

Wednesday 20 March 2019

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

QUESTIONS

Investigation into Alleged Historic Sex Abuse - Mr Rene Hidding

Ms WHITE question to PREMIER, Mr HODGMAN

[10.04 a.m.]

You have desperately tried to convince Tasmanians that you are the leader of a stable majority Government. In fact, you are in charge of a chaotic government that reached such depths of bedlam last week and last month that you took the extraordinary step to prorogue this parliament.

Serious allegations of historic sexual abuse of a child have recently been made against your former ministerial colleague and your choice for the Speaker of this parliament, Mr Hidding, six years after they were first raised in 2013. Can you explain why, after these claims of historic sex abuse were made to the police six years ago, the first person the alleged victim heard from was allegedly Mr Hidding. On 23 February you said you referred this matter to the Tasmania Police.

Can you outline the scope of the current investigation and confirm it will include the events of six years ago, now that these serious allegations have been raised again in both the media and directly with your office?

ANSWER

Madam Speaker, I ask that all members exercise caution in relation to what are serious matters that are appropriately being investigated by Tasmania Police. It is not for me, or any member opposite to direct or seek to influence investigations that should be appropriately undertaken by Tasmania Police.

The Leader of the Opposition in her question referred to one matter being the subject of an allegation, and there are allegations of a serious nature that have been made and which should also be subject to proper process, including investigation, by Tasmania Police.

I make the point as well that Mr Hidding has strenuously denied the allegations made against him and, as any person is entitled to, he has the presumption of innocence.

These are all cornerstone matters that must be considered in the context of this issue.

As I have said, I was first made aware of these matters on reading the reports about them in the newspaper. My prompt, swift action was to refer the matter to the police for them to investigate and for them to determine the nature of that investigation and the scope of it. I will allow them to do so.

In relation to why this matter was not allegedly taken up back in 2013 when it was apparently or allegedly brought to the attention of the police, which I note that they had no record of, is a matter for Tasmania Police.

As that allegation was made in 2013, and the then minister for police was David O'Byrne, perhaps you should ask him.

Investigation into Alleged Historic Sex Abuse - Mr Rene Hidding

Ms WHITE question to PREMIER, Mr HODGMAN

[10.04 a.m.]

Your long-term colleague, Mr Hidding, recently resigned under a significant cloud following an allegation of historic sexual abuse of a child.

Your response to these allegations was typically weak with little regard for the survivor of the alleged claim. Now that these allegations are the focus of a police investigation, can you confirm that you and your staff and other members of your Government and Cabinet are cooperating with police? Have you, your ministerial colleagues or members of your staff, been interviewed by police on this serious matter?

ANSWER

Madam Speaker, I utterly reject any assertion that allegations which, from the outset I have described as very serious, are not being handled appropriately. It is an outrageous and baseless claim by the Leader of the Opposition.

Second, in relation to any inquiry or investigation by the police, I and any other members of Government and staff will assist in those inquiries. I have not been interviewed by Tasmania Police but I expect that any of my colleagues, any of my staff, anyone else who is required to by the police would do so willingly.

This is a most sensitive and serious matter. This again shows the lack of judgment and the lack of leadership by the Leader of the Opposition, that they are so carefree. If they were that concerned about the individuals concerned in this matter, the parties affected by it including the alleged victim, the complainant, then they would not raise this matter in the way that the Leader of the Opposition has this morning.

Climate-Related Fire Events - Resourcing

Ms O'CONNOR question to PREMIER, Mr HODGMAN

[10.08 a.m.]

Last Friday, an estimated 8000 passionate, frightened young Tasmanians gathered on parliament's lawns to demand action on climate.

Yesterday you laid out your Government's agenda for the next three years and climate did not even rate a mention, yet you did touch on the bushfires, without acknowledging climate change,

towards the end of your speech. People have lost their homes and their livelihoods and, as we speak, the Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area is still burning. More than 3 per cent of the state has been torched.

It is a fact that your Government failed to adopt and resource all the recommendations of the Dr Tony Press review and then made a decision to ignore a cost-neutral plan from the Firefighters Union for stronger, more effective remote firefighting response.

This summer is likely to be another scorcher with the Bureau of Meteorology predicting a 70 per cent chance of El Niño event.

Will you commit to ensuring the resourcing that is commended and required to limit the damage caused by climate-related fire events in this May's state budget?

ANSWER

Madam Speaker, I thank the member for Clark for her question.

Of course, climate change is an important issue for this Government, which is why we have released strategies, policies and initiatives to deal with it in a practical way. The Minister for the Environment will have more to say about these matters, as we will as a government over the coming weeks, months and years. We take these matters seriously. We recognise that a government response is appropriate. It is under this Government that we have made not only significant investments dealing with matters relating to our climate and the environment. We were one of the first jurisdictions to be emissions zero. We were actually net emissions state, which is a positive advancement for Tasmania, we are leading the world in many respects, and we intend to continue to do so.

We are increasing our efforts with respect to our fire response. The current fire season will be the subject of a review -

Ms O'Connor - There have already been three reviews.

Madam SPEAKER - Ms O'Connor, warning one.

Mr HODGMAN - appropriately so. We have reacted and responded to the last fire event. One of the most significant things we have done, which is normally the subject of criticism by the Greens, is fuel reduction burning.

Ms O'CONNOR - Point of order, Madam Speaker. The question to the Premier is: will he commit to providing the necessary resources in this May's state budget?

Madam SPEAKER - Thank you. I believe the Premier heard that.

Mr HODGMAN - With our Budget in good shape - much better than it was in your government - we are able to do more, including in responding to the fire threat. We have done so with a \$55 million fuel reduction burn across the state, which the Greens are normally critical of. Whenever there is a burn outside of the fire season they are the first to criticise us. In this case, it has been very clearly suggested that our fuel reduction burns on the west coast prevented a further spread of wild fire. When it comes to the fire season our investment is significant - \$55 million.

You ask us about a commitment in the Budget. If you look at that, it is most significant indeed. It comes in relation to other initiatives that we have undertaken, following the last bushfire event. Certainly, we will do so again following the independent review that is being undertaken in relation to this.

Regarding our wilderness areas, we have a number of initiatives underway to ensure that the research that has been done by the Tasmanian Government with an additional \$4 million in funding is supporting a number of the research project's recommendations. Some have been implemented and others are continuing to be progressed, due to their longer-term nature. The recommendations include: improving bushfire management planning; bushfire risk assessment and modelling; bushfire recovery; developing a model of fire cover; and undertaking planned burning in the TWWHA.

The funding is also contributing to the Tasmanian Government's commitment to meet national and international responsibilities to protect the outstanding, universal value of the TWWHA. A committee meeting comprising representatives from DPIPWE, the TFS and the Department of Premier and Cabinet meets quarterly to monitor implementation of the recommendations.

One of the key outputs of the work currently being conducted is a comprehensive TWWHA fire management plan that will contain: clear objectives for fire management in the TWWHA; clarity regarding circumstances in which priority will be given to protecting the outstanding, universal value of the TWWHA over built assets; clear objectives for the management burning in the TWWHA, including indigenous and burning practices; and framework for monitoring impacts of bushfires and planned burns in the TWWHA.

The Parks and Wildlife Service is also reviewing its immediate, medium- and long-term fire suppression capabilities; reviewing the research program on fire on natural and cultural heritage values; enhancing its risk assessment tools, including the bushfire risk assessment model and bushfire operational hazard model; revision mapping outlying vegetation communities and other fire-sensitive vegetation communities in the TWWHA; and conducting rehabilitation trials in areas of the TWWHA that were impacted by the 2016 fire.

Ms O'Connor was part of a government that cut services. We have invested heavily, resourcing our firefighters to better prevent and fight fires. This includes an unprecedented \$55 million in fuel reduction strategies to decrease the bushfire risk in Tasmania, which was not done under the former government. These are a number of specific issues that we are taking to protect our wilderness areas from fire. We have done more to invest in our firefighting capabilities across the board. We are able to better do so because our budget is now back in a strong condition and our economy is strong. As we have said in our plan, we will continue to do it.

Liberal Government - Plans

Mr SHELTON question to PREMIER, Mr HODGMAN

[10.15 a.m.]

Can you inform the House about the Liberal Government's plans for the next 12 months to ensure that all Tasmanians benefit from the progress made under the majority Liberal Government over the past five years.

ANSWER

Madam Speaker, it is a reminder to the House of the agenda that we have set ourselves for the year ahead, but also our longer-term vision to not only ensure that Tasmania's strong economic conditions continue so that more Tasmanians will feel included and participate in what is one of the country's strongest performing economies.

Any political party worth its salt, whether it be in government or opposition produces a plan. It outlines what it stands for and it sticks by it - as we do with all our plans. We went to the election last year with an update. It was very much consistent with our previous plan to keep our economy strong, to get our budget back into good strong shape and to be able to invest more into health, education, essential services, and keeping cost of living pressures down, which we have done, and also ensuring that we are building the infrastructure that our state needs.

We were returned to Government just over a year ago. We are getting on with the job of delivering our plan. Yesterday I outlined some of the key elements of our plan. My ministers and members will take the opportunity during the debate on the Premier's Address to outline further detail about a number of policy initiatives. There are 286 actions and milestones that we will be held to account for.

Mr Bacon - Two hundred and eighty-six - he has given birth to six overnight.

Mr HODGMAN - It is 286 more than you have.

Madam SPEAKER - Order. We are 15 minutes into debating. The public expects us to have sound, intelligent debating skills. All we are getting is rambling, rants, screaming, yelling - from both sides. I ask everyone to behave. I do not want to throw you out, but I will.

Mr HODGMAN - Madam Speaker, we will not be distracted by the policy vacuum. The Leader of the Opposition dares to come into this place, or outside, and talk about strength in leadership. This is from a political party that, in this year, rather than produce its own agenda has chosen to wipe the slate clean, to leave all policy options open and say there is nothing it can do to deliver anything because it is in opposition. It points to the inability of this opposition party to lead or have any strength of conviction in what it stands for.

We are prepared to outline it. We are prepared to be held to account for it. We report quarterly on our progress against these milestones - it is what good governments do. We have a business plan, a work plan, that covers all our priorities, what we stand for, and what we intend to deliver over the next 12 months.

Our economy is strong and we want to keep it that way. We want more Tasmanians to participate in it. That is why we are now, as a government, approaching all we do through a lens that is all about strategic growth, ensuring that young Tasmanians, wherever they live, have the opportunity for training, education and a good job - a good opportunity for those wherever they live. Our regional areas should also enjoy the benefits of a strong economy, whether in our agricultural sector or in energy, in our salmon industry or our fantastic tourism industry, all of which are growing strongly.

We intend to keep it that way, but we want more Tasmanians being able to participate in that. We will do so by strongly collaborating with non-government partners, whether it is the TCCI or

TasCOSS, the University of Tasmania and business and industry leaders as well as community services leaders across the state. We will engage with them more as we intend to deliver our plan swiftly, effectively and in a way that brings Tasmanians together and keep us focusing on what is important.

Already today we have seen what this year holds for this parliament and the contributions that will be made by the respective parties. We are talking about what Tasmanians are interested in - better health care, more housing, a strong economy and a budget that can invest more into reducing road congestion. We are actually tackling these issues, tackling challenges, accepting them and seizing the opportunities.

I guarantee you, Madam Speaker, that we will hold the Opposition to account because they stand for nothing and they have no policies. They have taken the opportunity at the start of this year to wipe the policy slate clean and declare how useless they are in achieving anything positive for Tasmanians, because the Leader of the Opposition herself has said they have no ability to deliver in this place.

Climate Change - Emission Reduction Strategy

Dr WOODRUFF question to PREMIER, Mr HODGMAN

[10.20 a.m.]

The United Nations has given us until 2030 to dramatically cut carbon emissions and stabilise our climate or risk the world warming more than 1.5 degrees. Scientists are telling us in very clear language that the impacts on human survival of not doing this are dire. Your Premier's Address did not mention climate change once.

This is a clear betrayal of all Tasmanians, especially the 8000 children who left school last Friday to tell you, the Premier of Tasmania, that we are in a climate emergency. They are demanding that you show leadership and courage and treat this as a crisis, but you did not mention climate change and you barely touched on the impact of the recent massive bushfires.

Will you recognise that Tasmania, like every country on the planet, is in a climate emergency? Will you immediately focus your efforts to dramatically cut emissions across all sectors to keep carbon in the ground, to prepare communities for the ever-increasing extreme climate and to pivot our economy to a zero-carbon future?

ANSWER

Madam Speaker, I accept it is an important issue and worthy of scrutiny in this place. I am happy to advise members about what this Government is doing to deal with what is a serious issue that requires very local action, international action and, of course, a state response. We have in many respects been a leader in responding to climate change, not just in tackling climate change itself but also in advancing our renewable energy capabilities, which helps considerably. In climate science and research we have internationally renowned people working and assisting business, industry and government as well.

The Australian Government has released its annual state and territory greenhouse gas inventories for the 2016 reporting period. The report showed Tasmania is the first jurisdiction in

Australia to achieve zero net emissions. The total emissions for 2016 were at minus-0.61 megatonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent, which is a 100 per cent decrease from the 1990 baseline level.

Greens members interjecting.

Mr HODGMAN - This is a matter of international significance which I hope you will take the opportunity to inform anyone about, including those passionate young Tasmanians, because I am sure when you speak to them you do not tell them that we are leading the world.

Our Climate Change Action Plan 2017-2021 sets the Tasmanian Government's agenda for action on climate change through to 2021. It is an important matter. It will be further discussed by the minister during the debate in response to my address yesterday.

Our actions speak louder than words and we are making considerable progress. In fact there are 37 actions contained within Climate Action 21 and they grouped into six priority areas: understanding our future climate; advancing our renewable energy capability; reducing our transport emissions; growing a climate-ready economy; building climate resilience; and supporting community action.

We allocated \$3 million in the 2017 -18 Budget to deliver a range of new initiatives to respond to climate change and to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Under Climate Action 21, actions focus on climate change research, improving energy efficiency, reducing transport emissions, supporting our local businesses and local government and communities to take action. There are a number of actions contained within that report which I draw to the attention of the member who asked the question. We are doing a lot to respond to an important issue worthy of being raised in this place. It is worthy of considerable public debate and discussion. I hope it is done on the basis of information and fact and looking at the record of what we are actually delivering.

Investigation into Alleged Historic Sex Abuse - Mr Rene Hidding

Ms WHITE question to PREMIER, Mr HODGMAN

[10.25 a.m.]

Are you concerned that the survivor of alleged sexual abuse by the former member for Lyons contacted police in 2013 but there is no record of any investigation or of the complaint? The most startling and disturbing claim as a result of this complaint being made is that the alleged perpetrator subsequently contacted the woman. What have you done to ensure there is a process in place to investigate any misconduct or abuse of power, or indeed cover-up, so that Tasmanians who are reporting allegations of crime to police can be confident those complaints will be followed up appropriately?

ANSWER

Madam Speaker, I certainly have no evidence or information before me that would substantiate a claim of a cover-up that the Leader of the Opposition has included in her question. Any allegations that point to any inappropriate handling of any matter, particularly of a sensitive nature such as this, one that is the subject of police inquiry, will be perhaps the subject of other inquiry by other

appropriate agencies who should be allowed to undertake those without any political interference or game-playing, or any tainting of the matter before the police and possibly other authorities.

It is not appropriate for the Leader of the Opposition to come in here and make baseless claims about such a sensitive matter. If the Opposition was that concerned about the person who made the complaint, who they characterise as a victim, they would not raise it or characterise it in the way they have done. To describe them as a survivor of an alleged event shows either the deliberate ignorance of the Opposition or simply a desire to stir things up unnecessarily and without foundation and in no way assist any party to these proceedings.

At no time was I made aware of the nature of any such allegations. When they were brought to my attention they were referred immediately or very swiftly to Tasmania Police to undertake those inquiries. If the Leader or any of the members have any matters of substance they are able to contribute to advance this matter and to allow proper process to occur, they and indeed any other person or party should do so. When you keep asking me about what happened back in 2013 with the police, why don't you ask David O'Byrne, who was then the minister?

Royal Hobart Hospital - Stage 2 Benefits

Mrs RYLAH question to MINISTER for HEALTH, Mr FERGUSON

[10.28 a.m.]

Yesterday the Premier, together with this 286-point document, released the 30-year master plan for the Royal Hobart Hospital. What benefits will the \$91 million stage 2 have for the delivery of health services in Tasmania?

ANSWER

Madam Speaker, I welcome back the member for Braddon, Mrs Rylah. It is great to have Joan Rylah back in the Tasmanian Parliament. Madam Speaker, I join you, and I am sure all members, in welcoming her back. I know she will make a wonderful contribution, including in health.

We are all interested in health. I am supporting a strong vision for the future. We have delivered 130 beds in the Tasmanian community in our first term. We have reversed all of Labor's cuts and we are investing in the future.

Now that we are actually delivering the hospital that had been promised for 20 years - 2019 it is the year of delivery for K Block - we wanted to refresh the master plan, as we promised at the election to do. I am pleased that yesterday the Premier was able to announce that we have adopted every single one of the recommendations from the Clinical Planning Taskforce.

We have a very strong plan. We have budgeted commitments to deliver almost 300 new beds and the staff to open those. That has won the support of the Tasmanian people at the election. It is no wonder Tasmanians voted for our plan because it was much bigger, much better, and much bolder than the Labor Party's alternative for any one of its seven versions.

Importantly, a key component of our policy was to update the Royal Hobart Hospital master plan as well as that for the LGH and we are doing that. We are committed to doing this because we are focused on planning for the long-term future of our health system. It is very important that we

plan for the long term. Our community deserves nothing less, and our workforce deserves nothing less. I am pleased that the Government's Clinical Planning Taskforce, chaired by our chief medical officer, Professor Tony Lawler, was given the job of conducting this work. They have done a great job and have consulted wide and deep with the clinical community. Professor Lawler's taskforce has consulted comprehensively with staff and stakeholders looking at what we need for the future and how we can better meet demand with our facilities because demand is well up.

In line with our commitment, the Premier yesterday released the master plan, a 30-year vision in six stages so that we have a well determined and carefully planned vision for the future. As I have said, this Government has accepted every single recommendation made by the taskforce. We have listened to the experts; we now have the plan and we are getting on with the job of delivering that plan, and unlike the Labor Party that wanted us to up-end K Block, we actually wanted to listen to the experts, not play silly politics with health.

Just as the Premier has confirmed yesterday, unlike Labor's false claim, the Government is in fact funding all of stage 2, the \$91 million for stage 2, for crucial improvements to our emergency department and also to support our rollout of 250 beds. I will take us through those briefly:

One, a new second dedicated patient lift to connect the ED to medical imaging and J Block. That is a dedicated patient lift which we are funding, an expansion of the emergency department. That is a good thing to meet growing patient demand for a facility which is overcrowded and too small.

A comprehensive refurbishment of A Block which will provide contemporary space for additional beds, well overdue.

An expansion of the ICU, which was in our election policy, in its current location providing space for another 10 beds on the same floor - it is important to be on the same level - by 2024, and retaining close physical linkage to medical imaging -

Members interjecting.

Mr FERGUSON - You wanted us to split the ICU over two levels.

Also a refit of the soon to be vacated J Block to meet additional demand, and we want to provide opportunity for new clinical uses and help carry the load.

I am pleased to say, because of the way we have gone about consulting and listening on this new master plan, we enjoy the strong support from all of the key stakeholders. I quote the AMA:

Today's announcement is a positive step forward, and we commend the government on the approach they have taken to listening to doctors, health professionals and the community on what is required for the next steps in the redevelopment of the RHH.

They went on to say:

We welcome the fact the Government has completed and delivered on its commitment to release the master plan to the community and further, has seen fit

to fund \$91 million to ensure that stage 2 can commence; this is good news for health in Tasmania.

The Government is proud to be delivering these health facilities. Politicians have talked for 20 years about a redevelopment of the Royal. It is this Hodgman Liberal Government that laid the first brick and this year we are delivering that important project.

We are not going to stop there. We want to continue because it is a multi-stage approach over the long term for the whole of the campus and the dual campus model, taking into account the Repatriation site.

I am very thankful for all the work that Professor Lawler and his colleagues have done. I say a special thank you on behalf of Government to the southern reference group members who were keen contributors. They helped us solve this complex puzzle and the Government today makes it very clear. Stage 2 is funded. We are going to get on and start those works and we are planning for them.

I hope that Labor might retreat from its foolish approach of attempting to upend mental health, to shoot ICU into K Block which, on the clinical advice of experts, would be a huge mistake and instead support our strong plan, support our health vision, get on board and take the politics out of health as I have asked you to do numerous times.

Health Workers - Proposed Industrial Action

Ms WHITE question to PREMIER, Mr HODGMAN

[10.35 a.m.]

The health and hospital system remain in crisis and, on top of this, health staff rightfully feel utterly disrespected by your Government.

On 14 March your Health minister threatened health workers that if they carried out industrial action - their last resort to finally get a fair and reasonable pay increase from your Government - they would be punished. In this press release Michael Ferguson said, and I quote:

Where duties aren't performed, industrial measures including pay reductions and stand downs will be pursued.

Do you agree with the threat from the Minister for Health that nurses and some of Tasmania's lowest paid health workers, including cleaners, will be stood down if they continue with industrial action?

ANSWER

Madam Speaker, I can assure the Leader of the Opposition, Tasmanians and especially our hardworking public servants, whether in our hospitals or schools, who are keeping our community safe, we are negotiating in very good faith. We have come to the table with an offer that has a revision upwards of our wages policy that includes additional entitlements, allowances, conditions for our public servants all of which also comes at a cost and must be factored into these negotiations. We have tabled offers which we want the unions to consider in good faith. We want the union

leaders to talk to their members and get their views and also come back with an offer of their own because we have come to the table with an improved offer. We ask them to do the same and not be intransigent and simply say we are sticking to our wages policy.

Ms WHITE - Point of order, Madam Speaker. It is standing order 45. I ask if you could draw the Premier's attention to the question which was, does he support standing down workers if they continue with industrial action?

Madam SPEAKER - As you know that is not a point of order. I am sure the Premier is about to address that issue.

Mr HODGMAN - I am. I am also providing the context against which the Opposition Leader has framed her question: that is whether we are supportive of our public servants and are helping them to get on with the job of delivering services for Tasmanians, to do so with a wage but also other conditions, allowances, entitlements that are fair, that are reasonable and that are affordable. We think that is an entirely reasonable proposition.

The other point I will make is that, when it comes to any action instigated by union leaders, the Tasmanian Government will respond appropriately. We will not do so in a way that is outside the law, or agreements that have been struck with our workforce, or in any way that compromises Tasmanians, whether it be their safety, their amenities, or the receipt of services to which they are entitled. When it comes to those, as a Government we are very firmly of the view that we would ask union leaders to ensure that their members are not put into a position, or not asked, to do something that would in any way disrupt services for Tasmanians. When it comes to issues like public safety or the treatment of Tasmanians in hospital we would prioritise those things and urge union leaders to do the same.

Over the summer period on this matter all we have seen from the Opposition is more incitement, more encouragement for union leaders to ask their members, their public servants, to do things that could endanger Tasmanians. We saw a couple of frightening proposals over the summer which thankfully were withdrawn that went to safety on our roads, for example. It did not stop the Opposition parties saying go for it, whatever it takes, get on with the job of disrupting this Government and ensuring that those services that Tasmanians need are not delivered. It was another glaring example of political opportunism, pure politicking, and it puts Tasmanians at risk. That is a disgraceful thing for you to do. I have greater faith that the union leaders would do no such thing. We will always ensure that Tasmanians' interests are first and foremost and that includes our public servants.

We have brought forward a revised offer. I have met with union leaders, as has the Treasurer, to say we are prepared to compromise and to provide an improved offer. What will they propose in return? It has to be affordable and sustainable because we are not going to go into debt to fund wages. We will not do that. We are not going to allow our budget to be wrecked by reckless fiscal policies that the Opposition might propose we do. We want more public servants working in our hospitals and schools.

That is part of the issue as well. If we are able to continue to manage our budget well, provide a revised offer with improved conditions and wages for our public servants, we will also be able to get on with putting more professionals into our schools, our hospitals and into public safety. It will be a win for the public service and their union leaders and it will be a win for the Tasmanian community.

Mr O'BYRNE - Point of order, Madam Speaker, on relevance. The question was about whether he backs the Health minister in standing workers down and punishing workers for taking legal industrial action.

Madam SPEAKER - I am glad you got to repeat your question but it is not a point of order.

Gaming Industry - Plan for the Future

Mr TUCKER question to TREASURER, Mr GUTWEIN

[10.41 a.m.]

Can the Treasurer update the House on the Hodgman majority Liberal Government's plan for the future of gaming in Tasmania and is the Treasurer aware of any alternative visions?

ANSWER

Madam Speaker, I thank Mr Tucker for his question and his interest in this matter. I welcome him to this House and I welcome Mrs Rylah back to this House.

Ms O'Connor - Stop smirking while you talk about a policy that will lead to enormous harm. You are smirking while talking about an evil policy.

Mr GUTWEIN - I am not smirking.

Ms O'Connor - Yes you are. You can't help yourself, can you?

Mr GUTWEIN - On this issue there is some common ground, which is unusual for me and you, but both of us believe that this lot stands for nothing.

In the lead-up to the 2018 election the Government put forward a comprehensive plan for the future of Tasmania. Tasmanians clearly liked what they saw and the return of the Hodgman Government was a resounding endorsement of that plan. As part of that plan we put forward a sensible and considered policy for the future of the gaming industry in Tasmania. We proposed a modern, balanced approach to the future of the gaming market from 2023 onwards, whilst recognising that the vast majority of Tasmanians gamble responsibly. Our policy will facilitate a sustainable industry and supports freedom of choice, minimises harm and backs the future of jobs in the industry.

In comparison, Labor's approach was a shambles - that is the only way you can describe it. In the lead-up to the election, after months of internal division on the issue, the Leader of the Opposition locked herself and her fellow candidates into a policy that was based purely on politics, not principle. The policy that was put forward by those opposite is now widely understood to have been a last-minute thought bubble that was not based on principle or any deep policy, considerations or belief, but was put forward by a desperate Leader in a desperate attempt to win votes.

Labor obviously did not learn their lesson from being in government with the Greens and they decided to try it again and cosied right up to them. The recently demoted Leader of Government Business -

Mr O'Byrne - Who? You can't even get the title right.

Mr GUTWEIN - Last night someone said to me that he looked a bit like a short Sean Connery but I said he was more like a tall Papa Smurf, to be honest.

Mr O'Byrne - Is that right, Dr Evil?

Madam SPEAKER - I think you deserved that one, Treasurer. Could we please stop the personal attacks?

Mr GUTWEIN - Madam Speaker, Mr O'Byrne was sensibly calling for the policy to be reviewed as early as election night, undoubtedly positioning himself for a future tilt. We saw a moment ago that he had to ask the Leader of the Opposition's question again because he obviously did not think she had it right the first time. We know and they know, as does the rest of Tasmania, that Ms White's signature election policy was all about the politics; not about personal beliefs and certainly not based on principle.

The member who asked the question, Mr Tucker, sought an update on the Government's policy. That policy was to end the monopoly, to introduce a venue licensing model, increase the CSL and the future project team has been undertaking a comprehensive financial analysis of the current industry and the impact of various tax and licence settings on industry participants. This work is complex and ongoing and the Government will shortly be engaging the relevant stakeholders on the issues of tax rates, licence fees and licence terms.

Regarding the termination of the deed, I can inform the House that the Government will be meeting our election commitment of a new gaming framework being in operation from July 2023 and that the current arrangements will be terminated by legislation. I have recently written to the chairman of Federal Group advising him that it is the Government's intention to table legislation early next year which will give effect to the Government's policy to end the current exclusivity arrangements and put in place a new framework from 30 June 2023.

This will ensure that the industry is provided with certainty moving forward. The deed will not be extinguished until the new framework is in place and the legislation is passed by both Houses of the parliament. Ending the current arrangements through legislation rather than by notice under the deed will ensure that the industry has the certainty to continue to invest and employ more Tasmanians as the status quo will continue to apply until the new gaming framework is in place for the industry post-2023.

Health Workers - Proposed Industrial Action

Ms WHITE question to PREMIER, Mr HODGMAN

[10.47 a.m.]

Can you confirm any other time in Tasmania's history where nurses have been stood down over an industrial dispute?

ANSWER

Madam Speaker, I thank the member for her question. No, I cannot, but the point has been made that under this Government we have employed more health professionals. There are hundreds

more now in our system, which is a great thing and it is only possible because our budget is back under control. We are investing more into essential services and the best way to do that is to put more people into them working in a system that has the infrastructure and the governance it needs. We have moved to ensure that the governance of our health and hospital system is the best it can be and have also got on with the job of delivering on the infrastructure upgrades that these valued public servants work in.

We are progressing the Royal Hobart Hospital redevelopment, which did not have a single brick laid under the former government, and are investing in additional support around it as we have outlined following the release of the master plan yesterday. When you go up north and see what is happening at the LGH, as I did recently with the minister, it is fantastic to see the expansion of our hospital facilities. On the north-west coast new facilities and services are underway and we were able to secure the Mersey with an agreement struck with the federal government to ensure it remains a part of our health network, as well as a new hospital opening on the east coast at St Helens.

This is a fair indication of the investments we are making. We have more health professionals in our health system. We have offers before our union leaders to improve wages, terms, conditions and entitlements. Yes, we expect as a whole-of-government to manage our budget well and offset with greater efficiency and productivity, which is also important. We want more nurses working in our health system. We want them to be able to get on with the job that they are passionate about and which we are supporting, as I have outlined. I reject the characterisations of the Leader of the Opposition who offers nothing by way of her own policy on these matters. There is no alternative policy; there is no policy on wages that I can see.

I am not sure if your position is to give the unions whatever they want. Is that your policy position?

Ms White - We would have talked to them nine months ago.

Mr HODGMAN - Is that your policy position? Give them whatever they want?

We are responsible; we are negotiating in good faith. We are improving our offer; we invite unions to come back with one of their own.

Ms O'Byrne - You have got us into this mess. Fair negotiations.

Member suspended

Member for Bass - Ms O'Byrne

Madam SPEAKER - Order. I have been incredibly indulgent because it is very passionate issue for many in this room. Unfortunately, Ms O'Byrne, I have to send you out for 10 minutes. I ask everyone on the Opposition side, as well as a few of the colleagues on the right, to calm down and adhere to the rules.

Ms O'Byrne withdrew.

Traffic Issues - Hobart

Mr SHELTON question to MINISTER for INFRASTRUCTURE, Mr ROCKLIFF

[10.51 a.m.]

Can the minister update the House on how the Hodgman majority Liberal Government plans to tackle the challenge of the growing traffic in Hobart? Is the minister aware of any alternative plans?

ANSWER

Madam Speaker, I thank the member for his genuine interest in a very important matter.

Last year, the majority Hodgman Liberal Government focused on delivering our plan to address the issues Tasmanians care most about. We have delivered results.

The Labor Opposition can pull all the stunts they like. While they complained we governed. While they have talked and whinged, we have delivered. As the Government's Agenda 2019 clearly shows, we are getting on with the job in the infrastructure area. At the crux of this, is our 10-year \$13.90 billion plan; the first every infrastructure pipeline that maps out our planned infrastructure works, which is giving investors and industry the certainty that they need to invest in Tasmania.

This week the Premier has reaffirmed our commitment to tackling the challenge of growing traffic in our capital city. We recognise the pressure on Hobart's roads. We have a clear plan for the short, the medium and the long term to address this challenge. We are now bringing forward \$1 million in this year's Budget to allow the investigations to commence on alternative routes through Hobart. This work will consider all possible options whether it be bypass roads, tunnels, or a mix of both. They are long-term intergenerational infrastructure projects, which acknowledge that in the future Hobart's existing traffic network in the CBD will reach its practical limits. The signs of this are already being felt by Hobart commuters. There is no single simple solution to reducing traffic congestion. We are working to ensure that we are in a position to find the best possible approaches, consult with the community and all stakeholders and be ready to make a start as soon as practical.

We will also continue to progress our commitment to a Bellerive to Sullivans Cove ferry service, with planning for the landside infrastructure for a seven-day-a-week service, supported by investments in park-and-ride facilities, linkages with bus services, cycle ways and walking paths. A ferry service will not only support commuters, but our growing tourism market as well.

We are also continuing to progress the other elements of our election policy. A tender for investigation of the new Hobart bus transit centre has been released. Planning for a bus priority lane is underway, including building a fifth lane on the Southern Outlet to help get buses through the traffic more easily.

We have already made improvements to traffic signal coordination on Macquarie and Davey streets. We are working on other changes, like real-time congestion monitoring and information, and a better system to clear breakdowns more quickly to make traffic flow better.

The member also asked if I was aware of any other alternative plans. The answer to that question is no, I am not. The Opposition and particularly the newly demoted traffic person, Mr O'Byrne, has no plan.

Mr O'Byrne - No wonder I have been demoted.

Mr ROCKLIFF - You have been demoted, along with the member you are sitting next to, Ms White - as well as being ejected from the Chamber today.

I am aware of a stream of relentless negativity from the member; the conspiracy theories, the personal attacks being constantly concocted by the recently again demoted Opposition spokesperson, Mr O'Byrne. Mr O'Byrne is desperate for relevance. He is so desperate for relevance that this morning he produced a media release congratulating none other but himself.

Members interjecting.

Mr ROCKLIFF - Thank you, Mr O'Byrne for recognising our pipeline of works. It is the first time you have acknowledged that we have, for the first time ever in Tasmania, a 10-year pipeline of works for infrastructure and capital investment, providing certainty to those civil contractors. We have \$8 billion-worth of public investments; another \$6 million of private investment which bodes well for the future.

We have a budget in surplus. A strong financial management is allowing us to invest record amounts in infrastructure to create jobs and grow the economy. We took a strong plan to the election. We are focused on delivering that plan and we are getting on with the job.

Health Workers - Proposed Industrial Action

Ms WHITE question to PREMIER, Mr HODGMAN

[10.57 a.m.]

The fact is that nurses have never been stood down in Tasmania. Your minister has threatened not only to stand nurses down, but also to dock their pay if they continue industrial action. The only time that nurses have been stood down in Australia was in 1986 in Victoria, a decision that led to 5000 nurses marching on the Parliament. Will you pull your minister into line and today rule out standing nurses down?

ANSWER

Madam Speaker, I thank the member for the question. I do not recall the rally to which she refers in her question. I do remember close to 10 000 people rallying in opposition to what Labor and the Greens were doing when they were in government - permanently standing down close to 300 Tasmanian nurses. That is what happened under a Labor-Greens government. You stood them down permanently. You sacked them. You took away their jobs and left Tasmania's health system reeling as a result.

We are investing more in our health system. That includes employing more nurses and health professionals. We have come to the table in very good faith, saying we want to negotiate with

unions and their leaders. I note that the firefighters have confirmed that not only are they wanting to continue good faith negotiations, but they are going to stop any industrial action.

