



PARLIAMENT OF TASMANIA

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

REPORT OF DEBATES

Wednesday 23 June 2021

REVISED EDITION

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Wednesday 23 June 2021

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

STATEMENT BY PREMIER

Attendance of Minister from the Legislative Council

[10.02 a.m.]

Mr GUTWEIN (Bass - Premier) - Mr Speaker, with regard to the arrangements for question time today, I understand that in respect to Ms Howlett, Minister for Sport and Recreation, Minister for Racing, Minister for Women and Minister for Small Business, that leave is yet to be granted by the other place in order to allow for her to attend the House of Assembly today. That matter will be dealt with later and she will be joining us tomorrow.

QUESTIONS

Adam Brooks - Fitness for Public Office

Mr O'BYRNE question to PREMIER, Mr GUTWEIN

[10.03 a.m.]

Prior to the preselection of Adam Brooks, did you have any reason to believe he lacked integrity and was unfit for public office?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I personally and warmly congratulate you on your ascension to the Chair. I am sure you will serve this parliament with distinction. I also add my welcome to new members to this place and hope you find your time here as enjoyable and as fruitful as I have in the work you can do to assist the Tasmanian people to improve their lives.

Mr O'Byrne, congratulations on your ascension to Leader of the Opposition. I am sure that as this week rolls out there will be more to be said on that and the arrangements as they have landed. I note that Dr Broad has left us with a wealth of material in which to point out his views and the views of some within Labor of the machinations that have gone on over the last period, but we will deal with those matters as and when they come to hand.

To Ms White, thank you for being a decent and responsible Leader of the Opposition during your time here. Albeit there are things we will always disagree on - in fact matters that at times I would say stretched the truth somewhat. I wish you well with regard to the coming circumstances and the new addition to your family.

As to the question that was asked in relation to Mr Brooks, I had no dealings with him that would have indicated to me that he was not a fit and proper person to run as a candidate.

Adam Brooks - Fitness for Public Office

Mr O'BYRNE question to PREMIER, Mr GUTWEIN

[10.05 a.m.]

When it was revealed on 8 April that Adam Brooks was facing ammunition storage charges in Tasmania, what specific steps did you take to satisfy yourself that he was a suitable candidate for public office?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I thank the Leader of the Opposition for that question.

Regarding the question he has asked in regard to Mr Brooks, I listened very briefly to a radio interview the other day about a matter that was put to the Leader of the Opposition about someone who held a very senior position in the Labor Party, the Labor Party president, and what his views were on Mr McGregor and the circumstances he found himself in. Mr O'Byrne said it was not his role to act as judge, jury and executioner. As to this particular matter, I make the point that the courts have a role here. In this state and country we have the presumption of innocence until proven guilty. On that basis, those matters need to take their course. It would be unreasonable and unwarranted for me to comment on a matter that is potentially before the courts, which is exactly what he is asking me to do, Mr Speaker.

In terms of Mr Brooks, I will make this point: I wish him well. He is unwell; there are no two ways about that. I last spoke with him on the Friday of the declaration and I was very concerned for his health on that day. He was seeking treatment and I wish him well with that treatment. The presumption of innocence, which is granted to every member of this place and every person in this state, should be the standard in the matter raised by the Leader of the Opposition.

Mr O'BYRNE - Point of order on relevance, Mr Speaker. The question was not necessarily about Mr Brooks and his current condition. It was about the steps the Premier took to convince himself that he was fit for public office when these charges hit the public domain.

Mr SPEAKER - That is not a point of order and it is not an opportunity to re-ask the question. The Premier is allowed to answer as he sees fit, while sticking to what he sees as the question.

Mr GUTWEIN - Thank you, Mr Speaker. Obviously, Mr Brooks outlined his circumstances to me and said he would be vigorously defending the charges. On the basis of rule of law in this country, I accepted that and will allow the court processes to take their course.

Adam Brooks - Premier's Response to Issues Raised

Ms O'CONNOR question to PREMIER, Mr GUTWEIN

[10.08 a.m.]

In your Premier's Address last year, you will recall you spoke to the women who rallied across the country for justice and equality. You said, 'I see you and I hear you'. Yet you failed

at the first hurdle during the election campaign when two women came forward to say then Liberal Party state treasurer and Braddon candidate Adam Brooks had lied to them about his identity, even producing a fake Victorian driver licence. You did not believe them but you believed a candidate who had lied three times to parliament. Then when you were challenged at a press conference, you accused a female ABC reporter of dishonesty, of tricking up documents; in effect, of falsifying a story.

Given what we now know about Mr Brooks, will you apologise to those women who you chose not to believe and to Emily Baker from the ABC?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I thank the Leader of the Greens for that question and her interest in the matter. Regarding women who have anonymously made complaints about Mr Brooks, if those matters are found to be true then that is a very unfortunate set of circumstances they find themselves in. However, as you are aware and this place is aware, Mr Brooks is before the courts. One of the matters that is being heard is a matter of identity. It would not be fair nor reasonable for me to comment on that circumstance while it is before the courts.

Ms O'CONNOR - Point of order before the Premier leaves the lectern, Mr Speaker. He was asked whether he apologised to Emily Baker from the ABC, who he also chose not to believe.

Mr SPEAKER - The Premier has answered.

Securing Tasmania's Future

Ms OGILVIE to PREMIER, Mr GUTWEIN

[10.11 a.m.]

Can you please update the House on the Governments clear plan to secure Tasmania's future as put forward to Tasmanians in the recent state election campaign? How was that plan received? Are you aware of any alternative approaches?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I thank the member for Clark for that question and for all of her hard work during the campaign and, more importantly, as an independent member for joining my fine team. You represented your electorate well and I am certain as a member of this team you will continue to do so.

It is a very important question. Every question asked in this place is important. Unlike the hypocrisy that we heard yesterday from the Leader of the Greens in her response to the structure of question time and the fact that the Government is allowed to ask questions on important matters. I was in this place when the Leader of the Greens was fielding questions from Mr O'Halloran.

Ms O'Connor - That was in Estimates.

Mr GUTWEIN - Fielding questions from Mr O'Halloran in this place and making all sorts of what I would have said at the time were outrageous comments about Mr O'Halloran.

Ms O'Connor - It was a decade ago.

Mr GUTWEIN - So, if it happened 10 years ago it does not count.

Ms O'Connor - Keep bloviating.

Mr SPEAKER - Ms O'Connor, order.

Mr GUTWEIN - Hypocrisy writ large. On 1 May Tasmanians resoundly voted for this side of politics, for our clear plan to secure Tasmania's future. They delivered for this state a historic victory for the Liberal Party - a majority third term. It was significant and it was historic. I thank Tasmanians for the faith that they have shown in me and my team. We will not let you down. Tasmanians voted for certainty and stability. They voted for the clear plan that we laid out to secure Tasmania's future. There are 25 000 more jobs in this state than when we first came to Government in 2014. In fact, there are more jobs today than there were just before the pandemic. Our state is performing very well. On most economic indicators, in fact on all economic indicators, we are performing very well.

When you look at retail trade, at what is happening in the construction industry, when you look at job vacancies, the state is in a very good place. As part of our plan to secure Tasmania's future we laid out some key markers. We said that we would get a number of things done in the first 30 days and we have. We have delivered on that: important actuals which will improve the lives of Tasmanians. I want Tasmania to be a state of opportunity for all. Regardless of who you are, where you live, your circumstance or background we want you to be able to grasp the opportunities that are available in this state right now, in the strong growing economy. That is exactly what our plan will deliver. It is a plan that will secure Tasmania's future. It focuses on making the necessary decisions to keep Tasmanians safe. On that point, the Public Health Director is currently considering what the circumstances are regarding New South Wales. We will have more to say later today.

Our systems are working. We kept Tasmanians safe. Our economy has rebounded. Our strong plan will deliver an even stronger and more diversified economy. It will deliver the revenues that we need to continue to invest record amounts into health, education, and other essential services. Our plan for TasTAFE will ensure that we have a nimbler organisation. An organisation that is more like the businesses it is there to serve, providing more opportunity for training and skills for Tasmanians wherever they live, so they can grasp those opportunities that are in a strong growing economy.

I was asked about alternative approaches. The people's verdict was harsh on the former Opposition leader, Ms White - the chaotic campaign that was filled with negativity and false scaremongering, a land tax policy they could not explain. Ms White is now the shadow treasurer. I am sure she will have plenty of opportunities to outline how that one was going to work, considering neither she as leader nor the shadow treasurer could explain a policy that they trumpeted. It was just extraordinary. The Labor vote went backwards in every electorate. They won only one booth north of Kempton. There was a massive swing against Labor in the traditional heartland of Clark. What went wrong? Well, the member for Braddon -

Ms O'Byrne - Which member for Braddon?

Ms O'CONNOR - Point of order, Mr Speaker, the Premier has now, on a Dorothy Dix question, spoken for five-and-a-half minutes. Again, we urge you to -

Mr Ferguson - What standing order?

Ms O'Connor - Standing order 48, submission time.

Mr FERGUSON - Mr Speaker, if I may, in response to that point of order, we had a debate yesterday that provided for minimum number of questions, in the event question time goes over one hour.

Ms O'Connor - It did not provide for ministers to talk endlessly.

Mr SPEAKER - Premier, I ask you to start winding up. I know you have a lot of good news you would like to say.

Mr GUTWEIN - Mr Speaker, thank you. Time is relevant when it matters to the member, but on other matters when she has been called out it is irrelevant, as we discovered this morning.

Ms O'Byrne asked which member for Braddon? The one sitting next to you, Ms O'Byrne. Dr Broad put the failure down to the domination of a hard-left factional group of power brokers that have delivered three election losses in a row. They have taken over the Labor Party and pushed out moderate voices. They have a veto power on the leadership. You just experienced that, Dr Broad.

Mr Winter, welcome to this place. As Dr Broad said, the lengths that that group went to, to spike your campaign was symbolic of bigger issues within the party. Dr Broad said there will be consequences for the stand -

Ms O'CONNOR - Point of order, Mr Speaker. You asked the Premier to wind up one-minute-and-a-half ago. He has disrespected you and the House. Seven minutes.

Mr SPEAKER - Thank you Ms O'Connor, I am in charge of this. Every time you jump and object you are taking time away.

Mr GUTWEIN - I will wind up. There is a wealth of material. Dr Broad said there will be consequences for this. Ms Butler, I guess you know that first-hand.

Adam Brooks - Fitness for Public Office

Mr O'BYRNE to PREMIER, Mr GUTWEIN

[10.19 a.m.]

When it was alleged on 23 April that Adam Brooks had been operating dating profiles under a false identity, what specific steps did you take to satisfy yourself he was a suitable candidate for public office?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I thank the Leader of the Opposition for that question and for his fascination with Mr Brooks. It seems a little unhealthy.

The statements I made during the campaign are on the public record and they stand. As for the conversations I had with Mr Brooks, I make this point. With the allegations that were raised, he proclaimed his innocence every step of the way. In terms of matters related to the campaign and Mr Brooks, as I have said, the last time I spoke with him, Mr Brooks was very unwell. Secondly, he is before the courts, and those matters need to take their course.

Adam Brooks - Fitness for Public Office

Mr O'BYRNE question to PREMIER, Mr GUTWEIN

[10.21 a.m.]

In the last parliament, Adam Brooks resigned in disgrace after being found by the Integrity Commission to have lied to parliament. He lied to the then premier, Will Hodgman, and lied to an independent investigation into his conduct. What does it say about your judgment that you were willing to take him at his word?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I thank the member for that question and for bringing the Integrity Commission into this place. There is a matter I want to raise in a moment.

The Integrity Commission found that Mr Brooks did not at any time have a material conflict of interest and did not breach the ministerial code of conduct. On the basis that the Leader of the Opposition has brought the Integrity Commission into this place, the matter I want to raise goes to the Integrity Commission and to the heart of integrity. Yesterday it became apparent that there was a question of integrity, or lack thereof, sitting over the head of either the Integrity Commission, Ms White or the ABC.

In the report that the ABC ran yesterday, in respect of Operation Hyperion, there was a matter that was raised in that. I only looked at this late yesterday and I understand it was on the website most of yesterday. Ms White said, and I am quoting:

That Integrity Commission Chief Executive, Michael Easton, had told her that it had become too costly to continue that investigation because of the legal back and forth between the agency and the Liberals.

One, I thought that was a breach of confidentiality by the Integrity Commission in the first instance, so we contacted them last night and asked for their view as to the truth behind that statement. Overnight, the Integrity Commission corresponded with us, and in respect of what Ms White said, Mr Easton in his correspondence said:

The article states Ms White said the Integrity Commission chief executive, Michael Easton, told her that it had become too costly to continue the

investigation because of the legal back and forth between the agency and the Liberals.

He goes on to say, when he met:

I can confirm that I did not make the statement used in the article or provide that information to Ms White. It is not correct that the investigation has become too costly to continue, so I would not have made that statement. I confirmed with Ms White that procedural fairness submissions were received from parties who had been provided a draft report, however did not reference the content of those submissions, or that any submissions had been provided through lawyers.

Sitting on your front bench at the moment is a question that needs to be answered: did Ms White lie in that article?

Opposition members interjecting.

Did she lie and mislead people in that article yesterday? If so, Ms White should stand and clarify the record, because right now there is a significant question of integrity hanging over her head in terms of comments that she has made in respect of that article, and that matter needs to be cleared up, Mr Speaker.

School Lunch Program

Ms JOHNSTON question to MINISTER for EDUCATION, Ms COURTNEY

[10.25 a.m.]

You would be aware that one of the re-election promises the Labor Party took to the recent election was a plan to provide lunches to all primary school children in government schools. As a genuine independent in this parliament, it is my intention to support good ideas, no matter where they come from, and this one is a policy that I do agree with.

You would also be aware from your previous responsibilities as health minister that as a preventive health initiative, a good diet at a young age will not only improve educational outcomes and attendances at primary school, but it will also help to instil healthy eating habits into adulthood. It is important to acknowledge that a school lunch program targeting only needy children would almost certainly stigmatise those children. We know how cruel school yards can be, and how do we determine which children deserve a nutritious meal and who do not?

Minister, do you agree that a healthy diet is important for school-based children? If so, will you put your political rivalries to one side and introduce a healthy lunch program that would be available to all primary school students in government schools?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I thank the member for Clark for her question, and I, too, welcome you to this place and look forward to your inaugural speech, which I understand will be later today.

The Tasmanian Government is committed to ensuring that all Tasmanians have access to healthy and nutritious food, and this importantly includes our vulnerable children and our young people. We know that some of our students do come to school without breakfast or lunch, and this is why, as part of our election policy to ensure the food security of Tasmanians, we have committed \$1.4 million to expand our school lunch pilot to 30 primary schools around our state. This follows a smaller pilot run with the Tasmanian School Canteen Association last year across six schools with some positive results, including better concentration, increased school attendance and reduction in behavioural issues.

This expanded pilot will provide healthy and nutritious lunches for students in need. This program will be flexible to ensure that schools can make decisions about the kinds of lunches that best meet the needs of students in their local communities.

Each school community is different, and decisions about the most appropriate and equitable way to provide these supports are best made by the principals, the teachers and the parents, at a local level. Of course, we will continue to work closely with the Tasmanian School Canteen Association, which provides so many valuable services to our community. We will be rolling out the EOI process for the first 15 schools in the next two months. Findings from this expanded pilot will inform future initiatives.

We know that during the election, the Opposition took a long list of unrealistic and uncosted policies to the community, including its school lunch program. At a cost of \$30 million, the only way Labor was going to pay for this unrealistic spending would have been significantly increasing school levies. Our pilot is a considered, evidenced-based plan that targets the support where it is needed, and strengthens access for Tasmanians to have healthy and nutritious food. This is about supporting the food security of Tasmanians, and unlike Labor's policy, it is not at the expense of the education budget.

I acknowledge the member's genuine interest in this important topic. The findings of the expanded pilot will inform future initiatives in this space, and we will continue to do all we can to support our students. Our students' wellbeing is a priority of the Government, which is why we are focused on making investments in education that include free access to school pathologists, psychologists, social workers in every child and family learning centre, and recruiting additional school nurses to add to the 42.7 full-time school nurses already working within our schools.

In addition, we are hiring more in-school quality literacy coaches and more teachers. I will continue to work closely with my colleague, Minister for Community Services and Development, Jeremy Rockliff, who has leadership of our food security work to understand the findings of this expanded pilot.

I want every one of our children to fully engage in learning, and our Government is committed to providing the necessary and targeted supports our young people need.

UNESCO World Heritage Committee

Mr SPEAKER - Member for Clark, Leader of the Greens, Ms O'Connor.

Ms O'CONNOR - May I ask, Mr Speaker, why you have chosen not to refer to me as Leader of the Greens, as the previous Speaker did?

Mr SPEAKER - Simply because I will be asking members of the Chamber to not reflect personally by using individual's names, but to either use their position or as a member of an electorate.

Ms O'CONNOR - My position, Mr Speaker.

Mr SPEAKER - You are the Leader of the Greens. I acknowledge that. But, within the parliament, there are only two members, which does not make up a party status.

Ms O'CONNOR - That is untrue. I will take that up with you outside the Chamber.

Mr SPEAKER - I am happy to have that discussion outside the Chamber.

Ms O'CONNOR - I am the Leader of the Tasmanian Greens. You would not refer to Mr O'Byrne as the member for Franklin. I will leave it at that.

Mr SPEAKER - His title is in fact the Leader of the Opposition.

Ms Archer - Are you reflecting on the Chair?

Ms O'CONNOR - No, I am actually asking for some respect.

Mr SPEAKER - Order. You asked for an explanation and that is the explanation. Ms O'Connor has the call.

Ms O'CONNOR question to PREMIER, Mr GUTWEIN

[10.30 a.m.]

Australians found out yesterday the UNESCO World Heritage Committee has placed the Great Barrier Reef on the World Heritage endangered list. Tasmanians found out today UNESCO is also increasingly alarmed about the impact on wilderness and cultural values of your Government's divisive and unpopular expressions of interest process for developments in protected areas.

UNESCO finds your Government's five-year belated tourism master plan for the TWWHA to be wholly insufficient and has asked your Government to assure that any proposal which affects the outstanding universal values of the World Heritage Area need to be referred to the committee. By the Parks and Wildlife Service's own assessment, the Lake Malbena heli-tourism proposal would degrade wilderness values across many hundreds of hectares of the TWWHA. In short, UNESCO wants your Government to put a stop to the EOI process.

As Premier, what is your response to this damning assessment by the World Heritage Committee?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I thank the member for that question. It has been my practice to normally call you the Leader of the Greens but until that matter is sorted out I will refer to you as the member for Clark.

