



PARLIAMENT OF TASMANIA

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

REPORT OF DEBATES

Tuesday 25 October 2022

REVISED EDITION

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Tuesday 25 October 2022

The President, **Mr Farrell**, took the Chair at 11 a.m., acknowledged the Traditional People and read Prayers.

MATTER OF PUBLIC IMPORTANCE

Cam River Bridge - Impact of Damage

[11.01 a.m.]

Ms FORREST (Murchison) - Mr President, I move -

That the Council does now adjourn for the purpose of discussing a matter of public importance, namely the circumstances surrounding the recent damage to the Cam River Bridge at Somerset and the resulting major delays to travel as the result of the reduction to one lane of traffic, the concerns around the integrity of the bridge and the need for a reliable alternative route.

Mr PRESIDENT - In accordance with standing order 32(3)(d) at least three members should rise in their seats to support the motion.

The member can proceed.

Ms FORREST (Murchison) - Thank you, Mr President. I thank members for their support. In raising this matter of public importance, I wish to acknowledge there are many people around Australia, predominantly in parts of Victoria, New South Wales and here in Tasmania who have been severely impacted by the recent floods. My thoughts are with those who have lost homes, motor vehicles and, sadly, for some their lives have been lost as a result of this tragic and extreme weather event.

This highlights why the bill we will be dealing with later this week is very important but not as important as getting on with addressing the very real threat that climate change is to the future of this planet. I also note the work being done under challenging circumstances by divers in a river still swollen from floodwaters in a strong tidal river mouth working on site, through assessing the bridge damage, framing the formwork and pouring the concrete to shore up the Cam River Bridge.

Also, I acknowledge the work of those traffic controllers controlling traffic in the wind and rain. It is not a pleasant job and none of them deserve to be abused by drivers. I make that point. I have urged people through my social media to be respectful and kind to those doing the best they can in challenging circumstances. We need more traffic controllers. There are too many intersections that need controlling for the staff available and as I will get to further in my contribution, the whole of Somerset has been gridlocked two mornings in a row, completely gridlocked. The peak times are not just 8 a.m. until 9 a.m. It is from 7 a.m. until 10.30 a.m. every morning on the western side and 2.30 p.m. until 6.30 p.m. on the eastern side in the afternoon.

Before I describe the real challenges we currently face on the north-west coast, I will inform members where the Cam River and the bridge I am referring to are located and then describe why this is such a problem.

The Cam River Estuary is located in Somerset, roughly halfway between the townships of Wynyard and Burnie. The northern part of the Cam River forms part of the boundary to the City of Burnie and Waratah/Wynyard local government areas. The Cam River Bridge crosses the mouth of the river and forms a critical link to all communities to the west of Burnie and the rest of Tasmania - or west of the Cam, actually.

The mouth of the Cam River has very strong tidal movements and is in quite a dangerous area. We have, sadly, seen drownings in the past and many people needing to be rescued because it is such a very dynamic river mouth. For many years there have been calls from members of our community and members of local government to build another reliable crossing - a duplication of the existing bridge - to ensure this critical link cannot be disrupted due to the volume of traffic that uses this single bridge daily.

I will specifically speak about the significant impact the damage to the Cam River Bridge is causing the whole north-west coast, particularly west of Penguin. A population of about 4300 people regularly use the bridge, some many times per day, and this does not include all the traffic coming into the region, such as health professionals, teachers, disability workers, essential supplies deliveries, et cetera.

This would not be such a major issue, but for the wait to cross the one lane that currently remains open on the damaged bridge. On the other lane, there is a visible sag in the bridge pavement and the concrete is cracked. The damage is readily observable as you drive past. There have been up to three-hour delays each way, with traffic backed up at the eastern end to McDonalds in Burnie, and about seven-and-a-half kilometres and similar distances to the west. I will come to what happened yesterday and again today.

Clearly, many residents are very concerned about the structural integrity of the bridge, as concrete is not generally a flexible material. The other very significant issue is the availability, or lack thereof, of an alternate route to get around the bridge, noting the trip on the road on the west of the Cam to the road on the east of the Cam is less than five minutes drive. It will take at least one hour and 40 minutes to do this alternate route without any traffic on the road, and this includes going through Hellyer Gorge - not an easy drive, as it is often very slow and winding; there are few, if any, overtaking opportunities; and it is not suitable for large, heavy vehicles.

At night, there is a large amount of wildlife on the road and thus travel speed is reduced significantly. Last time I drove through in the night, I could not go any faster than 50 kilometres per hour at most. To give members some context, I have provided you all with some comparable examples, if major infrastructure damage occurred in major centres and required a similar diversion. I have provided examples around Hobart and Launceston. They are the distances and types of road, perhaps not as windy in some cases, that people in your areas would have to drive to do the same sort of detour.

You will note that, from Hobart, you would have to drive up over the Bridgewater Bridge, up to Melton Mowbray, across and come down the road down through Mud Walls, and cross the Tasman Bridge. If you were going down toward Franklin, you would see the route there

that has been mapped out. I thank my constituent, who proactively did this. I was thinking, 'I must do this for myself' - and suddenly, there it was, my constituent sent it to me.

Around Launceston, you would have to go out through Invermay, up through Lilydale, Lebrina, out to Scottsdale, and then back down through Springfield, Patersonia, and Nunamara. The member for McIntyre knows exactly how far that is and how long it takes.

Ms Rattray - A long time.

Ms FORREST - Launceston, down to Campbell Town, and then back inland through Cressy. That is the sort of bypass we are talking about, because there is no other bridge. Some of the heavy vehicles, including milk tankers, cannot safely use the alternate route, particularly as it has also suffered flood damage. There is a big washout on the road on Hellyer Gorge that I drove past on the weekend before last, just after that rain had occurred. That washout is as you are heading north down to the river, on the left-hand side of the road as you are going down. You cannot see it when you are coming down, so for any vehicles coming down, that is a very patchy bit of road that has been undermined. It has been marked out with witches hats, but again, it reduces the area of that road to one lane.

Mr President, this has been a crisis for my community. They have needed regular, accurate, and timely updates on the reality of the situation, as many people have been held up in queues for over two hours, initially with no detail available. That is improving now, and I thank all the people who have been providing accurate information. I have been seeking to ensure the communication was contemporary and responsive to questions being asked, respectful of people's ideas and solutions in a similar way that was required during the COVID-19 outbreak in north-west Tasmania. That is the level of activity this crisis has created in the north-west for people.

Many locals have been feeling vulnerable and uncertain: women who are pregnant and are due to give birth who live on the west side of the Cam River; those needing daily cancer treatment who live on the west side of the Cam River; those relying on disability support where their care providers live on the opposite of the river - whichever side that is; those health professionals whose workplace is the opposite side of the river; those with perishable goods from west of the river, such as milk. There is total reliance on this bridge to get thousands of dollars worth of produce out of Circular Head and Waratah/Wynyard regions, provide food and other products such as wood to end users and other external markets. These people are all very concerned. All needed much more and much clearer information and advice than was being initially provided.

Many businesses along the river have also been significantly impacted. Those who have driven along here might know of Young's Vegie Shed on the highway, on the eastern side of the bridge. It is always busy. I shop a lot there myself. The owner rang me yesterday to say they are probably going to throw out a whole heap of fresh produce as it is going to be wasted because people are not stopping. People do not want to get out of the queue because, sadly, people are not letting others back into the queue very readily.

He is also made the offer of having portaloos in his car park because there are no toilets on this side of the bridge. On the Somerset side, the Ampol service station has offered the use of their toilets for anyone who is held up in the line but that means having to get out of the line to go to it. It is on the opposite side of the road driving in and it is not recommended people

either stop in the line or pop over to the service station - you are crossing a major road or if you can pull off to the side, you still have to cross the road to go to the toilet. However, I understand how vital this is for families with children who cannot wait; often older people; and those with other urinary or bowel challenges. This is a very real problem for so many people.

Communication has improved of late, but almost all north-west road users know that the government and the state Government absolutely did not understand or appreciate the actual volume of traffic and traffic tasks this critical link relies on.

The minister was soon to withdraw his position from State Growth - one can only assume Hobart-based people - and this is what he told me on Friday when we were planning for the following week, this week:

The maximum wait time of 30 minutes could be expected at peak times on Monday.

I am not sure who told him that or why they would possibly say that when all evidence pointed to a maximum wait time of probably two-and-a-half hours during peak time. That was what the experience was on Friday. I had school bus operators contacting me with that very story - bus loads full of kids, two hours plus, waiting in line to get across the bridge and also normal commuters.

I encourage members if they want to look at Google Maps during the peak time. I had a look just before I came in for the debate here now and the congestion has eased, but you can follow that on Google Maps and see how far back the traffic is backed up. This is not just on the Bass Highway, you can see all of the streets in Somerset. That really impacts the residents who live there who do not even want to cross the bridge as they cannot even get out to go the other way easily.

Yesterday, vehicles were backed up to Wynyard on the eastern side during this period with the peak travel time commencing from 7.30 a.m. to 8 o'clock - a much longer peak time than the Government had anticipated. Vehicles, trucks and others were still backed up to the Wynyard turn-off near Doctors Rocks and further back at 10.30 a.m. That is how long it was taking to clear. Still that far back.

Mr Gaffney - Even people who do not want to go across the bridge, they cannot get to where they want on that side because they are blocked.

Ms FORREST - Yes, they are blocked, and we are urging people to keep well to the left so emergency vehicles can get through. That still does not mean that if I wanted to go into Somerset to shop I should nick through there in case an emergency vehicle is coming the other way. When I crossed this last weekend, on my way here, an emergency vehicle - an ambulance - did come through with lights and sirens. They had priority access as they should, but it just means you cannot have people pulling out to even just turn across.

Mr Gaffney - Even people who have childcare services on one side, trying to get your children across to there is not possible.

Ms FORREST - They are working on the other side. I will come to a couple of those, a brief couple of stories. It is very disruptive.

As I said, the whole of Summerset became gridlocked this day and again today, this morning, with traffic being diverted off the Murchison Highway. The Murchison Highway brings traffic down from Yolla, Elliott, down the west side of the Cam River. Depending on which way they are going, whether they are going west into Wynyard or going right east in Burnie, they cross the Cam. All the traffic that was being diverted there, even traffic going west, not wanting to cross the bridge, has been backed up. They diverted them off the Murchison to allow a priority route for buses, and that is an excellent idea. They have diverted them across Back Cam Road, down Bread Butter Hill, into Falmouth Street, which is where the traffic lights are at the bottom quite close to the bridge, and it was gridlocked all the way back to and including up the Murchison Highway.

That is how far it was backed up. Which meant Pelissier Street coming in from the west, Wragg Street and every other street coming in from there was gridlocked. People sat in the queue for an hour and did not move an inch. Some people told me they moved two car lengths in that time. Some of them were just trying to get to Somerset.

The main reason I can determine this seemed to have failed to alleviate the problem - the absolutely essential and bright idea of the Government to create a priority route for buses. The police had to drag the buses through, or make way for the buses to be pulled through from the west to get the schoolkids to school. They took them through a priority route through the town, effectively, through the town of Somerset, and they had to across Falmouth Street, which is gridlocked to the extreme, and they had to turn right into Falmouth, and back into Wragg Street to get out to the Murchison Highway to get priority over the bridge.

The reason it was not working is because we had no people controlling the traffic. At the Falmouth Street intersection with Bass Highway where the traffic lights are, they were initially relying on the traffic lights. That was never going to work. The minister also identified this as a challenge when he was up there on the weekend. However, we also needed traffic control where the buses had to cross Falmouth Street. There was no-one there. I have pictures of all this, my constituents who live in the area were taking photos and sending them to me. It is all an accurate representation. This is not an exaggeration. This is the reality.

I understand there were eight traffic controllers put on into the system there. That is nowhere near enough. They were only intermittently there from time to time. This morning, I was told there was a traffic controller on the Falmouth Street and Bass Highway intersection where the traffic lights are, at about seven. They were not there at eight. The traffic cleared a bit while they were there, managing the traffic from Falmouth Street, but why were they not there at eight?

I sent these messages to the minister about this, saying this is actually what is happening. He indicated in his messages to me that they are there. I said well, these people who are reporting this to me are not lying. They are not people exaggerating, they are people who are actually experiencing this. We need more traffic controllers there until this bridge is open on both lanes. Even then, I accept it will be quite slow, but most of us are used to the 'Cooee crawl' as we affectionately call it.

Mr President, I did contact the minister yesterday and again today to report what my eyes on the ground were telling me - and there were plenty of them - and I understand action was taken to make sure there were traffic controllers put in place but there were just not enough. There are not enough on enough intersections.

I sincerely thank my constituents for being very proactive and trying to find solutions to the problems, real and workable solutions, many of which I have passed along to the minister. I know that they are being considered. Some of them do not work for a variety of other reasons beyond the immediate but we need all heads thinking here.

Another matter that does require local knowledge and intel that I did think would not need to be stated is the understanding of traffic flows at different times of the day. It should come as no surprise to anyone that there is a greater volume of traffic travelling east toward Burnie in the morning and travelling west towards Wynyard in the afternoon. There is going to be traffic going each way, all day every day. Logic would tell you - and anyone who has experienced the Cooee crawl could tell you - that is how it works. It is really slow in the morning going east and very slow in the afternoon and evening going west. The Cooee crawl is a pinch point in our road there. This happens in normal everyday conditions.

It seems this has not been understood as we have significantly lower traffic build-up on the eastern side of the bridge to the west. There are heaps more, right back to Wynyard, and nowhere near as much on the eastern side of the bridge. The minister suggested to me this has been corrected. It has not. I have had people saying that they are counting the cars that are being let through. You need to let far more cars through in the morning travelling east than you do travelling west to try to ease that congestion and try to free up Somerset a bit, and the opposite way around in the afternoon.

I appreciate the need for accurate and consistent advice, but in the absence of frequent communication from those in charge, rumours abound and fear and uncertainty can be exacerbated. It is important that we have factual and accurate information going out there. Sadly, sometimes a rumour gets away and it takes a while to damp it down. I was told by many people on Friday that the bridge was going to close at 10 p.m. and that was it. I did contact the minister and say, I am sure this is not right, can you confirm? He did, straightaway, which I appreciated. Then I had to check in all the places it had been said, to say no, it is not, you will still be able to get through. This is what happens.

During this time, I have been working very closely with the community, informing the relevant ministers of the reality on the ground. Some of their advice from those I assume outside the region has been fundamentally wrong. I have had to call them again to correct the information they have received and pass on suggestions and the reality of the situation. Just two examples, to see how frustrating this has been. The minister, Mr Ferguson, assured me on Friday that the department had told him that there would be a maximum of a 30-minute wait to cross the bridge at peak times. Peak times being weekdays and one would assume that he was considering that to be about 7.30 a.m. until 9 a.m. with just the workers going to work and the schoolkids and again at 2.30 p.m. to 6 p.m., predominantly workers, heavy vehicles and school children travelling in opposite directions.

This was so far from the lived experienced of most commuters on Friday and it has been again on Monday and today. It was much more than half an hour for most commuters on Saturday and Sunday. I admit that the Burnie Ten was on Sunday and that would have added to the problem.

Mr Gaffney - It would have been faster to walk.

Ms FORREST - Some people did. Some people ended up leaving their cars in Somerset and running to school across the bridge and to Burnie High and places like that but you cannot do that with primary school kids.

This was so far from the lived experience for most commuters. Very early in the day and quite late at night, wait times are indeed far less, with some people only waiting a matter of a few minutes. However, the suggestion of a 30-minute wait at peak time was far from reality. That has since been revised to 45 minutes. The lived reality is far from that. I had calls from school bus operators sitting in the queues for over 2.5 hours with a bus load of children. I have had many messages across these days, of 2-3 hour waits at peak times. Even on a Saturday, a non-peak day at midday, it took me exactly one hour to get through. Once I joined the queue, an hour to get through. For those who know the area, I joined the queue near the Austins Caravans area.

My constituents are regularly updating me with travel times. It is patently clear that the peak times are not limited to a couple of hours in the morning and afternoon/evening. Even at midday, vehicles were still being backed up for kilometres and wait times of over an hour were common through until after 6 p.m. and significantly later. Even with the revised advice stating expected delays of 45 minutes during peak time, that is clearly fundamentally well short of the reality. This is what upsets north-west coasters: advice coming out of Hobart with no actual awareness of the reality.

The second example I will give you is when I called the minister, Mr Jaensch. Mr Jaensch had been on the mainland at the Environment Ministers Meeting, and I knew that. I called him to discuss some matters that were raised relating to access to education, especially for Year 10, 11 and 12 students. Year 10 students at Burnie High are having exams this week and the Year 11 and 12 students going to Hellyer College and Marist College have final preparations for exams this week, a really important period. These are the kids who have been severely impacted by COVID-19 interruptions and the Year 11 and 12 students have exams starting soon. There were also some issues raised that younger children needed to be on buses for up to three hours and not able to get home at a reasonable hour.

Mr Jaensch listened and agreed we need to address this but then he said - this is on Friday last week - 'Well, it hasn't been a problem today. Friday has been a pupil-free day'. I could not believe this was the advice I was getting from him. I assumed it would have had to have come from Hobart and his advisers down here because I informed him that yes, indeed, it might have been a pupil-free day in Hobart after the Hobart Show, it sure as hell was not on the north-west coast. Why am I telling you there are buses full of schoolkids two hours in the line and it is Friday? This is what upsets the north-west coasters. You can only imagine that my head just about blew off at that point. It certainly was not a pupil-free day on Friday on the north-west coast.

Even with the recent advice, 45 minutes, we need to be realistic about that and tell people the truth. It is likely to take them two hours in peak hour, at least, to get over the bridge and if they want to take the alternative route through Hellyer Gorge, it will take about that time as well, a much harder drive and some of them simply do not have the money for the fuel to pay for it. If you think about how much fuel they will use to go up and down that road every day for a week, some of these people do not have the money to pay for it.

One other thing I will talk about with people giving advice from afar, I had a message this morning from a nurse who lives west of the Cam River who works at the North West Regional Hospital and she contacted the Australian Nursing and Midwifery Federation (ANMF) - I assume they were in Launceston - and she was asking what rights nurses have if they need leave. They suggested that she ask to work at the Mersey Community Hospital instead of the North West Regional Hospital.

Mr Gaffney - Hopeless.

Ms FORREST - Correct.

Ms Webb - That is Launceston.

Ms FORREST - Correct. This is why I bang on about people understanding some of the very real challenges we have in our regions - and I know the member for McIntyre would not disagree with some of this in this absolute separation of reality between our regions, my electorate and Hobart where some of these decisions are made.

In light of these at times unhelpful and inaccurate assessments, I have continually sought to correct misunderstandings and provide accurate updates to my community and to the minister and the Premier and the relevant ministers. We do need to work collaboratively. I have had a proactive working relationship during this time with both the Burnie City Council and the Waratah-Wynyard Council mayors and general managers, even to the point of them having their engineers ring me to update me on matters related to potential alternative routes.

I have been proactive in talking to some of the other landowners whose properties may need to be accessed if the bridge does not survive the repairs. The concrete was poured last night around the pier that was damaged. I do not know if they are going to try to prop up the dip in the bridge. It is visible and obvious when you drive over it, but they have to stress test it and wait. B-doubles go over this, as well as fully loaded milk tankers and busloads of children. We are hopeful that we do not need to close it, but if we have significant heavy rain, which thankfully has not come yet, that could cause further damage. As I said, it is a very dynamic river mouth, with very strong currents.

As for the works on the new bridge that is there to replace it - I do not want to hear from the Leader about the great work the Government is doing on building a new bridge and we can just get over it. I want to hear about how we are going to look to this in the future as well, if the Leader chooses to speak on this MPI.

I have been talking to some private landowners about where the alternative routes could go that would not take the whole time to get around the Hellyer Gorge, that might be a little bit less challenging and save a bit of fuel, if we have to. We cannot wait until it happens. We have to have a plan in place.

Mr President, the reason I was particularly talking to the Burnie City Council and Waratah-Wynyard Council mayors and GMs over the weekend was to understand the damage of Oonah Road. Oonah Road is another link that is not so far back. It is also a narrow and windy road, and has had significant flood damage too, and significant landslips in the area. I was asking the GMs, can that be promptly repaired? There was so much damage, and with the rain continuing the engineers could not fully get in there. I understand the engineers have

now been in. It will take a major rebuild of that section of the road. It is not an option in the short term either, and it is possibly not suitable for heavy vehicles because it is a winding, country road.

I have been grateful for the local government representatives in communicating very freely with that. I asked the Minister for Infrastructure and Transport if money could be made available from the state to assist, so that the road could be repaired in a fairly timely manner. I understand that has been committed, if it is possible. That is a positive thing, too. I appreciate that. That is what we have a Treasurer's Reserve for, after all.

Mr Gaffney - Is there any federal funding? It would get federal funding for -

Ms FORREST - Not for the Oonah Road and repairing Oonah Road more quickly. That is a local government road. The federal funding is part of the Bass Highway, absolutely.

Mr Gaffney - Do you know if they have been helpful?

Ms FORREST - It was the Premier who told me there had been discussions with federal ministers and also with the Prime Minister, because he was in the state last week.

I am very grateful for the information that has been provided by them. It has been more difficult to get a truly proactive response without state government representatives questioning everything I am saying. It seems that I am saying, 'this is what is actually happening on the ground', and they are saying 'well no, that is not right, because we have said people are there'. I had a much better approach from the previous premier during COVID-19. He was very respectful and listened, and responded, and was not disbelieving what was being told to him. We need that approach now - to believe what people are being told, and look for real solutions to try to free up the traffic issue here.

The member for Mersey has alluded to some of the specific challenges being experienced. I will relate a small number of personal challenges that people are facing, so those listening and the other members can appreciate the real challenges facing the roughly 43 000 people who live in this area.

I had a phone call from a grandmother who is a carer for her brother. She lives in Ocean Vista on the eastern side of the bridge. Her daughter lives in Wynyard, with her children and family. Her daughter works at Toyota in Burnie, or in Cooe, which is just over the bridge. She has to start work at eight. She takes her children to her mother's place in Ocean Vista so she can be at work at eight, because there is nobody else to look after the children in Wynyard. The children, naturally, go to Wynyard, because they live in Wynyard. The grandmother of the children then has carers come in the morning to look after her brother while she takes the children to school. One of those carers comes from Wynyard. So, the grandmother has to take the children to school, then come back home so then she can take over the care of her brother so that the carer can go home again. The same thing happens in the afternoon. Try to think about the logistics of that.

Another person has contacted me, saying:

I'm losing work hours for next week as a casual disability worker, as I cannot get from one client in Somerset at 9 a.m. to Burnie to start with another at

9:30 a.m. I am just one person; imagine how many people are losing wages in the next week while this gets sorted? Also, think about the people who are not getting the disability care they need because their carer lives on the other side of the bridge.

Another one, from people living in Circular Head:

My son is one of many people from the north-west who need to travel to Burnie for an important medical appointment. He had been meant to have this appointment earlier, but unfortunately, his original appointment fell on the National Day of Mourning for the Queen. The thought of a trip now, that normally takes one hour taking up to at least three, with a child who is already so exhausted because of his medical issues may not seem like a big problem to some, but it will be one more issue and another delay that impacts on those already struggling.

We have already had an 18-months battle with our medical system trying to get him help. We are now looking at another six months at least before we can get an appointment to see the paediatric neurologist in Hobart, unless we can convince people to send referrals to Melbourne as well. The waiting times are so ridiculous here in Tasmania at the moment, and it is most certainly not an easy wait when you see your child continue to deteriorate.

Obviously, you can never predict these kinds of things happening, Mother Nature is powerful, but the response from the Government so far has been a little bit of a disappointment. I just hope we can begin to see the importance of a functioning second bridge.

Mr President, there were many accounts like that. I wanted to read a couple to give you a taste of what people are experiencing. People seeking medical treatment that is scheduled in the morning are trying to get accommodation in Burnie the night before, and that means even more out-of-pocket expenses for them. They do not qualify for PTAS, they do not live far enough away.

People from Burnie and surrounds need accommodation in Wynyard to avoid missing flights from the Burnie Wynyard Airport. It obviously depends on what time it is, but you might need to leave a day before, to get to the flight. A student coming back to school to Hellyer College from King Island arrives on a Sharp flight, peak time, and has to be picked up by a staff member from Hellyer College to be brought to school. The people on King Island are being affected.

In another account, I read about a woman who was working in Burnie; her son left his house in Melbourne for the airport, to catch a plane to Wynyard, at the same time his mum left Burnie. He arrived at their place in Somerset 30 minutes before her. That is the time that it is taking to get across the bridge.

I have raised this matter as a matter of public importance as it affects a significant portion of our population. It directly impacts a region of our state where millions of dollars of economic benefit and growth come from for our state. Much of this relies on timely transport of goods, including perishables, including the milk.

Many who have been providing advice to various ministers, based on the information provided to me by those ministers, show a lack of understanding of the volume of traffic and goods on this previously existing bottleneck. Locals have been asking for action on this for years, stating that without action, we would now see what we are seeing. Yes, I know, as I mentioned earlier, there is a new flood-proof bridge being built alongside this one. Some are concerned that may actually have contributed to the damage because some of the works went into the pier of the existing bridge, but that is a matter for another day.

However, any single bridge can be closed for many reasons other than a flood - such as, a major crash, a chemical spill, or other non flood-related damage. This is a critical link for the north-west to the rest of Tasmania. It is the only viable link. We do need to be listened to and we need to continue to fight for critical infrastructure which is what this is, including a second bridge before discretionary infrastructure is considered and funded, such as a multimillion-dollar stadium.