Ms WHITE - Point of order, Madam Speaker. Standing Order 45 goes to relevance. I draw the Premier's attention to the fact that we are talking about nurses. I asked him to rule out standing any down. It is a very simple question. If he cannot answer it, then we can only conclude that he supports standing them down and docking their pay.

Madam SPEAKER - That is not a point of order. However, I am sure the Premier has something in his mind that he might like to share.

Mr HODGMAN - Madam Speaker, I make the point that other union leaders are prepared to continue to negotiate in good faith and desist from industrial action that would disrupt public services and potentially not only inconvenience, but perhaps compromise the safety and wellbeing of Tasmanians in the process.

When it comes to health care, we will not allow that to happen. Our priority is ensuring that our hospitals are running smoothly. If it is suggested that elective surgery be cancelled, for example, and that Tasmanians suffer as a result of industrial action being undertaken, when we have an improved offer on the table, of course we will consider what options are available - not only to remind union leaders, members and staff what is expected and required of them but also to inform them of the potentially serious impacts of what is being suggested.

It might be okay for an all care no responsibility Opposition to just say do whatever it takes, take whatever action you want. We cannot allow that to happen because it could compromise public patient safety. We are not going to allow that to happen - we have no plans to do such a thing.

Our plan is to negotiate a good outcome and you get a good outcome with union leaders so that we can get on with the job. We want our union leaders and the Opposition - perhaps that is asking a little too much - to be reasonable and to come back with a counter-offer. We have put an improved offer on the table and it is a matter for them now to consider and I would suggest revert to us with an offer of their own. Then we can get on with the job of employing more staff, getting our hospital system servicing patients more regularly, assisting those public servants in a way that union leaders have asked of us by reducing workload pressures and by employing more staff. There is a range of other measures that we have publicly outlined that would go to not only improved conditions but also importantly to improve productivity and efficiency in our public service as well, which is not an unreasonable thing to ask.

This Government is all about progressing our positive agenda and that includes delivering good health care. We want our union leaders and the opposition parties to respect the fact that that is our paramount responsibility and priority here. We want to remind our union leaders as well that any action that they propose and that may be encouraged by the opposition parties that could compromise that objective will be resisted by the Government because we will not allow industrial action particularly when other unions, like the firefighters and I give them due credit, the firefighters have come back and said they want to negotiate in good faith. They will stop industrial action. They want to consider not only what we have put forward but also perhaps what they might offer and that is a positive way to reach a compromise position.

We have increased our wages policy for revision in the context of other initiatives that we have brought forward. It is now for our union leaders, I would respectfully suggest, to do the same and

they can do all of that without in any way interfering with the operations of our hospitals or essential services that Tasmanians deserve. They can make their point in other ways without in any way compromising public health and patient safety and it will certainly be our priority not only to achieve that outcome but also, we are optimistically expecting a positive outcome with unions.

Health Workers - Proposed Industrial Action

Ms WHITE question to PREMIER, Mr HODGMAN

[11.03 a.m.]

Five years after he took over as the minister and started creating havoc in the health system, Mr Ferguson is now openly attacking and threatening the staff who have been holding our hospitals together under his watch. Was the decision to threaten nurses and other health staff with docking their pay and standing them down a decision made by your Cabinet? Did you authorise the Health Minister, Mr Ferguson to make this threat and do you agree with it?

ANSWER

Madam Speaker, I thank the member for the question. I acknowledge the commitment, the dedication and the perseverance of our Health Minister who is into his fifth year.

He has not been relieved of duty as Opposition Labor members previous ministers begged for, either voluntarily or by demotion. We are a Government that sticks the course and are committed to what we have set out to do unlike Opposition parties including the Leader of the Opposition who could not even hack being the Opposition spokesperson on health matters, but handballed that away.

We stand by the position that has been taken for the department to take advice on a range of industrial matters to ensure public safety. We stand by the fact that we want to understand entirely what the unions might propose and how that will affect Tasmanians because our priority is public safety. I certainly back the Health Minister, I back our principal objective. Yours is to play politics. Ours is patient safety and we will always put that first.

Time expired.

MESSAGE FROM THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

Resumption of Proceedings on Bills

Madam SPEAKER - Honourable members, I am in receipt of a message from the Legislative Council which I shall ask the Clerk of the House to read:

The Legislative Council, having taken into consideration the Message of the House of Assembly requesting the resumption of proceedings on the following Bills last Session, has agreed to resume proceedings on the said Bills at the stage at which they were interrupted by the prorogation of Parliament on 26 February 2019 -

Corrections Amendment (Prisoner Remission) Bill (Bill No. 15 of 2018);
Gas Industry Bill (Bill No. 40 of 2018);

Gas Safety Bill (Bill No. 41 of 2018);
Gas (Consequential Amendments) Bill (Bill No. 42 of 2018);
Mental Health Amendment Bill (Bill No. 43 of 2018);
Justice and Related Legislation (Marriage Amendments) Bill (Bill No. 47 of 2018);
Security and Investigations Agents Amendment Bill (Bill No. 51 of 2018);
Supreme Court Civil Procedure Amendment Bill (Bill No. 52 of 2018);
Energy Co-ordination and Planning Amendment Bill (Bill No. 57 of 2018); and
Community, Health, Human Services and Related Legislation Bill (Miscellaneous Amendments) (Bill No. 58 of 2018).

J S Wilkinson, President,
Legislative Council,
19 March 2019.

RIGHT TO INFORMATION AMENDMENT BILL 2019 (No. 8)

First Reading

Bill presented by **Ms Haddad** and read the first time.

WORKERS REHABILITATION AND COMPENSATION AMENDMENT (PRESUMPTION AS TO CAUSE OF DISEASE) BILL 2019 (No. 7)

First Reading

Bill presented by **Ms Courtney** and read the first time.

MATTER OF PUBLIC IMPORTANCE

Access to Regional Bus Services

[11.09 a.m.]

Ms BUTLER (Lyons) - Madam Speaker, I rise to speak to this very important topic; access to regional bus services being compromised quite significantly recently due to the Project 2018 changes. We know that bus routes and timetables have changed in southern Tasmania since the Project 2018 review of existing services by the Department of State Growth. Operators including Metro, Tassielink, Redline and O'Driscoll Coaches Derwent Valley Link, provide the services for different regions as contracted by the Department of State Growth.

The recent changes were yet another attack on regional services and regional communities by this Government. Project 2018 was sold by the minister in glowing terms, and in press statements there were claims of a broad community engagement process supporting the development of general access bus services across our regional areas.

Though some consultation was undertaken with existing bus operators and local communities, overall the changes to the regional communities caused overwhelming chaos. It became evident

very quickly that communities such as the Derwent Valley, South Arm, Kempton, Oatlands, Sorell, Dodges Ferry, Dunalley, Triabunna, Swansea, Midway Point, Primrose Sands and Hamilton, just to name a few, were not consulted effectively and the outcomes of those changes caused a lot of chaos to some people in those communities. Hundreds of commuters and school students were not consulted. People in rural communities were forced back into their cars, providing more congestion. How can this be a well thought-through strategy when the Project 2018 solution only added to the problem?

The department made insufficient contact with many schools in those remote areas. They had no idea about the number of students using buses, they did not understand the ages of the students using those bus services, and they also did not understand the interlinks whereby students had to leave one bus to catch another. The changes meant some school students were arriving at school at 9.20 a.m. and in some examples having no possible way of arriving at school at all.

The main problem I found was that the Government almost stopped communicating with the general public about this. One of the main sources of information was coming from the public to us out of frustration because they were getting nothing from the minister's office and barely anything from the core department. What it boils down to is that this Government does not understand how people commute to work from rural areas and how much trust they place in the transport infrastructure to get their children to school and them to work on time, and how important that service is to those remote communities.

The Government simply was not listening when hundreds of residents from regions across Tasmania contacted the minister. Many calls were not answered or were ignored. Once more the Government was happy for frontline workers to bear the brunt of the community's annoyance. Bus drivers were spoken to quite harshly in many situations when it was not their fault at all. They were contractors and it was awful to see them having to bear the brunt of community outrage.

Time and time again I see examples of this pattern of behaviour which shows just how out of touch the Government has become with the public. How did you not know that some of the changes to the bus scheduling and services would cause such devastation and stress for your communities? Why did you fail to act when school returned and the calls and complaints started to accelerate? Our Labor team managed to pull together a public meeting which we hosted within three days. A total of 130 people attended that meeting and each one of those represented probably three to four other people in the community, and that was just in the Derwent Valley alone. That day our Leader, Rebecca White, our member for Derwent, Craig Farrell, our shadow spokesperson for infrastructure, David O'Byrne, and I attended and listened to what the community had to say. The Government did not front. The minister did not front. Representatives from State Growth fronted to deal with the anguish from the communities and they had to bear the brunt. Once more, you were not there. You were not listening to your communities.

The difference between you and us is huge. We are listening to what people say in our communities and we are able to attend meetings as such. We are able to bring people together to find solutions. One thing we kept hearing time and time again was that they were getting nothing back from their minister and their Government. These people were completely frustrated. Now we have a situation where primary school students, girls and boys in grade 5, are sitting at the Glenorchy exchange from 4 p.m. to 5 p.m. waiting for the next bus to come. What is going to happen for those grade 5 students when it is dark at Glenorchy? Have you really thought these things through properly? If you had consulted properly and listened to your communities we would not have this problem. We keep hearing frustrations coming from our regional communities about

the complete lack of empathy, compassion and insight this Government has to their communities. You have no idea most of the time what makes people in those communities tick, and we hear this time and time again.

The difference between us and you is that we are listening to our communities. We are engaging with our communities. Yes, from time to time we do not get everything, but we make the most of our opportunities to listen to our communities. We will keep holding you to account because you are not listening to your communities. You have no idea about the complete chaos and upheaval that the changes to those bus timetables caused. We had 130 people with three days' notice attend a public forum in the Derwent Valley on a public holiday in the afternoon without any advertising - no frills, no cups of tea or coffee. They sat there and came up with solutions to a problem that you had created through lack of consultation and lack of regard for your communities.

We had another forum in Sorell also well attended by very concerned parents, teachers and workers who had to face the disgruntled parents and commuters. I thought you guys were up for trying to fix the chaos on the roads, especially in Hobart, but all you did with your strategy was to accelerate the chaos. People jumped back into their cars. People had to drive their kids to school because they could not get there on time. That was the problem. These children were turning up -

Time expired.

[11.17 a.m.]

Mr ROCKLIFF (Braddon - Minister for Infrastructure) - Madam Speaker, we made an election commitment to delivering better bus services for regional centres in southern Tasmania as part of the first major system-wide review of bus services in over a decade, and we are delivering on that commitment. In fact, frequency has increased to major southern regional centres, including Sorell, Margate, New Norfolk and Huonville as a result of the changes made and just as we said we would.

Communities have changed over the course of the last decade and public transport services such as buses will be adapting to better reflect the needs of communities now, and where there is growth that is what has happened. The aim is to provide bus services that are better targeted to the areas where they are needed most and to ensure better access to employment, education and essential services.

We made a commitment to update our bus network to combat increased congestion and support our seven-day-a-week lifestyles and we are delivering on that as well. As part of the review managed by the Department of State Growth there has been broad community consultation over the past 18 months, including directly with councils, tourism organisations, bus operators and communities themselves, as you would expect. The changes that have been made reflect that consultation as well as usage, because our bus network needs to be efficient.

The updated network now has services from Sorell to Midway Point, New Norfolk, Huonville and Margate that depart on weekdays every 30 minutes on average during peak times and hourly on average for the rest of the day. The updated network also has Saturday services departing every hour on average to Margate and New Norfolk and every two hours on average to Sorell and Huonville. On Sundays there are services every hour on average to New Norfolk and every two hours on average to Margate, Sorell and Huonville. On the west coast residents now have access to a seven-day-a-week return bus service between the coast and Burnie with onward connections to

Devonport, Launceston and Hobart. The new daily service began on 10 March 2019 and replaces the three-day-a-week service to Hobart and the two-day-a-week service to Launceston.

Given recent concerns over changes to the west coast service I have requested a more recent review and discussions between the department and the West Coast Council's mayor and general manager found the council unanimously endorsed the new seven-day-a-week service to Burnie and also noted that a service from the west coast to Hobart was best catered for by private providers.

In order to increase the frequency of services where there is a strong passenger demand to do so a small number of unutilised routes have been discontinued or reduced. It is not possible to retain services running at or near empty on the network where there is strong demand elsewhere. This is the responsible thing to do with the Tasmanian taxpayer funds.

That does not mean we are reducing services; far from it. Overall services have increased across the network. We do care about small communities, which is why we are looking at better ways of delivering more flexible transport services.

We are piloting a flexible service called Area Connect, which is to ensure small communities retain transport links. Area Connect services are now operating in areas such as Bothwell, Kempton and Colebrook, connecting passengers to Hobart services for free during the pilot period.

There are more than 200 routes in Southern Tasmania. More than 15 000 adult passengers and some 12 000 students use bus services every day. This is a massive undertaking as you would appreciate. It was inevitable that there would be some challenges. We are committed to getting these changes right and we are listening to local communities and responding accordingly.

We have added buses at New Norfolk and Sorell, for example. We will continue to make changes where they are needed. Local communities appreciate that. I recently received a letter from a school association thanking the Government for being responsive to the delays that were being experienced when school initially went back. I quote from that correspondence:

I wanted to pass on my appreciation to you and your officers who responded to our student issue in a manner that was supportive, efficient and respectful. In discussion with the principal of the school or college, I am pleased to pass on to you that all students are now able to start classes on time as a result of your intervention.

Again, your support in resolving this issue is greatly appreciated.

We took calls whenever calls came into our offices. That is what we do; we respond to need in the community. We are not about playing cheap politics like those opposite, creating negativity which undermines public confidence in our bus services. It impacts on bus drivers and bus operators. I accept that. It damages the brand of buses in our communities.

We need to encourage people to get back on buses. Services are improving in both regional and urban areas. This side of the House is about improving bus services. That side seems to be hell bent on playing politics and undermining those services and public confidence as well.

[11.22 a.m.]

Ms O'CONNOR (Clark - Leader of the Greens) - Madam Speaker, I thank the member for Lyons, Ms Butler, for bringing this on as a matter of public importance. For people living in rural

and regional areas, having access to affordable transport options is essential. Wherever you live in Tasmania, being able to access affordable public, private and community transport is essential to social inclusion, to being able to reach education, schools, skills, training - to be able to have economic foundations in your life.

It is disappointing to come into this House today and listen to the kind of questions that came from the Labor Party this morning in the first question time back. We are facing a climate emergency. We had 8000 children gather on the lawns of Parliament House last Friday. I understand that access to regional bus services is essential, but I was hoping that Labor might come into this place today and show us that they actually stood for something. We have not had that.

Along with Dr Woodruff, I was pleased to be able to attend a briefing from the Department of State Growth last week on changes to the bus timetable. I thank the departmental officers who provides us with that briefing. We gained a deeper understanding of the review of contracts and what that meant for service delivery; and what progress was being made on making sure that there is integrated ticketing for public, private and community transport in Tasmania. It was very disappointing to hear that it is something that is still being studied.

There are issues around making sure you have a viable public, private and community transport system. It has to be connected and you need to invest in those connections. It is taking too long for this Government to do that. What we have again is 'ad hoc' racy'. We have communities that are disenfranchised; communities that, as Ms Butler said, feel that they are not being heard and planning that is not yet long term. That is a matter of great regret.

I listened with interest to the minister's response to the concerns raised by Ms Butler on behalf of her community in Lyons. I was very disappointed not to hear that there is a comprehensive review of the decision to cancel the service from the west coast to Hobart. It is difficult to understand why that service was cancelled. I have spoken to bushwalkers and fly-fisher people who have used that service and do not believe that it was underutilised to the extent that it should be cancelled. It is a madness not to have a service that connects the west coast to the capital city. I have not had the opportunity to speak to west coast councillors about why they would express such strong support for the cancellation of the Queenstown to Hobart service. That has let down people who have used that service.

It has been put to us that part of the reason that the service was cancelled is because Tassal has made a decision to fly its workers to the east coast, rather than use the bus service. If a Liberal member has an opportunity to respond to that concern, it would be excellent.

On the broader transport question in Tasmania, we have had successive governments, to be honest, underinvest in public and pedestrian transport infrastructure. We have had continued delays on investment in that infrastructure. Even yesterday, in the Premier's Address, there was no comfort to those Tasmanians who want to know that there is a long-term plan for public transport, for private bus services, for community transport and for making sure that our cities and our regions - increasing congestion is an issue in Launceston - are able to cope with the demands of an increasing population.

I agree with the minister that it is really important that we have programs and investment in place that drive people out of their cars and on to buses, on to light rail - when it is delivered - on to electric bikes, or to walk to work.

The City Deal was so disappointing from that point of view. The investment in public and pedestrian infrastructure is woefully inadequate. We still have governments that are only thinking about the next three or four years, rather than the next 30-50 years. It is a failure of this Parliament in not starting to look at the long term.

Madam Speaker, we would like to know that this minister and this Government does not think that the renegotiation of the contract is the end of the story for transport services to rural and regional Tasmania; that there is a comprehensive plan for making sure we include those excellent community transport operators and options in the mix; and that it is delivered as part of an integrated transport strategy for Tasmania that includes integrated ticketing, ferry and light rail, pedestrian and cycling infrastructure.

We are still hearing evidence of heel-dragging on things like the ferry service across the Derwent; the need for proper integrated ticketing; and the need for more than a study of congestion. We need a commitment to investing and making sure that Hobart, which feeds Southern Tasmania and is a powerhouse of the south of the state, has a long-term plan underneath it. So far, the best work on this front is being done by the Royal Automobile Club of Tasmania with their Greater Hobart Mobility Vision. I urge all members to get on board with the RACT's work.

Recognition of Visitors

Madam SPEAKER - I acknowledge our guests in the Public Gallery who are Legal Studies III students from beautiful Claremont College. Welcome to Parliament.

Members - Hear, hear.

[11.30 a.m.]

Ms DOW (Braddon) - Madam Speaker, I too acknowledge our guests.

I am pleased to talk today on this matter of public importance about access to regional bus services. I am a passionate advocate for regional Tasmania. I believe that essential infrastructure for rural and regional Tasmania is access to a good public transport network and access to regional bus services is a very important part of this. Regular flexible options linking small towns and our major capital city are very important, but also important is access to transport for medical treatment or services in major centres, particularly when those services are not available locally.

I want to focus this morning on our west coast communities whom I meet with regularly. Our west coast communities have undergone significant changes over many years with changes to local industries and essential services being experienced as part of this change. I understand that we are unable to provide every service to every person in every centre in Tasmania, but I also understand that different centres and their populations have very differing needs.

Recently I have had a number of representations made to my office regarding changes to bus services on the west coast. I understand these changes have been mooted for some time and it is difficult to consult with communities regarding change, making sure that everyone has access to information regarding that change as well as a full understanding of the impact until those changes take effect, and that is exactly what has happened on the west coast.

My colleague, Shane Broad MP, and I met with affected residents in Queenstown last week to discuss their concerns regarding the changes to bus services and in particular the Queenstown to Hobart route. The group voiced their concerns about no longer being able to access a bus service to Hobart and the time and cost associated with the new service via Burnie. The Queenstown to Hobart service operated three times a week and whilst not heavily patronised, to have it ceased entirely does have a significant impact for people. There are also people affected from Hamilton who also access this service regularly through to Hobart, so in effect two regional communities have been impacted upon by these changes.

An example of the impact conveyed to me by one constituent is that of students travelling to Hobart from Queenstown for university. These students will now be required to travel from Queenstown to Burnie, stay overnight and then travel to Hobart, which results in a 36-hour one-way trip, and this comes at a considerable cost to people.

We too met with the mayor and general manager last week who, I agree, are supportive of the changes to the service and believe that the Burnie and beyond service will be very beneficial to the local community with the service visiting individual centres on the west coast. I acknowledge this but I believe it is important for the west coast to have a regular service provided in one day to our major capital city, even if it was once a week, and for this to be complemented with a seven-day-a-week daily service to the coast, as both services serve different needs.

The Queenstown locals have decided to start a petition to demonstrate their need for this service to be reinstated to their local community. During our meeting the residents also voiced many concerns about a number of issues, including the number of community cars, which it is my understanding is going to be one mode of flexible transport to compensate for the loss of this service through to Hobart. They also have concerns about the lack of community transport available on the west coast after hours following medical treatment at other hospitals. Labor took a policy to the last state election to improve patient transport services for west coasters, mainly upon discharge late into the evening so there is a service available for people to be able to travel home rather than have to stay somewhere else or with friends or family until they can get a bus or other service back to the west coast. There is still a real need for this service on the west coast and I call on the Government to consider such a service.

I will watch with interest the council's work on their local bus network transport study between centres on the west coast, which is about to commence. Improved inter-town services opens up the opportunity to access facilities and services across different centres and to plan for future infrastructure and service needs. I implore the Government to work with the West Coast Council to implement the outcomes of this work and to fund those accordingly.

Our west coast communities have seen many changes over the years, with many services being downsized or no longer being provided. The bus service to Hobart is yet another example of this, which means locals not getting home from university for the weekend or a very long overnight trip for a 30-minute appointment in Hobart. I believe there must be a better way. I am committed to working with the west coast community to plan for their future and I call on the state Government to do the same.

[11.35 a.m.]

Mr SHELTON (Lyons) - Madam Speaker, I rise to add my contribution to this MPI on the basis that I am a member for Lyons, as everybody knows, but I have also had over 20 years operating

school bus services with my brothers-in-law up north, so I know the process and the industry very well.

The changes to the southern bus services are a result of the first major review of the public transport network in a decade. This review work was necessary as the existing bus contracts were coming to an end. The work has not been undertaken lightly by the Tasmanian Government and we want to ensure our bus services more accurately reflect the needs of local communities now and into the future.

This was always going to be a big undertaking, but after 18 months of considerable consultation with bus contractors, passengers, schools, councils, regional bodies and many others, the bus review, called Project 2018, has rolled out in the south. Putting this into context, as the minister has said, there are more than 200 routes in southern Tasmania and more than 15 000 adult passengers and 12 000 school students using the bus service every day. While some concerns have been raised about elements of certain routes, the vast majority have rolled out very smoothly and have been a benefit to thousands of Tasmanians. The rollout has resulted in changes to services for some regional passengers, including in my electorate of Lyons, who use the bus network to get to Hobart to access education, health facilities or social outings.

In New Norfolk, when school returned for the start of the 2019 year, there were some concerns raised about the bus timetable and route changes into Hobart. I know this because concerns have been raised with me directly. The Department of State Growth was also contacted by passengers and parents of students travelling on these services and together we have listened. The department has worked hard to refine the service delivery for residents of the New Norfolk area. An extra bus service was added in the morning and afternoon, while the 7.17 a.m. general access bus has become a super-express service to improve the travel time to Hobart. I know that is much appreciated by the travellers of New Norfolk. An afternoon super-express service is being considered.

New Norfolk residents now also have significantly increased weekend services. There are now 24 bus services on Saturday and 18 bus services on Sunday. This will give the residents much greater opportunity to take part in weekend activities in Hobart. It is important to point out that the fares have also been reduced for passengers travelling from New Norfolk to Hobart. The department will continue to listen to those in New Norfolk and examine if other changes are required.

Concerns have also been raised about some services travelling from the south-east into Hobart, particularly around school services. The department has significantly increased the number of services to the region, particularly to Sorell and the east coast as well as extra weekend services to Dodges Ferry and the Tasman Peninsula. There are now eight dedicated school buses from Sorell to Hobart schools and these will continue to be monitored.

The east coast or Swansea service has also been modified to run directly to Rosny College, removing the interchange at Sorell and improving arrival times for all students including those at Midway Point. An additional dedicated school bus service is now scheduled between Carlton and Dodges Ferry to Rosny College. This service started on 25 February.

The morning service has also been received well and some changes are being looked at to improve the afternoon service. The number of school bus services from Dodges Ferry, Carlton to Hobart-based schools increased from four to six. The department and the council are now also working together to improve the Sorell interchange to handle these extra buses.

Coal River Coaches has extended its school bus service to start and finish at Campania. This service also started on 25 February. Campania to St Johns and Richmond Primary School is under review with options being considered. A review of the Sorell-Richmond school service including bus sizes and routes is underway as well.

Services on the Tasman Peninsula have changed to better benefit the wider community and the tourism industry with a more direct service starting at Nubeena and travelling via Port Arthur. The department is also investigating whether to reinstate and upgrade the hardware shop bus stop at Nubeena.

Fares have also been reduced for passengers travelling from Dodges Ferry, Carlton and Sorell to Hobart. The department will continue to listen to the community about changes.

In the Central Highlands, we have introduced a service called Area Connect. The department is running free trial services that are more flexible and will better meet the needs of the communities of Ouse, Hamilton, Ellendale, Westerway, Glenora, Bushy Park, Kempton, Colebrook and Bothwell. We have consulted with council, communities and other important regional bodies and will be guided by them on the way forward with these services in the future.

The Government also understood that a system-wide review of the bus network was a big undertaking and the changes would require some refinement. This is why the minister and the Department of State Growth have listened to the concerns raised by passengers and parents of school children and local MPs who use the service on a regular basis.

It is very disappointing that Labor continues to play cheap politics with such a complex and wide-ranging bus service review. Labor's ongoing politicking is damaging the brand of buses in our community and we need to be encouraging people.

Time expired.

[11.43 a.m.]

Ms O'BYRNE (Bass) - Madam Speaker, in the last moments that are available to me, I will respond to the appalling contributions from both the Deputy Premier and from the member for Lyons who indicate that somehow this crisis of transport happened without anybody possibly expecting it, without anyone knowing it would take place.

The reviews commenced in 2017. Had the work been done properly, this would have been enacted some time ago and enacted properly. What they did was the absolute failure to consult, failure to engage with community and failure to understand what on earth they were doing.

The Deputy Premier stands up here and reads a letter saying 'thank you so much for fixing the problem'. It was a problem of your own making. You do not get to come in here and say 'do not play politics'. Families warned you before Christmas that their children would not be able to get to school, that they would not be able to get to work, and that they would not be able to guarantee the safety of their kids on the bus run. That is exactly what you knew and exactly what you chose to ignore.

Do not come in here and say 'aren't we wonderful for fixing it?'. You have been in Government for five years. Step up to job. Do your job properly. Learn to genuinely consult. It is not enough to say that we have a consultation process and not listen to anyone. This is why you get yourselves

in trouble - because you are so arrogant and incompetent. You fail to talk to people. You fail to understand their concerns. Then, when they come to you begging for help before Christmas, you ignore them. It is not until members on this side conduct forums around the state to highlight the concerns that you even bothered to recognise them. Then you come into the House and say, 'Aren't I wonderful? I fixed this terrible problem and I got this lovely letter from someone saying thank you'.

I remind you, you might have fixed the morning runs in Mornington but you have not fixed the afternoon ones. If you are going to come into this House and take some credit for fixing your own stuff-up, at least get it right.

Time expired.

Matter noted.

STATEMENT BY PREMIER

Integrity Commission Report - Minister for Primary Industries and Water

[11.45 a.m.]

Mr HODGMAN (Franklin - Premier) - Madam Speaker, I rise to inform the House that the Integrity Commission has dismissed allegations made by the Labor Party against Minister Courtney, the Secretary of the Department of Premier and Cabinet and myself. This was the latest in a long list of politically-motivated witch hunts by Labor and a shameless attempt by them to use the Integrity Commission as a political weapon purely with the intention of inflicting reputational damage which they were asked - and we were all asked - not to do by the Integrity Commission.

Labor has disgracefully questioned the integrity of the Department of Premier and Cabinet's highly-respected secretary, two of Tasmania's most prominent and well-respected legal practitioners, the former Solicitor-General, Leigh Sealy SC, and Mr Damian Bugg QC, and on the suggestions that DPAC's review was inadequate, the Integrity Commission found, and I quote:

... concluded that the DPAC review was independent and thorough and involved analysis of all relevant documents. The review was, when appropriate, forensic in nature and identified no material issues regarding Ms Courtney's decisions during the relevant time.

On the ludicrous assertions by Labor that myself and the secretary of the Department of Premier and Cabinet facilitated an inadequate response to these matters, the Commission said:

The evidence shows that highly experienced, qualified and independent investigators were engaged to conduct the investigations. The evidence shows the response by Ms Gale and the Premier to the personal relationship - in the form of the DPAC review and the investigations of Mr Bugg and Mr Sealy - was not inadequate.

Madam Speaker, this is another round from the Opposition who are using the Integrity Commission as a political weapon to make baseless allegations and slurs on a number of people.

I expect it and Ms Courtney expects it, though they have done it to Jenny Gale, Leigh Sealy and Damian Bugg. It is an outrageous abuse of the Integrity Commission and its processes.

PREMIER'S ADDRESS

Resumed from 19 March 2018 (page 27)

[11.47 a.m.]

Ms WHITE (Lyons - Leader of the Opposition) - Madam Speaker, this summer we have witnessed nature's full fury with the bushfires raging right across the state. The huge scale of the bushfire emergency and the destruction is difficult to comprehend. When you consider the length of time that the bushfires have been burning and the area that has been burnt, it is all the more remarkable that more property was not lost and thankfully that no-one was harmed.

On behalf of all Tasmanians, I thank everyone involved in the firefighting effort including the volunteers and the career firefighters, Parks' staff and Sustainable Timber Tasmania's staff.

Mr Deputy Speaker, the remarkable resilience in the face of adversity that I witnessed in my own community after the Dunalley bushfires in 2013, was again on display in Geeveston, Bothwell, Zeehan, Maydena and Miena. 'Hero' is an overused term sometimes but there are few words that better describe the actions of those who put themselves in the line of danger to protect their community. I heard stories of volunteer firefighters who left their own homes in danger so they could allow their neighbours to get some sleep by conducting overnight patrols.

Two weeks ago I joined those affected on the Huon Valley front line in Geeveston with my colleagues. Theirs are stories of loss - the loss of property and, for some, the loss of their livelihood. For them we know from the experience of Dunalley and other natural disasters that the road to recovery is long. The first step is to conduct a full, independent and forensic inquiry to ensure that we learn from this disaster.

It is equally important that we can have confidence that the Government has implemented the recommendations of previous inquiries in full. Past inquiries in 2013 and 2016 identified practical solutions to problems that made important recommendations. These recommendations cannot continue to be ignored by the Hodgman Government. We must make sure that we are better prepared; we must give our firefighters and Parks and Wildlife specialists the tools and resources they need to keep people, homes and businesses safe and to protect world heritage areas from further devastation.

The Government must act now so that Tasmania can be confident that we will be as prepared as possible for next summer.

The Liberals must also step in to support major employers like the Tahune Airwalk, Ta Ann and Neville Smith Forest Products during the next six to 12 months when they are expected to be out of action. The Huon cannot afford to lose full-time workers and their families from the region.

I encourage all Tasmanians to continue to support the businesses in bushfire-affected regions. Areas like the Huon, the Central Highlands and the Derwent Valley have so much to offer local visitors and tourists alike. Head down to visit Hastings Caves and Cockle Creek, make a stop in Geeveston at the old bank for a coffee and cake, or try some of Australia's best sushi at Masaki's.

Head to Mount Field National Park, drive to the Great Lake Hotel for a meal, or try out the rail track rides at Maydena.

Our regional communities and the people who live and work there need our support as they recover from the fires. It is a long road emotionally and financially and for many it may take years before the impact dissipates.

Just a few weeks ago Tasmania marked 12 months since the 2018 state election, making it five years of Liberal Government, but after an election that promised so much it is worth asking what has been delivered over the past 12 months. Many of the issues that were front and centre of the election campaign remain unresolved. Yesterday the Premier stood in this place and read off a list of things he says his Government will aim to achieve over this term of government - yet another list following five years of lists.

Tasmanians do not want any more lists of so-called reviews, inquiries or planning works they now have no faith or trust will ever be delivered. Tasmanians want tangible solutions to the roadblocks that they face in accessing essential services they need for a better quality of life, roadblocks that have in many instances been put there by the incompetence of this Government.

Look at the state of our state. Tasmania's health system is still in crisis; in fact it has only gotten worse over the past 12 months. The Royal Hobart Hospital redevelopment is a disaster, with mould, asbestos, wage theft and Tasmanians missing out on work because the Government failed to put in place training programs to prepare a local workforce.

Just over a year ago the Hodgman Government hastily organised what it called a housing summit, yet Tasmanians remain in acute housing stress with more than 3200 people still on the waiting list for public housing. Tasmanians from all walks of life continue to struggle to put a roof over their families' heads. It is unacceptable that 1600 Tasmanians on any given night are sleeping rough.

The Government continues to boast about job numbers, but there are 6600 fewer women working since the election and Tasmania's young people are less likely to have a job than any other state. This is nothing to be proud of.

There has been no progress on major water and sewerage projects, including the relocation of the Macquarie Point sewerage treatment plant or cleaning up the Tamar River. The Liberals have spent a year delaying or crab-walking away from major infrastructure commitments, including the bridge over the Tamar River, the underground bus mall, a fifth lane on Hobart's Southern Outlet and the duplication of the Sorell Causeway. The Government is still locked in a pay dispute with nurses, teachers, firefighters, child safety officers and correctional officers with a wage offer that is less than the increase in the cost of living. There are no ferries on the Derwent. There is no sign of progress on the Cradle Mountain cableway.

At the same time, the Liberals have blown the budget. The budget update, released quietly in the middle of the bushfire emergency, reveals the Liberals have put Tasmania on a fast track to debt with their twisted priorities and irresponsible election pork-barrelling. Tasmania will be in net debt of \$343.1 million within three years. What was forecast to be a \$161.9 million surplus has been reduced by 95 per cent to just \$7.3 million, and that is before we even start to factor in the cost of the bushfires which are expected to have a final bill in the tens of millions of dollars.

This is not a government and a treasurer that is managing a budget through tough economic times. The Treasurer has no-one to blame for these numbers except his own poor judgment and mismanagement. The golden age that Peter Gutwein heralded less than a year ago has been squandered. At a time when the national and global economy is relatively strong and revenue to the state Government has been higher than forecast, the Treasurer's budget mismanagement has been laid bare for all to see. As the gold paint wears away, the ugly reality of the Liberal Government's budget management has been revealed.

One of the greatest lies told by Peter Gutwein is that he inherited net debt from the former Labor government. He did not. Labor paid off Tasmania's debt all the way back in 2005 and maintained net cash investments over the life of that government despite the global financial crisis smashing its revenue forecasts.

You only have to look at funding for health to understand the extend of the Liberals' twisted priorities. Everybody knows there is a health crisis in Tasmania, yet 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 hospitals than was spent in the previous financial year, and that is after the Government's own report showed there was a \$100 million funding 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.

