania but still not the completion of state-wide policies for planning and we are seeing the impact of this now with pressure on infrastructure and essential services, particularly in the south which has experienced the greatest population growth.

There has been a lot of rhetoric about the Government's role in shaping Tasmania's economic growth and the so-called good economic management. The fact is we have seen enhanced global economic conditions feeding into national economic growth influencing the Tasmanian economy and this government is not addressing the structural disadvantages that continue to impact on the lives of many Tasmanians.

The recent *Tasmania Report 2018* affirms much of what Labor has been campaigning for in regards to greater investment in essential services and infrastructure. The report highlights that Tasmania is lagging behind the rest of the country when it comes to full-time employment creation and growth, despite the favourable economic climate.

In reading the *Tasmania Report* it is also concerning to see Tasmania's under-employment, long-term and youth unemployment profiles. My colleague, Jen Butler, spoke passionately yesterday about youth unemployment, particularly across her electorate. There are population centres within my electorate of Braddon which also experiencing high levels of youth unemployment.

The report highlights the need for more opportunities for upskilling and retraining for Tasmanians and to acknowledge the present skill shortage that lacks a more detailed analysis of considerations for future funding and delivery methods of vocational education and training in Tasmania. This is a conversation that we need to have in Tasmania. There is unprecedented demand for skilled labour and essential services. This will require governments and oppositions in planning their policy work to be strategic and plan accordingly.

Labor has been around the state, meeting with communities and understanding areas of need. Complementary to this work is the formation of our industry advisory councils. We have already

begun the process of asking the community what they believe is important in order to grow Tasmania's economy and our future workforce. I am pleased to be involved in our Industry Advisory Council on trade, economic development and employment. We have met a number of times.

The group, consisting of key industry representatives from the community, explored ideas to improve access to skilled workers and to ensure continued investment in Tasmania and the growth of local businesses. This group has expressed the need for greater collaboration between industry, education and community, and highlighted the importance of planned infrastructure investment, which supports jobs in regional Tasmania, such as housing and transport services.

Our Industry Advisory Council would also like to see a focus on reducing TasTAFE fees for students. Predominantly though, skills and training have been a large focus of the work that has been undertaken and brought forward as feedback from industry about one of their key areas of concern.

While our industries have had to change significantly over the years to remain competitive in a global economy, our education system has remained largely the same. Perhaps now it is time to start thinking about a post-industrial education system in Tasmania. That is about attributing equal value, and we are starting that conversation in our communities, to the importance of vocational education and training and tertiary education as both important pathways to employment.

I am a passionate regional Tasmanian. I say that all the time in this House and my colleagues in the PLP probably get sick of me saying, but I am. I believe strongly that Tasmania's regions are incredibly important contributors to our state's economic and social wellbeing. Many of the communities in our rural centres still have difficulty accessing essential services. One of the challenges to all of us involved at a state government level is to look at new ways we can improve the level of service provided to our regional communities.

An example of this is linked to the petition I tabled this morning in the House on the withdrawal of bus services between Queenstown and Hobart. The Hodgman Liberal Government has not taken a coordinated approach to engaging in planning with regional Tasmanian communities. Currently some of our regional authorities are doing some very good work in regional development. In Braddon, where I come from, the Cradle Coast Authority has developed its Regional Futures Plan. I was pleased to see funding of \$300 000 in the Premier's speech for the recruitment of additional staff to help implement part of that important plan.

The same can be said about the work being done on city deals in Tasmania and the role local government will play in making sure the key objectives of those city deals are achieved. It is important that our regional population centres also have the opportunity to be involved in collaborative planning across all levels of government when it comes to looking at future built and soft infrastructure in regional Tasmania.

Attracting investment to our regions is important, but it is also reliant on a highly skilled workforce. It is important when we are experiencing good economic times that Tasmania's young people have every opportunity to participate in skills and training in the workforce and the economic opportunity created through that.

Some of the key projects, particularly in my electorate, are energy and farm developments, particularly Project Marinus and the King Island abattoirs. We recently visited King Island. They



have numerous issues and I plan to talk on that later today. Is the Government behind these projects and have they done the workforce planning to support these important developments? When I was the shadow minister for skills and training it took me some time to get a good understanding of the way skills and training funding is allocated. It must be confusing for people to navigate that system. While the initiative of offering small businesses financial support to take on an apprentice and give young people additional opportunities for skills and training and entry to our workforce is well-intentioned, there is the other issue about teaching at TasTAFE, about the number of positions there are and about the viability of some courses. We have talked about that recently regarding electrotechnology and diplomas of nursing. TasTAFE cannot meet that increasing demand. In the second-year agenda, there are a number of skills initiatives outlined but no coordinated approach.

In my electorate, there is TasTAFE, some year 11 and 12 extension programs for key industry sectors, which is good work, as well as the University of Tasmania moving into the associate degree space. That will create a different dynamic in skills and training. There is not a coordinated approach to looking at how we might need to adjust models of education and training delivery, particularly in TasTAFE across the regions. It has been suggested that TasTAFE could work more closely with regional high schools. That might be a good initiative. I am interested in how we can improve that and am making that a focus of the work I do through my regional development shadow portfolio.

I am pleased to be shadow minister for local government. I will have more to say on that at another time.

It is timely that I finish my contribution with the observation that one of the most important qualities a politician can have is the ability to put themselves in the shoes of others in their decision making, whether that be thinking about sitting on a bus for 36 hours with an overnight stop to get to Hobart from Queenstown, whether that be being a nurse emptying a bed pan and providing assistance to people, or whether that be simply about equality. Compassion, inclusion and empathy are critical in today's leadership. We must think carefully about our words and this is epitomised by the actions of Jacinda Ardern, the New Zealand Prime Minister, following recent events in Christchurch.

**Time expired.**

[2.48 p.m.]

**Dr WOODRUFF** (Franklin) - Madam Speaker, I rise to speak on the Premier's Address. Listening to the Premier deliver his address a couple of weeks ago was like being in a parallel universe. The universe that I live in and the universe that is the real world is the one where the United Nations has said the critical decade in front of us gives us just 11 years to dramatically cut our carbon emissions. It is also the universe where a recent massive bushfire in southern, central and north western Tasmania decimated 3 per cent of the state's area, burnt 6 per cent of the World Heritage area and nearly wiped out a number of important regional towns.

The world in which the Premier delivered his address was one in which he lives along with the Liberal Party in Tasmania and at the federal level. He spoke for 35 to 40 minutes without giving a nod to the bushfires which have just happened. He did not mention climate change in any meaningful way. This is a government which continues to live in a world which is not the one Tasmanians inhabit. It is dangerous to continue to deny what is happening around us and to not take this year as a really important turning point for this state from both a budgetary point of view

and an action and planning point of view to set us up as well as possible for the coming decades and centuries where climate has changed and will continue to change beyond our control as well as play our part in mitigating the emissions we are contributing, along with other countries on the planet, that is increasing the level of warming to what many scientists believe is endangering human life and other ecosystems.

When I go into a neighbour's house I can still smell the smoke from the bushfires. I live in Cygnet, across the river from Geeveston, and this summer was very stressful for everyone who lives in southern, central and north-western Tasmania. I fear it is the new norm for us in Tasmania, that summers will be increasingly approached with a level of anxiety and stress. Some people who have had that recent experience will be sensitised to come to the next summer with a level of anxiety which they have not previously felt.

The experience of living through two solid weeks of smoke-filled air is very unusual for Tasmanians. People who lived through the 1967 bushfires were very surprised at how drawn out this fire period was. That was not the experience in 1967. The fire went from the western side of the Huon River, jumped to the eastern side and went to the Derwent just in one day. This was a very different profile of bushfire, and what we have come to understand from Dr David Bowman and other pyroecologists at the university here, and from people overseas, is that this is what we have to adapt and respond to.

What is clear is that we have new and changed threats to wilderness and human settlements. We have an international responsibility to protect our wilderness and we have seen footage from some of the world's most loved, and certainly Tasmania's most well-known wilderness photographers, Rob Blakers and Grant Dixon, incredible photographs that they took of the damage that occurred to the World Heritage Area. In Huon Gorge fire-prone ridges were burnt to gravel and relic vegetation including rainforest was burnt through. The Cracroft Valley, where there are old-growth forests including rainforest, was also burnt through. The rainforest and tall eucalypt there will take centuries to recover, if at all. The Crest Range's old-growth forest is also expected to take centuries to recover, if at all.

There was also fire encroachment at Mount Bobs, which protects the largest surviving forest of Tasmanian endemic King Billy pines and incineration of that paleoendemic stronghold was only avoided due to the absence of a very hot windy day. There was no strategy and no resources allocated that could have averted that global catastrophe if the weather had not changed as it did. The East Picton Valley was an extremely flammable post-logging region with a rainforest understory which has damaged rainforest and tall eucalypt that will take centuries to recover, if at all. The middle Huon Valley had sassafras and myrtle killed that will probably never recover and at Federation Peak the fire burnt to within only a few kilometres of Tasmania's most iconic mountain, a stronghold of King Billy pines and other paleoendemic vegetation.

This was the photographic evidence, and people can have a look at this on the *Mercury* website if they want to have a look for themselves at the damage that has occurred. What we do not have is the emotional evidence of the impact on people's lives and the incredible amount of work, care and kindness that was shown by all the people, paid and unpaid, who responded to that bushfire.

I want to thank all the people who were involved in the fire response, in my experience as a member for Franklin in the Huon Valley, people who worked for weeks. I spoke to one man who worked 23 days non-stop camped on the floor on an inflatable mattress in the fire station at

Geeveston because they did not have enough beds. He was basically sleeping on the concrete floor on a lilo for 23 nights and going out every day to fight the fire.

I spoke to a woman at the Geeveston Fire Station who decided to cook the food each day for the firefighters who came back. She did that work by herself because other people were busy doing other things and every single day she cooked roasts and other meals for the people who came back.

This is the way the Tasmanian community comes together. What brings me hope and spirit is knowing that regardless of our differences and views about how the world is and how we should respond, the next time there is a catastrophic bushfire - and it will come - we will all be together fighting that fire. We all need to reflect on that. We are all affected together by the changes that are happening, which is what gives me great hope that we will find solutions together. Despite the fact that this Liberal Government continues to fail to act in the way it needs to on the threats confronting us, I know that ultimately we will all find the solutions we need to find, because we have to.

Yesterday, 23 fire chiefs from around the country made a very impassioned call for the Prime Minister and the Leader of the federal Labor Party to take action and understand that we must do everything we can to accept that 'climate change is upon us, it is perilous, and we need to do more about it'. They were the words of Bob Conroy, a fire manager. We also had present the former head of the Tasmanian Fire Service, Mike Brown. These people know firsthand the experience of fighting fires. They know much better than any of us that this is a serious change which has happened in their recent lifetime of fighting fires and in the profile of fire, and that has been caused by global warming and the change in climate.

I want to talk about how we need to respond and the action we need to be taking in this state in the next year. The Greens have been thinking about and working on this, and the good news for the Liberal Government is that they can take heart because we have solutions. There are responses we can take. The scientists are telling us that we have a very short amount of time to act, only 11 years. The International Panel on Climate Change produced the report I have in my hand titled *Special Report on Global Warming of 1.5°C* last October. The 90 scientists from around the world who put that together make it very clear that the 1.5°C maximum level that we can possibly reach in terms of the average temperature on the planet and be confident - or at least be comfortable that there is a prospect that humans and ecosystems will be able to survive the way we have done - that level is fast approaching, much faster than we thought only five or 10 years ago.

They have called strongly for us to do everything we can to reduce our carbon dioxide emissions. We have to claw back the use of fossil fuels so that we reach a zero fossil fuel use in 2040 and that we have reduced our emissions to zero by 2040. That means that we should be reducing our emissions by 45 per cent in only 11 years' time.

Climate change is not a theory any longer and it is not a model. It is at the door, it is in the house, it is what is happening now. This is calling for us to respond in a way that we have never done before. It requires a major transformation in many aspects of society, and in the next 10 years.

It is a daunting prospect if you think about that in its totality. What we have to do is pull it apart, piece by piece, and get on with it and solutions are being proposed all the time. The first and obvious contribution that Australia can make is to stop exporting coal, stop digging it out of the ground: 80 per cent of Australian coal goes overseas. We have to stop that completely. There is no sense in making a decision about where to balance the risks and making a decision to continue

to export coal when we know that it is threatening human life and the existence of all ecosystems. For the last three years in Australia, our Australian carbon dioxide emissions have gone up. We need these to be dramatically going down. Clearly, the situation as it is, cannot remain.

At the moment at the federal level we literally have no climate change policy operating. There is no functioning climate change policy in Australia and there has not been for at least six years. There has been a series of revolving prime ministers, all of whom have failed to take action against the coal lobby and against the conservative arm of the Liberal Party, which is committed to coal at any cost. This is what we have to get rid of. We have to get rid of this federal Liberal Government.

We cannot let the Labor Party have a mandate to rule at the federal level because they also are committed to coal. They will not shut the door on Adani. We have to have all parties in Australia making a commitment to end coal mining. That is what the Greens are committed to.

That is what the young people are calling on us to do. They have read the science, looked around the world and they are quite clear that we must feel the fear, in the words of Greta Thunberg, the 16-year-old from Sweden, 'I want you to feel fear. This is a crisis.' Contrast that with Scott Morrison and his comments about coal in parliament, laughing as he held up a piece of coal and said, 'Don't be afraid of it. Don't be scared.' Thinking people are scared but thinking people are also committed to action.

From the leadership that the young people have shown, it is through collective action that we will achieve effective change and we will bring hope and lift the clouds of depression that so many young people and adults are feeling, a sense of paralysis about what to do next which makes many people feel like pulling the doona over their heads. I do not blame them.

It is a lot to take in. That is our job, to open our eyes. It is clear we need a new economic vision and it has to be compelling. We have to be off carbon deposits. Essentially, we are leaving a period that humans have inhabited for a really long time, a nice predictable period with predictable cycles of climate. We are moving into unpredictable water cycles: that is what happens when there is a warmer planet.

We need to end business as usual and that is what was so disturbing about hearing the Premier's Address - it was 40 minutes of business as usual. It was essentially a shopping list of roads, a pre-election shopping list that completely ignored the biggest issues that we face, including the threat of bushfires next summer. It completely ignored the fact that all of our ecological systems in Tasmania, as they are planetary-wide, are in crisis.

I want to talk about the fantastic work that has been done in the northern Midlands of Tasmania by Island Ark and also with the worker scientist from UTAS, the Bushfire CRC, the CRC for Forestry, Greening Australia, and a number of landowners in the northern Midlands. They are working hard to restore and connect the habitat to create a stronghold for the next 50 years and beyond so that some of our most critically endangered animals can still be travelling with us in Tasmania in 2080. That is one of their goals and it is a beautiful goal because it is very clear - we want to have the animals that we have around us here when our children and grandchildren are growing up. They are beautiful but they also contribute to the health of the systems that we live in.

We are just finding out more and more all the time about the little bettongs that are an important part of snuffling and turning over the soil under trees so that the eucalypts can survive for a lot longer than they would otherwise.

**Ms O'Connor** - Same for echidnas.

**Dr WOODRUFF** - Thank you, Ms O'Connor. You are absolutely right.

The work that is being done in the northern Midlands is important. Healthy woodlands have aesthetic value but they also provide an ecosystem service. They give shade and shelter for animals, they reduce erosion and hold the structure of the soil, they improve the quality of water, they control the pests, and they are important for maintaining biodiversity. All of these things are critical for farmers to be able to continue to farm. They are as much about protecting the quality of the soils for agriculture as they are about protecting the integrity of the woodlands themselves. The aim of this work is to try to keep a connective corridor between the eastern and western side of Tasmania. It matters to keep these links and the research that the scientists are doing is practical. It is showing us how we can do that and how we can stop tree decline and the enormous decline in a number of eucalypts species which unfortunately is happening because of the changing climate and the increasing dryness.

We want to have a marine environment which is densely full of marine life which is able to respond and deal with the warming waters that we are already experiencing. Some of the fastest warming waters on the planet are off the eastern coast of Tasmania, so we want to have a marine environment which is as healthy as possible to be able to adapt to those warming waters. Instead, sadly and concerningly, we are hearing that the eastern waters of Tasmania are in a very serious state of crisis. The work from the IMAS scientists released in December makes it very clear that unless we act very fast 32 per cent of eastern coast rocky reefs will be gone by 2021 and that is an incredible loss. That is only in two years' time, and knowing the scientists and that work, that is probably a conservative estimate. It may well be the case that we have already suffered that extensive loss.

There are many reasons but a predominant reason is *Centrostephanus*, or the sea urchin which has come in through the warmer waters and is creating sea urchin barrens. We know that the only effective predator of the sea urchins is the rock lobster, so unless we do everything we can to help rock lobsters to survive and grow to an old enough age to predate upon sea urchins, we are at risk of losing our rocky reefs, and with them will go the abalone and rock lobster commercial industries and the recreational fishing industries for abalone and rock lobster.

This is another huge change which is happening in a large ecosystem in Tasmania and it requires us to take concerted action and have leadership from this Government. The Greens will continue to shine the light on the ineffectiveness of the laws we have in Tasmania to protect our marine environment. Not only do we have an EPA that does not have the legal teeth to be able to go after an oil rig that comes in and get an inspection of the risks and what it carries on it that was sitting in the Derwent for a couple of months, we do not have an EPA that has the teeth to prevent the expansion of fish farms into areas which are clearly not suitable - Storm Bay, for example. We do not have laws that have created a marine farming panel that protects the independence and integrity of scientists, so the decisions made by the marine farming panel are essentially rubber-stamping for whatever the salmon farming industry would like to do and wherever they would like to go.