Ms O'Connor - I have a letter here from your own Planning minister to the Leader of the Greens and I also have a letter from you. You people are so petty.

Mr GUTWEIN - This is the people's House and it is managed -

Ms O'CONNOR - Point of order, Mr Speaker. I want the Premier to understand we have one female leader in this place and she should be referred to by her correct title. One woman in leadership in here. You have stitched up the Speaker's role, Chair of Committees, Deputy Chair.

Mr SPEAKER - Order, Ms O'Connor.

Ms O'CONNOR - All men. One woman in leadership and you belittle me.

Mr GUTWEIN - I was not belittling you.

Dr WOODRUFF - Point of order, Mr Speaker. It is simply disrespectful to the Tasmanian Greens and to Ms O'Connor - and to women - that she is not referred to correctly by her title as Leader of the Greens.

Mr SPEAKER - Order. I have dealt with this issue. It is not a point of order. The Premier has the call.

Mr GUTWEIN - Thank you, Mr Speaker. I will allow Ms O'Connor and you to sort that matter out.

With regard to the question you asked, the World Heritage Committee draft decision on the TWWHA state party report was released on 22 June for its upcoming forty-fourth session to be held in China. I was pleased to read in the report that the committee has welcomed progress in implementing the recommendations of the 2015 Reactive Monitoring Mission and commended this Government on the completion of the cultural values assessment of the 2013 extension area to the TWWHA.

I note that the decision reiterates the need to progress with proclaiming the future potential production forest land and the PTPZ land as reserve land and we are well advanced with that request, having now completed the public consultation phase. I also note the committee has been advised to take note that the finalisation and release of the tourism master plan on 1 June. The committee will address the World Heritage Centre and the advisory body to review this plan in light of their earlier comments. I am advised that the final master plan addresses all of the expectations that were outlined in that draft decision. I concur with the committee that the 2018-19 fires were serious and we have released background papers on a new fire management plan for the TWWHA. The World Heritage Committee highlighted the importance of the TWWHA fire management plan which has been drafted and this is all positive recognition of our efforts to protect the outstanding universal values of the TWWHA.

However, I note with concern a reference in the draft decision regarding development of the TWWHA that the Government believes is ill-informed and an over-reach of the World Heritage Committee's role.

Ms O'Connor - Ill-informed?

Mr GUTWEIN - The Government believes this direction needs to be corrected and is seeking clarification and will also be providing a recommendation in respect to an appropriate alternative position. I have not seen that advice as yet, as I indicated yesterday, but once that advice has been handed down I am certain we will have more to say.

As the question has gone to matters of environment, I think it is perfectly reasonable for me to raise a matter that was reported today with Ms O'Connor, as she has indicated as the Leader of the Tasmanian Greens, in regard to this disgraceful circumstance of the meat traps.

Ms O'Connor - Do you understand Parks and Wildlife does that too?

Mr SPEAKER - Order.

Mr GUTWEIN - The question is what relevant authorisations were obtained by the BBF under the Nature Conservation Act 2002 and the Threatened Species Protection Act 1995 in terms of taking this wildlife?

Ms O'CONNOR - Mr Speaker, point of order on relevance. The Premier has not addressed the question he was asked and now he is deflecting. Could you please turn his mind to the actual question, which is whether he will follow UNESCO's advice and put a stop to the EOIs?

Mr SPEAKER - Thank you, Ms O'Connor, for the point of order. The Premier had been answering that question and he has moved onto some general environmental issues.

Mr GUTWEIN - I did provide a response on that question and as the matter went to environmental matters I think is perfectly reasonable in this place to raise this dreadful and outrageous set of circumstances that have been brought to light this morning -

Greens members interjecting.

Mr SPEAKER - Order.

Mr GUTWEIN - and to ask whether the Bob Brown Foundation met the requirements of the Animal Welfare Act 1993. Was permission sought from the mining company prior to the mining lease being accessed or was it a matter of trespass? I understand on the mining lease that the cameras have since been passed onto Tasmania Police for consideration, but it would have been reasonable to expect the self-proclaimed Leader of the Tasmanian Greens -

Dr WOODRUFF - Point of order, Mr Speaker, I ask the Premier to withdraw that. It is factually incorrect and personally offensive.

Ms O'Connor - Withdraw. You cannot diminish the one woman in leadership in this place. Enough!

Mr SPEAKER - Order, order. It is up to the member if she is offended to raise the issue, not for somebody else. Therefore I cannot ask unless she does.

Ms O'CONNOR - Mr Speaker, I am personally offended by the Premier describing me as the 'self-appointed Leader of the Greens'. I am the Leader of the Greens; I am the leader of a registered political party. I also happen to be the only woman in here in a leadership role and on behalf of women I demand respect.

Mr SPEAKER - Thank you for that, Ms O'Connor. Leader of the House.

Mr FERGUSON - Mr Speaker, the behaviour from the Greens member for Clark, Ms O'Connor, is out of control today. It is disorderly, it is completely inappropriate and it is setting a terrible standard for the first question time in the new parliament. I ask you, Mr Speaker, to deal with Ms O'Connor if this behaviour continues.

Ms O'Connor - By calling me by my correct title.

Mr FERGUSON - It is highly disorderly and extremely unprofessional.

Mr SPEAKER - On that point, Ms O'Connor, I have indicated that I will talk to you privately over this issue. I do not expect it to be raised again in this Chamber. The Premier has the call.

Mr GUTWEIN - Thank you, Mr Speaker. The point that I was finishing was to simply say that I hope we hear from Ms O'Connor later today in terms of these circumstances and her view on whether or not she thinks it is appropriate that a range of statutes may have been transgressed and laws may have been broken.

It is beholden on her, if she is the Leader of the Tasmanian Greens in both spirit and in word, that she stand up and condemn those actions.

Securing Tasmania's Future - Health

Mr STREET question to MINISTER for HEALTH, Mr ROCKLIFF

[10.39 a.m.]

Can you please provide an update to the House on the Government's clear plan to secure Tasmania's future by prioritising health for the benefit of all Tasmanians?

ANSWER

Thank you, Mr Street, I can. I congratulate you on your election and interest in this matter. I congratulate you as well, Mr Speaker.

We are delivering on our clear plan laid out during the last election to secure Tasmania's future and a plan to continue to invest strongly in health. The Tasmanian Liberal Government

has delivered more funding, more staffing and more health services than any previous government. I acknowledge and thank my predecessors, Mr Ferguson and Ms Courtney, for their diligence and commitment in delivering additional resources.

However, we recognise there are ongoing challenges, with demand continuing to increase in a COVID-19 environment, putting pressure on our health services and our staff.

Our election commitments are built on the work already done to ensure that when Tasmanians come into contact with our health system, they get the right care, at the right place and at the right time.

Key commitments include:

Recruiting an additional 280 full-time equivalent staff to support new and boosted services across Tasmania. Consistent with our first 30-day plan, recruitment has already commenced;

Establishing a new health staff recruitment task force with health stakeholders, including unions, to look at how we can improve recruitment across our health system. The first meeting which I was able to attend occurred last week;

Providing a one-off \$20 million fund to soon deliver care by ensuring our private hospitals are better able to support our public hospitals to manage demand. Proposals have been received and are currently being assessed;

Strengthening palliative and community health care with an additional \$52 million for in-home and local community-delivered health services; and

Delivering a record elective surgery blitz, so more patients get the surgery they need within the clinically recommended time: an additional 22 300 elective surgeries and endoscopies. I am advised an elective surgery plan is already under development.

The next health dashboard, due by the end of this month, will show that the elective surgery wait list for March is marginally less than December at 12 061. I am informed the May figures are slightly more encouraging at 11 618, which is a reduction of 455 since March or 653 since a peak in January. Since January the number of patients waiting beyond the clinically recommended times, has decreased by 14 per cent, from 6694 in January to 5851 in May. This is one of the areas I am most concerned about. Behind all the stats and all the numbers there are people we must do better for. We can achieve the best outcomes for Tasmanians when we work collaboratively, which is why I have been engaging closely with unions and other health stakeholders over the past few weeks.

Collaboration requires the sharing of information as well as ideas. As an initial step to improve the transparency and currency of health information, I have asked for the health dashboard, which will be released at the end of this week, to show data from March, April and May. From then on the health dashboard will be released monthly. In late July the dashboard will be released showing the June data. I have also asked the department to provide me with further options for increasing the availability and accessibility of information on our health

system. The feedback I received from the community is clear - they want to see continued improvement in health service delivery. They are also clear that they do not want health to be a political football. Continuing an outrage and fear campaign by those opposite will only see them relegated to irrelevancy. More importantly, it undermines the confidence of our health system, it undermines the confidence of the people, the diligence of our people who work within our health system. It also makes it extremely difficult to recruit, one of our big challenges. There are many great things that happen in our health system every single day.

Yes, we have challenges, and I expect to be held accountable on every single one of those challenges. We all know the challenges in health. What is important is that we work collaboratively on implementing solutions. That is why I am focused on delivery better health care for all Tasmanians.

Adam Brooks - Fitness for Public Office

Mr O'BYRNE to PREMIER, Mr GUTWEIN

[10.45 a.m.]

During the election campaign you sacked one of your candidates after a video emerged of him disagreeing with Government policy. Even when a video emerged to prove the serious allegations against Adam Brooks were true, you stood by him. Did you continue to defend Adam Brooks because he was a Liberal Party donor?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I thank the member for that question. The answer to that question is no.

To clarify a matter and just so this does not go on in this place, you and I worked well together through COVID-19 and with good intent. I hope you can sort it out with the Speaker but my intention would be to declare you in this place and refer to you as the Leader of the Tasmanian Greens. I do not think we need to take that matter much further.

I point out to the Leader of the Opposition the matters that his side of politics had to deal with and the extraordinary circumstances of Mr McGregor. We had an omnishambles going on whereby the president of the party was suing the leader of the party for defamation. Extraordinary. The leader of the party declared that the president of the party was unfit. Another candidate said he would work subversively to change Labor Party policy because he did not agree with it and given the opportunity would speak out against it. A candidate for the Labor Party had a Facebook page that could probably only be described as a soft porn website. I have answered the questions both during the campaign and today honestly and clearly regarding Mr Brooks.

In that last conversation I had with Mr Brooks, I formed the view, and he informed me at that time, that he was very unwell. He is going through the courts at the moment and those processes should be allowed to take their course.

Mr O'Byrne - And they will.

Mr GUTWEIN - You cannot, as the Leader of the Opposition, play it both ways. You cannot when asked a question about Mr McGregor simply say I am not judge, jury and executioner and that matter needs to take its course.

Ms O'Byrne - He did not remain a candidate; Adam Brooks did. Adam Brooks remained a candidate until the day of swearing in.

Mr SPEAKER - Order.

Mr GUTWEIN - Hypocrisy writ large on that side. Dr Broad is the only one on that side prepared to speak the truth. What happened? Ms Butler knows full well; she bore the full brunt of the savage left. The domination of a hard-left factional group of power-brokers that delivered yet another election loss. Dr Broad claimed that people within his own party were nothing more than bullies and made the point that they have a veto power on the leadership, which is why he sits where he sits and Mr O'Byrne sits where he sits.

Ms O'Byrne - Tell us why Mr Ellis sits where he sits.

Mr SPEAKER - Order.

Mr GUTWEIN - Let me explain something: Mr Brooks is a private citizen now. He is not in this place. There are processes under way in the courts and they should be allowed to take their course.

Securing Tasmania's Future - Infrastructure

Mr TUCKER to MINISTER for INFRASTRUCTURE and TRANSPORT, Mr FERGUSON

[10.49 a.m.]

Can you please update the House on how the Government's infrastructure and building and construction program are contributing to a clear plan to secure Tasmania's future?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I thank the member for Lyons for his question and congratulate him on being again returned by the people of Lyons to this House. It was a great result. I loved the campaign. It was a tremendous campaign and on our side of politics we found so much goodwill in the Tasmanian community for our Premier, our ministry and our full team.

We are very grateful that Tasmanians had a very clear choice to make between our party and the omnishambles led by Rebecca White being undermined by David O'Byrne, I should say the Opposition Leader today, and we are getting on with the job. As the Premier has said, in the first 30 days we did meet our commitments which were very substantial. As we see our economy recovering from the pandemic, on this side of the House we know that the most important thing we can do is to continue to support jobs.

By investing in infrastructure we are doing exactly that and this money is circulating throughout the economy multiple times and keeping people employed. That is why we are

investing a record \$5 billion in infrastructure across government, including \$2.4 billion in our roads and bridges program.

The latest ABS figures show that Tasmania's economy continues to recover from the pandemic. This is great news, with our economic growth underpinned by increasing private investment, not just government investment, as well as record building approvals. This really reflects the strong investment in construction equipment and more houses, supported by our very successful construction blitz and the home builder programs in which we have partnered with the Morrison federal government.

Our record investment of \$615 million into social and affordable housing and homelessness initiatives, including our record election commitment of \$280 million to extend our building program of new social housing for Tasmanians in need, is the biggest in this state for decades. That is what Tasmanians have voted for. This means that we will deliver an extra 2000 new homes out to 2027 on top of the 1500 already being built over the next three years. That brings the total to 3500 new homes by 2027 to help our most vulnerable and to support our whole state. That is what we are about and what we want to do. We recognise the housing stress that exists for a lot of families in Tasmania which is why this policy has been designed the way it has.

This historic spend also supports our economy through thousands of jobs in the building and construction sector while also locking in the pipeline of future work. Two recent examples of upcoming projects are the awarding of the youth at risk facility in Launceston. That is worth \$2.32 million to RTC as well as the announcement that Vos Construction has been awarded the \$8.7 million upgrade and expansion of Thyne House in Launceston. That is really fantastic. A further example is the tender being advertised right now. Come one, come all and bid for this work to build 15 new units at Magnolia Place which I visited last week, and I can tell you the excitement and joy around that was palpable from the women who run that centre.

We also have a historic and ambitious infrastructure program that is creating jobs. Industry has told us that to deliver on this pipeline the workforce in that private sector will need to increase by around a quarter over the next four years because right now this industry is going gangbusters with all of the work that is going on. In the budget we have contained Tasmania's contribution to \$360 million in the infrastructure commitments in the Morrison government's 2021 budget. That includes the \$187 million duplication of the Midway Point and Sorell causeways, the missing pieces of the step project out to Sorell - four lanes all the way to Sorell plus the bypass. That is in addition to our contribution to the upgrade of the Tasman Bridge. Through this election campaign we made additional commitments of \$416.5 million into our roads and bridges over seven years, including targeted investments across every region of our state and Tasmanians voted for that. This has been further boosted by \$322 million in last month's federal budget, which was just incredible and we are very grateful for it.

Mr Speaker, what is next? We will also deliver the next four ten-year strategic action plans for the Bass Highway, Channel Highway and the Huon and Tasman highways, building on the success of the Midland Highway 10-year strategic action plan, which was the first for the state and is progressing extremely well. It was your plan, but you did not actually get around to operate a single kilometre north of Brighton, Mr O'Byrne, when you were the Infrastructure minister, and when you had money for the Bridgewater Bridge you spent it on other things.

Members interjecting.

Mr SPEAKER - Order.

Mr FERGUSON - That bridge on John Howard's money should have been built already by now, Mr O'Byrne, but you spent the money elsewhere. While we are on Mr O'Byrne's failures, I know there are some members on the other side of the Chamber who have to quietly admit that the Midland Highway today is vastly superior and so much safer than the one they left behind when they were thrown out with the Greens in 2014. I can also say that there is more work under way, including Melton Mowbray to Lovely Banks, Spring Hill and Powranna - those jobs were all finished earlier this year. It is a safer highway, but also there is more to come.

Ms O'CONNOR - Mr Speaker, point of order under standing order 48. The minister has been now speaking for six minutes. I ask you to wind him up.

Mr SPEAKER - Thank you, Ms O'Connor. Minister, over to you.

Mr FERGUSON - Mr Speaker, it has been a hallmark of this Government that our partnerships with industries is working for Tasmanians, and while what passes for debate but is actually just cheap, nasty politics, we are employing people in these exciting sectors such as housing, building and construction and the civils industry.

The Premier and I and the Minister for Skills, Training and Workforce Growth had a fantastic meeting with these heads of industries just last week. It was a great round table. We have agreed to work more closely than ever before so that we get better coordination and stronger growth in skills and training, but also that exciting pathway in the pipeline of work. This means we need more women and men to join these industries, to get those jobs and help to deliver to Tasmania the infrastructure that our growing state absolutely needs.

Ms O'CONNOR - Point of order, standing order 48 again - seven minutes.

Mr SPEAKER - Ms O'Connor, if it is the same point of order, thank you very much. I am in control of this Chamber and I will ask the minister to wind up now. I do not need you continually standing up and also consuming time within the Chamber. Minister, could you wind up, please.

Mr FERGUSON - Thank you. Mr Speaker. I will conclude on this point. This is a great plan that is working for Tasmania and Tasmanians have voted for this plan.

Adam Brooks - Fitness for Public Office

Mr O'BYRNE question to PREMIER, Mr GUTWEIN

[10.57 a.m.]

You endorsed disgraced former MP Adam Brooks for election despite the fact that he lied to parliament, to a former premier and to an independent investigation. You ignored warnings about his fitness to serve in parliament and when he was summonsed to face ammunition storage charges you took his denials at face value. When serious allegations were

made about him operating dating profiles using a fake identity, you joked about it, saying he was a good-looking bloke, you said you had more important things to concern yourself with and characterised the allegations as being about his love life. When presented with evidence that the allegations were true, you accused a journalist of fabricating it. When a woman came forward with serious allegations about his behaviour, including possessing a fake driver licence, you accepted his denials. You accepted his denials when a second woman came forward and you continued to accept his denials even when CCTV footage came out to prove the women were telling the truth.

Two weeks after the election, when all of this was public knowledge, you said you would be comfortable for him to be part of your Government and you said he was cabinet material. Will you now admit Adam Brooks was never fit to be a candidate for public office and that it reflects poorly on your leadership for your support of him day in and day out?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I thank the Leader of the Opposition for that question. I again make the point that Mr Brooks is a private citizen, there is a process underway before the courts and that process needs to take its course. What is directly within the Leader of the Opposition's remit is that he has a member sitting on the front bench who is, in effect, being called a liar in respect of comments she made to the ABC recently, so I hope he would be ensuring that post this question time, at the first opportunity she stands up and apologises to Tasmanians for what were very clearly put statements she made in direct conflict with the Integrity Commission.

I will remind the parliament what the article says, so the Leader of the Opposition is left in no doubt. The article states:

Ms White said Integrity Commission chief executive Michael Easton had told her it had become too costly to continue the investigation because of a legal back and forth between the agency and the Liberals.