Remember when you are hearing about millions being cut or the failure of Will Hodgman, Peter Gutwein and Michael Ferguson to properly budget for our hospitals and our health system, it is Tasmanian patients and Tasmanian families who are suffering, forced to wait for days in emergency department corridors because the Government does not support them. They are waiting for hours ramped in an ambulance and waiting years for elective surgery. This is a government that is letting people down. This is a government that is incapable of admitting its mistakes, let alone learn from them.

Budgets are about choices and the Liberals chose to prioritise unaffordable election spending over funding essential services. They have ignored sensible policy ideas that would bring additional money into the budget such as the point of consumption tax on online gambling that Labor proposed at the last election. All other states have now adopted this measure which is estimated could raise in excess of \$10 million every year for Tasmania, but we have not because the Treasurer refuses to.

Saul Eslake famously damned the Hodgman Government with faint praise, saying they had been 'minding the store'. Now we know they have also been raiding the till.

Being in opposition is frustrating. It means we are denied the opportunity to give effect to all our policies, whether that is fixing the health crisis, building affordable housing or investing in skills to create jobs. Labor has spent the past year since the election strengthening our connections with the community and holding the Government to account.

Last year we conducted 10 electorate tours in six months. These tours allowed us to engage with communities in 37 towns and suburbs and we visited 67 businesses and community groups. Labor is serious about listening to people and ensuring our policies remain relevant and reflect the priorities of Tasmanians.

Last month I announced a reshuffle of my shadow cabinet which takes advantage of the depth of talent within the Labor team. After 12 months, new members are now firmly engaged and established in their communities and the time is right to give them portfolio responsibilities. The reshuffle marked the start of an intensive policy development process over the coming year. We are reviewing and adding to our policy agenda in collaboration with Labor's platform committees, our industry advisory councils and the wider community, because a good government should have a long-term vision and a willingness to listen.

Quite frankly, we are doing the work of what the Government should be doing in listening to industry and the challenges they are facing and the strategies they have to overcome those challenges. Already the common theme across all industry sectors is skills and training. Youth unemployment levels in Tasmania are among the worst in Australia, so it is no surprise that the Liberal Government would have such a woeful track record when it comes to TAFE. Who could forget the scandals that occurred over the last few years involving nepotism and mismanagement? The stories more recently are about postponements, students in limbo, the lack of teachers and the genuine concern about the capacity of TAFE to deliver for industry.

What is needed is an injection of confidence in the public training provider, confidence for students that the skills they obtain will help them get a job and confidence for employers that students will have the skills they need to perform at a high standard. I want to see more businesses take on apprentices and trainees. I want to see more young people gain the satisfaction of learning skills that get them a job and allow them to access the opportunities that provides. In order to do that, we need to be leading by example.

Quite frankly, it is shameful that the Government has failed to uphold their own policy to employ a minimum number of apprentices on major infrastructure projects. It is appalling that they have turned a blind eye to the exploitation of foreign workers at the Royal Hobart Hospital while they have done nothing to skill up a local workforce. The Liberals like to pat themselves on the back for their spending on infrastructure but they have done none of the planning and they have none of the policies to ensure that jobs on those projects are filled by Tasmanians. I will have much more to say about skills and training over the coming year. The best way to ensure someone can get a job is to give them the skills they need and that industry wants.

I have spent the summer reflecting on what it means to be a Tasmanian. Why do we love living here? What is it about Tasmania and the Tasmanian way of life that people are flocking here to share it with us? There are many answers to these questions: our beautiful natural environment, our stunning beaches, our laidback lifestyle, and our warm and friendly people, to name a few.

The question that drives me in this job is: what are we doing to protect the things that make us unique? What are we doing to preserve the Tasmanian way of life? How do we ensure the best future for our children? When I sit in traffic for an hour to get home from the city, I worry that the work-life balance that we enjoy in Tasmania is being eroded. The time spent waiting in traffic is time I could be spending with my family. Mia is at an age now when memories are being made every day. Every minute is precious. No doubt there are people sitting in cars around me who feel exactly the same way. Every day the Liberals delay action on promised infrastructure upgrades, they are robbing Tasmanians of time they could be spending with their families.

In five years, this Government has done nothing to address traffic congestion in our major cities. They have squandered the benefits of growing population without investing in the

infrastructure to support growth. Yesterday the Premier announced yet another review, looking at how to ease traffic congestion after five years of nothing.

This Government is not only robbing people of their time, they are robbing them of their health. For me, there is nothing more fundamental to having a good life than being healthy. Health is and will always be my number one priority. That is why I am so angry that this Government has made such a mess of the health system. Every day we hear more stories about how Michael Ferguson is failing patients.

There is no greater example than that of the Royal Hobart Hospital redevelopment. The Government keeps saying that the new hospital will reach practical completion by the middle of the year. What does that mean? Tasmanians would be forgiven for thinking it means that the hospital will be open and taking patients within months. They would be forgiven for thinking that: 250 beds will be open and ready to take patients; the new building will be fully staffed; capacity constraints in the Emergency Department will be fixed; the hospital will have sufficient mental health beds; and ambulances will no longer have to queue for hours on end outside the hospital.

Unfortunately, none of those things are true. Once construction is finished, the hospital needs to be commissioned. That is a complex process. Just a few weeks ago the Australian Medical Association described the task of getting patients from the new helipad to the Intensive Care Unit as akin to getting school kids out of a Thai cave.

The great lie of the 2018 election was the fact that the vast bulk of the Liberal Government's health funding will not flow until after the 2022 election. The 250 beds at the Royal Hobart Hospital will not be fully opened for another five years. The Emergency Department that was designed for 45 000 patients, will continue to be space constrained in dealing with more than 60 000 patients. The Government has only provided 32 mental health beds, despite expert advice that we are 10 acute beds short. For as long as there is a shortage in beds, there will continue to be ambulances ramped outside the hospital. In short, the problems at the Royal Hobart Hospital will continue well beyond this year. They will continue even when K Block is open and taking patients.

Tasmanians could be forgiven for thinking that Michael Ferguson is just not interested in providing an adequate public health and hospital system. They can be forgiven for believing that the only thing Michael Ferguson wants his name on is a plaque. It is not only in the south he is failing patients, it is statewide.

It is a similar story when it comes to housing. We read the headlines almost weekly about house prices overtaking mainland capital cities and growing at the fastest rate in the country. That might be good news for those of you who already own a home, but spare a thought for people in the rental market or younger Tasmanians struggling to raise an \$80 000 deposit to buy their first home. Those same people have faced rent increases of 20 per cent more in the last year in some areas.

The Hodgman Government has not just contributed to this problem; they created it. They blindly deregulated short-stay accommodation, which has eaten into the rental market. They have failed to invest in new affordable housing stock. Roger Jaensch promised to build 900 new affordable homes by the middle of this year as part of the Affordable Housing Strategy. He will not deliver anywhere near that. Do not be fooled; releasing vacant blocks of land was not part of that promise.

For many years, Tasmania's cheap house prices and lower cost of living was seen as an offset to our comparatively low wages. That is no longer the case. As house prices sky rocket and household bills spiral out of control, wage growth has been stagnant. The Hodgman Government's so-called negotiations on public sector wages for its frontline workforce have been atrocious and have led to a nine-month stalemate.

The workers only want what is fair and reasonable from a government that is acting anything but fair and reasonable. The blame for the current dispute can be laid fairly and squarely at the feet of the Liberal Government and the Treasurer who have clutched stubbornly for such a long time to a 2 per cent wages policy that has not kept up with the cost of living. That means that teachers, firefighters, nurses, park rangers, paramedics and allied health workers are all falling behind their mainland counterparts.

The cost of living continues to grow. The Australian Bureau of Statistics measured inflation in Hobart at 3 per cent. It is little wonder that we cannot recruit workers for these essential jobs when we are not offering competitive wages. It is little wonder the workers across the public sector are taking industrial action to demonstrate the need for this Government to value the contribution they make every day. It is little wonder that people feel that the Tasmanian way of life is slipping out of their grip.

When I talk about preserving the Tasmanian way of life, I am not talking about stopping things or resisting change. We did not get where we are today by staying the same, but we need to appreciate what we have got and make strategic decisions that are aligned with our values. If we do not take control of our future, we risk losing what makes us unique.

I have spoken before about the need to support tourism in our state and the iconic attractions that entice so many people here. I do not believe that Tasmania has too much tourism, but I do think we need to be more strategic about how we manage growth. The rapid growth of tourism is currently outstripping the ability of the budget to fund necessary infrastructure and services. Labor wants to see visitors make a greater contribution to protect the things that make our state unique and special. To that end I would encourage the Government to adopt Labor's election policy to restructure entry fees to our iconic national parks and reserves to ensure the cost matches the true value of the experience. The proceeds should be reinvested to protect our biosecurity defences and upgrade visitor infrastructure.

As we have seen this summer, another major risk to the lifestyle we all enjoy is climate change. We cannot stick our heads in the sand and pretend that climate change does not exist. We know from expert reports that the warming climate is going to result in fire seasons that are longer and hotter. Along with that will be more frequent dry lightning strikes, like those that started many of the fires that ravaged Tasmania this summer. The effects of a warming climate are not limited to fire. Storm surges and coastal erosion pose a threat to our beaches and beloved waterfront shacks.

Tasmania, of all states, should be at the forefront of responding to global warming as a result of our competitive advantage in renewable energy. We have the potential to show the way towards a low emissions future by becoming a test bed for new technologies, including electric vehicles and hydrogen fuel. All this takes vision and a government that is passionate about preserving the Tasmanian way of life. Instead we have a government that is not preserving our way of life but exploiting it, squandering the good times for their own political gain.

Tasmanians were promised stable government. They were promised open and transparent government. They can be forgiven for now believing these promises were a con. What they have witnessed over the past year is something more akin to a soap opera; a government characterised by internal fighting and led by a weak premier who was incapable of controlling his Government and his Cabinet and incapable of stemming scandal after scandal. Almost immediately after assuming office last March, Premier Hodgman's Government began lurching from one scandal to another. Almost immediately after assuming office, it became blatantly obvious that the Government had no intention of addressing multiple crises. It had no intention of seriously delivering on its election promises, many of which we now know were not to be believed. Instead, it was focused entirely on itself.

The former primary industries minister, Sarah Courtney, plunged the Government into scandal by breaching the Ministerial Code of Conduct for not disclosing soon enough that she was in a personal relationship with the head of her department. She got away with it by being rewarded with another ministry. To date there has still not been any publication of the protocols that will apparently manage the continuing conflict of interest.

The saga over former mining minister Adam Brooks finally concluded, but not before Mr Brooks and Premier Hodgman were dragged kicking and screaming to the conclusion more than two years after serious allegations were first raised. Mr Brooks was finally revealed to have lied to the Premier, lied to the parliament and lied to all Tasmanians in his disgraceful email saga and got away with it, charging taxpayers for his legal bills before finally seeing the light and resigning from parliament.

The former police minister, Mr Hidding, who was also Mr Hodgman's parliamentary secretary, very recently resigned from the parliament in the wake of very serious allegations levelled against him that have now become the focus of a police investigation.

Tasmanians will not forget that Premier Hodgman himself, along with his Health minister, Michael Ferguson, became personally and recklessly embroiled in the Angela Williamson sacking scandal. The offensive online trolling from the Premier's own staff, the refusal to deliver legal health services in the public hospital system and the denial of any rights defy belief and it is not in any way acceptable that the Premier's staff at the highest levels in his office would engage in an online campaign against a former colleague and seek to silence her from criticising the Government's failure to provide terminations in this state.

It was an act of cowardice, an act of deliberate vengeance, and the disappointing truth is that still today there is inadequate access to affordable and accessible terminations in our state, and this should not be the case.

Mr Deputy Speaker, I see so much potential being squandered by this do-nothing Government. This is not the golden age that they promised. Think back over the past 12 months since the election. What did the Government actually achieve? What did they do to make the lives of Tasmanians better? Will Hodgman see his only job as winning an election every four years and then his job is done.

My vision is for a Tasmania that is prosperous enough to provide opportunities for all and small enough that no-one gets left behind. My vision is for a state which is a beacon for fairness. A true measure of Tasmania's success needs to include how well or how badly its people are faring. Tasmania deserves a government and a future where growing inequality is tackled thoughtfully and

meaningfully; a future where underemployment and insecure work is acknowledged and government, business and community can come together to find a solution; a future where essential public services are available for everyone; a future where ideas and innovation are encouraged and celebrated; a future where our economy can provide enough employment for each person seeking a job and where each person employed is paid appropriately in recognition of their value; and a future where people feel safe in the knowledge that there is someone there to help them when they need it.

I believe in a future Tasmania where no-one gets left behind, and when people ask what Labor stands for I tell them this. I also tell them that a Labor government, with this team right here beside me, is determined to deliver a fairness agenda, better access to hospitals and health care, training pathways to employment, investment in infrastructure to support housing and transport, action on climate change and investment in renewable energy, and a balanced budget that gives confidence to business and supports sustainable economic development.

We are fired up and ready because we know there is no more important job than looking after our state, our community and our children's futures. We are going to hold this tired Liberal Government to account every day because Tasmanians cannot afford another year of failure. Tasmanians demand and expect better than this and the Labor Party is ready to deliver.

Mr FERGUSON - On a point of order, Mr Deputy Speaker, I waited until the end of the contribution but I draw your attention to the Leader of the Opposition's use of the word 'lies' in respect of the Treasurer and I ask for it to be withdrawn.

Ms White - I didn't say he lied; I said it was the biggest lie.

Mr FERGUSON - I ask that it be withdrawn.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER - The word 'lie' has been used and therefore -

Ms O'BYRNE - Mr Deputy Speaker, the convention of the House is that one cannot directly call a member a liar, but I believe we are allowed to say that we believe something to be a lie.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER - I would accept that argument in one sense; however when a member has taken personal offence to the words being used, a request to withdraw can be made.

Ms O'BYRNE - Can I suggest, then, that it should be made to the person to whom it was targeted? Mr Ferguson was not in this circumstance the target of that comment.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER - The request has been made for it to be withdrawn. I would prefer the Chamber never to use the word or imply that word to each other. We need to show respect to each other and that is one way that we can do that as a House. I ask it to be withdrawn.

Ms WHITE - I withdraw, Mr Deputy Speaker.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER - Thank you.

[12.15 p.m.]

Ms O'CONNOR (Clark - Leader of the Greens) - Mr Deputy Speaker, we are standing on land that was never ceded by the palawa pakana. We are a parliament that has yet to reconcile with our

history, and we are an island community that is yet to come to terms with the enormous suffering and dispossession of our first people. I acknowledge in my first substantive contribution in this second session of the parliament Aboriginal elders past, present and emerging, and commit the Tasmanian Greens to working towards true reconciliation, the return of lands and a treaty with the first people of Tasmania.

It is hard to listen to the contributions of the Premier and the Leader of the Opposition in the frame of the student strike for climate that happened here on Parliament Lawns last Friday. When we talk about the state of the state, yes, there is much to celebrate, and yes, we are blessed to live on this island as Tasmanians, but let us be frank, it is not all rosy.

Tasmania is a state that is grieving. We are a state that is enduring the trauma of remembering again, because of the events of last Friday in New Zealand, the horror of the Port Arthur massacre. We are a state that is grieving after the bushfires that wiped out more than 3 per cent of this island's landscape. We are a state where young people are kept awake at night in fear over the future, where young people say to me and to Dr Woodruff, 'I couldn't sleep last night I am so frightened about climate change'. We had a premier who delivered a state of the state address yesterday that did not mention climate change. We are a parliament living through a climate emergency. We have 10 years to get this right. Human beings, humanity, civilisation, has 10 years to act very fast to turn this sorry ship around and make sure the next generation of kids is not kept awake at night because the body politic in Australia is fiddling while the planet burns.

People know where the Greens stand on those key issues. People know we have a set of values that we stick to and sometimes we will make statements or have policy positions that are ridiculed by our opponents in this place. They are ridiculed by vested interests like the Tourism Industry Council when we stand up to defend the wilderness, or the gambling lobby when we point out the ethical corruption of both the Liberal and Labor parties now on the issue of the removal of poker machines from pubs and clubs.

People know where we stand, and to give credit where it is due, people know where this Liberal Government stands too. They find it wanting, they find it short term, but they do know where this Liberal Government stands. They know this Liberal Government does not have a plan to tackle climate change, they know this Liberal Government has neglected public services in Tasmania, underinvested in health, education and housing and is now playing catch-up. They understand that. They know this Liberal Government does not understand what wilderness means and is prepared to exploit it for private profit and to send a signal to industry that the last free real estate, Tasmania's protected areas, is up for sale. 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.

I listened very carefully to the Leader of the Opposition's contribution. It was not until the end that we had any sort of articulation of a vision for Tasmania. 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. What we know is that last March, Tasmanians in good faith cast their vote for Labor on the back of their position on the removal of poker machines from pubs and clubs. People cast their vote in trust because they thought, at last, Labor is prepared to do something brave and go to the election on a position of principle. Within less than a year since election day, Labor has collapsed on its pokies policy. That means the gambling industry which funnelled millions of dollars into a Liberal win,

has had another win. The gambling industry wins with the major parties in this place twice over. It got the Government it wanted. Now it has the Opposition it wanted.

This is not a discussion that we have in an abstract. When we talk about gambling policy in Tasmania, we are talking about human beings, families, children. We are talking about the evidence that gambling addiction can and has led to; suicide, child abuse and neglect, poverty, homelessness, entrenched disadvantage over a lifetime.

We knew the Liberals would back in the industry. There was never a doubt about that. This Labor Opposition caved at the first hurdle. It has abandoned those people who, over the next 25 years should Labor continue to collapse on this issue, out to 2048, will suffer immeasurable harm as a result of gambling addiction, the proliferation of poker machines in our communities and the individual licensing model, which, as the previous gaming commissioner made clear, will cause more harm than the current monopoly deed.

I want to briefly talk about pill testing. It is the Labor Party's policy to support pill testing because it saves lives. That is backed up by the medical profession. What do we get on radio this week? The Leader of the Opposition walking away from another policy. The reason I highlight this, Ms White, is because people expect better from Labor. That is why it hurts, because people expect better from you people. People expect courage, commitment and to stick by some values. To cop out and say, 'Because we are not in government, we can't stand by any of our policies', is disgraceful.

Dr Broad - Implement is the word.

Ms O'CONNOR - It is disgraceful. By interjection Dr Broad talked about implementing policies. I ask Dr Broad to do the maths on this Chamber and on upstairs and appreciate that there is a possibility of a better way on gambling policies in Tasmania because of the numbers.

It is not good enough for the Premier of this state not to talk about climate change in a meaningful way and respond to the desperate distress of those children. It is not good enough for Labor to come in here and deliver a state of the state address, which bleats about all the failings of the Government and lays out no policy conviction whatsoever.

The Premier talks about Tasmania's time to shine. Mr Gutwein, the Treasurer, talks about the golden age. We know there is so much to celebrate about being Tasmanian. There is so much to look forward to as a Tasmanian but let us be honest about the acute uncertainty we face as an island community. Let us be honest about the mental distress our young people are experiencing when they look at the pictures, for example, of the fires that are still burning in the Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area. What those children are enduring, what every informed, empathetic person on this planet is enduring is a state of being that is now named as solastalgia. Solastalgia is a yearning, a grief for the loss of one's home. The young people who gathered on the lawns last Friday, possibly cannot name that feeling but that is what they are experiencing - a sadness, an uncertainty, a grieving. We share that grieving, but we are not going to stand up in this place and play petty politics.

You snort, Dr Broad. I look forward to your contribution on the state of the state and see if there is anything substantive in it.

We went to the election with a plan to tackle climate change; the only party that did. We went to the election with a plan to deal with the increased population Tasmania is experiencing, which

will only accelerate as climate refugees seek cooler parts of the world in which to build a future for themselves and their families. We need to acknowledge the truth of solastalgia. In our work, in this place, we need to send the strongest possible message to those young people that we not only hear their raucous, inspiring demands for action, but that we are prepared to act on them.

We are only a small island, this beautiful, little, green, heart-shaped island at the bottom of the world. It is not unreasonable for people to say, 'What difference can we make?' Mainland Australians say that too, in that great big country of coal-producing, rising emissions under a Liberal government. In this era of climate emergency, while we have these 10 years, we need to understand the importance of leadership. Those kids want leadership. They want courage. They want pointers to action, because action equals hope. They want to know that this coming summer they will not be looking at the burning of Gondwana, where more than 3 per cent of Tasmania has burned, where people have lost their homes and their livelihoods.

Like many Tasmanians who care about the wilderness, I was hoping to hear something from the Minister for Parks about the situation and what has been lost. We have not heard it. It is on the Greens now to lay on the parliamentary record some of the facts about the fires, which are still burning in the Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area.

With the support of the Tasmanian Greens, the Bob Brown Foundation and the Wilderness Society, Grant Dixon and Rob Blakers, wonderful Tasmanians, conservationists and photographers, made a low-level helicopter flight on 23 February 2019 to document the extent and severity of fires within the southern part of the Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area. Contrary to the narrative that has been promulgated by some, damage to Gondwanan values, especially rainforest and wet eucalypt forest, although not catastrophic, was extensive and locally severe. Alpine areas were burned, as was pure rainforest and large areas of rainforest understorey between tall wet eucalypt forest. Fire encroached on Huon, King Billy and pencil pine communities and crowned in some old eucalypt forests.

Of even greater concern than the damage done, however, was that with ignition ubiquitous and widespread uncontrolled fires, all that stood between the incremental loss that eventuated and catastrophic loss was a hot windy day. The recent fires burned upwind of the most important Gondwanan refuges that remain in Tasmania - Mount Anne, Mount Bobs, Federation Peak and the Eastern Arthurs, New River headwaters, the Duquesne Range, Mount Reid, the Tindale Range, the Lower Gordon River, and the entire takayna rainforest from Huskerson River in the south and Rapid River in the north. In hot, dry windy conditions, we have learned in Tasmania in recent years that rainforest does indeed burn. The Southern Ranges, Mount Picton, the Raglan Ranges, Frenchmans Cap, Mount Murchison, Algonkian Mountain, the Upper Jane River, the Meredith Range and many other places bear grim testament to that. With no effective strategy to check strongly burning remote wildfires, and in the absence of effective immediate suppression of new fires, we played Russian roulette with Gondwana.

Climate change is creating unprecedented levels of fire in the TWWHA across Tasmania. We need novel techniques and approaches to combat fire or we will lose the best of our Gondwanan forests and the paleoendemic flora within years or decades, either through further and repeated incremental loss or in cataclysmic fires.

Grant Dixon and Rob Blakers have made some suggestions based on the evidence of how we might deal with this better in the future. This is off the back of Dr Tony Press's report and previous Parks and Wildlife Service reviews after fires. Now we have another review announced while the

recommendations of Dr Tony Press have not all been implemented. This is what some of our finest wilderness photographers and conservationists believe needs to happen. We need dedicated remote fire capacity. They say while human life and private property is important and World Heritage rainforest and paleoendemic Gondwanan communities are also important, it is not acceptable to sacrifice one to save another. It is a false equivalence. We are not being asked to make that choice and we should not be. Of course we always have to protect human life, but to tell you the truth, if it was a choice between a shack burning and Gondwana burning, you can rebuild a shack but you cannot recreate Gondwana. It has taken tens of thousands of years.

Firefighting capacity in the United States and Canada is structured as dual forces, one for human life and private property and another for remote and wilderness fires. This system should be examined for Tasmania with both wings of a statewide fire suppression response separately resourced and funded in order they may both fulfil their two distinct and necessary charters. We also need a fleet of large amphibious water bombers. All of the recent fires were close to large bodies of water - the Gordon and Pedder impoundments, Great Lake, Huon River, Lower Gordon River, the Pieman impoundment and the New River Lagoon were all close to where fires were burning.

Tasmania has abundant lakes and estuaries suitable for use by large amphibious water bombers such as the Canadian bombardiers that can deliver up to 100 000 litres an hour and are routinely used in North America, Canada and Europe.

We also need extensive use of real-time thermal sensors mounted in fixed wing aircraft both to detect new fires and to accurately monitor the spread of known fires. Current technology can map fire through smoke and at night. We need night-time and early daytime firefighting when winds are typically less and temperatures are lower and humidity is higher, and we need locally based trained teams of remote firefighters, including harnessing our extraordinary capacity within our volunteer firefighting ranks, who are familiar with the Tasmanian landscape and capable of working and staying in the field for multiple days.

It is only because of the extraordinary efforts of the Tasmania Fire Service, the Parks and Wildlife Service and those trained firefighters from Forestry Tasmania that more damage was not done. This is no criticism of our firefighters, but we as a parliament need to make sure we resource them properly and are applying the best technologies. That is why it is so disappointing that a comprehensive cost-neutral plan put forward by the firefighters union to tackle wilderness fires with a highly skilled and well-resourced remote firefighting capacity was ignored by government. In the spirit of goodwill and out of a pressing need personally to know that this Parliament will do better, I urge the Premier and the minister responsible for the TFS to have another good look at that plan.

I take this opportunity so there is a proper public record of tabling some of the images taken by Rob Blakers and Grant Dixon on that flight last month. These are images of the Huon Gorge where fire-prone ridges were burned to gravel and relic vegetation in protected gullies including rainforest was burned through; the Cracroft Valley where old-growth forest including rainforest was burned through; the Crest Range where old-growth forest including rainforest was torched; and the fire encroachment at Mount Bobs. Mount Bobs protects the largest surviving forest of Tasmanian endemic King Billy pines. Incineration of this 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 this global catastrophe in bad fire weather.

Photograph no. 8 is of the East Picton Valley, an extremely flammable, post-logging regional forest which fuelled ignition of tall eucalypt forest and its well-developed rainforest understorey. The rainforest and tall eucalypt forest will take centuries to recover, if at all. You cannot look at these images and not be heartbroken.

Image no. 9 is of the middle Huon Valley old-growth forest with burnt and fire-killed sassafras and myrtle. Remember, there is nowhere else on Earth that grows these trees. You will not find them anywhere else on the planet. They are our precious Gondwanan relics. This rainforest may never recover. Image no. 10 is of Federation Peak which is fire burnt to within a few kilometres of Tasmania's most iconic mountain which is a stronghold of King Billy pines and other paleoendemic vegetation.

Madam Speaker, I seek the leave of the House to table these extraordinary and distressing images.

Leave granted.

Ms O'CONNOR - When I went back and had a look at the Premier's Address in print this morning a couple of things struck me. There are some good announcements, some good investment in education, good investment in health, although so belatedly. What struck me, the clanger of it, if you like, is that by the time the new Royal Hobart Hospital is fully built and the health plan is in place, that 30-year time frame, we will have to build another hospital to deal with the health impacts of climate change. The short-sightedness of a government that can make such a noise about investing in a hospital without mentioning climate change and the health impacts of climate change was jarring. We do not have time for a failure of leadership.

What we got out of the Premier yesterday was not the science, it was silence on climate change. When we are silent on the fact that we are enduring a climate emergency, we are complicit. That is a fact. The problem here is that it leads to an erosion of hope amongst the next generation. Let us talk about these young people. How amazing that all over the world an estimated 1.5 million young people gathered in cities all over the world and marched for action on climate. Let us have a think deeply on every action that we take as public representatives about the future those kids are facing and the future we are all facing.

Tasmania has an opportunity, our little island, to show leadership. We have good climate 'cred'. We have an extraordinary renewable energy resource. We do have extraordinary carbon sequestration in our beautiful forests. What this parliament should be telling those young people who met on the lawns last Friday, and in Launceston at Princes Park, is that we are wholly committed to showing global leadership on climate. We will fully harness not only our hydro renewable resources, but solar, wind and energy efficiency. We will invest in making sure Tasmanians who are socio-economically disadvantaged have energy efficiency upgrades in their house that not only make them healthier, but they lower our emissions footprint and bring down the cost of living for those Tasmanians.

We can show leadership. We have a community just down the road of some of the world's best climate scientists. We have more PhDs and doctorates per capita than any other capital city in the country. Right on our doorstep we have a knowledge bank of scientists that is the envy of many parts of the world: UTAS, IMAS, the Antarctic Division, CSIRO. We are truly blessed with a knowledge bank of global significance here. Let us harness that.

We are a resilient and connected island community. It often strikes me when times are hard it does not matter what your politics is in Tasmania there is that sense of being a Tasmanian that has real meaning. It is a tangible positive of being part of an island community. We are capable of the most extraordinary innovation and entrepreneurship and creativity and compassion. Let us harness that for those kids who met on the lawn last Friday.

Ms Standen - Were you at the rally?

Ms O'CONNOR - How could I be at the rally when I was at the Honour Roll for Tasmanian Women's lunch, like your leader, Ms White? Dr Woodruff was there and so was Senator Nick McKim. I was at the last climate march.

Ms Standen - So was I.

Ms O'CONNOR - You have made your point by interjection. I had accepted an invitation to attend the Honour Roll of Women's lunch long before the climate march date was announced.

Ms Standen - Just checking.

Ms O'CONNOR - Did you attend the march?

Ms Standen - I did indeed.

Ms O'CONNOR - That is good; you should have taken your leader along. We have passionate, committed young people who are prepared to stand up for their future and we have a mood for change. This federal election will be a climate election and that is a positive because Australians, Tasmanians, young people are looking for leadership and courage on climate.

In this island community we do have it all. The only thing that is missing right now is leadership, vision and courage and I say that to the leaders of both the major parties in this place, snap out of it. We have a decade. We need a climate plan that is a triple bottom line response to a climate emergency that is a 10-year plan for mitigating the impacts of climate change on our communities and for adapting to climate change.

In closing, the Greens in this place will never let down those kids, ever. We will do everything we can in this place to take our colleagues along with us in a constructive way. If every now and again it means we have to beat you over the head with the latest climate report we will do that but we are not letting up on this issue and we will never abandon those young Tasmanians.

[12.47 p.m.]

Mr ROCKLIFF (Braddon - Minister for Education and Training) - Mr Deputy Speaker, Tasmanians last year re-elected a majority Hodgman Liberal Government because they could see that Tasmania is a far stronger, prouder and more confident place than it was just four years prior. Since we came to Government more than 12 400 jobs have been created and our economy, once considered a basket case, is now the best performing in the nation. This has not occurred by accident. It is because we came to government with a plan - a plan to get the budget back into balance, grow the economy, create jobs and reinvest in essential services such as health, education and housing and we have stuck to that plan. I am proud of what we have achieved so far. I also know there is much more to be done so all Tasmanians and all regions can share in our success story.

A great education is a passport to a better life and standard of living so encouraging students to stay in school longer and improving educational outcomes is a top priority for this Government. As minister for Education I firmly believe that every student no matter where they live, or what their circumstances are, should have easy access to a high-quality education right from the early years through to senior secondary education and beyond. As a Government we are well aware that the ongoing strength of our education system will always be determined by the quality of our teaching staff and the ability schools have to remain flexible and responsive to students' needs.

Last August the first quality teaching declaration was signed at Bowen Road Primary School by key education workforce stakeholders including the Tasmanian Principals Association, Australian Education Union, University of Tasmania, the Department of Education, Teachers Registration Board and the Peter Underwood Centre for Educational Attainment. The signing of the Bowen Road Declaration was a momentous occasion for education in Tasmania with leading Tasmanian educators signing a formal agreement to increase educational outcomes in Tasmania by raising the status of the teaching profession and delivering a quality education workforce that is capable of meeting Tasmania's current and future needs. The agreement has set a solid framework for the employment of 250 more teachers in our government schools. Without a doubt this is the largest ever recruitment drive for Tasmanian government schools. Importantly, it provides an unprecedented opportunity to reshape the education workforce aimed at improving student educational outcomes and reducing the workload of our hardworking teaching staff, principals and support staff.

This year, 69 new full-time teachers have started teaching in classrooms around the state as part of our \$145 million investment to employ 250 teachers and 80 teacher assistants over the next six years. It was a pleasure to meet three of those at Taroona High School last week.

In our second consecutive term of government, we are in a prime position to be able to significantly build on and continue the work of the past five years in driving education improvement in Tasmania. Evidence clearly shows that people who complete year 12 have better life outcomes in terms of being healthier, happier, and most importantly, more productive. Our year 11 and 12 school extension program is clearly working as more students are staying on at school and the attainment rate for the Tasmanian Certificate of Education has improved by nearly 10 per cent since we came to government. It is therefore no surprise that communities around the state have embraced our year 11 and 12 school extension program with 43 schools extended to year 12 so far and another four schools ready to extend in 2020. By 2022 all high schools in Tasmania will offer access to year 11 and 12 programs.

In recent years we have seen the Education Department move from being an agency only about teaching and learning to one that recognises that for a child to learn they need to feel supported and valued and have the material basics to be healthy. The services provided by the Education Department now include school nurses, school psychologists, social workers and speech pathologists. Our Government understands that wellbeing is vital in supporting Tasmanian children and students to reach their potential. Funding of \$1.6 million over four years has been allocated to establish a child and student wellbeing unit that is responsible for developing and implementing the new Child and Student Wellbeing Strategy for Government schools.

Improving mental wellbeing is the first focus area under the strategy with an action plan soon to be released. This plan addresses some of the key issues experienced by our students and children such as resilience, depression, anxiety and cyber safety. We recognise that part of addressing wellbeing includes combating bullying in schools and we are investing \$3 million over four years

to help achieve this. We have partnered with the Alannah & Madeline Foundation to help address cyber bullying and our schools are utilising respectful relationships education resource. Bullying should never be tolerated in our schools or the wider community.

This Government will take a leadership role this year in addressing an issue that is becoming a growing concern to all. The evidence is unequivocal that investing in the early years is key to setting up our children for the brightest future possible, recognising that supporting early learning provides the highest return on investment. In terms of lifting education outcomes our Government is introducing free preschool for eligible three-year olds. Our Working Together for 3 Year Old's initiative sees Tasmania become the first state in the country to implement an approach that not only funds places for children in early learning centres but also provides holistic support and wraparound services. The pilot has started this year with a staged rollout to commence in 2020. This is a significant initiative for Tasmania, one that I believe will help break the cycle of disadvantage. We are also set to fund the introduction of six new early learning hubs with four hubs to be operational by 2024. These early learning hubs will provide a greater access for families in the early years to relevant services with a strong focus on improving place-based service delivery to communities throughout Tasmania.

When it comes to disability, my commitment to ensuring that our schools are high quality inclusive learning environments for students with disability has not wavered. We are systematically implementing all the recommendations from the Ministerial Taskforce for Students with Disability and have allocated a total of \$19.25 million to progress these initiatives.

Last year the signing of the bilateral National Schools Reform Agreement between the Tasmanian and Australian governments provided an additional \$490 million to Tasmanian government schools over the next 10 years. This unprecedented long-term funding begins in full in 2020. It will ensure certainty for Tasmanian schools and parents with resources to be allocated to key focus programs, including funding the introduction of the disability needs-based funding model. The new needs-based funding model will allocate funding and resources for the educational adjustments that are required to implement appropriate teaching and learning programs for students with a disability across Tasmanian government schools. Our new approach and modelling structure has been hailed as nation leading and a sure way to provide a truly inclusive education system that delivers all students a quality education.