The other system that needs our concerted attention is the current situation with plastic and waste. Since the Liberals came to government in 2014 the then minister, Mr Groom, had a waste levy sitting on his desk that he could have signed off. Instead, he did not do what all the councils around Tasmania agreed would be a good idea, and he put that aside. We have had another five

years where we desperately need a state-based levy. We desperately need a container deposit scheme in Tasmania. We are the second-last state in Australia to have one. It has been sitting there strongly supported by the community. It is strongly supported by the Scouts and community groups and it will make every difference to reducing the ocean of plastic which is developing and affecting every part of the marine environment filtering down. Microplastics are now found in every part of the benthic layer in birds, mammals and ultimately in human food. This is something we have to take action on. It is sitting here and is something the Greens will continue to push for this year.

We will continue to speak for strong gun laws in this state. We know that we must never weaken gun laws or pander to certain sections of the community who would like to put personal convenience above safety. There are many reasons we must look to keep our strong gun laws. We do not need to go further than what happened here in Tasmania at Port Arthur but we have had recent evidence of New Zealand taking heart from what we did and using our strong Tasmanian gun laws as an example that they have picked up and now have also brought in strong gun laws in New Zealand. We will continue to be the party that fights for strong gun laws in Tasmania.

We will also be the party that continues to speak up for people in the justice system when nobody else cares about them. We believe that the manner in which a society treats its weakest and most defenceless people says everything about the character of that society. We must understand the relationship between providing a house for people and the effect it has on their life.

In conclusion, we are at a critical juncture that demands we have out-of-the-box thinking and not business as usual. It was very depressing to hear the weak address from the Premier a couple of weeks ago when we know that the planet is warming far more rapidly than it can absorb.

Health and housing in Tasmania are catastrophically underfunded which is creating a gap between Tasmanians, those with a house and those without, and that gap is tragically enormous and intergenerationally unjust. It is having an impact on people's lives every day; whether they are personally without a house or living in rental stress, they know somebody who is. It is an example of the importance of working to make sure we reduce that gap because there are many challenges for us as a state and, at its core, we need people to have the basics of life and there are clearly Tasmanians who do not have a house, access to the health services they need when they need it, access to food of the right quality and nutritional benefit and who do not have mental health services when they need them. We need to bridge that gap to prioritise the things that mean the most to people.

The Budget the Treasurer delivers will tell everything to Tasmanians about the things that the Liberals value. I hope the Premier has listened to what has happened in recent times from the firefighters who spoke out, from the children on the school strikes for climate, from the unions who are asking for respect and conditions and salary; that he listens to those people and understands that the budget he delivers must speak to the poorest Tasmanians and the children of the future who will be here sitting in this parliament in 10, 20 and 30 years' time working on the issues of governing for a just Tasmania in a climate which will probably be different from the one we have today. The job of this Government is to deliver a budget for the next year so we can act on the things in Tasmania that matter the most.

[3.19 p.m.]

**Mr SHELTON** (Lyons) - Madam Speaker, I rise to respond to the Premier's Address. Before I start I would like to send my condolences to the Attorney-General, Elise Archer, who, as we know,

unfortunately lost her mother yesterday. Many who have lost a parent feel for her and understand what she is going through at the moment. We wish her and her family all the very best.

I congratulate the Premier on his address, the Cabinet for what it has done over the past 12 months, the vision it has set for Tasmania and the work being done around Tasmania. When you drive around Tasmania and talk to people, everyone understands that the state is buzzing. They are looking forward to the future. Most people can see six, seven, eight or 10 years of growth and prosperity for Tasmania and therefore prosperity for the next generation. It is not through good luck. It is because of good management. I applaud the Hodgman majority Liberal Government for that.

I now have the role of Parliamentary Secretary to the Premier. A couple of areas I will speak about are Brand Tasmania and tourism. There are plenty of good stories happening around the state. You only have to look at the Royal, the work that is being done, K Block and the master plan. It has been difficult. When you rejuvenate an old building that needs to stay as a working hospital there are going to be difficulties. Part of that was because of the procrastination of the previous government, which argued for almost a decade about where to put the hospital. That put us well behind the eight ball when trying to keep up with the health needs of Tasmanians.

There is no better hospital story than the LGH and Ward 4K, the children's ward in Launceston. It is the first dedicated adolescent mental health facility in the state, with specialists to go along with that. Through the work this government has done with its mental health plan, there is significant work to be done.

One of the reasons you need to drive your economy is so you can reinvest in essential services such hospitals, schools and paramedics. St Helens Hospital in Lyons is a \$12.1 million project about to be opened. There has been a community open day at the hospital. People have been able to walk through and have a look at what this Government has been able to do for that area. The old hospital needed upgrading as it had flooding issues. It was a fantastic effort by the Government. A regional hospital was well and truly needed at St Helens.

In the regions having a hospital close by is fantastic, but many of the Lyons residents do not. Therefore, they rely on the ambulance system. We have more paramedics being put on in St Helens, Deloraine, Bicheno, Dodges Ferry, and one outside which is Wynyard. There are more ambulances on the road than when we first came to Government.

The Northern Prison will be a fantastic thing for the north. It will be a great economic driver for the area when it opens.

Good news stories do not always come from spending money. The fires have been mentioned a number of times through this debate. It is not a good news story. The good news story comes from the community pulling together, with 3000 firefighters working on these fires. I will have more to say about the effort of the firefighters in a moment.

One of the good stories from the Premier's Address is Brand Tasmania and the direction the Premier and the Government is taking Brand Tasmania. We know Tasmania is a lovely place. When I go anywhere - I have not travelled much internationally - and I am asked where I am from I say, 'I am from Tasmania'. Not Australia. Not New South Wales. Not Victoria. In Tasmania, an island state, we have the unique opportunity when we go international to brand ourselves as from this lovely little heart-shaped island on the bottom of the mainland. Our state brand is one of our

most important assets. The establishment of Brand Tasmania as a statutory authority is part of the Government's commitment to, as the Premier says, 'Amp up our place branding efforts to ensure that our efforts in this area are properly resourced and sustainable over the long term'.

The new statutory authority, established on 29 March, will be responsible for developing and maintaining, protecting and promoting the Tasmanian brand. Brand Tasmania is the first statutory place-branding authority to be established in Australia and will ensure that we continue to stand out in the crowd and compete in a global marketplace. We know that we have a strong Tasmanian place brand. We also recognise that we have an immense opportunity to do more, to clearly identify and differentiate ourselves from our competitors.

One of the key intentions of establishing the authority is to better coordinate our branding efforts and to make our place brand more accessible to more people. The most contemporary place branding approach encourages, supports, distributes ownership of the place and distributes the ownership of the place brand to more people. It does not just belong to the private sector, but it also belongs to the community sector and across governments. The new Brand Tasmania Authority will be responsible for capturing and promoting a deeper explanation of our unique Tasmanian identity and culture in a way that more clearly differentiates us from our competitors.

It will tell a comprehensive story about what makes Tasmania unique and our reputation and competitive position will be strengthened, which will create even more opportunities for people who live here. This has an economic, social and cultural benefit. Nick Haddow, a highly regarded business innovator and entrepreneur, has been selected as the inaugural chair of Brand Tasmania Authority, supported by a number of other high calibre individuals: Robert Atkinson, Leigh Carmichael, Kim Clifford, Michael Cooper, Philippa Dawson, Sheralee Davies, Jenny Gale, Kym Goodes, Jessica Richmond and Brett Torossi. I can only encourage them from my position to go out there and sell Tasmania and create this brand. We need to strengthen our brand - and I am sure we will.

In my time in local government we always asked ourselves in conversation: we have this unique opportunity, we have a wonderful place in Tasmania, how can we get it out there? Our brand, therefore, is the most significant way of doing that. I commend what the Premier has done to Brand Tasmania and welcome it as an opportunity.

The other point that I mentioned of the Premier's portfolios is tourism and everybody supports tourism. The Hodgman Liberal Government's plan to grow tourism is working. Tourism Tasmania's latest tourism snapshot shows that in the year to December 2018 there were more visitors spending more in the Tasmanian economy compared to the previous year. Visitors increased by 4 per cent to 1.32 million and more than 1.1 million were from interstate, an increase of 5 per cent. Visitor expenditure increased by 5 per cent to \$2.46 billion and total holiday nights increased by 5 per cent to 5.8 million. In the year to December 2018 the number of international visitors increased by 11 per cent to 309 000, according to the Tourism Research Australia's international visitor survey from December 2018. At the same time expenditure increased 13.2 per cent to \$549 million.

Through the policy to get more tourists into regional areas we know that over the last 12 months tourists have been staying longer and spending more in regional communities. Part of that success has been the promotion of a number of things in the state. The Cradle Mountain development is ongoing, the Great Eastern Drive is there and of course the *Spirits*. This Government has done a lot to promote the *Spirits* and get more people on TT-Line, which is fantastic for the state.



It is interesting to travel round the state talking to people, whether it is in the building industry, the tourism industry or in manufacturing. Everyone I talk to is very appreciative of the work this Government has done and in fact is very busy.

As you know I was a TAFE teacher, and I was talking to a mate who I worked with at the TAFE college the other day. We were talking about apprentice numbers, and last year through the increased economic activity there had been a significant increase in the automotive area with the number of apprentices coming through automotive up by nearly 100 on the year before. Eighty something, I believe he said. The process in apprenticeship is that students are signed up for their jobs and then sign up for TAFE. At this point, half way through April, he indicated that the numbers look almost as good as last year. There are people with the confidence and I am sure that with the increased bonuses provided by the federal government through the budgetary and election process, and the \$4000 they can get from the state, that even more apprentices will be coming on board. There is lots of work out there to do.

Listening to the previous speaker, I found that I agreed with something Dr Woodruff said. When she first started her contribution, she indicated that she must live in a parallel universe to the Premier and now I understand why I do not think like her. She lives in a parallel universe. When I am talking to people in what I call normal land they often wonder why and how the Greens think this. I will be able to explain to them now that they actually live in a parallel universe. I heard it from one of their member's mouths. That explains a lot.

**Mr O'Byrne** - Are you talking about us or the Greens?

**Mr SHELTON** - The Greens indicated that initially, yes.

On a serious note, I need to talk about the fires through regional Tasmania this summer. It has been devastating to many regional communities. We have experienced the largest fires in Tasmania since 1967, greatly affecting the Central Highlands, Derwent Valley regions and in my own electorate and also down in Huon Valley and on the west coast. As a result, residents of these areas have been through a really tough time but it is heartening to see that these local communities all around Tasmania have pulled together when in need. The resilience is a credit to them and all of us, and I particularly admire everybody who has come through the process and out the other side with a positive on what has been going on.

The minister has indicated that there will be a review and that lessons have to be learned from this fire season. I spoke to a number of people, particularly from the Miena region, who were protecting their own land or assisting the firefighters. Others were working with colleagues, friends and owners of properties in the Miena area - whether it be farms or individual shacks - to help protect and look after these properties. It went on for a period of a few weeks and through that few weeks there were a number of days - three or four different days - where the weather conditions became so bad that anything could have happened. Fortunately, through wind changes, the efforts of the volunteers and other factors, no lives were lost and very few structures were lost as well. The Tasmanian Fire Service personnel - both career and volunteers - have worked extremely hard in trying circumstances and I can only say thank you to those more than 3000 personnel. They were in the field for many days and nights, protecting residents and communities from these awful fires. Remaining stoic in the face of danger every day is a testimony to your dedication to the service, which normally garners very little thanks. Everybody has thanked those people and I do the same.

How do we stop this? We have heard from the Greens about climate change. Over my lifetime - and, unfortunately, I believe that my lifetime is the longest lifetime in this Chamber now - I have seen the weather and climate changing but it is not as if it has not happened before. It might happen more frequently in the future, but I can recall when I was first employed at the TAFE college and as a 21-year-old I came down to Hobart and was enrolled in a Train the Trainer program. The Train the Trainer program was a program put together for people in the TAFE college who were starting off to get the initial skills that were needed. I stayed at Drysdale House and the course was at some university buildings on the bottom end of the Brooker Highway just before you get to the ABC roundabout. I believe they are still university buildings on the left-hand side, the sea side. It was early February and I distinctly remember walking out and down the steps and on to the Brooker. It was a hot day in February with one of these northerlies that blow. For a 21-year-old coming down to Hobart for the first time, when you come from where I come from, you do not get hot northerlies but when I walked on to the Brooker Highway and turned in to this hot northerly, it almost took your breath. That is a vivid memory that I have today, and that was in the 1980s and it must have been high 30s at the minimum.

We are not talking about days that do not exist or have not existed in the past. I understand that the 1967 bushfires had similar issues in temperature and when a fire is declared catastrophic in general terms you get a westerly or a north-westerly blowing significant winds on a very hot day and that can happen any summer we come across. In fact if we go back in history -

**Dr Woodruff** - So you don't agree with the 25 firefighters who spoke about it yesterday? You think they're wrong?

**Mr SHELTON** - It can happen any time. Whether we have climate change or not, we still have to manage fires. We have already talked about the 1967 bushfires in Hobart. It started on the north-west side with a northerly blowing; you basically cannot stop it in horrific conditions. In catastrophic conditions you cannot stop a bushfire. You have only to look at the history of Port Arthur. In the late 1890s, Port Arthur was burnt out twice, once in 1892 and then in 1897. Coming from the Dunalley area, if ignition happens with a northerly blowing, they are catastrophic conditions and we are going to have a fire that creates serious damage. What we have to do is minimise that opportunity to create serious damage and the only way to do that is to reduce the fuel load.

I have heard the Greens talk about what we have to do in the TWWHA and what we have to do to manage bushfires. I have to compliment the Attorney-General on what she was saying the other day. We have a process in place called Climate Action 21 which has \$4 million for some burns and so forth in the TWWHA and other areas. I am going to read into *Hansard* some work that has been done but you cannot ignore that when the TWWHA was created people believed you could put a line around a particular piece of ground and leave it and it would be safe. It has never been safe. The old-timers tell me, and have told me for years, that one day there will be a fire go through the central highlands. They have seen it before, they know what goes on and they were right. It started on the north-west side of Miena. The weather became horrific and those days when the people fighting the fire at Miena were under most stress was when the days started to warm up, there was a strong northerly blowing and it could have gone anywhere. The only way you can protect these and the other significant areas in the TWWHA is to reduce the fuel load in the other areas. We know that the fuel load over the centuries and millennia has been managed by the Aboriginals of Tasmania. We know that because of research being done and that they used the firestick method to reduce the fuel load.

I would like to talk briefly about a book called *The Biggest Estate on Earth* by Bill Gammage that covers all of Australia but has significant reference to Tasmania. He talks about when the first Europeans came to Tasmania and what they thought of the area. People like to think that if you lock it up and put a line around it then it is natural. It was not natural. It was managed by the Aboriginals. This is from the introduction to the book *The Biggest Estate on Earth* by Bill Gammage, how the Aboriginals managed Australia:

Across Australia early Europeans commented again and again that the land looked like a park. With extensive grassy patches and pathways, open woodlands and abundant wildlife, it evoked a country estate in England. Bill Gammage has discovered this was because the Aboriginal people managed the land in a far more systematic and scientific fashion than we have ever realised.

For over a decade Gammage has examined written and visual records of Australia's landscape. He has uncovered an extraordinary complex system of land management using fire and the life cycles of native plants to ensure plentiful wildlife and plant food throughout the year.

Aboriginal people spent far less time and effort than the Europeans on securing food and shelter and now we know how they did it. When you look at some of the photographs here - and we even have a print of John Glover on the wall - if you look beyond the picture, you can see that there is no way known in the time Europeans have been here that they could have cleared the land like the illustrations or the diagrams show. The fuel load was always managed by the Aboriginals.

The next people who moved into the central highlands and the TWWHA to manage that area were the graziers who brought sheep up over the highlands and in order to manage that, they learned from the Aboriginals that you need to burn off the gullies and keep the brush down and keep the native grasses growing so the understorey can come through and get rid of the kerosene bush that is there. That process continued for a number of years until we got to the point where we put it in a world heritage area, into the TWWHA, and then basically we have not managed it properly and now we know and understand. Through the efforts of the minister, Parks and Wildlife are starting to go back through the process of looking at that and the issues of fire management in the TWWHA. It all has to be based on how the Aboriginals managed that process over literally tens of thousands of years.

**Dr Woodruff** - The Aborigines didn't plant incendiary monocultures in a band of about 10 kilometres wide of *Eucalyptus nitens*.

**Mr SHELTON** - The Greens start harping. When Ms O'Connor, the Leader of the Greens, made her contribution she talked about putting the fires out straight away, and that is a good strategy, there is no doubt about that. She indicated that Grant Dixon and Rob Blakers had done some research, and I understand there are some photos around, and they have come back with some recommendations that teams of remote firefighters be put in place, that a fleet of water bombers be purchased so we can put these fires out straight away and we have real-time thermal sensing on fixed-wing aircraft - that is a good idea and I believe they actually do it now - and that night-time and early morning firefighters are put in place.