Ms White - Greg Melick says the board decided it would not be in the public interest to commit further resources to investigate it.

Mr GUTWEIN - Ms White said Integrity Commission chief executive Michael Easton had told her. The article says -

Ms White - The chair says.

Mr SPEAKER - Order, Ms White.

Mr GUTWEIN - that Ms White says Integrity Commission chief executive Michael Easton told her it had become too costly to continue the investigation because of the legal back and forth between the agency and the Liberals.

Mr Easton, in his comments -

Mr O'BYRNE - Point of order, Mr Speaker; standing order 45, relevance. This is a question about the Premier's leadership in relation to and support for Mr Brooks despite overwhelming evidence. This is not about the Integrity Commission and other matters. He

can address that matter in other forms of the House. This is about the question around his support for Mr Brooks, Terry or Adam or otherwise.

Mr SPEAKER - Thank you for that point of order. The Premier has answered part of that question initially in his comments and he moved on from that point.

Mr GUTWEIN - Mr Speaker, as with most questions, they provide for a wide-ranging response, because they cover a range of matters. In this case, the integrity of the shadow Treasurer is in question. It is now incumbent upon the Leader of the Opposition to determine how he deals with not someone - as he is asking me to - who is not in this place, but somebody who sits on his own front bench and quite clearly is in conflict.

Ms WHITE - Point of order, Mr Speaker. Under standing order 127, I seek to make a personal explanation at the end of question time.

Mr SPEAKER - I can give you the call at the end of question time.

Operation Hyperion - Cost

Mr O'BYRNE question to PREMIER, Mr GUTWEIN

[11.02 a.m.]

The Integrity Commission launched Operation Hyperion after allegations of bribery and treating by one or more Liberal candidates at the 2018 election, and that was referred to them by the Tasmanian Electoral Commission. The inquiry went on for two years, and the commission engaged its own lawyers to assist with the investigation. How much did Operation Hyperion cost the taxpayers?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I thank the Leader of the Opposition for asking that question and again providing me with an opportunity to point out some of the facts around this matter, and some of the mis-statements that have been made in recent days.

With regard to costs, that is a matter for the Integrity Commission and how they conduct their inquiries, but with Operation Hyperion, we very clearly have the Integrity Commission now in direct conflict with the Labor Party, and especially the shadow Treasurer, who I note has said she will clarify this matter at the end of question time.

I hope she can, because at this point it is clear that the CEO of the Integrity Commission says -

I can confirm that I did not make the statement used in the article or provide that information to Ms White. It is not correct that the investigation had become too costly to continue, so I would not have made that statement.

Securing Tasmania's Future - Building the Skills Base

Mr ELLIS question to MINISTER for SKILLS, TRAINING and WORKFORCE GROWTH, Ms COURTNEY

[11.04 a.m.]

Can you update the House on the Government's plans to secure Tasmania's future by building our skills base in key industries, which is so important to our state in supporting thousands of jobs for Tasmanians?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I thank the member for his question. We have laid out a clear plan during the recent election to secure Tasmania's future - to continue building on our strong economic position to create jobs and ensure we have the skills and training pathways Tasmanians need.

As the Premier has said, our plan is working. We are delivering more jobs for more Tasmanians, with the total number of people employed higher than before the pandemic hit.

We are securing Tasmania's future with business confidence and our growing economy. Integral to our plan is our commitment to skills and training. We have hit the ground running in this area, and as a new minister I am excited by what I have seen.

Tasmania continues to have the highest completion rates in the country. Apprentices are more likely to complete their training here than anywhere else in Australia. We have seen our apprentice and trainee data deliver strong results. October 2020 saw the highest monthly commencement count since 2012, and in November 2020 there were 691 commencements, the highest count since November 2011.

Today I am pleased to announce that we have now delivered on our promise of 600 additional training places for aged care and disability. The \$3 million investment in training will commence shortly, and allow new entrants to join one of the fastest growing sectors in Tasmania. Our plan is working and, unlike those opposite, we took a fully budgeted, well-detailed plan for both skills and TasTAFE to the election. We have a strong plan for TasTAFE to ensure we best meet the needs of young people and jobseekers who need to skill up to re-skill and to take the jobs that are available in industry.

We will ensure that TasTAFE remains not for profit, and will never be privatised under this Government. We will ensure that TasTAFE employees will not be worse off, and will have better pay for skilled teachers. We will guarantee that 80 per cent of all skills funding continues to be invested in the new Tas TAFE model, and we will consult meaningfully with staff, unions, students and industry and the broader Tasmanian community as we work with TasTAFE to ensure it is flexible, it is a choice for learners, and it delivers training in the ways those learners need.

Over the next four years, we will be investing \$98.5 million into TasTAFE to employ 100 more teachers, invest \$45 million into new buildings, campuses and equipment upgrades, deliver a new \$10 million online campus, and expand rural and regional access for our partnership with Libraries Tasmania.

We are getting on with the job. We have already delivered all TasTAFE commitments in the Government's first 30-day plan, including the launch of the next round of the highly successful SkillUP Program, and developing an implementation plan to deliver our \$10 million online campus. We have started planning for all our TasTAFE capital works, and we are working with Libraries Tasmania on our priority locations to offer TasTAFE training.

We know that the other side's record on TasTAFE and training is shameful. They botched Tasmania Tomorrow. They wasted tens and hundreds of millions of dollars, with worse outcomes for Tasmanians. While they were too busy in-fighting during the election campaign, we were listening to Tasmanians. We were talking to them, we were delivering the outcomes that the students need, the workforce needs and, importantly, the industry needs.

Tasmanians voted for certainty and stability. They voted for more training to take advantage of our growing economy. Unlike the opposition, who cannot even govern themselves, we are committed to continuing to work with stakeholders to secure Tasmania's future.

Time expired.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Member for Lyons, Ms White

[11.09 a.m.]

Ms WHITE (Lyons) - Mr Speaker, I wish to make a personal explanation under standing order 127.

The Premier is attempting to muddy the waters when it comes to Operation Hyperion and matters of integrity. I point out that the line he refers to in the ABC article of 22 June 2021 does not quote me.

I do, however, draw the House's attention to the direct quote from Greg Melick, head of the Tasmanian Integrity Commission, when he says -

Ultimately, the board decided that it would not be in the public interest to commit further resources to reinvestigate the matter, noting that, to that stage, no misconduct had been identified.

Mr Gutwein - That is very different.

Ms WHITE - I thought it was important to clarify it was not a direct quote from me but in fact the Head of the Integrity Commission has confirmed that the operation ceased and one of the reasons was due to resourcing.

Members interjecting.

Mr SPEAKER - Order.

MESSAGES FROM LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

Committee Appointments

Mr SPEAKER - Honourable members, the following message has been received from the Legislative Council regarding appointments to committees:

The Legislative Council has made the following appointments to committees:

Ms Rattray and Mr Valentine to serve on the Public Works Committee in accordance with the provisions of Section 3 of the Public Works Committee Act 1914;

Ms Forrest, Ms Rattray and Ms Webb to serve on the Subordinate Legislation Committee in accordance with the provisions of the Section 3 of the Subordinate Legislation Committee Act 1969;

Ms Forrest, Ms Webb and Mr Willie to serve on the Public Accounts Committee in accordance with the provisions of Section 2 of the Public Accounts Committee Act 1970; and

Ms Armitage, Ms Palmer and Mr Valentine to serve on the Joint Standing Committee on Integrity in accordance with Section 23 of the Integrity Commission Act 2009.

C. Farrell
President
Legislative Council
22 June 2021

Mr SPEAKER - Honourable members, the following further message has been received from the Legislative Council regarding appointments to committees:

The Legislative Council has made the following appointments to committees:

Mr Farrell, Ms Forrest and Mrs Hiscutt to serve on the Joint House Committee of this Parliament; and

Ms Armitage, Mr Farrell, Ms Forrest, Ms Rattray, Mr Valentine and Dr Seidel to serve on the Joint Committee of both Houses to manage the Parliamentary Library.

C. Farrell
President
Legislative Council
22 June 2021

Ms O'Connor - You have just saved yourself months.

Mr Ferguson - Stop reflecting on the Speaker. It is not acceptable.

Ms O'Connor - Thank you. We are referred to as the Greens as a political party in the Standing and Sessional Orders, just for clarification.

Mr Ferguson - It is not acceptable. You continue to reflect on the Speaker and it is my job to defend.

Ms O'Connor - You can stop telling me what to do. I do not need to be mansplained at in this place.

Mr SPEAKER - Order.

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY RESTORATION BILL 2021 (No. 20)
CRIMINAL CODE AMENDMENT (MISCONDUCT IN PUBLIC OFFICE)
BILL 2021 (No. 19)
INTEGRITY COMMISSION (MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT) BILL 2021
(No. 21)

First Reading

Bills presented by Ms O'Connor and read the first time.

PUBLIC INTEREST DISCLOSURES (MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT)
BILL 2021 (No. 22)

First Reading

Bill presented by Dr Woodruff and read the first time.

MOTION

Attendance of Minister from the Legislative Council at Question Time

[11.16 a.m.]

Mr FERGUSON (Bass - Leader of the House) - Mr Speaker, I move -

That pursuant to Standing Order 50, a message be transmitted to the Legislative Council requesting that the Legislative Council give leave for any member of the Legislative Council who is a Minister of the Crown to attend the Assembly so as to respond specifically to Questions without Notice seeking information of the kind covered by the Standing Orders of the House of Assembly.

Ms O'CONNOR (Clark - Leader of the Greens) - Mr Speaker, this permits the House to have, for example, the Minister for Racing, Ms Howlett, to ask questions of that minister.

A short time ago we tabled the House of Assembly Restoration Bill. It is not desirable for the House to have to draw members from the Legislative Council. Executive government really should be formed in the House of Assembly.

This is an indication of the deficits, if you like, in the system that we have as a result of having too few seats in this place. I hope all members reflect on the importance to the House of Assembly, to the proper functioning of executive government, to having a healthy back bench and also for democracy that we clearly need to restore the numbers in the House of Assembly.

Motion agreed to.

MATTER OF PUBLIC IMPORTANCE

Integrity

[11.17 a.m.]

Ms DOW (Braddon) - Mr Speaker, I move -

That the House take note of the following matter: integrity.

Mr Speaker, it does not give me pleasure to rise to speak on the matter of integrity. This has been put forward by the Opposition because we believe integrity is a matter of public importance. We believe it is a quality of this Government that is sadly lacking.

There has been a series of events. I can reflect on my time in this place and things that have occurred during the last term of the parliament which I will talk about a little bit later. I wanted to begin by defining integrity.

Integrity is defined as the quality of being honest and having strong moral principles, the state of being whole and undivided and upholding territorial integrity and national sovereignty. Some of the qualities that you see in those that display good integrity include honesty, respect, generating trust in others, responsibility, keeping promises and helping others. They should be arguably the qualities of a good government. They are qualities that we sadly do not see very often in this Government.

We could start with the last election. Was it really the election that we had to have? The word 'integrity' comes to mind when we think about that and the sense of urgency around the election. The Government was not really in minority. Ms Ogilvie was waiting in the wings to enable the Government to still be in majority. Had they not got rid of Ms Hickey, so to speak, then they would not have been in minority. They still had 12 months of government to go before the next election.

That goes to the heart of this issue and integrity. Was it the election that we had to have? The answer is no.

During that election campaign we saw an extraordinary chain of events. We have talked about that this morning in this place and still there are no answers from the Government or the Premier about who knew what about Adam Brooks and when they knew that. Of course it

would have been very difficult for Mr Brooks to take his place in this parliament, given the allegations that were made about him during the election campaign. As another member for Braddon, I have to say the people of Braddon were treated like mugs by this Government. The Premier reflects on the poor health of Mr Brooks but that begs the question: were the Liberal Party and the Premier and the Government aware of Mr Brooks' ill health and why was he still pushed as a candidate? We have asked a number of questions around that and his role as treasurer of the Liberal Party, questions around political donations to the party, but there is also the question about Mr Brooks' vote across the election of Braddon.

All of these things came to light about Mr Brooks, all these allegations, over a period of time, and the timing of that meant that many people who had already decided to put their faith and trust in this Government had already cast their vote through pre-polling; they had already chosen Mr Brooks as their candidate to put their faith and trust in. I think that is very disappointing for the people of Braddon and they deserve answers from the Liberal Party and from the Government.

Today the Premier still failed to say what he thought about Adam Brooks' candidature. Was it appropriate? What steps did he take, as allegations came to light? We are still in the dark and the Government continues to distance themselves from Mr Brooks. That is incredibly disappointing for the people of Braddon who put their faith and trust in Mr Brooks and this Government, but also for the people of Tasmania as it displays the lack of integrity of this Government.

I am going to read through the series of events again because they are important to put on the record again. We know that the Premier endorsed disgraced former MP Adam Brooks for election, despite the fact that he lied to parliament, as Ms O'Connor said this morning, three times to the former premier and to an independent investigation. They should have been warning signs about his fitness to serve in this parliament. When he was summonsed to face ammunition storage charges the Premier at the time took at face value his denials. When serious allegations were made about him operating dating profiles using a fake identity, the Premier at the time joked about it, saying he was a good-looking bloke and that he had more important things to concern himself with. I think that for the people of Braddon and the Tasmanian community that was a pretty important consideration to make at that time and turn your mind to, given the serious nature of those allegations and the fact that Mr Brooks was still a candidate in the state election.

When presented with evidence that the allegations were true, the journalist at the time was accused of fabricating those allegations and that evidence. When a woman came forward with serious allegations about Mr Brooks' behaviour, including possessing a fake driver licence, the denials were once again accepted by the Premier and the Liberal Party. As a second woman came forward, those denials were again accepted. The Premier continued to accept these denials, even when CCTV footage came out that proved the women were telling the truth.

Two weeks after the election, on the eve of the declaration of the polls, we all fronted the declaration of the polls in Devonport. There was a 'missing in action' air from those there representing the Liberal Party about what had happened, what had transpired, just hours before we were to be declared as the new members for Braddon - and there was Mr Ellis. Poor Mr Ellis thought he was going to be elected and then he was not, then he was and he was there again that day and could not even take his seat the day before with everybody else because of

what had happened with Mr Brooks across the electorate of Braddon. It meant that there had to be another election process, another counting, which took time as well.

All of these things just add to the lack of integrity around this whole situation.

Time expired.

[11.25 a.m.]

Ms HADDAD (Clark) - Mr Speaker, I rise to add my comments to this important MPI brought on by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition. Before I do so, I congratulate you as well, on taking the Speaker's Chair and wish you well in that new role.

It is no surprise and no secret that this Liberal Government absolutely lacks transparency, lacks honesty and is one of the most secretive governments this state has ever seen. There were multiple debates in the forty-ninth parliament around the fact that they have done multiple things across government to ensure a lack of information to the Tasmanian people.

I will give a couple of examples. In regard to the RTI processes complied with by state government agencies, this Government has run roughshod over them. We have good RTI laws in this state but this Government has created a culture of secrecy inside their public service agencies where the initial response to any RTI request is to hide information and refuse to release information. Indeed, nearly 100 per cent of the appeals on those decisions to the Ombudsman's Office were overturned, where the Ombudsman found that the department had made the wrong decision. That is only one example.

Concerningly, while we are still on RTI, we started to receive requests from the RTI officers in some departments before they answered our request as an opposition party, to check whether or not we had checked with the government minister or government media unit about whether or not we could get that information from them. Why on Earth would the government media unit be involved with assessing an RTI application, we all know we have the worst political donation laws in the country; in fact we do not even have any. Labor put forward a private member's bill in the last parliament. The Government sat on their report for more than six months before it was released. It was finally released and it was a good report with good recommendations. As an individual member of parliament, I was pleased when I heard the Government had accepted in principle the recommendations of that report and was eagerly awaiting a government bill so that we could put aside my private member's bill and deal with a piece of government legislation that would address once and for all our appalling donation disclosure laws in this state, but of course we did not see that legislation brought on in time for the election.

Why was that? It was because we went to an election nearly a year early under a false trigger of a claim of minority government after Sue Hickey, the former member for Clark, was sacked by the Premier, plunging the Government into a false minority that they knew they were not in, because of course Madeleine Ogilvie's membership application was already in the mail. They knew that and the Premier knew that. It was a false trigger and yet Tasmanians were pushed to the polls almost a year before it was due.

Since that time, we now see revelations that not only was there a police investigation into the conduct of the 2018 election, there was an Integrity Commission investigation, an own-motion investigation which are not that common and shows the seriousness with which the

Integrity Commission took the conduct of that 2018 election. It has been covered today in question time at length around that Integrity Commission own-motion investigation having to be dropped, with one of the reasons for that being resourcing and the cost to the taxpayer in going up against the Liberal Party's lawyers.

Additionally, we see an absolute cloud over the preselection and candidacy of Mr Adam Brooks. That was dealt with at length today in question time as well, so I do not propose to go back through that as my colleague, Anita Dow, has already done so. There are serious questions to this parliament about the conduct, integrity and judgment of the Premier in allowing that person to continue as a candidate and then coincidentally that all coming to light on the day of the declaration of the polls. It is a very smelly situation.

Finally, I have referred something to the Integrity Commission around the use of public funds which I will address at another time in this place, but there are a series of breaches.

Ms Archer - No, you shouldn't, because it should remain confidential if you've made a referral.

Ms HADDAD - I have not actually received acknowledgment of receipt, Mr Deputy Speaker, but it has been in the public sphere, it has been in the media and it has been commented on by the member who just took his seat, Mr Ferguson, who confirmed that taxpayer money was used to produce brochures, which I believe constitutes electoral material. I will not go into that detail now because I know my time is about to expire, but it is information which is in the public sphere. It has been commented on and confirmed by the member for Bass, Mr Ferguson, that public money was used for those brochures. I for one very much hope that I receive acknowledgement of receipt of that complaint and it will be investigated, unlike the one that was put forward in good faith by the Leader of the Greens, Cassy O'Connor, into the conduct of the Premier in preselecting Mr Brooks. It is deplorable that that cannot be investigated for the reason that the Premier was not a public officer during the election campaign.

We would all expect that our conduct would still be under scrutiny by bodies like the Integrity Commission at the time we face election. That is definitely something that needs to be addressed by amending the Integrity Commission Act, and I believe one of the bills tabled today by the Greens will attempt to do that. It defies logic that the Integrity Commission would not be able to look at the conduct of a member of parliament at the time preselection decisions are being made by someone in the highest office in this place, the Premier of this state.