We are also delivering on our \$179 million election commitment to expand and improve school infrastructure to support learning. We are investing in new schools, school rebuilds, new early learning hubs and school farm redevelopments in close partnership with local and school communities. New schools will be built at Legana and Brighton. There are also significant rebuilds being undertaken at Penguin District School, Sorell School, Cosgrove High School and Devonport High.

This Government is delivering on a record \$2.6 billion worth of job-creating infrastructure over the forward estimates that addresses pressure points and support ongoing growth in our economy. We are delivering the infrastructure Tasmanians need, both now and for the future to make their lives better by getting people safely to work and back home again; to deliver more efficient public transport services across our state; to welcome visitors; and to get our products from port to the world. At the crux of this is our 10-year \$13.9 billion infrastructure project pipeline, which clearly maps out our planned infrastructure works and is giving investors and the industry the certainty they need to invest in Tasmania. This is the first time a detailed 10-year pipeline of work has been released and this Government has delivered.

The Government has also welcomed the Hobart City Deal and the funding that has flowed from it. The funding is now locked in from both federal and state governments for the \$576 million to replace the Bridgewater Bridge. We expect this to be delivered. We expect Tasmanians to be driving on the new bridge by the end of 2024. We understand that a replacement bridge is vital to growing our economy and building an efficient freight and commuter network.

The Government is nearly half way through our \$500 million Midland Highway 10-Year Action Plan to upgrade the safety and efficiency of the full length of this important highway. We listened to Tasmanians who said they wanted a safer Midland Highway to reduce the unacceptable road toll. By June this year, we expect that 91 kilometres, or 62 per cent of the work, will be either completed or under construction. Work is well advanced on the largest single project in the Midland Highway action plan; the \$92.3 million Perth Link Roads Project, which is sustaining hundreds of local jobs in the civil construction industry and providing a massive economic boost to northern Tasmania. This important project will deliver the final link in a dual carriage way along the Midland Highway from Launceston to the south of Perth, four lanes all the way.

Contracts have also been awarded this year for the first project's now \$72 million Roads to Support Tasmania's Visitor Economy program, the first-ever dedicated investment in our tourism roads to ensure that they are safer for visitors and locals alike.

Work has started on sealing the road to Hastings Caves, a significant section of the Waterhouse Road is being sealed, a new overtaking lane is being built at Glen Gala on the Great Eastern Drive, we have delivered on our promise to seal sections of the Highland Lakes Road and the next stage of work to upgrade Richmond Road has gone to tender. This year we will start further work in improvements along the Great Eastern Drive and we will also start work to seal the rest of Bruny Island Main Road.

Another challenge for a growing economy, and probably one of the most frustrating, is more traffic, most notably in and around Greater Hobart. There is not a single solution. It will take a number of different elements to address this, including better use of the roads. We already have more commuters using more public transport, as well as long-term major infrastructure building projects. Already we have added Macquarie and Davey streets to our state road network. Improvements have been made to traffic-signal coordination and we are working on other changes to make traffic flow on these key roads. We are also committed to finding better ways to clear breakdowns and crashes in Hobart's congestion hot spots during peak times.

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

PREMIER'S ADDRESS

Resumed from above.

Mr ROCKLIFF (Braddon - Minister for Education and Training) - Madam Speaker, we are also committed to finding better ways to clear breakdowns and crashes in Hobart's congestion hotspots during peak times, like investing and coordinating more tow trucks.

Planning for bus priority lanes is underway including building a fifth lane on the Southern Outlet to help get buses through the traffic more easily. We are looking at how changes or

extensions to clearways and parking and better bus priorities can help traffic flows on the key CBD roads. The Department of State Growth has a dedicated team working on this.

We have delivered improvements to help reduce the traffic holdups at the Hobart Airport roundabout and we expect the tender to be released very soon for the major new flyover project there.

Importantly, we have also ensured that planning has commenced on a broader south-east traffic solution.

In the future, despite active management, the traffic network through Hobart will reach its practical limits with no efficient alternative routes. We have seen a number of suggested proposals to build bypass roads or tunnels or a mixture of both to deal with this future scenario.

I am pleased that an extra \$1 million has been made available in this year's Budget to bring forward our election commitment to investigate the costs and benefits of a bypass or a tunnel in Hobart. We will bring forward our election commitment to engage expert consultants and start this work as soon as we can. We want to get on with the early work we need to do to ensure that we are in a position to make a start to these sorts of long-term major infrastructure projects.

We know we need to make public transport more attractive and more efficient to encourage people to use it more often. This Government is acting and we are investing in public transport and we will ensure that Hobart has the transport linkages needed to support the sustainable growth in the city. This includes a seven-day a week ferry service from Bellerive to Sullivans Cove. We know there is a significant amount of interest in the local community regarding the establishment of a ferry service which is an idea that has been talked about for some time now. Hobart's lineal growth along the Derwent Estuary provides a natural opportunity to host a ferry commuter service that could potentially take thousands of vehicles off roads in and around the city.

Our plan will also include a new and improved Hobart transit centre for buses in the future to make it safer and more efficient to interchange in the CBD and, as we have said all along, this facility could be partly or wholly underground. We have released a tender for expert consultants to investigate the best options for the future and bring advice back to Government.

In the north, planning has started for expanding capacity at the Charles Street bridge in Launceston. Evandale main road has been upgraded, the tender for a new roundabout at the Mowbray Connector is being finalised, and designs for important safety upgrades on the West Tamar Highway are underway.

In the north-west, the Bass Highway is our most important route through the north and to the north-west and continued upgrade work on this corridor is crucial from an economic, investment and tourist perspective. The Government has made a significant funding commitment to it.

We have delivered the important junction upgrades on the highway at Wynyard to make this crash hotspot safer.

One particular focus is on the highway west of Wynyard, an important safety improvement specifically on increasing safe overtaking opportunities between Wynyard and Marrawah. These will be developed in consultation with the Waratah-Wynyard and Circular Head councils and that work is underway.

The west coast has long been a driver of the Tasmanian economy and through our west coast roads package we are ensuring there remains a well-maintained, safe and efficient road network. I have seen a number of important freight bridges being built across Tasmania which are helping our regions become more productive. As we announced only last week, as part of our \$19 million Freight Access Bridge Upgrades Program, seven bridges will be upgraded with the Oakleigh Rail Underpass on the Bass Highway at Burnie the first to be underway.

When it comes to rail, the overall state of Tasmania's freight-rail network has never been stronger, with \$120 million in infrastructure upgrades through tranche 1 of the joint Tasmanian- and Commonwealth-funded Tasmanian Freight Rail Revitalisation Program almost complete, and a further \$120 million in upgrades to begin under tranche 2 this financial year.

Under this Government, Tasmanian exports are booming with \$3.78 billion in export value over the 2018 calendar year. That is 14.6 per cent up from the previous year. With over 99 per cent of goods leaving and arriving in Tasmania moved by sea, it is vital that our investment in port infrastructure keeps pace with our growing economy. Last year, TasPorts launched its \$200 million 15-year Ports Master Plan. This will see a series of strategic infrastructure investments across Tasmania's four main ports in Bell Bay, Burnie, Devonport and Hobart.

We have delivered a 10-year infrastructure pipeline this year. This year we will go a step further and look beyond the horizon to what Tasmania could look like in not just 10- or 20-years' time but in 30 years' time. The 30-year infrastructure strategy we will release later this year will paint a picture of what our state could look like in 30 years' time, based on current and predicted future trends. It will include thoughts and ideas on how we can get there. It is an exciting and comprehensive piece of work, which we look forward to engaging Tasmanians in. It is important that we dream big together about the Tasmania we want to create for future generations.

Our advanced manufacturing and defence industry sectors are world class and contribute over \$1.7 billion to the Tasmanian economy each year. Last year, Tasmania became the first state ever with a full-time defence advocate, ensuring that our state is well represented at the highest levels of decision-making. Since then, we have seen Tasmanian companies being sought out for their niche manufacturing capabilities and winning significant supply contracts here and around the globe. This year we will continue to grow Tasmania's presence, including a presence in the 2019 Pacific International Maritime Exposition to showcase our capabilities to senior maritime, military and government decision-makers from around the world.

Underpinning our massive \$2 billion of public infrastructure investment is our strategy to deliver a pipeline of skilled workers for now and into the future. We know that while employment in building and construction is at historically high levels, meeting labour demand requires a coordinated effort by government and industry. That is why we are pushing ahead with a wide range of workforce development programs and targeted funding for training. Programs such as our \$2 million investment to help apprentices and trainees succeed in study are guided by industry advice on what is needed and what works.

Last year, we signed up to the National Partnership on the Skilling Australians Fund. This major partnership will deliver up to \$25.1 million to Tasmania over four years from 2018-19 and support our strategy to grow the number of apprentices and trainees by 40 per cent by 2025.

This Government strongly supports our public vocational and education provider. We have provided TasTAFE with a guaranteed 70 per cent of the state's vocational and training budget, a

figure we are constantly surpassing. Our new Centre for Excellence will ensure that TAFE is able to provide the highest standards of delivery in modern and contemporary settings with content driven by industry.

In the south there is a strong and coordinated industry support to help drive planning for the \$7 million investment for a new Trades and Water Centre for Excellence at Clarence. Likewise, in the north we will see interest and helpful industry involvement in the planning for the Agricultural Centre of Excellence at Burnie's Freer Farm.

I also note we are well progressed with our \$1.5 million Drysdale move into Providore Place in Devonport's Living City area and we are expecting a mid-year opening.

In my electorate of Braddon there is a sense of energy and confidence. I can also note that in welcoming back my colleague Mrs Rylah, who I enjoyed working with between 2014 and 2018. We missed Mrs Rylah in the Chamber over the last 12 months. It is fantastic to have you back, Joan. Your energy, enthusiasm and passion, particularly for regional Tasmania, will be very welcomed by many, including myself and my great friend and colleague Roger Jaensch, as we work together as a team.

This Government contributed \$14 million towards the first stage of the Living City project which opened recently and is a great example of the transformation underway and investments we are making to revitalise our regions. As a government, we have invested strongly in infrastructure to support economic growth and jobs including upgrades to the Bass and Murchison highways, a brand new \$10 million freight ship for King Island, a new mooring dolphin to allow bigger cruise ships at Burnie, and a \$120 million investment in our freight rail network.

Work is underway on the \$37 million Duck River irrigation scheme which will deliver 5200 megalitres of high security irrigation water to the Circular Head region, giving farmers the confidence to further invest.

On that note, I welcome my Lyons colleague, Mr John Tucker. I have known John for a very long time. With his energy and very genuine nature I know he will represent Lyons to the very best of his ability and work extremely hard. He has a very good work ethic and a real passion, particularly for the rural areas and regional Tasmania, so welcome, John.

We are supportive of our vital mining sector with mining exploration grants. By keeping the budget in balance, we have been able to invest even more to improve services. I am pleased that the Premier announced the Affordable Housing Action Plan will include a new purpose-built youth foyer on the north-west coast at Burnie at a cost of around \$10 million. It will provide 25 units for young people experiencing or at risk of homelessness. It offers the prospect of a much brighter future.

We have also delivered on our commitment to provide a seven-day a week bus service between the West Coast and the north-west making it easier for people to connect with work and education.

I am delighted that more tourists are discovering what Braddon has to offer - the beautiful north-west and west coast and King Island. According to the latest Tasmanian visitor survey there was a 4 per cent jump in visitors coming to the Cradle Coast region in the 12 months to December last year. It is the highest regional growth rate in the state. This Government is supporting that

growth with \$72 million over the four years to improve the visitor experience at Cradle Mountain and the announcement of the Western Wilds as Tasmania's next iconic drive.

As Education minister, I was pleased to recently launch the Children's University on the west coast with the Peter Underwood Centre of Educational Attainment in Zeehan. This exciting opportunity for children living in the region opens the door for them to explore a pathway to tertiary education.

I have been pleased to see the establishment of the Advanced Welding and Training Centre in Burnie, thanks to the federal government, which will ensure more Tasmanians are job ready.

Tasmania's best days are truly ahead of us. I congratulate the Premier on setting a strong and forward-looking agenda for 2019. I am looking forward to getting on with the job.

[2.43 p.m.]

Ms O'BYRNE (Bass) - Madam Speaker, I will start my reply with a broader commentary around our obligations as members of communities and our obligations as leaders.

I will have more to say at another time regarding Christchurch. We will probably all take the opportunity to do so over the coming weeks. Christchurch caused me to again reflect on the power of language and the authenticity given to statements that are made by members of parliament, in particular, and the impact our words have on shaping our community, how they respond and how they might choose to act.

To those of us who are passivists, who try to choose our words carefully - and we do not always get that right - but who understand that language shapes reality, it can almost sometimes be a very physical or visceral reaction when we hear cruel or racist words or people who are being seen to incite violence. It is actually a physical response when we hear it.

Even for those of us who try really hard to do the right thing all the time, there are tacit comments, those unconscious biases or acceptance of language, that we still need to remind ourselves of.

When British MP, Jo Cox, was murdered during the height of the Brexit debate, a fact that some white extremists are now disputing which is concerning, I raised in this parliament the damage that can be done simply by the use of language. Yes, we have free speech but with that freedom of speech comes an even greater obligation to ensure that our speech does not impinge upon the freedoms or the rights of others, including the right to live your life fully in peace and without fear.

I have mentioned before that when we see an increase in racist commentary - my own children notice and hear more things in their own environments - if you say something, then someone will hear it. If someone can hear it, someone else can imagine it, and unfortunately that means someone can do it. The events in Christchurch were horrific. We all agree, but we have all listened to the demonising of our Muslim community and either ignored it or not raised our voices enough. Last Friday's event show us the danger of inaction.

The demonising of any members of our community, and those who have sought safety here, has come not only from backyard extremists, or people who we think do not understand, but from people who are in authority - people like us. Statements by leaders give authenticity and licence to others. During commentary on those seeking refuge, when political leaders say things like 'these

people might be paedophiles or racists or murderers' and we say nothing, we are culpable. When conservative journalists speak of 'tidal waves of immigrants' and we say nothing, we are culpable. When Pauline Hanson speaks of a need to vaccinate ourselves against them, and we write her off and fail to understand the impact of her words, we are culpable. When a senator elected with only 19 votes - one of which, I assume, was his own - talks of 'a final solution', frankly, we should be scared.

You and I, and the people in this room do discount it; we do not take it on board. We do not act upon it, we look at it and put it into the context that we think is appropriate. The reality is that not everybody behaves that way.

Language shapes reality. The language that is used by leaders in communities, the people of influence, shapes reality even more. The things we say are repeated by others, imagined by some, and frighteningly can be acted upon.

There has been much said of leadership in this Chamber in the last two days. It is beholden on all of us to reflect on the things we have said in the past. We probably all have form in some way or another. Importantly, we need to reflect upon the things that we have failed to call out. As we regularly say when we attempt to raise the issue of abuse and violence against women in our community in this place, the standard you walk by, is the standard you accept. That understanding has led to many movements, requiring us to give validation when people say that they are frightened.

It has also led to movements, such as the Me Too movement. I gently remind all members that when women come forward, it is important to listen and to validate. The way that we respond sends a message to other women and to young girls about their rights to come forward and make a complaint and their rights to be safe. It also sends a message to our men and to our young boys about the role of consequences.

The state of the State is an important construct of this House. To avoid somewhat lavish, expensive and time-consuming openings at the beginning of each year, we moved some time ago, to having only one formal opening of parliament a term and an update to the House by the Premier of the state on the state of our position in Tasmania. It has historically heralded some big, new commitments from government. It is seen as an opportunity to report on how well the state may or may not be going.

I was left a bit disconcerted by yesterday's address. It did go to addressing the issue of the fire season. Fires still burn across our state. I add my voice to the many who have praised our firefighters and staff from across agencies and the many volunteers for their courage and phenomenal work.

To me, the Premier's speech seemed to be predominantly reannouncements of government policy, including commitments to implement legislation that has already passed at least this House and work that many in the community would have thought would already be underway. The glossy brochure is a hodgepodge of policies. I do not know if everyone has had an opportunity to scribble all over theirs, as I have. It is an interesting piece of work. Some of the things in here are legal or policy obligations, and some are normal process. There appears to be an attempt to break down every project into as many tiny little parts as possible to make all of them an 'announcable'. We open a grant round; we then announce the grant round recipients and then we open it again. That is three out of the 286. That happens quite a bit.

Some of the reports about legislation that has passed this House that will be enacted assumes that we are not reflecting on the capacity of the upper House to make their decision on the legislation that is yet to pass both Houses.

It also includes announcements of things that we thought were already underway. The police recruitment of 125 gets four, maybe five different mentions. Dove Lake is broken up into at least three reportables. A number of the grants funds are announced. When they are regionally done they are going to be announced separately so they become a different announceable. It was a somewhat disappointing job. It has been broken up as if you are trying to make it look like an awful lot more work is happening or that all of a sudden we are going to break down every government task into minute steps and report upon them.

There is a process for that and it is not the Premier's Address. It is the Estimates process and the GBE process that are there is for questioning in this House. The state of the state is not supposed to be a bit of a school project on what you might get done in the next couple of weeks. We all know when we did school projects that the first thing we did was write up a bit of a timetable and do a bit of a list and make it all look a lot bigger, but that is not what we are here to do, so that was a little disappointing.

I also am quite interested in how much it would cost to produce such a lovely brochure and how many departmental hours went into compiling what is effectively a list of what they need to do in the next couple of years as opposed to a second-year agenda, which it is called, although the language of its title certainly does not deliver on its content.

I expected there to be a more open acknowledgement of the Revised Estimates Report. It is almost as if everyone is pretending this did not happen. It is a concerning document, and for those members who have not had the time to read it - and I know that there are some new members who probably were otherwise engaged during January - it is important to read this report because it shows us that there are some significant issues. The budget has been blown and this document shows it. It is not us saying that, it is not independent commentators. It is not Saul Eslake, who has been a little dismissive of the Government's management. It is a report produced by the Department of Treasury and Finance. As our state burned, the budget update was quietly slipped out and it clearly demonstrates that the Liberal Party has put our state on a fast track to debt, partly through twisted priorities and through pork-barrelling in the lead-up to the last state election - the \$2.7 billion that they seemed to not be able to afford.

Tasmania will be in net debt of \$343.1 million within three years. What was forecast to be a \$161.9 million surplus has been reduced by 95 per cent to \$7.3 million. That is a significant deterioration of \$154.6 million in just seven months. As has been touched on already, we still do not know the full cost to our budget from the bushfires. It is going to take some time for us to understand but the last bushfires were extremely expensive.

We have talked about the golden age. The Treasurer has been very fond of talking about his golden age, but in less than a year since he said that he has squandered that golden age and that has been by choice. Governments are often impacted by different things. There are international economic climates and a whole host of things that might impact on a government's income, but these have been decisions that have been made internally.

At the end of her contribution, Ms White was asked to withdraw her comment, so just in case the entire line was withdrawn and not just the word 'lie' that had been found offensive, can I say

that one of the great and deliberate mistruths told by the Treasurer, Mr Gutwein, is that he inherited a net debt from the former Labor government. It is very clear that he did not. Labor's debt was paid off back in 2005 and we maintained over the life of that government net cash and investments despite a global financial crisis which smashed our revenue forecasts. Despite that coming down the line at us that we had very little capacity to do anything about other than manage our own response, we did not go into net debt. The Government is now in crisis economically, as we have seen over the last few days.

We have had ministers over the life of this Government misleading parliament, misleading the Premier, and misleading the Integrity Commission. We have had resignations, police referrals, protocols having to be implemented to manage conflicts which have either been ignored or, in the case of Ms Courtney, they have simply been promised; we have yet to see the protocols that are in place for Ms Courtney. This Premier is in such a crisis that he prorogued parliament. For people who do not understand parliament, that sounds like we just had an extra couple of days off and started a bit later, but proroguing is a really serious thing to do. This Premier was so frightened of the parliament that he stopped it and had to restart it again, so it was not just that he delayed it a little bit.

To give you an idea of how serious prorogation is and how rarely it is used as this kind of tool, there is another parliament toying with prorogation at the moment. British Prime Minister Theresa May cannot get her way in the votes in the House of Commons on Brexit. I imagine that would be a terrible place to be at the moment in terms of trying to get that through the parliament. In order to make it an option for her to reset her debate and her question again, she is genuinely considering proroguing parliament, so it has taken Brexit to prorogue the UK parliament. What has it taken to prorogue the Tasmanian Parliament? Dodgy ministers and an absolute and complete lack of leadership by this Premier.

I am tired of the number of times he says he did not know. I am tired of the number of times he has said he is taking something seriously, and nothing happens. I am tired of the Premier not acting like a premier or, in fact, a leader. I believe he is capable of it, Madam Speaker. It would be worse if I thought he did not have the capacity, but I do not feel he is putting into this job what the Tasmanian people require him to do, the effort, the commitment, the hours and the standards of his own ministers that we expect him to do.

On the subject of leadership, let us turn to the appalling way the Government has conducted its negotiations with its own workforce, the same workforce who we asked to run towards the flames when every one of our own human instincts would be to flee, the same workforce who are working ridiculously long hours in emergency wards, the same workforce caring for our most vulnerable. The Premier likes to say it is the union bosses making these decisions but when you go to these meetings or see them on television and look at the campaigns being run, it is the workers coming forward and telling their stories, trying to get a resolution.

The Hodgman Government's so-called negotiations on public sector wages has been - I would have liked to have said 'laughable', but it has gone too long for it to be laughable, Madam Speaker, and it is now quite offensive. There has been a nine-month stalemate. I do not remember a government getting itself into such a pickle with unions. There have been governments of different colours in this place before having to negotiate wage outcomes with staff. This is not a new thing; it happens quite regularly and grown-ups normally find a way through it.

I believe the blame for the current dispute has to be laid squarely at the feet of the Liberal Government and the Treasurer who have been so personally and emotionally attached to a 2 per cent wages policy that even they recognise does not meet the cost of living. Remember, these are the staff we asked during the global financial crisis not to take a pay rise. We asked them to do the right thing. We said, 'There is genuinely no money, what can we do?', and they said, 'We will stand with you', but it was always expected that when times got better, the golden age we are currently in, that we would do the right thing by them, and here we are, not doing that. Our teachers, our firefighters, our nurses, our park rangers, our paramedics, our allied health workers - all across our public service - are falling behind their mainland colleagues, and we wonder why it is hard to recruit staff.

The cost of living continues to grow. The ABS has Hobart at 3 per cent and it is certainly not getting any cheaper to live in the north, so it is little wonder that we cannot recruit when we are not offering competitive wages. It is little wonder that after this long a stalemate and inability to address what should be a normal negotiation that we have staff taking industrial action to demonstrate the need for the Government to start valuing the contribution they make every day. What response do we get from this Government? It is unheard of - threats, bullying and intimidation, Madam Speaker.

The Government has said, because for some reason they have no desire to genuinely bargain in good faith, that they will stand down workers who take industrial action. They stand down nurses from their jobs in the hospitals for taking industrial action. Some of the lowest-paid staff in the public service, our cleaners, our orderlies, the people who make sure patients are where they need to be and in safe and clean environments, will have their pay docked - and it is not as if we do not pay them appalling amounts as it is. More incompetence and bullying.

I urge the Government to negotiate in good faith, not with the ridiculous ultimatums and offers they have been making, that when calculated over the whole scheme actually deliver less in entitlements and wages than people are already getting.

In the address yesterday, the Premier said that he valued public sector workers. While I say that language shapes reality, that is one case where those words do not demonstrate that. They do not shape that reality. If you value your public service members, the people who work for us all, then work with them for a solution. It is no longer about saving face. We missed that opportunity a while ago. There was some bravado that we could have got through. It is now about Tasmanians who work for the public service and their livelihoods, and it is for Tasmanians who rely on those services. We need to have this matter resolved. It has gone too long. We need to be a little better at managing it.

Late last year, the 2018 State Service Employee Survey was conducted. We may have received it in January. I can check the date if anyone is interested. Please look at this report because it indicates the level of disquiet and despair across the public service. There were a number of parts that were okay. There were some good findings in it, which is fantastic but some things concerned me:

My agency has policies in place to report improper conduct and behaviour.

Twenty-five per cent of people said that was not the case.

Bullying is not tolerated in my agency.

Forty per cent of people said that was not the case.

That makes me very nervous. We talked about how culture sets from leadership. The things we do in here clearly have an impact. Frighteningly, over half of public servants who responded to the survey were not confident they would be protected from reprisal for reporting improper conduct. These are confidential surveys. There are always issues with how questions are asked. There are always issues with how many people might have responded, but anyone looking at this survey should hear alarm bells ringing. We have a public service that is not feeling valued in terms of our negotiations, but also are frightened of saying anything about what they think might be going wrong. Twenty per cent did not believe that earning and sustaining a high level of public trust is seen as important in their agency.

There are people who are not feeling that their role and their ability to speak out about their concerns would be a safe thing to do. That speaks volumes for what might be happening across our public service. There is a host of things that I suggest people look at. Under 'diversity and inclusion', 36 per cent of people did not believe that all staff in the agency were treated fairly with respect. I was interested in a question that was not asked, in support for employees affected by family violence. There were some good questions, which was great to see. There was no question about if you felt supported if you reported family violence. If you talked a lot about how you might respond to somebody who was subject to a family violence circumstance, but not necessarily about whether people felt safe to come out as well. Quite often, if you are in a violent situation at home, your workplace is the place you might feel safe enough to make that clear. It might be that we ask that question and we get some good data. I hope that is the case. It was an interesting question not to be asked, given the nature of the questions in the other sections.

The concerns around TAFE came to a head during the nepotism affair. TAFE issues continue to plague this Government. Industry does feel disconnected. That is clear in the work we are doing in our Industry Advisory Council discussions, but also broadly in the community when you are talking to employers. They feel a significant disconnect between their needs, what they want to achieve and what TAFE has been able to provide.

A common concern is the lack of provision of training or, in many cases, the lack of appropriate training that industry needs, not only now but in the future. The Deputy Premier talked about work and training in his contribution, yet he did not touch on the significant concerns that have been raised across TAFE. We have had courses cancelled. Courses have been postponed. If you are a small business person and you have employed an apprentice, you know that towards the end of that apprenticeship you are getting a lot more value out of that employee. That is the cost of doing business. You have invested in their training, particularly in those early years. In the end, you get a far greater return. Apprentices understand that they are paid a slightly lesser wage because they are learning skills. When you do not provide the training in the first year of apprenticeship and then the person has to do in the second year of apprenticeship, their first-year training and their second-year training and be off the job in the second year for a longer period of time and have their apprenticeship period extended, we have actually impacted not only on the apprentice but we have impacted on the business as well.

While plumbing and electrotech have been the areas that have featured in the media as the courses that have been delayed or cancelled, I am advised in discussions across the sector that this is not confined to only a couple of craft groups. This is across the entire sector and there is significant concern around the quality of training.

We have had students being slapped with a 3 per cent fee increase across the board. In fact, in one of these courses, they are not providing it physically, but for an extra \$250 you can do the whole

course on line. It is more expensive to do the course on line than it is to go into TAFE and provide the training and the support and the training environment that we want.

Staff are under incredible pressure. We have some areas where marking has not been done from work that was submitted last September. Those students have no idea how they are going. That work has not been able to be done because staff simply have not had the time, or there are not enough staff. Workers are having to extend apprenticeships because training was not provided at the time agreed or indeed required. We have many staff resigning. The new electrotech teacher lasted six days. That puts a lot of pressure on those left behind. Staff attraction is a challenge. I do not doubt that it is a challenge but going on the radio and saying 'come on in and work with us. That will fix up the whole issue about attracting staff. You are really good as a tradie. You should come in and teach and that will fix our problem'. We need to understand why people do not want to teach in TAFE. What is the problem? It is an environment that is currently regarded as toxic. There is a climate of staff being under-valued and there is a climate of people not feeling respected or remunerated. Simply saying come on in and work for us is not going to cut it as we have seen.

In a time where there is a lot of work in the industry, when you can get a good return in the industry, it is hard to attract them and we need to start working to make sure we get those people. Saying 'please come in' is not going to do it.

We need an urgent audit into commencement and completion. We need to know why the failure to complete levels is so high across both apprenticeships and traineeships, and we need that data broken down for every single craft group. We need to see if we have a systemic problem or if there are elements that we are doing well. Overall, our completion rates are really concerning.

We have to stop the practice of creating course content to unmanageable blocks - course content that might be over 400 hours being delivered in less than 200. We need to be assured that the training that they are providing meets the industry and student needs and that teachers are supported to be able to deliver it in the most appropriate way.

I am concerned about the number of students who are now being left to pursue self-directed study in areas that have historically received a greater level of guidance and support. If we do not have a teacher for this area it is okay, you can do it all on-line and we will check it at the end - that is not the training experience that people are expecting from TAFE.

The Deputy Premier, Mr Rockliff, says the right things about TAFE and about public vocational education and he truly believes them. He does not want things to not go well but TAFE is in crisis and staff and students from industry are getting to a level of desperation.

Going across some of the other issues where it is clear the Government is struggling in time constraints, we have 1600 people sleeping rough on any given night. That is not acceptable. The Government has made commitments on the number of houses that it will be providing. Over time that has changed to houses and lots. We are not meeting the targets and we are not seeing those targets and people housed fast enough. We are getting into another winter.

When we had this conversation last year, we talked about the need to do something for the short-term housing of people. Every solution that was on the table was a long-term housing strategy. None of those have got us to a position of being able to survive winter this year.

Remember there are a vast number of reasons why people are homeless. There are some people for whom there are very complex needs and it is very hard to house them and it requires some significant wraparound work. There are other people who simply cannot find anywhere to live. We have people who are employed who cannot find anywhere to live. Our housing issue is significant. The fact that we are going to go into another winter without any appropriate response to that short-term housing need is not acceptable.

We have seen other countries do short-term processes. We talked a bit last year in this place about the New Zealand model of opening up space so that people could be safe and warm. It concerns me that we do not seem to be making progress in that space at all.

There is a health crisis in Tasmania. Every year the budget allocates less than was spent in the previous year. The 2018-19 budget contained \$111 million less for health and hospitals than it actually cost to run health and hospitals in the previous year. There is usually an obvious thing. Health costs do not get lower. Health costs always go up so if you are already funding at less than what it cost last year to run the system then you have a significant problem. Then we had the Government's own report. The report that was very hard to get any access and information around which showed that there was a \$100 million blackhole in the health funding budget. There was an increased allocation but even that increased allocation of \$105 million left us \$6 million less than what was spent in 2017-18 and next year they are forecasting to spend \$15 million less.

I do not think we are anywhere near that and I note that despite all the commitments that we received in this House last year around access to termination services the private provider that the minister promised would be operating is still not operating. Women are getting access if they can afford it only through the goodwill of gynaecologists in the private sector. That is not a sustainable outcome. Nearly all of us were in this House when the minister made significant commitments about this service delivery that have not been met. It is really hard. We do still have women flying away because the referral pathway assumes you finding out and managing your pregnancy in a certain way. There are women who are struggling to afford the service. There are organisations still fundraising to help women to get to that service. This is not the type of health care that we want. Whether you like or dislike, whatever your personal view is on accessing terminations - and I appreciate that they are varied - you cannot stop women from having terminations. You can only stop them from having safe ones and it is not conscionable that we treat this health procedure in such a way.

Increasingly, women are concerned about a number of issues in the women's area. We are significantly concerned around the service capacity. When you speak to women's organisations around the state while, they are always grateful and always happy for the additional funds and the additional projects, they are saying that they simply cannot meet the demand that is currently before them. Whether the work is in legal, health, sexual assault, or emergency care, there is simply not enough funding to meet the need as it currently stands.

We know that there are waiting lists to get into our women's shelters. The point that women are at most risk when they flee an abusive relationship is at this point of leaving. If you leave and you cannot get into a shelter the risk of going home is huge. Within the Government's plans there is some discussion around additional beds but given that we are so far behind the need already I am quite concerned. I want to seek a briefing from the minister regarding creating the standalone facilities because the administrative costs of each standalone facility whether it be women's housing or youth housing actually takes a fair bit of the money out of the provision of beds. I am hoping that we have spoken with those services about making the best spend of our dollar to ensure that

we can cater and support as many women as possible. As I said, across the sector there is an underfunding and an inability to meet the existing demands.

As the Leader of the Opposition mentioned, we have a rise in the number of women in our unemployed ranks. That is concerning. We have a vast over-representation of women in insecure work. The concerning thing at the moment when you speak to young people and to women is that they now have a view that nobody gets permanent jobs any more, that there are no full-time jobs. The world opening up to them is one of insecure work. Recent data on the nature of the jobs that are coming forward is showing that where this job growth is that women tend to go into, so those caring roles, is paid lower and it does require a different level of skills. There is a whole lot of work that we are not doing around shaping those environments to make sure that we can provide meaningful employment that gives people security.

Insecure work is terrifying - not knowing if you can pay your bills. When you go back to that issue of the people who get permanent housing, not being able to show and demonstrate that the job that you might have been doing for five years is secure because you are still on the casual roll or you are still working three jobs regularly does make it harder for people to find housing. One of the biggest growing groups of people who are homeless now are older women: older women who have not been able to build up the financial resources over the years; older women who do not have careers that they can fall back on, who have been playing that caring role and then suddenly find themselves bereft of safe housing and employment.

I mentioned in the agenda some digital readiness work. That would be really good because in a recent national report on digital readiness Tasmania was not only the worst in the entire country but we were chipped a fair bit for having made absolutely no progress at all since the report started to happen. That concerns me because digital readiness is about a government's ability to interact with its community but also a community's ability to interact with its government. One of the things that has come out of another piece of work in the IT sector is the vast number of websites that the Government hosts. There is a huge number of websites which are quite hard to find and navigate. A number of them cannot be used on your phone and for most people that is where they do their IT work now. They do not always have laptops at home or go to online access centres, those that were not closed by this Government, but they use their phone to access services. If the forms you use and the data you need cannot be accessed by that medium there is a whole lot of people who are not having their needs met.

It concerns me because we have a minister who is responsible for the oversight of the entire Government and when we had an Estimates discussion it was quite clear he had no power and that is probably why very little has been done in that space.

Time expired.

[3.16 p.m.]

Mrs RYLAH (Braddon) - Madam Speaker, it is an honour and I recognise the privilege to return to represent the people of Braddon. I thank those people who voted for me and I undertake to work for all as a voice to create a better Braddon, one that shares in the state's growth and prosperity. I recognise and thank our retiring member, Adam Brooks, for his service to this parliament and the people of Tasmania over his nine years. I wish Adam well.