I am suggesting that the first thing we have to do is manage the fuel load, whether it is inside the TWWHA or on private or public land. That will prevent a number of things from happening. If a fire does get going, it limits the intensity of the fire and therefore what is likely to happen. The

Greens go on about protecting these special places in the TWWHA but there are a lot of special places in the TWWHA that have not been burned before, because the Aboriginals and then the early settlers in the central highlands managed the fuel load. What we have now is this build-up of fuel load there and when we get a horrific day with hot conditions the intensity is so great that it will burn over previous land that has never been burned before.

### **Time expired.**

[3.49 p.m.]

**Ms HOUSTON** (Bass) - Madam Speaker, it is a little over a year since I was elected to this House. In that time I have done a lot of kilometres, met a lot of people, listened to their stories, read a lot and learned a lot about my electorate. While many Tasmanians are doing well, many others are not. This is not the golden age for all Tasmanians, certainly not for the many Tasmanians who are being left behind.

There is a significant inequality across my electorate. The socioeconomic index for area, or SEIFA, of disadvantage measures the relative level of socioeconomic disadvantage based on a range of census characteristics. It is a good place to start to get a general view of the relative level of disadvantage in one area compared to another. The index is derived from attributes that reflect disadvantage such as low income, low educational attainment, high unemployment and jobs in relatively unskilled occupations. A higher score on the index means a lower level of disadvantage, while a lower score on the index means a higher level of disadvantage. Australia has an overall score of 1001.9, Tasmania scores 957, and Launceston, the major centre in Bass, scores 936. The region of George Town scores 857. The top three scoring suburbs in Launceston all score above the national average of 1001, whereas the three most disadvantaged suburbs, all in Launceston's northern suburbs, score less than 746, with the lowest scoring under 600. This not only demonstrates that some are being left behind but that disadvantage has a geographic location.

Around 25 per cent of Tasmanians live in poverty. That is around 120 000 Tasmanians living on less than \$433 a week. Poverty is compounded by a lack of affordable housing and lack of access to reliable transport that can get people with limited resources to services, training and work. This is further complicated by social stigma, prejudice and exclusion. Poverty may be exacerbated further still by low literacy levels and poor physical or mental health. This is particularly true of regional areas where access to services is limited by a lack of transport to get to services. These are the sorts of challenges that face many Tasmanians.

We are in the midst of a health crisis. Many in this House will be aware that I have spent a good deal of time in our hospitals in recent months. The first thing I must say about our health system is that many of the people working in it are exceptional. They are dedicated, professional, committed and compassionate but they are stretched to their limit. In fact I believe that many aspects of our health system are being held together by the determination and goodwill of those working at the front line.

I have seen the impact of the health system crisis with my own eyes. One particular experience comes to mind. One Saturday morning I attended my local emergency department. There were only a few vacant seats in the waiting room, several people were lying on the floor at the back of the room and there was a line-up at the front desk. I quickly learnt that every cubicle inside was taken and that there were patients on trolleys overflowing into the hallways. Other patients were being examined sitting on plastic chairs in the corridor. Several ambulances were queued and the day had hardly begun. The emergency department only got busier as the day wore on. They were

short-staffed and a number of staff I spoke to told me they had already worked a double shift and were not going home yet.

There were not enough beds on the wards for the numerous people who needed one and had arrived well before us, some of whom told me they had been there for a day or two. Some were still in the emergency department when we left for the Royal Children's Hospital the next day. I was informed that this was not a one-off situation but was becoming the norm. Fixing this should be the number-one priority.

Aside from the issues in our emergency rooms, Tasmanian women are being failed by a lack of accessible termination services. Women in Tasmania face many barriers accessing termination to pregnancy services. If a woman needs a surgical termination of pregnancy and lives in the electorate of Bass, she has to go elsewhere and incur all the costs of travel and accommodation to stay away at least overnight in order to have a surgical termination. This is not accessible health care and is not fair. Where is the statewide service that Tasmanian women were promised? This service should and could be provided in public hospitals and only then would it be truly accessible. Making this happen should be a priority.

Madam Speaker, health will always be Labor's number-one priority. This Government is not prioritising health. The Government is not listening to doctors, nurses and health professionals and meanwhile the health crisis continues to get worse and Tasmanians continue to suffer. We know this Government has a \$100 million black hole and they plan to spend even less on health next year. This cannot lead to better outcomes for Tasmanians. Our emergency departments are at breaking point; I have seen it with my own eyes. Sick Tasmanians are trapped in hospital hallways for hours because there are no beds, mental health patients cannot get treatment when they need it, ambulances are queued for hours and patients and staff are suffering. This can only be remedied by prioritising health and committing additional resources in the long term.

Tasmanians need secure work for fair wages. Unemployment, underemployment and a lack of access to training are all issues for my electorate. Labor's focus is on creating more secure full-time jobs for Tasmanians. Full-time employment allows people to build lives in Tasmania, to buy a home, to raise a family and to live a full and productive life. Currently many Tasmanians cannot get a job and those working often cannot get enough hours to achieve this. We want to see more young people gaining the satisfaction of learning skills to get them a job and allow them to access the opportunities that a job provides. Youth unemployment levels in Tasmania are at 15.1 per cent and among the worst in the country. This translates to around 6500 young Tasmanians actively looking for work. In fact Tasmanian young people are less likely to have a job than in any other state. This is happening while the Government is failing to properly invest in TAFE and therefore denying young people the opportunity to obtain the skills needed to gain employment.

Even those Tasmanians in employment are doing it tough. For many there are not enough hours of work to make ends meet and the cost of living continues to increase while wages stand still. The Government has failed to resolve the public sector wage dispute. Nine months after negotiations started they are still demanding teachers, firefighters, nurses, park rangers, paramedics and allied health workers take a real wage cut in exchange for stripping away their conditions. The only way to resolve this is for the Government to genuinely negotiate in good faith and that has not happened yet.

Housing and homelessness are a significant issue in my electorate. In Bass the waiting lists for social housing are long and new properties are a long time coming. Much of the ageing social

housing stock has fallen into disrepair, mostly due to a lack of maintenance. Regular repairs are not carried out. Leaking roofs, damaged guttering, broken windows and faulty heating are not mended in a timely manner. Houses that are fit to live in can sit vacant for long periods of time and end up vandalised or burnt out. Burnt-out houses are a loss to us all. This destruction destroys assets and houses which could be homes for some of the 3200 families on social housing waiting lists. This negatively impacts the whole community. These acts are destructive but also cause fear among residents.

After five years of this Liberal Government housing is out of reach for many Tasmanians. The housing summit resolved nothing. There are more than 3000 families remaining on waiting lists with more than a year to wait. Rental prices have exploded. The rent on a very modest three-bedroom house in Launceston's northern suburbs averages \$300 a week now. Homeless rates have risen 21 per cent. It is unacceptable that on any given night 1600 Tasmanians are sleeping rough and hundreds more are in temporary, insecure and unsafe accommodation and there is no end in sight. Tasmanians were promised 900 new affordable homes by the middle of this year as part of the Affordable Housing Strategy but this Government will not deliver anything near that.

Community safety is an issue often raised with me by constituents. Residents in some suburbs are being terrorised and police lack resources to adequately address the problem. In some suburbs in my electorate empty houses have been vandalised, public property including infrastructure repeatedly damaged, and social housing burnt out. Numerous houses have been damaged by fire while they sat empty for extended periods of time. These houses are empty while thousands of families sit on waiting lists desperately in need of a home. Because of the damage to property and the rampant antisocial behaviour, long-term residents tell me they are fearful.

I have been approached by a number of constituents concerned about the increase in crime in my electorate. Everything from hooning to home invasions, shootings, violence of all kinds and property crimes have all risen recently. I am informed that much of this is fuelled by an ice epidemic, an epidemic that rages on and hurts entire communities. Police are doing their very best to tackle crime but it is apparent they lack the resources to do much more than be reactive. They need more resources to have any hope of reducing crime. I cannot help but wonder what became of the Government's war on ice. Where are the specialist ice investigators to stop this scourge destroying our communities?

It is obvious that child safety is still not a high priority for this Government. The lack of resources allocated to child safety by the Government is a clear indication of the priority it places on children at risk in our community and the children who are entrusted to the care of the state. Data released on 5 April showed that 280 Tasmanian children have not been allocated a child safety officer to ensure they were not at risk. Nor was there anyone providing oversight to ensure these children were receiving quality care. Recently released information confirmed by staff earlier this year that the majority of reports to Child Safety are not investigated in an appropriate time frame and yet nothing has been done to ensure these children are protected. This data and the report on government services released earlier this year confirms that Tasmania is now one of the worst performing states in the country when it comes to child safety response time and investigations.

Investigations into the vast majority of reported cases of children at potential risk are not launched until 29 days or more after they are received. Let that sink in: a month before there is an investigation into reports of children being at risk. It is difficult to believe that it gets worse from here but it does. Only 20 per cent of reports were responded to within one week in Tasmania; in 2017-18 only 20 per cent. Additionally, investigations were not carried out in a timely fashion.

Only 20 per cent of investigations were completed within a month during the same time period with the vast majority taking up to three months or even more to resolve. This is an extremely dangerous situation. Too many Tasmanian children at risk are not receiving the support they need. More child safety officers are required but this plea has gone unheeded. Instead, the Government has focused on other priorities. Genuine support for children and families has not improved. The lack of care demonstrated by the Government in the children's portfolio is disappointing. The only remedy: more resources, more child safety officers.

Labor has spent the year since the election strengthening our connection to community and building relationships. Labor believes in a Tasmania that is a beacon for fairness for everyone that requires a different set of priorities to the ones this Government has.

[4.03 p.m.]

**Mrs PETRUSMA** (Franklin - Minister for Disability Services and Community Development)  
Madam Speaker, I congratulate the Premier on his 2019 Address. As the Premier outlined, under his strong leadership, Tasmania has captured the attention of the world with an envied reputation for our unrivalled natural environment, our premium grade products and excellence in education, science and research. This is Tasmania's time to shine. With such strong growth, inevitably comes challenges. Our Government will grasp the challenges, as we likewise do all the opportunities, as we aim for strategic growth so that more Tasmanians across every region can share in our state's prosperity.

As a proud member of the Hodgman Liberal Government, it is an honour and privilege to be back for the second year as a member of this, the Forty-Ninth Parliament of Tasmania. I acknowledge my previous parliamentary colleagues, Adam Brooks and Rene Hidding, for the deep, heartfelt and passionate commitment they had for their respective electorates of Braddon and Lyons. I welcome back my wonderful parliamentary colleague, the member for Braddon, Joan Rylah. Braddon will be well served by Mrs Rylah in this parliament. She has always demonstrated her commitment to working hard for her electorate and I am looking forward to working with her again. I also welcome the member for Lyons, John Tucker, MP. Mr Tucker may be the newest face in this Tasmanian Parliament but he is already well-known in the Break O'Day community in his role as a councillor. He is an important part of our team as we continue to deliver for Tasmanians and for his electorate of Lyons.

I acknowledge the Premier for his leadership, loyalty and friendship, as well as for being a wonderful colleague in the great electorate of Franklin for over nine years now. I thank him for all he does as he continues to lead this Government through even more exciting days ahead.

A parliamentary career is a demanding one. No one knows that more than the family and friends that surround you. I am very grateful to my number one supporter, my husband, Tim, my four children and all my grandchildren. I would not be here without their love and encouragement, and I am always conscious of the many sacrifices they have to make on a daily basis to allow me to have a career in public life.

Thanks to my electorate and ministerial staff without whom I could simply not do this role; likewise, all the wonderful Franklin members of the Liberal Party, as well as the fabulous staff in Communities Tasmania and Aboriginal Heritage Tasmania.

I especially recognise the residents of the Huon Valley in my electorate of Franklin who recently were severely tested by bushfires. Tragically, due to the sheer scale and ferocity of the

fires, some properties were unable to be saved. I pay tribute and give my grateful thanks to the Huon Valley Council, the wider community, and to the efforts of our emergency services and all the volunteers who, through their commitment and diligence ensured that no lives were lost. I also acknowledge and applaud the fact that we saw the best of the wider community, government, community sector organisations and the business community all coming together and working in tandem to contribute all their efforts to help the Huon Valley get through what was many weeks.

There are always lessons to be learned after major fire events and I welcome the Premier's announcement that the best way to do that is through an independent review by the Australasian Fire and Emergency Services Authorities Council with submissions from members of the public and interested parties all welcome and very much encouraged. The four-week consultation period closes on 3 May 2019 and the final review is expected to be delivered to the Government by July this year.

A confident economy grows on the back of a strong, stable government - one that knows how to manage its finances, a government that invests wisely in the services that people need and deserve and a government with strong, decisive leadership and a plan for the future. This Government is focused on the opportunities before it. We know there will be challenges, there always are, but we are also quick to meet them head on because we have had a strong and clear plan that we are focused on delivering. We are delivering on health and education services, working to keep families and communities safe, and keeping pressure on the cost of living so that we can afford to live life the way we want to.

As a member for Franklin, I am also excited to see the raft of measures being implemented to deal with traffic congestion in Hobart as people from both sides of the river in my electorate need to get into and often through the city to get to their work, to drop kids off at school, or just to participate in normal daily activities.

It is also an honour to be minister for the vital roles of Disability Services and Community Development, Aboriginal Affairs, Women, and Sport and Recreation.

With regard to Aboriginal Affairs, in our first term of government under the Premier's stewardship, we focused heavily on resetting our relationship with the Aboriginal community. Over the last year, I have been privileged to continue the work that the Premier started and I have been so fortunate and blessed to meet so many members of Tasmania's Aboriginal communities. All have been exceedingly gracious with their time and so very generous with the knowledge that they have shared and I have greatly valued and appreciated their genuine efforts to work with this Government so that together we can make a real difference for more Aboriginal Tasmanians.

Together we have achieved so much. Today, more than ever, we are continuing to deliver on our commitment to reset the relationship with Tasmanian Aboriginal communities. We are focused on improving the social, cultural and economic outcomes and to promoting greater understanding and acceptance of Aboriginal culture. That is because we have a genuine desire to make a positive difference - a true difference that recognises Tasmania's remarkable 40 000 years of Aboriginal heritage and culture and one that points to a brighter future for Aboriginal Tasmanians.

One of our most significant achievements over the last five years was the landmark constitutional recognition of Aboriginal people in Tasmania. For the Government and more broadly for the Parliament and community, it was a proud day to introduce a clear statement of



acknowledgement of the first Tasmanians in our constitution. As profoundly important as this initiative was, it was just one step on our long road to true reconciliation.

We have since taken other important steps like introducing a new approach to Aboriginal eligibility. We know that not all Aboriginal communities see eye to eye and recognising these sensitivities was a very important symbolic statement by the Government to say to Aboriginal Tasmanians right across the state that we recognise each and every one of you. This has not always been so in the past which led to the perverse situation of some Tasmanian Aboriginals being recognised by our Commonwealth but not by the state of Tasmania which needed to be rectified.

Other important steps in the reset include our reviews of the dual naming policy and the model for returning land and to explore more joint land management arrangements.

We want to see more dual naming because of its vitally important contribution and role in the broader community's understanding of Aboriginal history and culture in Tasmania. Assigning Aboriginal names to Tasmania's features and places also assists in preserving the language and culture of our First People and recognises their continued connection to country, land and water.

The Government is committed to reviewing the land return model and joint land management arrangements as an important part of our reconciliation process, both in creating economic and tourism opportunities for Aboriginal Tasmanians as well as helping to maintain cultural connections to country, land and water.

We are also committed to the Closing The Gap refresh, which will increase efforts to close the gap and disadvantage between Aboriginal Tasmanians and the wider community and initiatives to help reduce family violence.

We are focusing on improving employment opportunities and career development for Aboriginal Tasmanians within the State Service. The Aboriginal Employment Strategy will improve recruitment and retention and identify stronger pathways for Tasmanian Aboriginal people to engage with employment opportunities.

This work is being undertaken as part of the Tasmanian State Diversity and Inclusion Policy Framework and we are very proud to support this work. We are also close to finalising the Tasmania Indigenous Procurement Policy. Increased indigenous economic participation will lead to improved outcomes for both Tasmanian Aboriginal people and the broader economy.

The Tasmanian Government is also committed to supporting the growth and sustainability of Aboriginal employment and enterprises as part of our commitment to Closing The Gap. In partnership with Aboriginal communities, enhanced resources and training have also been developed to support teachers to deliver the history and cultures component of the Australian curriculum with a focus on Tasmanian Aboriginal people.

This new outstanding education curriculum is already creating greater understanding and respect for Tasmanian Aboriginal people by acknowledging past injustices and valuing 40 000 years of history and culture. It is also enabling the Tasmanian Aboriginal voice to be brought into our schools and is accessible to all.

As important as our pledge to reset our relationship with Aboriginal people is our steadfast commitment to the protection of Tasmania's Aboriginal heritage, which is why in 2017 we made significant amendments to what was then the Aboriginal Relics Act 1975.

The former act, now renamed the Aboriginal Heritage Act 1975, was an unfortunate reflection of the way Aboriginal people, their history and culture has been treated for far too long. The amendments in 2017 addressed some of the most outdated and problematic elements of the old act and were seen as a positive step forward.

The change of name, the removal of the offensive cut-off date for the creation of Aboriginal heritage and a significant increase in penalties for unlawful interference or damage to Aboriginal heritage were all important first steps in moving towards more contemporary legislation.

A requirement of the act is that a review be undertaken within three years of commencement of the act and a report on the outcome of the review be tabled in Parliament within six months. In other words, by February 2021. We have commenced work on this review and have commenced consultation with Aboriginal communities and other key stakeholders. A discussion paper will be released later this quarter. The Aboriginal Heritage Council will be a critical source of advice during the course of the review and I place on the record how much I have appreciated working with the members of the Aboriginal Heritage Council and for their strong commitment to protecting 40 000 years of Aboriginal heritage.