Overall, there is a cloud over this Government which has not been lifted since the election concluded. There is a shroud of secrecy and dishonesty and a lack of integrity and we will continue to hold this Government to account on those things.

Time expired.

[11.32 a.m.]

Dr WOODRUFF (Franklin) - Mr Speaker, appropriately at the start of the Fiftieth Parliament of Tasmania, the subject of the matter of public importance is integrity. It should not have to be so, but it is the case that we need to talk about integrity today because not just one but two elections have now gone by in Tasmania where there have been serious and serial concerns about the integrity in the manner which elections have been conducted, in the funding of elections, and now, in the people who have stood for election. It is incredibly important that Tasmanians can expect their representatives to uphold the standards of the community at a

minimum, which would be that people who stand for public office abide by the law of Tasmania, that they do not lie, that they have a reputation for respect and for fair and proper dealings with people during their conduct if they were to succeed to be in public office.

What we had at the last election and what the Greens were so concerned about was the Liberal Party's preselection of Mr Adam Brooks for the seat of Braddon and their continued adhering to him as a candidate throughout the campaign, despite the fact that evidence came into the public domain that not only had he lied to parliament three times previously, lied to an Integrity Commission investigation and lied to the premier of the day, but he was also blatantly disregarding the law of Tasmania and, as we subsequently found out, the laws of Queensland as well.

On top of that, the real concern for women in Tasmania was that the Liberal Party had preselected a man who had continued his lying to lure women into relationships with him, a process called catfishing, using fake identities to lie to women about who he was. The obvious reason that Mr Brooks had to resort to doing that was because he was widely across the internet for having been an acknowledged and committed liar in parliament. He lied three times to parliament, was found to have done so, was also found to have lied to the Integrity Commission in the process of the investigation and also was found to have lied to the Premier.

All of that stuff was on the internet and Mr Brooks clearly wanted to catfish women, multiple women, as we have found out. Two women came forward during the election campaign and presented their very sad stories of being lied to by Mr Brooks and the Premier chose not to believe them.

This is the other matter of integrity that the Greens have been so concerned about and the reason that we wrote to the Integrity Commission. When did the Premier know that Mr Brooks had charges of explosives and an unauthorised use of a category H weapon and multiple fake licences in Queensland? When did the Premier know that Mr Brooks had charges of firearms ammunition being incorrectly stored in Tasmania and when did Mr Gutwein know, as Premier, that the person standing for the Liberals in Braddon had been lying to women and catfishing them about his true identity? We know the answer to some of these questions. It was pretty clear that the Premier, like everybody else, knew on 8 April that Mr Brooks had been charged with firearms ammunition incorrect storage in Tasmania, and he also knew two weeks before the election that two women had accused him of using fake identifies to lure them into relationships.

His response was very concerning and it was the sort of response we do not expect from a Premier who has committed himself, as he did during the Greens' matter of public importance on rape culture, to listening to women and to hearing them, so when a female ABC reporter confronted the Premier with the evidence of Mr Brooks' catfishing, he accused her of dishonesty and of 'tricking up documents'. In effect, he accused Ms Baker of falsifying the story before him. Even after public CCTV footage was made available of Mr Brooks tricking a woman into a relationship, the Premier also chose to disregard that footage. He chose to believe the man and disbelieve the women.

The Premier said that Mr Brooks was emphatic in his denials of the allegations against him, the Premier had conversations with Mr Brooks but because Mr Brooks said, 'I didn't do it', the Premier chose to believe him. Despite the women coming forward with their stories, despite the CCTV footage, despite the photos of 'Terry' Brooks' fake Victorian licence, the

Premier chose to believe the man who was a recorded serial liar over two women and the evidence of material documents that were made available to him.

What is wrong with this story? Why are women in Tasmania really concerned that the Premier would have acted like that? Why should we not expect the Premier to make an apology to women in Tasmania for his appalling leadership throughout the election campaign?

Time expired.

[11.39 a.m.]

Ms ARCHER (Clark - Attorney-General) - Mr Speaker, this MPI gives me an opportunity to put some facts on the record. It is interesting that members of this House make an issue when the Government does not jump second. We are entitled to hear the matters that are put before the House by members and I wanted to hear the Greens' version of events, even though it is usually not factual. With an MPI it is a bit rich for members to allege that we do not want to get up and talk on an MPI when in government because we would like to hear what the allegations are against us.

It is a very serious matter today, because during question time the Premier revealed that, basically, Ms White has been less than truthful. I will read from a tweet from the ABC reporter in question, Emily Baker, who is defending herself, and rightly so. It will be very interesting to get hold of the transcript or the recording of Ms White's interview with Ms Baker, because Ms Baker clarifies here that:

Rebecca White said to me she had spoken with the IC's Michael Easton, and 'it became evident they had made a decision not to proceed with Operation Hyperion because of the cost-benefit analysis after lawyers were engaged by both sides over the terms of reference'.

She goes on to also say in another tweet:

This is in relation to a story I wrote, in a statement Greg Melick said to us, the Integrity Commission decided not to commit further resources to Operation Hyperion after issues were raised by relevant parties.

Meaning the Liberals.

What Ms Baker has confirmed - from her no doubt very strenuous notes, but I would say it is recorded - is that Ms White has said those things about Mr Easton, who has emphatically denied using the words that are being used by Ms White in the article. As the article states:

Ms White said Integrity Commission chief executive Michael Easton had told her it had become too costly to continue the investigation because of a legal back and forth between the agency and the Liberals.

He emphatically denies that. Ms White is not in the Chamber at present. I suggest she take some legal advice, but clearly, she needs to come in here as a matter of urgency and clarify the matter properly. What she did at the end of question time only muddled the waters even further, because all she did was quote from what I presume was a statement the chair, Mr Melick, provided to the media in relation to the reasons for the Integrity Commission

finding that there was no misconduct. Let us not forget there was no misconduct, and the reasons why the Integrity Commission had withdrawn the matter.

The question of integrity is sitting very uncomfortably with the Labor Party today. It is most unfortunate they had already put on the blue that the MPI would be integrity, because with this matter coming up in question time, with Ms White being quoted, as she has, confirmed by the reporter in question, that she did in fact say that during her interview she has lied. She has lied. What is more, she has not withdrawn that lie. The hypocrisy is -

Mr O'BYRNE - Point of order, on a point of clarification. The member who is speaking has made an inference about another member of parliament, accusing her of lying. That is unparliamentary language and I seek her to withdraw that.

Ms ARCHER - The precursor was if, then she has lied.

Mr O'Byrne - You said, 'she lied'.

Ms ARCHER - I said, 'if this is the case'.

Members interjecting.

Ms ARCHER - I will say, if this is the case. I will withdraw if you think that I have impugned Ms White in any way in that regard, but -

Mr O'Byrne - You withdraw it.

Ms ARCHER - She is being untruthful, then. I will say untruthful.

Mr O'Byrne - Can you withdraw then, and you can say that?

Ms ARCHER - I can withdraw the fact that if I may have said that she actually lied, but it was a qualifying sentence that, if she has said this, then she has lied to this House. If she has said this. If you want me to withdraw the word 'lie', I will say then she is being untruthful.

Mr O'Byrne - Could you withdraw, though.

Ms ARCHER - Or loose with the truth. I have. I just said I withdrew the word 'lie'. If members think that I have not had a sentence that was -

Mr SPEAKER - Just to confirm on the record, Attorney-General, you have removed the unqualified part.

Ms ARCHER - Mr Speaker, with the greatest respect I have already said it twice now. I will say it a third time. I have withdrawn the word 'lie'. I was explaining the construct of my sentence, which has been lost on members in this House, so I will withdraw the word because they clearly did not understand the sentence that I was talking about.

I do want to move on from that, and I am looking forward to Ms White clarifying this, otherwise she will be questioning the integrity of Ms Baker at the ABC.

Members in this place harp on about transparency quite a bit. Members opposite forget that under their government they barely pushed out any information at all. It is worth remembering that it is our Government that pushes out more information now by way of routine disclosure than any government before it. These things were not in place under previous governments, under the previous Labor-Greens government, under the previous Labor governments prior to that.

Since June 2018, our Government has released more than 60 new routine datasets online as it continues to expand public access to information, launching a new Government information gateway webpage that is available on DPAC's website to make Government information proactively disclosed easy to find.

Time expired.

[11.46 a.m.]

Mr STREET (Franklin) - Mr Speaker, this is my first time to congratulate you on your election to the Chair. I am sure you will do a fine job over the next four years.

Your election to the Chair brings me to my first point of integrity, and that is Ms O'Connor referring to the process of being 'stitched up' during question time. The exact same process which led Mr Shelton to the Chair is the exact same process that she took advantage of to elect Ms Hickey to the -

Ms O'Connor - What are you talking about?

Mr STREET - You were alleging that we stitched up the process to put Mr Shelton in the Chair.

Ms O'Connor interjecting.

Mr STREET - Exactly, and I will get to that as well, Ms O'Connor.

Mr SPEAKER - Through the Chair, please.

Mr STREET - Mr Speaker, as you well know, having been sitting here since yesterday, the process that was used to elect you to the Chair was the same one the Labor and the Greens used to elect Ms Hickey to the Chair: a Speaker, I might add, who they did nothing but then complain about for the last 18 months of the last term of parliament.

Ms O'Connor - I do not know what you are talking about. I simply observed.

Mr STREET - The Labor Party comes in here and uses their first MPI to raise the matter of integrity. Ms Dow, when she got to her feet, decided to define 'integrity', and actually referred to the fact that integrity refers to being whole and undivided.

How do you reckon being whole and undivided is going on the opposite side of this Chamber? There is the transcript of the member for Braddon's interview after the election. Do you reckon Dr Broad thinks the Labor Party is whole and undivided at this stage? The member for Lyons, who is not present in the Chamber at the minute - do you reckon she thinks the

Labor Party is whole and undivided? I doubt it. The Labor Party has no integrity. They then get up here and try to prosecute the 2018 election.

I have lost elections, I have lost sporting contests. People who recover from losses do so by being honest with themselves about why the losses occur. Unfortunately, the 2021 election repeated itself because the Labor Party spent three years trying to blame everybody else for the fact that they lost that election, instead of looking a bit further.

In 2021 we had the omnishambles election campaign from Labor. They talk about whole and undivided and integrity. What about the integrity of their preselection process? We all know that the other members of the Labor party did not want Mr Winter being selected. Presumably Mr O'Byrne did not want him preselected because -

Mr SPEAKER - I will remind the member, when referring to other members on the other side, to refer to them as the member of certain electorates, rather than using personal names.

Mr STREET - The Leader of the Opposition, member for Franklin, Mr O'Byrne, did not want Mr Winter in this parliament. He did not want him on the ticket, and we know exactly why he did not want him on the ticket. He did not want any competition for the leadership position.

Mr Winter then says, I am here - and he is here. Mr Winter, member for Franklin, as long as you now understand that you cannot interject until tomorrow. We wait with bated breath for your inaugural speech and for the fact that you can then interject as much as you like, until the Speaker pulls you up on it.

The member for Franklin, Mr Winter, said, 'I am here'. The reason he is here is because there was a federal intervention to make that happen. There is now a federal takeover of the state Labor Party. They talk about integrity. What about the integrity of your shadow cabinet selection process? Did you have to clear who you selected in your shadow cabinet and the portfolios you gave them with the federal party, or was Mr O'Byrne able to make those decisions himself?

The Greens talk about integrity. How about the integrity of a party that stands beside the Bob Brown Foundation, which has knowingly manipulated scientific data to suit its cause?

Ms O'Connor - Out of order.

Mr STREET - It did not take long.

Dr Woodruff - That is what happens when you lie, Mr Street.

Ms O'CONNOR - Point of order, Mr Speaker. The member is being misleading. If he wants to be in a position like his federal colleague, Senator Jonno Duniam, having to apologise to the Bob Brown Foundation, he should keep talking -

Mr SPEAKER - It is not a point of order.

Ms O'CONNOR - or you rein him in because, if I could finish, the point of order is that Mr Street has told an untruth in here, misrepresented the Bob Brown Foundation and failed to mention that it is standard scientific practice to use these techniques to understand where threatened species are.

Mr SPEAKER - Thank you. It is not a point of order and the member has the right to a debate.

Mr STREET - Mr Speaker, via interjection, Dr Woodruff actually accused me of being a liar. I would ask her to withdraw that, please.

Dr WOODRUFF - It is not true that I called Mr Street a liar. That information he perpetrated is a lie. The information is a lie.

Mr SPEAKER - Pedantic. The member has taken offence to what you have said. Do you withdraw?

Members interjecting.

Mr SPEAKER - Order, member for Braddon, order. The member has taken offence to what you have said. Do you withdraw?

Dr WOODRUFF - I am sorry if Mr Street finds the evidence that he has presented a lie in the material that he has provided. What am I withdrawing?

Mr SPEAKER - Order. The member has taken offence to what you have said in accusing him of not telling the truth.

Mr STREET - Mr Speaker, Ms O'Connor, the Leader of the Greens, yesterday said that she knows when she thinks she has got under our skin by the volume being raised on our side. What you have seen is a perfect example of the hypocrisy of the Greens. As soon as they are called out on anything, they start interjecting, use the exact same language I was asked not to be used in relation to them. No integrity whatsoever.

Time expired.

Matter noted.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY

Continued from 22 June 2021 (page 25).

[11.54 a.m.]

Mr O'BYRNE (Franklin - Leader of the Opposition) - Mr Speaker, first I acknowledge that we meet on palawa land on lutruwita and I pay my respects to elders past, present and emerging and acknowledge their deep and ongoing connection with the land and the longest surviving cultures on the planet.

I also acknowledge your election to your position and I wish you well for the sake of the House. You have had an interesting first day in the Chair in Question Time, but for the sake of the House, I wish you well. I know you will be judicious in your rulings. I look forward to the coming weeks, months and years.

It is a great privilege and a deep responsibility to address you and through you, this House for the first time as the new Leader of the Tasmanian Parliamentary Labor Party.

At the outset, I congratulate the Premier on his election victory. I wish him and his Government well. I am sure the Tasmanian people want to see the Government rise to the many challenges facing our state and deliver on its election promises.

I also pay tribute to my friend, the outgoing Labor leader, Rebecca White. Rebecca has led the Labor Party with distinction, dedication and high principles. I am very glad that she will continue as a senior member of the Labor team, as shadow Treasurer.

I acknowledge the outgoing deputy Labor leader, Michelle O'Byrne, for her work, commitment and passion, not only for the people of Bass, but her loyalty as deputy and the roles that she will continue to play in this House.

I congratulate the new deputy leader of the Parliamentary Labor Party, the member for Braddon, Anita Dow. Anita, since coming into this House, has shown balance, judgment and a tenacity which belies her nature and gives us an insight into the strength that she will bring to this House and the advocacy not only for the people of Braddon, but for the people of Tasmania.

I thank Alison Standen, the former member for Franklin, and Jennifer Houston, the former member for Bass. Both were outstanding contributors to the work of this House and to the work of the Parliamentary Labour Party.

I congratulate Dean Winter, the new member for Franklin, and Janie Finlay, the new member for Bass, on their election. They will be an important part of the new Labor team.

I thank the rank and file members and the state conference delegates of the Tasmanian Labor Party for their strong 74 per cent vote to endorse my leadership in what was our very first partywide democratic election for the Tasmanian Labor Leader.

The Labor Party in this House acknowledges the principled conduct and the positive contribution of Dr Shane Broad during the leadership ballot. He is, and will continue to be, a talented member of the shadow Cabinet.

Labor Party members have spoken with one voice to give me a mandate as party leader. Ultimately, the most important voice is that of the Tasmanian people, and they have spoken at the recent election. Our side of the House has heard this message loud and clear. While Tasmanians embrace Labor's policies on health, housing, infrastructure and education, they did not believe that Labor was sufficiently united to govern.

The new Labor team will act on the people's message. We will listen to and learn from all parts of the Tasmanian community. We have a responsibility to re-establish Labor as a

united party of alternative government, with a positive vision to govern for all Tasmanians. As the new Labor Leader I know that the Tasmanian people expect nothing less.

As the Opposition party, we also have a responsibility to hold the Government accountable to make sure it keeps its election promises and to constructively criticise its policies and its decisions. The Tasmanian people know that the Gutwein Government must end the woeful delays on infrastructure projects, the ongoing health crisis, poor service delivery, traffic congestion and the failure to meet social housing targets.

My vision for Tasmania is driven by the values instilled in me by my parents and life experiences. I grew up in a working-class family. My dad was a trades painter and my mum a cleaner. While they did not have much money, they were rich in moral values. They taught me that there is a right and wrong, that you should stand by and help your mates, and when people are in trouble you should step up and you should help.

I played a lot of football at junior and Tasmanian state league level. This taught me the value of people working together and building a real sense of community. Behind the scenes in every one of the football clubs that I played at, there were dedicated people who tirelessly worked, preparing food, transporting players, cleaning jumpers, maintaining the clubrooms and encouraging supporters. The success of the team depended on this community effort. When the team took the field, it could only win when the players worked together: a blend of collective commitment and individual effort.

As a Tasmanian and National union leader, I represented the interests of many low-paid workers, including cleaners. This privilege and responsibility was not only about improving paying conditions and the working lives of members, but also about recognising the dignity and importance of their labour. I never forget that without the work of cleaners our community could not function, and we learnt that here through the pandemic recently.

As the chief operating officer of the not-for-profit Beacon Foundation, I learnt that disadvantaged young people can succeed in work and life if they are given opportunities and support, so as the new Labor leader my core values are about right and wrong, helping others, leaving no-one behind, acting collectively, building a sense of community and encouraging individual effort. They will guide me and my new Labor team.

Mr Speaker, a united Labor Party is not prepared to see Tasmania settle for second best. We believe in the power of the Tasmanian people and community working together, with individual aspiration and collective commitment. I do this to make Tasmania a better place for all. Our new Labor team has an ambition to make Tasmania the equal of the nation in economic growth, industry development, job creation, social equity, public services, living standards, health, housing, education and environmental protection. Our policies to achieve this ambition reflect a deep and renewed conversation with the Tasmanian community. Labor will honestly reflect on our strengths and weaknesses and listen to the many voices of Tasmanians from all walks of life.

We intend to rebuild a strong and meaningful relationship with the Tasmanian people and to promote the values and policies that have historically made Tasmanian Labor the party of government that has delivered reform, progress, economic growth, equity and social cohesion. The modern Tasmanian economy was built by Labor, first in the 40 years after World War II and then later in the late 1990s and in the first decade of the twenty-first century.

Reforming Labor governments built Tasmania's irrigation system, they built our hydro energy system, they built the *Spirit of Tasmania* vessels and a future Labor government will build tomorrow's industries.