In 2018 the Braddon Liberal vote was nearly 60 per cent on a two-party preferred basis, or 3.55 quotas and three seats, a tiny reduction from our historic 2014 vote which delivered 3.7 quotas

and four Liberal seats. What the 2018 vote showed me is that our team is very strongly supported by the people in Braddon. They recognised that we have delivered. I salute my Braddon colleagues in the House, the Deputy Premier and Mr Jaensch, and I look forward to working with them and the rest of the team over the next three years.

The Hodgman Liberal Government is determined to deliver for my electorate, delivering more services, better infrastructure and to make Braddon stronger - a fair share, because we want all Tasmanians to feel the benefits of the strong economy and a balanced budget. In 2019 our plan is to focus on economic growth into all our regions and to the people who most need our government services. I am excited and energised because I am part of the team which will deliver these benefits.

Braddon is a long way from Hobart and the centre of government, so therein lies the perennial challenge - the tyranny of distance. For our regional areas, sharing in the growth of the state is critical and I recognise that strong advocacy is needed to turn these challenges into opportunities. I am honoured that the Premier has asked me to provide leadership on the issues important to the north-west and west and more broadly in the north of the state in the areas of regional infrastructure and rural health. Braddon is a place I cherish. Its beauty, its wildness, its richness, its verdancy, its innovative and clever people and its strong communities.

In the dreadful years leading up to 2014 in Braddon and Lyons families were split apart because there were no jobs, businesses folded at an alarming rate and despair hung over communities like a sea fog and an easterly wind on the north coast. It was an area where unique regional communities were crushed. Schools were to be shut, jobs destroyed, nurses and police sacked and service delivery castrated. I must say it has been heartening to see the return of strong communities since the Hodgman Liberal Government was first elected in 2014.

Destruction is easy but rebuilding takes years. There are now strong communities rebounding, like the ones I visited last week in Zeehan and Marrawah. Farms are viable, forestry businesses are flourishing, mines are on the rise and busy drilling for new resources. Small business is growing and making profit, there are more nurses, more police making communities safer again, schools are filling up and service delivery is extending to where it is needed. New community events and new tourism ventures have been created, with evidence just last week of greater numbers of visitors extending further and further into regional areas.

The latest Tasmanian Visitor Survey statistics shows tourists have spent a record amount in local communities while overall visitor numbers have grown steadily. The figures show 69 per cent of all visitor nights were spent outside of the capital, and for the first time the Cradle Coast has benefited from substantial growth. This is great news for our tourism operators.

While we have seen continued steady visitor growth, the Government understands we must protect what is special about our way of life so it can continue to be enjoyed by locals and visitors alike. I believe strong communities are a reflection of those people within it doing well, so it is with great pleasure and a sense of fulfilment that I see the many communities in Braddon flourishing again, but there is more work to do.

The Commonwealth Grants Commission acknowledged just in the last few days that Tasmania's economic position is stronger which has led to a reduction in the states GST relativity compared to other states. They identify that the reasons for this have been above-average growth in property sales, investment growth and Commonwealth payments offset by increased wage costs and population growth. However, they also identified this state's key weakness in our lack of fiscal

capacity. Our fiscal capacity has been this state's Achilles heel, in my opinion, since we lost Tattersalls to Victoria in 1954 among many other events, which limited the state's ability to create independent income, but Madam Speaker, I suggest that is up until now.

Our fiscal capacity is our ability to generate revenue in addition to our GST allocation. The Grants Commission identified three key reasons for our fiscal incapacity, and they are our below-average mining production; taxable payrolls, that is, businesses not being domiciled in the state; and the low value of property sales vis-a-vis mainland states. The commissioner also looked from the other side of our cash flow statement, saying we had the second-highest expenses per capita in the nation in spending on schools, health, housing and welfare. So we are insufficient on the income side and expenses are much higher per capita than other states. It is a paradox we must face.

There are many needs and wants within our community. It is a complex picture, and as an elected representative I seek to understand those needs and prioritise their delivery. Getting the balance right is a challenge I embrace. The balance I am seeking is both financial and social. Clearly the Grants Commission is saying Tasmania's weakness is not social spending but financial. I will work hard with the team to remedy that most difficult challenge. A great deal of work has been done already with a balanced budget, but we need a long-term solution and the fruits of this work are now appearing.

Madam Speaker, I draw the House's attention to the vision I outlined in 2014. I specified three elements and they are unchanged today. The first was prescient and is particularly relevant at this time and remains my priority today - energy. There is nothing more important to security and a future for people than the cost of the energy they use, its reliability and accessibility.

In the first part of my vision I outlined in 2014, I said 'our Government must create cheaper energy to facilitate the growth of industry, advanced manufacturing and downstream processing of the commodities we produce so well from our primary sectors in Braddon'. I further added 'we need to make power less costly so that people on fixed incomes can afford this essential service. This is my vision of our future.' I am enormously proud of the work done over the last five years by the Hodgman Liberal Government, in particular ministers Groom and Barnett. The recent announcements regarding Battery of the Nation and the second interconnector the Marinus project is key to unlocking our fiscal capacity. It is tremendously important.

The Hodgman Government's focus on recognising the remarkable and unique strength inherent in the location, geography and climate of Tasmania is coming to fruition. Energy will drive this state's employment and add a new and significant income stream for Tasmanians for years to come.

This income is a pivotal change in the state's fiscal strength and therefore in every Tasmanian's way of life. More income means better services, more opportunity and greater certainty about our financial security.

The nation-building Battery of the Nation using pumped hydro and wind generation plus the Marinus interconnector can transform this state. These projects have the potential to inject up to \$5 billion into the Tasmanian economy and deliver 2000 local jobs in Braddon. Many of these are in Braddon. There is nothing comparable to a strong and growing income stream for the state to build value. It will mean jobs and opportunity as well as better services and more infrastructure to support our state. It will mean a growing confidence by and in our communities.

Where is state Labor on these matters? Where are you on these national infrastructure projects? Where is your vision? What is your strategy regarding energy and giving this state a new income stream, or are you going to burn more gas at the Tamar Valley and drain the dams again, living in the past?

Under our strategy, Hydro Tasmania has confirmed three sites as being the most promising for pumped hydro development. The sites at Lake Cethana and Lake Rowallan in the north-west and near the Tribute Power Station on the West Coast will undergo an intensive feasibility study and community engagement process costing up to \$30 million. The Tribute Power Station, part of the Pieman Scheme below Lake Plimsoll and above Lake Murchison with a tunnel from the Anthony Dam has many attractive features. It is relatively modern, built in 1987 under the Robin Gray Liberal Government and fed by water that is used in the three stations downstream. The announcement has been very warmly welcomed. I was in Zeehan last week and heard the enthusiasm of people as they talked about the focus coming back to 'their' and 'our' hydro dams and 'their' power station. It was great to hear. The locals are embracing development and the jobs offered.

Tasmania has what the rest of the nation needs. The Hodgman Liberal Government is committed to using this energy advantage to ensure Tasmanians continue to see low cost, reliable and clean energy in Tasmanian homes and businesses. Further, the Australian Government's earlier commitment to work with the Hodgman Liberal Government to underwrite the first phase of Battery of the Nation through the federal Underwriting New Generation Investments Program is a further game changer for this state.

The Australian Government has also announced \$56 million to fast-track the delivery of the Marinus Link project following the release of the initial feasibility report. Our state is well on the way to achieving 100 per cent self-sufficiency in renewable generation and securing the nation's lowest regulated power prices by 2022. I am an extremely strong supporter of these commitments, along with the wind and solar projects which will supplement our energy expansion. This is the vision I have for this state. I am pro development because I want our state moving towards true financial security, that is developments that are sustainable and that enhance living and working here. As I said in my inaugural speech in 2014, 'Tasmania must progress and give its people, our children and our grandchildren the chances they need to prosper'. Energy is proven and critical as the fundamental element to create this future. I congratulate the Government on the outstanding progress it has made.

Braddon is an electorate that is deeply connected to the primary sector of the economy - the farms, the forests, the mines and the oceans, yet it also has world-class manufacturing enterprises. These manufacturing businesses, from my point of view, are the child of those farms, forests, mines and oceans. It is in these primary industries where the people who have created these businesses and many of those who work within these manufacturing businesses learned their skills. They have seen the manufacturing opportunity, learned the value of hard work and the drive to create success for themselves and others.

The tight connection between our primary and resource sectors and our world-class manufacturing businesses is clear and strong. These businesses in Braddon are grounded in reality yet leverage their technical and technological expertise for the benefit of the state, the nation and the world.

Braddon is very much private enterprise and it is this that drives the jobs and futures in Braddon. This will be a key focus for me in this term. Many people in Braddon have lived a life

taking risks on farms and in mines, in the forests, at sea, and in business, putting their homes, their families and their lives at risk. For many in Braddon, it is not a cosseted and protected life, where superannuation contributions are taken for granted, or even possible, or where wage rises or wage increments have nothing to do with improved productivity. There is somewhat of a difference between many in Braddon who cannot understand the demand for conditions and employment conditions they could never have and others in this state, nor do they stomach the threats to sick people in our hospitals from unclean equipment and dirty toilets. Excessive wage increases, which do not take account of improved conditions granted or improvement in productivity, do not get much truck.

It is accepted that wage increases of 2 per cent plus an increment is sufficient unless additional productivity is achieved. That is how life is in the real world. We must be internationally competitive. If you are a farmer or a miner or an exporter you must be nationally competitive if you deliver services. The one thing economists from both right and left agree on is that we need to raise Australia's and Tasmania's productivity.

The median age in Tasmania is 42 years, but in Braddon it is 44. Braddon is an older demographic and we have a higher proportion of women in our community so service delivery needs to reflect this orientation to older, female people, and I will use this prism to consider issues.

At the other end of the age spectrum, I commend Mr Rockliff for the implementation of the pilot program for free preschool for three-year-old children. This groundbreaking initiative recently commenced with pilot programs underway in five communities, including Devonport. Investing in early years of education can set up our children for the brightest future possible, particularly those children who are vulnerable. As a kindergarten teacher for eight years, I know the tremendous value early learning gives, particularly for vulnerable children. I strongly support this program.

Tasmania will become the first state in the country to implement an approach that not only funds places for children in early learning centres, but also provides holistic support. The Hodgman Liberal Government is investing \$2.27 million to support the co-design, which is backed by the strong body of evidence that shows a child's experiences and environment in their first years will shape their life. This program for our youngest and vulnerable children shows this Government's initiatives are long term and strategic and will improve lives both educationally and socially.

In the 11 months I have spent observing from outside government, I witnessed my colleagues delivering for the state. Over 12 000 jobs have been created and the unemployment rate has reduced by 1.3 per centile since we came to government. When I look at the north and north-west the average number of people now employed is 1900 more than the last year of the Labor-Greens government. Further, the year average unemployment rate is 6.1 per cent. This contrasts with an average of 9 per cent during the last year of the Labor-Greens government, an improvement of nearly three percentage points. Our plan and our strategies are working. It is a long-term, positive change that is being realised in this state; no longer the mendicant state of 2014, which those on the other side perpetuated in their embrace with the Greens.

Tasmanians today can proudly hold their heads high as the best performing of any state in the country, with the highest rates of growth in exports and international tourism and the highest levels of business confidence. Using out-of-date data, the left-aligned Australia Institute recently tried to demean the achievements and the people of Braddon. They are a bunch of Greens. They are complaining about the loss of mining jobs in Braddon up to and including the period 2011 to 2016.

I find the hypocrisy of that feigned care gobsmacking, particularly mining in Braddon over this period.

Like the mining stool of old - exports, tourism and business confidence - these three legs of economic strength are giving stability, power and hope to Tasmanians. More and more Tasmanians are returning home. A clear and strong trend in population growth well established will add demand and new opportunity.

There are real threats on the horizon. Where is state Labor on the nation-leading energy solutions? Do they support Battery of the Nation? Will they stand against the threats to our revitalised forest industry with federal Labor's commitment to use the failed TFA or so-called 'Peace-Deal' platform as their model for the future of the forest industry? Federal Labor will lock up the essential 356 000 hectares of Tasmanian production forests that we released. Will they stand up for those jobs? Where do they stand on the Federal Environmental Protection Agency Mr Shorten and Mr Burke propose, which will have the singular purpose to overrule the state EPA, local councils and state governance?

Here we go again. Another disaster is threatening Tasmanians. What do we hear from the other side? Where do they stand on the millions of jobs that will be taken out of regional communities if they double tax retirees who have saved enough not to be pensioners, but are by no means wealthy? This tax will sap money from regional towns and cities. It is a direct reduction. No wage rise for these Aussies. In fact it is a spiteful cut to their income. This will directly affect local businesses, cut business confidence and, at a broader level, have a serious effect on the ability to raise capital through the share market. If the share market shrinks and business is unable to raise the capital needed, the only alternative is to get loans or sell the farm to overseas investors. Where does state Labor stand?

Tradies' tax is yet another threat. It is another unfair tax grab from everyday people. This time it particularly targets women. When their husbands are tradesmen, women who do the books, raise a family and answer phones are often paid through discretionary trusts. Labor is a threat, stealing from middle Australia. I have no doubt if it gets a chance, it will waste the cheque book on the likes of pink bats and school halls all over again. Never trust Labor with getting the balance right.

Aquaculture, one of this state's great strengths, is sustainably producing health-giving, stunning quality salmon and trout from our waters. Why is Norway, one of the Scandinavian countries, often portrayed in this House as something we should aspire to? Why are they so proud of their aquaculture farming, yet some Tasmanians, like Labor and the Greens, seek to lambast and demonise it. As Jacques Yves Cousteau, the great conservationist and explorer, remarked in 1971:

We must plant the sea and herd its animals, using the sea as farmers instead of as hunters. That is what civilization is all about - farming, replacing hunting.

In our civilised first-world nation, we have responsibilities to sustainably feed our people, to care for our environment, to farm, not hunt for food. We have proven we can do exactly that. Wild-captured fisheries worldwide have flatlined since 1986, yet populations have grown.

Aquaculture is a way we can feed Australians and stop importing 75 per cent of the seafood we eat. As seen recently, much of the seafood is caught and filleted by low-paid workers overseas or through slavery. Do those against our aquaculture stand up against slave labour, or do you condone it with your silence? Or do you condone the over-fishing of other nations' wild fisheries?

It has been proven again and again, that there is proven to be no link between aquaculture farming and the health and viability of Australia's wild fishery.

In Tasmania, we have very strong regulation, clear catch limits on wild fishery, and strong and proven wild fish populations. The Faroe Islands, 80 tiny islands in the Atlantic, with a population of 50 000 people, has as much aquaculture production as the whole of Australia. Tasmania could be adding to the empty basket of Australian seafood, and seafood to the world, just like the Faroe Islands, with clean, sustainable, job-rich, healthy protein.

Tasmania's current production is minuscule. More work can be done. That is why this Government has developed the Sustainable Industry Growth Plan for the Salmon Industry with a vision for this industry to continue to deliver increased tangible benefits to Tasmania through sustainable growth, delivering more and better jobs and economic growth, especially in the regions and acting as a driver of productivity and innovation in the state's economy. It can remain an industry Tasmanians are proud of and have confidence in by increasing transparency and industry accountability for environmental management. By the introduction of clear and robust mechanism for expansion, be the most environmentally sustainable salmon industry in the world by continuing to improve environmental performance by industry-driven innovation coupled with the appropriate environmental monitoring and regulation.

It is our responsibility as a first-world people to create a better world, producing quality protein sustainably to feed ourselves at a bare minimum. Let us be proud of what we are doing here, instead of knocking, blocking and stopping a truly sustainable industry like energy, aquaculture and forestry and give them our support and endorsement as they create jobs, innovate and get better and better, making Tasmania a most fabulous place to visit, to live in, to work, to raise a family and to retire.

In conclusion, Madam Speaker, I return to my primary vision for this state, and that is optimising our energy resource to provide the lowest regulated power while at the same time creating an income to boost this state and create economic security. This energy opportunity can be grasped because in Tasmania we do not have the precursors of energy cost inflation; in fact, we have the exact opposite, energy cost deflation. Inflation or cost increases occur when there is a shortage of productive capacity and huge demand.

In this state we have what the mainland desperately needs: massive energy production capacity from the renewables of pumped hydro and wind perfectly paired with our 80 per cent wind reliability and diurnal character. Add to this the key ingredient only recently announced that we have a nationally funded second and high capacity interconnector, the Marinus 2 project, which will stabilise the state's power frequency and support high mainland demand at maximum prices. Without these projects being fulfilled the Robbins Island wind farm cannot be built, so where is Labor on the Battery of the Nation? Will you fund the interconnector and enable the creation of thousands of jobs in Braddon and across the north?

There is and has been an energy cost inflation on the mainland. The suffering for everyday households and industry is very clear and the clarion call for power price reductions and reliability is loud and clear. Will state Labor detail how they will support these projects? I do, 100 per cent.

[3.47 p.m.]

Mr O'BYRNE (Franklin) - Madam Speaker, it would be remiss of me not to respond to some of the contribution by the member who just resumed her seat. I am not sure if it is a Braddon thing - we had the previous member for Braddon who did not retire but resigned in disgrace. There were

some things that were put on the record by the new member for Braddon, Mrs Rylah, which are just outrageous. She asked a question of the Labor Party about the union movement. We feel very strongly about workers' rights, so to say that we have been silent on worker slavery either here or globally is plainly offensive and outrageous.

In this House we all score political points, we all have our views and angles, but it is beyond the pale and plainly ridiculous to put forward the proposition that we remain silent on slavery and, by virtue of our apparent opposition to the salmon industry, that we are complicit in a level of slavery. Let us be clear that Labor is very supportive of the salmon industry. We were the government that allowed the industry to grow to a point that it was sustainable and professional. Over our 16 years of government, we were the ones that built the salmon industry to the point in 2014 that we handed it over to a Liberal government that fell asleep at the wheel. There were no dramas with the salmon industry during our time in government. It was when you were in government that the problems started to occur. You refused to take responsibility to work with the industry to manage some of the risks that were emerging within that sector.

I repeat for the record that we support the salmon industry. It creates thousands of jobs and millions of dollars of economic opportunity for the state. It was your Government that created the problem and challenges for the industry in terms of its environmental and economic sustainability. We will always work with the salmon industry to ensure that regulations are appropriate, the environment within which they work is sustainable and they are both socially and economically sustainable moving into the future.

Regarding your challenge around energy and your comment to say that it was Labor using the gas and draining the Hydro lakes - that was your direct comment and I quote using your quotes - what a remarkable thing to say. It was the Liberal Government under energy minister Mr Groom who wanted to sell. Release the letter, release the advice, Treasurer. Here is your opportunity in the new Government. Turn over a new leaf and release the letter and advice you received from Treasury, which advised you - and you know it - not to sell the Tamar Valley Power Station, when you know you were. You had sacked the workers and paid them redundancies, the turbine was overseas getting worked on ready for sale, and then old sleepy at the wheel, Mr Groom, allowed the Hydro to drain the dams to the point where they were down to single-digit capacity.

There is a very good reason Labor kept the Tamar Valley Power Station in our time in government because it was the redundancy asset. Remember in the 1967 drought they pulled a boat up to the wharf in Hobart with a generator to keep the lights on in Tasmania. That created the environment for the investment initially in the oil-run power station and the subsequent gas power station. Labor created the redundancy asset. We did not sell it. The Liberals, in their hands-off approach - taking credit but never responsibility for resolving issues - allowed the state to waste over \$100 million worth of taxpayer dollars by flying in diesel generators to keep the lights on in Tasmania. Energy security in Tasmania is one of the key issues under the Liberal Government but they were asleep at the wheel and allowed a crisis of energy to occur in Tasmania, a remarkable set of events. Then we have the member who just resumed her seat blame Labor for using all this gas and draining the Hydro lakes. What a preposterous notion. It is outrageous to say those things.

The Liberal Party questions the Labor Party on renewable energy but it was the Labor Party that build the Hydro. It was the Labor Party that built Woolnorth and created the environment to build Musselroe for wind energy. It was the Labor Party that led on wind energy. We created the first connector to the mainland. We built that. Labor's energy connection to the mainland sparked significant investment in renewables on the island. It was Labor who did that. For the Liberal Party

to have the temerity to get up in this place and question our support and commitment to renewable energy, particularly with the massive advantage that Tasmania has, is outrageous, and it has happened a number of times. We are not the problem.

In terms of the Battery of the Nation, we are very keen to see the business case. Another \$56 million has been committed. We support that work. That will hopefully produce a great piece of work for us to be able to take it to the next stage and enable us to take advantage of pumped hydro and Robbins Island. All of those things are important but unfortunately we have an Energy minister who has just signed up to it but he does not know how much it is going to cost or who is going to pay for it. That is the problem. These are questions that need to be answered when you get to the feasibility stage where this is a project that is going to work.

We heard Mrs Rylah ask if Labor was going to fund the second interconnector, as if the Liberal Party had already committed to funding it. That is obviously not the case but that is what she said in this House. It is up to the Treasurer to clear up the mess their new member has created because she has essentially committed the Liberal Party to fund the second interconnector and that is news to us. That is an amazing development today and I am sure he will clean that mess up for the House.

We know that presents an enormous opportunity for Tasmania but there are serious questions that need to be answered. Unfortunately we have a minister who is very good at the one-liners but struggles with the detail.

Ms O'Connor - Are you serious about that? Very good at the one-liners?

Mr O'BYRNE - Well, he is very good at one line. He has one line.

Mr Bacon - Who are we talking about?

Mr O'BYRNE - My old mate, the goose.

He will come up with this TasNetworks report and it is great that TasNetworks have narrowed it down to the next stage. It is either \$1 billion or it is \$3 billion. That is a tremendous scope in terms of the cost to the taxpayer or private investment or wherever the money is going to come from. It is either \$1 billion or \$3 billion. It is remarkable that we have a member who just resumed her seat saying that they are essentially committing to the second connector when TasNetworks has a scope of between \$1 billion and \$3 billion. It is very hard to make commitments and it is very hard to back in a project with such a large scope of cost. Notwithstanding the work that needs to be done - we understand that there have been some real disagreements between federal and state Liberals on this, massive disagreements about the cost of the work that needs to be done; they have only granted \$56 million - we know that there was a much larger figure that had been bandied around and that the federal government refused to commit to that.

One of the biggest challenges in the report on the work that has been done by TasNetworks talks about the coal assets on the mainland and that you will have to retire early a number of coal assets on the mainland. We know the raging battle inside the LNP, the Coalition federally between the Nationals who want to invest and underwrite more coal projects and some city Liberals who believe that that is not the sensible way to go. You have the current Prime Minister and we have had three in a row that have tried to walk this very uncomfortable barbed wire fence they are betwixt and between in terms of their position because effectively the biggest enemy of the future of Tasmanian renewable energy is the Federal Liberal Party.

To have people stand up in here and have a go at us about not supporting renewable energy is offensive. We are not the problem. We believe in hydro, we believe in wind, we believe in solar, we believe in the opportunity that it presents, we believe it is an appropriate and reasonable response to the dangers and the real threat, not existential, the real threat that is climate change to our environment. We are not the problem. If you really want to stand up for Tasmania, Liberal Party, have a crack at your good senators - Duniam, Abetz, Askew. We are not the problem. Your problem is with your federal counterparts who are, arguably, because you do not have any lower house members, the senators who are sitting in the state's house federally. They are the ones you should be lobbying to change their positions, particularly Senator Abetz who is still advocating in some circles that nuclear is an option, maybe in a different context or a different way.

Ms O'Connor - Or a different country in a different century.

Mr O'BYRNE - Yes, for a different country. To have the member who resumed her seat say that we are anything but 100 per cent in support of the opportunity that is presented by hydro and wind is fanciful at best, offensive at worst and we will not accept it.

The other matter that I would want to touch on in terms of the good member for Braddon who resumed her seat, I genuinely welcome you back to the seat; it is elected. However, it is a great opportunity and we will have a robust exchange and, of course, of all these things this is not personal. This is about challenging the ideas and having a contest of ideas. It is not personal but the other issue that you raised in terms of characterising wage increases now purely attached to productivity: you said that is accepted by left and right economists. That is not the case. The offer on the table is below inflation so anything below inflation is actually a wage cut and arguably your comments are offensive to nurses.

To make a demand of nurses that the only way they can keep up with the cost of living is to work harder and increase productivity is offensive. They work very hard now. They work extremely hard and they deserve the respect of their employer. Nurses do not take these kinds of action lightly, nor do teachers, nor do health workers, nor do firefighters, nor do ambulance workers and paramedics. These workers do not take this action lightly. They have been offered a pay cut. It does not keep pace with inflation and the concept of productivity is a relatively new one in contemporary industrial relations in the last 20 years. It is a factor -

Mr Gutwein - It has been around for two to three decades.

Mr O'BYRNE - Yes, 20 years, but the history of work has been a long time. Remember, the Harvester decision in the early 1900s essentially founded the principle of a living wage, making sure that people can have a decent wage so they can provide for themselves and their families, keep a roof over their head and have a life that has some level of enjoyment in it, some capacity to pay.

Whilst productivity is an element, it is not the only element in terms of wage increases. I know we all work hard as parliamentarians in this House, and when we received a pay increase last year I did not see any productivity trade-offs for our wages. We expected to work hard and we received that wage from the Industrial Commission. The Industrial Commission is the appropriate body that makes these determinations for parliamentarians in Tasmania. We received a wage increase which is above the 2 per cent wages offer and I cannot recall offering up productivity. I always work hard, as do all members in this House, but to say that you demand of ministers, teachers, cleaners, firefighters, productivity when we ourselves are not offering that up, that is a bit rich. I wanted to put that on the record.

In terms of the Premier's state of the state address, it is an opportunity for the premier of the day to provide a snapshot not only of the state that Tasmania is in, what the current conditions are, what the challenges are, and how we are seeking as a statement to parliament to respond to those, but it is also an opportunity for us to critique the efforts of the government in the last 12 months.

Getting to my substantive debate, as a member for Franklin particularly representing the area of the Huon Valley, I put on record my deep and sincere thanks to emergency service workers who responded to one of the toughest and longest fire seasons that the state has confronted in living history.

On the Thursday night before the Australia Day long weekend, I was in Geeveston at a community meeting where a lot of people were talking about the 1967 fires. That was an extreme weather event which essentially ravaged that community, the Channel community, in a period of five hours. The fire season that we had emergency service workers and communities responding to lasted four weeks. Whilst in terms of loss of life and loss of property, it was, thankfully, significantly less, the fact that there was such a long and difficult engagement meant that the response from our volunteers and from those communities that had to survive the toughest of times was amazing. I pay credit to them and I am sure up in the Central Highlands there were some magnificent responses as well.

I would like to talk about my electorate in Huonville. I was at the Huonville evacuation centre probably on a daily basis, dropping in and chatting and providing support where you can. You do feel like there is not really much you can do - you are not a firefighter, you are not in government to make decisions, but providing support and helping people work their way through what is the most difficult of times. The evacuation centre in Huonville was open for 13 days and when you get people who have been evacuated from their homes, and about the six or seven-day mark of fatigue, the emotional fatigue sets in. When you have people who say, 'Oh David, I just want the fire to come out of the bush and burn me out so I can get on with my life', when you have people who are essentially wishing for the most catastrophic outcome, you know that they are in tough space emotionally. The response from the government services and the Huon Council in leading and managing that evacuation centre was absolutely first-rate.

Traditionally, these kinds of major fire events in Tasmania, like the big event, like the five-hour firestorm that we saw in 1967, or the Dunalley bushfires, happened every decade, but now we are seeing them every two or three years. This is concerning for all of us. We had the Dunalley bushfires, we had the Tarkine and north-west coast and the highlands bushfires in 2016. Now we have had the 2018-19 bushfires which stretched the emergency services, particularly the Tasmania Fire Service, in terms of their ability to respond.

The volunteers provide a surge capacity. Traditionally, the risk presented by bushfires has been about the volunteers coming in and providing the surge capacity for two days up to five days. They could rotate, depending on the size of the fire. Now deployments are lasting weeks. The risk is significant, so the volunteer brigades are being stretched. We need to have a conversation about how best we support our volunteer brigades. The model they were founded on was very much a system where people work five days a week full-time. There were minimum industrial agreements, enterprise agreements and awards, which allowed people to take paid leave to go to these events. There are a number of people, particularly the Franklin Brigade, who do not work at a workplace. They are consultants and they volunteer at their local brigade, or they do bits and pieces of work. They do not have a full-time job at one employer. They do a range of things to supplement their income. My heart goes out to them for the extended nature of the call out to save their own

community. Day in, day out, they did not know when the fire might be coming up over the hill. I give my heartfelt thanks to the volunteers and the emergency service workers who responded to what was a significant and horrifying event.

In terms of the Premier's Address, it is important in political life and in government to take responsibility. You take responsibility for not only resolving the short-term issues, but also the medium- to long-term issues. What we have seen from this Government is absolute shambles. They take credit for others' work. There is no doubt that the global and national economic winds have been at our back for the last four or five years, but the work required to make that a sustainable growth is clearly not being done. We have a government focused on its own disfunction. This Government has had to confront so many issues that it has taken its eye off the ball. What they need to do to is respond to the important everyday needs of Tasmanians, such as traffic congestion and a lack of infrastructure investment in southern Tasmania.

It is about our health, hospital system and our housing. It is about having a relationship with the public servants you ask and trust to deliver on government services, not being at war with your workforce. These things are all happening on this Government's watch. We know why. It is because they are more focused on themselves. We have had scandal and crisis after scandal and crisis.

Mr Brooks who, after misleading his Premier, this House and the people of Tasmania for over two years, avoiding his obligations as a member of parliament, completely put the confidence in the Executive arm into crisis. Effectively, you can mislead this House, mislead your leader and virtually get away with it with little or no consequences. That sorry saga came to an end in February of this year when it became clear that Mr Brooks had no option but to accept what he had done and to move on from this place. This Government had been torn on how to deal with Mr Brooks. Clearly, the internal divisions inside the Liberal Party were writ large about those who were supporting him, those who were not, those who knew he had to go, but did not have the ticker to tell him that he had to take responsibility for what he did.

I was away for the four years that Mr Brooks was in government, but watching his performance over the last 12 months, he had learnt nothing; he had little respect for this place and for others in it. The dysfunction he was creating was pretty clear and we had a premier who was too weak to deal with and respond to it.

We have had a senior member of this Government and former minister and the Premier's pick for Speaker resign under a cloud. Clearly, there is a lot of water to run under that bridge; it is a matter for the courts. Having such a senior member of your Government and of your party, and your pick for Speaker, and the position that Chair holds, to have him resign in such circumstances, is again a window into the dysfunction of this Government.

Ms Courtney has been shuffled sideways with little or no consequences for misleading her Premier, her leader, over a relationship which in anyone's measure would give rise to significant potential conflict of interest. To start a personal relationship is fine, but to start a personal relationship with someone with whom you have a statutory relationship, which could compromise their role, your role and not declare that to the Premier after one month, is misleading.

We are still yet to see the new protocol that the Premier announced would be established to deal with these sorts of conflicts. The conflict is still there. The reporting lines are still there. We

are yet to see from the Premier the kind of accountability that the Westminster system demands and deserves.

Every time there is a crisis, the Premier is asked, 'Was he aware? Did he know?' The answer is, 'I had no idea. I was not aware'. That does not wash. The Premier of the state, actually has to run the state.

We saw a window into the thinking of the Liberal Opposition when former chief of staff, Mr Stansfield, gave an interview on ABC radio in mid-late January. The journalist said, 'Tell us your predictions for the year. Will the Premier stand down? Will he retire?' The response from Mr Stansfield was pretty clear. All he spoke about were milestones, such as 'If he gets to the end of this year, he will be the longest serving Liberal leader. If he gets to the end of this term, he will be the longest serving Liberal Premier beating Robin Gray'.

That was a window into the thinking. He has a lot of work to do. We have to deal with congestion and infrastructure projects. We have to support industry and create jobs. We have to do all of these things that will make Tasmanians lives better. Health, education and housing. None of those things were offered up as a reason for him staying. All that was offered up was that he has a couple of milestones to tick off to make sure the Hodgman name goes down in history. Tick, tick.

I believe it was Paul Keating who said that the Tories only get into government because they want to get into government. A Labor government gets in because we want to do stuff.

This government is about self-survival, about taking credit for other people's work. We see it day in and day out. One of the prime examples was when the Infrastructure minister got up in a debate late last year. He was reading from a script. 'We are five years into our 10-year Midland Highway strategy'. They have only been in government four years. That strategy was established by me as state minister for infrastructure and the federal minister, Mr Albanese, in the 2013-14 year. He was taking credit for our Midland Highway strategy. I challenged him and he looked at me like a rabbit in the headlights. Then back to the script. There has not been one major infrastructure project with state and federal government working together, initiated by this government heading into five years. Not one.

They still have not produced the business case for the Bridgewater Bridge. They were so desperate to get the money out of the door from the federal government that Malcolm Turnbull flew down when he was prime minister and made the announcement to say that they would fund the Bridgewater Bridge to the surprise of the state Government and of local people in infrastructure. Already we are seeing them crab walk away because they have started to re-profile the money.

It is now a year later when the work starts and the bridge will be developed. You have not even started one project.

In my term of 2010 to 2014, in the teeth of the global financial crisis, we started the Brighton Bypass, the Brighton Transport Hub, the East Tamar Highway major development, the Kingston Bypass, and we commenced the 10-year Midland Highway strategy which this Government takes credit for. All you are doing is rolling out the stuff that we started. Take responsibility, do not take the credit. Credit is there when it is due and everyone knows it.

We had the previous minister, Mr Hidding, in the previous government, pull together an emergency committee in 2016 to deal with traffic congestion in Hobart. Where are we three or four

years down the track? We are bringing forward \$1 million to do a bit of a study on the options for us. Seriously? It has been a major issue in the south for the last six or seven years. We started to do the work on it and you fell asleep at the wheel on it. Now you are claiming as a virtue that you are spending \$1 million thinking about some options and plans, years after you announced it was a crisis. We had with great fanfare before the election the underground bus mall, and then when challenged on it in the media last week, the Infrastructure minister said it was not his idea, it was the previous minister's idea. No, it was not, it was the Premier announcing an election commitment for an underground bus mall and now you are crab-walking away from it.

No wonder people are so frustrated with this Government. They just want you to do something. Could you do something instead of taking credit for other peoples' work? I need more time, Deputy Speaker.

Time expired.

[4.17 p.m.]

Mr FERGUSON (Bass - Minister for Health) - Mr Deputy Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity to speak on the Premier's Address which he gave yesterday to this House. This is the Premier's annual contribution to telling Tasmanians what the Government will be doing for them over the coming year. The Premier is one of a select few in our state's history who can speak about a record of achievement already over five years that is very impressive, has helped countless numbers of people and has lifted the quality of life for Tasmanians, which is really what we aspire to in this place. Regardless of where you sit, our job is to make decisions as best we can with the resources we have to make people's lives better.