I feel blessed to continue looking after Community Development. Community Development has the aim of building community capacity, enhanced access and participation and to support individual and sector development for carers, children and young people, migrant and multi-cultural communities, volunteers, older persons, men's sheds, women and girls, LGBTI and people with a disability.

I am delighted that in my portfolios I am fortunate to work with the respective peak organisations as well as key government advisory groups, including the Tasmanian Women's Council, the Minister's and Premier's Disability Advisory councils, the LGBTI Whole-of-Government Reference Group, the Carer Issues Reference Group, the Multicultural Reference Group, the Family Violence Consultative Group and the Aboriginal Heritage Council.

Each of these key reference groups and their members provide invaluable feedback and advice and I very much look forward to working with them as we continue to deliver instrumental bodies of work in these respective areas.

Over the next three years we will also be investing more funding into the community development peak organisations, including the Council on the Ageing Tasmania, the Multicultural Council of Tasmania, Volunteering Tasmania, Carers Tasmania, the Tasmanian Men's Shed Association and the Youth Network of Tasmania. In the 2018-19 budget all these peak bodies' core funding was increased to \$110 000 per annum. I am delighted that in 2019-20 the Hodgman Liberal Government will provide annual indexation to these peak bodies' core funding. This is the first time that indexation has been provided to these peaks and is a well-deserved recognition of the importance of these peak bodies for the vital services that they provide to the Tasmanian community.

The Hodgman Liberal Government is a proud supporter of our grassroots organisations, which is demonstrated through our strong investment in programs and facilities that are much needed

across Tasmania. The Men's Sheds Association is a very important community organisation and there is no stronger supporter in Tasmania than the Hodgman Liberal Government, especially through the TMSA grants program, which supports the sustainable development of men's sheds in Tasmania. In 2018-19, 33 sheds shared in \$125 000 in funding, delivered to all corners of the state, from King Island to Zeehan, St Helens and Huonville. Men's sheds are a valuable community asset to the state and ideally placed to improve mateship and the health and wellbeing of Tasmanian men. Whether it is passing on skills and knowledge to other members or training younger people on how to use tools safely and correctly, the contributions that our men's sheds make to our local communities is invaluable.

The Hodgman Liberal Government is committed to working in close partnership with the community and for the community to build an inclusive, accessible and supportive island that empowers all Tasmanians to thrive and to get the most out of life. This is reflected in *Accessible Island: Tasmania's Disability Framework for Action 2018-2021*. This sets out the actions the Tasmanian Government will take to help make it possible for people with disability to participate in all aspects of community life. In regards to disability services, the Government, over four years, is investing more money on people with disability than ever before with a massive \$982 million in the 2018-19 Budget and forward Estimates. This includes \$878.7 million in cash and in-kind supports over the forward Estimates to deliver on our commitment to the NDIS. As shown in the 2018-19 Budget Tasmania is also fully budgeted for its future NDIS funding requirements, which from 2019-20 onwards is a fixed contribution under the full scheme arrangements, which for 2019-20 is \$233.3 million, again fully funded.

This is because under the heads of agreements, states and territories agree to make a capped fixed contribution to the NDIS based on population share. It is only the Commonwealth's contribution that fluctuates. All participant plans remain fully funded to provide the reasonable and necessary supports that they need to achieve their goals in accordance with the NDIS act. Participants will actually receive an increase in funding for their individual plan from 1 July 2019 due to the \$850 million injection to grow the NDIS services market and to increase the choices available for NDIS participants. This will assist disability service providers as well.

The NDIS is changing the way that people with disability are able to participate in the broader community. It is providing people with disability greater choice and control over their disability supports and assisting them to achieve their goals and aspirations with all eligible Tasmanians aged 0 to 64 now having access to the scheme.

Regarding Tasmanians who will not be getting individualised support under the NDIS, it is under the Information Linkages and Capacity Building Framework that all people living with disability in Tasmania, their families and their careers are connected to the broader system and support, including mainstream and universal services. The ILCs were recommended by the Productivity Commission as part of the tiered NDIS approach so that all people with disability across Australia are connected in some way to the NDIS. Anyone who does not have an NDIS plan can have access to ILC supports, which was a recommendation of the Productivity Commission to ensure that all Australians with a disability can be a potential beneficiary of the NDIS. Under the NDIS we will have 10 600 Tasmanians who get individualised funded support, but the ILCs are there to meet the remainder of the need including access, information and referral to the mainstream and universal services which will be there to support these Tasmanians.

The NDIS is changing the way people with disability are able to participate in the broader community. It is providing people with greater choice and control over their support and is now

open for Tasmanians aged 0 to 64. It does have its challenges; however the Hodgman Government is determined to work hard to ensure that the National Disability Insurance Agency gets it right, so we are continuing to strongly advocate with the NDIA as well as with our federal, state and territory counterparts on the Disability Reform Council for the best possible outcomes for Tasmanians and, likewise, all Australians living with disability as we complete the transition to the full scheme.

In addition to providing significant funding to the rollout to the NDIS, our other election commitments for disability include another \$21.2 million in funding over and above our NDIS commitment. This includes \$20 million of the \$125 million in stage 2 of our Affordable Housing Strategy which will be quarantined for disability-specific housing for people living with a disability. We have also increased funding to the peak body, National Disability Services, to \$600 000 over three years so that NDS can help support the necessary growth and transition needed by our disability service providers as Tasmania moves towards the full rollout of the NDIS.

We also committed \$300 000 in funding for continuation of the early detection and diagnosis of autism spectrum disorders to ensure that children get the earliest interventions they can for improved outcomes under the SACS-R project. There is continued funding of \$150 000 to the Autism Cooperative Research Centre to ensure that Tasmania stays at the forefront of autism research in Australia, and \$150 000 for disability sports to continue to facilitate sport participation for people with disability.

The Tasmanian Government is also steadfastly committed to working very collaboratively with the Australian Government in establishing the Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability. Likewise we are very committed to working closely with the Tasmanian community, including people with disability, their families and carers, community organisations and advocacy service providers to ensure that the royal commission provides an opportunity for people's stories to be heard and for recommendations to be developed that will improve the lives of people with disability, their families and carers into the future.

It has been an honour to have been the Minister for Women for over five years now. The Hodgman Government's vision and plan is for a more inclusive Tasmania that empowers and enables women and girls to fully participate in our economic, social, political and community life. As a government we have led by example and elevated women to a number of key roles, including Tasmania's first female Speaker of the House of Assembly, the Honourable Elise Archer MP; our first female Governor, Her Excellency Professor the Honourable Kate Warner AC; and our first female Chief Magistrate, Catherine Geason. I also note that the member for Braddon, Joan Rylah's successful return to the parliament increases the overall representation of women in the House of Assembly to 56 per cent and the whole of the Parliament of Tasmania to now 53.5 per cent women, so the Hodgman Liberal Government is also delivering on our plan to improve outcomes for women in Tasmania.

Last year I was delighted to launch the Tasmanian Women's Strategy 2018, with the four key priority areas of financial security, leadership and participation, health and wellbeing and safety. In regard to leadership, it was the Hodgman Liberal Government that launched the first Tasmanian Government Women on Board strategy which also has funding, a target and a timeframe, and we are seeing results. Our target is for 50 per cent of women to be on government boards by 2020 and we are making excellent progress, with 44.17 per cent representation as at December 2018, an over 30 per cent increase in the ratio of women, or 10.37 percentage points.

We also have our partnership with the Australian Institute of Company Directors to deliver the Tasmanian Government's Board Diversity Governance Scholarships Program, giving more Tasmanian women the opportunity to learn the skills they will need to serve as company directors with a genuine focus on building board diversity and inclusivity. I was delighted that of the 17 scholarship recipients for 2018-19, seven are from a migrant or refugee background, two are women with disability and three are working in the STEM areas. I look forward to the next round opening in the coming months.

Across Government we are very determined that all appointments to government boards must also comply with the Government's policy of gender equality. I am delighted to report that at the end of December, 55 per cent of GBE directors are now women and currently 48 per cent of directors of state-owned companies are also women. In regard to leadership, we have seen women in the Senior Executive Service increase from 28.3 per cent when we formed government in March 2014 to 41.4 per cent as at December 2018. This is a significant milestone, as the target set in August 2016 was for at least 40 per cent of senior executives to be women by 2020. I am glad this target has now been achieved 18 months ahead of time, with the new goal now being 50:50.

Also in regard to participation, Tasmania is full of exceptional women from a wide range of different backgrounds who are all dedicated and willing to make a significant contribution to our state. This is why the Tasmanian Honour Roll of Women plays such an important role in preserving the stories of these women and women's organisations. I was deeply honoured to induct 29 women and one women's organisation to the honour roll on 15 March in Launceston. To date, 325 nominations have now been included on the honour roll from a vast range of backgrounds, including community service, Aboriginal Affairs, agriculture, business and industry, education and training, multicultural affairs, arts and media, history and science, just to name but a small few. I am delighted to say that nominations are now open for the 2020-21 round of inductions and applications can be submitted until Friday 25 September 2020.

The gender pay gap continues to be a major barrier to women's financial security, which is why financial security is a key priority in the Tasmanian Women's Strategy. Our Financial Security for Women Action Plan was released in September last year and includes improving outcomes for women in paid employment, increasing the number of women and girls in STEM and trades, building financial capabilities and increasing opportunities for women entrepreneurs.

In regard to safety, one of the many achievements and the one I am the proudest of is our nation-leading Tasmania's first Family Violence Action Plan - Safe Home, Safe Families. This Government took a whole-of-government approach to tackling the scourge of family violence and its elimination is a top priority for us. With all the actions under our \$26 million Safe Home, Safe Families Action Plan now well underway, and with our further commitment of another \$20.2 million in the 2018-19 budget for family violence initiatives, including \$18 million for the next Safe Home, Safe Families, we are continuing to take a responsive and evidence-based approach to addressing this scourge. We are also taking note of emerging issues and learning from new evidence as we undertake the next stage of the process.

The Government is currently finalising the review of the family violence system to inform the next Safe Home, Safe Families Action Plan that will be launched later this year. As we did with the first action plan, we are undertaking extensive consultation with the community, key stakeholders and the Family Violence Consultative Committee to ensure that all Tasmanians have the opportunity to have their say on the next action plan, as family violence is a scourge that affects us all.

Over 150 stakeholders attended a series of roundtable discussions across the state in February that will assist in shaping the next action plan, as well as the first whole-of-government Sexual Violence Action Plan that will be released in July in recognition of the fact that sexual violence often intersects and overlaps with family violence. Later this year we will also be developing a Health and Wellbeing for Women Action Plan in recognition that gender is one of the most powerful determinates of health outcomes. Over the next three years we will continue to build on the gains we have made and create even more opportunities and better outcomes for women in Tasmania.

One of the greatest privileges of being the Minister for Sport and Recreation is seeing what a profound and positive benefit sport can have for all people in our community, whether they are younger or older, competing hard or playing just for fitness, fun and laughs. Sport truly is one of the fabrics that binds our communities together. In pursuing strategic growth for our state, sport is also critical as a social enabler and is a major part of our regional and statewide economy that also generates investment and jobs. It is important for so many other reasons too. We know that getting people into sport is key to establishing lifelong healthy habits to ensure that future demand on our health system is manageable. Sport builds confidence and resilience, builds a sense of belonging and personal discipline, improves physical and mental health, builds social skills and networks and provides the perfect vehicle for developing communication, leadership and organisational skills.

The Hodgman Liberal Government's goal is for Tasmania to be the healthiest state in Australia by 2025 and also to reduce the rates of obesity to below the national average at the same time. This requires coordinated investment into all levels of sport and the infrastructure that creates the opportunity for participation. This is why this year we will continue our investment into sporting organisations through the major sporting grant round to support infrastructure and also the minor sporting grant round to help clubs with their needs.

Our commitment to improving health outcomes for women and girls is also reflected in our record capital investment into Levelling the Playing Field. Last year when I launched the Levelling the Playing Field Round 1 expression of interest process, I was keenly aware that poor and inadequate facilities was the biggest barrier to women and girls playing sport. There was a big demand for major improvements to girls and women's sporting infrastructure, especially in the sports of AFL and cricket which have seen participation numbers boom in recent years.

The Hodgman Liberal Government's \$10 million commitment over two years to improve sporting facilities for women and girls is the largest investment per capita by any state or territory and will provide funding between \$15 000 and \$1 million per project. Twenty-one organisations were successful in receiving funding under the first round of the program and we will be supporting women and girls' sports around various locations around Tasmania of Wynyard, Sorell, Evandale, Longford, Deloraine, Westbury, Lauderdale, George Town, Bridport, Cygnet, Clifton, Ulverstone, Burnie, Launceston and Hobart. The total projects to be delivered under round 1 will be over \$10.1 million - a fantastic investment into these local communities, and round 2 of the program was launched recently so that we can continue to remove one of the biggest barriers to female participation that has existed for far too long.

In February we were also delighted to launch our Ticket to Play program which delivers on a policy we took to the election and is the first of its kind for Tasmania. We know that for many families and carers costs can be a major prohibitive factor in children and young people not taking part in organised sport and recreation. That is why we are very committed to doing more to provide the opportunity for up to 30 000 children who right now can access up to \$100 each to meet the cost of registering for organised sport and recreation.

I also pay tribute to the over 700 clubs and their state organisations plus the schools, parents, coaches, officials and sport administrators who have been working hard to promote this program to help ensure that our children do get the chance to participate even more in sport and active recreation.

As the Premier stated, it is an exciting time for Tasmania. We are living in a place that looks and feels very different from the way it did five years ago. Back then, five years ago, this Government had just launched our plan to grow the economy, to fix the budget mess, to invest in the essential services that Tasmanians need and to get on with the job of providing strong and stable government to get things done. Tasmanians want a strong economy because it provides opportunities and employment prospects for our children, our grandchildren and future generations of Tasmanians.

Today, Tasmania's economic growth is the envy of other nations. In fact, in many of the key indicators, we are leading the way, whether in housing finance approvals and completions, private new capital expenditure, job vacancies, retail sales and business confidence. For only the fifth time in a quarter of a century, Tasmania's economic growth for the last financial year was higher than the nation's, and per capita we are growing at our fastest rate in a decade - nearly double the national average. Respected economists have also reported that for the first time in 27 years, economic growth in Tasmania is now broadly based across all industry sectors.

As part of our plan, we are investing more into vital social infrastructure, including in my portfolio of Sport and Recreation and have developed the state's first 10-year infrastructure pipeline which maps \$13.9 billion of infrastructure investments for government and the non-government sector.

We know there is more to do because our aim is for all Tasmanians to feel the benefits of a strong economy, and the Hodgman Liberal Government is equipped for the challenges and ready to grasp the opportunities. Today we are excited about what it is to be a Tasmanian.

### **Time expired.**

[4.34 p.m.]

**Ms STANDEN** (Franklin) - Madam Speaker, I rise to make my contribution on the Premier's Address. I welcome the new members to this place - Joan Rylah, member for Braddon; and John Tucker, member for Lyons - and congratulate them on their election or re-election in the case of Mrs Rylah. I wish them the very best for their parliamentary careers and sincerely hope that they find working in this place and for our communities as rewarding as I have this past year. I enjoyed John's inaugural speech and to hear a little about his background. I have enjoyed learning more about the diversity and flair of people in this place, and we are the better for it. I look forward to working with both John and Joan, including in her capacity as Government Whip.

Earlier this year I had the pleasure of being appointed shadow minister for housing, climate change and for the environment, parks and heritage. My thanks to our leader Rebecca White for putting her trust in me. I was pleased to accept this honour and challenge. It builds upon my role as shadow spokesperson on housing last year as well as my background in health, and community and social services. In the case of climate change, environment, parks and heritage, I do not have as strong a background in those areas but I hope that my formal education in science and my interest in climate change and the environment will equip me well to take on this challenge. In the few

short weeks since being appointed to these shadow portfolios I have enjoyed meeting stakeholders to start getting my head around some of the complexities and challenges in these areas.

A year has already flown by, a year that has been challenging and rewarding. I thank my electorate officer Sharon Carnes for diligently working with me these past few months and also Morris and Tom before her to help me establish my electorate office in Kingston. I thank my Labor colleagues for helping me settle into this place and learn the ropes, it has been an exciting year, in particular understanding the machinations of parliament and the procedural aspects of this job, which has been quite the challenge.

I thank my many supporters and of course my family for their forbearance. It is a considerable thing that parliamentarians ask of our families when we step into public life and this year has not been without challenges but I love my family for all that they have provided me to take on this role.

This year has already flown by and it has been challenging and rewarding. It has also been heartbreaking as I have engaged with so many individuals and groups across my electorate that feel that they are missing out on essential services of this so-called golden age in Tasmania. I am concerned that this Liberal Government could be doing more to assist those most in need.

Before I go into some of those challenges that I see in Tasmania at the moment, I must first mention the bushfire season that just passed. I thank the heroic efforts of career and volunteer firefighters, parks rangers and Sustainable Timber Tasmania staff, police, ambulance and also the many public servants who I know offered to assist and support communities, community organisations and the many volunteers across communities. They all pulled together to protect lives and property, also supporting one another in an unprecedented long and drawn-out fire season. This season was distinguished by mental stress and anxiety unlike other fire seasons that we have experienced in recent years. It has brought out the best in people, the generosity of giving and supporting one another, bringing people together. It is terrific that now that fires are nearly out it has enabled a time of celebration and thanks for all that people have done.