Members may be aware I am sponsoring a petition to parliament on behalf of my community. It states:

The petition calls for the state Government to:

- (1)
 - (a) conduct a thorough and open review into all issues surrounding the causes of the damage to the Cam River Bridge related to the heavy rainfalls and the concurrent construction of a replacement bridge;
 - (b) the subsequent repairs of and temporary closure of one lane of the Cam River Bridge at Somerset since Thursday, 20 October, 2022; and
 - (c) publicly release the information and findings of the reviews in a timely manner.
- (2) retain the current Cam River Bridge until a full and proper analysis is undertaken to identify possible alternative routes across the Cam River to prevent this situation or other events that could result in the closure of all or part of the Cam River Bridge happening again; and
- (3) ensure the process utilised to undertake a full and proper analysis to identify possible alternative routes includes direct and inclusive community and stakeholder engagement processes that assesses all options for another viable Cam River crossing, including but not limited to:
 - (a) the retention of the current Cam River Bridge after the new bridge is constructed;
 - (b) a second new bridge at the current or at an alternative location; and

- (c) upgrades of the current alternative route such as at Oonah Road.

I know that the current bridge is past its use-by date and this is why it is being replaced. The option of repairing and restoring is probably not feasible, but we do need to see it replaced - not removed and not replaced. This is the crucial point here, or another functional link that can take all this traffic load across the river.

We get better outcomes for our communities when we work together in times of crisis, as we did during COVID-19 and as such, we must continue to, as we address the current and sadly increasing risk and reality of severe weather event such as floods, bushfires, storms, et cetera. I know that we can do this and I urge the Government to take an inclusive approach - one that engages other community leaders, the local councils, community service groups and organisations, and business groups, as well as non-party-elected members. We all care deeply about our communities and the welfare of our people who we represent.

I was disappointed I had to request, more than once, to be updated at least as often as the media on important developments in this matter. I was being informed by newspaper articles and not proactively from the minister or the Government. That is disrespectful in the extreme.

It was very frustrating to have to wait for a media announcement to see if the matters that I had sought information about had been actioned and what decisions had been made on behalf of my community. It is entirely disrespectful in a community where we should be working together.

The lines of communication have improved since then, thankfully, and I thank the minister for being much more responsive and ensuring I was getting information at the same time as the media, at least.

The conversation to follow this event is just as important as the emergency actions being taken now. I, and my community, need a commitment from the Government to futureproof our critical infrastructure. The new bridge on its own will not achieve this. We need a dual carriageway plus two bridges or four lanes available over the Cam River. This is a critical link for the north-west of Tasmania to the rest of the state and as we can see, if disrupted, causes traffic chaos well beyond what we have seen in other parts of the state. It is a major freight route. It is a vital link to health services, to education and to workplaces.

Mr President, I will work with the government of whatever colour to see this matter progressed effectively for the community and the economic welfare of the whole state.

[11.44 a.m.]

Mrs HISCUTT (Montgomery - Leader of the Government in the Legislative Council) - Mr President, I thank the member for Murchison for bringing this important issue forward and her helpful suggestions. The Minister for Infrastructure and Transport has repeatedly said that the Government will do everything possible and spare no expense to ensure the Cam River Bridge is reopened as soon as possible. That process will not take a day longer than necessary. The minister has publicly acknowledged the very significant travel delays some north-west commuters have experienced since the damage was identified last week. In response, a number of measures have been quickly put in place to reduce traffic congestion on the site on the Bass Highway as much as possible. The Government also recognises the very important strategic

role of this bridge. Particularly for people who live, work and study west of the Cam River and for those who need to travel east to Burnie and beyond. Let us not lose sight of what has occurred here, the Cam River Bridge has sustained some structural damage as a result of a significant flood event. In response, the reduction of traffic to a single lane over the bridge has been necessary, on expert advice, in order to protect the motoring public safety as a direct result of flood damage to the structure.

The damage under the bridge is being repaired as quickly as possible and it is expected that the repairs will be completed and the bridge restored to dual lanes by the end of this week. I am also advised about 25 cubic metres of concrete were poured overnight into the formwork under the pier that has been undermined. I look forward to further updates on this work.

The Government also understands the importance of community updates. As soon as we have information that may assist people in the north-west in making their daily plans, we will continue to share updates as appropriate. I have an update to read at the end of this contribution. I am also aware the people of the north-west coast are very resilient and despite this disruption, most people have been understanding. Like the member for Murchison, the minister is concerned at reports by the Department of State Growth from road work contractors, that road workers have received verbal abuse from motorists at the site as you mentioned, member for Murchison. While some frustration is understandable, I am sure members will agree that the abuse of road workers who are simply doing their job is completely unacceptable. This damage to the bridge highlights why we need a new Cam River bridge, this is currently under construction and is designed to be higher, stronger and wider to ensure the situation does not occur again.

The minister is happy to provide some detail on the design of the new bridge, which is planned for completion in 2024. I note the member for Murchison said she did not want to hear this, but there are people who do so I will give an update. The Cam River Bridge plus the Murchison Highway traffic light project were awarded to VEC Civil Engineering. The project design has not changed from that displayed at council chambers during 2021.

I provide the following information. It is a 12-metre-wide bridge, with a 1.8 metre footpath. The new bridge is approximately 1.75 metres higher than the existing bridge. The new bridge will be stronger and suitable for the current and future loads from freight and oversized vehicles and more reliable during large flood events. It will include a pedestrian path under the new bridge, connecting to the council reserve and it does not impact within the strategic rail infrastructure corridor.

The project also includes the installation of traffic signals at the junction of the Murchison and Bass highways which will improve traffic flow. The Murchison Highway is a heavy vehicle route and signals will allow heavy vehicles to enter the Bass Highway more safely. Traffic modelling and crash data did not support a four-lane bridge at this location. The Bass Highway is single lane in each direction at Somerset, so traffic on a four-lane bridge would need to merge back into a single lane when leaving the bridge.

Ms FORREST - It needs to be fixed, that is the whole point.

Mrs HISCUTT - The crash history on the bridge suggests a low likelihood of a traffic incident on the bridge causing lengthy delays to highway traffic. In the event of an incident, the increased bridge width through wider lanes and shoulders will provide greater traffic

management options. By using the wider shoulders on the new bridge, two lanes may operate at reduced speed while a crash is being cleared. Retaining the existing bridge would need significant strengthening and maintenance to protect against future storm events.

Those are some of the benefits of the new Cam River bridge currently under construction.

The minister would now like to address some of the measures the Government has put in place since the damage to the bridge was discovered last week. The Government has put in place additional bus services this week with four extra Metro busses which will operate on route 197 services, between Wynyard and Burnie, providing more services in the peak periods and throughout the day. There will be eight additional services in each direction, providing a total of 20 services each way per day. All government-contracted bus services, including school buses, that travel across the Cam River are free to ride. The minister for Transport has encouraged anyone in this area who can use a bus to do so as this will reduce the number of vehicles queuing and reduce travel times for everyone. The Department of State Growth continues to actively engage with bus operators and the heavy vehicle industry to understand their needs and help them to plan their operations. It is recommended, where possible, to avoid peak time commuting or avoiding travel across the bridge altogether if that is an option available.

Meanwhile, work continues to build a structure to help protect the pier from further damage. The department has advised that the expected timing for the return of two operational lanes on the Cam River Bridge remains the end of this week. This minister is aware of the many questions and well-intentioned suggestions being put forward.

Ms Forrest - The end of this week - does that mean the weekend or Friday because businesses need to know? They have got rid of all their staff because they cannot afford to pay them.

Mrs HISCUTT - We will see how we go here. However, many of these present unacceptable risks to public safety or do not assist with the current traffic challenges. All suggestions are being considered and answers are being progressively added to the dedicated page that has been established on the Department of State Growth, Transport and Infrastructure website.

I will address some of these now and the information I am about to read is available from that page, along with a range of other content. One of the assertions some are making is that the construction of the new bridge has caused damage to the existing bridge. The large increase in water and the speed of water flow from the recent floods is the main cause. However, the department is continuing investigations to gain a more detailed understanding of how the flood waters affected the bridge, including whether construction work on the new bridge contributed.

In relation to ideas about alternative or temporary bridges, installing a temporary bridge would take longer than the expected length of time for the repair. Preparation works on either side of the crossing and the installation of a temporary bridge usually takes four to six weeks and these repair works are expected to be completed about next weekend.

On the subject of alternative routes, this question goes to the heart of the strategic importance of the Cam River Bridge and the Government's replacement of the bridge with an improved and more resilient structure. Unfortunately, the only alternative route available is

via the Murchison Highway and Ridgley Highway as Oonah Road is currently closed for safety reasons. We understand it is not safe to access Oonah Road due a landslip from the recent floods. The minister has also advised that the Burnie City Council is working on plans to repair the road once it is safe to do so. Currently there are no viable safe alternative roads.

The question of emergency vehicle access is also addressed on the website. The traffic management at the bridge is working with emergency services to provide priority access over the bridge at all times. Some users of the bridge have expressed concerns that it may be closed to heavy vehicles. The department advice is that there are no restrictions on heavy vehicles at this time and it is actively talking to bus operators and the heavy vehicle industry to understand their needs and to help them to plan their operations. A trial is underway to see if it is possible to provide priority access across the bridge for buses.

I have already mentioned the extra bus services put in place and I can further confirm that where there are multiple buses meeting at the Wynyard interchange, and bus operators have been requested to wait for late-arriving connecting services wherever possible to enable students to make their onward journey. A sweeper bus was also provided last Friday afternoon and yesterday to collect any students who may have missed their connection.

I am also aware that the member for Murchison requested that portaloos be placed in the vicinity of the bridge. The department advises that there are very few safe locations to provide portaloos with enough space for parking and having vehicles stopping in the area could actually increase wait times for those travelling. I note the comments that the member for Murchison mentioned earlier about Young's Vegie Shed. Therefore, provisions for portaloos are not currently considered a viable option but I will feed that information.

Ms Forrest - I have already fed that through and I have let the minister know that Young's are happy for that to occur.

Mrs HISCUTT - There is a range of other responses on the Transport and Infrastructure website and I encourage any members to read them, if they are interested, including matters involving students and the duty of care to those who may face delays.

In summing up, the Government is doing all it can to restore the Cam River Bridge to two lanes as quickly as possible and to get on with the job of building a new, wider, higher and more resilient Cam River Bridge.

As I mentioned earlier, I have a release here, which is hot off the press, dated 25 October, from the Department of State Growth, and I will read the pertinent parts. It says:

Teams continue to work around the clock to get both lanes on the Cam River Bridge safely opened as soon as possible. Work is progressing well and on track for the closed lane to be reopened for the weekend.

Formwork for the pier repairs was completed yesterday and the concrete was poured last night.

Further testing and assessments will be done throughout today to ensure it is providing the support required.

One lane remains open to all traffic and real-time monitoring shows that the bridge is safe to use.

Additional protection and monitoring have also been put in place for the other piers.

We have extra traffic controllers in place at key intersections, including Falmouth Street and East Cam Road, to help highway traffic continue to flow and keep intersections clear and operating appropriately.

Ms Forrest - They need to be there the whole time, not just from time to time, which is what happened this morning.

Mrs HISCUTT - I am sure that that will be brought to the attention of the minister.

Ms Forrest - It has been.

Mrs HISCUTT - That is good. It is not a good situation. The Government is working as hard as they can and as quickly as they can and I ask motorists to please respect the workers who are there doing the best that they can.

Thank you for bringing this MPI to the attention of the Council.

[11.57 a.m.]

Mr GAFFNEY (Mersey) - Mr President, I have not a lot more to add, but I thank the member for Murchison for the work she has been doing for the end of the coast. For those from the south or the north who do not know that area, it does reverberate all the way through, it is a domino effect. It is important for people to understand. Another situation where a mother in Somerset has her child care situated in Burnie, what time does she take the kids there and then get to work? All these things place pressures and stresses on us.

I am pleased that the Government said that they would spare no expense. In the short term, what they are doing is fine, but it does make us wonder exactly how serious they will be about the longer term. This is not a new issue for the north-west coast, this is something that has been in the pipeline for many years, but it has always never been. I suppose you could liken it to, and please do not take this the wrong way, when the Hobart bridge had its issue with being knocked down so many years ago by the boat. What did the community have to do here, quickly? They had to get people from one side of the river to the other side. If you think about that on the north-west coast, it is a similar scenario.

Many people on the western side work on the eastern side and vice-versa and there have been benefits out of the Hobart bridge tragedy, in the actual structural thing, because of the Bowen Bridge and what happened there. It gave it another avenue. When this Government - and the next government - seriously looks at what needs to be done in that section of the coast, it will provide perhaps greater opportunities for other things to open up. Instead of having the Cooee crawl all the time, there might be something different. If they look at it as a positive, that could be important.

Whilst I am pleased that the new bridge seems to be of a more appropriate standard, which is great, it still only leaves the fact that there will be one bridge. We must not lose

sight - if there is an accident on that bridge for some reason, then we are back in the same situation. This has to be a high priority for the north-west coast and I am pleased the Government is taking that on board.

I am pleased to hear of the new initiatives with the bus operations. They are to be applauded but when you hear the amount of traffic - 18 000 vehicles - that is a lot of traffic going through over a short period of time. I have noticed in other areas where people have been encouraged to take the much longer route, and there are people who are not time-sensitive in where they need to travel, there have been suggestions of petrol vouchers and whatever to assist people to take that longer - that is something the Government could consider for those to say it is going to take you an hour longer but it will take the pressure off this, if the bridge is not fixed in time.

A lot of my family come from down that way and the member for Murchison has been putting a lot of time and effort into updating the community. I have had a lot of positive feedback about that and I congratulate the member for the work and effort she has been making there.

I am heartened by the Government's response, but we need to see that into action - not just for the short or medium term but for the long term and making sure there is plan there. Whilst the member for Murchison has gone out to approach different landowners about different options, the Government will need to have a look at the whole section of that road about how to put this into infrastructure for many years to come. Thank you to the member for Murchison; thank you for the response and the proof will be in the pudding.

[12.01 p.m.]

Mr VALENTINE (Hobart) - Mr President, I found the analysis very interesting and clearly when we look at the way our communities are set up, it is not until something like this happens that it points up significant problems. The Orford rockfall, for instance - it was not carrying heaps of traffic but it was very disruptive to the whole of the lower east coast.

Clearly, we need forward thinking and plans and to make sure we spend infrastructure dollars in the areas that can mitigate against these sorts of events. I thank the member for bringing it forward and pointing out the issue. Clearly, one lane simply does not cut it over that bridge. We all know about the safety issues there because without that full investigation you do not know how precarious it might be; we really do not. I support the fixing of that particular issue, but it is important that the department also puts on its thinking cap and looks at other areas across the state where a similar circumstance might be experienced.

Ms Forrest - The Detention River Bridge is one I can give you straight away.

Mr VALENTINE - There may be the Detention River Bridge but there may well be others and they might be down the west coast or further on the east coast.

Ms Rattray - If you lost the bridge at St Helens.

Mr VALENTINE - That is exactly right.

There needs to be a plan put in place to be able to address these things. When the bridge went down here, Bailey bridges were used and happened in a reasonably quick time. The ferry

boat shuffle happened and that relieved the strain of the bridge being down. We felt the impact of that for quite some years. I encourage the Government in sorting out its infrastructure planning that they do a bit of an assessment as to what other events there may be waiting to disrupt the various communities across our islands.

I thank the Government for their response, and I found it interesting to have that debate.

[12.05 p.m.]

Ms RATTRAY (McIntyre) - Mr President, we do not have a lot of MPIs in the House, so it is a great opportunity the member for Murchison has taken to raise a significant issue - not only for the communities she represents, but for people who travel in and out of that area. It is a significant area for a lot of heavy vehicles who travel to Smithton for cattle carting and the like.

Ms Forrest - Tourism.

Ms RATTRAY - Yes, tourism.

Ms Forrest - The tours that operate have had lots of cancellations.

Ms RATTRAY - It has a large knock-on effect. It would be interesting to have a look at the last assessment of the state of the bridge and to know when it was done, and how long ago that was. Obviously, we have had some significant weather events, not only in Tasmania, but on the eastern seaboard.

Ms Forrest - The review of the bridge showed it was past its useful life base and that is why the Government has commenced building a new one - which is great, but does not fix the problem of having a single bridge over the river and no other way around.

Ms RATTRAY - That is right. I did hear it is still only going to be two lanes and not four and that in itself is not really futureproofing that particular area of our state. The suggestion by the member for Hobart that there is a full assessment of those bridges - and there are significant bridges in Tasmania. From memory, the Dorset municipality had about 120 bridges. Some of them, if they were out for a time, might not necessarily affect hundreds of people, but it still affects people. We need to make sure the department and the Government, with local government, identify any areas that are perhaps under or could be potentially under pressure, or there is a problem with.

Having those extensive areas, and I appreciate the maps that were provided, a two-hour extra trip to get to where you need to be, whether it be for work, medical appointments, or whether it just be for tourism, can impact on people's experience. We are going to have a loss of economy, the whole thing. It impacts.

I appreciated the opportunity to hear some of the challenges, although we have been hearing them in the media. They have been articulated quite well if we have been listening at all to whatever media outlet we use. I have not experienced it firsthand, and I can only appreciate it is very frustrating sitting in a line and not going anywhere and not knowing how long you are going to be in that line.

Obviously the Leader has provided the Government's response and I expect they are all hands on deck to sort this issue as soon as possible.

Ms FORREST (Murchison) - Mr President, I seek leave to withdraw the motion.

Leave granted.

Motion withdrawn.

STATEMENT BY LEADER

Answers to Questions

Mrs HISCUTT - I have no answers to questions for the member for Hobart today but I can let him know that I am starting to work on it, very diligently.

Mr Valentine - Thank you.

TABLED PAPERS

Report on Inquiry into Rural Health Services in Tasmania

[12.08 p.m.]

Ms FORREST (Murchison) presented the report of the Legislative Council Sessional Government Administration Committee A on the Inquiry into Rural Health Services in Tasmania, together with evidence taken by the Committee.

Reported received and printed.

Report on Road Safety in Tasmania

Ms ARMITAGE (Launceston) presented the Report of the Select Committee on Road Safety in Tasmania, together with evidence taken by the Committee.

Report received and printed.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

Member for Pembroke - Mr Edmunds

[12.14 p.m.]

Mrs HISCUTT (Montgomery - Leader of the Government in the Legislative Council)(by leave) - Mr President, I move -

That the member for Pembroke, Mr Edmunds, be granted leave of absence from the service of the Council for this week's sitting.

Leave granted.

RECOGNITION OF VISITORS

Mr PRESIDENT - Before calling on Special Interest matters, I welcome to the President's Reserve Paul and Pat Ferguson from the Southern Beaches Eight Ball Association, who are part of the subject of the member for Prosser's Special Interest item today.

I also welcome John Hooper, who is the guest of the member for Elwick. John is from the No Interest Loan Scheme, that I am sure all members are very familiar with. I am sure all members will make welcome these guests to our Chamber today.

SPECIAL INTEREST MATTERS

Southern Beaches Eight Ball Association

[12.15 p.m.]

Ms HOWLETT - Mr President, I also welcome Paul and Pat Ferguson to the Chamber, and John Hooper. Welcome to this place today.

In July 2022, I had the pleasure of visiting the Dodges Ferry Hotel, which was playing host to the grand final of the annual eight ball tournament organised by the Southern Beaches Eight Ball Association. This game marked the conclusion of the eight ball association's 27th annual tournament. This annual tournament began in 1995, when a group of men and women wanting to play eight ball decided to play a casual tournament against one another at the Lewisham Tavern. They had a lot of fun and decided to make the tournament a yearly event, with the host venue moving to the Dodges Ferry Hotel 17 years ago.

The annual tournament starts during daylight saving week in April with games being played each Tuesday night, running for around 16 weeks until July. The tournament utilises teams of six players with teams playing against each other in a series of singles and doubles. Teams are not eliminated from the tournament until the finals, which start in July.

Over the years, more than 170 people have taken part in the tournaments, and the Southern Beaches Eight Ball Association wants to build up the number of players so that they can field six teams once again.

Today, I have the pleasure to introduce Paul Ferguson, one of the original tournament competitors who has competed in every tournament for 27 years. He also captained the winning team of this year's 2022 tournament. Paul is a very passionate member of the Dodges Ferry community who is not only involved in the Southern Beaches Eight Ball Association, but is also a long-time volunteer and member of the Dodges Ferry Sharks Football Club.

Paul advises me that the people interested in getting involved in the Southern Beaches Eight Ball Tournament do not need to be overly skilled, as playing eight ball is all about competitors being B-grade players and any standard can participate. It is all about getting together and having fun. Anyone in the community who wants to play eight ball is welcome to join at the Southern Beaches Eight Ball Association and call into the Dodges Ferry Tavern.

I commend Paul, not only for his long-term dedication to the Southern Beaches Eight Ball Association, but also for his wider commitment to the community. It is people like Paul who are the driving force behind so many community organisations.

I commend the Southern Beaches Eight Ball Association for their longevity. The fact that a grassroots community tournament like this has been able to take place annually for 27 years is amazing. It speaks volumes to the dedication of the Southern Beaches Eight Ball Association in organising the tournaments and to welcoming new members. It is also a wonderful example of how community sport can bring people together, fostering new connections and building friendships.

NILS Network of Tasmania

[12.20 p.m.]

Mr WILLIE (Elwick) - Mr President, I stand today to highlight the important role undertaken in our community by the No Interest Loan Scheme (NILS) network of Tasmania. The NILS concept was developed by Good Shepherd in Victoria and operates across Australia. It was first established in Tasmania in 2002 with the support of the then Labor government. Since that time, NILS has issued over 31 000 loans to Tasmanians, totalling more than \$30 million. Last financial year, NILS approved over \$3.4 million in loans.

If you are not familiar with the program, NILS provides low income Tasmanians with safe, fair and affordable loans. NILS operates on the belief that all people should have access to essential goods and services, for which credit is often necessary. Under the popular essential loans scheme, low income Tasmanians can borrow up to \$2000 for goods like fridges and washing machines, car registration and repairs, and educational expenses. In addition, NILS funds essential medical and dental needs for Tasmanians who choose to pay for their own procedures as opposed to dwelling for years on our public elective surgery waiting list. Not a perfect situation, but NILS is happy to intervene. NILS also offers a very popular and in-demand subsidy to purchase energy-efficient appliances. Loans carry no fees and interest. You pay back only what you borrow, and nothing more. With the cost of living being a major concern for Tasmanians, a NILS loan is the smart and affordable option rather than a payday lender.

Payday lenders - my electorate has a few - make their money from exorbitant interest fees, targeting those vulnerable to financial hardship. It is a sad reality that there are far too many Tasmanians caught in the payday lender trap, going without food and basic needs to barely meet debt repayments. I was very pleased to hear that the Albanese Labor Government is prioritising reforms to crack down on predatory lenders. Certainly, such consumer protections are overdue.

The NILS network of Tasmania is a small team overseen by an exceptionally experienced board, chaired by Kym Goodes. As members would agree, Kym is well recognised for her tireless commitment to social justice and advocacy on behalf of disadvantaged Tasmanians. These values are reflected across the board's membership. Working alongside the board is John Hooper, CEO, who is here with us today. I suspect John is reluctant for me to direct focus his way, so I will only say, having consulted with John for many years in his current role, and in his former role at Neighbourhood Houses Tasmania, his compassion for the Tasmanian community is honest and genuine. Under the guidance of the board and John, NILS has

received and expanded its service to offer loans of up to \$3000 to pay for rental bonds and rent in advance. The loans have the potential to contribute to addressing our state's homelessness crisis by helping Tasmanians to secure a roof over their head and to avoid homelessness.

My office recently helped an individual, faced with eviction, to apply for rent in advance. Within a day, thanks to NILS, the individual was able to meet rent, cancel a notice to vacate and avoid homelessness. The individual was truly grateful to NILS for their support. In helping potential NILS clients, Elli in my office acts as a service delivery partner. That means, we help potential NILS clients to complete and submit their application for assessment. I am sure you will agree, Elli does an amazing job, strongly advocating for Elwick constituents and for people around the state. She has a reputation in the community for genuinely caring and being a person to go to for support. I have been very fortunate to work with her for nearly seven years now, and I thank her for her tireless efforts - not least, putting up with me.

Members - Hear, hear.

Mr WILLIE - I was not expecting that. My office is one of 105 volunteer community access points, operating across the state. I believe there are a couple of other MLC offices that provide the service, including yours, Mr President.

Ms Rattray - And McIntyre.

Mr WILLIE - And McIntyre, good. It is a pleasure to be a service delivery partner of NILS, to see firsthand the difference made to the lives of Tasmanians. It also provides an opportunity for me to inform Tasmanians about the scheme. Recently, I co-hosted a successful community morning tea with John Hooper at my office. Since then, several attendees from the morning tea have made appointments with Elli to apply for NILS loans. My office is one of only a few locations in the northern suburbs of Hobart that acts as a service delivery partner for NILS and I am very aware of its value to the community.

In summary, with the resident expansion of loans, I am sure if members are not yet offering the service, NILS would be happy to talk to you further. It is so worthwhile and satisfying to be a small part of the important service that NILS provides across our communities.

Special Olympics Australia National Games 2022 - Launceston

[12.25 p.m.]

Ms ARMITAGE (Launceston) - Mr President, last week, we were privileged in Launceston to host the Special Olympics Australia National Games 2022. Last Monday, the athletes converged in Launceston to celebrate the last leg of the Law Enforcement Torch Run, which saw the flame reach Civic Square. Scores of people came out to cheer and welcome all those who participated in the torch run, the City of Launceston, the volunteers, officials from the national games and of course, all the athletes who came from right across the country to Launceston to compete.

During this ceremony, an athlete from each state and territory had the honour of carrying the flame of hope alongside a law enforcement officer. We had a gorgeous day for it and had a fantastic time welcoming everyone. It was an absolute privilege to be there. Later that day

was the opening ceremony itself, which was held at the Silverdome. This really got the athletes, their teams, coaches and the volunteers ready for the week of competition that was to begin. During the week, we saw events take place in the fields of athletics, basketball, bocce, tenpin bowling, soccer, golf, gymnastics, swimming, table tennis, regular tennis and the competition was fierce.