That is why I love being a parliamentarian. I feel like one of the luckiest people to be able to be here in this beautiful Chamber to represent my community of Bass, the people of northern Tasmania, and I get that sensation whenever I come in here. I remember as a new member nine years ago, along with Mr Bacon and Mr O'Byrne at the time, being amazed at how much more impressive and beautiful this Chamber was compared to the drudgery of what it looked like on television. I was immediately impressed with the sense of the linkage between the decisions that come out of this Chamber and the way people can live their lives in the community. I was impressed by that from the earliest stage, because everything we say and every bill we pass has consequences, sometimes big and sometimes small.

The ripple effects are there. It causes me to remember not to be flippant although at times we have our fun, including sometimes jibes across the Chamber. Everything we do as a House, the Government, the Opposition and the crossbench, everyone has a role. I remind myself of that and count myself as a very lucky man to be able to represent the people of Bass, and when I am part of a government that has achieved so much for our state, even more so.

In light of the Premier's Address yesterday, I thank him for being the man and the leader and the Premier that he is. I admire him as a person. I believe he really cares about our state; I think he gets it. Whatever people who did not vote for our Government think about policies, I know there is a general respect and regard for Will Hodgman as our Premier.

The agenda that the Premier has spoken to and published, with 286 key deliverables that we have set ourselves, is as much a description of our policies as it is an accountability mechanism for us that we hold ourselves to. You would be amazed - and former ministers will appreciate - how

important it is for us to be able to say to our departments that this is what is expected and we have to work on this to make sure we are holding ourselves accountable.

The agenda spells out what the coming year contains. It is much more than just a document; it is about describing the path ahead for us. It is also a very important indicator to Tasmanians of this Government's continued drive, energy, determination and passion to deliver on our plan with improvements across every portfolio.

For me as Health minister in particular, 2019 is very exciting and very busy. There is so much work for us still to do. We have achieved a lot but we recognise there is so much more yet to do because we know in some cases we are still not doing well enough.

The Royal Hobart Hospital master plan has obviously been in the headlines lately. Everybody wants to see us being able to provide the services in a facility that is fit for purpose. For 2019 the master plan builds on the incredible work already achieved and the improvements we have already made. It signals what the long-term plan should be for that site and the Repatriation Hospital site so that we end up with a contemporary first-class hospital that will benefit the people of southern Tasmania, vitally. After all, it is their local hospital, but as I often remind this House, it is the highest-level hospital for all Tasmanians. Wherever we come from, we or our family will need that hospital. It is our highest level of tertiary health care in the state.

As the K Block nears completion, it is now the tallest building in Hobart. That is a bit of a powerful symbol of what is to come within that hospital environment and what can be done by our staff to benefit patients and help them to have their lives saved and improved.

We are embracing the next major steps in the master plan from those recommendations. There will be a bigger emergency department and a bigger intensive care unit as part of the \$91 million investment, and I will come back to that a little later.

The agenda also delivers solid gains for the people in my electorate of Bass, particularly in roads and schools, our hospital and our infrastructure. East Launceston Primary School, the Mowbray connector and the Scottsdale irrigation scheme are some of the major projects that come to mind. As I have said, since I was first elected to this place as the member for Bass, I have spoken of my gratitude to our community. There are outcomes that are planned in our work program for the year ahead which, across the portfolios, are designed to help them.

It is a big responsibility in health and I do not shy away from that. It is a massive responsibility and this Government has given me the support I need so we can make those investments and deliver a better health service for our state. The team has been a wonderful part of that because to a man and woman this Government has been united in getting those outcomes and driving and the leadership that has been required, including our staff, our key leaders in the health system, who have been so vital.

In looking around, it is pleasing that the two members I wanted to acknowledge are here in the Chamber right now, so I want to welcome back to the Tasmanian Parliament my good friend, the member for Braddon, Joan Rylah, and also our newest member of the Tasmanian Parliament, the member for Lyons, Mr John Tucker. I am pleased to welcome you both, in the case of Joan, back, and in the case of John, for the first time.

Joan may or may not realise this, but when I spoke here at this place one year ago, I spent a fair bit of time praising Joan's tenacious efforts on behalf of the people of Braddon, particularly in her passion for health and the north-west community.

To John, I know quite a bit about you from experience as a farmer, a family man and as a councillor on Break O'Day Council, and I know with a lot of confidence that you are going to make a great contribution here.

I also acknowledge and thank Adam Brooks and Rene Hidding, who have both resigned from this House in the time since our last sitting. I am very grateful for each of their contributions and Tasmanians know those contributions have been real, sincere, genuine and meaningful.

In our portfolios they keep me extremely busy and moving all around the state. I also make a concerted effort to get about in our local community and speak to as many people in the Bass electorate as I can. I know it is very important to listen and to be available and I will never forget that. In fact, I have reflected that every day I learn more and grow in my own personal understanding of family life and community life in the families of northern Tasmania, which are the fabric of our way of life in this state. There are the highs and the lows because we still have people in our community who are doing it tough. These include people who might be quite affluent but are doing it tough because of some challenges they have in their family, whether it is by an illness in the family, a disability, maybe somebody who is struggling at school with bullying. You cannot ever judge a person by the outward appearance. Really there are not too many people going around in our community that have got it all going just fine.

In actual fact it is a reminder about the need and the reality that across the portfolios there is more to do and we will never, ever get the job fully done. There will always be challenges for us to be willing to address.

In this second term of parliament, led by our Premier, we have health planning and I will come back to that again now. I am particularly proud and pleased that the Royal Master Plan and the LGH Master Plan are all about the future and they are progressing. We know that demand on our health services is increasing. We know that Tasmanians are presenting to hospitals in greater numbers than before and in greater numbers than previously predicted. Also, perhaps something that is a reality that people have been able to see coming down the pipe is that patients presenting to our hospitals and to our GP clinics around the state are becoming more complex. The level of what people in the health professions call 'acuity' is increasing. There are more people with a greater level of chronic disease, which can be presented as more complex conditions by the time they become an emergency.

I will take this chance to say to the Opposition we also acknowledge, we actually get and we understand, that at times our current services are not keeping up with that demand and we would never say otherwise. That really explains why we are investing record amounts to build a better health system so that we can meet that demand and not just provide more of the same care, but provide more and better care. We have opened the beds that our predecessors closed.

Mr Bacon - Rubbish.

Mr FERGUSON - We have employed hundreds of nurses, doctors and health staff, including ones who were sacked. That is not rubbish. We have reinstated services and we are building new facilities. We are well on the way to seeing some of those major projects coming on line. It is a

very bold master plan, but most importantly it is not all about the future. The master plan talks about how we best use the stage that we have nearly completed, stage 1 of the Royal. It talks about the enabling next stage of interim works at the Royal worth \$91 million. We have a program of work about delivering that.

We have committed to fund stage 2 upgrades. That sits on top of the \$28 million that we have already put aside for ward upgrades and the Budget will describe the remaining funds, which allows our health department to start now the preparation works that are necessary to make those five enabling projects stand up.

I will be consulting clinicians as we expand the ED, which will result in increased public access. By the way did you know that the Royal ED is smaller than the Launceston General Hospital ED. How did that ever happen?

Ms O'Connor - It feels like it.

Mr FERGUSON - It is too small and it is overcrowded and we want to provide more space. There will be a separate area for ambulance presentations and a separate space for mental health presentations for assessment and support. We know we need this. Separate adult and paediatric treatment spaces and additional clinical spaces to meet demand. Again, this is possible as we commission K Block. It frees up spaces that allows us to do that, hence the importance of K Block and why I want to get it on line.

I know that Tasmanians and our hardworking emergency staff are going to be embracing these improvements. In fact, they have helped design them and I am grateful for the endorsement that the plans have received.

I should mention as well the improvement to lifts. This is going to see a new dedicated patient lift connecting ED, medical imaging, the ICU and J Block. Believe it or not, that is not in place right now and that allows us to do that now with this funding.

The longer-term vision includes extra services at the Repatriation Hospital site where I visited earlier today. That will include sub-acute and mental health services plus three new blocks on the city site over time, including parking. We have thought ahead.

Future health ministers, future governments, will have a document and a plan which they are free to change over time, as you would expect. Every decade you should update it but we have a plan now and we can grow our services in a controlled way knowing we are not spoiling our future options as we go around the site, updating a 200-year old hospital.

I take this chance to say a very sincere word of thanks to every member of the clinical planning taskforce, particularly Professor Tony Lawler and his colleagues, together with the members of the southern reference group. I thank them for investing their time, giving us a vision that allows us to meet the current demand pressures, have contemporary facilities and think about the future. How often do government's get criticised for not planning for the future? That is what we are doing.

It goes without saying how important it is that our clinical experts have led that work and been involved in it. I am grateful to them including those who significantly changed their position along the way about what was the best way for us to get to the desired outcome. That shows a humility and a grace which I applaud and I am grateful for that.

We have the opportunity to futureproof our health services and that is exactly what we are committed as a government to laying out. Our dedication to health reaches far beyond Hobart. In his speech, the Premier outlined the major investments also planned for the LGH, for the Mersey Community Hospital and the North West Regional Hospital. Combined, these commitments in the north and north-west reach into the hundreds of millions of dollars. Like our commitment to the south, they are about delivering new services, better services in contemporary facilities across the state, supporting our patients and our staff and giving them facilities that demonstrate that.

I am very excited and feel personally convinced, as I have said most years, about the need for the Ward 4K redevelopment at Launceston. This year we will see delivery of the first stage of that project I have been banging on about for the past few years. Wonderful planning and wonderful people have been contributing. Fairbrother is doing a great job of building that project right now. It includes extra parking and several extra levels for clinics, women's spaces which have previously been parts of other wards. They are all important. The kids of our city and the greater north have been underdone in this area. Ward 4K has certainly served its purpose but it is past its best life and we are giving it a renovation. Vitally, it is an expansion.

Again, with more beds, it is about meeting demand but also for the first time in Tasmania's history, providing dedicated child and adolescent facilities, particularly but not only for mental health. Launceston will just beat Hobart. My advice on this is that we should have stage 1 up and finished by October of this year, a little bit ahead of the commissioning for the Royal.

This year both in the north and south, we are going to take delivery of child and adolescent mental health services that have never been provided in dedicated facilities in our state before now and I am thrilled about that.

We are also launching into the next stage of assessment for the much talked about LGH co-located private hospital proposal to be completed at the LGH this year. There are also the air-conditioning upgrades and its master plan to guide future infrastructure needs.

Briefly, because time is going to beat me, the helipad at the Mersey will be completed this year. Construction will begin at the North West Regional Hospital's purpose-built antenatal clinic. The Midlands multipurpose centre refurbishment will be done. I visited there recently. The health staff on Flinders Island will enjoy accommodation upgrades.

From an overall health perspective, we are going to continue to make these investments, focused on making a real difference as I talked about earlier, decisions that come out of this Chamber, this Parliament, sanctioned by every member of this House, we are going to get on and make those real in the lives of Tasmanian people.

In health we need innovation and we need to be willing to provide health in new, safe and different ways. One of the ways we are doing that is by resuming Hospital in the Home models of care. They have previously been trialled in this state; they have started and stopped. We now have up and running in Launceston the community rapid response Hospital in the Home service. This service in the Greater Launceston area today is now a mainstream service. GPs love it and without doubt it is a great success.

One of the recent highlights for me was visiting one of Launceston's most famous sons, Rex Sainty, at his home in Ravenswood. This amazing gent now in his 70s expressed to me, Meredith and the team his heartfelt gratitude for the rapid response service which comes to his home instead of a doctor telling him he needs to go to hospital. It has enabled him to receive much of his treatment

in his home surrounded by his lovely family including Sheila, his wonderful wife, and his friends. In fact he is even able to go to work in the morning and afternoon because he has not been an admitted patient.

The program has been such a success that we will be rolling it out this year into the north-west and the south. It is a model of care that starts with the GP, so GPs have a lot of say over the way the care should be provided but then it us, the Government, through the THS, that then provide that service to that person's home and, of course, stay in touch with their GP. It is these services and people like Rex that remind me again that it is about the people and hearing firsthand how we are bringing great benefits to people spurs us on.

We are now investing more than 30 per cent of our state's total budget in health. Tasmania is now in the top two in the nation for health spending and that has allowed us to grow the health services that I know every member of this House hears about, sees and wants us to address with increasing demand.

In the coming years our record boost to health will result in nearly 300 new beds and new staff to operate them. It is an unprecedented increase in funding. It is not lucky, as I heard claimed earlier. It has been hard work and it started with the Government working together with purpose, getting the budget under control and making these investments very carefully. The expert advice we have is that in the next 13 years the need for acute inpatient care is expected to grow by 43 per cent and bed days by 35 per cent. Subacute inpatient care is expected to increase by an incredible 94 per cent and bed days by 61 per cent in the subacute realm for the same period. These numbers are incredible, so apart from key investments in preventative health and helping people to stay well for as long as we can away from hospitals, it is vital that we also remain up to the task of meeting those challenges and that demand. Mr Deputy Speaker, I can assure you and other members of this House that we are onto the job.

In addition to those I have already mentioned, the brand-new hospital at St Helens will open very soon - next month, Mr Deputy Speaker, member for Lyons. The Kingston Health Centre is up and running, operational. Work on the King Island Hospital redevelopment will commence this year and the first defibrillators in our AED program will soon be allocated in the largest ever community defib program the state has had.

At the weekend I was honoured to spend some time with our new aeromedical rescue and retrieval service. That is being fully rolled out this year but is now up and running and is the first integrated medical and search and rescue service the state has had. We have a dedicated team now at the airport. Previously people would have to come off the road, meet at the airport and get up into the air. Now they are ready to go. The uplift time has changed from a 52-minute average to 10 minutes and Dr Paul Scott, he will not mind me saying, told me at the weekend something that knocked my socks off. I asked him how many lives he thought we might see saved. I was not prepared for his answer, which was that it has already saved lives. It has only been up and running for a little while and has already saved lives. He declined the opportunity to go into any detail with the media but he knows of cases that would not have made it with that time, had it been 52 minutes.

In the foreseeable future we will no longer be landing choppers at the Domain and transporting by road ambulance to the Royal Hobart Hospital, taking a further 20 minutes, so we will be able to shave that time off as well. We are talking about lives saved through this infrastructure but also, critically, through the teams themselves.

Communities are going to get better support around our regional communities with extra paramedics. In the next 12 months we will be stationing paramedics in Wynyard, St Helens, Bicheno, Deloraine and Dodges Ferry. That is part of our additional 42 paramedics for regional areas. Latrobe will have an upgraded ambulance station. I drove past it the other day and it is looking smick. I know the team are really looking forward to that. Planning will also start this year on the new emergency services hub at Sorell, and I know our Lions members are red hot for that.

Also, a major pilot project for us will be HASI, or the Housing and Accommodation Support Initiative. This is being trialled to provide those with mental illness with better clinical, psychosocial and housing support. We understand that some patients do not need to be in hospital but are there because there is nowhere else to go. We will be working with Colony 47 on that. It is their idea and we are backing them in and hope it is successful. It is great to work with an organisation with a proven track record of supporting vulnerable people.

There are people in our community who, for a variety of reasons, have difficulty in accessing the digital world. It is all around them so it is almost expected that they should rely on some services which they have difficulty accessing. To ensure that our fellow Tasmanians are not left behind, we have a \$400 000 project which we are developing in partnership with TasCOSS which is about helping people with capability shortfalls. We want to support people who are sometimes on the margins of the mainstream economy and digital access through practical, community-based training and we also want to support them with measures to address affordability and barriers to access. We want all Tasmanians to be able to have the opportunity to participate in this information age.

In the business sector we will be continuing the wonderful program Digital Ready for Business. It is a shame Mr O'Byrne has gone because I have always said it has been a great program that was started by the previous government that we have continued, and in our second-year agenda we will be including in our digital Ready for Business program the digital check-up tool. Mr Bacon, if you promise not to tell anybody else, that digital check-up tool has not been launched yet but it is already on line so you may want to check it out and see how your website fares. It is about supporting anyone with a website, but particularly small business.

Mr Bacon - Is it State Growth?

Mr FERGUSON - It is; go to digitalready.tas.gov.au. We want any business with a website to be able to use this tool to see how their website is performing and whether there are things they are missing out on. This is about helping them access customers and improving their presence on the worldwide web.

Also this year - and in fact we are in the market for this right now - we will be taking the next step with our enterprise innovation hubs in Launceston and Hobart. It will be further bolstered by the introduction of our start-up accelerator program. This is about helping people with great ideas to marry up with the kind of support that will allow them to go to market, to be innovative, to take their kernel of an idea and turn it into something that can employ Tasmanians. We want to position the state as a leading innovation hub in our Asia-Pacific region. We are doing it small. These are modest first steps but I am pleased to tell you, Mr Deputy Speaker, that we are already being noticed as a start-up base here in Tasmania and that is to be applauded.

This Government is committed to solidly resourcing our Police Service, reversing the brutal cuts of 2011, and now we have this plan for an additional 125 recruits over the next three years to boost the front line. There is another recruit intake next month and another in July. The Police

Academy at Rokeby has never been this busy. It is flat-out and there is a lot of excitement there. The new recruits are really looking forward to serving our state as fresh constables.

It is very important that we do have enough police on the beat to service our community and to crack down on crime, to tackle criminals, but to support victims of crime and help them follow up occasions where the law has been broken. We also need to support those who support us. We need to support our police. That is why this year we will be moving through this House - I hope we all agree on this - removing the step-down provisions that apply to those who are forced onto workers compensation due to an injury that occurred while they were in the line of fire. We think that is appropriate, it is reasonable and because of the special nature of policing where they go into situations where there is inherent danger we want to do that. We think it is the right thing to do. We have been campaigning on this since 2008. We want to deliver that this year.

I do not want to steal any thunder, but my colleague, Ms Courtney, today tabled the important legislation around presumption for our public servants, not just emergency service personnel, but our public servants in relation to PTSD. This has been a long time coming. Others have had good ideas on this as well, but we are implementing it. We have consulted, taken advice and we think this will take more of the stigma of mental health out of the situation. We need to recognise that for people who confront very troubling circumstances in their work, particularly our emergency services personnel, it can have an impact on them for the rest of their lives. We do not take a deficit model approach to this though. We want to support them through recovery. I thank the Premier for his address.

Time expired.

[4.47 p.m.]

Mr BACON (Clark) - Mr Deputy Speaker, it is a pleasure to rise this afternoon to speak on the Premier's Address, the state of the state as it is known. I would like to take this opportunity, the first opportunity I have had, to welcome Mr Tucker, the new member for Lyons, to this House and congratulate him on his appointment, and also the return of the member for Braddon, Mrs Rylah. I have had a lot to do with Mrs Rylah over the years on various committees and she has always been a hardworking member of this House. I have never had a chance to meet Mr Tucker until he joined us, but I wish him all the best in the future as well.

The sad side of these two members coming into the House is that this is a Government that is characterised by dysfunction, by scandal and you see it time and time again with a revolving door in the Cabinet room. I believe it was someone from the mining industry saying the other day that in the short time, five years now that we have had this Liberal Government, they have seen five mining ministers in the state. It does not give them confidence when they are looking to invest in the industry when you see a revolving door at the Cabinet table when it comes to appointing a minister for mining. That is what this Government has been known for from day one, but then particularly over the first year of this second term, which has seen scandal after scandal, total dysfunction and where you will not read any of that is in the Premier's glossy brochure titled Second Year Agenda: Building Your Future.

We know he loves to roll the sleeves up, get his photo taken and be seen as a man of action, but everyone in Tasmania knows that this is a premier who likes to talk the talk, but when it comes to the tough decisions to keeping his own ministers in line, for making any tough reform decisions or any tough decisions when it comes to government this is someone you could not find when the tough decisions are being made.

I did have a question for the Government: it was reported in the media that we had 280 - not sure if you would call them initiatives, things that were going to happen, I do not know exactly what they are - but it appears overnight six new ones have appeared because it is now 286 that they are working on. I read this on a number of occasions and the thing that really stood out to me when you read this document, you read 35 pages mostly photos and my only criticism is there are not enough photos of the Deputy Premier. That is always my complaint. If you are going to sell a glossy brochure I think pictures of the Deputy Premier are the way to go.

Ms Archer - You really love him, don't you?

Mr BACON - I do. He is the only good one over there and we still have hope that one day he will see the light. I digress. We see a lot of photos, a glossy brochure, 35 pages, we are told there are 286 milestones, or whatever they are. I did go through because I have seen a bit of a change in the Premier's language when it comes to the way he talks about the state budget. It all mysteriously happened when the revised Estimates report came out earlier this year. We had a Premier who was very confident in the performance of his Treasurer, thought he was doing a fantastic job, he had saved the state from doom and gloom with his own genius when it comes to preparing the budget each year. That seems to have evaporated and I did wonder where the guy with the rolled-up sleeves, the fantastic photo on the inside cover. I thought, out of 286 we might see 10 on the budget and the performance of the Treasurer. I looked through eagerly to find 10, 15 great milestones going to be achieved by this Treasurer when it comes to the management of the state budget over the next 12 months. But I did find one.

I was very pleased to be able to find one out of 286 mentions when it comes to the state budget. It is right there on page 4:

The 2019-20 budget to be balanced across the forward Estimates. The 2019-20 budget will be delivered on 23 May 2019 and will continue to progress the Government's long-term plan for Tasmania, an election commitment, and be balanced across the forward Estimates.

This is going to be a very challenging thing for the Government to do. We wish them all the best. We know they have inadvertently linked the big problem when it comes to the budget in that statement. Of course, it is all about the election commitments that are going to drive the state into net debt. We know that this is a Treasurer who has wasted five years as Treasurer of Tasmania. It is a huge missed opportunity for the state. We know that there have been good economic conditions. We have seen more revenue and yet somehow the budget is headed for \$343 million worth of net debt. This is a disgrace. It has laid bare the deception that has been peddled by this Treasurer, believed by the Premier right up until the revised Estimates report came out and now we have seen a complete change in his language because now the truth has been laid bare.

We know that the Treasurer, Mr Gutwein, has never delivered a real surplus when it comes to the budget and the budget updates shows that he never will. We know that he likes to call this a golden age that we live in. This is a man out of touch with reality. We have our hospitals and our health system in crisis. There is a health funding blackhole of over \$100 million every year. If you can believe it, in the middle of the health crisis we have next year the Liberals forecasting to spend \$15 million less on our hospitals and the health system. Can you believe that? That is the answer to the crisis: to spend less funding. We know what was a very thin headline surplus number forecast to the \$161.9 million. It has been reduced by how much? It has been reduced by 95 per cent in the

revised Estimates report to \$7.3 million. This is before the devastation of the recent bushfires and there will have to be more spending on health.

We know that this is a Treasurer and a Government that have squandered the good times and you only have to look at these net debt figures to see that this is a Government that is heading the state towards fiscal strife. You only have to look at the graph when it comes to net debt. We know that even through the GFC, the state budget did not go into net debt. The closest it got was around \$200 million of positive net debt, which was around 2012-13 when there were huge write downs in GST revenue on the back of the GFC but we never got into net debt. The Treasurer, Mr Gutwein, with his deception on the Tasmanian people, now has us headed to \$343 million worth of net debt. We know that this report including the comments in the fiscal strategy are sugar coating the record of very poor financial management that we have seen from this Treasurer. We have seen a lack of any real financial strategy.

We have seen very poor planning for health service costs and demand increases. We have seen a Government that has starved the health system of adequate funding increases in its first three years and it has now had to throw a lot more money at the problem because of what we have seen with the run of revenue growth they have had that opportunity but it has not filled the blackhole. We know that net debt is going to turn very significantly positive very quickly. Shortly there will be no buffer left to address any sudden financial shocks or economic downturn. We have seen a treasurer who is blatantly dishonest. The situation is much worse than that they inherited from the former Labor government.

Their lack of discipline or strategy has been papered over up until now through such things as: the treatment of Commonwealth capital grants as revenue: the receipt of the Mersey money last year as a lump sum; and the trend in the underlying deficit. If you go to page 20 of the Revised Estimates Report 2018-2019 - released at the height of the bushfires, one would assume to avoid as much scrutiny of their numbers as possible - you will see that the real operating deficit is averaging around \$150 million of deficit every year. We are now talking about an underlying net operating balance of a deficit of \$164 million. It averages about \$150 million over the Forward Estimates.

This is a government that claims they are going to bring the budget in under surplus on average over the four-year period. They cannot be believed. It will become apparent as times goes on. They have never achieved a surplus on an underlying basis. They keep claiming they have cleaned up the mess left by the previous government. They have made no structural change to the budget to achieve that.

The claim made last year by the Premier was that for the first time ever we would see a surplus in the non-financial sector. If you go to page 73 of the report, they are talking about combined cash deficits of general government and government businesses averaging around \$530 million year on year. That is \$530 million every year that they will be in deficit.

This is government that has squandered the good times here in Tasmania. They have not brought forward any significant reforms that they can hang their hat on. They snub their nose at sensible revenue suggestions that are put forward. We have told the Government for effectively two years now, that it is time to bring in a point of consumption tax when it comes to online gaming. Every other state around the country, and the ACT, has brought in such a point of consumption tax.

This is money, which is available to the state Government, that is desperately needed by the Racing Industry. That is a fact. You only have to talk to anyone in the racing industry. They know

what is going on around the country. We saw it in South Australia first, which brought in a rate of 15 per cent. Then that was rolled out right across the country. Anyone with any sense can see that there should be a point of consumption tax on online gaming.

It beggars belief that the Treasurer cannot see this. We have seen racing minister after racing minister in this Government. We have had Mr Rockliff, followed by Mr Brooks, followed by Mr Rockliff, followed by Ms Courtney, and now followed by Ms Archer. Every racing minister who has held the portfolio since South Australia brought in the point of consumption tax, has been urged by the industry to look at this tax. They see the Treasurer and he says no. He will not give a cogent argument for why Tasmania would not introduce this tax. Why are we the outlier when it comes to this tax? Why does it make sense for every other state to bring this in, and not Tasmania? This is a state that, in a few years' time, is going to be \$343 billion in net debt. They are turning down money that is available to them if they had a bit of guts and gumption.

Ms Archer - You are not being honest. The industry wants all the money. It is not for the taxpayers. The industry wants the money.

Mr BACON - You cannot have the money if there is no tax.

Ms Archer - Don't be tricky with your words. The industry wants all the money.

Mr BACON - The industry wants the tax brought in, Ms Archer. How are they going to get the money if there is no tax?

All this Government has to do is bring legislation into the House. They should do it immediately. The tax should come in on 1 July. We urge the Treasurer to get on with it, to stop sitting on his hands, and bring in this very sensible revenue option before the state ends up with a net debt of \$343 billion.

When looking at inaction when it comes to this Government, you only have to look at the Housing portfolio. There has been a failure to invest in new affordable housing stock. The minister has promised to build 900 new affordable homes by the middle of this year as part of the Affordable Housing Strategy. He is not going to deliver anything near that.

We know that releasing vacant blocks of land was never part of the 900 new affordable homes. The minister has had time in the portfolio now. You would think that 12 months after the housing summit, you would see some real urgency and some real action, but we have not seen it yet. We hope he improves his performance.

I have been contacted by numerous people about the Windsor Street complex in Glenorchy, not only by residents, but also other concerned members of the Glenorchy community. There needs to be a whole-of-government approach to the issues being faced by people within the Windsor Street complex and also other people who frequent that area, particularly school children. I urge the minister to look into what is happening there. I have written five letters about it. I urge the minister to visit or, at the very least, have his department look at different solutions to the very significant issues being faced by a large number of people in that housing complex and in other Housing Tasmania properties in Glenorchy.

The other issue, raised by the Leader of the Opposition, is the ongoing wages dispute we have seen between the Government and its own workforce. We know that the blame for this can be laid

at the feet of the Government. The Treasurer seems to be the architect of this strategy. He has been so stubborn about his 2 per cent wages policy, which does not even keep up with the cost of living. It is good that the Government is now starting to move away from that, but we still see hard-working teachers, firefighters, nurses, park rangers, allied health workers and paramedics falling behind their colleagues interstate. Plus, they are not being treated with respect by this Government.

We think there have been a couple of ministers that have behaved very poorly when it comes to this issue. The Treasurer started the whole mess. Then you have Mr Ferguson, the Minister for Health, threatening to stand down nurses and other health workers. It is a disgraceful threat to these hard-working Tasmanians who are doing their best to work in his health system, which is in crisis because of decisions that he has made.

It appeared in question time today. It took three or four questions before we got to the fact the Premier is actually backing that threat. I hope that is a misunderstanding. The Premier should clear that up. There should not be a threat to stand down workers who have been forced into industrial action by the attitude of this Government, which has treated them appallingly over the past five years. It is time to resolve this issue. The Government can do that if they negotiate in good faith, which they should have been doing for months, if not years. We know they have never shown any respect for their own workforce. It is a disgrace, but it does not have to continue. There now appears to be a greater engagement from the Premier, rather than leaving it to the Treasurer. He has an opportunity to resolve this issue. He said today that the unions should come back with a counter offer. I believe the teachers have already come back. It is incumbent now on the Premier, in particular, to negotiate in good faith and offer a pay rise that is above the cost of living.

We do not want to erode people's living standards, particularly when the Government talks about hiring more and more staff in various different departments of the state's public service. You will not attract staff unless you treat them with respect and pay them a fair day's pay and also treat them with respect when it comes to their conditions as well. Do not erode their conditions in the trade-off for the wages.

What we have seen so far this year is scandal and disfunction from this Government. It forced the Government to cancel a week of Parliament. We are a week behind where we should be. I think it is regrettable, but we want to see a lot more action from this Government. They have been saying it for five years now, a lot more action, less of the glossy brochures and some real genuine attempts at making the lives of Tasmanians better.

We hear talk about business confidence and economic growth and those kinds of things, and they are all well and good but they do not mean anything to everyday Tasmanians unless their lives are being improved. We do not see any drive from this Government to improve the lives of everyday Tasmanians. We see a government that is virtually asleep at the wheel. They do not have to stay like that for the next three years of this term. They have had a wasted 12 months with scandal, dysfunction and navel-gazing, but they do not have to do that for the next three years. They can get on with the job and look at improving the lives of Tasmanians. Even if they fail they will have had a crack. The very least we could expect from this Government is to actually have a go.

[5.06 p.m.]

Ms ARCHER (Clark - Minister for Justice) - Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to give my reply to the Premier's Address delivered yesterday. As has been said, the Hodgman Liberal Government has delivered in many ways across so many of our portfolios, but my focus will be - and I hope I get through all of my notes - across my six ministerial portfolios.

There has been a lot happen in terms of law reform over the past year. We have also delivered legislative and financial support to communities and to organisations and individuals across Tasmania and will continue to do so, as promised at the election, over the next 12 months.

Within my Attorney-General, Justice and Corrections portfolios, as has been the case in previous years, the coming months will involve a heavy legislative agenda in these areas, with a number of reforms being progressed or under consideration or consultation aimed at protecting our most vulnerable and holding offenders to account. Community safety is a core priority for our Government. The Hodgman Liberal Government will always stand up for the safety of our community for victims and the most vulnerable in our community.

I want to turn briefly to the issue of cyberbullying. Following significant public consultation, as has been stated publicly already, I will introduce into this place a bill that forms part of a broader government response to the growing and unfortunate trend of cyberbullying. Bullying has lasting effects on individuals and their families, and serious bullying can result in tragic personal consequences for victims, such as long-term mental health impacts, self-harm and psychological damage. We know that bullying can occur in almost any social environment and it has become a significant issue given rapidly changing technology and the widespread use of social media.

The Education Act 2016 introduced by this Government already takes a restorative justice approach to instances of unacceptable behaviour, including bullying, prior to any punitive disciplinary measures coming into effect. We have also taken action in this space with the anti-cyberbullying program eSmart Schools Cyber Safety, now available in all government schools in partnership with the Alannah and Madeline Foundation. To date 121 schools have signed up to this program and I know the Deputy Premier and Minister for Education has already touched on that.

We have also developed and funded the Bullying Stops Here website aimed at creating positive school cultures. Consistent with the recommendations of the Tasmanian Law Reform Institute, the new legislation seeks to build on the existing crime of stalking to ensure that the most serious examples of bullying and cyberbullying can be brought before the courts - and I stress the word 'serious'. To be serious and resolute about addressing this sensitive issue authorities must have the range of tools they need to respond to all levels of bullying. We are committed to protecting victims of serious online bullying, particularly children and young people.

The legislative measures expand the existing crime of stalking to address serious bullying behaviours, which includes targeting those who use the internet with the intention to cause serious physical or mental harm. It also includes safeguards so we do not unnecessarily bring people, especially young people, before the courts. The reforms the Government proposes are part of the host of measures we are already undertaking as well as work being undertaken at a national level to reduce this often devastating scourge on our society.

I also want to refer to section 194K of the Evidence Act. This is another area that is of significant public interest which relates to victims' rights to tell their stories if they wish. All states and territories have laws, including Tasmania, that place restrictions on identifying perpetrators of certain sexual crimes. However I am conscious that some issues have been raised by our current law in Tasmania and similarly in the Northern Territory.

Section 194K of the Evidence Act 2001 prohibits the identification of complainants in sexual offence proceedings, including when the person is an adult at the time of publication and consents to being identified without a court order. Section 194K contains a provision that allows persons to

apply for permission to publish information without remaining anonymous. I recognise that there are concerns that this provision may not strike the right balance and as I have already said, we are open to changes to this section.

With any reform, it is important that appropriate checks are put in place to ensure that where one victim may wish to publicly speak of their experience, such action does not unduly impact or identify other victims, such as maybe the case with siblings or classmates who may be inadvertently identified which, of course, can occur in a small jurisdiction like ours. Therefore it is important that any change in this area is worked through carefully and in consultation with stakeholders and the wider community. With this in mind, I will shortly release an options paper to promote further discussion on this issue and help identify what issues may need addressing in any proposed reform.

Again I stress that any reform needs to strike the appropriate balance between protecting victims of sexual assault and the paramount public interest in open justice, and I look forward to engaging on that issue with the public and targeted stakeholders from the legal profession. I know there is a significant interest in this by the media as well.

Turning to dangerous criminal declarations, the Government also remains committed to reforming Tasmania's laws relating to dangerous criminals. It is recognised that Tasmania's laws in this area are in need of an overhaul, and later this year the Government will release draft legislation for public comment, which is another election commitment that we made in the last election.

The current system has been criticised as being too difficult for the court to implement because an order can only be made by the same judge who sentenced the offender. In cases where a judge has retired, this makes the process obviously impractical. It is also a significant concern that the current provision has not been applied in many years. Our draft legislation will amend the law to ensure dangerous criminals are not released when the courts and prosecutors believe they are too dangerous to re-enter society.

We will also introduce a second-tier declaration for dangerous criminals that will allow certain offenders, such as repeat sex offenders or serious family violence offenders, to be subject to intensive monitoring post-release. This could include electronic monitoring and other forms of supervision to ensure these offenders do not reoffend. In particular, I refer to comments made by former Justice Shan Tennent, who made a number of observations during her time as a judge about the existing provisions. I will read three separate quotes. She stated:

There is no scope for the making of an order which might see a prisoner released in some sort of staged way to ensure post-order that the declaration is no longer warranted.