Recently I heard about a parks ranger who spent only seven nights in his own bed since Christmas Eve through to the end of last month. He was utterly exhausted and it did make me think, as I reflected on this past fire season, what more we could do to assist those first responders, those who have been ground down and worn out by this extraordinary effort. I spent a good deal of time in Huonville and Geeveston these past few months and was struck by the example of a woman I met in the evacuation centre in Huonville. She was pretty distraught at the time having left her husband, an older person, to defend their property. She was fearful of his ability to do so and uncertain as to what the future would hold. What set this woman apart in my mind was when I bumped into her about a month or so later at a community market. I said to her and her husband, 'Wow, it must be terrific to be feeling like the community and your lives are getting back to some sort of normality', and she said, 'Actually no, it's only in this past week that I visited my GP and have had to ask for help to be able to sleep better'. The anxiety, stress and trauma compounding over many weeks had really taken its toll and I was reminded that for many people, the ongoing noises of helicopters, smoke lingering in their air and so on have really affected them.

We have been debating the PTSD legislation this week and we need to be mindful of the ongoing stress and trauma that has impacted our community. I have talked with many small business owners impacted by the fires and I hope Tasmanians continue to get behind our rural communities as they continue to recover from this awful bushfire season.



There have been magnifying effects when volunteer firefighters and their employers have struck arrangements to work at the frontline over many weeks and months have suffered loss of income. This has meant reduced spending in hospitality and retail in the local community and a spiralling effect. There must be a better way to recognise and support our volunteers to ensure they are not substantially out of pocket as well as being so stressed in some cases defending their own communities.

The firefighting operation is still continuing but the independent review is underway of the management of the bushfires during this season. I note that submissions close on 3 May and I urge those with an interest in the fire season now drawing to a close - although ironically it has flared up this week in Dolphin Sands - to put forward their ideas on how the Tasmanian Government could be supporting bushfire management and recovery better.

I turn now to the budget. The Treasurer's budget for 2018-2019 original promised \$161 million surplus. At the time, the CEO of TasCOSS said:

When you have a \$161 million surplus and people are sleeping rough, it will be hard to understand why it is a good budget.

We need to leave a legacy and this budget does not leave a legacy.

Of an originally forecast surplus of \$161.9 million, it was astounding to see this reduced in the Revised Estimates Report earlier this year by an astounding 95 per cent to just \$7.3 million. How can this house of cards fall apart so quickly? This week the Treasurer has indicated a further deterioration in the budget, with some half a billion dollars of writedowns in GST and stamp duty which, incidentally, I find extraordinary given that this state is experiencing a sustained housing boom and is at odds with other jurisdictions across the country.

Last year's budget contained a record \$1.6 billion of new spending, including a record \$878 million of additional infrastructure spending over the next four financial years. As TasCOSS CEO Kym Goodes said at the time, the Treasurer, Mr Gutwein's fifth budget was 'a missed opportunity for the Government to rebalance investment and rebuild for the next generation'. She said, 'Leaders do the right thing, not just do things right.' Those words are ringing in my ears as I cannot help but reflect that the Treasurer's budget for 2018-19 has failed on both counts.

Its priorities focused on funding election commitments and infrastructure spending rather than service delivery. Now it has been shown that the Liberals have blown the budget and it is also clear that they have failed to fix the significant and ongoing issues around service provision around health, housing and traffic. It was a missed opportunity to put forward a legacy budget that committed funding in what was heralded as good fiscal times to address needs in order to save to protect against budget shocks, including the likely significant expenditure around bushfires.

This budget is not doing the right things in terms of its irresponsible election pork-barrelling and the Treasurer's budget mismanagement has now been revealed. The rivers of gold have run dry and every year the Liberals' budget allocates less to Health than was spent in the previous year. The 2018-19 budget contained \$111 million less for Health and Human Services than was spent in the previous financial year, and that is after the Government's own report showed there was a \$100 million black hole in their Health budget. Whilst the Liberals have now allocated an additional \$105 million for Health it is still \$6 million less than was spent in 2017-18, and next year they are forecasting to spend \$15 million less than they spent this year. The Treasurer's so-called golden

age has now been revealed for what it is, fool's gold, a counterfeit. He has blown the budget without addressing serious issues with service delivery.

I turn now to public sector wages because predictably the Treasurer has blamed this budget and its shortfalls, now shown for all to see, to offer the public sector workers in this state a fair and reasonable pay rise that keeps up with the cost of living, estimated by the ABS or measured as inflation in Hobart at least at 3 per cent. Negotiations have been dragging out for more than nine months and we have seen every trick in the book. The Treasurer changed his language from 2 per cent as a wage cap to 6 per cent over three years. Tasmanians know the simple maths and they can also recognise standover tactics and threats of stand-downs, for example. This Government has failed to invest in fair and reasonable wages for the public sector. It is disrespectful of public servants and will inevitably result in the loss of good people and the inability to recruit workers to essential jobs when we are not offering competitive wages and conditions.

I was struck by the example of a graduate nurse I met in my election campaign who had recently graduated and started a role in Hobart's major teaching hospital, the Royal Hobart Hospital. After six months or so of intolerable working conditions she accepted her wages were below those of her mainland counterparts but also compounding this situation she was forced to work overtime. Unable to get the support she needed from her superiors and training and development and so on to support herself in that role, she made the difficult decision to leave that employment and move on to the private sector as a nurse working in an emergency department but found that the pressure was just as great there because of the overflow from the public health system. This young woman told me she was so stressed in this situation that she entirely threw in the towel and was working in a coffee shop, waiting on tables and making coffees. There is nothing wrong with working in the hospitality and retail industries, lower paid jobs though they are on average. It is just such a waste of our human talent when our young people do not have a pathway for proper wages and conditions to support them to provide our essential public services.

There are some 29 000 public servants by head count, or 23 000 FTEs, and those salaries we must never forget support households, families, homes, and those homes contribute to consumer spending. These are not just voters, they are an important part of our economy, and this Government is on notice that unless it recognises the importance of these public servants to our economy they will ultimately pay the price. This Treasurer has clung stubbornly to a 2 per cent wage cap for months and that means that teachers, firefighters, nurses, park rangers, paramedics and allied health workers are following behind their mainland counterparts. Ignore them at their peril.

More than 120 000 Tasmanians are missing out and waiting for a better life, while 74 000 Tasmanians live below the poverty line. It is estimated that over 150 000 Tasmanians are in housing stress today. The Tasmanian way of life, whether it being through the lens of traffic congestion, housing and rental affordability or even access to public transport, is under threat. I looked to the Premier's Address for the vision, hope and action that is being taken to address and preserve the Tasmanian way of life. Instead we got a glossy second-year agenda plan with 286 incoherent projects. It is not a strategy. This plan lacks an overarching long-term direction or strategy, and I think it was telling that the very next day after the Premier delivered his address, what appeared in the *Mercury* editorial column? Do you think it was a glowing assessment of the economy and how well this state is doing in terms of service delivery, addressing housing and homelessness issues in this state? No, the *Mercury* editorial column was on AFL football. As important as that is to this state, I thought that was a rather telling thing.

Talking of important things to this state, I turn now to climate change. The Premier's Address failed to mention climate change whatsoever and the minister's contribution in order to make up for this shortfall referred to the Climate Action 21 document and plans to amend the Climate Change Act 2008. Let us hope the minister embraces the opportunities before her, because of the hopes of the next generation, not just the 8000-strong student rally that massed in front of Parliament House some weeks ago, depend upon her taking action and convincing her Cabinet colleagues that there is indeed a climate emergency.

Students, fire managers - reported in today's paper - and doctors are amongst other groups that are demanding action. Last Saturday I met with a group of doctors for Environment Australia at their conference. One person said to me that it has been said this is the first generation feeling the effects of global warming but it is the last generation with the opportunity to act. It is crucial that governments act in this decade to deal with dangerous climate change. Doctors for the Environment contend that there is already almost no chance of keeping within the 2 degrees centigrade so-called guardrail agreed in Paris December 2015 and that there is a 40 per cent risk of 4 degrees warming. The WMO climate report for 2019 indicated that we are on track for at least 3.5 degrees warming. This summer just passed, there were 206 records broken across Australia in 90 days. In Tasmania we had our driest summer on record and bushfires burnt more than 200 000 ha of vegetation. Climate change, I was distressed to hear, is estimated to cause approximately 250 000 excess deaths annually in the period from 2030-50.

Toby Thorpe, a commendable young man who lives in my electorate, outlined recently to a forum convened by you, Madam Speaker, which the member for Braddon, Jeremy Rockliff, attended, three recommendations made at the Katowice COP24 UN conference on climate change presentation at the Parliament House. The first and second related to modest suggestions to support all schools in Tasmania in making the transition to renewable energy and to reform the energy resource allocation to schools to allow for renewable energy savings to be kept by schools. I look forward with interest to hear from the Education minister to hear what action is being taken in that regard. The third was a cry for help. Toby Thorpe implored this Government to establish a youth climate council with statewide youth representation of climate leaders. It is not much to ask, to listen to this generation of young people who have most at stake in terms of climate change. Are these not realistic, achievable goals and could not the Government take immediate action that is meaningful in this decade?

**Dr Woodruff** - Ms Standen, is your party, the Labor Party, taking action against the Adani coal mine?

**Madam SPEAKER** - Order.

**Ms STANDEN** - In the area of environment, it seems that local government is leading the way. Just as young people are leading the way in climate change, local government is leading the way in key environmental issues such as single use plastics and water quality.

The Environment minister is missing in action and failing to provide leadership by failing to provide a state-wide waste management plan. It has taken nearly 18 months in my own electorate, in the area of Kingborough Council, to investigate water quality issues that have closed 10 out of 18 beaches recently. The EPA should be tasked to act as an independent regulator to support councils, TasWater and the Derwent Estuary Program.

I was alarmed when I checked on progress yesterday that swimming is still not recommended at two sites, but the remaining 16 sites are simply rated with a question mark. Work it out for yourself. 'Retesting is required or data not available', it said so check for yourself the long-term grade. This is an emerging public health issue. We are approaching Easter where families will be looking forward to using the waterways and recreational swimming in our waters. We celebrate the quality of water in this state, yet the Derwent is a major sleeping issue. We need to do more to at least give sound advice to residents potentially affected by dangerous enterococci levels.

In terms of Tasmania's health system, it has gotten worse over the past year. The Royal Hobart Hospital redevelopment is a disaster with an overflowing emergency department, ambulance ramping, and elective surgery waiting lists blowing out. This is to say nothing of the fading likelihood that Tasmania will become the healthiest state by 2025 with funding a long way behind the level suggested by TasCOSS of 5 per cent of the total budget spending required in preventative health.

Saul Eslake's presentation on last year's budget showed that Tasmania spends about 6 per cent or \$335 million less on service provision than it would need to to provide services at the all states and territories average level. Health and housing service provision ratios in Tasmania are around 80 per cent to 90 per cent of average operating expenses compared with the average spending across jurisdictions, and community services is a woeful 30 per cent of average spending.

This Liberal Government has developed a habit of underfunding our health system. Every year the Liberal budget allocates less to Health than was spent in the previous year. The 2018-19 budget contained \$111 million less for health and hospitals than was spent in the previous financial year. That is after the Government's own report showed there was a \$100 million black hole. They have now allocated an additional \$105 million for Health but it is still \$6 million less than was spent in 2017-18. Next year they are forecasting to spend \$15 million less than they spent this year.

Even the most inexperienced budget manager could see through these budgeting tricks. It makes no sense to under-allocate funding in the household budget. If you know from past years that your winter electricity bill will cost you \$1000, why would you set aside only \$500 hoping like mad that it will cover the costs?

I turn to housing and homelessness. It is unacceptable that more than 150 000 Tasmanians are experiencing housing stress. There are over 3200 families on the public housing waiting list, which has remained static over the last reporting period. The Minister for Housing even celebrated that fact recently. On any given night, Tasmania's homeless population swells to 1600 with 38 per cent of those being aged below 25 years. It is unacceptable that people are being turned away by emergency shelters. It is unacceptable that the Government has no solution to offer a home for unaccompanied minors presenting to shelters and that there are untold numbers of people couch-surfing or sleeping in tents, cars and sheds that are well beyond those 1600.

The housing debt of \$157 million keeps ripping around half of the operating budget out from underneath the department in order to address these issues and I would like to know what action the Premier has taken to have this problem addressed by his coalition colleagues in Canberra.

Under the Government's Affordable Housing Strategy, a commitment was made by the Premier and the former minister to build 900 new homes between 2015 and 2019 and now the Premier has committed to a further 1500 new affordable homes in stage 2 of the Affordable Housing Action Plan. The first question is whether this commitment of 2400 new homes over eight years will meet

current and projected need. By any measure, that 2400 will fall a long, long way short of the long-term supply needs of up to 14 000 new affordable homes over the next couple of decades.

The next question is the likelihood of the Government delivering on its targets. Within the strategy itself, the Premier, unfortunately, for this minister - the minister who is now fleeing the Chamber because he does not want to be held to account - the strategy itself was very good, if only the Government had delivered on it. The Premier himself committed to 900 new homes in the foreword of this and the former minister committed to the same. Somewhere - even in June of last year - the minister committed to 941 new homes by the end of June of this year. Then suddenly he changed his language, to 'new lots and homes'.

It is plain to see why that is because today, conveniently just after question time, he released his most recent quarterly report that shows that a woeful 281 new social housing dwellings had been delivered in the past period, but wait for it, there is more. This included 29 refurbishments so if we take those out because refurbishments in anybody's language is not new homes. Neither is HomeShare, Streets Ahead or Emergency Housing. We are looking at new social housing dwellings and this Government, so far, has delivered 252 out of 900 - a woeful 28 per cent to his own target this financial year.

We will be watching like a hawk because the kicker is in action 19.3 of the minister's new Affordable Housing Action plan - a commitment to review the housing dashboard measures in order to change the reporting, to change the accountability, to not only use smoke and mirrors to avoid the dreadful reality but to change the goal posts to meet his own target. The minister has refused my request for a briefing from his department on the Affordable Housing Action Plan stage 2. Today, this minister has told the House that there are:

More than enough homes under construction in order to meet the targets that this Government has set.

I felt sorry for him at the beginning of his term. I thought that he was handed a difficult situation with his Premier and the former minister putting him in a difficult situation but he is the one who has changed the language here. This is why we will be moving to establish a select committee into affordable housing because Tasmanians deserve to know how we got into this mess and how we are going to get out of it; what it will take to fix this woeful situation. Putting aside the fact that Tasmania's Affordable Housing Strategy and Action Plans set targets for housing that are inadequate, I am determined to hold this minister to account.

### **Time expired.**

[5.04 p.m.]

**Mr JAENSCH** (Braddon - Minister for Human Services) - Mr Deputy Speaker, I commend the Premier for his Address and his continuing outstanding leadership of this Government and our state. By any measure, Tasmania is booming and is now the place to be and this is just the beginning of the next level and the brighter future that we have spoken of at election time.

It is pleasing to hear this sentiment being echoed right across the state by people who can see and feel the positive change around them. I know that some people and some areas of our state are not feeling it yet and that our state's growth has also brought significant challenges. That is why I am proud to be a member of a government that is committed to strategic growth and seeks to ensure that the benefits of growth are felt across our island and across generations. I embrace that challenge

wholeheartedly as a member who represents regional and remote communities of our state and as a minister with responsibilities for some of Tasmania's most vulnerable people.

As the Premier said in his address, a strategic focus for this Government in 2019 is to unlock the potential in our regional communities. This includes ensuring that our young Tasmanians are skilled up for the jobs of the future and have the first opportunity to fill those jobs. In my electorate of Braddon, the Hodgman Liberal Government will partner with the Cradle Coast Authority in the first instance to deliver a raft of strategic local employment projects to retain population share in the region and drive employment. This initiative aims to improve educational outcomes and reduce unemployment rates through leveraging the coast's strengths to create more local investment and more jobs. I commend the Cradle Coast Authority and its member councils for their continuing unity and vision, working together as a region in the interests of their communities, and I am proud to have been able to help broker this strategic relationship with them to deliver on our state's objectives of strategic growth across our regions.

We are investing an additional \$125 million as part of stage 2 of our state's Affordable Housing Strategy which I announced at the end of last month. A main focus of the second action plan to deliver on the strategy is better outcomes for young people, with a number of important initiatives to help address that complex issue. This includes a new purpose-built youth foyer, a supported accommodation facility with additional services laid on at Burnie, costing around \$10 million to provide 25 units for young people experiencing or at risk of homelessness. This foyer will be a safe environment for young people experiencing homelessness with supported accommodation and pathways to education, giving them the opportunity to look towards a brighter future and to be part of the growth of our economy.

In our second year of government for this term, the Hodgman Government will further support strategic growth in the north-west through a range of initiatives, including rolling out the \$3.15 million north-west job-ready generation package; commencing construction of the west coast roads package; implementing the Sarah Island visitor experience plan on the west coast; commencing the community rapid response hospital-in-the-home service in the north-west; completing the Mersey Community Hospital helipad; completing the \$1.8 million upgrade of the Latrobe ambulance station; commencing construction of the North West Regional Hospital antenatal clinic; funding more paramedics for Wynyard as part of the Government's investment in 42 new regional and rural paramedics; commencing construction of the \$1.1 million Smithton ambulance training facility; opening the new \$435 000 Macquarie Heads jetty upgrade; and launching the regional tourism infrastructure investment attraction pilot, a range of initiatives to address challenges to increase the number of visitors spending time and money in our regions, the pilot of which will be on the north-west coast of Tasmania; and commencing the \$120 million tranche 2 of the Tasmanian Freight Rail Revitalisation Project, which includes the Burnie to Hobart freight corridor.