I volunteered to assist with the bocce event and was absolutely thrilled to see so many volunteers who took the time to make the competition run so smoothly for athletes. It was lovely to see that in the bocce there was one athlete from Western Australia who played in a Tasmanian team because they needed an extra player. I must admit, she was absolutely fabulous, knew exactly where to throw that ball to get the best advantage and they did very well in the game I actually assisted with. The Tasmanian team, with assistance from Western Australia, won their game.

It was interesting to see the rules with bocce, how they differ very slightly to bowls. They are quite the same apart from the fact there is no bias on the ball. The athletes absolutely enjoyed it and were thrilled. When giving out the medals, the joy on their faces when a medal was put around their neck was heartwarming to see, they were so delighted. It did not matter where they came and for all the participants, whether they won a medal or not, it was an absolute pleasure to be there.

Governor-General David Hurley, stated:

The Special Olympics Australia transforms the lives of competitors. The passion, commitment and camaraderie of athletes is inspirational and their joy infectious.

I could not agree more and it was wonderful to have the Governor-General and his wife attend.

I was struck by the level of cooperation and the sportsmanship I saw and I know that in the other events, the spirit of good gamesmanship would have been heartily demonstrated. The winners of medals in all events were varied and each state and territory had the chance to flex their respective muscles and skills. Suffice to say, Tasmania performed extremely well and everyone from the athletes and coaches to the volunteers and supporters poured their hearts into the competition. I encourage any curious members of this place to visit the national games website, where all the information on events and results can be found.

The Special Olympics brings together, through the power of sports, people with intellectual disabilities who can discover new strengths and abilities, skills and success. These athletes inspire people in their communities and elsewhere to open their hearts to a wider world of human talents and potential. We truly saw that in Launceston over the last week and having the opportunity to host these games made our city glow with an enthusiasm and vigour we do not always see.

The Special Olympics Australia National Games of 2022 was a roaring success and to all those who volunteered, for their time and passion and who came out to cheer the athletes, I say a huge thank you. To all those who competed, I say congratulations. I finish off with the athletes' oath which was recited by Victorian gymnast, Patrick Forssman, at the end of the torch run:

Let me win. But if I cannot win, let me be brave in the attempt.

World Pancreatic Cancer Awareness Month - Judi Adams

[12.30 p.m.]

Mr VALENTINE (Hobart) - November is recognised annually as World Pancreatic Cancer Awareness Month. The theme for 2022 is: It's about time to shine a light on pancreatic cancer.

On the evening of Thursday 17 November, the Hobart City Council sites at Franklin Square and Elizabeth Street Mall, Cardinal Lights at the Docks, Crowne Plaza Hobart; and the Launceston Town Hall will join with other landmarks across the nation illuminated in purple as Australia recognises World Pancreatic Cancer Awareness Day and, indeed, month. This is our moment to personally learn more about the risks and symptoms of pancreatic cancer and for organisations around the world to push to do more, to learn, to teach, to advocate for increased research funding.

I would like to share the story of Judi Adams - a long-time campaigner, herself shining a light on breast cancer here in Tasmania, and her personal ongoing experience with pancreatic cancer. First, some very sobering facts and statistics members may not be aware nor many people out there in the community.

About 3700 Australians are diagnosed with pancreatic cancer each year, making it the eighth most common cancer in the country today. Around 63 lives are claimed by the disease weekly - a very significant statistic. It is now the fourth most common cause of cancer deaths in Australia. More than 80 per cent of those diagnosed are over the age of 60 and slightly more men than women overall. A person has a one in 69 chance of being diagnosed with pancreatic cancer by the age of 85. Symptoms can, at times, present as other illnesses so by the time the cancer is identified, it is well advanced. Accordingly, almost 50 per cent of pancreatic cancer diagnoses are stage IV, or inoperable, by the time they are detected and obviously, individual outcomes are impacted by this. Eighty per cent of those diagnosed with inoperable pancreatic cancer will only survive six to 12 months.

It is all a bit grim and they are uncomfortable statistics, but it underlines the very significant need for further research into this debilitating and deadly disease.

Only about 10 per cent of pancreatic cancers are diagnosed early enough for more treatment options to be viable, including surgery. The long term - that is, five years plus - survival rates are then ten times higher than if the cancer has grown and already spread to other parts of the body. Early detection is vital.

It is important to be aware of changes in your body and seek tests early on with your GP, and some of the symptoms are:

- digestive problems, including abnormal stools;
- nausea or vomiting;
- pain in the upper abdomen and back;

- loss of appetite;
- sudden weight loss;
- jaundice which is a yellowing of the skin and whites of the eyes; and
- very high sugar levels in diabetic patients.

Pancreatic cancer is not a rare disease and yet there is a lack of public knowledge and research funding. A person diagnosed with the disease today has less than an 11 per cent chance of being alive in five years time. Compare this to current survival rates in prostate, breast and skin cancers which are now over 90 per cent. This can be directly attributed to investment in medical research. We can sense the urgency on why further research and understanding of this disease is so vital.

Now, about Judi. Since 2004, Judi has been a passionate advocate for cancer research, raising awareness and funds for the National Breast Cancer Foundation as a volunteer community fundraiser and through her work as a volunteer for the women in Super Mother's Day Classic.

Judi was named Glenorchy Citizen of the Year in 2014 and in 2017. Her advocacy and awareness-raising efforts were recognised again in 2018, when she was chosen as the incoming Tasmanian Local Hero in the Australian of the Year Awards program.

Judi then extended her reach after a relocation to Brisbane, continuing to contribute to the National Breast Cancer Foundation through her fundraising efforts and involvement in causes such as Pinktober, held in the Breast Cancer Awareness Month of October.

In November 2021, despite little to indicate she was unwell up to that point, routine tests detected an abnormality on her pancreas, and subsequent surgery led to Judi receiving her own pancreatic cancer diagnosis. July 2022 saw her complete a six-month course of chemotherapy.

Judi is not content to be a passenger on this journey. Instead, she has chosen to shift her focus to a campaign dedicated to raising public awareness of pancreatic cancer. For Judi, this process starts with a conversation, which then contributes to a pathway for further dialogue, hoping to ensure earlier detection and better outcomes for those like her, who may not realise their symptoms are indicative of pancreatic cancer.

This November, Judi encourages the community to join in this campaign, to light a landmark, start a conversation, know the symptoms, and share this knowledge in order to highlight the need for greater awareness of pancreatic cancer and more research. She says that sadly there is not nearly enough research or knowledge about pancreatic cancer:

I want to take my experience and use this knowledge to make a difference and offer hope. ... Olivia Newton-John did this. She turned her own private breast cancer journey into one offering positivity to others, and this was inspirational to me. ... I am using my time and lived experience to inform others, pushing the key messages - encouraging the public to support research, but equally importantly, to be self-aware, be aware of changes in their bodies, to get medical tests, to explore treatments, to join support groups and to support the carers and families impacted.

She goes on to say:

I have always had faith that any advances in knowledge of one cancer will feed into the collective global knowledge and help to unlock answers for the global community for many cancers.

This was brought home to me this last week when the Olivia Newton-John Cancer Wellness and Research Clinic announced ground breaking research has had positive outcomes for pancreatic cancer patients, with the discovery of a novel new drug that can improve the response of pancreatic cancer tumours to immunotherapy. Once again Olivia's legacy has resonated and been pertinent to me at a key time in my life.

Judi further says:

Many people, not just the patient themselves, are affected by a pancreatic cancer diagnosis and each need better access to support services, both clinical and psychosocial, especially in rural or remote areas and for people with cultural differences.

These issues continue to be of importance to me and are things that I hope can be addressed as the world gains a greater awareness of this disease.

To learn more about what is happening in Australia in this space I encourage people to visit two key resources: Pancreatic Cancer Research Foundation - known as PanKind Australia - and the National Pancreatic Cancer Roadmap.

We must thank Judi so much for her grit and determination in sharing those words, and for her personal drive and enthusiasm to make a difference under such difficult circumstances. I am sure members will join with me in wishing her great strength for the remainder of her journey with this disease.

Members - Hear, hear.

Scottsdale High School Centenary and Tasmanian Women in Agriculture Installation

[12.38 p.m.]

Ms RATTRAY (McIntyre) - Anyone who was in the north-east over the weekend for the Scottsdale High School centenary celebration, and I know you were, Mr President. You and I bookended the event - you started, I finished. It was an absolute delight to see so many people come back to the high school and acknowledge their time as a Scottsdale High School student. Mr President and I were both students, and we certainly enjoyed the opportunity.

Mr PRESIDENT - Student is a loose term when it comes to me.

Ms RATTRAY - Also, Mr President, there was another very high-profile event, or events, taking place as well. Dorset hosted the second installation event for the Tasmanian Women in Agriculture installation. They are rustic panels at the entrance of Scottsdale if you are coming over the Tasman Highway on the Sideling. You are not at the moment, because it

is closed, but if you were, that is the street, King Street. They are beautiful panels. They have come there because of the success of the book, *A Place in the Stockyard*, authored by Fiona Stocker, written about the organisation celebrating Tasmanian Women in Agriculture and their challenges and successes.

It was decided by the book committee that had worked on the project for the proceeds of the sale of the book to have an art installation commissioned to celebrate the history of Tasmanian Women in Agriculture. As the first gathering was held in 1994 in Scottsdale, the committee decided to commence their installation journey in Scottsdale and the community thanks Tasmanian Women in Agriculture for that honour. There will be more installations that follow in other areas where Tasmanian Women in Agriculture are key in their communities.

At the end of 2021, an expression of interest for artists to present their works was put forward and the winning artists were Karin and Michael Gethin from the Gravelly Beach Metalworks. They were awarded the contract and their four panels beautifully depict what Tasmanian Women in Agriculture aims to do for rural women in Tasmania - connect, support and celebrate. They are worth a visit to look at the panels and their rustic style and how they fit in that rural setting.

The art installation subcommittee, Annette Reed, Deb Morice, Mandy Cooper, Sigrid Nelson, were an integral part of the project and then the committee invited mayor, Greg Howard, Rae Wardlaw, Jo Tate, Cheryl McCartie and myself to take part in the selection of the chosen commission works. I was pleased to be able to do that, albeit it was difficult to be able to choose one of those art works out of a number but we managed to come up with the ones we have now. Deb Morice played a huge part in arranging the celebratory two-day event for us. She had her hand in every aspect of the celebrations and for anyone who knows Deb Morice she commits 100 per cent and does it meticulously.

The weekend concluded with a gathering dinner event which was kindly hosted by Jo Palmer, minister for Women and Primary Industries - and a couple of other things aside but they were her two focuses on that night. She also arranged - and we are thankful for that - an inspiring and interesting guest speaker by the name of Felicity Richards, an absolute delight to listen to. If you ever get an opportunity to listen to Felicity she has a wonderful story and she shares it so beautifully. We were pleased to have Felicity with us on the evening and particularly pleased to have the Jo Palmer as our MC.

There were three outstanding contribution awards made on the night and one was made to the late Jenny French for her contribution to Tasmanian Women in Agriculture, Rae Wardlaw from the north-east and quite a big surprise to Deb Morice who had organised everything, she also received what they call an OCA award, the outstanding contribution award. It was wonderful to have that as part of the gathering event.

On the night we thanked the mayor, Greg Howard, and the Dorset team for installing the panels. We had great sponsors. For our catering, Ashgrove Cheese came on board; Anvers in the member for Mersey's patch, Fonterra, Pyengana Dairy, Saputo, Cadburys and Huon Aquaculture. Talk about a feast. I hosted the event on Friday evening after the unveiling of the panels and to my executive officer of 18 years, Melissa Partridge, who always helps - so I have outdone the seven years by the member for Elwick by heaps, Mel has been my assistant for 18 years and she helped. Also, my cousin Janine Walker, came out from Launceston and they are the catering queens from now on. I will not do an event without them. In addition, a

local lady, Deanna Scott. Deanna and Bruce have a beautiful garden and they provided the floral arrangements. Talk about a feast. -

Ms Forrest - Good community contribution.

Ms RATTRAY - Absolutely, talk about a feast of events over the weekend in Dorset. I particularly wanted to thank those people who were involved in putting together all those events, the Tasmanian Women in Agriculture but also the Scottsdale High School centenary celebration. We are blessed in Dorset.

Penguin in Pink

[12.46 p.m.]

Mrs HISCUTT (Montgomery, Leader of the Government in the Legislative Council) - Mr President, today I will talk about Penguin in Pink. It was my pleasure to attend the function this weekend. It is a Breast Cancer Awareness and a fundraiser for the McGrath Foundation and all the wonderful work that they do. This function is organised every year by a dedicated committee and it is now held at the Dial Regional Sports Complex, which is the home of the Penguin Football Club. Everyone in town knows when it is about to happen because the famous Big Penguin is suddenly clothed in pink and the Breast Cancer Network Australia symbol, the little pink cardboard lady cut-outs, appear all over the town along with the National Breast Cancer Foundation symbol, the little pink bow.

This year, 180 people attended, with about 10 men, including my 32-year-old son, councillor Casey Hiscutt. This is an important point which I will come back to. We were told to bring heaps of \$2 coins and \$5 notes. A delicious meal was served via a smorgasbord, which was prepared by the Penguin footy club. The MC, Dee Dawkins, was excellent at extracting money from the patrons. A box was provided in the middle of the table for fines to go into. I prefer to call them donations, but it just so happens that if you laugh too loud or not loud enough, you were fined \$5. If you complained about being caught out, you would be fined for attitude and the fine was doubled. It seemed that the MC had fines for nearly anything and everything.

Mr Valentine - It sounds like Rotary.

Mrs HISCUTT - She was very good at extracting the money. Well, she is a Lions Club member so she was very good at it. The event started with a great contribution of \$500, coming from the Penguin Village Stitchers. It is group of ladies who get together to knit and make things. The funds were raised by selling their products, which they then generously donated to this fundraiser.

There were two guest speakers, the first was Gill Slater, who is the current breast care nurse for the north-west for the McGrath Foundation. Gill told us that breast cancer is the most commonly diagnosed cancer of women in Australia, the risk is one in seven for women. I know the member for Hobart had some statistics and I also have a few here. On average, 57 women are diagnosed with breast cancer every day and this year we will see 20 428 women and 212 men expected to be diagnosed. Gill told us that the McGrath Foundation breast cancer nurse aims to be there to provide support from diagnosis through to wellness. This can include,

from the diagnosis, pre-surgery, post-surgery and through all the treatment in between. They become a vital and important part in the lives of those going through breast cancer treatment.

The second guest speaker was Giovanna Simpson, deputy mayor of Burnie. The member for Murchison would know her quite well. She is still likely to be deputy mayor after the election in my opinion. 'Gee', as we fondly call her, spoke openly about her breast cancer experience. She told us how her mother had passed away from breast cancer and unfortunately all her three daughters, of whom Gee was one, had inherited the gene. Gee spoke about her experiences, including her operations and her breast reconstruction. She spoke with a healthy, forward-looking attitude and to help her get past her experiences, she used humour. She spoke highly and fondly of the McGrath Foundation breast care nurses.

Now, back to the part that I mentioned earlier, about there being 10 men there and one of them being my son, Casey. We were sitting at the official table, along with the breast care nurses and the guest speakers. Gee had just finished talking about how she had coped with her breast reconstruction and said that she was so pleased to have smaller breasts, that she had them tattooed. As she was walking back to our table, and she had almost sat down, when someone from the crowd asked a question about her tattoos. Gee said, 'Well, I will show you if you like' and started to expose the top of her tattoos, without exposing too much, but enough for us to see the lovely red flowers entwined with green vines and leaves. Well, Mr President, Casey put his hands up to his face and covered his eyes, and he went bright red. Of course, the MC was loud on the microphone saying that he was as bright as his tie, which was bright pink and he was fined. He did not have attitude, but he put in double anyway.

Mr President, besides having lots of fun and raising much-needed funds for a worthy cause, I thank the Penguin in Pink committee, who are: Vicky Docking, Marian Longmire, Jennifer Hyland, Diane White and of course, one of the larger-than-life members of our Penguin community, Shirly Good, who is the lead for the committee. I thank all these ladies very much for the great day, and such a worthwhile cause. Well done.

MOTION

Importance of Neighbourhood Houses in Tasmania

[12.50 p.m.]

Ms HOWLETT (Prosser) - Mr President, I move -

That the Legislative Council:

- (1) Notes the importance that Neighbourhood Houses play in the economic, social and mental wellbeing of Tasmanians;
- (2) acknowledges the significant role volunteers play within Neighbourhood Houses;
- (3) thanks those who work and volunteer at Neighbourhood Houses for the critical role they play in the wellbeing of the community;

- (4) commends the Rockliff Liberal Government's recent investment of an additional \$1.75 million, equating to an additional \$50 000 for each of Tasmania's 35 Neighbourhood Houses, to allow Neighbourhood Houses to do more to support those in the community.

Mr President, the neighbourhood houses model in Tasmania is approximately 50 years old, and has the largest, most diverse community service footprint of any non-government organisation in Tasmania. The Tasmanian neighbourhood house network consists of 35 houses. Thirty-four are funded through the Tasmanian Government, while one house at Dowsing Point is funded by the Australian Government through the Department of Defence.

Tasmania's neighbourhood houses are funded to be local, community-led organisations that build capacity using a community development framework. Each house works towards four goals: to connect community; to support people; to create opportunities; and local leadership with community development central to the program goals.

When faced by the explosion of complexity in people's lives, neighbourhood houses have worked to build resilience and capacity. Despite the shared core ethos, each neighbourhood house is different, having evolved and changed in response to the needs of their local communities. The strategic direction of each house is informed by consultation with the local community, and set by their respective board of management.

A wonderful example of this can be seen in my electorate of Prosser, with the Dunalley Tasman Neighbourhood House. Despite officially being a single neighbourhood house, the Dunalley Tasman Neighbourhood House recognised that they required more than just one premises to adequately service both the Dunalley and surrounds area and the Tasman Peninsula. Therefore, through prudent management of their finances and resources, they operate two neighbourhood houses: one in Dunalley, and one in Nubeena.

Straddling the challenging landscape requires dedicated and committed staff and of course, volunteers, who are all the backbone of the success of neighbourhood houses. Neighbourhood houses across Tasmania play a vital role in community connections, as well as providing support to communities. What happens each day in a neighbourhood house matters to so many Tasmanian families, friends and communities and our house volunteers work to help build them up. Neighbourhood houses bring people together. They build strong, connected communities, support families and create opportunities for people to grow, and develop local leaders and community pride.

We are investing into the network, so that they can invest their time into the Tasmanians who need it most. They have helped so many people find their way, by providing connection, support and friendship. Importantly, by providing connection and support, they are helping build community and individual resilience, improving so many Tasmanian lives as strong commitments acknowledge the houses' vital role in community connections.

Mr President, neighbourhood houses have reported to the Tasmanian Government that rises in the cost of living have resulted in a rise in the number of people accessing houses for food support in particular, as well as other concerns including mental health, accommodation pressures, digital literacy, financial stress, family violence and relationship breakdown since COVID-19 began. I was proud of the Premier's recent announcement of a \$5 million package of additional measures targeted to support the most vulnerable, through a one-off funding

increase to our community sector partners, including an additional \$50 000 for each neighbourhood house across Tasmania to support their vital community assistance work. This means an extra \$1.75 million into the houses, across the network.

The 34 funded neighbourhood houses will receive \$8 339 829 (GST exclusive) for the 2022-23 financial year. This is the core funding, excluding one-off funding allocations. So, it is fair to say the Tasmanian Government is providing over \$10 million to neighbourhood houses, in total, in core funding and extra cost of living booster package funding, this financial year alone.

Mr President, I will read some excerpts from a media release from Neighbourhood Houses Tasmania, the peak body that advocates for the 35 houses, on the \$5 million cost of living booster package. The release is dated 17 August 2022, and is titled Neighbourhood houses across Tasmania to receive \$1.75 million:

The Tasmanian Government has announced a \$5 million cost of living booster package which includes \$1.75 million for Tasmania's Neighbourhood Houses. Each of the houses will receive an additional \$50,000.

Neighbourhood Houses Tasmania (NHT) welcomes the government investment with the NHT Acting Board Chair Debbie Smith saying "This is a gigantic win for Neighbourhood houses and reward for the efforts that have been undertaken by the current board and CEO. I would like to thank the board members and CEO for arranging the meeting with Minister Nic Street to make this all happen, and of course Minister Street for going in to bat for us and ultimately getting us the funding that we all so much need."

....

NHT CEO Michael Bishop praised the Tasmanian Government saying "The Tasmanian Government are to be congratulated for this generous acknowledgement of the value of Neighbourhood Houses in working with Tasmanian Communities and making a difference to many people who are experiencing distress and financial hardship."

Mr President, this additional funding will be utilised differently by all neighbourhood houses, tailored to suit their respective circumstances and community requirements. In my electorate of Prosser, the Okines Community House plans to use some of this additional funding to host free cooking classes for the community. These classes will be taught by qualified dieticians and will teach attendees how to cook healthy and nutritious meals. Following the class, the attendees will be provided with fresh ingredients to take home so they can cook their newly learned recipes for their family and friends.

Sitting suspended from 1.00 p.m. to 2.30 p.m.

RECOGNITION OF VISITORS

Mr PRESIDENT - Before I call on questions without notice I welcome to the Chamber Dr George Carter, from the Australian National University, who will be the guest speaker at tonight's Commonwealth Parliamentary Association branch dinner. Dr Carter is a research fellow in geopolitics and regionalism at the Department of Pacific Affairs. He is also the Director for the ANU Pacific Institute at the ANU. Dr Carter, among many things, lectures courses and undertakes research in international relations, diplomacy, security, environment and climate change policy, cross-cultural communications and Pacific studies. He is from Samoa with family in Apia where we all hope to return some day. Dr Carter has a rich heritage embracing Samoan, Tuvaluan, I-Kiribati, Chinese and British ancestry and this informs much of his work and interests. We very much look forward to you being our guest speaker this evening and I am sure all members in the Legislative Council will join me in welcoming you to our Chamber.

QUESTIONS

Cam River Bridge Damage

Ms FORREST question to LEADER of the GOVERNMENT in the LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL, Mrs HISCUTT

[2.32 p.m.]

With regard to the recent damage to the Cam River Bridge and works related to the construction of a new bridge:

- (1) Will the Government undertake a full assessment of the factors contributing to the damage to the existing bridge, including:
 - (a) the impact of flood waters during initial heavy events, and
 - (b) the role that works on the new bridge may have played in the damage to the existing bridge, and
 - (c) if so, when will this occur?
- (2) When will the results be made public? If not, why not?
- (3) What is the expected time for repair of the existing bridge to enable two-way traffic? I would like that confirmed again because there is some speculation about differing items.
- (4) What actual contingencies are in place to ensure safe and timely crossings of the Cam River in the Somerset vicinity if the existing bridge needs to be closed due to current or future damage to the existing bridge in light of ongoing rain?

ANSWER

- (1) The Government is currently committed and focused on the repair of the existing bridge. The large increase in water and the speed of water flow from last week's extreme weather event is the main cause.

We are continuing investigations to gain a more detailed understanding of how the flood waters affected the bridge, including whether construction works on the new bridge contributed to the impact.

A suitable assessment of the damage and contributing factors will be undertaken after the bridge has reopened and any residual risk suitably dealt with.

- (2) Information will be made available to the public as appropriate, noting that the factors contributing to the damage may be complex and are not likely to be understood for some time.
- (3) Current estimates are the repair works will be completed around next weekend, being the 29 and 30 October 2022, weather permitting. The repair work will allow the bridge to be opened to two lanes of traffic.
- (4) The Government is currently committed and focused on the repair of the existing bridge. Real time monitoring of the existing bridge is in place with no current indication that the bridge will become unsafe to use. Additional modelling and analysis of the bridge is also being undertaken by consultants to ensure current and future loading of the bridge is fully understood. Additional mitigation to reduce further damages to the bridge is being put in place.

Free priority bus services are operating across the Cam River Bridge and the public is encouraged to use these services, if possible, to reduce time frames crossing the river.

Construction of a new bridge at the location has already commenced. The new bridge will be higher and wider, with the pier footing of the new bridge ranging from 10 metres to 30 metres deep and anchored into the bedrock to mitigate the risk of damage by floods, providing a sustainable, long-lasting structure with low maintenance needs.

State of the Environment Report

Ms WEBB question to LEADER of the GOVERNMENT in the LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL, Mrs HISCUTT

[2.35 p.m.]

In relation to the public statement by the Minister for Planning issued on 29 September 2022 announcing the Government's intention to issue a direction to the Tasmanian Planning Commission (TPC) to produce a State of the Environment Report (SOE) by June 2024, can the Government:

- (1) confirm whether the 2024 SOE report will use the internationally and nationally recognised system of environmental economic accounting (SEEA) as its environmental reporting framework, as endorsed by former Tasmanian environment minister, the honourable Elise Archer MP, at the 2017 meeting of Environment Ministers;
- (2) if the SEEA is not intended as the SOE's environmental reporting framework, please detail the following:
 - (a) the alternative environmental reporting framework intended to inform the 2024 SOE;
 - (b) any comparative analysis undertaken of the cost benefit of the SEEA and the alternative environmental reporting frameworks; or
 - (c) in the absence of any comprehensive comparative analysis, the rationale for adopting a different environmental reporting framework than the nationally endorsed SEEA model?

ANSWER

Thank you, Mr President. I thank the member for her question.

- (1) This will be a matter for the independent TPC who will prepare the 2024 SOE report in accordance with the requirements of section 29 of the State Policies and Projects Act 1993.
- (2) This is a matter for the independent TPC.