By working together Tasmanians can use the reforming power of government to diversify Tasmania's economic base, support established industries, build the new industries of the twenty-first century, create high-quality secure jobs and lift living standards. Our side of the House, unlike those opposite, knows that only an active government can help make real and lasting change to our economy, but the work of an active government depends on individual Tasmanians and the whole community working together.

A sustainable economic policy depends on good social policy. Labor knows that a responsible and compassionate government cannot leave any Tasmanian or region behind. All Tasmanians should have access to high quality schools, health care and affordable housing, whether owned or rented. Good economic policy also needs to encourage and reward individual aspiration and effort. Individual initiative is the foundation of the many Tasmanian small and medium-sized businesses underpinning our economy.

Tasmania's pristine environment is a key public good and an important economic asset. An active government has a responsibility to protect our natural heritage. Labor will strike the carefully considered balance between industry development and environmental protection necessary for long-term sustainable economic growth and secure jobs, particularly in our regions, and there can be no sustainable growth without continuing government and private sector action on climate change.

The change needed to make Tasmania the equal of the nation requires real government partnership with the Tasmanian community. Change can only happen when government, individuals and the community work together. That is why my new Labor team will listen to all Tasmanians. We will work with Tasmanian industry and their representative bodies, the Tasmanian workers and trade unions, but we will reach out to a much wider spectrum of community opinion. Our policy development and strategy for government will also involve sustained and general consultation with small and medium scale businesses, self-employed workers, independent professional and contractors, public and not-for-profit community organisations, churches, environmental advocates and local government.

Tasmanians know that our state is the best part of Australia, with an enviable lifestyle, a beautiful natural environment, clean air and water, a tolerant and diverse community and a vibrant, distinctive Tasmanian culture, but, Mr Speaker, they also know it could be so much better. The big long-term challenges facing Tasmania are well known. We lag behind the mainland states on many key indicators, with the lowest disposable incomes, low labour force participation, low life expectancy, poor health outcomes, fewer year 12 completions and university graduates, and poor productivity growth. We have the lowest economic output per capita of any state, an older population with a greater dependence on government benefits than the rest of Australia, and a deep pattern of regional and social disadvantage.

Our state remains unequal and divided because of the neglect of our regions. While state wide unemployment is 5.7 per cent, the second highest rate in the country, unemployment in our region averages more than 7 per cent and is over 10 per cent in some places. All serious and objective analysts know that the Tasmanian economy has entrenched structural problems and is more vulnerable to external economic shocks than the mainland. Our private sector is

very dependent on trade-exposed sectors such as tourism, hospitality, agriculture, fishing and forestry, with a heavy reliance on the Chinese market for merchandise exports. Sudden changes in the terms of trade, international supply change and the exchange rate have a disproportionate impact on Tasmania.

Tasmanian government investment and gross fixed capital formation per head of population is 12 per cent below the national average, and we have the highest reliance on GST revenue of any state and the lowest share of revenue from local taxation. A core longstanding Tasmanian economic and social advantage, a low cost for home ownership and rental housing, has evaporated as housing prices have skyrocketed. For too long, these problems have been swept under the carpet. Successive Liberal governments and the Premier, Peter Gutwein, have ignored these challenges and have wasted the fruits of economic growth. They have shown policy complacency with no effort to diversify the economy and no appetite to pursue microeconomic and state government financial reform. They have been content to let Tasmania continue to lag behind the mainland. They lack ambition for our wonderful state. Only Labor has the ambition to make Tasmania the equal of the nation.

Mr Speaker, my new Labor team will ensure the Government meets all the commitments it made to the Tasmanian people at the election. There is no ambiguity in what the Premier has promised and Tasmanians have a right to expect he keep his promises. There should be no repeat of the litany of the broken Liberal promises of the last seven years. Let me put on the record the promises the Premier has made. They will become the measure of his accountability to the Tasmanian people. Labor will remind Tasmanians of theses promises each and every day of this Government's term.

In health, accountability means delivering an additional 22 300 elective surgeries, including 8300 in 2021-22. It means 280 additional hospital staff on top of those promised to K-Block and 48 additional paramedics. It means getting started on the \$580 million redevelopment of the Launceston General Hospital, delivering a co-located private hospital on the side. It means completing stage 2 of the Royal Hobart Hospital redevelopment and upgrading a range of health facilities in our regions.

It means 20 000 additional dental appointments, \$56 million for mental health care and \$20 million for preventive health. We expect to see real improvements in Tasmania's broken health system, because Tasmanians deserve to live long, healthy and enjoyable lives.

In education, accountability means \$100 million in school upgrades, a school lunch program for 30 schools, 40 additional literacy coaches, and teaching of phonics in every primary school. We want to see real improvements in outcomes for Tasmanian students, because education is what will provide a future for our children and a stronger economy for us all.

In housing, accountability means 3500 new social housing properties. It means building new supported accommodation for older Tasmanians in the north and north-west, and investing \$15 million for new youth housing initiatives. It means real reductions in homelessness, real reductions in public housing waiting lists, a better deal for renters, and real improvements in the ability of people to purchase their first home.

In infrastructure, accountability means finally building the infrastructure projects that this Government has been talking about for years. It means real progress at Macquarie Point, a new

Tamar Bridge, traffic fixes in Hobart and Launceston, a light rail to the northern suburbs of Hobart, and tourism upgrades at Cradle Mountain. It means delivering all of the infrastructure commitments it made in its last budget, the \$416 million it promised for Tasmania's major roads at the election, and more than \$160 million of initiatives for cycling and public transport.

We will ensure that this Government overcomes its chronic inability to deliver infrastructure because Tasmanian jobs and quality of life depend on it.

On budget management, accountability means bringing the budget back to surplus by 2022-23, and keeping debt levels manageable without any new taxes or public asset sales. It means managing the budget responsibly and in a way that supports prosperity for all Tasmanians.

On jobs, accountability means the Government must follow through on its commitment to a range of industries, from tourism and hospitality to advanced manufacturing, to small business to ICT, to our shipbuilders and to those who work in the primary industries, and to those who want to generate the renewable energy future. It means the Government must keep the promises it made to people who are looking for work, because we want to see a Tasmania with low unemployment, where people can build careers and start prosperous small businesses, and where they can use a comfortable, stable income to build a good life for themselves and their family.

In every portfolio, we will be holding this Government to account, not just for what they claim can be achieved in the first 100 days, but for every single day of their four-year term. My new Labor team and shadow Cabinet have the capability, talent and drive to make this happen.

Tasmania's democracy depends on the Government maintaining the highest standards of integrity. Tasmanians want greater honesty and transparency from their Premier and his Government. As the Opposition party, we will do everything we can to make sure they get it. We will accept nothing less than the comprehensive reform of Tasmania's political donation laws, which despite years of promises, remain the weakest in the country. We will fight to ensure the Integrity Commission has the powers and resources it needs to give Tasmanians confidence their representatives are serving the public interests at all times, because a Government that falls short on integrity will soon enough fall short in other areas, too.

On behalf of our side of the House, I congratulate our new Governor, Her Excellency the Honourable Barbara Baker AC, and thank her for her speech opening the first session of this, the Fiftieth Parliament of Tasmania.

I thank our recently retired Governor, Professor Kate Warner. She carried the office and vice-regal duties of the Governor with great distinction, and was a great emblem for our wonderful state, and I thank her husband Dick Warner for supporting her in that work. In particular, I acknowledge Professor Warner's fine work in recognising the special significance of the Tasmanian Aboriginal people and her commitment to the path of reconciliation. On our side of the House, we look forward to Professor Warner's further work in her foreshadowed report on the way forward for reconciliation, truth telling and a pathway to Treaty - the most important work of members in this House to reconcile with the first peoples of lutruwita.

My Labor team is committed to work with Aboriginal people to build a better and fairer Tasmania, where long-held aspirations for land, treaty and justice can be made a reality. The lives of many Tasmanian Aboriginal people continue to be shaped by disadvantage across a range of areas, including employment, health, housing and education, and we recognise that the Tasmanian Aboriginal people are the experts on their history and their contemporary stories. The best reconciliation and Treaty solutions must involve the grassroots of the Tasmanian Aboriginal community.

Mr Speaker, I conclude by reiterating that Labor has heard the voice of the Tasmanian people. We will listen and we will consult. Labor must and will be united across its parliamentary and organisational wings. As Labor leader, I give the Tasmanian people a solemn commitment that my new Labor team will be a party of genuine alternative government, and we will hold the Premier and his Government to account. Tasmanian democracy deserves nothing less.

[12.17 p.m.]

Ms O'CONNOR (Clark - Leader of the Greens) - Mr Speaker, I rise with pleasure to respond to the Governor's Address. I begin by respectfully acknowledging this island's first people, the palawa pakana, who shaped and nurtured lutruwita from putalina, Oyster Cove to kunanyi, to kudalina, to rookalina, to takayna, for tens of thousands of years.

The palawa pakana, and their old people, have been here since the beginning of time. If you look past the harsh lines and structures of European settlement, there are signs of a people who lived deeply and intimately connected to nature, to country. Nowhere is that more so than in takayna, with the hut depressions and the middens along her beautiful coast: takayna, whose wild beauty and biodiversity, rich heritage and fragile habitats are under threat right now. It is a place that should be protected as a national park, a World Heritage area, and handed back to the first people of lutruwita, Tasmania. This gorgeous, wild place, unlike anywhere else on Earth with its World Heritage and National Heritage-value forests, is under assault from logging, mining and mindlessness.

To the proud people, the warriors who fought for their country, to elders past and present and emerging, I pay deep respect on behalf of the Tasmanian Greens. Today we are standing in lovely nipaluna, Hobart, in a white man's parliament, below magnificent kunanyi, another threatened Aboriginal cultural landscape with the waters of timtumili mananya seeping into this reclaimed land. The Greens will always fight for truth, treaty, justice and the return of lands. As leaders, we have the responsibility for lutruwita's future and for its people. As members of parliament, we must be accountable to the people who put us here. In a climate crisis and a biodiversity emergency, where every action matters, we are responsible to the children and the grandchildren of lutruwita/Tasmania.

Building back from COVID, we should be turning a social and economic crisis into a reset that creates the future so many Tasmanians are yearning for, and particularly young people, a new future where nature is respected and protected and where no-one is left behind. Mr Speaker, it is only the neoliberals in the old parties who will tell you this is not possible. We know better. We know it is about the choices that government makes, and as I said on election night, on every key social metric Tasmania is going backwards. Tasmanians know it and they feel it.

More than 120 000 Tasmanians live in poverty and that is why the Greens took a comprehensive package to tackle poverty to the last election. In every single electorate of every member here, children are going without and in substantial part it is because of the choices the Government has made over the past seven years. People are dying on elective surgery waiting lists and in our emergency departments because the Liberals in government were much more about spin than substance. They have failed to undertake the structural reform that our health system so desperately needs and they have failed to invest in preventative health, in keeping people healthy and out of hospitals.

Homeless teenagers are sleeping between bins in shopping centre car parks, families with children are sleeping in cars on unused forestry roads, old people with nothing or no-one are sleeping under bridges and in parks, and nature is under assault in lutruwita/Tasmania. The intensity of it is confronting.

Mr Speaker, I am 54 years old, have been in parliament for 13 years and have been a Green for 19 years. I have not seen such a frenzied assault on nature as we are seeing under the Gutwein Government. I refer members to the Premier's Economic and Social Recovery Advisory Council, which is very comforting reading on multiple levels, particularly the chapter on environment and sustainability. This is the feedback that came from around 3500 people who participated in PESRAC's consultation process and this is some of the commentary that came forward:

Think more about the future and in particular the environment. What will it be like for children and future generations?

Another statement:

Having a health and protected natural environment is why people come to Tasmania. Protecting the natural environment should be the Premier's top priority.

Another comment:

Tasmania's COVID-19 recovery must address climate as the top priority. Nothing else matters if we don't address the climate emergency. The pandemic brings an unprecedented opportunity for change.

In the commentary, PESRAC says this:

Tasmanians told us of their concern that Tasmania's environmental credentials don't truly stack up when a close look is taken.

If you have a look at what is happening in takayna, or in our protected areas, on kunanyi, in our forests and in our marine environment, you will appreciate that our hard-fought and lucrative clean, green brand is being undermined in real time under the Liberals. PESRAC is really clear that if we want a sustained and sustainable economic recovery from COVID we have to look after nature. We have to be prepared to do things differently.

Mr Speaker, I welcome our new Governor, Her Excellency the Honourable Barbara Baker AC, and wish her all success and strength in the role on behalf of the people of Tasmania

and commend the Premier on the choice of the Her Excellency as our next Governor. Many women in Tasmania were overjoyed that Kate Warner was the Governor but we kind of expected that things would revert back to normal once our former Governor retired and it was such a relief to have a good woman appointed to that role. I thank the Honourable Kate Warner for the grace, kindness, courage and resolve that she brought to the role. It was Her Excellency, the Honourable Professor Kate Warner, who made sure the Aboriginal flag flies permanently at Government House in a mark of recognition for the palawa pakana people.

I am also very heartened by the Premier's announcement or decision to commission Kate Warner to work with the broad Aboriginal community in Tasmania towards a truth-telling process, the mechanisms for treaty and hopefully the return of lands, because there has not been any land returned in Tasmania, from memory, since 2005 and it is well past time that there was the return of lands.

I listened very carefully to the Governor's Address. I appreciate that it is in significant part influenced by the priorities of the government of the day and it has never really sat all that comfortably with me to hear a Governor mouthing words that are political in their nature and talk about, for example as we heard yesterday, the alleged great successes of the Gutwein Government.

I also listened very carefully for any mention of global heating or the biodiversity crisis and while there was some mention of renewable energy and some talk of our greenhouse accounts, there was no recognition that the reason Tasmania's greenhouse profile looks as good as it does is because of the forests that have been saved by the work of conservationists over decades and indeed because of the 570 000 hectares of forest that was set aside under the Tasmanian Forest Agreement, albeit that there are still 365 000 hectares of future reserve forests that remain unprotected and therefore threatened.

We did hear the words 'the environment' in the Governor's Address and that was it - two words - and it is well past time that we stopped hearing from the major parties lip service to nature. I listened very carefully to the new Opposition Leader's words on the importance on looking after the environment and it was very heartening to hear Mr O'Byrne make a point of that in his address-in-reply and also acknowledge the need to meaningfully tackle climate change, but the challenges that we face as a community are so significant - accelerating climate change, crashing biodiversity, assaults on nature. We have to work on these challenges together.

Like a number of members of this place, I attended the church service for the opening of parliament yesterday and half expected my head to catch fire because I am not a Christian, but I found the service to be very meaningful and a number of the sermons and the readings certainly should give us all pause in our roles in this place. I will revert briefly to a statement from one of my favourite scientists, astrophysicist Neil de Grassi Tyson, who said:

I am driven by two main philosophies: to know more today about the world than I knew yesterday and lessen the suffering of others.

He says we are all connected to each other biologically, to the Earth chemically and to the rest of the universe anatomically.

Bishop Condie said yesterday in the speech that he has very kindly forwarded to me because I asked for a copy:

We have some massive challenges in Tasmania that seem to me are going to need something altogether different than the business as usual approach if we are going to see them solved. I do not have to tell you what they are. We all know about the challenges of health and homelessness, the scourge of domestic and intimate partner violence, of enough economic development to serve our wellbeing balanced with the care for these precious islands, their forests, rivers and mountains. The social and economic carnage from poker machines in our poorest municipalities and the alarming rate of youth suicide. And I am sure I could list many more. We need a new way to tackle these issues.

It is not a particularly profound insight to suggest that we will not solve these problems by pretending that one party or another has a monopoly on solutions. We are going to need to bring our best selves, all of our best selves, all of the collective wisdom and energy of all our minds, both sides of the parliament, both Houses together to tackle them.

We talk in this place of the importance of cooperation and collaboration. We have been back two days and we are already beating each other up. I am not saying that the Greens are perfect here, we have been participating in the fray because we will always stand up for nature, we will always defend the Bob Brown Foundation, but on key issues we are going to have to work together.

I listened to Ms Ogilvie's reply to the Premier's Address and she spoke of jobs, jobs, jobs, and the jobs unit that the Government is establishing. What we need here is what the New Zealand government has in place, which is a Just Transition Unit, where the machinery and the resources of government are working with industries that are having to change, adapt or close down.

I am very proud of my first-born son, who works in that Just Transition Unit, and the stories he tells of going into communities where, for example, there is an aluminium smelter that needs to be shut down, of working with the Maori people, with local government, with the unions to chart a path through so that those workers being left behind by change, by changing markets, are helped into industries so they can maintain the dignity of having meaningful full-time employment. We need a just transition program in Tasmania, Mr Speaker.

It is no longer justifiable to log native forests; the science tells us that. The science tells us that our carbon stalls are worth far more standing.

Economists like John Lawrence tell us that Forestry Tasmania, over the past 20 years or so, has lost about \$1.3 billion. When we log native forests and chip them and send them off to China, for example, where they are not worried about forest stewardship certification, we would almost be better off filling the holes with \$50 notes and shipping that north. Every time a tree in a native forest is felled and chipped, the Tasmanian people lose money. We also lose carbon, we also lose habitat. So, we need just transition for workers in the native forestry sector.

The data is really clear - all the growth in forestry is happening in the plantation sector. The data is also really clear about what the international market wants. The international market wants forest stewardship certified, sustainably harvested timber. The preference is strongly now for plantation timber.

So let us be responsible on this issue. Let us stop this pandering to the ideological old guard in the native forest logging industry. Let us stop treating workers in the native forestry sector like mugs, because their future is finite. Government should be working with these highly skilled workers, many of them in regional areas, to make sure that those skills, that knowledge and that love of the bush is harnessed in a way that leads to better social outcomes and better environmental outcomes. That is the responsible path forward.

Our priorities leading into this term of the parliament: we want the recovery from COVID-19 to make sure that we have greener and fairer Tasmania, where no one is left behind. It is possible. We are an island of just over 500 000 people deeply connected to each other, yet we have enduring and crushing social inequality. We have people who are getting notices from their landlords of \$50, \$100, \$150 per week increases in rent. We have people living right at the margins in a state of acute stress.

I am really tired of hearing the Government talk about this golden age that we are allegedly in. I encourage the Premier and his ministers to get out more and talk to families who cannot afford to pay the rent. It is possible to build 8000 new affordable energy-efficient homes over the next decade. It is possible to make sure every Tasmanian who needs a home has a home. It is about the choices that Government makes. Belatedly, what we are seeing from this Government is a recognition that the choices it made in its first term to under-invest in increasing the supply of social and affordable housing, to not regulate short-stay accommodation, has had a devastating flow-on impact on Tasmanians who want to buy a home or Tasmanians who want to secure an affordable rental home.