These are just some of the investments that demonstrate our Government's commitment to harnessing our state's competitive advantages to continue to drive growth in our economy and employment in every region. They build on what we have already delivered for Braddon since we came to government in 2014, including \$14 million towards stage 1 of the Devonport Living City Project as part of our \$90 million Northern Cities Development initiative; upgrading the Bass and Murchison highways; a \$1.5 million mooring dolphin for cruise ships in Burnie; and significant investment in the west coast region, including the Western Wilds iconic drive, three return flights a week between Hobart and Strahan, the revival of Strahan's esplanade and its bond store and the

new west coast visitor information and booking centre. The majority Hodgman Liberal Government has and will continue to deliver for Braddon and Tasmania as a whole.

Turning now to my portfolio areas. Our Government is taking a range of actions to address housing supply and homelessness in Hobart and around the state. This too is part of ensuring all Tasmanians benefit from a strong economy and to ensure that no-one is left behind. We extended the First Home Builder Boost, provided stamp duty relief for home purchasers and pensioners downsizing, removed red tape to make it easier and quicker to build homes, and we have rezoned surplus government-owned land to enable more homes to be built faster. Each day in Tasmania we provide subsidised social housing for around 12 000 households and each month, on average, over 200 additional households are assisted into the private rental market through the private rental assistance program.

Our first Affordable Housing Action Plan, a multi-faceted approach to tackle housing stress and homelessness around the state, is on track to assist over 1600 low income households by the end of June 2019 including new supply of 941 affordable lots and homes. This \$125 million in funding combined with the funding contained in our first action plan will bring this Government's total investment in affordable housing to almost \$200 million over eight years, an unprecedented level of state investment in response to this major challenge.

Our investment has also created an estimated 900 jobs in the building and construction industry, a further boost to our already growing economy. Action plan two will see the Government investing more in outreach support through Housing Connect. More resources will be directed towards enabling Housing Connect to regularly visit clients in need of emergency housing support and they will work closely with support services to meet the often complex needs of clients and provide safe and secure accommodation for them.

The Affordable Housing Action Plan also includes more land; supply of around 380 new lots for new affordable homes. More social housing; 607 new homes in areas of high demand. More homeless accommodation; 88 more units for those in crisis and better planning to make it easier to build new homes and increase supply. More people in home ownership; 287 low income households will be helped to buy their own homes. We will be supporting people into private rental; 200 new tenancies to assist low income households. New support for vulnerable people; 418 people or families will be assisted to enter into supported accommodation.

We will be connecting clients to support services and finding safe and secure accommodation for Tasmanians most in need and developing better data, including work with UTAS, in consultation with peak housing bodies to update and adjust projections for housing demand and supply. This will ensure that key movements are identified early and that the investment for the future being delivered under action plan 2 is well-targeted and responsive. Overall, our second action plan will provide an additional 1500 new affordable homes and assist around 2000 households, increasing the number of new affordable homes to 2400 over eight years.

We are confident that our Affordable Housing Strategy supported by two action plans, combined with the \$30 million housing investment under the City Deal, which is additional money, nation-leading building approvals in the private market and new tourism construction will ease the pressures for Tasmanians currently experiencing housing stress. However, we know that we cannot do this all on our own. We expect all key stakeholders, industry sectors and levels of government to play their part to make sure that new housing and accommodation projects are delivered across the entire spectrum of need. I thank our excellent partners and stakeholders in the social services

and housing sector and homelessness sector who have given us their time and their advice, ideas and support through the development and deployment of our affordable housing action plan so far. I would like to thank the community housing providers - Housing Connect, their staff and teams and all of the builders and contractors who are currently out there building an unprecedented number of social housing dwellings for Tasmanians who need them.

The Hodgman Government is also attacking the housing challenge from a planning perspective. To further speed up the supply of houses we are making it easier to build apartments and town houses in our urban areas. This will provide greater choice for Tasmanians looking for an urban lifestyle while still retaining the character of existing neighbourhoods. For the first time, we will develop new planning rules that focus on medium rise developments and gentle in-fill projects that provide attractive options for people looking to live close to work and who want to enjoy more of what city living has to offer. This can be achieved through good urban planning and design and addresses the need for more affordable housing whilst protecting and adding to the Tasmanian way of life, and choice in housing.

We will also continue the fast-track rezoning of government-owned land for new affordable housing developments to increase supply and increase residential building across the state. In recognition of the fact that the demand for transport infrastructure and services is growing we introduced new legislation to enable the development of a suite of Tasmanian planning policies.

Formal preparation of the draft TPPs will commence soon and will include a comprehensive period of consultation with the public and reporting to me by the independent Tasmanian Planning Commission.

By working with the private sector and the community we will develop these new TPPs to ensure that the state is ready for the future. Looking ahead, the Hodgman Liberal Government remains focused on our plan to put in place Australia's first single statewide planning scheme, a central pillar of a fair and consistent planning scheme providing certainty and clarity for all Tasmanians using it.

The final step in this process is the development of the local provisions schedules from each of the respective local councils, which they are all working towards in a timely fashion. The planning policy unit in the Department of Justice and the Tasmanian Planning Commission are working right now with council planners finalising these LPSs with the target of having them all submitted to the Tasmanian Planning Commission for statutory assessment by 30 June this year.

I thank all of the councils across the state, their council planners, their staff in the planning policy unit and in the Tasmanian Planning Commission for the extraordinary work that they are putting into this acceleration of delivery of the LPSs so that we can work-flow their assessment through the TPC and bring the Tasmanian Planning Scheme into operation within the next two years.

There is nothing more important than the safety and wellbeing of our children. We are making a significant investment in the redesign of our child safety system through the Strong Families, Safe Kids redesign project, employing more staff, providing early intervention to families and assisting vulnerable children with very complex needs in out of home care. In 2018-19 we invested a further \$24 million to employ more child safety officers and other frontline staff. As I reported this morning those 25 additional child safety staff positions have been created and people appointed to them.



This is on top of the \$51.2 million from the redesign of child safety services that we committed to in our first term and the \$16 million election commitments that we delivered in the 2018-19 Budget, primarily focused on youth at risk.

We reached a major milestone in December last year with the launch of our new Strong Families, Safe Kids advice and referral line. The great news is that early data indicates this new service is already seeing a reduction in the overall notifications, because it concentrates on providing more support to families at the beginning, keeping them strong before they reach crisis point and before children are at risk. By giving earlier support, children are less likely to be removed from their families and relationship breakdown can be prevented.

I thank the staff of our Child Safety Service and also our gateway services, Mission Australia and Baptcare for their patience, their cooperation and their willingness to work together in a new model to radically change the way we do business. We recognise that whilst they did that the business did not stop coming through the door. I congratulate and thank them for the extra work that they have put in place to ensure that we are, at all times, dealing with the needs of children who are presenting to our services. I look forward to continuing improvement in the statistics of our management of these cases ensuring that we are able to keep more children with their families and keep them safe.

We also believe that outcomes for children and young people in out of home care should be the same as for any child in the community. They have the right to the same expectations and hopes for their lives and futures. We know that when Tasmanians stay in education and training longer they get better qualifications and have the best chance of getting a job and having a brighter future. That is why we have invested \$1.2 million over three years to encourage and support young people living in out of home care to stay engaged in education beyond year 10. Incentive payments of \$2500 will be provided to young people and carers of young people who complete year 12 or its equivalent. This policy supports our target to ensure that the retention rate of students from year 10 to 12 is at or above the national average by 2022 and will help close the gap for children, young people and their families to give them the positive future they deserve.

The Hodgman Liberal Government continues to implement the Protecting Older Tasmanians from Abuse, Tasmania's elder abuse prevention strategy because we firmly believe that elder abuse in any form is never okay. We are working in partnership with the Council on Ageing, and Advocacy Tasmania to deliver identified outcomes under the strategy, which continues to be successful in raising awareness in helping to prevent elder abuse from occurring in Tasmania. We are working towards an updated and refreshed 2019-2022 Tasmanian elder abuse prevention strategy that will support Tasmania's seniors and keep them safe. This will take into account and build upon the recently released national plan to respond to the abuse of older Australians. This has been compiled by the Council of Attorneys General in conjunction with all states and territories. We will have more to say on this important issue and this development as we finalise our next steps.

Before wrapping up I will pay tribute to our former colleagues Adam Brooks and Rene Hidding whose characters, values and life experiences are missed by our team and this Parliament. I wish to extend a warm welcome, as others have done in their contributions, to my fellow member for Braddon Mrs Joan Rylah on her return to our Parliament and to our newest member, the member for Lyons Mr John Tucker. It is great to have you both working with and supporting the Hodgman Liberal Government to make Tasmania an even greater place to live.

[5.22 p.m.]

**Mr HODGMAN** (Franklin - Premier) - Madam Speaker, I thank members for their contributions to this debate, which each year is a lengthy one. I always find it a refreshing opportunity to take stock of where we are at and remind ourselves of what more we as a Government might do. I always take the opportunity to listen or at least read what other members say in debate. You often pick up a lot, from some more than others. In closing the debate, I will take the opportunity to elaborate a little on my portfolio responsibilities. I will outline some key initiatives and reforms my Government is undertaking and also respond briefly to some matters raised in the debate.

Firstly, tourism. Our visitor economy is performing very strongly. The tourism industry is one of the key drivers behind our state's very strong economic performance. Over the past five years we have reported solid and sustainable growth. Our plan is for visitors to stay longer, to see more of our state while here and spend more while they are here. Visitor spending has hit a record \$2.46 billion this year. That is almost double the amount in March 2014 when we first came to government. We are now responding to the growth by targeting our infrastructure investments particularly in roads, but also in accommodation and other amenities for our visitors. This includes a massive investment in the road infrastructure catering for visitors to our hotspots.

I would like to see more visitors to the north west and the far south, so we are attending to a number of initiatives that will drive dispersal into regional communities. We have marketing activity to target new visitor segments. We are focusing on travellers more likely to travel further and spend more and new marketing strategies encouraging people to enjoy some of those world-class experiences. They could be golfing, fishing, mountain biking, walking, food and beverage experiences across the state that are often best done in our regional areas. We are doing this by increasing flight access to Launceston, improving visitation to the Burnie and Devonport airports, and increased sailings of the *Spirits* and passenger numbers. The new *Spirits* coming online in the near future is important for visitation of the north west. Trial flights between Hobart and Strahan are an exciting initiative to make it easier for people to get to the west coast. We are also sending some of the world's best tourism experts to parts of the state where we want to drive increased visitation, particularly the north west. We are starting an initiative which will be led by former Tourism Australia managing director, Andrew McEvoy, with a group of industry leaders, influencers, marketing, branding, product development, industry and investments specialists. They will lead the Reimagining the Regions initiative, which will commence on the north west in the Circular Head region. I launched this in Stanley last week. They will work in close collaboration with the local and regional tourism organisations, industry organisations, local councils and the Cradle Coast Authority.

We are expanding our calendar of events to bring more people to the state. We have a new event attraction fund which we launched last June. It has already secured new participatory events such as the Special Olympics and the Australian Musical Theatre Festival. We are looking at new technologies and improved methods to better understand what visitors want and to identify places to invest into new products and infrastructure. This includes a digital mapping tool that will look at new infrastructure and experiences underway and visitor travel patterns to identify what would benefit from future tourism development. We are working to acquire visitor geo-tracking technology to better understand where tourists travel in our state.

Hospitality is the back bone of our visitor economy. We are very proud to support this sector, to see it continue to grow with important initiatives such the Great Customer Experience Program and assistance for workforce development.

Our parks and reserves are key drivers of growth in our visitor economy. Almost half our visitors say they come here to see them. Figures released last year show overall visitation to our parks has increased by 7 per cent to 1.4 million visitors. It is not just visitors; many Tasmanians also love to go to those special places. We have about 200 nature-based tourism operators who create thousands of jobs for Tasmanians. We are investing more into our national parks and reserves to protect our precious wilderness areas, \$31 million, with a focus on asset renewal and future-proofing our parks. We have allocated an additional \$16 million into our icon experiences such as Maria Island, the Overland Track, \$8 million over two years to 2019 to fund up to 46 projects that were identified by the tourism industry's Future Proofing our Icons initiative. These projects create jobs and investment in regional Tasmania and ensure that our parks are safe and well managed. Quality park experiences translate to the purchase of other services such as food, fuel, accommodation in those areas and really sustain what is the visitor economy.

Recognising that more visitors require expert people on the ground and our parks require more to manage and protect them, we have invested \$7 million to employ an additional 15 frontline employees into the Parks and Wildlife Service.

One of the signature investments in our visitor economy, which will support visitation to the state and particularly to the north west, is the \$31 million investment in addition to the \$56.8 million, which alongside the Commonwealth contribution amounts to about \$100 million into Cradle Mountain. It will fund a new visitor gateway, a visitor experience there on the edge of the park, improved services and facilities at Dove Lake. It is wonderful to see it well underway. It will be great to see that project fully realised in the coming years.

We do have a spectacular natural environment that visitors and locals want to experience. We support sensible and appropriate tourism developments in our national parks, reserves and Crown land. This helps to not only create jobs and grow our reputation as a first-rate ecotourism destination but also allows people to access those areas, gain a greater appreciation of them and help in their preservation. The combined value of all projects in the EOI pipeline, some of which have already signed leases or lease agreements, sits at around \$93.9 million in new investment. It will create approximately 247 full-time equivalent jobs when fully realised. We have said from day one these developments need to be appropriate and they need to be sensitive to our environment. We stand by that commitment.

When we first launched our EOI process for sensitive and appropriate tourism offerings, many said that it would lead to all sorts of things: resorts, casinos and caravan parks all through the world heritage area and our national parks. It has not happened and without being open to new ideas we would not have things like the Overland Track, the Three Capes Track - many iconic Tasmanian experiences. Leases and tourism opportunities in national parks are not new. In fact, under Labor and the Greens a significant number of multi-year licences and leases were issued for tourism and accommodation.

**Ms O'Connor** - For what?

**Mr HODGMAN** - They included Pumphouse Point, the Maria Island Walk.

**Ms O'Connor** - That is on a little pocket.

**Mr HODGMAN** - It was alright then; it is certainly alright now.

**Ms O'Connor** - Not the Maria Island Walk when we were in government.

**Madam SPEAKER** - Ms O'Connor, where are your manners?

**Ms O'Connor** - He is inciting me.

**Mr HODGMAN** - We welcome those initiatives and we consider the others that are coming through this process, that will also materialise, will be equally welcomed by many in the community. It is an important process. The EOI process is important but it is also robust. It means that all significant tourism proposals for public lands are pre-assessed by an appointed expert panel that is guided by a set of high-level principles. The process provides another important first-level filter and robust process that ensures that there is a consistent statewide approach in the assessment of commercial tourism propositions on public lands. As I say, it is activating new, sensible, unique and high-class tourism opportunities in our precious natural areas.

Another important part of our plan includes a significant funding commitment of \$20 million to develop the next iconic multi-day hut-based walk. It will build on our great competitive advantage of being a place where a lot of trekkers and walkers want to come. It will further enhance our brand, our reputation as a nature-based ecotourism destination.

In September 2018 we invited submissions from the Tasmanian community to help determine what might be the next iconic walk and more than 20 submissions were received, representing great diversity in a number of regional areas. These have been welcomed and present many diverse options that will be further considered and are under review by a panel of experts. A lot of work has gone into them and we welcome that and we look forward to being able to provide a further update with respect to short-listed options in the near future.

Heritage is another one of those key attributes that makes our state such a special place to live in and also to visit. Our rich cultural and built heritage that is well-preserved today is one of the key reasons why we are seeing more visitors here. These places are also welcoming more Tasmanians who want to go to places like Port Arthur and Maria Island. Many other and much smaller heritage properties and assets around the state are very richly preserved and also enjoyed by many people.

The Government has committed \$3.6 million in funding over 2018-19 and 2019-20 for a new visitor centre at the main point of entry at the Royal Tasmanian Botanical Gardens. They see around half a million visitors each year and during their bicentenary year, a record was set of over 500 000. The new visitor centre will increase engagement but also improve the visitor experience and the ability for the gardens to generate revenue.

We have had record visitor numbers at Port Arthur and at the Cascades Female Factory site. The Port Arthur Historic Site Management Authority has celebrated the opening of our new visitor centre to cater for growing visitation.

We commenced a new initiative last year - a \$10 million Heritage Places Renewal Loan Scheme to revitalise our unique historical heritage and to give property owners the boost and support they need to protect their heritage property. It will also support increased visitation to these properties. Around \$2.4 million in applications are being assessed and around \$805 000 have been approved to date, including some wonderful redevelopments of accommodation across the state.

The brand is one of our greatest assets - the Tasmanian brand - and we have taken significant steps to ensure that we protect and nurture our brand. The Brand Tasmania Act 2018, a great reform, commenced on 29 March this year. The new brand statutory authority is an Australian-first and one of the first in the world.