King Island - Refrigerated Freight Service

Ms FORREST question to LEADER of the GOVERNMENT in the LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL, Mrs HISCUTT

[2.37 p.m.]

With regard to the decision of Bass Island Line (BIL) to commence a refrigerated container service between King Island and mainland Tasmania:

- (1) Which businesses on King Island were contacted and/or consulted directly regarding this proposed service?
- (2) Which individuals on King Island were contacted and/or consulted directly about this proposed service?
- (3) Of those consulted, which ones supported the introduction and indicated their intention to use the service?

ANSWER

Thank you, Mr President. I thank the member for her question and the answers to (1), (2) and (3) are in the statement I am about to provide.

BIL continues to build a strong working relationship with existing and potential customers on the island. Out of personal and professional courtesy, and respect for those existing and potential customers and the individuals who have engaged in discussions around doing business with BIL, it would be inappropriate to provide the level of information required to answer these questions in detail. Instead, the following high-level summary is provided.

BIL engaged directly with shipping agents, retailers and businesses on the opportunities the perishables service presented. The overall response was heavily in favour of retaining the relationship with the existing air freight provider. BIL will continue to work with retailers and customers on King Island to assist in reducing the impact of cost of living pressures to the community on every day perishable food items. The introduction of the refrigerated container service is one way to help with this.

Ms Forrest - Through you, Mr President. I particularly asked for a breakdown because of all the people I spoke to on the island, which is a lot, none of them were directly consulted. That is why I was interested. Anyway, we are clearly not going to get that information. They would have been happy to have their names mentioned as not being asked. Perhaps I should have asked negatively rather than positively.

King Island - Health and Ambulance Services

Ms FORREST question to LEADER of the GOVERNMENT in the LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL, Mrs HISCUTT

[2.39 p.m.]

With regard to health and ambulance services on King Island:

- (1) Does the model used by UK company, Operational Research in Health, to inform Ambulance Tasmania's decision-making regarding the level of ambulance services from volunteer-only stations to single-branch, double-branch and career stations, consider the unique and often challenging circumstances experienced by ambulance volunteers living in isolated and remote communities, including King Island and Flinders Island? If not, does the minister believe specific consideration should be given to the level of ambulance services provided on King Island and Flinders Island?
- (2) Will the Premier consider the employment of a paramedic practitioner on King Island to work across the THS ambulance services and other community health services on King Island? If so, when is this likely to be considered and/or progressed?

ANSWER

- (1) Operational Research in Health (ORH) is currently undertaking work to develop a 10-year Ambulance Tasmania ambulance station and service delivery master plan. The development of the master plan includes all Ambulance Tasmania stations and emergency medical services, which encompasses volunteer stations and community emergency response teams or CERTs. This includes King and Flinders islands.
- (2) The ORH master plan is looking at the type of ambulance services that are provided to better meet the medical needs of communities across Tasmania. The modelling work includes the recently introduced community paramedic roles. Community paramedics are provided with additional training in assessment and provide a primary health care focus. Community paramedics are currently employed in Burnie, Launceston and Hobart. The ORH master plan will consider service delivery in rural and more remote areas where the community paramedic role may be of increased benefit to those communities. The minister is advised that the master plan is expected to be provided by the end of the year.

Murchison Highway - Proposed Upgrades

Ms FORREST question to LEADER of the GOVERNMENT in the LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL, Mrs Hiscutt

[2.41 p.m.]

With regard to the proposed upgrade to the Murchison Highway between Rosebery and Zeehan, what is the proposed timetable for this project, including:

- (1) the state of the current works program;
- (2) anticipated construction and commencement date; and
- (3) anticipated construction and completion date?

ANSWER

- (1) The Murchison Highway upgrade for the section between Rosebery and Zeehan is currently in design.
- (2) Construction is presently expected to commence in late 2023.
- (3) Completion is anticipated to be mid-2024 or early 2025, depending on the final construction methodology.

King Island - Community Cabinet

Ms FORREST question to LEADER of the GOVERNMENT in the LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL, Mrs HISCUTT

[2.42 p.m.]

With regard to facilitating direct community engagement between the Government and residents and businesses on King Island, when will the next community cabinet meeting be held on King Island?

ANSWER

The sitting schedule for next year has not been finalised. As soon as that has been finalised those dates will then be progressed.

Ms FORREST - Hopefully, we will get a date then too.

King Island - Shipping Services

Ms FORREST question to LEADER of GOVERNMENT in the LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL, Mrs Hiscutt

[2.44 p.m.]

My final question to the Leader with regard to shipping services to and from King Island:

- (1) I understand the new Devonport Port facility for Bass Island Line (BIL) includes a loading ramp and has a levy imposed to assist in recouping some of the costs associated with the new ramp.

How long does TasPorts or the minister envisage it will take with this levy to recoup the out-front costs related to the new berth?

- (2) How many crews are currently employed by TasPorts and/or Bass Island Line to service Bass Island Line?
 - (a) Have the expected savings related to reduce crew and other costs materialised with the withdrawal of the Victorian leg?
 - (b) If so, the stated saving was approximately \$2 million. Has this been achieved?

ANSWER

- (1) In early 2022, TasPorts, the port operator, invested \$2.4 million in the construction of a new multi-user roll-on/roll-off, a RORO ramp at the Port of Devonport to support King Island shipping needs. The RORO ramp is a long-term solution and will play an important role in supporting King Island shipping and other similar commercial vessels calling at the Port of Devonport. TasPorts notes the application of an infrastructure levy on investment in new port infrastructure is an appropriate

and acceptable commercial practice which the businesses intend to follow into the future.

- (2) TasPorts notes that BIL's crewing arrangements are outsourced to a reputable provider of the service and crew are employed under an appropriate enterprise agreement, ensuring the high standard of conditions for workers. There is a total of two crews employed month-on, month-off, noting there are sufficient numbers to safely operate the service.
- (2) (a) Negotiations are currently underway with Polaris, which is providing the crew.

Ms FORREST - The Leader said (2)(a), and there was (2)(b). I said to be or not to be. Have the savings of \$2 million that were stated as the reason for withdrawal of the Victorian leg been achieved? I looked at the TasPorts annual report today and there is barely anything in it on Bass Island Line. In fact, I had to get the magnifying glass to read it.

Mrs HISCUTT - I apologise to the member for Murchison, there is a (2)(a) and a (2)(b). I do not have the (2)(b) here so I will resubmit that for tomorrow.

Rosebery Community Health Centre - After Hours Access

Ms FORREST question to LEADER of the GOVERNMENT in the LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL, Mrs Hiscutt

[2.46 p.m.]

Mr President, with regard to after hours access to care at the Rosebery Community Health Centre:

- (1) What after-hours services are provided from the health centre?
- (2) Is there a triage nurse available and if so, is the triage nurse onsite?
- (3) If the triage nurse is onsite, can patients attend the health centre for minor ailments?
- (4) If not, where are they to seek medical care?

ANSWER

Mr President, the Minister for Health is advised that due to recruitment challenges, a temporary model has been implemented at the Rosebery Community Health Centre. Under this model, the centre operates from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m., seven days a week. During these times, there is a triage nurse onsite and patients visit the nurse for any concerns, including minor ailments.

The minister is also advised that Ochre Medical Centre continues to provide services from the health centre.

Should anyone present to the Rosebery Community Health Centre after hours, there are signs providing information on the available options, including a nurse on call. After hours, the telephone is diverted to a West Coast District Hospital registered triage nurse in charge who can review the person over the phone and direct them to attend West Coast District Hospital or North West Regional Hospital if appropriate. For members of the community who require assistance outside of these hours, they are encouraged to call HealthDirect on 1800 022 222 or in an emergency dial 000 immediately.

The minister is also advised that requirements are continuing in earnest.

Ms FORREST - Does the mine know? It pays for half the service.

Paediatric Rheumatologist Access

Ms RATTRAY question to LEADER of the GOVERNMENT in the LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL, Mrs Hiscutt

[2.49 p.m.]

- (1) Leader, is the Government aware that children living with musculoskeletal conditions, including arthritis, do not have access to a Tasmanian-based paediatric rheumatologist?
- (2) Does the Government intend to explore opportunities to secure a Tasmanian-based paediatric rheumatologist?

ANSWER

- (1) Tasmanian children are currently provided access to a paediatric rheumatologist who visits from Melbourne to provide services twice a year, as well as a visiting medical specialist in rheumatology who sees some children.

The specialist rheumatology workforce in Tasmania is small and coupled with Tasmania's population profile, it makes it challenging to provide safe and sustainable Tasmanian-based services in some subspecialties, such as paediatric rheumatology.

- (2) Through the Our Healthcare Future forums, the department is undertaking a clinical service planning process. This process is examining the clinical services that are provided across the state and will make recommendations on the clinical services that should be provided in each region.

The Department of Health has met with, and will continue to engage with, representatives from the Australian Rheumatology Association, the ARA, to discuss national and Tasmanian rheumatology workforce challenges, opportunities to expand the rheumatology services offered in Tasmania, and innovative models to increase training capacity and to deliver services.

MOTION

Importance of Neighbourhood Houses in Tasmania

Resumed from page 31.

[2.51 p.m.]

Ms HOWLETT (Prosser) - The Okines Community House also plans to use the funds to purchase a new large double-door fridge, which they intend to fill with produce donated by local farmers and also vegetables grown onsite in the community garden. This will contribute to enhancing the neighbourhood house's Foodbank program. Neighbourhood houses and community gardens are intertwined and provide communities with opportunities for social connection, as well as providing place-based, sustainable and accessible food and garden programs.

Sustainability is inherent in community gardens. Houses embrace sustainability, incorporating education through teaching people about growing things, understanding nutrition, budgeting use of produce and creating affordable, nutritious meals. The long-term benefits of this capacity-building approach include literacy and numeracy outcomes, futureproofing and planning, with the development of seed banks, orchards and shared community plots.

The legacy of the past and the hope of the future are underpinned by the community development ethos, at the heart of neighbourhood houses, driven by a commitment to make a difference to people's lives and opportunities. This strength has been the backbone supporting the changed role of neighbourhood houses as they have evolved from a gathering space for a sense of belonging to a responsive community resource, providing a range of supports through place-based programs, projects and services.

The neighbourhood houses in Prosser provide a diverse array of services that include children's playgroups, autism support groups, sports programs, counselling services, family support and intervention, and free-to-use laundry and shower facilities. During the challenging past few years, neighbourhood houses have risen to respond to the rapidly changing social needs of their communities.

Communities trust their local neighbourhood house and because there is no screening or waiting times, people will often go to their neighbourhood house seeking advice on how to manage very complex system services for health, mental health, family violence, poverty, homelessness and family support. In the 2020-21 financial year, over half a million occasions of this service were provided through neighbourhood houses throughout Tasmania.

One of the biggest challenges during the COVID-19 pandemic, as well as the health challenges, was our mental health and wellbeing and that feeling of connection. We recognise the vital role of neighbourhood houses in keeping and maintaining community connections and the practical support they provided in response to the pandemic. We acknowledge and we thank the network, the staff and the volunteers for their response to the pandemic, for adapting their services to meet the required health measures as determined under the Tasmanian public health emergency. They all helped build strength and resilience in their communities, quickly responding and adapting to changing needs, as well as acknowledging their ongoing commitment to the people they support under some very challenging circumstances.

I acknowledge the work of Neighbourhood Houses Tasmania CEO, Michael Bishop, who has only recently left NHT after a number of successful years in the leadership role. In particular, I reference his paper to the recent neighbourhood houses conference in my content that follows:

In response to the increasing social isolation and community fragmentation caused by the impacts of COVID, many Neighbourhood Houses began or increased their community outreach service offerings and [like a majority of businesses and other organisations] adapted to meet their local community's needs.

The Government recognised this community value in 2020, providing:

a one-off grant for each Neighbourhood House to assist in responding to COVID impacts to Tasmanian communities. These grants were not specifically tied to outcomes and were used in creative ways to enable community access to House resources even during lock-down. Neighbourhood Houses adapted to continue to support community members through phone, internet, referral, and essential face-to-face services, using appropriate risk-management measures [to prevent COVID-19 transmissions] such as physical distancing and hygiene measures.

The grant allocation signified a formal shift by government in redefining the neighbourhood houses as an essential community service. Vital programs including food relief, meal delivery and collection care packages, no-interest loan applications, computer and phone access, social support via phone, information sharing and community connections were able to be continued during COVID-19 restrictions, thanks to the dedicated staff, board and volunteers.

Many neighbourhood houses set up physically distant appointment-based internet use for Centrelink and MyGov purposes to assist community members to access Australian government online services. Online exercise programs, information sharing, including printed Public Health information for those without internet access, and community connection programs online, and by phone, kept people around Tasmania informed. A range of innovative social activities also was facilitated via the internet.

The work of the houses during and since the COVID-19 pandemic has underlined the importance of houses to their communities. Also, the Government has demonstrated its strong support for neighbourhood houses across Tasmania.

Consultations with the house network are currently underway to develop the next neighbourhood house strategy. The current one expires in June, and it will include addressing the eligibility criteria for any new houses required.

I extend my gratitude and acknowledgement - as I am quite certain every member in this place also does - to the wonderful people working in and around Tasmania's neighbourhood houses for making such a difference every day to the lives of many Tasmanians when they need the help most. Thank you.

[2.58 p.m.]

Ms LOVELL (Rumney) - I stand and speak to this motion in support of neighbourhood houses and the critical role that they play in communities right around Tasmania.

A number of us have spoken in this Chamber at various times about the neighbourhood houses in our own electorates, and the role that they play. I do not think there is any question among any of us about the critical nature of that role, and the importance of all the varied services that they provide to local communities.

The member for Prosser spoke about some of those including food relief, social connection, NILS loans and what a serendipitous synergy it was to have the previous CEO of Neighbourhood Houses Tasmania and now current CEO of NILS, Mr John Hooper, in the Chamber this morning as we prepared to debate this motion.

I acknowledge the 11 years of service that John gave to Neighbourhood Houses Tasmania as CEO, and also acknowledge the outgoing CEO, Michael Bishop, who has recently left the role, as the member for Prosser spoke about.

We understand, we all know, and there is no argument about the critical role that neighbourhood houses play. We have all seen that critical role become even more important in recent years particularly during and throughout COVID-19, but in more recent times with the increase in demand that they are facing on all of the services they provide as the cost of living rises and more and more people in our communities are struggling with everyday expenses.

We saw, through COVID-19, an absolute flood of demand on neighbourhood houses. I spoke to the neighbourhood houses in my electorate throughout that time and one of the things they all said was that they were noticing, not only an increase in demand from the people who they had been engaging with for a long time, but finding that people in the community who had never had to reach out for that kind of support before were engaging with the neighbourhood house because they required support, whether it be social connection, food relief, meal deliveries, support in navigating Centrelink. There were so many services people were requiring that help with that they had never had to seek before and that was a bit of a moment in time for Tasmania. I am sure it is something that has reflected all around Australia but particularly here in Tasmania, a moment in time where we saw a real shift in the service neighbourhood houses were providing and who they were providing that service to.

The member for Prosser spoke about the government grants allocated at the time through COVID-19 to neighbourhood houses and the innovative ways that those grants were put to use. What that demonstrates is not only that there is a huge amount of innovation and brilliant ideas - anyone who has been to a neighbourhood house and spoken to the staff and volunteers knows they know better than anyone, not only what is needed in their community, but how best to deliver that service. How best to make use of every cent they get. The various programs and supports they came up with and ways to use that funding, not only demonstrates that and particularly that innovation and way of thinking, but it demonstrates there is no money to spare in the neighbourhood house budget. Every cent they can get goes to good use. The neighbourhood houses in my electorate not only rely on government funding, but they put in applications for grants. They will help their community with Tasmanian Community Fund grants for various things they might be able to fund another way. There is no spare money, and they make very good use of every cent they get their hands on.

I also acknowledge those who work and volunteer in neighbourhood houses. I feel like I am repeating this - anyone who has been to a neighbourhood house and engaged with the staff and volunteers knows the absolute passion they feel for their community. You would not be doing that job if you were not passionate about your community. They are not doing it for the money; I can tell you that now. They work endless hours, I know, particularly during COVID-19 when there were restrictions around the types of ways that people could engage with a neighbourhood house.

One example that always comes to mind for me is the Clarendon Vale Neighbourhood Centre which runs a food relief program on a Tuesday evening - they cook meals and they invite members of the community into the centre to share a meal. They call it 'Soul'. They went from a busy night of maybe 80 to 100 meals being provided to their community through COVID-19 to not being able to do that any longer. They moved to an outreach model where they were delivering meals and at the peak they went from 80 to 100 meals a night to 300 meals in a night. They had teams of volunteers coming in. They had days where the staff and volunteers were there from 7 a.m. in the morning until 11 o'clock at night. They were not getting paid for those hours. They were staffed for part of that time but certainly for the rest of the time they were volunteering. They had teams of volunteers coming in with their cars, loading up the meals and hand-delivering them to people in the community. They have maintained that engagement with many of those people who were among that group who never had to reach out for that kind of support before, so they work endless hours. They are passionate about their community and they want to do everything they can to not only support but empower their community to have access to services they may not have otherwise.

I recently attended their annual conference dinner. Because of the nature of the work they are doing - all doing very similar work, but very spread out across the state with 35 houses right across Tasmania - they do not get a lot of time to spend talking to each other about what is going on in different communities and how they might be doing things differently. How they might be able to improve what they are doing in their own centre. So they have an annual conference where they come together. They spread this around the state and this year it was in the south; next year it will be somewhere else.

Mrs Rattray - It was Deloraine last year.

Ms LOVELL - Yes, Deloraine.

Ms Howlett - Sorell.

Ms LOVELL - Yes, down past Sorell at another venue down there. They have a conference that usually runs for two or three days. They have a number of workshops, skill development, skill sharing; just time to spend with each other and talk about what is going on around the state, and they have an annual dinner. I attended the dinner and the dinner has a theme every year and this year's theme was flower power. We get invited to a lot of events. Often there is a theme and I said okay, sure, I will wear a floral top or whatever. I arrived at this dinner and I sent a text message to my former colleague and the former member for Pembroke, Jo Siejka, who had in her time here been the shadow minister for community service and development. I said to her, 'I am at this dinner, have you been to one of these before?' The very first thing she said to me was 'I hope you committed to the theme'. I had not committed to the theme; but let me tell you, I learnt my lesson. Next year, I will be putting in a lot more effort.

I commend the staff and the volunteers and it was lovely to see them able to spend that time together, to let their hair down a bit and have some time where they could put themselves first for a change. They were not even putting themselves first. They had a moment where they could relax, share a dinner together, have a laugh. There was a lot of laughter, a lot of fun, to enjoy the evening and enjoy that conference. It was a pleasure to be there and share it with them.

We know that people are relying on neighbourhood houses more than ever before and I am sure members have heard stories from around their electorate that break your heart when you think about the things that people are living with, when you talk to the people in neighbourhood centres and houses for engaging with these people in our community every day. I know every one of those houses will tell you they have people who come and sit there all day. They might sit there to have a coffee, or they might come to a workshop; but they stay. They stay because it is warm and it is dry and they can get a cup of coffee and maybe some lunch or a snack. They can go home with a loaf of bread and something from the various food relief programs.

I have heard of a devastating story from a person from the Derwent Valley Community House, Mr President, in your electorate. They spoke of a young person in their community who was lucky enough to be living in a private rental - so they have a roof over their head - but all their income goes on their rent. That young person cannot afford to have the power on, so he runs an extension cord from his home to the neighbour's house so that he can boil the kettle and have a hot drink. He cannot do that all the time because it is an imposition on his neighbour, so every time he wants a coffee he has to check with the neighbours that it is all right to use the power. The level of indignity that comes with living in that sort of situation is heartbreaking and it is a sad reality that more and more Tasmanians are in that position as interest rates rise, as rents increase, as grocery prices rise; and we know there is no real relief on the way.

There were reports in the *Mercury* today of some data collected in an EMRS poll. Half of Tasmanians are reporting that they have less money to spare than 12 months ago. More than a quarter of home owners and renters spend between 30 and 49 per cent of their gross income on rent or loan repayments, and we know that is the very definition of being in mortgage and rental stress. Eighty per cent of Tasmanians are expecting to spend more on food and groceries in the next three months. Three-quarters of survey respondents reported that running their vehicle is costing them more than before. One in 10 renters describe their financial situation as bad, which means they are not able to meet basic outgoings. I find that devastating. That data is a sobering reminder for all of us, that cost of living pressures are having an enormous impact on Tasmanians. As a result, and I spoke about this in my contribution when we were debating the budget, more and more people are going to be reaching out for support through public services and community services. Neighbourhood centres are absolutely going to be at the centre of that.

There are two ways, as I see it, that a government can approach that. When you know your population is going to need more support you can either pay them more and get more money in people's pockets so they are not having to rely on those services. I know that is not something that the Government can do for everyone. Alternatively, you can fund those services better - and that is what we need to see, particularly in the short term.

I was very pleased to see the Government's recent announcement to allocate an additional \$50 000 to each of the neighbourhood houses. I wholeheartedly welcome that announcement.

I had written to the minister before that announcement, calling for an increase in funding. I wrote to him, because just before that announcement was made I met with a number of neighbourhood house managers who came to my office, some from my electorate, some from outside my electorate. They said, 'If we do not get increase in funding we are going to have to either cut services - we are not just going to run at a loss, but run at a greater loss than we did last year - or we are going to have to cut hours.' Every one of them around the table said, 'We cannot cut staff, I will have to cut my own hours. As manager, I will have to cut my pay.' They would not cut their hours, we know that. They would still be there. 'I have to cut my pay because we cannot make this work'.

While I welcome this funding and I commend the minister for that decision, I implore the minister to make this an ongoing increase in funding. It has been a long time since neighbourhood houses have had a significant increase in funding, but let me tell you, they are seeing a significant in demand each and every day.

I have one last comment to make, and that is about assets and capital investment. I know the Government has made some funding commitment to a capital investment program, which I believe might be ending at the end of this financial year. I urge the Government to turn their attention to capital investment because there are some neighbourhood houses that are in desperate need of some pretty significant upgrades. I have one in my electorate where there was a question over who pays for a hot water cylinder repair. They do not have time to be worried about that. They certainly do not have money to pay for it, but they need their hot water. They were trying to do something about it because they know they cannot function without it.

We have the neighbourhood house in East Devonport, where half of the building has been condemned, as I understand it. They are operating out of the top floor, which presents enormous challenges in itself because of the accessibility issues. There are people in their community who would not be able to access that top floor, who are probably in need of those services and are not able to do so because that house needs those upgrades so badly.

I support the motion. I welcome the funding that was provided this year but I strongly encourage the Government to make this an ongoing commitment. We know, and the member for Prosser has spoken about the critical role neighbourhood houses play and the fantastic work that they do. They are not going to be able to continue to do that past this financial year without an ongoing, secure increase in funding. I support the motion.

[3.13 p.m.]

Ms RATTRAY (McIntyre) - Mr President, I also rise to support the motion put forward by the member for Prosser. It has generated quite a bit of support in this House because, like other speakers, I acknowledge the value of neighbourhood houses or, as some of them in our communities are known as, the community house.

I will pick up on a couple of points that the member for Rumney made about the infrastructure upgrades that are so desperately needed for quite a lot of houses. A lot of the houses when they were first established were literally a house in a street. They have been repurposed over time, but they are still often a basic three-bedroom house that has an extension on the back and the garage has been made into some work space. That is pretty much what a couple of mine are, particularly Deloraine House and the Dorset Community House. They were just three-bedroom houses in a street in the town and they are being repurposed.

They are tired and they are not necessarily fit for purpose but they do serve that critical purpose of supporting communities. When the member for Rumney talked about what people do when they go to the house and why they go to the house in their community - some of them go for a shower and to wash their clothes. That is what it is because if you cannot access a shower at the local caravan park and you are homeless and living in your car, you have to be able to go somewhere to have a shower and at least wash your clothes one or two times a week.

As we know, the houses are not open on weekends so it is only that weekday support that the community houses in some of our neighbourhoods can offer. As well, it is about the people, the staff and the volunteers who give their time so freely.

We know there is some paid support at our community houses. There is the community house centre manager, but a lot of the other support people around them are all volunteers and they might well be driving the community bus or delivering some food in areas of need where people are short on food and that type of thing.

I expect that the 30-odd neighbourhood houses right across Tasmania are all doing exactly what the neighbourhood houses in my electorate of McIntyre are doing, providing that valuable service.

This motion actually took me back to when I was a member of the Dorset Community House Board. I was first appointed to the board through my position on the Dorset Council. I stayed on after that for quite some time because it still felt like I had opportunity to provide some input into the running of the community house at the time. I am no longer a board member. You are not a very effective team member in any organisation when you are away from home such a lot. You want to be but you know that it is not fair to take a position where you might be missing one or two meetings, particularly if they are on a monthly basis and you are only there for half the year. It is not effective in my mind. You need to let those positions go to people who are going to be able to be more regular attendees. That is the only reason that I have not been part of that particular organisation in my role here.

We could go on about the value and the importance, as the motion notes the importance neighbourhood houses play in economic, social and mental wellbeing. That has already been touched on by the mover of the motion and then the next speaker as well.

We absolutely know, each and every one of us who represents a community, that they are that linchpin between the community and the people in the community. They organise events, they do Eating with Friends as being among the various names for what they call them. Eating with Friends is a very popular one and I often attend when I am about because it is a great way to connect with communities.

For instance, the Deloraine House Inc., whenever I need to meet with people in and around the Meander Valley community, I hire some space at Deloraine House and they provide me with a private room and a cup of tea if I need it and a general catch-up on what is happening in the community. I am able to put some funds back into the coffers for the community house to be able to do something extra for their community. They have wonderful events.

I also recall going to the gala dinner event last year in Deloraine, and I also dressed so low key. I am not sure that anyone knew I was there because everyone else goes to such great lengths to get into the theme and it was a bit of a country theme so I should have known better.