Dr Woodruff and I will be watching the housing space very closely because without a secure home it is impossible for a person to properly engage in education, skills, training, employment, recreation, social connections. Housing is a critical and fundamental human right and this parliament has a responsibility in this term to turn around the housing crisis.

We also want to see a focus in this parliament on sustainability of our water supplies. The Greens will be moving, as we said during the campaign, for a parliamentary inquiry into Tasmania's water management. We want to understand what the pressures are on our rivers and our water catchments. We think parliament should understand what the issues are with declines in water quality and in river health. Unfortunately the minister responsible for water in Tasmania is Mr Barnett, who wants \$10 billion dollars of agriculture value by 2050.

Mr SPEAKER - Minister Barnett or Minister for Primary Industries and Water rather than use personal names when reflecting on other members. We should keep that protocol if you do not mind.

Ms O'CONNOR - Thank you, Mr Speaker. I said the minister is Mr Barnett but I will take on board what you said. The minister, Mr Barnett, has overseen the development of a rural water use strategy. This is the document and it was released in March this year. This rural water use strategy is deeply flawed. It does not speak about the range of pressures on our water catchments. It does not engage with the issues of urban water supplies and quality. It

certainly does nothing to reassure the Greens that this Government is serious about maintaining the health of our rivers. In every catchment, in every river system where there is an increased draw from irrigation we are seeing a decline in water quality. We are also seeing a decline in flow. This is a very serious issue. We can look no further than the Murray-Darling system to see what happens when there is imbalance in the allocation of water rights. We can look to New Zealand, which has some of the most polluted water ways in the world, because the dairy industry went gangbusters and it was largely unregulated. Now the brand of New Zealand is damaged because of its failure to keep its rivers healthy. There is active discussion in New Zealand now about letting the Maori take some control over rivers because there has been such an epic failure of successive governments in New Zealand. We need to avoid that.

PESRAC make some strong recommendations about the need for water sustainability. We also have a whole range of stakeholders who are increasingly ringing the alarm bells about what is happening with water. The Australian Fresh Water Sciences Society (AFWSS), in response to the Rural Water Use Strategy Position Paper, that is the 'vision' for the agricultural sector to have a \$10 million value by 2050, the scientists say:

Given this vision and policy for growth in agriculture in Tasmania, it is surprising to see that the position paper does not fully acknowledge the serious environmental challenges this policy poses for Tasmania's waterways.

They note that the last State Of The Rivers report is 12 years old, and an update on river health is long overdue. The AFWSS says:

We are concerned that an increase in water available for irrigation will also cause significant land use change that in turn will have detrimental effects on water quality. We agree that surface water models need to be updated but suggest that any future modelling efforts are also inclusive of water quality.

The independent scientists, the Tasmanian Independent Science Council, say:

Much to our concern it appears that the scientific advice and recommendations in our submission, as well as in the majority of other submissions, has been disregarded, either because it is considered to be out of scope or it is supposedly addressed through other mechanisms. This is disappointing and frustrating and a real failure of the process, as a number of the issues raised are absolutely central to form in the basis of a robust water policy.

The Anglers Alliance of Tasmania said:

The Anglers Alliance seeks a more precautionary approach and increasing research to address the stated lack of understanding of ecosystem impacts and resilience. Many aquatic organisms within Tasmania's waterways are already listed as vulnerable or endangered. It is disappointing to note the significant lack of proposals to support and protect the environment considering excepted threats from climate change.

TasWater in its submission to the Rural Water Use Strategy, in its own quiet and slightly muted way, is also ringing the alarm. It says:

Under the Water Management Act 1999, town water supply along with other specified uses is assigned the highest priority of access to the state's water resources. TasWater does not accept as appropriate the exclusion from scope of the highest priority water use, especially given the extent of catchments, where both urban and agricultural uses co-exist. Doing so risks a fragmented approach to planning for improvements to Tasmania's management of water resources. This extends to both the management of water quality, and quantity. In particular, water quality has an insufficient prominence in the Rural Water Use Strategy Position Paper.

When you look at the Rural Water Use Strategy, water quality barely raises a mention. Christine Coughanowr, who ran the Derwent Estuary Program, says this in a talking point article that was in the *Mercury* in December last year:

Many Tasmanian water professionals are worried. Contrary to popular belief, we do not have clean and abundant water supplies across the state. Water restrictions are becoming more common, not only in the dryer areas of south eastern Tasmania, but increasingly in well-watered regions. The people of the once mighty Murray-Darling basin also thought they had limitless water supplies at one time, as have countless river basins around the world. Do we really need to tread the same path?

Remarkably, Dr Coughanowr says metering of rural water use is not generally required or reported in Tasmania. This is essential. You cannot manage water if you do not measure it. Agriculture currently receives more than 52 per cent of Tasmania's fresh water allocations, compared to 20 per cent for aquaculture and 10 per cent for municipal water supplies and 9 per cent for industry.

We have a very important responsibility and opportunity as members of the 50th parliament to take on the big issues that are confronting this beautiful island and its people. The Climate Futures work tells us that there will be substantial changes in rainfall patterns across this island over the period that they measure to the year 2010. The central highlands will become drier. I drove through the central highlands just last Saturday morning and was again stricken by the site of the Miena cider gums. These are trees that are found nowhere else on the planet. Some of the Miena cider gums have marks in them from the palawa people of old. These trees are dying and the Miena cider gum is disappearing.

We have to take this on. We cannot just blithely carry on regardless as if the world is not rapidly changing and the climate is not rapidly changing. We have to underpin the policies and the decisions we make with robust science. I hope all members of this place recognise that protecting water, liquid gold if you want to call it that, the first medicine which it is, for the future for our children and our grandchildren is one of the most important tasks that we can undertake collectively. I hope the Government sees the benefit in supporting our move for an inquiry into water management in Tasmania.

Time expired.

[12.48 p.m.]

Mr ROCKLIFF (Braddon - Deputy Premier) - Mr Speaker, I rise to formally respond to the Premier's reply to Her Excellency as this Government sets out our plan to secure Tasmania's future.

I congratulate you again, Mr Speaker, on being elected to the role. I know you will excel in it. You have in the past and as you have done with your dedication to the people of Tasmania and your electorate of Lyons.

I also welcome our new Governor, Her Excellency Barbara Baker, and pay tribute to our outgoing governor, Kate Warner, who made a wonderful contribution in that role over the past six years.

The 1 May election was a strong endorsement of our Liberal Government's long-term plan for our state. I thank the people of Tasmania for placing their confidence in us again so that we can continue to make Tasmania the best place to live in, to grow up in, to learn in and to work in. I congratulate Premier Peter Gutwein for his strong personal performance, for his leadership and friendship. Together we have been in this parliament both in opposition and Government for 19 years. It is a privilege to continue serving Tasmanians alongside him today.

I also humbly thank the people of Braddon for their support of our team, our policies and our plan and for their confidence in us by returning a majority Liberal Government.

Reflecting on Her Excellency's Address there is no doubt that we have faced many challenges together, particularly over the last year or so. There will be more ahead. Some of those challenges include health and mental health. I consider it a real privilege to be Tasmanian's Minister for Health and Minister for Mental Health and Wellbeing.

People are often at their most vulnerable when they interact with our health system and if I can make their experience better, I cannot think of anything more rewarding than providing the right care at the right place at the right time.

We have delivered more funding, more staffing and more health services than any other previous government and the recent state Budget included \$9.8 billion on Health over four years, an increase of some 70 per cent since we came to government in 2014.

We have recruited 15 additional health staff, opened new beds and invested significantly in the facilities our staff and patients deserve. Despite this, there are ongoing challenges with demand continuing to increase, putting pressure on our staff and our services. This means we must do more. There is still a big job ahead of us. If we want to create a better health system for all Tasmanians we need to integrate and connect solutions; I have no illusions about that. That is why we will continue to prioritise Health and our plan builds on the work already done to ensure Tasmanians get the right care at the right place at the right time.

We will continue to prioritise Health and the 2021 Budget included that extra investment I have spoken about - our \$580 million next stage of the Launceston General Hospital redevelopment master plan, our \$200 million expansion of stage 2 of the Royal Hobart Hospital redevelopment, our \$60 million redevelopment of the North West Regional Hospital and our \$20 million capital investment in the Mersey Hospital. Our \$8.1 million investment will also

deliver a second linear accelerator to the North West Regional Hospital to meet demand for cancer patients throughout the region.

We want to ensure that people get the right health care in the right place at the right time, which is not necessarily in hospital in a hospital bed. While they are an essential piece of the jigsaw of solutions to challenges, healthcare is about more than just hospitals. We are strengthening palliative and community healthcare with an additional \$52 million for in-home and local community delivered health services and I have already met with Palliative Care Tasmania to discuss this significant commitment.

We want to keep emergency departments for emergencies and our \$3 million investment incentivising GPs and pharmacies to provide after-hours services to local communities is part of that solution. This complements our \$1 million hospital avoidance co-investment fund which is in addition to progressing urgent care centres for urgent but non-life-threatening treatment.

We will also deliver an additional 20 000 dental appointments statewide with a \$5 million investment in dental care. We are increasing access to medical cannabis products in Tasmania and are on track to allow GP prescriptions by 1 July 2021. We have established a \$20 million fund to deliver care sooner and we have already met with private hospitals and can deliver a co-located private hospital adjacent to the LGH and our recently signed an MOU with Calvary Healthcare fast-tracks that plan.

We are also looking to collaborate with the Commonwealth on primary care such as the funding of GPs and I am keen for there to be similar discussions with our aged care providers, which is just as important as ensuring we maximise and enhance existing services in the community such as district hospitals and health centres. In addition to \$24 million currently being invested in rural and regional hospitals and ambulance upgrades across the state, our \$8 million investment will boost staffing levels in rural hospitals to ensure support for the purchase of new equipment.

Of course, the greatest asset in our health system is our people and I want the Tasmanian Health Service to be considered a workplace of choice where everyone feels valued. Improving the workplace culture in our hospitals is a major focus of mine and we have made a start with incentives such as Pathway to Excellence. However, we need to do more and we will do more.

Our Health Staff Recruitment Task Force, which brings together health stakeholders including the ANMF, AMA, HACSU, TasTAFE and UTAS, met on 16 June and I look forward to working together to improve recruitment across our health system. We want to invest \$120 million to recruit an additional 280 full-time equivalent staff to support new and boosted services across Tasmania. This includes more than 160 nurses, 14 doctors, 30 allied health staff and over 70 hospital support staff. Recruitment has already commenced and we are working with recruitment agencies to find those harder-to-fill roles. In line with that, we will establish a rural medical workforce centre at the Mersey Hospital to drive the rural generalist training pathway within Tasmania and help reduce our reliance on locums.

While we look to the future, it is important to acknowledge the impact of COVID-19 on our health system, not only regarding the elective surgery wait list but also the hundreds of health staff who have been undertaking duties in quarantine hotels or in vaccination centres. While that is something we need to acknowledge, I want to see more people getting their

surgery within the clinically recommended time. We will deliver an elective surgery blitz to get our waiting list down to a manageable level so that more patients get the surgery they need within the clinically recommended time frame, with an additional 22 300 elective surgeries and endoscopies over the next four years, representing a total investment of some \$156 million. Our elective surgery blitz delivery plan is already underway in development.

I was pleased to recently announce that more than 50 additional hospital beds will be opened across the state to meet the expected increase in seasonal demand and to support our elective surgery blitz. Importantly, due to increased hospital demand, these beds will become a permanent addition to our hospital system.

Like the health system, we have a long-term vision for our Tasmanian mental health system, with an increased focus on community support options and to reduce reliance on acute hospital-based services, including emergency departments. Our investment of over \$5 million for an emergency mental health co-response team in the south will commence later this year. Our two-year trial will see mental health workers travel with police and ambulance to attend mental health-specific triple zero calls.

As well, we will invest some \$8.5 million over two years for a mental health Hospital in the Home pilot in the north-west, scheduled to commence in 2023, and \$300 000 for mental health support for the Circular Head region. That is largely as the result of discussions I had with the mayor and community members about the need for a greater mental health presence and services within that region.

We will also invest \$40 million for the first stage of the new mental health precinct to be completed in 2025 next to the North West Regional Hospital to replace the ageing Spencer Clinic. A project manager is expected to be appointed by July this year and my expectation is that the new precinct and centre will cater for all ages, unlike the existing mental health facility at Spencer.

Keeping Tasmanians healthy, connected and engaged is the best way over the longer term to reduce pressure on the health system. This sort of generational change will take time and it is important that we start by putting a greater focus on preventative health and wellbeing. We will do this by investing \$20 million to prioritise prevention and early intervention to empower Tasmanians to improve their own health.

Our plan expands on our commitments to roll out a best-practice integrated model of care across the state so people can access more holistic support at the right place at the right time. We will do this through investing \$500 000 to fund the initial implementation of Rethink 2020, our updated mental health plan for Tasmania to be finalised later this year.

We will also invest just under \$2 million to appoint a peer workforce coordinator to support an implementation of a peer workforce development strategy, working with the Mental Health Council of Tasmania. That investment of almost \$8 million is needed to continue and expand new-look services put in place through the pandemic, including the 1800 Tasmanian Lifeline hotline and the Mental Health Council's check-in website. A grant will be in place with Rural Alive and Well, and I know many colleagues recognise their good work, the Mental Health Council and Lifeline Tasmania, to continue to expand these initiatives from 1 July.

There is also additional investment into alcohol and drug treatment services, including 65 residential rehabilitation beds across the state, as well as funding the Alcohol, Tobacco and Other Drugs Council to help meet the ongoing impacts of COVID-19. We have kick-started our \$4.5 million -

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

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY

Resumed from above.

Mr ROCKLIFF (Braddon - Deputy Premier) - Mr Speaker, we have kickstarted our \$4.5 million trial in partnership with Health Consumers Tasmania, and the Department of Health will now work with Health Consumers Tasmania to further progress this important preventive health commitment. As well, we will invest more than \$9 million to support community-based programs and initiatives, including the Healthy Tasmania Fund, the Heart Foundation's walking program and the Diabetes Tasmania telephone COACH Program for type II diabetes.

We will continue to prioritise reducing smoking, promoting healthy eating and physical activity and improving mental health and wellbeing by investing \$10 million for the next iteration of our Healthy Tasmania five-year strategic plan, which we will launch within six months.

Our \$1 million commitment for a new youth smoking-prevention package will target potential young smokers before lighting up for the first time, starting from year six up. This will involve a close collaboration with the Department of Health and the Department of Education. I understand both departments have already come together and are mapping out a way forward. Working together across government agencies is vital if we are to continue achieving positive results.

Community Services and Development are a part of the network of supports we all need, delivering services while helping Tasmanians and the communities they live in to build strength and resilience. Indeed, community organisations are part of the vital fabric that keeps us all connected, engaged and supported. As part of a more holistic approach to the community and wellbeing, we have commenced development of guidelines for the Men's Sheds Grants program to include mental health and wellbeing initiatives.

As well, we have finalised and delivered a new support in Tasmanian Carers: Tasmanian Carer Action Plan 2021 -24, to support Tasmania's unpaid carers. This action plan is now available on the Department of Communities Tasmania website.

We have commenced development of our new active ageing strategy by providing \$125 000 to enable COTA to commence consultation on the review of our active ageing strategy. Consultation will commence in the final quarter of 2021.

To enable the development of a new generation of volunteers, we will work with Volunteering Tasmania on a new Youth Volunteer Army for Tasmania.

We have delivered funding to King Island for their new community car, and established the parameters for the new \$500 000 Community Car and Coach Fund, for access for local communities right across Tasmania.

We will soon commence consultation to inform the development of Tasmania's first carers recognition legislation, working with our Carer Issues Reference Group, which is due to meet in July.

We are investing in just under \$3 million to ensure we have place-based support to increase the capacity of Neighbourhood Houses through our new family and community support worker pilot. Initial discussions with the CEO of Neighbourhood Houses regarding this pilot have begun. We are increasing funding to the Neighbourhood Houses peak body with an investment of \$400 000 over four years, to improve its capacity to support the house network. We will extend the Neighbourhood House Capital Improvement program with a further \$2 million, and the new investment will allow a further round of capital improvements to the network beyond 2022.

We will also start work with Glenhaven through the investment of \$500 000 for the new purpose-built facility for Kentish House.

Mr Speaker, the issue of food security was highlighted during COVID-19. We will deliver Tasmania's first food security strategy to help futureproof food security in the state. We met with key stakeholders on 7 June this year to progress this development.

I also look forward to meeting with our whole-of-government LGBTIQ+ reference group later this week to commence development of a new framework and action plan. Indeed, diversity and inclusion are vital in keeping Tasmanian communities connected, kind and strong. This is why we believe very strongly we must continue on our pathway to achieve reconciliation with our First Nations people, the Tasmanian Aboriginal people.

During her recent term as Governor for Tasmania, Professor Kate Warner AC demonstrated a strong commitment to Tasmanian Aboriginal people. She has agreed to facilitate a process to understand directly, from Aboriginal people themselves, how to best take our steps towards reconciliation. It is through initiatives such as these that will seek to achieve a stronger, connected, kinder Tasmania through the principles of compassion and conviction.

The last 16 months have been some of the most challenging this state has ever faced. Tasmanians, regardless of race, religion, circumstance or background, demonstrated a common humanity during this time that brought us closer together, and our plan will ensure that this continues. We have commenced development of a small business enterprise loans program for the new enterprises within migrant and multicultural communities, working with the Migrant Resource Centre, MRC, to deliver additional support for small business assistance. We will establish a multicultural hub in the north of the state, investing some \$250 000 for the MRC's Mowbray site, and \$50 000 per year for two years to support its operation.

To support participation and give more Tasmanians the opportunity to learn about our multicultural communities, we will provide MCOT with funding of \$60 000 over two years for Harmony Week and festival support, and will continue providing \$40 000 investment over two years for the interpreter scholarship program.

We have a plan to address the needs of the community sector workforce, and we will work with TasCOSS to establish a community services-based project team and workforce-ready team. We will do this through investing \$195 000 per year for three years to identify workforce and skill development priorities, and invest \$500 000 into the establishment of a workforce-ready team.

Our \$930 000 workforce development fund will deliver a coordinated rapid boost to the industry's training capacity, supporting an additional 120 accredited trainers with 40 subsidised training places in Certificate IV per year through TasTAFE and other registered training organisations, and will provide support for a recruitment campaign to attract and retain workers in the sector, and strengthen governance through investing \$50 000 per year for three years into a scholarship fund linked to the Australian Institute of Company Directors.