We have appointed a chair and board to it. It was a hotly -

**Ms O'Connor** - Why didn't you appoint Christine Milne to the Brand Tasmania Board?

**Mr HODGMAN** - That process was independently assessed and appropriately so.

**Ms O'Connor** - Christine Milne, the parliamentarian who coined the term 'clean and green'.

**Mr HODGMAN** - There were well over 200 applicants for board positions. It is not surprising and I am sure that those who were unsuccessful -

**Ms O'Connor** - I would like to understand why Christine Milne was not put on the Honour Roll of Tasmanian Women as well. She was nominated and she has had an Order of Australia and she is the first female leader of a political party in Tasmania.

**Mr HODGMAN** - Many people wanted to be on the Brand Tasmania Board, now to be chaired by Nick Haddow, a very inspiring and passionate Brand ambassador. There will be support from the Department of Premier and Cabinet as per the legislation that passed this place by secretary Jenny Gale.

**Ms O'Connor** - Jenny Gale, the secretary of DPAC is on the Honour Roll but Christine is not.

**Madam SPEAKER** - Order, Ms O'Connor.

**Mr HODGMAN** - Robert Atkinson, the Deputy VC Global at the University of Tasmania; Leigh Carmichael, Creative Director of Dark MoFo and Dark Park; Kim Clifford, Managing Director of Incat; Michael Cooper, former Chief Executive Officer of Juicy Isle; Philippa Dawson who was a former Chief Operating Officer at Austrade and is now CEO at Fermen Tasmania; Sheralee Davies from Wine Tasmania; Kym Goodes, community representative, CEO of TasCOSS; Brett Torossi, founder and principal of New Ground Network and Tourism Tasmania's nominee under the act; Jessica Richmond, who is Commercial Manager at Grange Resources headquartered in Burnie. That is seven women and four men, a good gender balance there.

The next step will be to appoint a CEO and we will look forward to receiving further information and make further announcements with respect to that as the authority gets on with developing its strategic plan. It will engage the community as well as the business sector in consultation.

Our trade strategy, Tasmania's first, was released earlier this year. Our reputation for the quality of our products and services continues to grow through the trade strategy. We are committed to a number of initiatives to best promote our state and all we offer to the world but also empower our businesses to get their products to the world. Our strategy will provide impetus to increase our exports by identifying cross-sectoral opportunities, implementing strategies to maximise these export opportunities and that includes trade missions, targeted trade fair participation and so on.

The estimated nominal value of overseas merchandise exports from our state increased by 13.5 per cent to \$3.74 billion in the year to January 2019 compared to last year and it looks like a positive forecast for our exports, despite some ongoing volatility in international markets.

Mainland China, being the largest importer of our goods, accounts for about 28.7 per cent of our state's total nominal value of exports. Hong Kong and China, with 32 per cent of the total of Tasmania's exports combined, became our first billion-dollar export market. The primary drivers are metallic ores and metal products, our goods, seafood and a number of new areas are being identified.

An increase in dairy and meat is up, as well as paper and paper board. Our exports across the board continue to increase and we will continue to support Tasmanian export businesses through a number of targeted initiatives.

In conclusion, I point to some matters that were raised by opposition parties. The Labor Party I thought fell well short in terms of policies, ideas or plans; a very negative view of the world in the state of the state.

The Leader of the Opposition talked quite negatively about our economy, talked about fewer women working, but as at February 2019 there were over 13 000 more jobs since 2014 when we came to government and 7500 more women employed today than there were in March 2014 when we first came to office. The Leader said that young people are less likely to have a job, but there are 1500 more young people employed in Tasmania compared to when we came to government on year average terms and the youth unemployment rate has fallen since we came to government as well.

A more meaningful estimate of the extent of youth employment is the share of total population aged between 15 and 24 who are unemployed and by this measure total year unemployment was 10.7 per cent in the year to February 2019, which is considerably lower than reported. There is a lot more to do in that space and in youth employment and engagement and participation in education and training, they have more opportunities to do that now because of the reforms we have introduced, but we want to also ensure they are able to get into post-school training and jobs. That will be a key element of our strategic growth agenda.

The Leader of the Opposition talked a bit about TasTAFE as well. The work being done there is being done with great priority and urgency because it was in no great state when we came to government. In fact I was reminded that the Leader of the Opposition acknowledged in her first-ever speech as Labor leader that Labor had played a very big part in decimating TasTAFE by pulling it apart in the Tasmania Tomorrow education reforms which were a failure. It is important to note as well that not only are we rebuilding TasTAFE, and there is a lot more work that needs to be done, but in trade training, building and construction trade commencements have grown by 26.5 per cent over the last 12 months to June 2018 and there was 4.6 per cent growth in Australia for the same period. We continue to have the highest apprentice completion rates in Australia, with 58.1 per cent of Tasmanian apprentices and trainees completing their training contract compared to about 52.7 per cent nationally. We should also remember that around 4000 traineeship and apprenticeship positions in just a year and a half from June 2012-13 were lost. That was certainly an ordinary situation back then.

I am conscious of time but I wanted to touch on the Greens and, as usual, they had a number of policy ideas and proposals, a number of which we strongly oppose. They pointed out that the

feeling is mutual, but at least they came forward with ideas and proposals. There will be ongoing incessant carping and complaining from opposition parties, but at least the Greens came forward. I could not help but notice the observation from the Leader of the Greens who, following Ms White's contribution, said:

People know where the Liberals stand. They know where Dr Woodruff and I stand. They have serious questions in their minds now about where Labor stands.

... Twenty-five minutes of the Leader of the Opposition's contribution was dedicated to bashing up the Government.

This Leader of the Opposition has been the Leader of the Opposition for more than two years now. You have had a year since the election and we still do not know where you stand, Ms White.

I make that point because it is starting to become more and more obvious to people not just in this place, but outside it. They question what the Leader of the Opposition stands for. Yesterday there was another great example of a divergence of views. It was a very sensitive and complicated matter and some very significant contributions were made by members in this place. I acknowledge the shadow attorney-general and also the Leader of the Greens in relation to reforms which passed this place yesterday. There were a number of contributions made by Labor and Greens members during the course of the debate, but one thing that really stood out for me was that the one person we did not hear from on that legislation was Rebecca White, the Leader of the Opposition. That can only lead to the question of where she really stands on this stuff. Is it a principle or belief that she was prepared to back and stand up for in this place yesterday? No, she did not say a thing about it.

I led the debate on behalf of my party and it is fine for you to speculate as to what might have happened if it were not for the fact that the Attorney-General could not be here because of her bereavement, but nobody prevented the Leader of the Opposition from getting up and making a contribution. You did, Madam Speaker, Dr Broad did, Mr O'Byrne did, a number of members did, and Dr Woodruff as well. I make that point because the contribution of the Leader of the Opposition was very conspicuous in its absence. I will leave my comments at that, Madam Speaker. It is a matter for the Opposition and it may be for them to come to this place with no policies, no plans, no alternative budget, no contribution on matters they say they care about, and that was on display yesterday.

The state of the state is that Tasmania is in a very strong position but no-one in this Government thinks this is as good as it gets. We all appreciate that there is a lot more to be done and there are many Tasmanians who need to share in our economic and social progress and prosperity, and that is what will continue to drive us. It will be great if we can at least get some meaningful and sensible contributions from the Opposition as to what they might do. Regardless of that, we will get on with doing with what we are committed to and what Tasmanians elected us to do, which is to give political certainty and stability. This is a different parliament and I have acknowledged that, but we were elected to keep our state heading in the right direction, deliver on all of our commitments, keep our budget strong, keep our economy strong and invest in record ways into the things that Tasmanians care about - our health system, our education system, protecting our most vulnerable, building the infrastructure that our state needs and ensuring that we do all of this in a way that is financially sustainable.

To those members opposite who are carefree and indeed reckless about such matters, we could only do it if the budget was in such strong shape. If we did what you proposed and what you asked of us in respect to public sector wages it would come at a cost. I am still waiting, as the minister asked this morning, to hear what Labor would cut to make those additional commitments to public sector wages.

**Ms Standen** - We are the Opposition, you are the Government - this is on you!

**Mr HODGMAN** - We are endeavoring to fit into our budget a sensible and sustainable wage increase which we have offered. It will require productivity and efficiency gains and there are terms and conditions that we are negotiating, but with what you are proposing we would do, \$280 million would send our budget into deficit. We will not do that because it is fiscally reckless and irresponsible. We are committed to keeping our budget in good shape.

Madam Speaker, I will close the debate on that note and look forward not only to the work for the year ahead but also to delivering another state of the state address in 12 months to see what progress we have made.

**Motion noted.**

## **SHORT STAY ACCOMMODATION BILL 2018 (No. 66)**

### **Second Reading**

[5.48 p.m.]

**Mr JAENSCH** (Braddon - Minister for Planning - 2R) - Madam Speaker, I move -

That the bill be now read the second time.

In response to the housing summit hosted by the Premier on 15 March 2018 the Government committed to a range of actions that would lead to an increase in the supply of affordable housing. A key action of the housing summit was the establishment of data-sharing partnerships between government and website booking platform providers who host short-stay accommodation such as Airbnb and HomeAway to determine exact numbers of entire properties being converted to short-stay accommodation, particularly in areas currently experiencing housing pressures.

Recent studies by the University of Tasmania's Institute for the Study of Social Change suggest that compliance with planning requirements for short-stay accommodation has been poor for a number of years. These studies also suggest that short-stay accommodation has an impact on housing affordability and availability in Tasmania.

Tasmanians have embraced the sharing economy and we are committed to ensuring it continues to play a positive role in our visitor economy and community. However, it is clear that there is an issue when it comes to compliance that is a cause of concern for the community sector and the tourism and hospitality industries. Local government, the community housing sector and others have called for further action and the Government has listened.



It is important that those who benefit from the sharing economy are playing by the rules in relation to the planning requirements. We need more detailed and accurate information about the use of homes for short-stay accommodation to enable better policy informed by robust data.

This bill establishes a process to collect certain information from short-stay website booking platform providers. The legislation and the data collected will serve two important purposes - to ensure everyone is playing by the rules and to paint a clear picture of home sharing across Tasmania. The bill will also provide information to government that will lead to a better understanding of the impact of short-stay accommodation on the broader housing market, particularly the extent of conversion of entire houses in residential areas to short-stay accommodation.

The draft bill was released on 26 September 2018 for a five-week period of broad public consultation and targeted stakeholder consultation, which included the attendees of the housing summit, local government, state agencies, community housing groups, short-stay booking platforms, infrastructure providers and other organisations. The submissions received outlined significant support for the bill and the feedback received was constructive and of great assistance to the Government in refining and framing the bill.

I would now like to make a few comments about the specific provisions of the bill. It is important to note that the bill does not aim to introduce new planning requirements or building, health and safety requirements for short-stay accommodation. It also does not aim to introduce other requirements relating to property and liability insurance, tax, local council rates or codes of conduct for the operators. The bill will instead operate in conjunction with the existing planning requirements in planning schemes and Planning Directive No. 6 and the existing enforcement provisions available to local planning authorities under the Land Use Planning and Approvals Act 1993.

It provides a coordinated approach for collecting information on short-stay accommodation in Tasmania, will assist the state and local governments in determining compliance with the planning requirements and provides a better understanding of the extent of short-stay accommodation in Tasmania. It will also assist in determining compliance with existing building health and safety regulations.

The bill specifically focuses on short-stay accommodation operating in the residential zones under the current planning schemes. This aligns with the planning requirements currently in place through Planning Directive No. 6. While short-stay accommodation exists in many of the planning zones such as commercial, business and rural zones, impacts on housing is clearly the greatest in the residential zones.

The majority of short-stay accommodation providers in Tasmania utilise a booking platform for advertising and booking purposes. Collecting information from the booking platforms provides greater scope for ensuring compliance with the existing planning requirements and understanding the extent of short-stay accommodation in Tasmania.

By requiring booking platforms to advertise a permit number or other relevant compliance information for each listed premises, the bill allows for easy investigation of non-compliance with the planning requirements. Importantly, it also enables listings to be declined by the booking platform provider if relevant compliance information is not provided.

It is pertinent to mention the recently published independent review by the Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute - AHURI - on the impacts of short-stay accommodation booking platforms on housing markets. This independent review specifically notes the advantages in using the booking platforms for checking compliance, particularly through requiring the permit number to be included in the listing on the platform. This bill seeks to do exactly this. Specifically, the bill:

- requires short-stay accommodation providers to supply certain information on their property to the booking platform provider before their premises is listed on the booking platform;
- requires the booking platform provider to display on the platform the relevant planning permit number for the property, or a statement that a planning permit is not required or that the property otherwise has existing use rights;
- requires the booking platform provider to supply information on the short-stay accommodation listed on their platforms to the Director of Building Control at the end of each financial quarter;
- includes penalties up to 50 penalty units (currently \$7950) per offence for short-stay accommodation providers for not supplying the required information or for providing false or misleading information; and
- includes penalties up to 100 penalty units (currently \$15 900) per offence for each listing, with recurring penalties for non-compliance, for booking platform providers for listing properties without receiving or displaying the relevant information, and further penalties as outlined in the bill if the relevant information is not supplied to the Director of Building Control.

The bill includes a 6-month transition period after its commencement for existing short-stay accommodation providers and booking platform providers to comply with the requirements.

The information collected will be used to ensure compliance with the existing planning requirements and to assist with further policy development on short-stay accommodation in Tasmania. The information may also be used to ensure compliance with existing building health and safety requirements. Aggregated and other non-privacy-sensitive information may be published on the use and extent of short-stay accommodation.

Enforcement of the bill will be the responsibility of the Director of Building Control. Local planning authorities will retain their role in enforcing the planning requirements under the Land Use Planning and Approvals Act 1993. The Director of Building Control and local councils will also retain their roles in enforcing the building requirements under the Building Act 2016.

Implementation of the bill will require coordination between booking platform providers and state and local government. A comprehensive implementation plan will be prepared and a range of information will be provided to support the operation of the bill.

In conclusion, the bill delivers on the Government's commitment to ensure that those who benefit from the sharing economy make sure they are doing the right thing. I commend the bill to the House.

[5.57 p.m.]

**Ms DOW** (Braddon) - Madam Speaker, I am pleased to speak on the Short Stay Accommodation Bill. I thank the minister and his department for the briefing on this late last week. Whilst today we are assessing the merits of this piece of legislation aimed to address the need for the collection and sharing of data across existing booking platforms and with levels of government, thus encouraging greater compliance with current regulatory requirements for short-stay accommodation planning permits across Tasmania, we need to be very clear that any legislation approved in this House must consider that short-stay accommodation is just one piece of this complex puzzle putting pressure on essential services including housing in Tasmania.

We state from the outset that we support the Government's intent to ensure greater compliance from platforms and providers through the public listing of permit details and the sharing of data with local and state governments. We also support the introduction of penalties for non-compliance. There is a need for a whole-of-government approach to population growth, settlement planning, cost of living pressures, income and the impact of tourism and short-stay accommodation. Data collection and shared cross-sector and community objectives are an important part of this process and this bill does not address all of this need.

Let us start with the significant and prolonged growth in the Tasmanian economy through the tourism sector, an exciting development for Tasmania, I am sure that we would all agree, bringing more people here to share in our beautiful state and offering more employment opportunities and small to medium, and large business opportunities. The sudden growth has also led to a vibrant and diverse accommodation offering across regional centres and our major cities. These considerable changes and the evolution of the sharing economy have, along with other factors, had an impact on housing affordability and homelessness in Tasmania.

The bill before the House today offers a mechanism for reporting and displaying data. It does not ensure compliance and should not overshadow the importance of long-term monitoring on the effect of the short-stay accommodation sector on housing and in investment in accommodation right across regional Tasmania, not just Hobart. It also looks at addressing the current uneven playing field with regard to quality standards across the accommodation sector. This has been advocated mostly by tourism stakeholders and others.

**Debate adjourned.**

## **ADJOURNMENT**

### **Robert Prince - Tribute**

[6.00 p.m.]

**Mr O'BYRNE** (Franklin) - Madam Speaker, I rise to pay my respects to a member of local government. I am sure members in the House, when you do your work as a local member, come across and work with representatives of local government, councillors and mayors that represent and do the best by their local community.

I pay respect tonight to a councillor for the Huon Valley Council, Robert Prince. Robert works at the local high school. During the bushfires I saw him on a daily basis at the evacuation centre and working with local members of his community who were undergoing a significant traumatic fire event. Recently there was banter in this House about a bit of facial hair that I grew. I shaved

that off and we raised money at the Huonville High School for the Leukemia Foundation's World's Greatest Shave. We raised over \$3000. Robert, being not only an employee of the school but also a good member of his community, shaved his head. He had quite a luxurious mane and he got his head shaved.

As you build relationships with local councillors rivalries bubble to the top. Mr Prince is a big fan of the West Coast Eagles. As the House would know I am a big fan of the Collingwood Football Club. In our robust exchange about last Saturday night's game, where the Collingwood Magpies took on the West Coast Eagles in the grand final replay, I was hopeful and confident that Collingwood would turn the table on the West Coast Eagles. Mr Prince said, 'Let us make this interesting'. I was hoping it was not going to be as interesting for him as it was for me. The bet was pretty clear that on,

**Ms Haddad** - This is public.

**Mr O'BYRNE** - Yes, I know this is public. That was a part of the bet. I think we have it on camera now. I am just saying, 'Well done, mate, it was a good bet and I will see you next round'. This is going to burn my skin. The losing team supporter had to wear something of an opposing team. He was due to wear something Collingwood for a period of a week and he asked me for one moment to wear the West Eagles scarf, as I am doing. It is burning my skin as we speak.