Ms Forrest - You should have been right - a girl from the country.

Ms RATTRAY - I should have had an Akubra hat. I could have borrowed one from your good self, Mr President.

Mr PRESIDENT - For a fee.

Ms RATTRAY - Yes.

Ms Forrest - You could probably find some good boots around somewhere, I am sure.

Ms RATTRAY - Sometimes we go from one event to another and particularly when they are quite a way from home base you tend to be starting out early and you make a complete day of it.

Ms Forrest - A pair of gumboots in the boot. You are never lost without them.

Ms RATTRAY - I have a pair of Merry People boots, the rubber-looking Blunnies.

Ms Lovell - They are excellent boots.

Ms RATTRAY - Yes, they are called Merry People.

Ms Forrest - There you go. That would have done it.

Ms RATTRAY - They are quite a bit more expensive than the good old black wellies.

Mr Gaffney - Did you get those from the community house? Let us get back on track.

Ms RATTRAY - I did not.

Ms Forrest - She is donating them to the community house though.

Ms RATTRAY - I feel like I might well have been chastised by the member for Mersey, again.

Mr Gaffney - Never. A good friend.

Ms RATTRAY - Former friend.

Mr PRESIDENT - It is probably a case of people in glass houses throwing stones. You might go off the track but he goes right up the mountain at times.

Ms RATTRAY - Thank you very much, Mr President, I appreciate your support.

I was talking about the fact that we know the value and the benefit that neighbourhood houses play in the economic, social and mental wellbeing of Tasmanians. That goes for the people who go there as well. The number of times that my office has directed a constituent to the community house, I believe that many of us would have those same experiences. Legal Aid comes there once a month. You will see a support person for this or you will see a support

person for that or you will be able to get assistance with some form-filling out or something like that. There are a myriad services that are provided by our community houses and we know that they are so important to the people who we represent.

Moving on to part two of the motion where it talks about the volunteers, and I have already indicated that they are doing everything. Every piece of what the house delivers they are involved in, whether they are digging up the garden patch out the back to plant some more vegetables or whether they are cleaning out the fridge inside the centre that has some of that produce that has been provided, waiting for the people to come in and access it. You can get a large bundle of carrots from most of the houses for 50 cents and if you do not have 50 cents it does not matter. You will walk out with what you need if it is in that fridge or on those shelves at any given day.

Some of the businesses are so generous. I will be driving around and quite often I will see a note up, 'The baker has delivered today. Come in and get a loaf of bread'.

Ms Lovell - Your local farmer; your local butcher.

Ms RATTRAY - Your local farmer with potatoes, onions and carrots. Somebody has excess eggs or whatever. It has the community at its heart and it is so integral to the communities that we represent.

I thank those who work and volunteer in our neighbourhood houses.

I know that none of those who volunteer are there because they are looking for any acknowledgement of the work they do but it is important that we do acknowledge and thank them for their continued investment with their time, energy and often it is possibly financial as well, supporting our neighbourhood and community houses.

The recent investment that the Government has provided of an additional \$50 000 for each of the 35 neighbourhood houses to do more support for those in the community. I will be touching base with my community houses as that money rolls out. However, as the member for Rumney said, more than often it is possibly just keeping the lights on and making sure the facility itself is good enough to function. You would have to hope that not all of that \$50 000 in funding has to go to maintenance, caring and looking after the facility itself and that it does go into programs and opportunities for those areas that a community identifies as so important for their own community. The people who know best about what is needed in the community are those who are on the ground in the community connecting with people at every opportunity.

For instance, earlier in the year, a couple of the houses organised International Women's Day events which is often a wonderful opportunity to do something different. In 2021, there was a walk-up Mt Stronach. I never thought I would make it, but I did. However, a lot of people stayed behind to just help keep pushing me on. It was an amazing opportunity to share that event and significant day with a lot of people I do not necessarily engage with, certainly not on a regular basis. After having that experience, I feel like I have some new friends, because we reached the top of Mt Stronach on that significant International Women's Day on 8 March. The lunch was also delicious and we got to the top. We did not even have to carry our own lunch. It was there when we arrived. I mean wow, how fantastic. Just like that. It was fantastic.

Mr President, I could possibly get off track again and I will try not to, but I wholeheartedly support the motion the member for Prosser has put forward. I look forward to hearing other contributions. I do that by also saying we need to continue to look very closely at what community neighbourhood houses deliver in our own areas, across our electorates and across the state, because if they are not resourced then they are going to struggle to continue to provide those valuable services.

Hear, hear to the \$50 000 increase. Let us make it \$100 000 in the next budget.

I support the motion.

[3.28 p.m.]

Mr GAFFNEY (Mersey) - Mr President, I also thank the member for Prosser for bringing this forward and acknowledge the contributions from the members for McIntyre and Rumney.

Interestingly enough, each of these community houses are a bit different. They have a little bit of a different flair. If you want to lose at Scrabble, you go to the East Devonport Community House, because they are really good Scrabble players. I also have to say the dinners are fascinating, and John Hooper always set the bar very high with what he used to wear.

Recently I attended the Devonport Community House's 40th birthday. It was wonderful to hear the history and development of the club. Interestingly, although it is 40 years old, it has only had a few managers. I find that in most of the community houses, the managers tend to be there for quite a long time, because they are invested in what they do. You can tell that coming through the organisation or through the club. It is not surprising, because they are people with good hearts, who are effective leaders and work very hard. I asked Kate Beer, who is the manager of Devonport Community House if she would write a few words, and she sent a paragraph. I thought she would express it a lot better than I would. She said:

Over the years, you can see how community development works by looking at Neighbourhood Houses. Sometimes, returning to what has been done before, but never static. From crafts and playgroups to social businesses and food programs, it is all in response to the community and, hopefully, helps to make life a better experience for locals. It takes many people willing to volunteer their time and energy to make a Neighbourhood House run well, and that is important; but mostly it takes trust from government, to provide bipartisan support to Neighbourhood Houses over many years.

I thank all sides of politics for believing in us.

Kate made that same sort of comment at the 40th birthday and it was good that she highlighted it does not matter who has been in government or what side - everybody has been supportive of the community houses.

I also note that the community houses in Devonport and East Devonport were instrumental in supporting the first Men's Shed. The Men's Shed outgrew that space and now have their own space. The community houses also supported the community garden - which

is good if you are the patron of the chook club because you get the chooks for them - as well as the local play centre and a food bank.

They step in where they see there is a need, even if it is only for a short while. Sometimes they have the capacity to pull back once it is up and running. It is a good example of how fluid the organisation is, without losing sight of its structure.

The other thing they asked me to speak about, is that one of the four blocks of building a community is affirmation, which means that everybody within that community is important. Any time you walk into a community house everybody who is there feels valued and feels they have something to contribute. That is one of the strengths of community houses, and may they go on for many more years.

The other thing I like about them is that they are quite happy to have students from local colleges doing courses, or young people who were not at school coming along to help out. Those young people might be involved with helping with the babies or with other activities, as a way to try to give a bit of guidance to the young people outside a school setting. They also involved those people within their community that they knew may have recently have lost their partner or may not be travelling too well. They have the food banks, and the capacity to know what is going on in the community when it is needed.

I have a lot of respect for the community houses, the staff and also the volunteers, as would everybody in this place. I thank the member for Prosser for bringing this forward.

[3.33 p.m.]

Ms WEBB (Nelson) - Mr President, I am pleased to rise to speak in support of the member for Prosser's motion about the amazing work of the neighbourhood houses throughout our state. I thank the member for bringing the motion, to give us this opportunity. It has been a pleasure to listen to the contributions of other members. It is quite emblematic of neighbourhood houses that we are all keen to rise and speak so glowingly of them and indicate how highly we value them as part of our community.

I will try not to traverse too much of the same territory in my contribution.

Ms Rattray - You will be chastised as well.

Ms WEBB - I would say hear, hear, to the contributions thus far and to the rest to come, no doubt. As we know, we have our 35 neighbourhood houses throughout Tasmania playing a vital role supporting and empowering individuals and communities. Neighbourhood houses are run by the community for the community, offering a wide range of services and activities focused on supporting the social, economic and mental wellbeing of all Tasmanians.

I know that some members in this place may be lucky enough to have several neighbourhood houses within their electorates. The electorate of Nelson is home to only one, the Kingston Neighbourhood House, but what we lack in numbers we make up for in quality. The wide range of meaningful support that the Kingston Neighbourhood House provides never ceases to amaze me in my interactions with it and the people who spend time there. It includes being the first point of contact for community members going through difficult times or crises. It involves providing affordable and accessible child care. It includes providing a range of classes and activities and get-togethers focused on wellness and togetherness. That is just to

name a few. I am sure we are all familiar with that phrase, 'it takes a village to raise a child'. I have witnessed the ability of neighbourhood houses to serve as a village to support young families, often those who are most in need, and at times of vulnerability.

The Kingston Neighbourhood House also has a number of strategic partnerships that allows them to provide additional support to the community, including through food relief, as well as through wonderful local organisations like Kingborough Helping Hands and Kingborough Community Missions. They also host Orange Sky Laundry every week to provide laundry services to people experiencing homelessness. Others have mentioned the capacity of neighbourhood houses to provide some fundamental and practical services and support to community members who need them.

On the last Friday of each month, the Kingston Neighbourhood House hosts an Eating With Friends function, which is a real highlight. I am sadly often not able to make it, but I can say that my Dad is a regular attendee, and he attests to the excellent food and company. Those sorts of events facilitate social and community connections over affordable and nutritious meals, and that is a combination of things that we can benefit from at all times.

Neighbourhood house staff are highly skilled. Essentially, they are frontline workers, dealing regularly with people who might be experiencing a whole range of circumstances in their lives, including challenging circumstances such as mental health challenges, alcohol and drug issues, family violence, economic and social pitfalls. Neighbourhood house managers in particular are a lynchpin of much of the success that we see in this sector. The member for Mersey mentioned that there are neighbourhood house managers who often stay with the house for a long time, guiding it, and helping to shape it, and be shaped by the community. Being a neighbourhood house manager would be a labour of love, and that is what we see there with those longer tenures.

Imagine being in the shoes of a neighbourhood house manager, and the things that they would need to deal with throughout the course of a day: making sure that the house runs smoothly and dealing with crises that crop up, but also managing your own mental health and wellbeing so that you can be there the next day to keep doing more of the same - and again, in the days, weeks and months after that.

As noted in the motion, the other extremely important people to recognise in relation to the success of neighbourhood houses are those who volunteer their time to provide support and services and to assist in the governance of the houses. Like so many vital organisations focused on serving the community, the Kingston Neighbourhood House and others around the state would cease to function without the tireless work of committed and dedicated teams of volunteers. It is always a pleasure to speak to those involved in providing services and support at neighbourhood houses, or those running them through governance and committees or boards of management, and to learn how much they gain from volunteering their time, energy and skills to support their community. There is a lovely synergy between volunteers and their work, and those who benefit from it.

I put on the record my deep thanks to all those wonderful volunteers, as well as staff and board members and others, who work tirelessly to meet community members and provide timely and practical support through neighbourhood houses.

Madam Deputy President, the final point in the motion relates to government funding. I recognise the Government's previous announcement to invest an additional \$1.75 million into neighbourhood houses as part of its cost of living booster package. That additional funding was well received by Neighbourhood Houses Tasmania as the peak body for this sector, and by individual houses. I commend the Government for including that initiative and investment. It is fitting that it was there as part of that cost of living booster package, along with additional funding to food banks, charities, school lunch pilots, NILS and others. It signals an understanding from Government that properly supported and resourced frontline community service organisations have a significant role to play in assisting community members with their economic, social and mental wellbeing. I hope that is a recurring theme during the time the premier, Mr Rockcliff and the minister, Mr Street continue to have responsibility for decisions such as these. I add my voice to comments made by the member for Rumney, in relation to the need not just for one-off boosts - valuable though they are, they do not necessarily provide longevity for the benefits they initially generate.

It can be a real bane of the community sector's existence to be given drops of largesse here and there, but no security of funding to be able to continue to provide and meet the needs of the communities or cohort they are supporting. In fact, it can sometimes be a situation of awkwardness for an organisation if there is booster funding for a short period of time which allows the service to be created or a support to be provided. Then, because that funding is of short duration and it drops away, the services are in the position of having built an expectation for the services and support but not be in a position to be able to carry on delivering it. That is particularly unfortunate.

Mr Willie - The staff often bear the brunt of that.

Ms WEBB - Indeed. What will happen is the staff, the managers and their boards of governance will often seek to ensure they can continue that program, service or support but to do that they will have to either pay a personal price towards it or scrimp on other aspects of the services they are delivering. Potentially take from Peter to pay Paul. It is a very difficult position to be in, so it is excellent to see investments and important to see ongoing stable, secure investment into these sectors.

As the member for Mersey said, there is a lot of bipartisan support for the neighbourhood houses sector and that is wonderful. Others in the community sector sometimes look at budget time at the bits of support provided to neighbourhood houses and get a bit jealous, because it is easy to love neighbourhood houses. Governments of any flavour find it easy, potentially, to provide some additional funding there. We would never take that away from them. We also need to remember there are some other areas of our community service sector that require that sort of support too.

I will leave it at that. I appreciate the opportunity to speak to the motion and thank the member for Prosser. I hope it will get back to the sector that we have spoken so glowingly of them. I know there are members still to make their contributions. I look forward to hearing those also.

[3.42 p.m.]

Mr WILLIE (Elwick) - Mr President, it is my privilege to rise to speak about neighbourhood houses, I have three in my electorate. I also have one I share with you in your

electorate we go to together, share a barbeque lunch and the friendships there. It was in Elwick, once upon a time -

Mr PRESIDENT - You need to move on.

Mr WILLIE - It is a very strong neighbourhood house. Like other members, I commend the work of neighbourhood houses and the difference they make in our communities. I emailed this motion to the neighbourhood houses in my electorate, only yesterday. I received one back. There is one in particular I will speak about today that is having a particularly difficult time. The Goodwood Community Centre is grateful for the \$50 000. It will assist them with covering the huge cost of repairs to their building and grounds.

If members are not aware, Goodwood Community Centre has been subjected to significant antisocial behavior and destruction of property, along with neighbouring businesses, like Tassie Prime Meat. Members might remember Rahut, from that business in the paper describing the racial vilification and violence his workers have been subjected to. I do not think the perpetrators would be listening to any of this, but we stand with the community centre and Rahut and his workers. We do not accept the pernicious and illegal behaviour they have been subject to. We hope the perpetrators are accountable and receive the restorative justice they need to live a purposeful life as a contributing member of the community.

The \$50 000 will go towards \$12 000 in repairs due to disengaged youth and vandalism. They tell me they are working hard to find opportunities to support youth and their families, but as a community house they are limited in what they can do due to a lack of funding to pay an expert youth worker or youth workers or having a place-based space that supports their needs. There are many within the Glenorchy area that know we need a place-based youth-focused service. We currently have nowhere for them to go. Inspector John Ward - who I met with recently and have a good relationship with - and the Glenorchy police division are doing the best they can. Not just in the Glenorchy area but across the district, youth justice is a major issue in my electorate and yours.

The police only have limited resources and they cannot be everywhere all the time. Some of these youth need to reconnect with education and be supported with workers who are trauma-informed. It would be great if they wanted to get involved in a sport or some other interest, but intergenerational poverty often puts barriers in the way of participation. Food insecurity for all the Elwick community is an underlying issue and very hard for many families.

Goodwood has at least four people call a day requiring food support. We are in a privileged position as members of parliament who can refer people to neighbourhood houses, as the member for McIntyre was saying. They also refer people to us who might need advocacy. It is important we work collaboratively with the neighbourhood houses in our areas. West Moonah Community House, who I have had a long relationship with, have a food pantry and I have often provided items to that. It often runs empty and Goodwood is exactly the same. During COVID-19, I provided them a \$300 cheque just because they were running out of items. The need was so great, they were desperate and turned to my office for some help. I am sure they have turned to other members of parliament at times. In fact, the member for Clark helped Goodwood get a premier's discretionary grant to upgrade their alarm system recently because of the trouble they have been having.

Some of the other feedback is that volunteer numbers are down due to ongoing concerns around COVID-19. There are often elderly people who engage with neighbourhood houses. That is particularly the demographic that engage with the West Moonah Community House. They have a playground which has very young kids, but with Eating with Friends and that sort of things, it is an older demographic. Some of them have stopped coming because they are concerned about that. Going back to Goodwood, they have lost income because of the ongoing issue, they cannot hire out their hall to people in the community, they do not feel safe there. That is impacting them too, and the \$50 000 will go a little way to covering some of those losses in revenue.

Neighbourhood houses and community centres are the grass roots of community and members have reflected that, but they work on a shoestring budget. The member for Nelson said that other community organisations sometimes can be jealous. However, with the level of demand in our communities and the services they are providing, it is a shoestring budget because the demand is so great.

Ms Webb - No argument about that.

Mr WILLIE - Imagine what they can do without a shoestring budget, where we did cater for needs in our community. I will leave you with that.

[3.49 p.m.]

Mr VALENTINE (Hobart) - Mr President, I have to say I am not in a position to have a neighborhood house in Hobart.

Ms Rattray - Too well off.

Mr VALENTINE - Going through and looking at the list of neighbourhood houses I can see and the member to my left here, the member for McIntyre, has five. All I can say is the Government gets great benefit for every dollar invested. Why is that? Because it taps into community goodwill. Everyone that has been through neighbourhood houses, I have certainly visited neighbourhood houses in my role here but also, I have a shack at Dunalley and have been through the Dunalley Neighbourhood House.

Ms Rattray - You do have one then in your patch.

Mr VALENTINE - Yes, maybe, but not that I would represent, but nevertheless -

Mr PRESIDENT - You could be like the member for Elwick and just claim one.

Ms Forrest - That you have been to once.

Mr VALENTINE - It is obvious that there is a range of community groups in my electorate that perform a similar role in a way, in parts. Whether that is groups that are focused on the environment, Neighbourhood Watch or progress and community associations, we have many of those in the Hobart community and it gives the community focus. They are good value and provide a reason for being for some people.

I have often said in the past that there is a pandemic of loneliness in the older members of our community and it is increasing. It is the baby boomer bubble moving through, getting

now towards the end of that bubble. There are people who have lost their partners and loved ones and they are lonely.

Ms Forrest - That has been particularly exacerbated by COVID-19.

Mr VALENTINE - Absolutely, through the COVID-19 period, people being at home and feeling absolutely lonely.

Ms Forrest - And isolated.

Mr VALENTINE - And isolated.

Ms Forrest - Even in the city.

Mr VALENTINE - One might even say that in the city it is even worse for some because in a busy city -

Ms Rattray - You do not know your neighbour.

Mr VALENTINE - You do not know your neighbour, quite right. The point is, places like Mathers House, for instance, in Bathurst Street that is in my electorate, they play such an important role. I go in there on the occasion to have a meal or to grab a drink and to communicate with people who are in there. Here they all are playing mahjong or doing something else. They are getting some computing tuition and all of that activity goes on. It is good for their psyche, their development, their welfare to be able to communicate with people on a daily basis quite often. Even though I do not have one in my electorate, I want to underscore the tremendous value they provide to the community and for the government dollar. I thank the member for bringing the motion on.

I am sure you can see a return tenfold for the dollars invested. I remember when the member for Elwick was just elected, he had an inquiry into child and family centres. We went around all the different child and family centres and the value they were providing to the community - young people who had children and maybe single parents not able to access certain services, they were getting their services at those child and family centres. This is probably dealing with a different cohort of people in neighbourhood houses but the value that we could see through that inquiry, and I thank the member for instigating that inquiry because -

Mr Willie - It might have contributed to the six new ones that are being built.

Mr VALENTINE - It may well have but I am not here to spruik you.

Mr Willie - It was the Government.

Mr VALENTINE - I know but I do jest. These generally are in places where services are hard to access. There might not be a shopfront that somebody can walk up to and talk to someone behind the counter or a Service Tasmania shop. These are the only connection that people get to those sorts of services sometimes without having to travel many kilometres and take lots of time out of their day. If there is a common need in the community then neighbourhood houses, I am sure, step in and provide some of that.

I want to underscore their value. Someone mentioned Eating with Friends and playgroups and those sorts of things. All power to them and I hope that the Government continues to see the value and gives them a little bit of security going forward in consistent funding. It would be good to see the level of funding provided for the benefit that they provide back to the community. It is important for us to look at it that way. I support the motion.

[3.56 p.m.]

Ms FORREST (Murchison) - I reiterate comments made by others with regard to the value of neighbourhood houses and community houses, whatever they are called in the region. They provide a vital service to a community and sometimes they are the absolute backstop of the community when there is nothing else. In Hobart, with a high-density population and lots of other services that the member for Hobart referred to, the need is not there for this sort of service particularly.

I particularly acknowledge the amazing work they do, as others have, and the absolute value of the volunteer workforce that provides support to all the neighbourhood houses around the state. They are truly incredible and we know that COVID-19 had some impact on the volunteers but they have been absolutely reliable and done whatever they could during that time to assist their communities. They are a hub to bring services together or make space available for services to visit where there is nothing else in the region. I have four in my electorate and I will talk briefly about each of them and more particularly about one of them.

In Rosebery, for example, when the bakery shut down and there was nowhere to get a cup of tea in town, they provided that. People would go there and have their morning coffee or cup of tea and that was their meeting place. There was nowhere else for a period. They provide a whole range of other services too but they rely very heavily on volunteers, many of whom are older people in our community which makes it a challenge in itself, particularly when there is illness in the community.

They also provide a safe place for people to go for no particular reason where you can deliver passive services to them, where they can see posters on the wall. They can see things about family violence; they can see things about drug and alcohol misuse; they can see things about gambling addiction. You do not have to make an appointment to see someone about that. They know that they can go there safely and there is a place there.

The member for Montgomery will be familiar with the Burnie Community House.

Mrs Hiscutt - I was going to mention that.

Ms FORREST - It is in my electorate.

Mrs Hiscutt - Seeing as we are talking about shared places, that used to be in my electorate but it is not now. It is in yours but I would like to think that we share that one.

Ms FORREST - We do.

Mrs Hiscutt - Thank you. You are very generous.

Ms FORREST - I think it has always been in mine. Shorewell Creek is the boundary and it is on the western side of Shorewell Creek.

Mr Valentine - I am sure the people who attend come from both areas.

Ms Webb - I am sure the catchment area goes into yours.

Ms FORREST - Yes, a catchment area absolutely. Either way, I am happy to share because we both recognise the great value of this work. It is in a low socio-economic part of Burnie in the Shorewell Park area around Acton, which is the member for Montgomery's area. Shorewell is my area and the creek divides it.

The Child and Family Centre is definitely in the member for Montgomery's area but it is on the other side of the creek which does have a bridge over it which is still functioning. It is only a small bridge.

The Burnie Community House provides an enormous range of services and a lot of them are passive so people can go in and get support for a whole range of matters without fear of being judged and without fear of being thought to be attending for a particular matter. There is such a wide range of services and a wide range of information available there and that is the beauty of these places. They are in smaller communities where everyone likes to know everyone else's business. They absolutely do.

Ms Rattray - It is called caring.

Ms FORREST - Perhaps caring a bit too much on some occasions but that way people do not have to disclose or even feel like - today is the day for drug and alcohol education.

Sitting suspended from 4.00 p.m. to 4.30 p.m.

MOTION

Importance of Neighbourhood Houses in Tasmania

Resumed from above.

[4.30 p.m.]

Ms FORREST (Murchison) - Before the afternoon break, I was talking about the value and importance of some of the passive service delivery and how it is a safe place for people to access a whole range of services, without identifying the fact that they are going for a particular reason. There is no sign outside saying 'come and have your drug and alcohol education here today', it is much subtler than that. People are much more comfortable and feel they can walk into these neighbourhood houses and receive the services they need without having to necessarily declare the reason they are there. The staff are very good at facilitating that and being very aware, knowing that sometimes they may need to find a quiet room with someone to have an individual chat. I know all our neighbourhood houses would work in a similar way. I note in the Burnie Community House that is a particularly valuable service the way they do that.

Another one of the neighbourhood houses in my electorate is Zeehan. That has had low patronage at times because of the fluctuations in population. Zeehan is coming alive again now with Avebury mine underway and more people in the region. All of these in my electorate

found it very difficult to continue to maintain services during COVID-19. A lot of their volunteers were older people, but they were often the only backstop for people during those times. They continued to provide and do continue to provide an amazing service. I thank them sincerely for their work.

The other one I wanted to speak about is the one on King Island, called the Phoenix Community House. I wanted to read in part of a letter of support I wrote for Phoenix House, because it does describe the role and the challenges particularly for King Island with Phoenix House. We know that it is part of a wider network of 35 neighbourhood houses, each offering a place for people to come together to find support, belonging and purpose. Members who came on the electorate tour would have visited there and seen the new Phoenix House complex built where they co-located the Men's Shed and the community garden. I was there a couple of weeks ago and they are doing some incredible work on the community garden, making it much more accessible for people with mobility issues who can more easily access it as the garden is on a bit of a slope. They are doing some great work there.

That day, they had a fantastic new coffee van parked outside. The coffee was free for everyone who wanted to come along and visit. It was fantastic that Phoenix House was providing that service, and the men were popping in and out of the Men's Shed and there were also lots of visitors while I was there.

The committed and dedicated staff of Phoenix Community House, together with the generosity of volunteers, have worked hard to create an oasis, a place to seek support, information skills, develop relationships within the community of King Island, and again, being a small community, it is important that they can turn up there. There is a nice quiet meeting room I have used to meet constituents when I am over there, and they can access a whole range of services passively as well as actively. They also have a great kitchen and they cook some pretty good food as we saw the day we were there.

Ms Rattray - Great morning tea.