She also said:

The act does not allow the court to make any type of conditional order which could perhaps be revoked were conditions breached. The order foreshadowed by the legislation creates an all-or-nothing situation.

And another quote:

There is also no scope for an order with conditions which will provide support and assistance to a prisoner once in the community. Thus the court is unable to impose any conditions requiring, for example, an offender to continue participating in a rehabilitation program or to adhere to certain accommodation requirements.

The Government's reforms will address these limitations and ensure that Tasmania's laws are flexible and contain appropriate safeguards for a court to impose when a prisoner is seeking the removal of a declaration.

Now to one-punch attacks. Random attacks of violence at or near licensed venues and one-punch incidents have justifiably created fear around Australia in relation to health and safety. This is why we have made a commitment as a government to introduce legislative reform and this was another election commitment. A number of other Australian jurisdictions have introduced such reforms. However, there is no common approach, with other states adopting a variety of models. Therefore, it is vitally important that Tasmania adopts the best possible model and that we adopt laws that provide the most effective response to this issue for Tasmania. To this end, a jurisdictional review is well underway and I expect to receive advice shortly about the best form our reforms should take.

I turn to my Corrections portfolio. As members are well aware, this Government has committed \$79.3 million to construct a new Southern Remand Centre at the Risdon Prison site, \$70 million for the new facility and the \$9.3 million is in relation to some shared facilities, not least of all the kitchen. A key focus of the department's planning efforts has been the development of a more effective prison design for the Tasmanian prison system. The new Southern Remand Centre will support more effective and efficient prison operations, including improving conditions for staff who are involved in the design process, I am happy to advise. Stage 1 of the new Southern Remand Centre is in the procurement and planning phase. A number of key consultancy contracts have already been awarded. Site works, designs and statutory approvals are underway and I expect to announce the opening of the pre-tender expressions of interest process to short-list managing contractors before the end of this month.

A major election commitment of the Hodgman Liberal Government is also to build a new \$270 million prison facility in the northern part of our state. This major infrastructure project is to be built over two stages and will house up to 270 prisoners. The first stage allocates \$150 million to build facilities to house 140 prisoners. The second stage allocates a further \$120 million to build facilities to house a further 130 prisoners. The Government has already run a thorough expressions of interest process for the northern prison site which attracted proposals from across the north and north-west of the state. Ten sites were submitted through the EOI process - I think it was 11 but one withdrew. An interdepartmental siting panel was established to assess the EOI submissions and guide due diligence investigations. A site short-list will be received by the Government in March, this month, for consideration. We expect to then be able to begin public consultation on the new northern prison location by the middle of this year. Once the location is finalised and a managing contractor selected, it is estimated this major project will create more than 4000 direct and indirect jobs, both during construction and also during its operation. I have been pleased with the response. Many of the local councils in many areas are willing to embrace such a facility. I know it can be fairly contentious but I also know that jobs in regions are critically important.

These two major corrections infrastructure projects that I have mentioned will alleviate capacity pressures at the current facilities at the Risdon site. We are futureproofing this. It is a simple fact that unfortunately prison populations around the country have increased. Most

excitingly, it provides greater rehabilitation opportunities and with a new facility you can purpose build areas for a greater range of rehabilitation programs and also provide long overdue increased accommodation and other facilities for those on remand, which is an important feature to separate those on remand. Obviously, those people have not had their trials and we know the presumption of innocence applies in this state and in this country and it is an important part of our process that, where possible, we separate this cohort. That is another development that I am excited to be turning the first sod shortly.

Now to the Environment portfolio. Much has been said on this matter already throughout members' contributions. The Tasmanian Government recognises, and I certainly do as minister responsible for climate change within my Environment portfolio, that it is a serious issue that requires local, national and international action.

Ms O'Connor - You should have asked the Premier to make sure it featured in his state of the state address.

Ms ARCHER - Well, I am addressing it in mine.

Ms O'Connor - You are not the premier.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER - Order.

Ms ARCHER - We were the first jurisdiction in Australia to reach zero net emissions in 2016, and we are delivering on our agenda for action on climate change through *Climate Action 21: Tasmania's Climate Change Action Plan 2017 - 2021*. I urge members to read this document because it sets out the incredible work that has been carried out by the Tasmanian Climate Change Office. There are extremely dedicated public servants within that office who do fantastic work. They are implementing the Climate Action 21. The action is focused on climate change research, improving energy efficiency, reducing transport emissions and supporting business, local government and communities to take action on climate.

Ms O'Connor - Silent on forest carbon.

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

Ms ARCHER - Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker. These actions include funding for the rollout of electric vehicle charging infrastructure in Tasmania, funding to undertake a business resource efficiency program to assist small and medium-sized businesses to reduce their emissions; funding to conduct energy audits for small and medium-sized businesses to identify opportunities to improve energy efficiency and to reduce power bills and emissions; and funding to work with local government and regional bodies to embed climate change consideration into strategic and financial decision-making.

The \$3 million in funding we have already provided for Climate Action 21 builds on over \$400 million already invested by this Government to support action on climate change in coming months across portfolios and across government.

In coming months, the Government will progress amendments to the Climate Change (State Action) Act 2008 to provide a strong framework for leadership and action on climate change. We also recognise that we need to protect our national parks and reserves and wilderness areas from the

impact of wildfires. We had made significant investments in developing strategies, systems and tools for managing bushfire risk in these special areas.

The Government has committed \$55 million into a statewide targeted fuel reduction burning program, and a further \$4 million for bushfire management in the TWWHA. The \$4 million will be used to improve bushfire management planning, bushfire risk assessment and modelling, bushfire recovery, developing a model of fire cover and undertaking plant burning in the TWWHA. The funding is also contributing to the Tasmanian Government's commitment to meet national and international responsibilities to protect the outstanding universal value of the TWWHA.

I also stress that we take the responsibility for the protection of threatened species very seriously, and I certainly do within this portfolio responsibility, both in terms of flora and fauna. We have provided significant additional investment for the Save the Tasmanian Devil Program and to construct a new purpose-built orange bellied parrot breeding facility which is expected to be fully open by the end of April this year. This facility is already home to a number of breeding birds that have increased our captive breeding capacity by around 50 per cent of this year, because as we have been able to construct the facility, we have been able to start moving birds in for breeding purposes.

We have also provided funding for research into protecting the swift parrot, maugean skate and Tasmanian handfish, and we have amended the Threatened Species Protection Act 1995 to significantly increase the penalties for those who deliberately kill or harm threatened species in Tasmania, and impose a potential custodial sentence also.

I will now mention waste management because it is a highly topical issue, particularly throughout our local government areas. The Government is committed to continue to work with local government, the waste industry and the community to improve waste management and resource recovery in Tasmania.

We have recently acted on some of our most pressing waste issues by providing grants for controlled waste and tyre facilities, making changes to the regulation of waste tyre stockpiling issue - that is something I did upon coming to this portfolio - and also, by assisting with the roll-out of national product stewardship schemes for e-waste, paint, batteries and packaging.

We made a number of commitments to waste management in the last election, in particular to tackle littering and dumping and to improve reporting and enforcement of littering and dumping and to work with local government to increase its capacity to collect recyclable material.

We have a target to make Tasmania the tidiest state with the lowest incidence of litter in the country by 2023. The latest 2017-2018 National Litter Index survey shows we are already working towards this with a 6 per cent decrease in littering in Tasmania over the past 12 months. I had some comments on my Facebook recently. The litter index is not something I drafted. I issued a media release noting that the survey's results show a very positive result in 6 per cent decrease in littering in Tasmania over the last 12 months. There is always more we can do to encourage people not to litter.

We are developing a new reporting smartphone litter app. We use offenders now to assist with clean-up activities. That is something that has been implemented recently on community corrections orders. It is progressing well and is expected to be fully in place by mid-2019. These things take some time to plan and organise, not least because workplace health and safety issues apply to those on corrections orders as well.

We have also introduced amendments to the Litter Act 2007, which I have tabled, to establish new categories for dumping with increased penalties for persons convicted of illegal dumping. We will release our draft waste action plan later this year for public consultation.

We have provided funding to the Environment Protection Authority Tasmania to investigate a potential model framework for a container refund scheme for Tasmania that complements other jurisdictions. We are currently considering the key findings and recommendations of that report.

The Hodgman Liberal Government is continuing to restore the racing industry's sustainability and the jobs it supports in regional Tasmania. I am looking forward to continuing the strong gains that have been made over the past five years since we came to office. Tasracing posted consecutive profits for the first time under our stewardship. The strong financial position of Tasracing has enabled them to provide funding increases along all three codes over the last financial year, with total prize money for the industry in 2017-18 reaching \$23.3 million, an increase of 12.2 per cent, which is significant given previous funding by Tasracing. When Tasracing is posting consecutive profits, more goes back into the industry.

It is also allowing them to reinvest in much-needed infrastructure across the state. We have many facilities and much work needs to be done, not least the replacement of the Elwick Thoroughbred Race Track. Work has now officially commenced on that track. It is a \$12.5 million redevelopment that will deliver a new single 28-metre-wide track that will benefit the industry in the long term, and ensure a bright long-term future of racing in southern Tasmania. In a boost for local jobs, Tasmanian company Strathayr was chosen by Tasracing as the head contractor and is employing additional staff as a result.

In line with our election commitment, later this year the Government will begin a capital grants fund of \$250 000 per year to assist local racing clubs across the state to fund vital racing infrastructure upgrades. We want to see locally bred race horses thriving against the rest of Australia which is why the Government has provided \$300 000 to the thoroughbred racing and breeding sector in 2018-19 year.

The great results of horses such as the Adam-Trinder-trained Group 1 and All Star Mile winning filly, Mystic Journey, which we saw on the weekend, reaffirms the strength and viability of the Tasmanian thoroughbred breeding industry. I hope that win has buoyed people's spirits.

Animal welfare continues to be an issue of paramount importance. The Government, through Tasracing, committed \$349 000 towards the Greyhound Adoption Program in the last financial year. This investment is bearing fruit with adoption numbers in the program increasing to a record of 116 greyhounds in 2017-18. I have had the benefit of having some time with some of these greyhounds that have been through the adoption program. They truly have a delightful nature. We want to see as many greyhounds rehomed as possible. We strongly support the industry's ongoing efforts to help greyhounds find new homes once their racing career ends.

With a recently appointed new CEO, Paul Eriksson, and led by Chair, Gene Phair, I look forward to continuing to work with Tasracing, local racing clubs and the broader racing Tasmanian racing industry. I believe I have managed to get around to all of them to date. If I have missed any, I will endeavor to meet with any of the smaller clubs, but I have been meeting with clubs from around the state. I want them to maintain confidence and certainty; I want them to have a united industry. That is important to the Tasmanian economy.

I turn to my Arts portfolio, which is a highly important portfolio to me. I refer to it as being 'the arts' as it's a much shorter title than saying cultural and creative industries, but that encompasses such a broad range of genres. The Hodgman Liberal Government is a strong supporter of Tasmania's cultural and creative industries. I am a very strong supporter and have been for as long as I can remember. Our Government is focused on generating jobs in the artistic sector and building momentum in our economy for the benefit of all Tasmanians and certainly those within the industry.

There are many genres that make up this sector and not enough time to list all of our initiatives, grants and funding opportunities in this contribution today. Suffice to say, they are all important contributors to our creative economy and social health and wellbeing.

During the next 12 months I look forward to delivering on a number of new commitments that will ensure our cultural and creative industries continue to thrive for many years to come. We have invested substantially in Tasmania's screen sector which has thrived over the past five years under our Government. Over coming months, I will announce further screen production investments funded through our new \$2 million Screen Innovation Fund - again, an election commitment.

Expenditure on screen production has produced great results for Tasmania and also great exposure. Recent successful releases of Tasmanian productions such as *Rosehaven*, *The Kettering Incident* and *Aussie Lobster Men* have entertained audiences and won national and international awards and promoted further interest in Tasmania as a production location. In light of the screen industry's recent successes and the growing reputation of Tasmania as a viable filming destination, we are confident that with this new injection of funds, Tasmanian stories will continue to enthrall audiences throughout Australia and the world.

The games development sector in Tasmania is also pushing ahead at great speed. Our Government is proud to continue to support it. With funding support from our Government, Giant Margarita, a games development company based in Hobart, developed Party Crashes, a manic car-racing game launched in 2018 on Steam, Play Station 4 and Nintendo Switch. I understand it has been selling well on those platforms. I can confirm that it is heaps of fun to play, although I am terrible at it. Giant Margarita took Party Crashes along with Party Golf and the in-development, Party Coppers to Melbourne International Games Week in October last year and received a great response from attendees.

The next round of Screen Tasmania games development funding is under consideration. I understand a record number of games developers applied for this support. I look forward to receiving recommendations from Screen Tasmania's expert advisory group in April.

Our Government also recognises the importance of regional arts as contributors to the identity of Tasmanians to the broader creative economy and social health and wellbeing of our state. Last year in recognition of this our Government announced new funding of \$300 000 over three years for the Northern Tasmania Arts Organisations Initiative. This program supports arts organisations based in northern Tasmania to deliver high-quality activities that strengthen northern Tasmania's arts sector, engage and inspire audiences and the wider community, and of course benefit northern Tasmania's professional artists and arts workers, of which there are many of a very high standard. The initiative is open to arts organisations across 16 local government areas in the north of the state and a first round was assessed in November last year and six organisations were supported.

I also take this opportunity to announce that RANT, Regional Arts Network Tasmania Limited based in northern Tasmania, has been selected as the new regional program administrator for regional arts funding in Tasmania.

Time expired.

[5.36 p.m.]

Ms HADDAD (Clark) - Mr Deputy Speaker, I will start by acknowledging the many contributions that have already been made in response to the Premier's Address so far and to my colleagues who have laid out very clearly for the House some of the difficulties with the Government's priorities. We have heard a lot from Government members about the series of election commitments that have been made, but we have also heard from many members of the Opposition about just how far removed we are from those lofty promises made during the campaign to the reality of where we stand today, one year into the Government's second term, and arguably the mess that Tasmania has been served up ever since.

There is a stark difference between this and Labor's vision of Tasmania as a fair, equitable and prosperous place. During the election Tasmanians were promised the largest investment in health in a generation, yet almost none of this supposed new money was scheduled for this term of government, nor was much of it budgeted for the one after that. This commitment was one that the Government thought they would not have the task to fulfil. The Premier and the Liberals have never cared about improving the health system. They have just been after headlines. Tasmanians are well aware of the fact that our health system is in crisis right now. We can all see for ourselves ambulances ramped daily outside the Royal and we hear excuses for yet more delays to long-promised upgrades. Women fly interstate for medical terminations, and Tasmanians see friends, family members and neighbours not getting the healthcare they need and deserve to live happy lives. They feel they are the lucky ones, though, because we all read and see even more harrowing tales in the paper and on the news.

The reality is that this Government trashed our health system in their first term and had the contempt to mislead Tasmanians about their intentions for the next. Yesterday we saw more of the same from the Premier. His announcement about funding for the redevelopment of the Royal Hobart Hospital was not sufficient to fund stage 2, let alone stage 3. The Australian Medical Association's support was so lukewarm it must have been pretty hard to swallow. He got the big front-page splash he was after but he knows what he announced yesterday was little more than a drop in the ocean compared to what is truly required to address the crisis in our health system today.

We see the same story in housing. During the election the Government unveiled its so-called Affordable Housing Action Plan, yet what Tasmanians see is less affordability, fewer houses, no action and no plan. The glossy brochure they put out promised 1500 more new houses by 2023 in addition to the 900 they promised would be completed by June this year. I do not believe that anyone in Tasmania's community seriously thinks they are going to come close to meeting that target, least of all the Tasmanians who see the housing crisis deepen and spread by the day. Even if they did come close it would still be woefully inadequate, as their own agency's target indicates that 656 new dwellings will be required each year until 2031 to properly manage the housing crisis. Going on their own numbers, even if they managed to build the 1500 new extra homes by 2023, a dubious assumption on the track record we have seen so far, they will still be 1780 houses short of what their own agency says is needed.

Hobart is now the least affordable capital city in Australia. Who would have ever expected that? Rents are going up sharply and rental properties are getting harder to find. People have to pay up or face the very real prospect of nowhere to live, or at least nowhere to live that allows their kids to walk or continue to walk to school or to their friends' houses. With desperation comes the possibility of exploitation. I have heard too many stories since opening my electorate office in the City of Hobart and since being elected, of people being ripped off or otherwise exploited. I met a young man who could no longer work as a builder because he had injured his back on the job and simply could not find a house he could afford on the disability pension. He was living in a caravan in exchange for 20 hours building labour a week. It is just not good enough and it is not what we expect in our beautiful state of Tasmania.

The cost of buying a house continues to rise faster than people can save which, combined with rising rents, puts the prospect of home ownership even further out of reach for too many Tasmanians, or if not for them, for their children and grandchildren. Tasmanians see more and more people sleeping rough, not out of sight but on Main Road in Glenorchy. Twenty-five people are predicted to be living permanently on the Domain and people are sleeping in bus shelters throughout the state. In fact Tasmania has almost twice as many homeless people per capita than the United States of America. I doubt Tasmanians would believe that is true of their state and yet it is. It is not the Tasmania we once knew, and certainly not the one we were promised at the last election.

During the last election we constantly heard promises of a strong, stable majority government that would be delivered by the Liberals and would take Tasmania to the next level, but what we have is a total shambles. The Government is engaged in an ongoing dispute with the public service because they refuse to pay our nurses, teachers and firefighters a salary that keeps pace with inflation. They demand frontline workers take a pay cut while they give \$50 000 payouts to Liberal Party advisers moving to lucrative private sector careers. We would have all given these speeches last week except the Premier cancelled the first sitting week of Parliament. The Hodgman majority Liberal Government cancelled it because it lost too many MPs to scandal to command a majority. They cancelled it in fear. This is the sort of thing you might expect to see when a government has been in power for two decades, not one term.

We heard a lot yesterday about infrastructure and the Premier announced yet another study, but how many plans, frameworks, strategies and pipelines of works we heard about today - does this Government need to get on with the job? This is a government devoid of real vision. They have been in power for five years and they are out of ideas. They have no plans to deal with the ever-worsening traffic on our roads, no approach to transport that recognises the rapid growth in our cities and no plan to improve the public amenities in our suburbs. This is exactly what we saw in the insulting announcement made yesterday that the Government would be spending \$1 million on yet another study - another bunch of expensive consultants getting a payday because, unlike ferries, this Government is all at sea. Another year wasted for what? What is the study possibly going to tell them that an entire department of highly experienced and knowledgeable public servants could not tell them or likely have already told them but been ignored?

Yesterday we heard a lot about the Hobart City Deal which the Premier signed at a media event at the Hobart Airport recently. If this is the crowning achievement of this Government's infrastructure vision, that says it all. This is the same City Deal the Prime Minister did not even bother coming to the city to sign, the City Deal that reannounced funding for the Bridgewater bridge that had already been announced by former prime minister Malcolm Turnbull, that did not fund

light rail to Hobart's northern suburbs and contained no money for Macquarie Point or university relocation. There was nothing to move the CSIRO and revamp Castray Esplanade or the waterfront.

This is why the head of the Tourism Industry Council described is as 'a bore' and 'a bit wishy-washy'. He also said, 'There is no real tangible development here'. It is why the Hobart Lord Mayor said she only signed the deal because it would have been bad form not to do so. What were the Premier and the Deputy Premier, the responsible minister, doing during those negotiations? I suspect they did not have much of a say at all.

When he was talking about infrastructure yesterday the Premier asked us to imagine what Tasmania would look like in 30 years. I fear that if this government is still in power it will look exactly the same, or worse.

The government is also out of ideas when it comes to the economy and what it really means to address poverty and inequality in Tasmania. Nothing to address the inequality between rich and poor, which continues to grow and widen by the day. They have no plan to address the glaring issues with productivity in Tasmania and no vision for how we can address the crisis in youth unemployment. Young people in Tasmania are less likely to have a job than in any other state and 6600 fewer women are in work than were at the last election. This is an economy that is not working for ordinary Tasmanians. Wages are stagnant and \$10,000 below those in other Australian states, on average.

Every fortnight, when Tasmanians check their pay there is, on average, \$400 missing; \$400 they would be getting if they worked the other side of Bass Strait. We have been told by the Premier and Treasurer that we are in a golden age in Tasmania. It is certainly not a golden age for those who are missing out, and missing out significantly; like the thousands of public servants being denied a proper wage rise to deal with the increasing costs of living and inflation and whose employer, the Government, refuses to bargain for in good faith.

The cost of living is higher for Tasmanians who are charged more than other Australians for food, petrol and now even rent. It is not good enough to ask them to accept that everything goes up, except their wages. The Premier spoke yesterday about education being the key to social inclusion and mobility. This is true to an extent. Quality education and training is vital for all Tasmanians. But it is only within a fair economy that puts people at its core that education can truly change lives because if you do not have food on your table, petrol in your car, or a roof over your head, nothing else is really going to matter.

Until we start focusing on the social factors that lead to inequality we will not make any serious inroads into improving things for Tasmanians, many of whom continue to struggle and continue to miss out on reaping benefits promised by this Government. The Government has not pursued a single economic reform that will set Tasmania up for the future. Time and again they shirk tough decisions, and they even shirk easy ones. They are too concerned about today's front page, or tomorrow's front page, to put in the work that will contribute to a better tomorrow.

History tells us that good economic times never last forever. Every economy has upswings and downturns. The good times are when you make the necessary but hard decisions to set yourself up for the future. We have all heard stories about the guy who won the lottery, yet five years later he was bankrupt because he blew it all on jet skis and partying.

This is the story of this Government. They are dancing their way through the good times, claiming sole responsibility for having caused them, but doing nothing to secure Tasmania's prosperity for the future. The result of this recklessness was that last month Tasmanians saw the Government's revised budget. It showed they have blown the surpluses that were promised before the election, the surpluses that were going to pay for their so-called record investment in health, infrastructure and housing. I suppose if you are not actually making record investments, you do not need surpluses that were going to pay for them. But seriously, this is a government that promised good economic management but instead blew all the money on getting elected. Labor left a budget free of debt, and they have racked up \$343 million in debt in just five years. This is a government that does not have the guts to make the big calls for our state.

One of the significant causes of the budget deterioration was the \$5.5 million blowout in the Justice Department which followed several years of similar outcomes. The cost of running prisons in Tasmania is now \$20 million more each year than it was when the Liberals took power. This was apparently due to demand pressures in the prison system. Demand pressures, as we would all know in this chamber, is bureaucratic speak for crisis. It is exactly the same phrase the health minister uses to excuse what is going on in our hospitals.

We are on the verge of a crisis in the prison system, too. The average daily prison population has risen from 448 when the Liberals took office in 2014 to 613 in the 2017-18 financial year. This is an increase of 37 per cent and the numbers are probably higher today. Prison capacity has grown from an occupancy rate of 77 per cent to over 95 per cent in the same period. Again, it is probably even more full today. Media reports have highlighted instances of prisoners sleeping on mattresses on the floor. Inmates are packed to the rafters with new bunks being installed so small two-bed rooms now have three inmates in the one room. Low risk prisoners are being held in maximum security while they wait for a space to become available in minimum security.

Prisoners are being refused parole for the sole reason of having nowhere to live upon their release. The Government will tell you that this is all okay because they are building a new, shiny prison in Launceston. That is not for 10 years and there is no funding in the forward Estimates to do more than build the thing. At this rate it will be built but it will have no budget to staff the place.

All of this puts correctional officers at risk; rolling lockdowns - we are told at least one per day in any area of the prison, sometimes for several hours or even a whole day - put correctional officers and prisoners at risk. The facts are clear: there is a chronic underfunding in our prison system and with the Government locking away the prisoners and throwing away the key, it is only going to get worse. At the same time, Community Corrections offender to staff ratio has declined by over 20 per cent since this Government took power. Social services have been starved of funding and this adds to recidivism on release.

In the prison, for approximately 600 male prisoners there are two drug and alcohol counsellors. For female prisoners, there are no specialist drug counselling staff. While opioid replacement therapies and detox facilities are offered and offered well, the numbers are capped and dozens more would benefit from these programs if they could access them in the general prison population.

The independent custodial inspector has bemoaned a lack of dedicated spaces to manage and support prisoners with mental health issues. It is little surprise that the prisoner on prisoner assault rate has almost quadrupled since 2014, while prisoner on staff assaults have increased by a factor of six. Little surprise the prison is regularly in lockdown for long periods of time. This puts extra and unwarranted pressure on custodial officers who tell me the main thing they have to deal with

in the prison population every day is mental ill health. They are not mental health workers; they are custodial officers and should have the support that they need and that the prison population needs in place to deal with the changing prison population need.

Even basic things are falling apart. In 2013-14, 136 prisoners completed the Sober Driving Program and just 84 did the same program in 2017-18. The public was rightly horrified to read of the case of the 11-year-old boy recently stripsearched in Hobart. The Right to Information request from the *Mercury* showed that between 1 and 30 November last year, 203 stripsearches were conducted on Tasmanian children, 56 per cent of whom were Aboriginal. No contraband was found on any of them.

The revised Budget did not say what had caused these so-called 'demand' pressures. On coming to Government Will Hodgman and the Liberals cut key services such as the Reintegration Ex-Offenders Program, or REO. This program is now being hurriedly reintroduced under another name. It supported prisoners to find somewhere safe and stable to live after they have served their sentences. It helped people move on with their lives. The program cost approximately \$250 000 a year, or around 4 per cent of the amount by which the Justice budget has now blown out. It also reduced the reoffending rate by almost 90 per cent. Only 6.5 per cent of people engaged with the program committed further offences compared to 55 of all people released. It was a remarkably effective program and, as I said, it has been hurriedly put back together after this Government cut it and realised their error.

Mr Deputy Speaker, the \$5.5 million blowout figure also does not include the staggering cost to victims, police, courts and the community when people commit crimes, nor does it include the cost to families and children of having a loved one go to prison, or to our state's productivity when people are in jail instead of in jobs.

In other words, it is difficult to record and calculate the social cost of government decisions and budget blowouts.

To put it another way, the Government has spent \$5.5 million this year and cost the rest of us a whole lot more to increase crime in our community and they have done it every year since they were first elected. Everything about this is typical of this Liberal Government. They want to look like they are tough on crime, but they are really too weak to do what works to prevent crime in the long term.

Someone who was tough on trespassing would not have hordes of people camping on their lawn. Refusing to service your car would not make you tough on engine failure; it would just mean you do not understand that sometimes good financial management means spending a bit of money on upkeep to prevent a much larger bill later.

Let me be absolutely clear. I am not saying that people who commit crimes should not go to prison. I am saying that how we manage our prison system, our criminal justice system and our support systems for the community and victims is directly linked to the amount of crime we see in our communities in the years that follow and the cost, both financial and social, of dealing with that crime. A crisis in our prison system today is a crisis in our communities tomorrow and ongoing.

The Government continues to delay even the most basic reforms to Tasmania's political donation laws, which are rightly described as the worst in the country. They have recently pushed back the deadline for public submissions on a consultation they are running about changes to the Electoral Act. This week they have tabled legislation that will deal with administrative changes to

the act such as nominations, postal votes and news coverage on polling day. While these administrative changes are worthy and needed, and I am grateful to have received a briefing earlier today on that bill tabled yesterday, it is simply a cynical move by the Liberal Party to make it appear they are doing something about donations reform when in fact the legislation they have introduced goes nowhere to addressing the tragic reality that we have the worst political donations laws in the country.

In stark contrast to this, Labor has a very robust policy to clean up our electoral laws in Tasmania. Labor's policy on electoral laws would lower the limit so that donations over \$1000 or cumulative donations from one donor up to \$1000 have to be declared straightaway with real-time 14-day rolling disclosures. If parties have the time to cash a cheque then they have time to report who gave it to them. We also want to see caps on spending by political parties. Right now, a party could spend anything from \$1 to \$1 billion on campaign activity and nobody would be any the wiser. This is simply not good enough. Ideas and policies that advance our community should matter more than money spent on advertising or billboards. Labor in government will clean up these laws and the regulations that apply to spending and declaration of donations by candidates.

Mr Deputy Speaker, I am not sure if you were as shocked as I was when I first became a candidate to discover that candidates for state election in Tasmania do not have to declare any of the donations they receive - not to their party, the Electoral Commission or the public. It shocked me and it simply has to change. It is not fair and I do not believe it is what the public expects from politics in this day and age. I believe the donation disclosure requirements we want to apply to parties should also apply to candidates.

Candidate spending is also currently unlimited. The fact that two candidates for the same seat, especially in our unique Hare-Clark environment, could spend vastly different amounts does not make for a level playing field between candidates. That is why spending caps should also apply to individual candidates, because honesty, values and connecting with your community should count more than your bank balance. Candidate spending caps currently exist for local government and Legislative Council elections in Tasmania so there is absolutely no reason and no cogent argument anybody could give for this not to be applied also to candidates for election in this Chamber in the House of Assembly.

All that is holding us back from progressing laws like this is this Government. While I acknowledge, as I said earlier, that the Government has tabled a bill this week, I sincerely hope that does not lead to a misconception in the Tasmanian community that the Government is taking donations laws seriously or that they are doing anything tangible to clean up our appalling laws relating to the activity of political parties during election campaigns and the spending on electoral campaigns, not just of political parties but also of individual candidates seeking election, and the disclosure of those donations.

Tasmanians are cynical about the motives of this Government and the lack of action not only on political donations but on a raft of measures that this Government is pursuing. They may even equate it to corruption, and probably for good reason, but there is another way in which this Government -

Debate adjourned.

ADJOURNMENT

Bushfires in Tasmania

[6.01 p.m.]

Mr FERGUSON (Bass - Minister for Health) - Mr Deputy Speaker, Tasmania communities have undergone a very challenging time over this summer and these recent months with multiple bushfires across Tasmania from late December through January, February and into March. More than 2000 dry lightning strikes hit our state in January, which started more than 70 fires across much of the state. Some were detected immediately and others over a number of days and weeks after that initial lightning for ignitions may not have appeared above ground until days or weeks after the strike.

Since Christmas Day, significant numbers of Tasmania Fire Service personnel working alongside our firefighters from Parks and Wildlife Service and Sustainable Timbers Tasmania, were working to combat bushfires around the state. I rise tonight to speak of their exceptional efforts and to thank them on behalf of our community.

We have been supported by an impressive contingent of fire agency personnel and aircraft from interstate and New Zealand. In the two months since 28 December we have had a combined total of 3000 firefighters actively fighting fires on the ground. In terms of fire area, these are the largest fires in Tasmania since 1967, but unlike 1967, as we have heard earlier today, this was a very extended period of fire attacking our vegetation, livelihoods and lives.

Everyone's efforts have been successful to date. We say thank you to everybody involved because it is probably best demonstrated by the level of protection of life, property and wilderness values that has been achieved despite the losses that has been extraordinary.

During significant fire events all fire agencies in Tasmania come together to work as one. Colloquially they say it is 'badges off' and we work together as one team. Our multi-agency response arrangements which are in place because of past fire campaigns and lessons learned are held in high regard by other jurisdictions, and in this particular event these arrangements have allowed for a comprehensive and sustained attack on the fires, which I say have been very successful and have avoided and averted much worse possible outcomes.

Briefly I would like to touch on the preparedness for the 2018-19 season. We live in one of the most bushfire-prone places on the planet, which surprises people who seem to think that Tasmania being more south than other states would be less so. We have to do all we can to make sure we are prepared each year.

The Government's \$55 million fuel reduction program has dramatically reduced the risk of bushfires to our communities and has targeted areas that are most at risk as a priority. I spoke about this at length last year when I talked about the fuel reduction program and the level of risk it has reduced in different communities - in some areas single-digit and in other areas double-digit reductions in risk.

Leading into the summer we have recently had, it was declared in advance that it would be a 'normal' fire season with slightly elevated risk on the east coast. What is interesting is that the late spring rains that we had tended to be very helpful for soil dryness on the east coast and much of the

state that was expected to have a normal season was ravaged by fire. As Ms O'Connor said earlier today, 3 per cent of our land mass has been affected by fire.

Ahead of this fire season, nonetheless, our agencies worked tirelessly on mitigation activities, preparedness days, exercising emergency management plans in case they were needed, and ensuring that appropriate resourcing arrangements were in place, especially for aircraft.

There was a statewide bushfire exercise in October. TFS leads a concept of operations which is known as Rapid Weight of Response. I specifically mention this because some have been saying that the TFS need to start doing Rapid Weight of Response. That is exactly what TFS has: a central belief in attacking fires as early as possible, even overdoing it in some cases to extinguish fires early if possible because you do not know what tomorrow will bring. They do that at the earliest opportunity on days of very high fire danger, using a variety of techniques; not only water but compressed foam and retardant.

NAFC aircraft contracts were put in place in advance for fixed wing and five rotary assets with additional resources under call on demand. I am pleased that is the case because they were needed.

The TFS also undertook a summer bushfire public education campaign, targeting high-risk areas and ensured that we had community bushfire protection plans in place.

I can speak for everybody when I say how grateful we are to TFS, to STT, Parks and Wildlife Service, our volunteers as part of the TFS, the interstate visitors and those from New Zealand. What a wonderful job they have done. One of our regional chiefs recently said to me 'Minister, any bushfire with no loss of life is a good bushfire season'. It is wonderful to be able to say that we have had that outcome. It is sad that we have had one serious injury. That person has an excellent prognosis, I am pleased to say.

We have lost property. We have had damage to valuable industry and we have had damage to our environment and wilderness areas. That does not take away from the extraordinary efforts that our personnel have made. The generosity of our volunteers who, in many cases, were very sacrificial in wanting to help with this campaign, was astounding. It might surprise some colleagues in this Chamber that even volunteers from other states attended our fires. It was amazing.

We will ensure that everything is done to protect communities in the future. We will be reviewing through a robust independent review to be undertaken by the Australasian Fire and Emergency Services Authorities Council. It will be led by the highly experienced Mal Promstead, AFSM. It should never have got to this, but I understand there were some political demands for an external review. I announced the review on 6 January. We are pleased it will happen. The Government is willing to learn lessons from this campaign as we thank our service men and women.

Bushfires in Tasmania

Honey Industry - Effect of Bushfires

[6.08 p.m.]

Ms O'CONNOR (Clark - Leader of the Greens) - Mr Deputy Speaker, I echo what the minister has passed on in terms of this parliament's gratitude and certainly the Tasmanian Greens gratitude to everyone who took part in responding to the fires, to our Parks and Wildlife Service fires, to the TFS firefighters and to the Forestry Tasmania firefighters. I also want to acknowledge that we were

provided with two briefings during the fires, as we requested them, in order to understand the greater impact of those fires and the threats to the Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area and Gondwana relics of outstanding universal value.