Building stronger and more connected communities builds a stronger Tasmania. We are getting on with the job of ensuring more Tasmanians have an opportunity to participate, learn and work.

Our Government recognises that the advanced manufacturing sector is a key contributor to our economy and a significant employer across the state. We have committed \$10 million to support the delivery of our advanced manufacturing action plan and related manufacturing and defence industry programs. This includes \$5 million over three years to implement our Advanced Manufacturing Action Plan, including developing and attracting a highly skilled workforce, supporting the adoption of leading-edge design and technologies, and supporting greater market identification, access and industry promotion. We will also provide \$3 million over two years for the Advanced Manufacturing Accelerating Growth grants program to assist Tasmanian manufacturers to become more competitive, resilient and able to scale up to better compete in global markets.

There are billions of dollars worth of defence contracts up for grabs, so we will provide \$600 000 over two years to assist businesses to prepare and submit tenders for lucrative defence contracts, and provide a \$600 000 interest-free secured loan over three years for the PFG Group to build an ultra-durable, high-density polyethylene prototype vessel for the defence sector for domestic and international markets, with flow-on effects to many local businesses, and will clearly demonstrate their capabilities for the next generation of watercraft to potential buyers here and overseas.

We will also assist the Tasmanian Minerals, Manufacturing and Energy Council with \$500 000 over three years to support the advanced manufacturing sector adopt Industry 4.0.

We will support the Tasmanian Defence Advocate to continue working with Tasmanian manufacturers to compete for lucrative defence contracts, with a further investment of some \$900 000.

These are all investments that we will continue to build on in future years; investments we can make because we have a plan which supports all Tasmanians.

I have a big responsibility and a lot to do. I will do the best I can to the best of my ability as I believe I have always tried to do with the number of portfolio areas of responsibility, as challenging as they can be. There is no doubt if we continue to work together in a more holistic

integrated way across agencies, across communities, we can and will do all we can to achieve the aim of securing Tasmania's future.

[2.41 p.m.]

Ms JOHNSTON (Clark - Inaugural Speech) - Mr Speaker, I begin by acknowledging and paying my respects to the Tasmanian Aboriginal community as the original, traditional and continuing custodians of the land that we stand on, and pay my respects for elders past, present and emerging.

I am honoured to stand and speak in the House today. I begin by congratulating you on your election as Speaker. I also wish to acknowledge the former member for Clark, Sue Hickey, for her contribution to the electorate and her care and advocacy for those in need.

Writing your first speech is hard. Most members here have been there and done that, but for the newbies, we are discovering that talking about yourself is a daunting task. In many ways it feels like over the past few days I have been writing my own eulogy.

In preparing for this speech I naturally called on Google for help. I checked out the first speech of Jacinda Ardern, one of my political heroes who began by saying that first speeches were like words spoken in a heated argument. They will come back to haunt you. I hope this is not the case for me.

Moving on, I looked up a few more and most were pretty good. I was particularly taken by Scottish National Party member, Mharie Black, who won a seat in the UK House of Commons in 2015. Ms Black only spoke for seven minutes but she had a powerful message of hope which struck a chord with me. It is hope that I want to finish my speech on here today.

Before I do, I need to mention another human emotion - frustration. Hope and frustration for me have been constant companions throughout my life. Hope and frustration in one way or another dominated my childhood and upbringing and brought me to this place.

My father, David Knox, is former Baptist minister, so I and my younger sister, Rachel, grew up in a house where faith played a big part in shaping our values. Dad's job was to focus on hope: preaching hope and salvation, giving people hope of a better world and through his ministry helping others to see hope in the goodness of people. I recall on numerous occasions, people knocking on the manse front door seeking help and refuge, and as a family, while we did not have much ourselves, we offered what we could and we offered hope.

But there were frustrations, too, in equal measures. We lived just a few 100 metres from the Springfield bus interchange, where there were people regularly sleeping rough, yet the warm church hall next door was locked up and only for use of the congregation. The reluctance of the church at the time to help those in need in a more pragmatic way and to reach out into the community led Mum and Dad to decide that they could do more for the community by leaving the church than staying in it. It was a difficult decision to make. We lost our home, the family income and our support network but Mum and Dad firmly believed they had a responsibility to do what was right and to serve the community in the best way they could.

My Dad is here in the gallery today. I am proud to say that his and Mum's determination to help others and their strength and example of doing what was right, rather than what was

convenient, drives me today and shaped the person now standing in this House. Thank you, Dad.

While Dad went on to study sociology at UTAS as a mature aged student, Mum, Donna, continued to work in emergency relief to support the family. She was working at the coalface of emergency relief when poker machines were introduced into pubs and clubs. Along with other emergency relief agencies, she began to collect data on the impact of poker machines on the clients that she saw. As a teenager, I remember volunteering my time to do the data entry for her and seeing first-hand just how harmful poker machines were. Almost every client she saw was impacted by poker machine addiction in one way or another. Families lives were destroyed by this parasite in our community.

Mum was our family rock, a quiet principled person, the best mother to me and Rachel and grandmother to her precious grandchildren. She passed away from a rare degenerative illness 18 months ago, at just 64 years of age: too young for one so vibrant with so much to live for and so much to give. Her goodness and values will live on with me forever. I know that she would be very proud of me today.

At 17, with a keen interest in social justice, a desire to change the world, and having thoroughly enjoyed my experiences at youth parliament and the Australian Schools Constitutional Convention, I joined the Labor Party. Hope springs eternal in the human breast said Alexander Pope, but he never had to deal with the Labor Party. I lasted about two years then quit, frustrated by the party's stance on asylum seekers. I was devastated and angry that the party I joined that espoused dignity, respect and equal opportunity could treat human beings so appallingly. There are many good people in the Labor Party but I can never forget the ALP's disgusting acquiescence on this issue. I could not accept, as I was told by party members at the time, that it was all about trade-offs, that it was okay to support an inhumane policy because of swings and roundabouts in other ways as the party stood up for the disadvantaged.

This did not sit well with me and it never will. In my book you do the right thing every time, not just when it is politically convenient. That episode of my life might have been frustrating but it also gave me hope for our own future. The penny dropped - I would never be a party person again. I love politics but the party route was not my road to follow. If I was going to do this again it would strictly be as an independent. That revelation, that epiphany, forever changed the way I looked at my life. I was only 19 years old, university studies, my work with the Hobart Community Legal Service and the Tenant's Union of Tasmania, marriage, an overseas working holiday and then children ensued. Out of necessity politics took a back seat for a while.

My husband, Ben, and I had our two children, Harry and Lucy, in our mid-20s, a young age by today's standard. As a parent you naturally want to change the world to make it a better place for your children. I also feel that it is important to model for them a commitment for serving the community with empathy and kindness through living out your values so that they grow up to understand the responsibility and joy of living as part of an inclusive community. From a very young age I have never shielded them from what I do or the issues I have had to grapple with, because I know that these are valuable life lessons - sometimes tough ones and they have taken it all in their stride.

Harry, my gentle, caring soul and budding commercial pilot, and Lucy, my strong-willed dancer and paramedic-to-be, now teenagers, are in the gallery. A prouder mother you will not

meet. Thank you both for allowing me to do what I do for sharing me with the community, for putting up with my crazy diary juggling, for not getting too embarrassed seeing me in the paper or on the television and, most importantly, for loving me unconditionally. I love you both.

We agreed I would be a stay at home mum while the kids were little and I relished the opportunity. I did not work again until my late 20s. I enjoyed my time at home with the kids but quickly realised I was becoming all too familiar with The Wiggles lyrics and dance moves and again craved the need to enter the adult world and get back involved in my community. I decided as a sleep-deprived mother running around after two children under two there was no better time to do a Master's degree in Criminology and Corrections. I had the benefit of learning from the likes of Professor Rob White and the late Dr Vanessa Goodwin about the need to be smart on crime and tough on the causes of crime if we are to break the cycle of repeat offending. My study highlighted to me again the great structural inequalities that exist in our community and how small budget programs, such as the now defunded Chance on Main, can have a big impact on people's lives and on public safety. My frustrations grew.

About this time with my husband Ben and a small but passionate group of rail enthusiasts I started a community campaign to reinstate passenger rail to Hobart's northern suburbs. My role was to speak with community groups about this no-brainer proposal and seek their support. I loved meeting with all the different groups and finding out about what they did. Before I knew it, I was recruited to join the committee as their secretary and rewrite their constitutions. It was through this volunteer work that I started to take more and more notice of what my local council was doing - or not, as was the case.

I was often the only person sitting in the public gallery at a council meeting and my frustrations again grew. I could see the problems and I am the sort of person who does not like those who whinge from the sidelines but are not prepared to do something to make a difference. What I saw from the public gallery needed calling out. I had to step up and get involved, and so my political journey began.

With the help of my mentor and dear friend, Bill Butler OAM, I spent time listening to my community about their genuine concerns and figuring out how best to represent them. They told me loud and clear they were concerned about the direction of council and the self-interest rather than the public interest that existed around the table. With a committed grassroots campaign on the platform of 'Get Glenorchy Back on Track' - pun intended - I was privileged to be elected first time as an alderman.

However, once I was around the aldermanic table and privy to the internal machinations of council, it quickly became apparent that the situation was far worse than we thought. The council was riddled with poor governance practices, a serious lack of oversight by aldermen of council resources, groupthink to the extent that aldermen had abrogated their duty to act in the best interests of the community and instead favoured their own self-interest in maintaining the status quo.

At my very first council budget this appalling lack of oversight behind closed doors was evident, so I called it out publicly and that sealed my fate with my aldermanic colleagues. I had broken ranks and called out their cosy arrangements where no-one was held to account. The community finally had a voice on the council in me and they joined me in asking questions, but rather than doing the right thing and changing their ways, the council doubled down on their poor practices. With a groundswell of community public support behind me on a platform

of 'Clean up Glenorchy and Clean up the Council', I was elected mayor in 2014, but politics is a numbers game and whilst there was no doubt that I had the numbers in the community, I certainly did not have the numbers around the council table. At my very first council meeting this became apparent. A cabal of seven aldermen, with the backing of the general manager and his director of corporate governance and general council at the time, then voted to remove my automatic appointment as mayor to a whole range of committees, positions the mayor had held for decades. Whilst this clearly was a move designed to render me impotent as mayor despite the clear mandate I had from the public, what was more galling was that publicly they stated the move was because they were concerned that as a young mum I would find it difficult to manage my duties as mayor on committees and look after my children at the same time.

This overt sexism, however, soon became the least of my worries. What followed was two years and four months of gross maladministration, cosy and dodgy deals and in some cases irreversible harm to the community and council. Urgent intervention was required and I called for a board of inquiry. Despite the best efforts of the cabal to shut down and undermine the independent inquiry through legal proceedings, finally the board of inquiry report was released after two years of investigation.

The report is a formal and independent record of a very dark period in Glenorchy's history and documents the frustrations of myself and the community at the time. It is an important reminder, Mr Speaker, of what we have endured and overcome. The report's executive summary reads:

The board noted at the outset the majority of aldermen did not reconcile themselves to the outcome of the council elections in October 2014, particularly the popular election of Alderman Johnston as Mayor. These aldermen henceforth failed to support the Mayor as a leader of the community and failed to show the respect due to her office. The resultant discord was exacerbated by the General Manager towards the faction opposed to the Mayor and by the persistent provision of poor and/or inaccurate advice on governance and operational matters, particularly that provided by the Director of Corporate Governance and General Counsel.

The situation worsened as aldermen aligned themselves more strongly against the Mayor and her supporters, both within council and within the community. A most damaging outcome of this factionalisation of the council was that the majority of aldermen opposed regular and consistent monitoring of the organisation's functions.

The report goes on to say that:

Those aldermen who opposed the Mayor failed to put the interests of the community ahead of their own apparent intention to destabilise the office of the mayor and denigrate the Mayor herself.

Community dissatisfaction with the conduct of council manifested through hostile attendance at council meetings and rejection of the council's annual report at the 2016 annual general meeting.

At the start of its inquiry, the board hoped to see during the course of the inquiry any improvement to the conduct and governance of the council, with resultant improvements in staff morale and community confidence in council. This did not occur. Council did not address the dysfunctionality in its relationships, most particularly within the elected body and between the Mayor, the aldermen, the General Manager and the Director of Corporate Governance and General Counsel. The majority of aldermen persisted in behaviours which were detrimental to council and the community. Those aldermen who questioned the General Manager faced derision or antagonism from those who supported him.

Mr Speaker, these are serious findings and vindicated the position I took as mayor. It not only had a profound impact in the community, but the experience changed my life. There were times when the attacks on my colleagues were extremely personal, targeting loved ones and even my home on occasions. It cost me personally - relationships, reputation and money.

There were times when I questioned why I was doing this and I thought it would be easier to walk away or turn a blind eye. It is quite a bizarre situation when you find yourself publicly supporting your own suspension and calling on your own sacking, but for better or worse, I had given the community my personal commitment to serve them in their best interest and not in my own. For me that meant making sacrifices. It meant doing what was right for the community every time, not what was easiest or convenient. It meant enduring a harrowing board of inquiry that lasted two years, the making of a formal complaint to the Integrity Commission and having that complaint upheld, and a report by the Auditor-General.

Even though the council was ultimately dismissed by an act of this parliament, there is still a great sense of injustice in this whole debacle. For the community and myself, there was no justice served. Whilst reports by the board of inquiry, the Integrity Commission and the Auditor-General all revealed gross misconduct, numerous breaches of the legislation, potential criminal offences and maladministration, the only people to pay the price have been the ratepayers through some hefty bills. There were no prosecutions, no-one has been forced to pay back money and the wrongdoers walked away scot-free.

The system failed my community, and I along with the community and a newly elected council were left to pick up the pieces. It was a wholly frustrating experience from which we all must learn and act to ensure that our watchdogs, be it the Integrity Commission, a board of inquiry or an Auditor-General, actually have some teeth and can be a genuine deterrent for future potential maladministration and corruption. Moving on from that dark time, my community elected a fresh new council with me back as mayor and for the first time in a very long time the council was made up of 10 independent aldermen who were all united in a common purpose, to put the community's best interests first.

I am incredibly proud to have led this council. We worked diligently to address all 58 ministerial directions and restore good governance at Glenorchy. We worked through a large number of legacy issues and made tough decisions. Respect, honesty, transparency and accountability have become the hallmarks of the Glenorchy City Council and I could not be prouder. The council and community are thriving now, and with a \$1.9 billion pipeline investment, the future of Glenorchy is one full of opportunities where people are proud to live beyond the curtain, embracing its diversity and working together.

While it was me sitting back in the mayoral chair, I could not have done this alone. The achievements are a team effort and they deserve recognition. First, I must thank the community for their strong support right throughout my time in local government. The trust and faith you showed in me gave me great strength to carry on when times were difficult. I thank also the current aldermen I served with for their willingness to step up when things were tough. I want to particularly thank and acknowledge the staff at the council, those who risked their jobs for speaking up and calling out the wrongdoing at the time, and those who have helped to rebuild the council in the face of adversity.

Why, then, with the council kicking goals, did they decide the time was right to move on? The answer is simple. It is about frustration and hope. With things settled down at council, community members were no longer sharing with me their concerns about council administration. Instead they were talking to me about health, housing, transport, education and pokies, just to name a few. They were consistently telling me that they were disillusioned with party politics not dealing with these issues, and they were looking for a voice. I care and I wanted to be that voice.

Frustratingly, I could only do so much as mayor when these issues fell squarely within the remit of state government. From that frustration grew a hope that by shining a light on these issues, we might actually find solutions and ultimately get a better outcome for the people of Tasmania.

I will pause briefly to explain what drives me, what pushes my buttons - in other words, my frustrations with our society, and what needs to be fixed, which is why I am here today. What I really despise, what frustrates me to the core, is the indifference and injustice in our society. I hate that Australians on one hand can show so much caring and compassion, then on the other can be uncaring to the point of cruelty.

I have already mentioned the major political parties' brutal asylum-seeker policy, but there is just as much wilful indifference right in front of our noses, on our streets and in our homes. For instance, why do we allow poker machines to populate our poorer suburbs? Since the 2018 election, \$500 million - half a billion dollars - has been lost by Tasmanians from poker machines.

In Glenorchy, our community loses over \$2 million every month on these evil machines. We know for a fact that lives are destroyed, but we still let it happen, right under our noses.

Why do we let people live on our streets? Think about it for a minute. Here we are, one of the richest and luckiest countries in the world, living in the best state, and we cannot provide a roof over our neighbours' heads. Housing is a fundamental human right. We must have serious investment in affordable housing, and emergency and crisis housing.

Why do we have a justice system that is little more than a criminal factory, a sausage machine that sees six in 10 young people, released from prison, incarcerated again within 12 months? How on earth can that be good for our society?

Do not get me started on the failing health system. Of course, this is a much bigger and more complex debate than can be allowable here, but suffice to say there needs to be an increased focus on community health so that people can be treated in their own homes, in their own community. This means promoting wellness, allied health, after-hours GPs, mental health

services, addiction counselling. I hope you get the picture: putting people at the centre of health policy.

These are a few of my concerns and motivations for coming to this House. They are bound together by a desire for a community, for us all to look out and care for each other.

As customary in these speeches, I must take a moment to thank and acknowledge a number of people. I do so, knowing full well that I will no doubt miss out someone, but here goes, nonetheless.

To my family, Lucy, Harry, Ben, Dad, Rachel, Kevin, little William and George, Greg and Elaine and the entire extended Knox and Johnston clan, thank you for loving and supporting me.

To my political mentors, Dr Peter Tucker, Andrew Wilkie, and Phil Butler, who I dearly miss, thank you for your wise counsel and guidance. Thank you for putting up with me and listening to my rants, for encouraging me when I thought all hope was lost, and for taking my calls at all hours of the day and night.

To my best buddies, Georgia, Georgi, Bryn, Kerrin and Terry, thank you for sticking by me, keeping me grounded and supporting me.

Finally, thank you to the people of Clark for giving me the honour of serving you, and for believing that politics can and should be different. I will not let you down.

I am proud of my success as an Independent member of parliament, the first since the size of the House was decreased in 1998. Independence is hard, but it is worth it.

I have come close to the end of my address today. I have spent some time outlining my frustrations, but wish to end on the hopes I have for the future. By nature, I am an optimist. I believe in the goodness in people, if only we allow it to shine.

We Tasmanians are living in a different era. The limitations on international travel, because of COVID-19, has turned the country's attention to our beautiful little island. We are a destination of choice, the envy of many.