Ms FORREST - Yes, and I was there when this beautiful sponge was there. Did you see that photo on Facebook? That was pretty good.

They offer a range of services, including, but not limited to, the King Island Men's Shed, the community garden and various wellbeing and craft activities. I personally believe the Phoenix Community House also plays an important role in the delivery of public notices and information. The promotion and support of local inclusion, participation and engagement creates a real connection with the community for this region, who can suffer from social isolation and exclusion. As I said, the Rosebery Neighbourhood House does and the Zeehan Neighbourhood House, they are called neighbourhood houses too in Rosebery and Zeehan, not community houses.

We know none of this is possible without adequate funding. That is the point I want to raise in regard to Phoenix House. I understand that Zeehan and Rosebery Neighbourhood Houses have secured recurrent funding from the Tasmanian Government, like many others around the state. I also understand that the Phoenix Community House did receive state government funding in the last budget but it was only for one year. It does not give you any surety and security of service provision. This may have been partly because previously

Phoenix Community House received ongoing federal funding. As someone else mentioned earlier there was another one that was federally funded.

Mrs Hiscutt - Yes, the defence force one.

Mr Willie - The one at Dowsing Point for veterans.

Ms FORREST - That is right. I am not sure of the history of how Phoenix Community House came to be federally funded but that funding has now ceased. I am supporting the call on behalf of Phoenix Community House and Sally Haneveer who does a truly amazing job there, to ensure we can have committed longer term funding because they do provide such a critical service on the island. Even though, as members would be aware, we do not have high rates of unemployment on King Island, we do not have as high rates of poverty, we certainly have issues with housing over there. Like everywhere, no difference there.

In spite of being a small island that is quite connected, there also are people there who suffer from social isolation and exclusion. They often require linking up of services for them to make sure they can access the services they need and try not to have to leave the island. It is quite expensive, as members may be aware, and it is not always easy for them because if they are going with Sharp Airlines to the Tasmanian mainland it is a small plane and that can be difficult for them, as the member for McIntyre well knows with going to Flinders Island.

I urge the Government to fully consider the budget submission for funding from Phoenix Community House to ensure it can continue to be funded beyond one year to continue to provide an important service to the island. I thank the member for Prosser for bringing forward the motion. It is important we acknowledge the work of these important organisations throughout the state, particularly those servicing remote and isolated communities at times too. I support the motion and thank the member for bringing it forward.

[4.37 p.m.]

Mr DUIGAN (Windermere) - Mr President, I speak in furious support of the motion. Like other members here, I have a number of neighborhood houses but not Hobart or Launceston seemingly. I have three but the Northern Suburbs Community Centre has two campuses, almost four, so I should give a quick shout out to Starting Point Neighbourhood House in Ravenswood, the Northern Suburbs Community Centre, Newnham and Mowbray, and 'The Hood' at George Town.

As mentioned by other members, one of the interesting things about neighbourhood houses is that they each have their own unique character, their own cadence, their own specialties they deliver, although it is variations on a theme. As previously mentioned, they also have long-serving managers and that is a feature, the stability that those long-serving managers provide to the services they offer. A call of duty, I will give a shout out to Nettie, Simone and Trish. Trish, who is at Northern Suburbs has only been there for a couple of years but she has come from St Helens, where I believe she was for a long time there. She is new to us but -

Ms Rattray - You have a good one there.

Mr DUIGAN - Yes, we have a good one there. Interestingly, before coming into this current role, I had no experience of neighbourhood houses. I do not think I had ever been to a

neighbourhood house. I knew they existed but like lots of new members, the neighbourhood house is one of the first things you plug into in your electorate. I remember the first time going up to the Ravenswood Neighbourhood House, going in there and feeling vaguely heightened and a bit anxious to meet all the people. A meeting had been set up and the first thing you notice is that nobody is taking themselves too seriously. It is a great place to get frank and fearless political advice should you wish to start those conversations. I do not mind that. Sometimes I will sit in there and start a conversation about this government policy or the other and you will not be short of opinions.

What the neighbourhood houses do above and beyond anything else is provide a welcome. They make people feel welcome and that is the specialty. As the member for Murchison mentioned, it is a place to go for no reason. It is a warm and inviting space and in some of our communities that is an important thing.

The motion speaks about volunteers and the neighbourhood houses do not run without volunteers. There is an extraordinary array of services, food programs, people who sit on the board, all volunteers, running the arts programs, the playgroup, the movie nights. George Town has a room dedicated to helping people with their interface with government, Centrelink, MyGov, and for a lot of people those are challenging spaces. The Neighbourhood House in George Town does that.

There is one particular program that always stands out to me, as a parent of upper teenage year kids, and that is learning to drive. Currently you have to spend 80 hours on your Ls.

Ms Forrest - Supervised.

Mr DUIGAN - Supervised, to get your P1s. That is a reasonable job of work, even for my kids who are -

Mr Willie - You have to have access to a car too.

Mr DUIGAN - We have a car.

Ms Forrest - It is a bit easier in the country when you have to drive a long way. If you are sitting at the bridge at Camdale you could have it up in a couple of days.

Mr DUIGAN - That is right. It is good to get back to the Cam River.

Ms Forrest - There are some benefits.

Mr Willie - Drive across a couple of times and you will have done the whole thing.

Mr DUIGAN - Check your logbook. Getting your licence is a big deal. It gives you those freedoms. It lets you move through the community. It is the difference between being able to access a job and not in some cases.

I thought these were interesting statistics. The Northern Suburbs Community Centre last year, out of its annual report, 3700 volunteer hours, cars on the road - 3700 hours - which led to 35 P1 licences. For the Neighbourhood House in Ravenswood, more than 2000 hours and 37 P1 licences, so 70 people, 70 kids often, 70 culturally, linguistically diverse people in our

community who have been given that not insubstantial gift. It is free of charge and it is something we should not take for granted. It is having that ability to drive and move through the community and go to the places you want to go to that is important - something we all take for granted.

The member for Hobart mentioned the fact that neighbourhood houses represent pretty good bang for buck. From a government perspective, I commend the Government for its decision to contribute another \$1.75 million - another \$50 000 for each of Tasmania's 35 neighbourhood houses. It will get gobbled up fairly quickly. I have spoken to all my neighbourhood houses and they do not have any grand plans as to what they will do with that \$50 000. It will go into running the service. It is something that we need to keep an eye on.

I congratulate the member for Prosser for bringing this forward. I also congratulate the Government for finding some money for our neighbourhood houses. It is an area of government expenditure that represents good value for money. I support the motion.

[4.45 p.m.]

Ms HOWLETT (Prosser) - Mr President, we can all agree in this place on the critical role that neighbourhood houses play, in the social, economic and mental wellbeing of many Tasmanians across the state. Once again, I thank the staff and the volunteers for the many services that they provide. We are all so very grateful. I also thank all members for their wonderful contributions and for supporting my motion.

The member for Murchison mentioning passive service delivery, I found that very interesting. I had not thought about that aspect before. When you think about it, you are sitting there and looking at particular signs about sexual violence, alcohol, drug abuse and also government services and that passive service delivery is there for people who are, perhaps, too frightened to ask or are not in the position or have the confidence to ask. You are quite right, being surrounded by that information is critical. It is not something that I had thought about before.

The contributions were brilliant. It would be wonderful for all of the houses out there to see your contributions, whether it be to upload them on video or email *Hansard* to the houses to show our appreciation to them. I hear all members' calls for continued funding for these houses and I am sure that there is someone from the minister's office listening. If not, we will certainly take information back.

It is interesting how many members share neighbourhood houses, or pop into ones that are not particularly in their electorate as well. I must confess to the member for Rumney, I pop into the Midway Point one quite regularly and it is quite common in this place that we all visit each other's from time to time. It is interesting also knowing that there is not one in Hobart or in Launceston. I was not aware until the member for Launceston and the member for Hobart raised that.

It has been a wonderful, insightful debate and it is important that the volunteers and the workers are recognised for the amazing contribution that they make to many Tasmanians in need. I thank everyone, once again, for their contribution and I commend the motion to the House.

Motion agreed to.

MOTION

Government Business Scrutiny Committees - Establishment

Mrs HISCUTT (Montgomery - Leader of the Government in the Legislative Council) -
Mr President, I move -

That two Government Businesses Scrutiny Committees be established to inquire into Government Businesses in accordance with the schedule detailed below and rules as set out in the Standing Orders at Part 22.

That the Committees have leave to sit on Tuesday 29 November and Wednesday 30 November 2022 between the hours of 9.00 a.m. and 5.45 p.m. or such other time as varied by the Chair and as necessary for the purpose of relevant stakeholder and deliberative meetings.

For 2022 Government Businesses are allocated to the Committees as follows:

Committee A - Tuesday 29 November 2022 - Metro Tasmania Pty Ltd, Motor Accidents Insurance Board, Tasmanian Public Finance Corporation, Tasmanian Railways Pty Ltd.

Committee B - Wednesday 30 November 2022 - Aurora Energy Pty Ltd, Port Arthur Historic Site Management Authority, Tasmanian Irrigation Pty Ltd, Tasmanian Water and Sewerage Corporation Pty Ltd, TasRacing Pty Ltd.

And that

Mr Duigan, Mr Edmunds, Ms Forrest, Mr Gaffney, Mr Harriss and Ms Lovell be of Committee A; and

Ms Armitage, Ms Howlett, Ms Rattray, Mr Valentine, Ms Webb and Mr Willie be of Committee B.

And that the Committees report on the Government Businesses by no later than 16 December 2022.

If the Legislative Council is not sitting when the Government Businesses Scrutiny Committees complete their reports, those reports may be presented to the President or if the President is unable to act, to the Deputy President or other Office holder and in that event:

- (a) the reports shall be deemed to have been presented to the Council;
- (b) the publication of the reports is authorised by this Resolution;
- (c) the President, Deputy President or other Office holder, as the case may be, may give directions for the printing and circulation of the reports; and

- (d) the President, Deputy President or other Office holder, as the case may be, shall direct the Clerk to lay the reports upon the Table at the next sitting of the Council.

Motion agreed to.

CONDOLENCE MOTION

Andrew Paul Harriss

[4.48 p.m.]

Mrs HISCUTT (Montgomery - Leader of the Government in the Legislative Council) - Mr President, I move -

That this Council expresses its profound regret at the death on 1 October 2022 of Andrew Paul Harriss, who served as a Member of the Legislative Council for the Division of Huon from 1996 to 2014, a Minister of the Crown from 2014 to 2016, and Member of the House of Assembly for the Division of Franklin from 2014 to 2016, and places on record its sincere appreciation of his great service to this State, and further, that the Council humbly and respectfully tenders to his family its deepest sympathy in their bereavement.

Andrew Paul Harriss - Paul - is fondly remembered by many of us in this Chamber, both members and staff. He is remembered by us and others as an unfaltering champion for his community and constituents; a staunch defender of his personal values, beliefs and principles; and a much respected and admired member of parliament. When he became the member of this Council in 1996, Paul told the *Mercury* that he thought he could work best as the lobbyist for Huon. Well, that certainly proved to be the case, Mr President.

He was unashamedly a proud member of a family of six generations of Huonites and his dedicated advocacy on issues affecting the Huon region and its constituents was passionate and relentless. Paul loved the Huon. He was born in Franklin and raised at Lucaston, being educated at Huonville Primary School and Huonville High School before moving on to Hobart Technical College.

His involvement in his community was extensive. He was a Huon Valley councillor for 13 years from 1983 to 1996, and his sporting prowess in the local footy and cricket clubs was pretty impressive. He was a board member of the Huonville Lions Football Club and the Huon Cricket Association; a life member of the Ranelagh Grove Cricket Club and the Glen Huon Cricket Club; and a foundation life member of the North Huon Cricket Club. He also served as the President of the Southern Tasmanian Football League.

Paul's commitment and community involvement were well recognised and appreciated by the voters of Huon, who were happy to see him re-elected for three consecutive elections until his resignation from the Legislative Council in 2014.

When I was first elected, I was sitting in the newbies seat. I was sitting between Paul - the chair of committees - and on the other side of me was Vanessa Goodwin. Mr President, I could not go wrong and they taught me an awful lot between the two of them. Paul would always be

whispering in my ear about what was going on and brought me up to speed on everything I needed to know.

While the Huon region, no doubt, held a special part in Paul's heart, he was as interested in the welfare and benefit of all Tasmanians and all of Tasmania. I believe this was at the forefront of his mind when, in November 2013, he officially announced he would run for the seat of Franklin in the House of Assembly at the 2014 state election. I must say, this was a pretty gutsy move on his part. He had a relatively secure position in this place and there were certainly no guarantees that he would be successful.

From my discussions with people who knew Paul at the time, it is fair to say that he was motivated by a strong belief that he could do more and accomplish more for Tasmania as a member of the team formulating and implementing government policies, programs and strategies rather than remaining in the traditional House of review. His decision was vindicated when, on 13 March 2014, he was successfully elected as a member for Franklin and given the role of the minister for resources in the Hodgman Liberal Government. This was a role he successfully performed until his retirement from politics in early 2016. His parting words to the ABC, when asked if he had any regrets about his move to the lower House, were interesting:

I would do it all again in a heartbeat because I wanted to see a better Tasmania.

One action that stands out to me as reflecting the true measure of the man that Andrew Paul Harriss was, occurred after his political career and towards the end of his life. Paul found out that he had prostate cancer - a devastating diagnosis that in many cases causes men to respond in an understandably introspective manner. It is often not a disease that men want to discuss or talk about.

Notwithstanding the diabolical personal ramifications of the diagnosis, Paul used his enduring strength and personal commitment to his fellow man to raise awareness of the importance of personal health checks and tests. Working alongside the Cancer Council, Paul went public with his battle and urged men all over Tasmania to get checked. He said:

Don't be complacent - don't be ignorant - just do it.

Even in the midst of his own personal crisis, he was thinking of others.

Paul Harriss' contribution, in a life tragically cut too short, was significant at so many levels. Perhaps, above all things, the role that was most important to him and in which he took most pride and enjoyment, was his role as a devoted family man. He absolutely adored his children and his grandkids. He lived for them.

In the early days of his cancer diagnosis he told Jonathon in my office that he was determined to beat the disease because he wanted to see his grandkids grow up. He wanted to be at their 21st birthdays. Tragically, that was not to be the case.

One of his proudest moments did occur before he passed. That was when his son Dean was successful in his campaign to become the Huon's representative in this Chamber, thereby assuming the position that Paul himself performed with such passion and professionalism for some 18 years.

Vale Andrew Paul Harriss. On behalf of the Government, I pass on our sincerest condolences to Dean and to all other members of his family.

[4.55 p.m.]

Ms FORREST (Murchison) - Mr President, most of the time when I was in this Chamber with the former member for Huon, Paul Harriss, he was in this seat. So he spent a lot of time here and he was chair of committees as well. As the newbie, even though Jim Wilkinson was the chair of committees at the time, Paul was on Estimates committees and GBE committees with me, so I spent a fair bit of time seeing how he operated and the things he was passionate about, forestry being one particular passion.

The Leader has given us a really good account of Paul - I call him Paul because he is Paul - his dedication to the work he did, the longevity of his service, and his leaving this House and going to the House of Assembly; his 18 years of service.

I particularly acknowledge the very important role he played in supporting the decriminalisation of homosexuality in Tasmania. His vote was crucial in that, and that made an enormous difference to the lives of many people. It was very courageous for Paul to do at the time. I acknowledge that. I know that Rodney Croome has also publicly stated his great appreciation of that decision at the time.

I thought it would be nice to reflect on some of the funnier memories that we have of Paul over his time here. I will talk about a couple of them.

He was a bit of prankster along with other members like Greg Hall and Jim Wilkinson. I remember Paul was a non-drinker. Most would be aware that he was a non-drinker. When he was the chair of committees though, he used to have the odd drink session, well not drink session, but he would invite members down for drinks. He never drank any of the drinks. They would sit in the cupboard, in the fridge for years. On one occasion, it might have been when he was elected to the chair of committees, we went down to say congratulations, well done, that sort of thing. He pulled out a beer to give to the former member for Windermere, Ivan Dean, and Ivan has always claimed to be a one-pot screamer in having a drink. On this night it was probably less than that, because the beer was actually seriously off. Ivan did not realise until after drinking about half the bottle. Ivan was quite unwell the next day. That was not a deliberate ploy by the former member for Huon, Paul Harriss at the time, but we still talked about it for some time afterwards.

One of my memories of Paul is that he had this stance, he would stand at this lectern over here, he would put his hand in his left pocket, he would lean on the lectern and say, 'Well, I am just going to address my mind to this'. He would have a little cough at times as he did that, to emphasise the fact that he was addressing his mind to something. We all have our own mannerisms. We talked about that.

Those of us who were here working with Paul when he became unwell - it is always a shock when someone as young as Paul becomes seriously ill with an illness such as that. However, as the Leader described, the courage he showed in going public, talking openly about the very real challenge he was facing, and encouraging other men to have checks. As the Leader said, a lot of men do not like talking about this. They do not like being up-front, particularly when they are facing a very real challenge and facing their own mortality.

I know from discussions I had with Paul over many years of his great love for his family, his pride in his children and the grandchildren. When we did an electorate tour down in the Huon - and I am not one for being out in boats - and they were going out on the Bruny Island Cruise, it was not a particularly smooth day so I bailed on that part of our trip. Paul was probably not that keen to go himself, to be quite honest. He said, 'No, no, I'll stay with you and we'll go for a bit of a walk and a drive up to some café somewhere on Bruny Island.'. I was very grateful to him for that because I thought, 'No, I am happy to sit on the wharf', for however long it took to get back.

He recognised that it was a very legitimate and genuine reason that I did not want to go and so he stayed with me and we spent the afternoon just catching up. That was a very kind gesture and considerate, particularly as all the other members headed off on the boat. I do not know if anyone was sick on that trip, but it did not look too good to me from my perspective.

Ms Rattray - It was fine, I do not know what the problem was.

Ms FORREST - Mènière's has something to do with that. It does not go well on sea. Anyway, Paul was very considerate and aware of not putting people down in those sorts of circumstances and I certainly appreciated that.

I am sure other members, particularly the member for McIntyre, will have other memories she wishes to reflect on.

Paul was always reliable, always here. He took his job seriously and we did not always agree on everything. That is the nature of it. I believe it was he who referred the forestry bill to the Committee of the Whole House for the whole summer - I think he is still responsible for that. The only member who managed to get himself out of that was the former member for Rosevears, Mr Finch, who had a lovely summer while the rest of us slaved over a bill.

Mr Valentine - We never let him forget it.

Ms FORREST - We will never forget Paul for that either, but such was his passion for getting the forestry matter properly sorted, particularly from his perspective. Whilst we did not always agree with everything and where we ended up with that in every manner, you could argue it was a good process. I just wished it had not happened over summer, but anyway.

Thankfully, now we have our government administration committees that we use more frequently for those sorts of things, rather than trying to drag everyone into it which is always a bit of a challenge to get everyone available at a time to have a hearing.

Mr President, there are many other memories of Paul's time here but I wanted to make mention of a few of those. With the Leader on behalf of the Government, as she mentioned, my thoughts, too, are with the family, particularly with you, Dean. It must be an extraordinarily difficult time for you and I pass on my sincere condolences to you, the rest of your family and, particularly, to the children who will not see their grandpa as they grow up.

I hope that all those many happy memories you have as a family together will sustain you during the really tough times. It must be hard being in the room while we are talking about this, so all power to you, Dean.

Vale Paul Harriss.

[5.03 p.m.]

Ms RATTRAY (McIntyre) - Mr President, I have appreciated the contributions thus far.

Along with a few other members I recently attended Paul's celebration of life at Glen Huon where I had not been before. It was really nice to travel with the former president and former member for Montgomery, Sue Smith. We talked about Paul pretty much all the way down from Perth and back.

At that celebration of life, Greg Hall, a friend of Paul's and former colleague, spoke about when Greg arrived in the car park for his very first time in the parliament, and that experience of the phone call he received prior to arriving and then Paul, in the car park that morning, with his hand out to welcome Greg to the parliament.

I did not receive the welcome in the car park, Mr President, when I arrived in 2004 but I certainly received a warm welcome, as I am sure many other members have done in this place since Paul arrived in 1996. That, for Paul, depicted the man that Paul was. He was always welcoming. I know the friendship the former member for Western Tiers had with Paul was extremely strong. That extended to many other members in the Legislative Council and certainly me, and I appreciated that over the time.

When I first arrived here the former member for Nelson was in the seat where the member for Murchison is. Paul was in another place in the Chamber. The year after that when Tony Fletcher retired, he took up the seat that Tony Fletcher had where the member for Nelson sits now. He was very much like Tony Fletcher in his mannerisms. The way he talked about a bill he would say, 'I have just addressed my mind to' and that is the way Tony Fletcher worked. He was a great mentor for a lot of us in this place. I only had one year of his tenure, but that was something I noticed - that Paul took over that seat and the way he delivered his contributions over the time.

I am pleased to say I felt like I was a friend of Paul's and recently recall a chat with Paul after his retirement from parliament in 2016. I am pretty sure I was one of the members when he announced that he was going to stand for the House of Assembly, who said, 'What the hell are you doing? We want you here. We would much rather have you here', and for the reasons that have been outlined by the Leader in her contribution, Paul felt he had something else to offer. He did do that, particularly for his beloved forest industry. He was the strongest advocate you would find in this place during those pretty tumultuous times for the forest industry. He had such a strong connection with those people of the Huon: to care for, to work for, and to do what he could to make sure their lives were not completely turned upside down. We know that in 2014 he was able, as the minister, to remove some of that protected native forest under the TFA agreement and take it out of the reserves and place it back into the production forests. That still remains today. We know there will always be some challenges with that but I believe it to be one of Paul's strongest legacies.

As I was saying, after Paul had left the parliament we had a few chats and he talked about his new venture which was his jet ski business. I said, 'That is interesting', and he was very enthusiastic. After we had finished the conversation I thought, well if that is what you want to do that is fantastic, but I felt it was more about Paul's enjoyment and grandchildren and the children's enjoyment, than it was a business venture. He was very enthusiastic about it and

loved to talk about it. It was a bit difficult through COVID-19 and then his illness, but he did have a huge commitment to that.

I also have it on good authority and, as the member for Murchison has indicated, he was a bit of a practical joker. He was behind quite a lot of the practical jokes that happened around this place. At times the three musketeers - Jim Wilkinson, Greg Hall and Paul Harriss - were known to get up to a few antics but the most memorable one I can recall is the talcum powder joke.

Ms Forrest - Except it was not very funny.

Ms RATTRAY - There had been a bit of talcum powder in somebody's drawer, but the icing on the cake was when Jim Wilkinson needed to head uptown, I believe to -

Ms Forrest - To court. That is where he was going.

Ms RATTRAY - He was heading to court. It was a wet day, so he grabbed the umbrella that used to sit outside the door. As he is walking out the door, he began to open the umbrella. It was raining, so he had a little bit of rain on his jacket. Then he completely opened the umbrella - and there it was: a shower of talcum powder.

Ms Forrest - I think it was Greg Hall who did that, not Paul. Pretty sure it was Greg.

Ms RATTRAY - Well, I have it on pretty good authority, Mr President.

Ms Forrest - By Greg? Did Greg tell you that?

Ms RATTRAY - No. From the person who was showered in the talcum powder. That incident is quite famous around here. There are many more, and the member for Murchison has shared one as well.

On a more serious note, Paul's contributions to debate in this place were always considered, articulate, and extremely well researched. When everyone else was finished for the day, Paul would still be in his office. I would poke my head in as I was heading out the door and ask, 'Are you heading back to the Huon tonight?' 'Yeah, Ratters, I will, but I have to finish this. Just have a bit more research on this.' I was affectionately, and very much liked to be, known as 'Ratters' by Paul. Ratters Minor sometimes, because my Dad was Ratters Major. Generally, just Ratters.

Members always listened intently, Mr President, as you would recognise. He could change a member's position through his contribution. You thought you were not going to support something, and then the member for Huon, Paul Harriss, would make a contribution when he came up out of that chair, and you thought, that sounds very feasible. A great mind.

I feel honoured to have served for 10 years in this House with Paul. He was a very strong advocate for the people of Huon. He liked to have a chat about his sporting prowess, although he never let us know that he was as good as he actually was. Hearing some of that prowess through the celebration of life was something that I greatly appreciated. He was a very good sportsman as well as a wonderful contributor in this place.

I feel honoured to have considered Paul a good friend and a kind and supportive colleague.

I also have been on the receiving end of many a conversation about his wonderful children. My sincere condolences to Dean, Mel, Jaclyn, Ange and their families, who are going to significantly miss their Dad and their Granddad over the next years.

It has been a real pleasure to have known Paul and now to get to know his son who is, what we would call, a chip off the old block.

I support the motion and I thank the Leader for putting it on the paper.

[5.14 p.m.]

Mr VALENTINE (Hobart) - Mr President, I only had two years with the previous member for Huon, Paul Harriss. During that time, he was always kind and welcoming. I really do appreciate that side of Paul. We may not have had the same focus on certain aspects of politics. I remember the Tasmanian Forest Agreement, and sometimes being on the other side of the debate in that. I always enter a debate with an open mind and I always found him to be a person who you could approach and have a good conversation with. Whether or not you were on the same wavelength as he was, he would accept what your position was.

I was looking at his inaugural speech, and he was up-front in saying he was a member of the Liberal Party prior to coming to this place. He said in his speech, even though that was the case:

... I am here as an independent, unendorsed, and therefore unshackled by what might otherwise be the constraints of party politics and I will be voting on issues which arise in this Chamber entirely on their merit and, as I said, unshackled by party politics. I think that of itself indicates the very importance of this House. ...

While previously a party member - I am not sure what his membership was during this time in this Chamber - he saw the importance of this House as the House of review. He was very focused and had the courage of his convictions to stand up for what he believed was right for the seat that he was representing. He pursued those issues with vigour. There is no question about that.