There are still questions to be answered about the response to the Gell River fire. I hope that those questions are dealt with very clearly by the independent assessor.

Another sector of our community, our economy and our society that has been impacted by the fires over this summer season is our beekeepers. Some members of the House would be aware that this past summer has been the worst summer for our honey industry since 1981.

The leatherwood trees have failed to either flower or to produce enough nectar for the bees to make honey. Even before the fires had broken out, our beekeepers were counting losses in the order of some 600 hives. That is a climate-related industry catastrophe.

The industry's spokespeople make it really clear that it will take decades for the honey industry in Tasmania to recover from the drying of the leatherwood forests and then the compounding effect of the bushfires that swept through leatherwood forests in the south-west, in the north and the north-west of Tasmania. It is fair to say that if there were any climate sceptics in the honey industry before last summer, there are not any anymore. For example, Shirley Stephens from the R. Stephens Apiarists from Mole Creek, one of our most famous bee producers, producing honey for more than 60 years, said this is the worst she has ever seen:

Even last year we produced 280 tonnes of honey and this year we will be lucky to get 20 tonnes.

Then we have Mr Lindsay Burke, President of the Tasmanian Beekeepers Association, who said:

All honey producers across the state have been affected. It is really disastrous. It is the worst we have had since 1981.

He goes on to say,

I always thought that climate change would not make any difference to us. I welcomed a bit more heat but it dried everything out.

The industry is having a crisis meeting on 29 March. They will be asking for an urgent crisis response from government in relieving some of the costs they bear in accessing their hives in Parks and Wildlife-managed lands and in STT-managed lands. They will also be looking for cost relief in order to purchase sugar to keep the bees alive.

There is a path forward to protect the leatherwood resource that the beekeepers have been calling for for decades. That is to stop the clear felling, the burning and the re-sowing into monoculture plantations of forests that contain leatherwood trees. If we want to maintain a viable honey industry in this state, we are going to have to do things differently in our forests. This is not just coming from the Greens. This is coming from people who have been working in that sector for decades, who have been out in the forests and who have seen the devastation caused to leatherwoods by an industry that has been out of control and is trapped in the clear-felling, burning, harvesting models of the past.

I implore the minister, do not just pay lip service to this really important sector of the Tasmanian economy. Be open to doing things differently if you want to protect our beekeepers. There are 27 species of eucalypt in Tasmania and only five of them flower. Among them is the blue gum, which only flowers every two years, the manuka and the leatherwood. The leatherwood trees are essential to the survival of our honey industry in Tasmania. We should commit as a parliament to making sure that we are doing everything within our capacity to protect those leatherwood forests so that they can be part of a genuinely sustainable industry, an industry we can all be proud of. For example, in 2015, Mr Lindsay Burke was awarded Best Honey in the World for his leatherwood honey. In the whole world the best honey came from Tasmania.

We need to acknowledge that the beekeepers are highly distressed; they have lost hives. They are not able to go in and check their hives in some places because of dangerous trees. They are watching the leatherwood trees fail to produce the nectar that sustains their industry. This is extremely serious. I urge the minister to work with his Cabinet colleagues to be sure that we are doing things differently in Tasmania: that we are prioritising the production of honey over woodchips; and that we acknowledge climate change is having substantial economic impacts. It requires us to do things differently and we must do that. We owe it to our beekeepers.

Climate Change - Student Rally

Christchurch, New Zealand - Shooting Tragedy

[6.15 p.m.]

Ms O'BYRNE (Bass) - Mr Deputy Speaker, I want to touch on two moments from last Friday. The first one was uplifting and the second a devastating one.

President Obama said that we are the first generation to feel the effects of climate change and the last generation to do something about it. There was a generation of kids in Launceston, over 1500, many of them I knew, who gathered in Prince's Square to voice their concerns about the future of the climate and the actions and engagement they wanted from their political leaders.

There are many people who said they should not have been out of school protesting but should listen to their elders. However, I want to remind people that the last time we said that to a generation who spoke out it was the generation after the First World War. The famous saying at that time was about an old man saying that the young do not listen to the old anymore and someone pointing out that was because the old told them to die.

These children spoke out because they are genuinely concerned about their future. I commend the organisers, who are an amazing bunch of kids: Lachie Moore, Anna Roberts, Tom Wiley-Watson, Joe Savva, Gabby, Annie and Holly, who did an amazing job putting together a fantastic event and spoke so passionately and brilliantly. I was really proud to know them that day.

But as we were feeling proud and positive about the action of the young we were devastated as the news came through from New Zealand. I know that one of the members here joined me in Civic Square in Launceston for the vigil to remember people. I do not know if I will have time to do it all in my time, but I wanted to read the names of the fallen in New Zealand:

Mucad Ibrahim was three years old;

Lilik Abdul Hamid was an aircraft maintenance engineer;

Sayyad Milne was 14 years old;

Hamza Mustafa was 16 years old

Khaled Mustafa was a Syrian refugee;

Atta Elayyan was a Kuwaiti-born goalkeeper for New Zealand's national futsal team, the Whites, and recognised as one of New Zealand's most transformative technology and digital leaders in 2017 and 2018;

Tariq Omar was a part-time football coach;

Husna Ahmed was a wife and a mum;

Ashraf Ali was a taxi owner and a Fijian immigrant;

Syed Jahandad Ali was a senior dynamics developer at Intergen;

Mian Naeem Rashid tried to tackle the gunman at the mosque and died of his injuries at Christchurch Hospital;

Talha Rashid was his son;

Farhaj Ahsan was a software engineer with a masters degree in that area;

Syed Areeb Ahmed was a chartered accountant with PricewaterhouseCoopers in Pakistan and was in New Zealand on business;

Shahid Suhail;

Musa Vali Suleman Patel was a visiting Fijian imam visiting his family;

Dr Haroon Mahmood was an economics tutor at Lincoln University;

Haji-Daoud Nabi was an engineering employee and community leader who fled to New Zealand from Afghanistan;

Dr Muhammed Abdusi Samad was a professor at Lincoln University and previously a lecturer at Bangladesh's Agriculture Development Corporation;

Dr Amjad Hamid was a senior medical officer at Hawera Hospital in Taranaki;

Osama Adnan Youssef Kwaik moved from Gaza and was in the process of getting citizenship;

Muse Nur Awale was a marriage celebrant;

Mohsin Al-Harbi worked in water desalination;

Abdukadir Elmi moved from Somalia 10 years ago;

Mohammed Omar Faruk was a welder whose wife is four months pregnant;

Mojammel Hoq was a healthcare worker who planned to return to Bangladesh to start a dental clinic and family;

Hussein Moustafa was from Egypt;

Abdelfattah Qasem immigrated from Palestine in the early 1990s because of the Gulf War and had worked as an IT specialist in Kuwait;

Linda Armstrong moved to Christchurch recently to be closer to her daughter and grandchildren;

Zeeshan Raza was a mechanical engineer;

Ghulam Hussain was visiting his son in New Zealand;

Karam Bibi was the wife of Ghulam Hussain and mother of Zeeshan Raza killed during her visit to her son;

Mohammed Imran Khan was the owner of the local Indian Grill restaurant;

Hussein Al-Umari immigrated from the UAE 20 years ago and worked in the travel industry;

Junaid Ismail owned Springs Road Dairy;

Zakaria Bhuiyan, who is missing and presumed dead, had just moved to start a brand-new job;

Ali Elmadani was a retired engineer;

Kamel Darwish worked in a dairy farm while his family was still in Jordan;

Maheboob Khokhar was a retired manager of a power station and visiting his son in New Zealand for the first time;

Arif Vora was visiting his son and daughter-in-law and meeting his new grandchild;

Ramiz Vora and his wife had their first child the week before the attack;

Ansi Alibava moved to New Zealand from south India a year ago and was studying agriculture at Lincoln University and worked part-time at K-Mart;

Ozair Kadir was a student at the International Aviation Academy of New Zealand who came from India with plans to be a commercial pilot;

Mounir Soliman was an engineer at Scotts Engineering for more than 20 years;

Ahmed Gamaluddin Abdel-Ghany had arrived from Egypt, as had Ashraf El-Moursy Ragheb and Ashraf Masri;

Muhammad Maziq Mohd-Tarmizi, aged 17, was originally from Malaysia;

Mohamad Moosi Mohamedhosen was from Mauritius; and

Mathullah Safi moved from Afghanistan and was working various jobs in Christchurch.

They are all people we would meet and know in our day-to-day lives. We honour them, we mourn them, we are them.

Christchurch, New Zealand - Shooting Tragedy

[6.20 p.m.]

Ms HADDAD (Clark) - Mr Deputy Speaker, it is fitting that I follow Ms O'Byrne, because I also rise to put on record my sincere condolences to the friends and families of all of those were murdered in the horrific terrorist attacks in Christchurch last Friday. I struggled to write this because I do not have the right words to adequately express the enormity of their loss. I doubt any of us do. I fear that such words do not exist. Some things are too gut-wrenching, heart-breaking and despicable for any of us to describe in the narrow confines of our language, but I will say this.

One of the victims who Ms O'Byrne just honoured in her contribution was named Haroon Mahmood. He was the same age as me. His two children were the exact same ages as my two children. I have seen pictures of him standing with his son on a bushwalk just like the photos I post to my Facebook page of my daughters and me on our family bushwalks together in the Tasmanian wilderness. These photos were taken in a part of New Zealand that looked like it could easily be Mount Wellington or Mount Field National Park. Five years ago he and his family moved to Christchurch so he could complete his PhD. Anyone who has ever known a PhD student knows how hard he would have worked over the past five years. He ran classes at the university as so many PhD students do. He helped hundreds of others be the best students that they could be, to get the most they could out of their education.

He had recently finished his thesis, a milestone indeed, and was due to graduate in May. Just last week he and his wife booked tickets to Canada to visit her family. We all know how exciting booking a holiday is and making plans like this. Few people would have been so deserving of such a holiday as Haroon Mahmood, but instead of the chance to take more photos with his family on their trip to Canada he was murdered in the mosque in Christchurch. Instead of being presented with his degree by the university chancellor his wife will receive a death certificate from the coroner. This is the scale of the tragedy we have seen, a sickening crime that stole goodness, kindness, love and justice, and tore families and communities apart. I am just so sorry for everything that has been taken from them and wish everyone affected all the strength and hope in the world for the weeks and months and years to come.

I vividly remember as a young woman, as everybody here would, the absolute shock I felt when the horrific mass shooting was perpetrated at Port Arthur in 1996, and everyone in this Chamber no doubt would have similar memories. Things like that just did not happen here - just how the people of Christchurch are likely feeling today. Over the years since the Port Arthur massacre all of us would have heard stories of those who were first on the scene, who saw, heard and smelt the utter devastation the gunman had wrought. These are not things communities recover from easily or quickly.

I also extend my condolences to all of the people of Christchurch who have already been through so much in recent years. I trust the Government of Australia will do all it can to support you through this difficult time.

Thinking back on 1996 I also remember the swift action the Government took to make sure things like that could not happen again. Because of their political courage, no Tasmanian aged 22 or under has ever woken to such news in their entire life in Australia. This is the way it should be. I put on record my admiration for the strength and clarity shown by the Prime Minister of New Zealand, Jacinda Ardern, and wish her all the best in her efforts to create a similar generation of New Zealanders who never have to wake to such unspeakable horror.

Mr Deputy Speaker, this change is not just about gun laws. There is a role for all of us to play in preventing the spread and legitimisation of the hateful, racist sentiments that fuelled the Christchurch massacre. We could start by turfing out a Prime Minister who in 2011 in a former ministry urged the shadow cabinet to 'capitalise on the community's fears about Muslims in Australia.' Let us be clear about what this means. It means using racism, fear and discrimination for personal political gain. That is the same Prime Minister who only weeks ago endorsed his Home Affairs Minister's vile lies that refugees seeking a better life were paedophiles who would steal hospital beds from Australians.

In Tasmania we could refuse to vote for the Liberals in the Senate. Both Jono Duniam and Eric Abetz voted in favour of Pauline Hanson's infamous 'It's Okay to be White' motion and Senator Duniam shook Fraser Anning's hand after his hideous maiden speech in which he called for a final solution to what he called 'our immigration problem'. It is a disgrace how the most senior members of our federal government and numerous other members of our national parliament have stoked and pandered to the sentiments that they now try to have us believe they condemn.

Last week on ABC radio, Mr Dutton was asked if he took any responsibility for fuelling hate violence through his previous racist language. He denied any link. This morning, Senator Pauline Hanson was interviewed on ABC radio. She was asked if she took responsibility, allowing racist sentiment to inch back in Australia through her decades long campaigning against migration and specifically against Muslim migration. She denied any responsibility and committed to continue to campaign against Muslim migration.

Hate speech leads to hate violence. Hate speech at the highest levels of government and in the highest levels of our national parliament legitimises and authorises hate speech to fester and incubate in our communities day to day.

I end with a call to Tasmanians to do more and to show our federal parliamentarians what we expect of them, to reach out to members of Tasmania's Muslim community, to show them that you stand with them and always will. Visit the mosque. It is a very friendly place. Start volunteering at community organisations who support newly-arrived Tasmanians like learning to drive or adjusting to school life.

Trevallyn Cricket Club - Tribute

[6.27 p.m.]

Ms COURTNEY (Bass - Minister for Resources) - Mr Deputy Speaker, this evening I pay tribute to the past, present and future members of the Trevallyn Cricket Club, a club that I am proud to be patron of and the home of cricket on the hill since 1929.

It was a delight to recently have attended the club's 90th anniversary celebrations at Max Fry Hall. This was a great celebration of cricketing history and recognition of the 812 players past and present who have donned the cap for Trevallyn. The evening was particularly special because it recognised two life members in Ian Clark and Phil Woodforde who received their badges.

Trevallyn Cricket Club has evolved with the Launceston suburb for 90 years and continues to be an important social and cultural hub for hundreds of players and supporters. Along with the nearby Trevallyn Bowls Club, it is an important part of the fabric of that community and it has an enormous amount of local engagement, particularly with the local school nearby.

The early rosters in 1929 showed that the games were played against the Launceston Working Men's Club, the Postal Institute and Coats Patons. Apart from one missing year, club historians have managed to secure every scorebook of every game that has ever been played at Trevallyn which is an extraordinary feat in itself and a window on our history, which brings me to the season that has now been completed.

I congratulate everyone who has played for Trevallyn this season across all divisions. Three sides made the preliminary final and A Reserve made the grand final. On behalf of the club I acknowledge the leaders within the club who make it happen. As all members in this House would recognise, clubs do not happen without an enormous number of volunteers.

To Matthew Cocker as Senior Coach and A Reserve Captain, assisted by Glen Gleeson, to James Whiteley leading the Premier League, Louis Bordin for taking over B Grade, Aaron Parry with C Grade, Charmaine Whyman looking after the successful Women's Cricket and the Boomers. It is wonderful to see the high engagement they have in female participation at this club.

To Glenn Bate and Phil Gregory looking after the Hilltop Hoods Juniors. The committee that is led by President Steve Cocker and ably supported by Vice President, Rob Miller, to Greg Haug the Secretary and Luke Salmon as Treasurer. I cannot praise the dedication of these people enough and the enthusiasm they have for their club and their community.

This past weekend saw club members and volunteers supporting the New Horizons game in a Tasmania versus New South Wales cricket game at the ground. The club normally charge to hire out their ground but this was waived as a gesture of support and many members helped make this day possible. This club looks forward to continuing to support New Horizons and other community projects into the future.

On behalf of the members here, I congratulate the Trevallyn Cricket Club. I look forward to celebrating their century in 10 years' time and hope they will have a few more trophies in the cabinet then.

Campbell Town Primary School - Pedestrian Underpass

[6.30 p.m.]

Ms BUTLER (Lyons) - Mr Deputy Speaker, I wish to talk about an experience I had about a month ago upon the return of school, and I refer to Campbell Town School. I was quite appalled to see young students of about 'this' height, navigating their way across the Midlands Highway, completely supervised by three teachers who were wearing high visibility vests and motioning for

trucks to stop on the Midlands Highway to let these little school children cross. 'Cross' is actually a perfect word for it; that is exactly how I felt watching this.

Both the Leader of the Labor Party, Rebecca White, and I, campaigned heavily in the last election for an underpass under the Midlands Highway which would go directly from Campbell Town Primary School across to the new sports precinct which has millions of dollars being ploughed into it at the moment. It is going to be a fabulous development, but we will still have the same problem where we have primary school children being led across the Midlands Highway by teachers wearing high visibility vests, motioning for trucks to stop. These are air brake trucks and this is not good enough.

I have been waiting on the Government to undertake their commitment to look into the problem of the children having to make this dangerous cross, and also to honour their pledge - which apparently was an election pledge from this Government - to build an underpass and put the interests of those children at the forefront of what they were doing.

Upon a bit of research, I did note that last year this Government announced that they were looking at increasing funding to a stock underpass pilot scheme. What that pilot scheme is, is an underpass but it is for cattle, for animals, and it is very important because we know that the agricultural industry in Tasmania is worth about \$1.5 billion to our economy. It is very important, and we understand that, but so are our children.

The priority is not right there; we need to find a much better balance. We have the students from Campbell Town Primary School with their teachers indicating to trucks to stop while they take the children across the highway, but at the same time, this Government is funding underpasses for cattle as a priority over children. I do not understand. Do the children need to put fur or hides on their back and pretend they are animals for you to build them an underpass? Is that really what is required? It is ridiculous.

Today I am calling on the Government to please put the money into your budget to build this underpass for the students of Campbell Town. We know they certainly want that. We petitioned them, we have signatures from Campbell Town community members, Ross community members, and anyone. Thousands of Tasmanians use that stretch of road every day and it only takes one child to have a momentary lack of concentration and maybe stray from the pack of children that are being held back by a teacher wearing a high visibility vest, or one inattentive driver, or one driver who is highly medicated. You just do not know and you should not be taking risks.

Please - I implore the Government - please build the children of Campbell Town the underpass that you pledged to build in the last election.

Ordinary Seaman Teddy Sheean - Campaign for Recognition as a War Hero

[6.34 p.m.]

Mr BARNETT (Lyons - Minister for Primary Industries) - Mr Deputy Speaker, I wish to update the House on the latest chapter in the long fight to see the extraordinary bravery of Ordinary Seaman, Teddy Sheean, recognised.

As members here would know, I have fought, along with members of the Sheean family and others for more than 16 years to see Teddy, one of Tasmania's best-known war heroes, recognised

with the Victoria Cross. I particularly recognise and thank Garry Ivory, the nephew of Teddy Sheean, for his friendship along this journey.

We have had our ups and downs in the journey and I acknowledge that of the 100 Victoria Cross recipients, not one in the Royal Australian Navy to date.

In Hobart next week the campaign enters one of the most promising phases yet with the Defence Honours and Awards Appeals Tribunal to hold hearings at the Hobart Town Hall on Monday 25 and Tuesday 26 March as part of a merits review of Sheean's case. For the first time in the Teddy Sheean campaign we have a merits review, a review of the facts. That is why I am more hopeful than ever of securing a Victoria Cross for Teddy Sheean.

Sheean's story is well known to most in this place and others. He was born in Latrobe, Tasmania. Sheean joined the Royal Australian Navy in 1941. At just 17 years of age he was allocated to his first ship HMAS *Armidale* in little more than a year. Whilst on a resupply and evacuation mission to Japanese-occupied Timor the *Armidale* was attacked by Japanese aircraft and hit by two aircraft-launched torpedoes. With the ship sinking fast Commander, David Richards, gave the order to abandon ship. Sheean, who had been wounded during the attack, was standing by the side of the ship ready to abandon ship when he saw his crew mates being strafed in the water. Teddy Sheean made his way back to the gun, and wounded, strapped himself into the anti-aircraft gun and was shooting at the attacking aircraft even as the ship was sinking beneath him. He shot down one plane and damaged another, with crew mates seeing tracer bullets rising from the beneath the surface as Sheean was dragged under the water, firing until the end. He died on 1 December 1942, aged 18 years of age. His bravery was recognised at the time with being mentioned in dispatches.

I first learned of Teddy Sheean's bravery in 2003, thanks to Garry Ivory 16 years ago. We have campaigned with the family and with the support of RSL Tasmania and many others ever since. These campaigns have resulted in an inquiry into the unresolved recognition of past acts of naval and military gallantry by the Defence Honours and Awards Tribunal in 2010. The tribunal delivered its report in 2013, advising that none of the 13 individuals whose actions and recognition were reviewed, including Sheean, would receive a posthumous Victoria Cross or any change to their award.

There were petitions, including those lodged in this place, 4271 signatures calling for Sheean's courage to be appropriately recognised, tabled in 2015 by myself. It was one of the largest petitions in 2015. It is of note that a similar case to Sheean's occurred elsewhere during World War II. A British sailor, Jack Mantle, stood at his gun on the HMS *Foylebank* whilst under attack by German bombers. Mantle was injured and later died of his injuries. He was subsequently awarded a posthumous Victoria Cross for actions very similar to Sheean's.

Furthermore, Commander Richards of the HMAS *Armidale* gave a commendation to Teddy Sheean's bravery to the British Admiralty in 1942, but no action was ever taken. I wrote a request to the British Admiralty for a review of the decision in 2017, but was unsuccessful. I wrote to Prince Harry; I wrote to Prince Charles. I wrote to the then Chief of Navy, Vice Admiral Tim Barrett in August 2017 to review Sheean's eligibility for a higher honour on the basis of new evidence received from Sheean's last surviving shipmate, Ray Leonard, but to no avail.

In July 2018 the current Chief of Navy, Vice Admiral Noonan, advised that he considered that there was no evidence to merit the referral of Sheean's matter to the tribunal for consideration.

Following discussion with the federal Minister for Veterans' Affairs, the honourable Darren Chester MP, I received advice that the decision made by Vice Admiral Noonan could be referred to the Defence Honours and Awards Appeals Tribunal under the Defence Act 1903. I made that application to the tribunal in October last year. On 14 November 2018 I was advised by the tribunal that it accepted my application and that a review would be conducted in accordance with the act.

Hence the tribunal has since advised that the public hearing is next week. As the applicant, I will be appearing and will be able to question the Department of Defence, represented by the Royal Australian Navy. There will be many other witnesses there as well. As part of the tribunal process, being the merits-based review, Sheean's actions will be re-examined. This is giving hope.

Sadly, and disappointingly, the Royal Australian Navy has said no change to the status quo in its submission. That is disappointing and I strongly disagree with their position.

Tonight, I take the opportunity to table in this place my application to the Department of Defence, and the response from the Department of Defence through the Royal Australian Navy. I have received other letters of support as well.

Sheean is currently remembered through the naming of the submarine, HMAS *Sheean*, in the Royal Australian Navy, which is fantastic. In 2013, the tribunal recommended that the name Sheean be used in perpetuity for naming future Australian Navy vessels, a high honour indeed for an ordinary seaman. He is remembered in the song 'Forever Eighteen' by Lee Kernaghan and in the painting by Dale Marsh, the heroic piece that hangs in the Australian War Memorial. He is remembered through the Teddy Sheean Memorial Grants offered by the Tasmanian Government and through other memorials.

The time has come for Teddy Sheean to be recognised. I will be pleased to be representing the Hodgman Liberal Government next week.

I acknowledge and thank the Labor Party, the Greens and my own Government for their support.

Time expired.

Christchurch, New Zealand - Shooting Tragedy

Harmony Week

[6.41 p.m.]

Mrs PETRUSMA (Franklin - Minister for Disability Services and Community Development) - Mr Deputy Speaker, like all members of this House I was shocked and horrified by the events that unfolded in New Zealand last week. I place on the record my deepest condolences, thoughts and prayers to those in New Zealand who have lost loved ones, families, friends, colleagues and fellow worshippers in last week's senseless attack on people who were only peacefully participating in religious observance. I give my support, prayers, thoughts and condolences to the Tasmanian Muslim and multicultural community as well as the wider Tasmanian community as we all come to terms with this tragedy.

Tasmanians all too well understand how difficult it is for the people of Christchurch at this time. What we know and have learnt is that there is no place in our community for the hatred and intolerance that has bred this barbaric act of terrorism. Therefore, we condemn in the strongest possible terms and we are united in our respect for diversity and the right to live our lives free from hatred and fear.

As minister responsible for multicultural affairs, but most importantly as a proud Tasmanian, I passionately support the principles of diversity and therefore multiculturalism for the tremendous good it brings to the world and to Tasmania. Tasmania is a multicultural state. We are a dynamic, vibrant and inclusive community with such a great and wide diversity of cultures, traditions, backgrounds, languages, faiths and religions. Therefore, this week more than ever, we need to celebrate and welcome diversity in our community and show that harmony in Tasmania is stronger than evil.

This week is Harmony Week, a week of celebrations which includes Harmony Day tomorrow, Thursday 21 March. It is the same day as the United Nations International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination. Harmony Day was first celebrated in Australia in 1999. Today, 20 years later, Harmony Day and Harmony Week have grown to become a uniting and much valued opportunity for Australians to come together and celebrate our cultural diversity.

The colour orange has been chosen to represent Harmony Day. Traditionally, orange signifies social communication and meaningful conversation. It also relates to the freedom of ideas and encouragement of mutual respect. It is also fitting that the theme for Harmony Week is 'everyone belongs'. It is in all of our interest to build a Tasmania that is harmonious, inclusive and a respectful place to live, where people from every corner of the world can belong, contribute, achieve and succeed together.

Australia today is one of the most successful multicultural countries in the world. We in Tasmania are fortunate to be part of that story. According to the 2016 ABS Census, more than 61 200 Tasmanians, or over 12 per cent of our population, were born overseas. Tasmanians come from 177 different countries with 159 identified languages spoken in Tasmanian homes. This wonderful diversity contributes to Tasmania's success as a multicultural community. It brings with it exciting economic and social benefits that enhance every aspect of Tasmanians' day-to-day lives. Every day Tasmanians benefit from the skills, knowledge, experiences, innovation, job creation and personal contributions of our culturally, linguistically and religiously diverse community.

There is no doubt that Tasmania is a much richer place to live, work, study and raise children because of the diversity today of its people. The Tasmanian Government therefore passionately wants to support, strengthen and continue our island's multicultural success and to enable a Tasmania that is a very welcoming, inclusive, respectful and harmonious place to live.

I especially thank the Multicultural Council of Tasmania and staff from the government agencies, as well as all the many other multicultural communities, councils and organisations that have helped organise, coordinate and hold events in Harmony Week 2019. Through their combined efforts a large number of sensational events are being held right across Tasmania this week which will promote unity, understanding and respect for all individuals who call Tasmania home. Lastly, I wish all a happy and blessed Harmony Week and a blessed and happy Harmony Day tomorrow.

Ambulance Coverage - East Coast

[6.46 p.m.]

Ms WHITE (Lyons - Leader of the Opposition) - Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise tonight to raise concerns about ambulance coverage on the east coast of Tasmania. These concerns have been brought to my attention by members of the volunteer ambulance service as well as the mayor and members of the Freycinet Association Incorporated.

I have had it brought to my attention that the paramedic who has been working out of Bicheno is due to cease in that position at the end of this week and that there will be no coverage for the east coast once that occurs. Members would be aware that there is a branch station office at Triabunna, Campbelltown and Oatlands and there is also a service delivered from Scamander, but there is limited coverage across the east coast. The Coles Bay service has heavily relied upon volunteers, which because of a lack of access to training and other reasons, the volunteers who have typically staffed that service are not able to. I want to draw this to the attention of the Government because the east coast region has a number of permanent residents as well as visitors who frequent there and they require an emergency service response.

The Freycinet Association in its letter to the mayor and me has raised concern about the fact that the Coles Bay station will be offline a significant amount of the time between May to October, with the only volunteers in Coles Bay during that time being a level 3 on maternity leave and three trainees with little or no experience and therefore unable to attend cases without the level 3. As the paramedic from Bicheno will cease to provide that service from the end of this week, they are concerned about the lack of coverage, as am I.

Coles Bay is a very popular place. Just to put it in context for people, the distance that will need to be covered is about 100 kilometres from Campbell Town or Triabunna, and from Scamander it is about 70 kilometres to get to Coles Bay. It is not close or easy to access in a timely fashion and that is why the paramedic being stationed at Bicheno is really important.

I urge the Government to continue to provide services on the east coast. I understand from correspondence that I have seen the mayor provide to the Freycinet Association that she has had an assurance that the Tasmanian Government has allocated funding for a paramedic to be permanently based in Bicheno in the 2019-20 financial year without any indication of a specific time frame. Nonetheless, from the end of this week until the new financial year there will be a lack of coverage for the east coast of Tasmania for ambulance services and that is incredibly concerning, particularly given the health needs of that community and the fact that data provided to me by the Freycinet Association shows there were approximately 50 ambulance calls to people in Coles Bay alone since October. That does not include areas that would have been covered by that paramedic from Bicheno. This is just from Coles Bay. The loss of that service has made that community very concerned.

I commend the mayor for the work that she has done working with the Government to get commitment to ensure that not only is there coverage but there is equipment and infrastructure made available to support the people on the east coast with a station and relevant ambulance trucks, but it does leave a gap and I bring that to the attention of the House and the minister and ask that that gap be filled in the interim between the period of the end of this week and the new financial year before the new service begins.

Christchurch, New Zealand - Shooting Tragedy
Campbell Town Primary School - Pedestrian Underpass
Traffic Management Association of Australia

[6.50 p.m.]

Mr ROCKLIFF (Braddon - Minister for Education and Training) - Mr Deputy Speaker, first, I commend the Premier, the Leader of the Opposition and the Leader of the Tasmanian Greens for their contributions yesterday with respect to the horrific circumstances in Christchurch, and I commend minister Jacqui Petrusma for the words she gave to this House.

Last time I was in Christchurch was in November 2015 and I was being briefed on the recovery from the earthquake. Many New Zealanders lost their lives in that tragedy as well. I have some links to Christchurch. My mum grew up in Christchurch and studied to be a nurse there. She is a Kiwi so I am half-Kiwi. I spent two years living in Christchurch at Lincoln University. I also want to give my prayers, thoughts, condolences and support to those affected right throughout New Zealand and to the Muslim community, not only in Christchurch and wider New Zealand but as our minister said, the Tasmanian Muslim and multicultural community and the wider community as we all come to terms with what clearly has been an horrific tragedy. I agree with Mrs Petrusma that there is no place in our community for hatred, prejudice and intolerance and we need to stand up to it wherever we see it and condemn it in the strongest possible terms.

I raise a couple of other issues with respect to my portfolio. I was not able to listen to all the contribution of the member for Lyons, Ms Butler, but I will read it in *Hansard* with respect to the pedestrian facilities at Campbell Town. The Northern Midlands Council has commenced upgrades to the Campbell Town regional recreational facilities located across the Midland Highway from the school, hospital and residential area. We committed \$1.5 million during last year's state election to improve pedestrian access to the facilities.

The Department of State Growth has had an initial meeting with the Northern Midlands Council regarding pedestrian access across the highway. The department met with other key stakeholders including the school this afternoon, 20 March 2019, at Campbell Town, prior to finalising a project brief for the design and provision of pedestrian facilities. The brief will look at all options - overpass and underpass - and all options will be considered. That work is well and truly underway and I look forward to updating the House at another time and am happy to brief Ms Butler on the progress.

On Monday night it was terrific to catch up for dinner with the Tasmanian members of the Traffic Management Association of Australia at their awards ceremony. It was a small but very dedicated group of professional people whose aim is to recognise the hard work of those who keep us safe around roadworks and provide temporary traffic management on civil construction sites.

The Tasmanian division members include these companies - Altas Traffic, Australian Traffic Control, Stornoway, Traffic Dynamix, Spectran and Viatic Traffic Solutions.

My thanks to Jake Vlasveld from ATC Traffic who welcomed us and introduced the keynote speaker for the night, Dr Dan Sullivan, who was running a national traffic management safety project and provided inspiring personal and professional insights.

The TMAA (Tas) is the voice of the industry in Tasmania and, later that night, during dinner, I was pleased to announce the Tasmanian finalists for the traffic controller of the year awards and Mr Zak Sall from Stornoway. As TMAA (Tas) finalist, Zak will travel to Melbourne next month

to compete for the title of Traffic Controller of the Year 2019. Zak said he will continue to drive safety in traffic control and in the next five years his goal is to head up a major traffic management business with the latest innovations and safety procedures to keep his people and the public safe. Congratulations to Zak and the other nominees, Bernie Doyle and El Platt, and to all members of the TMAA in Tasmania.

My thanks also to Camille O'Meara from Stornoway who was also the national secretary of TMAA. Camille is providing great leadership nationally and locally in the civil construction industry. Camille did a great job putting the event together and being MC for the night. I very much appreciated the invitation to be involved and say a few words. Thanks also to Kennards Hire for their support of the event.

The most important message here is - remember, your speed is their safety - so please slow down for roadworkers.

Climate Change - Student Rally

[6.57 p.m.]

Dr WOODRUFF (Franklin) - Mr Deputy Speaker, I pay tribute to the 8000 students who were estimated to have flooded the lawns of Parliament House and marched around the streets of Hobart last Friday. This was a truly momentous occasion, probably the largest march that has ever been seen in Hobart and they joined together with approximately 1.5 million children from around the world in 2233 different cities, over 128 countries. Every country in the world was represented in some form.

I do not think I saw you there, Mr Deputy Speaker, but what this display was, and it is hard to describe the absolute enormity, the waves of young people from primary school to high school to young adults. About 90 per cent of the people were children, about 10 per cent were adults. The energy of the young people was incredible, their passion and their incredible, clear words. They know what they want and what they want is leadership from politicians. They want action from politicians. They want the people who have the ability to change the way we do things, to change and dramatically bring down our carbon emissions. They want us to act.

I want to share some of their beautiful signs, because children can be so humorous and playful and they used their words. I saw a sea of signs - Losing Nemo: One the year's best disaster films; Denial is not a Policy; There is no Planet B; Time is running out; Wake up to the climate crisis; We cannot drink oil and we cannot breathe money; Santa: Homeless by 2021; The oceans are rising and so are we; Scott Morrison, you are three times our age and three times as naïve, and a special message to the minister for Education: I am sorry I cannot do my homework, I am too busy saving the planet.

Mr Deputy Speaker, those children learnt so much more by striking and meeting with other children and sharing their collective energy. They are getting positive action and support in communing with other children than they would ever have achieved by staying in the classroom that afternoon. Children, thinking children, children who look at what is happening in the world and who read social media, understand the planet is in a very dark place; time is running out, so is the time for action.

We have been given just 11 years to take dramatic action on carbon dioxide emissions. Thanks to Greta Thunberg, a 16-year-old girl in Sweden. This is where it all started. She has been nominated for a Nobel Peace Prize. Her action alone has started this global movement because if adults will not act, children will force us to. There are solutions there; there are things we can do. It is not an insolvable problem. I, and the rest of the Greens, will spend every day we are in parliament talking about this until action happens.

Time expired.

The House adjourned at 7 p.m.