Congratulations, Robert. I am very happy for you and your team. We will see you next round. Consider the bet paid. This is the great thing about the tiers of government working together and having strong, healthy rivalries. All the best. Thank you, Robert.

### **Federal Budget 2019-20**

[6.03 p.m.]

**Ms HADDAD** (Clark) - Madam Speaker, I want to talk about what a disappointment the Morrison Liberal Government's 2019-20 Budget was, particularly for women. I put these comments in the context of the election having just been called today.

The 2019-20 Budget will see single mothers, women over 50 and women who are already financially marginalised far worse off than before. The Budget was built on tax cuts, but the tax cuts are offered the most to the people who already have the most. People on the lowest incomes receive nothing.

Here is what the tax cuts will look like if the Morrison Liberal Government is re-elected. People earning \$200 000 a year will get a tax cut of \$220 a week. People earning \$50 000 a year will get a tax cut of just \$23 a week. People earning \$25 000 a year and on pensions would receive a one-off payment of \$75 which equates to \$1.40 a week. People on Newstart, already well and truly below the poverty line will receive nothing. They have been totally forgotten in this Budget. Instead of supporting people Australia's welfare system is punitive, it is cruel and it entrenches poverty in this generation and the next. The Morrison Liberal Government is no friend to women and it is no friend to anyone living in poverty.

Mr Morrison tells us that becoming a self-funded retiree is one of the most important things all of us should aim to achieve. He says this is because he believes the age pension should be seen as a backstop not an entitlement. Since the Liberals have been in power in Canberra rates of home

ownership have plummeted and the number of people living in extreme housing stress is sky high. Many of those are women. Since 2011 the number of homeless women in Australia over 50 has increased dramatically. Women over 50 are now the fastest growing group of homeless people in Australia.

Almost one-third of single mothers have experienced homelessness at some point; 32 per cent of single parents in Australia now live in poverty; 83 percent of sole parent households in Australia are headed by women; half of all unemployed single mothers have health conditions or care for children with a disability or illness; women are over-represented at lower income levels and are over-represented in the lowest paid industries like cleaning and early childhood education, teaching and nursing; and a staggering 95 per cent of single parenting payment recipients are women. If you are a woman in Australia right now you are more likely to be in a low-paid industry, you are more likely to work part-time and have taken large chunks of time out of the workforce to care for family, you are more likely to be the head of a sole parent household balancing work and caring responsibilities of children and also likely ageing parents. That is if you are lucky enough to be in work. If not, you are more likely to be on a single parent pension or on Newstart.

Newstart is already drastically below the poverty line and has not increased in real terms in 25 years. Meanwhile the cost of living, the cost of rent, the cost of electricity, gas, groceries, petrol has risen year on year. Living on Newstart, which is less than \$40 a day, actively locks people out of employment, because living in poverty hinders your ability to effectively look for work. It is hard to look for work if you are homeless and hungry. It is hard to look for work if you cannot afford to put food on your kids' table or afford their school supplies.

There are an estimated 3 million people living in poverty in Australia right now, including 730 000 children. I would like to know how the Liberal Prime Minister, Scott Morrison, thinks this picture looks for women, in particular, in terms of setting themselves up as self-funded retirees as he suggests we should all aim for when it is majority women who work in low-paid industries, work part-time or are on pension payments.

In stark contrast to the Morrison Liberal Government, Labor has a real plan to tackle poverty and a plan for women. Federal Labor releases an annual women's budget statement. They did it in government and the Liberals scrapped it, but federal Labor has continued to do this work from opposition. In the 2019 statement shadow minister, Tanya Plibersek, explained that Labor has spent the last six years developing the most comprehensive set of gender equality policies ever taken to an election by an opposition.

Labor has done that because equality is at the heart of Labor's mission and will be at the heart of a Labor government, if elected, on 18 May. If elected in May, Labor already has plans to close the gender pay gap and give women a fair go at work. They have committed \$2.6 million to boost women's superannuation. They will invest in parental leave and early childhood education. They will invest in violence prevention and front-line services to finally push down rates of violence against women. Importantly, Labor's committed to reviewing Newstart and to shifting Australia's employment laws from a minimum wage to a living wage.

Labor will legislate so that the Fair Work Commission's highest priority will be making sure no person working full-time in Australia lives in poverty and makes sure that a living wage is informed by the real cost of what it costs to live in Australia to pay for basics such as housing, food and utilities.

We have some of the highest levels of poverty in Australia right here in Tasmania. With the starting gun now fired on the federal election set for 18 May there really is no reason for anyone to vote anything but Labor, in particular women, but all Tasmanians. I urge you to vote Labor if you care about those living in poverty, if you are living in poverty and if you care about making sure no one in Australia or Tasmania need live in poverty in the future.

### **Hon Jim Wilkinson, President of the Legislative Council - Tribute**

[6.09 p.m.]

**Mr HODGMAN** (Franklin - Premier) - Madam Speaker, I place on record, on behalf of the Government, our congratulations to the President of the Legislative Council, Jim Wilkinson, on his last sitting today in this place and our sincere thanks to him for his service as a member for Nelson and latterly Queensborough for some 24 years. We wish Jim, Jill and the family the very best in the next chapter of their lives.

I have had the privilege to know Jim for many years. For as long as I can remember his family have long been very close to mine but I have also had the great joy of working with Jim in two professions. First, in this parliament of course, with him representing a division my grandfather did, but more recently in my time in this place his contribution to this parliament, his very even-tempered approach to the affairs of this place and the role of the Legislative Council and its interaction with the House of Assembly has been greatly appreciated. He is well regarded, I can safely say, by all sides of politics, but is also somebody held in high regard for the effective way in which he helps not only to progress important reforms and improvements to the lives of Tasmanians not only in his electorate but more broadly, but also diffuses what can be politically contentious issues in a disarming way and often with an injection of goof humour, which is something I am sure we will all miss.

He has also been an important driver of reform, improvements to services and amenities in his community and a lot of achievements of which he can be immensely proud. He will be missed in this place but 24 years of service is certainly an extraordinary effort and he is due for some time out of it.

It was even longer in a former career some 26 years ago when I first arrived as an apprentice at law at Wallace, Wilkinson and Webster, a great Tasmanian law firm. Whilst Jim was not my master in my apprenticeship, in many respects he was my first and most important mentor in the legal profession. A lot of my time back then was spent in the Court of Petty Sessions, the Criminal Court and the Supreme Court, which Jim was often in himself as a highly regarded and very effective criminal lawyer. Part of his great skill set comes from the fact that he is down to earth, resonates and connects with people right across our community, and often did so very well in the Court of Petty Sessions and particularly before a jury. He is the most persuasive advocate.

He taught me a lot about the law and it was great fun working with Jim Wilkinson. As you can imagine, there was never a dull moment. He is not the most organised person I have ever worked with, and often he would thrust me right into the deep end, but it was a great learning experience and he is a very highly regarded legal practitioner as well.

We have also had a lot to do with each other over the years in football circles, having both served on the Southern Football League at the same time. He will continue to support our efforts to not only build the sport in Tasmania as the new chair of our recently constructed Tasmanian

Football Board but to also help build the case for a team of our own. I know he is retiring from this place but I have no doubt that he will continue to be active within our community.

He is a lovely bloke. Often in this line of work people might suggest it is not a good thing to be a nice bloke - or a nice woman for that matter - but I think they are wrong. Jim Wilkinson is one of the nicest people you could ever meet and he has made an extraordinary contribution not only to our parliament but to our community.

To Jim, Jill, the kids and the broader Wilkinson family, we say thank you for the time he has given us and I hope you enjoy the time you now get to spend with him.

### **Australian Rowing Championships**

### **Australian Track and Field Championships**

[6.14 p.m.]

**Dr BROAD** (Braddon) - Madam Speaker, I rise to recognise some fantastic sporting achievements from some residents of my electorate of Braddon and also some people I know quite well.

First, I would like to talk about some results from the Australian Rowing Championships that were held at the Sydney Olympic Course during 25-31 March, only a few weeks ago. The first to highlight is an Ulverstone rower, Joseph Wilson, although actually he is from North Motton but formerly with the Ulverstone Rowing Club. He came fourth in the under-21 men's singles, which was a fantastic achievement, but then backed that up by coming first in the under-21 doubles, together with Launceston's Jack Barrett. Winning a race like that at a national level is an exceptional achievement and he should be congratulated and I am sure his parents, Sandra and Michael Wilson would be very happy about his performance because he has a lot of talent and together with Jack Barrett those two could go a long, long way.

There is also Kate Hall, another former member of the Ulverstone Rowing Club. She had an outstanding race to come fifth in the under-21 lightweight women's single, and then Hannah Tippet from Devonport was fourth in that same race, which was also an outstanding achievement. Together they both combined to get third, the bronze medal, in the Australian Championship for the under-23 lightweight double. Hannah Tippet, together with Anneka Reardon, Eve Mure and Georgia Nesbitt had an outstanding race to win the interstate women's lightweight quad scull on behalf of Tasmania. That is an outstanding achievement and they should get a lot of raps for that, because winning an interstate race is a massive achievement for a small state like Tasmania, up against powerhouses like NSW and Victoria. Tasmania's girls in the lightweight women's quad did an outstanding job and they should be very proud. Hannah Tippet from Devonport was one of them.

I would like also like to recognise Hannah's sisters, Prudence and Lydia Tippet, who also competed at the under-17 level at the same regatta, although their results were not as high up the list as their sister. However, I think from experience, going to a national championship is an amazing learning experience and I am sure they will be very good down the track. We also need to recognise the coaches of those crews, some of the people I have mentioned and the parents. Dave Tippet coaches his daughters along with a grandparent, David's father, Merv Tippet, and the grandparent of the girls also is a coach. 'Mersey Merv', as he is known at the national level, is an outstanding ambassador for the sport of rowing. He has been in the sport longer than most people have been alive and now is passing on that wisdom, not only in the past to his son but now to his

grand-daughters. It is these sorts of people who continue to put into the sport who make a sport like rowing so much more special and enjoyable.

I would also like to highlight some fantastic results also in Sydney but this time at the Olympic Park Athletics Centre where athletes competed in the Australian Track and Field Championships between 1 and 7 April. Morgan Gaffney had an outstanding competition where she got thirteenth in the open women's 100 metres, and she was the ninth Australian. For a north-west athlete to be the ninth Australian in such a competitive event like the 100 metres is an outstanding result and then she backed that up by coming eighth in the open women's 200 metres. She made the final in the women's 200 metres, which is an outstanding result for a Tasmanian athlete, and together with the north-west's Abbie Chapman and others from around the state, Kiani Allen and Kiara Calvert, backed up to get second in the women's 4 x 100 metre relay. A Tasmanian team got second at the national championships in the 4 x 100 relay, which is an outstanding achievement, especially noting the level of competition at an event like that.

In some of the underage events, Tom Winkel from Forth got second in the under-15 1500 metres, and then he backed that up by getting seventh in the under-15 800 metres. Tom definitely has a bright future in those longer races. Dion Kenzie had an outstanding competition, getting first in the T38 1500 metres and first again in the T38 800 metres. A fantastic result.

Another young athlete, Chelsea Scolyer, got first in the under-14 100 metres. Chelsea, from Turners Beach, was the fastest under-14 girl in the country and she is from our electorate of Braddon. She backed that up by getting second in the under-14 200 metres. So first and second. If she keeps up the work, she can go a long way. She also got second in the under-14 long jump.

She is not only good at sprinting. She performed in a number of track events, getting fourth in the discus. Not only did Chelsea Scolyer win the 100 metres, get second in the 200 metres and second in the long jump, she got fourth in a power event like the discus. Outstanding results for Chelsea. She should be suitably proud of that.

I will finish where I started in athletics. Morgan Gaffney is a fantastic example for her fellow competitors, her fellow Tasmanians and especially Tasmanian women in athletics. She was quoted as saying, 'It doesn't matter where you're from or what you do, if you do the work you can be successful'. In communications with me she said that all she is looking to do is inspire other female athletes in Tasmania.

Morgan Gaffney, you are doing that by your perseverance, by your work ethic and by your inspiration. You demonstrate what people should do. You are a champion. Even though you may not have medals around your neck, you get medals for inspiring future Tasmanian athletes.

### **Carrick - Bus Services**

[6.22 p.m.]

**Ms BUTLER** (Lyons) - Madam Speaker, I rise in support of Carrick residents who are currently unsatisfied with limited bus services.

I seek leave of the House to table a non-conforming petition which has 138 signatures. With your leave, Madam Speaker, I will table this petition of 138 petitioners calling for better bus services to reflect the growing community of Carrick.



**Mrs Petrusma** - You need to circulate it first so we actually look at it if you are tabling it.

**Ms BUTLER** - With your indulgence, I will read the wording of the petition into the *Hansard* and thank my fellow members in the Chamber for acknowledging the petition -

We the undersigned are requesting that the Metro Bus service be extended from its current terminus at Rutherglen to include the growing population in Carrick. This will allow the youth and elderly to access the facilities of the city and also shop at Prospect.

I support this petition. The 700 residents of Carrick deserve a better bus service so they can access services, schools and employment.

Carrick has no existing regular bus service and if residents want to go into Launceston or Prospect, they must book 24 hours in advance so a bus can detour three kilometres from the current route to pick them up.

A resident born and bred in Carrick has just lost her licence and is looking at selling up and leaving Carrick because she has no way to do her grocery shopping or visit a GP without booking a bus 24 hours in advance. She is an older person and she is stuck in the instance of an emergency. The community obligations of the transport strategy are simply bypassing Carrick. Carrick has no GP, no chemist and limited shops. The people of Carrick deserve a bus service that gives them access to vital services and opens the doors to employment. The community would like to see a regular bus service run through Carrick as the current service is inappropriate and does not meet the current needs of the community.

Many residents of Carrick commute to Launceston for work and would like to have a public transport system that they can rely on. Carrick also has a large older population and high youth unemployment. Carrick residents have been ignored by the Liberal Government and they are now demanding action to have a regular bus service to the township of Carrick.

I congratulate Steve Bolland from the Carrick post office for raising this important issue. I hope the Government will respond to this request and show the people of Carrick the respect and manners that they deserve and take this request seriously.

**Leave granted.**

### **Marine Farming Planning Review Panel - Petuna Fish Farm, Storm Bay**

[6.26 p.m.]

**Dr WOODRUFF** (Franklin) - Madam Speaker, I rise to read back to the House the stink bomb that was quietly delivered by Mr Barnett this morning in question time when he revealed that he has accepted the recommendations of the Marine Farming Planning Review Panel and approved an application by Petuna to set up a massive fish farm off Betsy Island in Storm Bay. This was a sham process, it is a disgrace and I will take the House through the corrupted process that has been used to date.

A recommendation was made by the Marine Farming Planning Review Panel on 30 November and approved by the minister on 2 April. There was a four-month gap there. In the process of

approval for the Marine Farming Planning Review Panel hundreds of people made submissions. There were public hearings that went for days in Hobart. Not a single submission or the public statement made in the hearings process was taken account of when the panel made its deliberation. We can be confident about that because we have had a look at the information that was provided to the panel by marine farming branch, the branch of the department that provided information to the panel on the submissions. They made an assessment about what information the panel should take account of and what it should not. On almost every occasion, the recommendation to the panel was that the representation that had been made or the submission that had been received did not create any need for modification of the draft amendment.

I want to read in the comments that were made by Christine Coughanowr on behalf of the Derwent Estuary Program, which was a bombshell in the hearing process. The Derwent Estuary Program had severe concerns about the impact on the nutrient load on the Derwent River with a proposed 40 000 tonnes of fish excrement going into Storm Bay and up into the Derwent River each year. Their comments make it clear that there is no environmental baseline, that there is no accounting for the impact on the whole system from the Storm Bay proposals. Christine Coughanowr, on behalf of the Derwent Estuary Program, raised concerns about water quality, substrate and fauna, marine vegetation, threatened species, introduced marine pests, climate change, environmental management, recreational fishing, land use and development, marine farm planning practice, and holistic impact assessment. None of these were considered relevant by the department, the Marine Farming Branch, for the panel to take any account of in their assessment of the application.

This is a rubber stamp committee. Only five of the nine panel members were present when the decision was made for the Petuna Storm Bay approval. The panel was meant to have a person with expertise in biosecurity and that person was not there. A person with expertise in fish health, a person with expertise in environmental management, a person nominated by the chairperson of the Tasmanian Planning Commission and a person with boating, recreational and navigational issues. None of those people were on the panel when the recommendation was made by the panel for that particular application for Storm Bay to go ahead. It is a disgrace. It is an outrage. It is a total abuse of a process which the Government pretends to be world's best practice. It is anything but.

What we know is that the threatened screw shell is found in the vicinity of the lease in the survey area. In all likelihood, there will be an investigation of the EPBC impact of that Storm Bay fish farm on that particular animal. The EPA still has its processes to go through.

What is incredibly clear is that there was absolutely nothing that this Government was prepared to listen to in terms of science or community comments, the impact on other industries and the impact on the marine environment about this fish farm expansion going ahead. This is all about opening the door to the industry for access to public waterways, endangering the impact on the marine environment and on people's lives and people's businesses. There is nothing that the Liberal Party is doing to protect anything except the interests of those three big fish farm companies.

It is a shame. People do understand that this Government is not standing up for them or the marine environment. It is only the Greens who are speaking out about this. Labor is lock-step with this position. It is a false idea to imagine that it will benefit anyone other than the industry and its own private profit-making activities.

**The House adjourned at 6.33 p.m.**