I also publicly offer my condolences to the now member for Huon, Dean, and his family on losing their dad. Quite often, grandchildren are the ones who feel these things the most and I am sure that you are finding that at the moment. My thoughts are with you and with your family. It is a very difficult time. I note Paul's service to the House. I acknowledge his commitment to the task as he saw it, and I note the motion of condolence.

[5.18 p.m.]

Ms ARMITAGE (Launceston) - Mr President, I thank the Leader for this motion and extend my deepest condolences to Dean and the family and friends of our dear past colleague, Andrew Paul Harriss, who recently passed away.

I was fortunate to be here for three years with Paul and I sat next to him for a time. I remember how welcoming and friendly he was and so helpful, particularly in committee

work. When you are new, and you have Estimates or GBEs, you have absolutely no idea what you are doing or what questions you are asking, and he would give me questions. He would write down some questions and say, 'You can ask these'. He was so helpful and it was great to have someone who was willing to assist you and explain when you are feeling like you are really quite lost. Nothing was too much trouble for Paul.

Paul was an outstanding local member. His passion for grassroots issues and serving his community was obvious, particularly for those working in industries such as forestry and mining. I tend to agree with the member for Murchison - it probably was Paul who moved for that committee.

Ms Forrest - Not probably - actually.

Ms ARMITAGE - I have been thinking of it. It was a very long summer.

Ms Forrest - I have quite a clear memory of that.

Ms Rattray - He did not mind a fishing issue either. He used to have a disallowance motion quite regularly for fishing.

Ms Forrest - Not many successful ones though.

Ms Rattray - No, but he still had them there.

Ms ARMITAGE - It was very sad when he resigned his upper House seat and joined the Liberal team at the 2014 election, where he served as Minister for Resources until his retirement in 2016. However, our loss was certainly their gain.

I also recall the entertaining incident in his rooms when the previous members for Windermere and Rumney were unlucky enough to get a stubby of beer that had been there for some considerable time, possibly for two or three members previous in that office. I think it had been in that fridge for a time. Yes, I recall Paul's glee at the member for Windermere having to quite regularly rush out the next day. He could not sit for very long and he said he was quite unwell on the way home. He used to run or walk home - he did not drive. Poor old Ivan had nowhere to stop on the way home.

Mr Valentine - As I recall the member for Rumney was absent from the Chamber the following day.

Ms Rattray - Too much information, Mr President.

Ms ARMITAGE - I am not sure, I just remember the member for Windermere made many absences from it as well.

Having worked with Paul for a couple of years, during his time, he was a great advocate for his community, a wonderful colleague and a friend. Like another member in this House, he had nicknames for people and mine was Lady Launceston. I told him on a number of occasions it was actually the name of a boat in Launceston as opposed to a person but it did not deter him at all from saying Lady Launceston. I did feel as though I was a barge or something

but that was Paul's name. I thought Lady Launceston sounded okay; it brought back a memory of the boat in Launceston.

Mrs Hiscutt - He called all of us M'Lady and M'Lord. He used to call me M'Lady Montgomery.

Ms ARMITAGE - However, you probably did not have a boat named Lady Montgomery. Anyway, Paul was a great colleague, he was wonderful in this House and he was a great member.

My sincere condolences to Dean. I am sure it must be hard. Speaking with Paul when Dean was elected as member for Huon, he was incredibly proud and I am sure he is watching this House very fondly from wherever he may be.

Vale Andrew Paul Harriss.

[5.22 p.m.]

Mr PRESIDENT - I take the opportunity to make a few brief comments too. When I first joined this place, Paul was one of the senior members, along with Jim Wilkinson and Greg Hall. I am not sure if they were the Three Wise Men or the Three Stooges but they certainly worked very closely together.

Paul was always very welcoming, as other members have said. I can remember at my declaration of a poll that Paul was one of the first there. He probably got to nearly every declaration of the poll for new members that I can remember.

Ms Forrest - In the south.

Mr PRESIDENT - Yes, in the south. It is a long way to travel from the Huon to anywhere else in the state but every time there was an event he was there.

In the early days, when I had only been there 12 months and had to take on that glorious role of leader in the twilight years of the government, and coming up against Paul, Greg, and Jim who would certainly put you through the mills in a very nice way. I can remember the way they had a committee meeting and, much like they did with their practical jokes, get together to work out how they are going to execute it. There was one point where Paul stated, 'Oh well, we aren't going to catch you out so we're just going to give up,' and I thought well, that is going to make it a fair bit more enjoyable. As tough as it was, they were always fair. At the end of the day, you left the Chamber and we were all good friends. Sometimes we would have a drink together but if you knew what was in the bottle, you would not say.

We did a lot of social events. I particularly remember there was a Tour de 'Norchy, a fundraiser riding pushbikes around the Derwent Valley region. The then member for Elwick, the then member for Pembroke, and Jim Wilkinson, Greg and Paul all turned up. Unlike Jim and Greg, who had to have the very latest, fast pushbikes and Greg, of course, had to have all the fashion to go along with it like the latest skin-hugging lycra apparel and aerodynamic helmet, I seem to remember Paul just had this battered old mountain bike but it never held him back. His fitness and energy were amazing. He just left everyone else behind and had this bike that must have been really difficult to keep going.

I remember particularly controversial legislation we had that played very much against Paul's personal beliefs. The legislation itself was solid and we worked through that and it got to pass because Paul voted with it even though it was something he was quite uncomfortable with. However, he came over and said, 'In your summing up speech you illustrated that the legislation is solid and I am going to support it', and I was humbled by that in lots of ways. Unfortunately, I could not get him across the line on the TFA no matter how hard we tried. We did every possible Standing Order in the book. He had a great knowledge of the Standing Orders, and he tried every possible Standing Order to try to get the TFA killed off. Ultimately, it ended up in the summer of the long debate. I had planned an electorate tour for that summer, but we cancelled that so we could spend time debating the forest industry. It was something he fiercely believed in. He fought very hard for what he thought was right, which is what we all do here.

Even after he left, I would still get occasional messages from him, commentary on what was going on. He kept a fairly active interest in the Legislative Council. He was a passionate and proud member of the Legislative Council. Other members have talked about his excursion to the other place but his heart was here.

Ms Rattray - I still have plenty of text messages to prove he still had an interest.

Mr PRESIDENT - Yes. I, too, went along to his celebration of life service and I thought that really summed up how a lot of people felt about Paul. It was a huge crowd. After the service was over it felt like it was a reunion of the Legislative Council. He had so many former staff, so many former members - from a long time ago - three former presidents were there. It was a tremendous and emotional send off to Paul. It was a great expression of how other parliamentarians felt about his contribution to the Tasmanian Parliament.

I, too, would like to pass on my thoughts to the whole Harriss family, of which there were so many - not just direct members; there seemed to be a lot of cousins, as happens down in the Huon - many cousins and uncles and aunts and family.

I know we will all have wonderful thoughts of Paul for the rest of our careers in this place.

As a mark of respect, I ask all members to stand and observe a minute's silence.

Motion agreed to *nemine contradicente*.

[5.29 p.m.]

Mrs HISCUTT (Montgomery - Leader of the Government in the Legislative Council) - Mr President, I further move -

That a copy of the foregoing resolution be forwarded to the family of the late Andrew Paul Harriss.

Motion agreed to.

**JUSTICE MISCELLANEOUS (ADVANCE CARE DIRECTIVES) BILL 2022
(No. 41)**

Third Reading

Bill read the third time.

CLIMATE CHANGE (STATE ACTION) AMENDMENT BILL 2021 (No. 63)

In Committee

Continued from 19 October 2022 (page 78).

Clause 6 -

[5.31 p.m.]

Madam CHAIR - I remind members where we are up to. As members might recall we are doing clause 6 but breaking it up into the subclauses. We have dealt with subclauses 5 and 5A and we are now into subclause 5B. We have not started because no-one has had any calls on that yet.

I will also inform members, too, that in terms of the member for Nelson's amendments, there has been an update but it has not changed the number. The time has changed, so if you did want to refer to them, make sure you have the right document, the time is 9.21 a.m, 25 October 2022, No. 4. The times change depending on when you print it.

Clause 6 -

Subclause 5B

Ms WEBB - On subclause 5B there are two amendments of mine, fourth amendment, fifth amendment, that relate to that part. I am not going to move the fourth amendment. It covers matters we discussed in a previous amendment reducing five years to three years for plans. Previously, it was climate change action plan, this one is in relation to climate change risk assessment. I do not think we need to go through the same debate because it was not supported last time so I am not going to move the fourth amendment.

I am going to move the fifth amendment and I wonder if I might change the wording slightly because it refers to the fourth amendment, not the wording of the amendment itself but we are talking about page 12, proposed new section 5B subsection (2), after paragraph (a).

Insert the following paragraph:

- (ab) consideration of the risks associated with energy transition, including social and economic impacts, stranded assets, and fuel security risks;

That amendment relates here to the section we are looking at which is statewide climate change risk assessments which are to be done. Under the legislation the minister is to prepare those within two years after the commencement of the act or at least every five years thereafter.

Proposed subsection (2) that the amendment seeks to insert into talks about things the minister is to take into account when preparing the risk assessment and it adds something in there to be taken into account. Essentially, it is adding a further element which is not something that is particularly controversial or onerous. It simply makes explicit that as part of preparing the climate change risk assessment there is to be consideration of risks associated with the transition process itself. So not climate change per se but the risks from what is occurring to facilitate the transition. As we know, risks related to the transition process and the impact that will have will be just as important in many ways as the risks that are directly caused by climate change that we are trying to manage as well as we go forward.

The phrase, 'energy transition', is taken to mean the transition from all forms of fossil fuels to emissions-free alternatives. In the Tasmanian context, energy transition would be almost completely about phasing out of coal, gas and petroleum products such as petrol and diesel which is something that would be the long-term plan. The fuel security risks to be considered if this amendment gets up would be that the risk assessment will include the security of Tasmania's supply of petrol and diesel, for example, and how they might be adversely impacted by the energy transition worldwide. It is not just Tasmania that will be transitioning. Worldwide there are efforts to respond to climate change by transitioning away from various types of fossil fuel and energy sources like that and the changes made elsewhere will impact on us. We will face risks associated with that so it is about taking those into account in our risk assessments.

Tasmania depends on diesel to move almost everything in this state so the worldwide energy transition that is going to be occurring around us will necessarily increase business risks for oil companies and risks to our supply chain for that. We are a very small market, we are at the end of a long supply chain. This is an example of why we would want to include here that as we are making these risk assessment plans, we would include the risks associated with the transition matters and not just the risks from climate change itself. We have stranded asset risks. We have lots of supply-side stranded assets, such as liquid fuel storage and transport facilities, gas pipeline networks, petrol stations. We have demand-side stranded assets, such as domestic gas heating appliances, industrial gas boilers and HVAC systems, petrol and diesel cars that lose their resale value. Those are the examples. We have potential social impacts to consider, in terms of this risk assessment - renters stuck in inefficient dwellings, people who cannot afford the transition to EVs, people working in industries that will contract, over time.

That is the rationale behind the amendment. As I said, I do not believe it is particularly onerous or controversial. I want to consider these matters as part of a risk assessment. It makes it explicit, here in the legislation, that we do so. I will leave it with members to consider and if there are questions arising I will try to address them.

Mrs HISCUTT - The Government supports the broad intent but we do not support this amendment. The reason is that the scoping work for the first statewide climate change risk assessment is currently underway, with the first assessment to commence following the bill. It is anticipated that the scope for the risk assessment will consider economic and social risks associated with the transition to a low-emissions economy. However, the explicit terms for the proposed amendment, including stranded assets and fuel security risks, are highly detailed for the framework legislation. They introduce more terms and definition issues and again, have not been consulted on. While these issues are likely to be considered as part of the assessment more broadly, the Government considers their inclusion in the legislation at this stage is

inappropriate and it could constrain the risk assessment process by focusing on too detailed aspects rather than the broad risks.

It is informative to see how other jurisdictions are conducting similar risk assessments. For example, in September this year, New South Wales sought tenders to conduct its next climate change assessment. The tender documents include a requirement to consider the physical and transition risk of climate change. It should also be recognised that transition issues will be considered in the development of the emissions reduction and resilience plans, and in the resilience component of each of plan. This is in clause 5C, subclause (2)(b), which says that the plan must support 'the transition to a low emissions economy'.

In conclusion, the Government supports the intent of the amendment and is committed to considering social and economic transition risks as part of the risk assessment, but we do not consider this necessary for the bill. Also, the terms require further definitions and could constrain the risk assessment process. Clause 5B already considers the economic, social and environmental implications. Page 12, clause 5B, subclause (2)(b) says:

... consideration of economic, social and environmental implications of climate change and assessment of the associated risks to Tasmanian communities, natural environments and ecosystems and economic activity...

Members, the Government has taken these things into consideration and they have been put into the bill in other places. There is no need for this amendment and I urge members to vote against it.

Mr VALENTINE - When I look at this, this amendment adds some very sensible things. Stranded assets - who would not want to know up-front what the risks were, associated with stranded assets?

Fuel security risks - if we are going to go forward with this, we do not want to do it on a wing and a prayer. It would be wise of us to have as much information available to the Government when making decisions on aspects associated with this, not just to think - well, we will deal with that later. It may well be valuable information up-front that could direct the work in an effective way. I cannot see anything wrong with the addition.

In clause 5B, subclause (2)(b), as you point out, Leader:

... consideration of economic, social and environmental implications of climate change and assessment of the associated risks to Tasmanian communities, natural environments and ecosystems and economic activity ...

I do not know that that particularly covers 'stranded assets' and I do not know that it necessarily covers 'fuel security risks'.

Any business would want to know how exposed they are. If we are working with industry and the like, they would want to know how exposed they are, so that they are not surprised. I consider it adds a good element to this section of the bill.

I support it.

Mrs HISCUTT - In response - when you consider it, the subclause says:

... implications of climate change and assessment of the associated risks ...

This would fall into an 'associated risk' which needs to be considered. Your comment about a wing and a prayer - can I remind members that this bill has been consulted on for two years so it has not been done on a wing and a prayer. It has been consulted on widely and the last time we had this bill we have been through those who were consulted. People have prepared for what we have here. I consider that it is covered off in 5B(2)(b) and I urge members not to support the amendment.

Ms LOVELL - I have listened to the contributions from the member for Nelson and the response from the Leader. I am not sure that I agree with the Leader's assessment that this is covered in 5B(2)(b) as it stands. The member for Nelson can correct me if I am wrong on this, but the way that I read 5B(2)(b) currently in the bill is that it is the consideration of economic, social and environmental implications of climate change and assessment of the associated risks to Tasmanian communities of climate change; whereas the amendment proposed by the member for Nelson is talking about the consideration of the risks associated with energy transition. Energy transition is the transition away from the sources of fossil fuels and the fuels that we are trying to move away from. It is not actually an assessment of the risk of climate change; it is an assessment or consideration of the risks associated with the transition away from the industries and fuel sources that we need to transition away from, as we move to decarbonise the economy.

I am inclined to support the amendment if my assessment is correct, and I am sure the member for Nelson can confirm that or otherwise in her contribution. I consider these are important things to be considered.

I hear what the Leader is saying but we have had this discussion a few times throughout this bill - this is not necessarily binding the minister to anything. All it is saying is that, if you read them together - clause 5B(2) states:

In developing a statewide climate change risk assessment, the Minister is to take into account the following matters:

All it is saying is that these things need to be considered, and as a parliament we believe these are important matters that need to be considered. These are important matters to be considered. I have spoken about some of these issues in previous amendments and discussions we have had on this bill.

I will keep listening to the debate, but at this point, if I am understanding things, as I believe I am, then I am inclined to support the amendment.

Mrs HISCUTT - In response to that, and I have already stated it, these elements will be considered as part of the risk assessment. This specific language is inappropriate, as it raises definitional issues and opens up a whole new can of worms. I urge members not to vote for this.

Ms FORREST - I am along similar lines to the member for Rumney here. Maybe the member for Nelson in her next call could address her mind to what is the problem you are

trying to fix here with the bill as it is. There is a difference between the consideration as described in 5B (2)(b) of the economic and social environmental implications of climate change, whereas this is looking at the risk of an energy transition. I hear what the Leader says, on behalf of the Government, they do not oppose the principle of this, which is sensible really, because they should not in my humble view.

We have other things in the bill here which relate to similar matters, and it is about a risk assessment. I also hear what the Government says about stranded assets, fuel security risks, and the social and economic impacts, which are probably more easily understood than some of the others. The point the Leader was making, and I am interested in what the member for Nelson thinks about this, is why do we not just finish it with consideration of the risk associated with energy transition, because then you are not limiting it. I know it says including. Then, rather than having to define what a stranded asset is, or what would constitute a fuel security risk, maybe it is better to have it as a more broad consideration that considers the risks associated with energy transition, which will be potentially social, potentially economic, almost certainly economic. It may have impacts that result in stranded assets, or it might have fuel security risks, but it might have a whole range of other things related to the transition that are not captured here, that could be perhaps overlooked because you have narrowed it down by the language here.

I am trying to understand what is the problem here. If the member for Nelson could be clear about the problem or gap this is addressing, and what would be lost by amending the proposed amendment to take out all the words after transition. The only question I would then have is, does it need to clarify we are talking about moving away from fossil fuels and things like that? That is probably not necessary, but I am interested in what the member for Nelson thinks about that, because I am trying to understand what the problem is we are trying to address here.

I agree we should be considering the risks associated with the transition away from fossil fuel energies and that. However, I do also hear if you name certain things when it is probably unnecessary, because all risks associated with energy transition should be considered - if that is an important aspect, I believe it is.

Mrs HISCUTT - What you are suggesting to the member for Nelson?

Ms FORREST - To consider.

Mrs HISCUTT - Is it 'consideration of the risks associated with energy transition', full stop, and deleting the rest? Is that what you are saying?

Ms FORREST - Yes, I am saying, what do you lose from doing that? If the Government supports the intent of this, and I support the intent of this, does that remove some of those definitional problems and make it broad in that for all risks associated with the energy transition, whether they be social, economic, or other matters, that obviously relate to the fossil fuel sector, it is adequate with those words removed. That is the question I have for the member for Nelson, but she might want to hold fire before she answers those.

Ms WEBB - Madam Deputy Chair, thank you to members for their contributions, I appreciate that and the questions asked. I will go through a couple of comments in relation to that and get to the specific questions as we go.

I find it interesting that the Government likes to talk about how much this was consulted on and therefore what we have before us, apparently, is a product of that. The reality is that much of that consultation put forward suggestions from experts that have not been taken up in the bill and this is one of them. This has been put forward by expert stakeholders involved in that consultation process that made submissions and gave recommendations that did not make it through to the bill. That is where this has come from. It is fine, we probably do not need to hear too many more times from the Government about how much this bill was consulted on. We are well aware of it. All the amendments being brought were also a product of that very consultation process.

We can agree elements of the bill were and we can agree that pretty much everything behind amendments came from that consultation. The matter about this being captured in (2)(b), the suggestion that is the case. I come to the member for Rumney who was seeking some confirmation on that, yes, you have articulated it correctly. My view is it is not adequately captured in (2)(b) because that is specifically about consideration of economic, social and environmental implications of climate change and the associated risks with that. Interestingly, we are not fussed about the vagueness of associated risks being used there as a term.

The member for Murchison asked what is the problem we are trying to fix. The reality on that is it is just to make more explicit, rather than take on faith, the Government's assurance these risks associated with energy transition are captured in the bill. When even in the room here we have some concerns that perhaps it is not explicitly captured. It is to recognise those will be quite significant for particular industries, members of the Tasmanian community and areas of our economy. The risk associated will be specifically - not just with climate change, but with energy transition - things we need to manage. This is, as was pointed out, putting that into the bill, but not in a particularly prescriptive way or a way that binds the minister in any onerous way. It simply asks the minister, in putting together the climate change risk assessment to consider 'consideration of'. It is a fairly light requirement, it does put it there so it is front and centre as an element. Without having to take it on faith that this Government and this minister think that it is. Then, the next minister and or the next government and the minister of that government may not think that it is.

This gives us the backup, there is not a particular risk in putting it in, in that sense. If we are assuming and the Government is agreeing it is assumed to be there, this simply makes it explicit. In terms of the wording, adding in that the risks associated with energy transition including and then the short list of things it includes, it is an inclusive list, not an exclusive list. It is a prompt to include consideration of social and economic impacts. I think we would accept that is probably pretty straightforward. We use social and economic impacts in many other areas of the bill as things to be attended to or considered.

Then they are specifically putting in their stranded assets and fuel security risks, it fits here. It is not exclusive of other things but particularly, in terms of energy transition, those are identified by the experts who have recommended this be put in the bill as the very clear things we would want to see consideration of. They are areas of particular risk, specifically in relation to energy transition. I can understand why in (2)(b), we would not necessarily want to go to great lengths to list all of the potential economic, social and environmental implications of climate change, because that would be a long list. Even a non-exhaustive list would be potentially huge, but in this case with energy transition there are particular ones: stranded assets and fuel security, particularly, would be at the top of that list. I do not think there is a problem

of definition there. They would be well understood terms. They are recommended by expert stakeholders as some key front-of-mind elements to risks associated with energy transition.

Members are welcome to put forward an amendment that would adjust or remove or shorten my amendment. As I am not in a position to consult readily with the stakeholders who I have worked with on this amendment, I am going to keep the amendment as it is. I believe it is robust as it is; I do not think it is onerous as it is. I do not think it is unclear in a way that is problematic in the bill. It does not bind a particular course of action from the minister. It requests consideration and gives visibility to this particular area.

I hope that is at least an explanation on that, the list of things being inclusive not exhaustive and the need to put them front and centre in a more explicit way than an assumed way.

Madam CHAIR - While the Leader is getting her thoughts together, can I encourage anyone who is thinking about moving an amendment to that effect that they do it while the member for Nelson still has a call left, and do not force her to take that call before at least declaring their hand on that.

Mrs HISCUTT - My advisers are still very nervous about the definition issues that are raised with this amendment. The member for Nelson talks about the submissions that she speaks to. We have just checked the submissions that were there and there was one - one of 25 organisations which made a submission on the draft bill and of them, Climate Change Tasmania, was the only one that raised this issue so this is the one -

Ms Webb - The group of experts with the most credibility.

Mrs HISCUTT - One of 25 organisations. I want that on the record.

After talking to my advisers here, if the member for Nelson would be able to comply in some way with the suggestion from the member for Murchison, we would find that amendment much more palatable because that moves away from the definition issues which we are very nervous about. It was consideration of the risks associated with energy transition.

I urge the member for Nelson - you do have another speak - if you were to eliminate those words at the end, the Government would be able to support that amendment and I will come halfway to meet with you on that if you would do that.

Madam CHAIR - I will allow the member to speak from her chair because you made it fairly clear that she was not intending to do that but because you have only one call I will allow you to respond to that from your chair.

Ms WEBB - Thank you, I appreciate that, Madam Chair. While you are on your feet, Leader, there is no definition issue, I presume, with social and economic impacts since we are using that terminology frequently through the bill, including in this same clause in (2)(b). If there were to be an adjustment to the amendment and it read:

Consideration of the risks associated with energy transition, including social and economic impacts ...

Is there agreement from the Government that that would be able to be supported?

Mrs HISCUTT - I will check.

Yes, so what we are saying, and to make it clear - this is what is acceptable:

Consideration of the risks associated with energy transition including social and economic impacts.

Yes, I am advised, that that would be acceptable to the Government if you were to do that.

Ms WEBB - I am prepared to adjust the amendment to that.

Madam CHAIR - Can I make the point, the best way to do that would be for the member for Nelson to withdraw her current amendment and then re-put it without those words. We need it in writing, that is all, but we can get that done quite promptly. That would be the best option if that is what the member is happy to do, but I will give other members a chance to speak before you take that call.

This is on the amendment before the Chair.

Ms RATTRAY - Speaking to the amendment, I have appreciated the opportunity to listen to the suggestion put forward, particularly by the member for Murchison and the comments made by the member for Rumney with regard to the inclusion of this amendment referring to the consideration of risks associated with energy transition. Then the acceptance by the member for Nelson, who has moved the amendment, including 'social and economic impacts' but leaving out 'stranded assets and fuel security risks'. I understand what the Leader has been saying in regard to the actual definitions on that because they are not actually defined in the bill. I am quite comfortable to support the member's proposed new amendment with those few words taken out. That actually achieves pretty much what the member has suggested and still satisfies the Government. What a great outcome.

Madam CHAIR - If no-one else wants to speak on the amendment before the Chair, I invite the member for Nelson, if she wishes, to seek leave to withdraw her amendment. We will get copies circulating to members, but we will get the member for Nelson, if she is of a mind to, to withdraw the question before the Chair, which is that the amendment be agreed to.

Ms WEBB - I seek leave to withdraw my amendment.

Leave granted.

Clause 6, as amended -
Proposed further amendment

Madam CHAIR - The member for Nelson can have three calls on this new proposed amendment, if she needs.

Ms WEBB - I move this amendment in my name, page 12, proposed new section 5B, subsection (2) after paragraph (a):

Insert the following paragraph:

- (ab) consideration of the risks associated with energy transition, including social and economic impacts.

I do not think I need to speak to it. We have thoroughly thrashed that out. I hope that everyone can see that is a reasonable concession from both sides and hopefully gives visibility in the bill to the issue.

Mr VALENTINE - I would have preferred to see the other one go through, but there is a thing called compromise and sometimes that is needed. I note that the Government is understanding that there is a desire for stranded assets and fuel security risks to be dealt with. It is up to the Government whether they go that far, but I hope that they do at the end of the day, even though it is not spelt out here. Clearly, the climate change experts we are talking about are of world standard here.

They are world quality people. They are intelligent, climate change-focused people. They have worked on climate change for many years. They are in IMAS and CSIRO in the past. They are pre-eminent in this field and they were the ones putting this forward. Yes, they may have been one of 25, but they are people who need to be listened to. I will agree with this motion. It is not the preferred amendment for me, but I know that sometimes compromise is required in order to get something on the books, and in this instance, it is consideration of the risks as opposed to climate change in itself.

Amendment agreed to.

Clause 6 -
Subclause 5C

Mr VALENTINE - This is the question I was going to add right before when I tried to beat the member for Nelson to her feet. It was simply 5B(1) and indeed (2): 'the Minister is to prepare a statewide climate change risk assessment'. We did have a submission on that, the UTAS policy exchange wanted to see 'must' in there. Now we always have debate over 'may' and 'must'.

Ms Rattray - Now we have it over 'is to'.

Mr VALENTINE - Now we have an 'is to'. Does the 'is to' really equate to a 'must'? Obviously, because we do not want it to be a 'may' - while it is a head of power, we want to make sure that it happens.

Mrs HISCUTT - The OPC rule is that 'must' is mandatory, whereas 'is to' is directory. The OPC advice is that use of either word depends on the level of compulsion you need. For example, if a particular thing or process will be invalid if the minister does not do something, OPC uses 'must'. If the intention is that the minister should do something and it is not critical that they do not, OPC uses 'is to'. When OPC uses 'must' in legislation aimed at members of the public, it is usually followed by a penalty for failing to comply. OPC does not intend to provide for penalties for ministers.

This is saying the minister 'is to' prepare. It is a definite direction for the minister to prepare.

Clause agreed to.

Ms WEBB - This is the sixth amendment in my document. I move -

Page 13, proposed new section 5C, subsection (1):

Leave out “business and industry representatives”.

Insert “community, scientific, business and industry representatives and relevant unions”.

Members will note this section 5C is about sector-based emissions reduction and resilience plans. We are onto the next sort of things we will be preparing as part of the requirements under this bill. Proposed subsection (1) says 'the Minister, in consultation with each relevant portfolio minister, is to consult with' - and I am trying to amend who is consulted. Broaden it a little bit - 'to develop a sector-based emissions reduction and resilience plan for each of the following sectors', and it goes on to list those sectors.

The reason I am seeking to broaden in this part of the bill who is consulted at the earliest opportunity in putting together these emissions reduction and resilience plans is highly relevant. We acknowledge there will be valuable input to be had at that development more broadly than just the business and industry representatives who may be relevant. That there will be - and we have had this discussion in relation to some other parts of the bill - relevant unions involved who will be representing the thoughts, rights and the opportunities of workers within those industries.

I also contend that it is a mistake to not have scientific representatives represented there or included. The Government seeks to make what is a false division between scientific and business as if they are two completely distinct things not actually already intertwined in a way. We have heard from the minister that they have consulted with the scientific community about climate change, we do not need to hear from them now and we are looking at industry making plans to reduce emissions, we are just going to talk with industry. That is probably a little limited and will not get us the best results. We would recognise that often some industries work hand in hand with scientific folk, researchers, people who are developing new technologies. There is a lot of interplay between the frontier of science related to an industry and the industry itself. Having scientific representatives involved at that early development stage for these emissions reduction and resilience plans makes a lot of sense, rather than excluding them, as if we only have to talk to business and industry by themselves, without scientists anywhere near it.

It makes a lot of sense to put community in there at the earliest stage, because we know each of these industries and the businesses within them sit within our community. They employ people in our community. They have an impact on the community within which they sit. As we are making these positive plans together for these emissions reduction and resilience plans, there is an opportunity, where relevant - and it does say relevant - where relevant it is going to be community that will also have valuable contributions to make at that stage. This is seeking to say, look, this is broadly a community task. The sector-based emissions and resilience plans are yes, about a specific sector, yes, we will need to have the business and industry folk from that sector right there in the midst of developing those plans. That would be well supported by scientific, union and community representatives as well who have something valuable to add into that area.

The Government is going to point out the facts that later in this part 5C there is a stage at which there is public consultation on these sector-based emissions reduction resilience plans over the page in proposed subsection (4). It talks about the fact the minister puts a draft plan out for comment. That is not sufficient inclusion of community. It is important. I do not think we should not have that. We should, but we also all know that once a plan is developed and it is put out for consultation it is limited by the degree to which it might be adjusted, changed or incorporate new elements of any significance. Sometimes tweaks are made, but then other times what we get is a government that says we have consulted on that and we are still going ahead with it anyway. This is the version we like.

It is not appropriate to rest on consultation at a later stage in the process for community. There will be relevant and valuable community contributions to make at that development stage at the front end of developing these plans. That is my pitch for this amendment. We do not lose anything or risk anything by including this amendment in the bill, broadening out who the minister can be consulting with at that earliest stage of these plans for particular industries and sectors.

Mrs HISCUTT - The Government does not support this amendment. As noted, we have already considered two similar amendments in both the objects and the development of the Government's climate change action plan, but this amendment for the development of the emissions reduction and resilience plans is different. The development of the emissions reduction and resilience plans goes to the core of the Government's approach to reducing emissions that is different to some of the previous efforts and the alternatives being suggested. The plans are about specific sectors of our community, their industries, the technologies that they use, business operating environments and the trajectories they are now on.

All of these elements need to be thoroughly explored to find the opportunities for removing emissions from those sectors. This is not a public suggestion box process. We have to start with the people who control those emissions and work directly in an in-depth partnership approach to reduce them in ways that also support the continuing successful operations of those businesses.

The plans will be developed in partnership between the Tasmanian Government and representatives from businesses and industries to ensure any identified emissions reduction opportunities and pathways are equitable, realistic and practical, consistent with the opportunities and challenges that climate change presents to each sector and consistent with the capacity of each sector to transition to a lower emissions future.

For example, the emissions of an industrial facility are controlled by its board and its senior management team, not community organisations or its workers. Agricultural emissions are controlled by the farm owner, their property management plans, their pumps, machinery, fertiliser, decisions, and uptake of feed supplements that are currently being developed. The emissions associated with heavy transport and trucking depends on the type of truck used, which is controlled by the fleet manager, or the small business owner, not the drivers or the community organisation. Emissions associated with waste are controlled by the owner of landfills and wastewater treatment plants, not specifically with the workers themselves.

We need to bring these industry sectors with us because they are the ones that everybody else is talking about. We want to talk to them about their emissions and what we can do together to reduce them. Once we have plans formed to a draft level, as part of the transparency

and accountability of this approach, we will then publish them for broader comment and input. This is required in proposed section 5C(4), as alluded to by the member for Nelson, and provides the opportunity for comment by interested parties, research organisations and worker representatives, including unions.

We do not want to close the general public and various other interests out of that entirely, but we need to start with those who control the emissions if we are going to make reasonable inroads to them. This process has transparency and it has rigour.

In addition, the bill requires the development of the emissions reduction and resilience plans to consider the objects of the act, which includes a consultative partnership approach with relative business, industry bodies and the community and as has already been mentioned, unions. This is proposed section 5C(6).

The definition in the objects in the bill is intended to broadly capture the range of individuals and groups that comprise the Tasmanian community, including organisations that represent Tasmanian workers. By naming specific groups here in this clause, there is a risk that other important community groups may be missed. Further, no submissions were received from unions through the independent review of the act.

The minister will also be convening a climate change reference group to gather and test ideas, which will include community, research and specific stakeholders. As the Government has committed, we will also review governance models to determine an appropriate model for Tasmania in the future.

In conclusion, for too long, climate policy has involved outsiders who do not specifically understand an entity's business or its operations to tell them how to reduce emissions. That approach just described is different. Hence, we do not need, and we should not support, this amendment. Members, this is all about the businesses themselves and how they can approach and what they can do to reduce emissions in their sector. That is what this part is about. This amendment is not appropriate for this section and I urge members not to vote for this amendment.

[6.24 p.m.]

Ms WEBB - I will respond to a few of those matters in relation to this amendment. It is interesting to classify everybody but people we can label business and industry representatives as outsiders, which is what the Leader has just done. In her comment she used the term 'outsiders'. Workers in an industry are not outsiders and while industry and business owners and directors may be the ones who make decisions, the impact of decisions is felt by people who work in industry, at times by the community around them, by other community businesses in the supply chains and the other businesses associated with that industry.

Potentially, they are all quite impacted by the choices made towards reducing emissions. This is a planning process we are talking about. It is about who gets to be involved at the outset of that planning, to be able to speak, to represent, to make valuable suggestions and contributions, not as outsiders but as key and central players in what we know is a community and an economy, not just a single business or a single industry because they do not exist in a vacuum.

It is interesting to suggest that by listing these groups more fully in the way this amendment does that somehow we might miss others out. This is not an exhaustive list. It is not meant to be exclusive; it is inclusive. It recognises that across the fact that this covers industries (a) to (g), (g) being any other sector or subsector determined by the minister, there are quite a lot of different industries we are talking about in sectors. There may well be for different ones quite highly relevant groups that would be captured by communities, scientific and relevant unions as necessary at that early stage of planning.

It might not be the case for each of that (a) to (g) but in some of them it may well be. This does not bind the minister to do this in a particular sort of way or the same way for each and every sector that is listed there in (a) to (g). There will be relevant stakeholders. I imagine the mix of relevant stakeholders will look quite different across each of those anyway.

It is disingenuous and unfortunate to try to categorise this as a public suggestion box. Clearly, what it does is recognise that there is value in the input, not just from the people who are responsible for operating the business at the highest level in decisions in terms of boards or management or owners of business, but there will be others who have skin in the game and who will be impacted by those decisions and who can bring forward valuable contributions and suggestions.

I reiterate - there is no specific artificial divide between scientific and business and industry. Those two things are intertwined quite frequently. Where you have scientific bodies, independent ones, university-based ones, perhaps commercial scientific bodies operating into business and industry spaces all the time it is quite natural to consider who is going to be relevant on the scientific side of things to help us best develop innovative technological solutions and other ways towards these emission reductions.

I hope members will consider this as something that is positive and constructive rather than exclusionary, which is the way it reads at the moment.

Mrs HISCUTT - The term 'outsiders' is referencing to being outside the initial process. We will then involve all interested parties in the draft plan to ensure that those impacted will see the process involved. Basically, to put it in simple terms, I would not expect the member for Nelson to be able to advise a farmer on how to reduce emissions on no-till cropping. Once that - and I can see the member for Rumney wondering what 'no-till cropping' is, but there are ways to reduce it. You have to have that draft plan before others - and I will not use the term 'outsiders' any more. It means outside the business decision-making process. You have to have a draft plan first. The people within their businesses know where they can cut emissions the best.

Once these plans are in a draft form then there will be something to be shown to all of those other people who can have a look at it for input. You have to have a starting point and dare I say that the trucking companies, the farmers and all these people who are here know their businesses best and where they can cut emissions. They will formulate the plan then the plan will be put out for others to look at and make comment on. Any refining of that plan can then take place after the submission. You are involving groups here that do not need to be involved at this point. You have to have a plan to start with and when that plan is made by the businesses which know their business the best, that plan can then be put forward for consultation, and on it goes from that point. You have to have a start point, and the businesses

themselves know where to start, where the best place is for them, and then others can comment on the draft plan after that.

I urge members not to agree with this amendment here because it is narrowing what needs to be done and it is having other people who know nothing about 'no-till cropping' to have a comment.

Ms LOVELL - I hear what the Leader is saying, and I am not disagreeing; I have no doubt that business and industry representatives understand their industry and know where they might be able to make changes, in line with an emissions reduction and resilience plan. I am not disagreeing or discounting their knowledge and their expertise in their own industries. There are others that can also add to that, and I see further in the clause that it requires the minister to cause the draft plan to be published online and call for public comment.

Mrs HISCUTT - We are talking about clause 5C(4) on that on page 14?

Ms LOVELL - That is right. The bit that is missing for me is that there is no specific consultation with anybody with any kind of scientific expertise. I have spoken about this at length on this bill. There is nothing specific about consulting with workers or their representatives. I understand what the Leader is saying in not wanting to open it up to everyone, but I also consider it is not open to enough people, specifically. It may be open to public comment but there is a big difference between publishing something and calling for public comment, and specifically consulting with an agricultural scientist who might understand what more can be done in addition to what the business representatives would know themselves.

I am leaning towards supporting the amendment because I feel like that has not been taken into account. It is not spelled out in this clause explicitly enough. If there was another subclause, it might not need to be in that first stage; but in this clause as it stands, it is not really anywhere, other than the public comment. That is the big concern for me, and that is why I would be inclined to support the amendment at this stage.

Mrs HISCUTT - The Government is focused on a partnership approach with industries to reduce emissions, so once we have the draft plan it will be put out for public comment. I can put on the record here that the public comment is a consultative process. Clause 5C(4) that we were just talking about, says 'draft sector-based emissions reduction'. That is why it is in draft form when it goes out, because it will be there for public comment and consultation. Any good ideas that may come forward from scientists - and I am sure there will be lots of people interested in the draft submission plans - they will be taken into consideration by the Government.

Ms FORREST - Madam Deputy Chair, I am a bit confused after the Leader's contribution - not the most recent contribution, but the one before that. I want to talk us through this, to ensure I am understanding it correctly now. To traverse back a bit, there is to be a climate action plan. We are talking about plan, plan, plan - without reference to what sort of plan it is. It would be helpful if we called the plan by the right name, so we know what plan we are talking about.

There are various consultation processes around that. Then there is a requirement for the minister to prepare a statewide climate change risk assessment, which we have debated in the previous section.

Ms Rattray - And amended.

Ms FORREST - Now we are looking at the sector-based emissions reduction and resilience plans, so we are talking about that. When we read this in context, the minister is to consult - the minister being the Minister for Environment and Climate Change, currently Mr Jaensch. I am trying to talk us through so we can all understand what we are talking about here. Mr Jaensch is to consult with each of the relevant portfolio ministers. So, he will talk to the member for Rosevears in her role as minister for Primary Industries.

Mrs Hiscutt - And other industry representatives.

Ms FORREST - Consult with the business and industry representatives to develop the sector-based emissions reduction and resilience plans. That is, develop a plan - in the case of agriculture, the plan for agriculture. There will be consultation with the agricultural sector, business and industry involved in that, with the relevant ministers having carriage of some of that. These emissions reduction and resilience plans need to support the greenhouse gas emissions reduction, and transition to a low-emissions economy, and resilience to climate-related risks.

The minister is to prepare sector-based emissions reduction and resilience plans - 12 months and 24 months, depending on the sector. Before preparing a sector-based emissions reduction and resilience plan, the minister is to cause the draft sector-based emissions reduction and resilience plan to be published online. There will be a number of them prepared - one, two, three, four, five, six, and maybe seven, eight, nine or 10; at least the first six we will know, and then they are reviewed.

Once the emissions reduction and resilience plans are finalised, they are going to be tabled in parliament.

I assume that these emissions reduction and resilience plans will be informed by the climate action plan. My question to the Leader is, which happens first? Do they happen at the same time?

Mrs Hiscutt - The action plan will happen first.

Ms FORREST - That is right. Okay. So, we have the input from everyone - scientists and unions and everyone - in that process. These are sector-based, so to assist the energy sector, transport sector, agriculture sector, to look at how and where they can reduce their emissions and comply with the requirements of the expectation that that will reduce greenhouse gas emissions and transition to a low-emissions economy and demonstrate resilience to climate-related risks. For a farmer, that might mean planting more trees to stabilise the river banks. It might be all sorts of things.

I can see the merit of having the key players sort of developing in that, doing this part. I wonder whether the amendment proposed by the member for Nelson is perhaps in the wrong spot. The point when we have a draft -

Ms Webb - No.

Ms FORREST - that the various sectors have agreed, should then be consulted more broadly, or responded to, by the scientific community, because the industries themselves, as has been said, understand their business best. And yes, one would presume that any farmer worth their salt, or any energy producer or miner or whoever - well, they are already doing it - is looking at all the available research, science and evidence about how they can do this.

I am still unconvinced either way about this; but I consider we need to be clear about what plan we are talking about, what process it is. In terms of producing an initial emissions reduction and resilience plan, each sector has to get to work and do that with the help of the ministers and the department, obviously. The ministers are not just figureheads, they are responsible. However, it is the departmental officers in the relevant departments providing this expertise and support and driving the change and helping develop these plans that then go out for public consultation.

In the member for Nelson's amendment as it is drafted, I fear that putting the community in there would not be helpful.

Ms Webb - Community representatives, it says.

Ms FORREST - You will have people who want to shut down the mining industry entirely, inserting themselves into that. People who do not think we should be using livestock at all, may want to insert themselves. An easy way to cut down meat and emissions is to not eat meat, or drink milk. That is pretty easy, that will cut down a whole heap of emissions very fast; but that is not necessarily the alternative that we try to achieve.

Sure, members of the community and the public should be able to have a look at these and maybe provide input, but not at the front end. We need the industries to get on. I am concerned about that aspect of it, and the potential for this to take ages to do because of the requirement to consult with absolutely everybody who has an interest at the front end in the draft process. That is going to take too long. We want to get on, we want them to get this done. Get on with people who know their industry and their sector the best and then, if you need to strengthen it, before it is finalised, maybe that is the time.

That is as I understand it.

I am concerned about inserting a whole heap of people at the front end. The minister has made it very clear when he has talked to me and when he has talked to us in briefings, that we need to get on with this. We absolutely need to get on with this, because this is where the real work is done. If we do not get on with this, we are doomed.

The difference between 1.5 and 2 degrees is catastrophic. I would rather see business and industry and the departments get on with this, get something done and then get it out. Then maybe we need to strengthen the public consultation process later, not at the outset. That is my thinking on it.

[6.42 p.m.]

Mr VALENTINE - I have been listening very carefully to the arguments on this and I will be very interested to hear the member for Nelson's response. I can see both sides of this

argument. I want to hear the member for Nelson's response to it in terms of what has been brought up before us in the Leader's offering but also the member for Murchison's offering.

If I could have a little indulgence, Madam Chair. Previously, I talked about Climate Change Tasmania having experience in CSIRO and IMAS. It is actually the University of Tasmania. I want to correct the record on that, if that is alright. I made a statement and I want to make sure it is clear, it was about the University of Tasmania experience and the Tasmanian Independent Science Council were a part of that and it is the Antarctic Climate and Ecosystems CRC that I was talking about, when I made that statement. I wanted to make sure that is clear.

I want the member for Nelson to convince me, I suppose is what I am saying.

[6.44 p.m.]

Ms WEBB - Madam Chair. thank you for the contributions from members, I appreciate it. In responding to the points made, I will start by saying it is interesting how scared sometimes the Government or others sound about the impact it will have if people have a say.

Mrs Hiscutt - They will get a say, but not at this point.

Ms WEBB - Let me finish my point. We need to remember that what we are laying out here in this bill, is a process that is owned by the government of the day. These plans - in this instance, we are talking about the sector-based emissions and reduction resilience plans - as I have stated numerous times, these plans are, essentially, owned by the Government. The Government ultimately decides what goes into them. At whatever point of the process that they seek input from relevant stakeholders - whether it is right at the front end, whether it is looking at the consultation and the submissions made to a draft plan later in the process - it is entirely at the Government's discretion what they take from that input and then formulate into the plan. No one is able to take this away from the control of the Government. It is the minister and the Government that makes the decisions. Let us be clear about that. Some risk that somehow people being involved at a certain stage will mean that suddenly we will never be able to drink milk again or eat cheese because we are going have to reduce emissions to do with cows is kind of silly, because it is ultimately the Government's decision what goes into these plans.

At any stage we know this from this bill. The Government has reminded us over and over again how much they have consulted on this bill. Who decided what went into this bill? Who ultimately decided from the different points of consultation along the way? The Government did. The minister did. We know the minister disregarded all kinds of consultation that occurred and did not take on board all the suggestions, took on board some, made adjustments in some areas, but also picked and chose. When these plans, the other ones we have already talked about, but in this instance, the sector-based emissions reduction resilience plans come to be drawn up, both at the development stage when there is consultation with key stakeholders and then later when the draft plans are consulted on, it will be the Government, the minister who decides then what ultimately comes to pass.

Let us not scare ourselves about somehow we are going to end up with something that the government of the day does not agree with or is not in control of. That is one point I would like to make and have on the record.

It is interesting to talk about that we have to get on with this and we should clear away as many people as possible and have the core industry and sector folk there only so we can get it done. This is a bill that has sat for 12 months. It is 12 months since it was finalised before we dealt with it. There was not a great terrible rush from the Government to bring this on for debate and that is a shame. Now, when we are asked to be rushing and to think about excluding key stakeholders in order to rush, let us remember we have just wasted 12 months, let alone what we wasted before that. We have wasted 12 months. I agree, there is urgency. That is why we tried to change various other parts of this bill because there is urgency.

Effective communication with relevant stakeholders should not hold things up. It should expedite things and it should make the process ultimately easier if the right stakeholders have been involved at the early development stage, beyond the central stakeholders, industry and business, and no one is saying they are not there centrally. No one is saying they are not experts in what their businesses are about and what they do. Of course, they sit there, but there are other and quite nuanced relevant stakeholders for each of those sectors who would be covered by community, union and scientific representatives.

That is what this amendment adds. Each sector would have some who may fit into those categories of expert, relevant input at the development stage. Remember, the minister owns it and is in charge of putting it together. The draft plan the minister then puts together and goes out for public comment will be at its best level. It will be robust. It will be already inclusive of many things likely to have come up through a public consultation process later. It will already have a good robust start there in that draft, if the right stakeholders are involved.

If you only exclude relevant stakeholders beyond business and industry from that development stage, you know what is inevitably going to happen? It is going to be a contentious issue when we get to the draft consultation stage because key things will likely have been missed. Relevant scientific experts and stakeholders, relevant community stakeholders, relevant union stakeholders, excluded at the development stage still means more discussion needing to be had, more arguments needing to be had, more interactions more awkwardly had during a later public consultation process.

Let us bring people into the tent who are relevant, who are expert and who are connected to seeing a successful outcome at the earliest opportunity in developing these particular sector-based emissions reduction resilience plans. There is absolutely no contention that businesses know their business, that they are at the centre of it and they will have intimate and expert knowledge about putting together these plans, but they are not the only ones who have good, valuable input to be had at that early stage.

It is not a broad consultation being inserted by this amendment and the reason I said that, the thing that I can point to in relation to that is that, it is not about consulting, for example, all communities. It says:

Community, scientific, business and industry representatives.

The 'representatives' there applies to each of those things that comes before it: community representatives; scientific representatives; business representatives and industry representatives; and then, relevant unions.

We are not saying to open it up to everyone and as much as the Leader might like to suggest that somehow this would mean I would be involved in feeding into the agricultural sector-based emissions reduction and resilience plan. Of course, that is ridiculous. I would never be identified as a community representative relevant to feeding into the early stage development of that plan. Of course I would not, but there would be other community representatives who would be highly relevant to being involved at the early stage of that plan who would not be captured by the descriptor of business and industry. There would certainly be agricultural scientists and the like who would be captured by scientific representatives for that particular plan and there may well be relevant unions or there may not. Each sector is going to look a bit different in terms of who would be there in that discreet and relevant group of stakeholders.

Members, no doubt, have probably made up their mind already. I hope I have addressed some of those issues. Many of us will agree to disagree on it, but I do not think we need to have a concern that regardless of who is here at this stage, at a later stage of consultation, it is the Government's plan; they own it. The Government will always have control of exactly what is in it. We do not have to scare ourselves about who is involved where on that front and, therefore, what will end up in the plan.

Mrs HISCUTT - The Government is focusing on a partnership approach and the bill as it stands embodies this approach. By working with industries and sectors themselves, the Government will be commissioning the scientific experts to tackle the specific challenges that these sectors face. The minister will be establishing a climate change reference group that will include many of the stakeholders considered.

The member for Nelson used key words. She talked about 'relevant stakeholders', 'key stakeholders' and 'right stakeholders' to involve. Can I remind members we are talking about sector-placed emissions reduction and resilience plans? The Government believes they have the relevant key and right stakeholders involved at this point.

Madam CHAIR - The question is that the amendment be agreed to.

The Council divided -

AYES 5

Mr Gaffney
Ms Lovell (Teller)
Mr Valentine
Ms Webb
Mr Willie

NOES 7

Ms Armitage
Ms Forrest
Mr Harriss
Mrs Hiscutt
Ms Howlett (Teller)
Ms Palmer
Ms Rattray

PAIRS: Mr Edmunds, Mr Duigan

Amendment negatived.

Progress reported; Committee to sit again.

**JUSTICE AND RELATED LEGISLATION MISCELLANEOUS AMENDMENTS
BILL 2022 (No. 43)**

First Reading

Bill received from the House of Assembly and read the first time.

ADJOURNMENT

Mrs HISCUTT (Montgomery - Leader of the Government in the Legislative Council) -
Mr President, I move -

That at its rising the Council does adjourn until 11 a.m. on Wednesday
26 October 2022.

Motion agreed to.

Mrs HISCUTT (Montgomery - Leader of the Government in the Legislative Council) -
Mr President, my office has sent out a rearranged schedule for the rest of the week. If members could please take the time to have a look at that, that would be good.

Before I move the adjournment, I remind members that at 9.30 a.m. there has been a different arrangement of briefings. At 9.30 a.m. there is a briefing for the Occupational Licensing (Automatic Mutual Recognition Consequential Amendments) Bill 2022. Then at 9.45 a.m. there will be the Roads and Jetties Amendment Bill 2022 briefing, and the Traffic Amendment (Electronic Billboards) Bill briefing. At 10.15 a.m. it will be the Electricity Safety Bill 2022 briefing. That is on the new updated schedule that has been sent out to all members. Please have a look. So, the message is 9.30 a.m., Committee Room 2.

Mr President, I move -

That the Council does now adjourn.

The Council adjourned at 7.03 p.m.