My hope is that we can take proper advantage of that while the sun shines on us. We are at a critical point in our history. We can continue the same old ways with health, housing, criminal justice and education, or we can use the lessons learned from COVID-19 and make real change. Do things differently.

It is a cliché, I know, but Einstein's famous quote could not be more applicable: 'Insanity is doing the same thing over again and expecting different results.' My hope is that we learn from our past mistakes. We can stop throwing more and more money at an acute health system that continues to fail, and instead invest in keeping people well.

We can stop the urban sprawl and start thinking about a holistic approach to housing and transport in our cities and towns.

We can stop turning minor offenders into hardened criminals through an out-of-date criminal justice system.

We can stop the robbery of our most vulnerable citizens by the greedy and immoral poker machine industry.

There is a finite bucket of money for services in Tasmania. I know from my days at council how difficult balancing community needs for funding can be, but a lot of what the state Government does can be done better and cheaper. For example, it costs over \$120 000 a year to keep a prisoner in jail, and yet we keep creating more and more prisoners - and that does not factor in the cost to the community increased crime.

We could utilise our existing rail corridor by investing in the northern suburbs light rail, reshaping Hobart and providing millions of dollars in economic stimulus, as well as providing higher amenity to our residents and visitors, and a catalyst for 4600 new homes and 1200 new jobs.

With our health system, how much would we save by keeping people out of hospital in the first place by a modest investment in preventive and community medicine?

As I said at the start of my speech today, in my research I stumbled across the maiden speech of Mhairi Black, and I want to end with her words that really resonated with me. She said:

In politics there are weathercocks and signposts. Weathercocks will spin in whatever direction the wind of public opinion may blow them, no matter what principle they have to compromise. And then there are signposts. Signposts which stand true, and tall, and principled and point in one direction and say this is the way to a better society and it's my job to convince you why.

These are the things I hope for. To be a signpost in this parliament. To demonstrate a new way and a better way of politics that is collaborative and productive, that works to solve problems for the people who elected us to serve them.

Thank you, Mr Speaker.

Members - Hear, hear.

[3.08 p.m.]

Ms DOW (Braddon) - Mr Speaker, I congratulate the new member for Clark on her inaugural speech. Well done and welcome to the House.

We have listened to the Tasmanian community and understand they did not entrust their vote to Labor to be their Government at the last state election. That does not mean that we will not continue to work hard every day in this place, and in the Tasmanian community, to rebuild that trust and faith in what a Labor government can do to change the lives of Tasmanians for the better.

I congratulate the Premier on his election win, and I acknowledge the hard work of our Labor team - in particular former Labor leader Ms White, who gave her all, as we all did, during the campaign right across the state.

There is no doubt our state finds itself at a point where we need to do things differently if we are to address the unique challenges that we face. These challenges, as we all know, are across health, housing, transport, education, social and economic disadvantage, and of course our built and natural environment.

There have been calls for the parliament to work together more to address these challenges. At the height of the COVID-19 outbreak in Tasmania, our commitment to work together as three parties and an Independent was incredibly important to instil trust and address the seriousness of the situation that we found ourselves in.

However, as we find ourselves in Opposition once more, we have a very important role to play in holding this Government to account, and presenting ourselves once again as an alternative government.

I believe many of the policies we took to the last election would have made a significant difference to the lives of many Tasmanians, and did think differently about the way in which we deliver services across Tasmania, particularly when we look at our health policy, where we had a focus on investment in permanent staffing and more services across rural and regional Tasmania, primary healthcare services, servicing communities and keeping people out of hospital.

When it comes to planning, we would have had a more strategic focus and invested in the resources required to increase land supply and housing supply and finally complete the statewide planning scheme which the Government has had seven years to do. The other example of this is our housing policy, which I will refer to later.

During the Premier's recent state of the state address we were presented with an uncoded, ambitious plan off the back of PESRAC and the economic impacts of COVID public health-related restrictions, in an attempt to begin to address the unique challenges Tasmania faces, challenges this Government has had seven years to begin to address. It is important to note, though, that many of these serious issues were experienced by Tasmanians prior to COVID, with these being exacerbated by COVID. Our poor socioeconomic outcomes and projected demographic change will present fiscal challenges for our state, as outlined in the fiscal sustainability report of 2021. This further substantiates the need to think differently about how to address these issues.

Upon preparing my speech today I took some time to look back three years to my inaugural speech and my objectives when I came to serve in this place. I am pleased that my motivations and objectives have not changed, nor have my values of empathy, social justice and a determination to make a difference to the lives of Tasmanians. I must admit, it feels a lot longer than three years ago when I made my inaugural speech here in the House, and I remember how nervous I felt. I want to take this opportunity to extend my congratulations and best wishes to our new members of the House, Dean Winter, Janie Finlay and Kristie Johnston, who I have known for some time through their roles in local government and I know they will make an excellent contribution to this place.

That brings me to a sad reflection, which is to pay tribute to my friends and colleagues Jen Houston and Alison Standen, who will no longer be sitting here in the Chamber with us. I am very saddened by that, as they made meaningful and thoughtful contributions in this place that were delivered with passion. I want to thank them for their service and wish them all the very best for their future ambitions and opportunities. As Rebecca White said yesterday in this place, I also have a feeling this is not the last time we will see Ms Standen, in particular.

As we commence the fiftieth parliament, I would like to welcome our newly appointed Governor, Her Excellency Barbara Baker, and extend my thanks to outgoing Governor Professor Kate Warner and her husband Dick, who have left a lasting legacy and made an outstanding contribution to the Tasmanian community.

So here we are at the opening of the Fiftieth Parliament, albeit a year early, on the back of an election we apparently had to have when the Government staged their plunge into so-called minority government, despite having Ms Ogilvie waiting in the wings as a Liberal candidate -

Ms Ogilvie - Hang on a second. Just saying it doesn't make it true. That's the second time you have said it today, thank you very much. Say it outside.

Mr SPEAKER - Order.

Ms DOW - Did we really need this election? What unfolded during the election campaign was quite extraordinary and remains enshrined in controversy, with glaring questions remaining about the candidacy of Adam Brooks and who know what and when and the Premier's judgment on this issue. The people of Tasmania and Braddon deserve answers.

As I have said, when it comes to improving the lives of Tasmanians, key long-term and short-term challenges remain for this Government. In fact, some of the ministerial faces may have changed, but the problems in these key portfolio areas remain and they demand a different approach from this Government.

Mr Speaker, I want to thank the people of Braddon for putting their trust in me again and re-electing me a second time. I am incredibly proud to represent the people of Braddon, this amazing place where we live, a place with many competitive edges and resilient communities. It is my great privilege and I do not take this privilege lightly. I am enjoying being back at work, continuing to help our community and providing strong advocacy for the issues that are important to the people of Braddon.

To all those who have helped me along the way, the wonderful volunteers from my campaign, you all worked so hard, to those who helped me put up signs and for those who had signs in their yard for me. To my family, Roy and the kids and my mum and dad and siblings, thank you for your unwavering support. Politics demands a lot of you and your family, so thank you for your patience.

To my staff throughout my first term, Naomi, Kaye and Jess, thank you all for your hard work and support and to Teresa, our wonderful volunteer in our office, I say thank you.

Congratulations to Jeremy, Shane, Roger and Felix, and I look forward to working across the electorate with you again this term. To all the candidates who put their hands up, it takes

courage and determination and you have done yourselves proud. To our other candidates, Justine, Amanda and Michelle, it was great working with you on the campaign and we certainly had some laughs. There is still more work to do in our community but also as an ALP to rebuild, improve our vote and our membership in Braddon. I am committed to working constructively and collaboratively to get better outcomes across each of these important focuses.

Thank you for the honour bestowed upon me by the people of Braddon. I am determined to make Braddon better in partnership with our community.

The conclusion of the state election brought with it an historic event where we saw the first ballot for the leadership of the parliamentary Labor Party take place. This presented to give the opportunity to give the rank and file a say in who they wanted to lead our party. I want to take this opportunity to thank my friend and colleague Rebecca White for her leadership of the party over the last four years. Rebecca did an amazing job as our leader and I have the greatest respect and admiration for her passion, her work ethic, dedication and talent. I am really looking forward to working with Rebecca as a member of our caucus in the shadow treasury role.

The ballot was a respectful and thorough campaign by both contenders, and I want to congratulate Shane and David for putting their hands up to lead the party they both care deeply about and understand the need for change across. I am looking forward to working with David as our new Labor Party leader. He has the determination and dedicated focus to take our party forward and rebuild a strong Labor narrative across Tasmania.

I thank my colleagues for entrusting me to the role of Deputy Leader, a responsibility I will not take lightly and am very passionate about. I want to thank and acknowledge the tremendous work of Michelle O'Byrne as Deputy Leader of the Labor Party over the last seven years. Thank you, Michelle, for your contribution to the party and your dedication and passion for this role. I have big shoes to fill as you leave an amazing legacy. I am also looking forward to working with you as a member of our caucus.

It is a new day for the Labor Party. We have a talented team who are up for the challenge and I do not think any of us underestimate the work we must do to reveal trust in us across the Tasmanian community. We are also committed to working closely with our rank and file membership, and as the ballot has demonstrated we need to do better. We have some amazing members who have given years of dedicated service and volunteer hours to the Labor cause and we should be embracing this and working more closely with them.

I am committed to working with all Tasmanians, business, industry, the union movement, church community clubs and sporting groups to rebuild trust in Labor and demonstrate the difference a Labor government will make to the lives of all Tasmanians and to position us firmly as an alternative government in Tasmania.

I want to take some time to speak about my shadow portfolios. The first I want to speak about is Planning and Local Government. Having worked in local government for a long time I am pleased to be assuming this responsibility. I thought it would be important to read some of our policy from the last state election from around the role of Planning and Local Government in Tasmania and what a Labor government would have done around these key issues.

Labor recognises the important role of local government as the level of government closest to the people. A major regional employer, they represent the interests of their communities and deliver important services that our communities rely on. Similarly, we recognise the important role of local government in strategic planning and driving economic growth, addressing challenges like the housing crisis and preserving those things that make Tasmania so special.

After seven years we still do not have a statewide planning scheme in Tasmania. Our regional land use strategies are out of date and holding back urban growth and we still do not have Tasmanian planning policies to guide development across the state.

A Labor government would have ensured communities have the final say over their future by committing to no forced amalgamations, whilst supporting voluntary amalgamations. We want to work hand in hand with local government to deliver stronger regional economic development and better regional health services. We would have provided additional funding to the planning and policy unit and the Tasmanian Planning Commission to appropriately fund the strategic planning agenda which is required across this state, including the review of the regional land use strategies.

In order to address planner shortages across Tasmania, we would have supported LGAT in their efforts to set up regional planning hubs to provide additional resources to the local government sector which would have resulted in greater resourcing and better and faster decisions. We would have used Planning to help address the housing crisis by making new housing supply and improved affordability a planning objective and by working with local government to prioritise new infill and medium-density development. We would have worked with local government to deliver better strategic planning across the state, which one can argue is the element that is currently missing within the planning agenda of this Government. There has not been any dedicated focus on strategic planning across the state. That has contributed to a lot of the conflict in local communities where they want to have a say in future development but there has not first been that conversation or strategic intent about what communities want.

A Labor Government would have included local government in the independent review into Tasmanian parliamentary workplace culture. Having listened to Kristie Johnston's inaugural speech, there is a place for local government in this review. It would be important to do that and we will stand firm in our commitment to see that happen. It is an omission from the current terms of reference or outline for the review that has been put in place by the Government.

We will continue to work strategically with the local government sector to implement the recommendations of the review of the Local Government Act and to plan cooperatively for future roles and responsibilities of local and state governments.

That brings me to Advanced Manufacturing and Defence Industries. During the last term of the parliament I was privileged to have the shadow portfolio. It is an area that is close to my heart. Fabulous advanced manufacturers close to my home in the electorate of Braddon develop world-class products. They should have every opportunity to be involved in the supply chains and the development of components for large-scale manufacturing projects including defence, across this country and internationally. They fly under the radar. They are a very modest group of businesses, many with long-held family tradition. I congratulate them on the

great work they are doing. We support the advanced manufacturing sector. I look forward to continuing to work closely with them.

Housing and construction and building and consumer affairs are new shadow portfolios I have been given the honour of working within for this term of our parliament. Housing was a front and centre issue during the election campaign, continues to be and has been over the past seven years of this Government. Regarding construction, building and consumer affairs, skill shortages in the construction industry are a significant issue, particularly across regional Tasmania. I will be looking forward to working very closely with key stakeholders across the construction industry.

One of our policies at the last state election involved the need for regional investment in TAFE. We stand by that. It does not mean only providing that to those communities over the internet or remotely. There needs to be face-to-face training. The Study Hub West Coast at Zeehan is a wonderful example of what can be achieved in rural and remote Tasmania when providing skills and training.

We could look more to that model. The Circular Head community is also hoping to establish a similar model in its local community. I look forward to working with them on that. I encourage there to be more face-to-face investment in regional TAFE opportunities for regional Tasmanians.

These areas link very closely to my Planning shadow portfolio. It makes great sense to me to have both of those responsibilities with planning reform stalled across the state. Regional land use strategies need urgent review. It is holding back urban growth. There is a need for those to be completed to enable land to be opened up for housing development. Local government has been a strong advocate for that need.

Through my work as a community health nurse and in local government, I know that housing is a fundamental human need. It affects everything if you do not have safe, secure housing. It impacts on your mental health and wellbeing, but also your ability to get a secure job, to raise your family and provide for your family.

It is at a crisis point across Tasmania, even in regional Tasmania. It is more than building houses. Increasing supply across the state is fundamentally the most important thing, but it is also about providing services and support to people to navigate the system, as well as providing greater access to emergency and crisis accommodation, social and affordable housing and private rental opportunities. Rental affordability, particularly in regional Tasmania, is impacting our communities. Ms O'Connor earlier today spoke about how the lack of regulation on Airbnb has created pressure on housing and people's ability to access safe and secure housing across the state.

I am keen to get my teeth into this new portfolio. I have lots to learn and I have lots of stakeholders to meet. It is one of the most pressing issues for the Tasmanian community. I will do my utmost to hold the new minister to account and make sure that he stands strong on his election commitments, some of which - if I have some time left - I might touch on.

We have been through a number of ministers in this portfolio and we need to see action on the election commitments while ensuring that all of the aspects of housing across the state are addressed.

In recent weeks there have been concerns raised by HACSU regarding allied health professionals and their ability to find housing to take on work in the state. On the west coast there are issues with the quality of the housing for central service providers. That acts as a barrier to attracting professionals to live and work in those communities.

As industry develops - Circular Head is one community that comes to mind - there is a shortage of housing stock. The councils have taken it upon themselves to start looking at how to partner with community housing providers to increase housing stock in the community. It is holding back economic growth across Circular Head.

I have met with the council a number of times about it. I understand they have also met with the minister, so I encourage the Government to work closely with those councils to look at how you might be able to support them in creating more housing opportunities across their communities.

I thank in my previous shadow portfolios of Transport and Small Business the RTBU, the Tas Bus Association and the Small Business Council. I enjoyed immensely the opportunity to work with your organisations in those previous roles. I came to know you all well and understand your position on each of these issues. I want to extend my thanks for working with each of those organisations.

When it comes to housing I want to talk about the election and some of the commitments that were made by the Government. On 20 April at the height of the state election campaign, former housing minister, Roger Jaensch, promised to spend \$580 million to build 3500 homes by 2027. He also promised \$20 million to build two new supported accommodation facilities for older Tasmanians in the state's north and north-west. Another \$10 million to address youth homelessness with the residential care pilot program for young people under 16. Mr Jaensch promised a further \$4.35 million would deliver 20 modular homes across Tasmania for people aged 16 to 24.

This raft of promises to address Tasmania's growing housing and homelessness crisis followed the Liberal Government's 2014 election promise to build 900 new homes, a promise that was broken. It followed their 2018 election promise to build 1500 new homes, another promise that failed to materialise. Since 2014 the Liberal Government has increased social housing stock by 712 properties, achieving an abysmal 16 per cent of their promised target. The responsibility for putting a roof over Tasmanian heads and addressing the most serious housing crisis this state has ever endured has now been passed from Roger Jaensch to Michael Ferguson.

I encourage him to deliver on these commitments. There are thousands of Tasmanian families who are languishing on housing waiting lists, in many cases some have been for years. We all hear the stories through our electorate offices, no doubt, from people who have been waiting for far too long for housing. The thousands who are couch-surfing, living in unacceptable conditions and sleeping rough are long overdue for a realistic compassionate solution from this Government.

The crisis in housing and homelessness existed well prior to COVID-19. All indications are that it is getting worse. The only solution is to build because, to state the obvious, housing ends homelessness.

Despite the Liberals' acute awareness of the deepening housing crisis, investment over the past decade has failed to address escalating needs, resulting in a current estimated shortfall of 11 400 social houses across Tasmania.

According to the most recently available official statistics from the 2016 Census, 8 per cent or 130 of the 1622 Tasmanians experiencing homelessness on any given night are sleeping rough, but those in the housing sector acknowledge the actual number has increased significantly over the last five years as we await new data. Further data analysis provided for Homelessness Australia shows at least half the homeless population are living in regional and rural Tasmania, showing that homelessness is not just confined to capital and larger cities.

Most troubling is the effect of the housing and homelessness crisis on older Tasmanian women. This is something that has come to my attention through being in this role. The number of older homeless women in Australia has increased by over 30 per cent as our population ages, the cost of housing increases and we witness a significant gap in asset accumulation between men and women. Any services currently available importantly focus on women affected by family violence or living with mental illness across our communities, but there is an immediate need to make more services available to older women who are renting, working and have savings, yet find themselves at risk of homelessness.

Homelessness among older Tasmanian women is often hidden from view, with 43 per cent of older women staying temporarily with friends. Mainstream housing support is available to older women; however, many fall through the cracks. They may be ineligible or unable to access social community and affordable housing and not in a position to enter the housing market.

The other aspect which concerned me is around emergency shelters, which are bursting at the seams and turning away on average 31 people every day. The situation is chaotic and unacceptable and has been exacerbated by a government that has failed to act. Failing to deliver on the important election commitments that this Government made would be inexcusable to many of Tasmania's most vulnerable people right now who are caught in the midst of this housing crisis.

In conclusion, Tasmanian Labor has ambitious hopes for a better Tasmania. We would have been a government with compassion for all Tasmanians, no matter where they live or their disadvantage. Communities are tired of this Government ignoring their concerns and forging on with their own agenda. The examples of this are glaring, with the lack of consultation on the Westbury prison, Rennie Court, Smithton Court, Leith Overpass and the fifth lane on the Southern Outlet. The Government really has little regard to the impact that a number of these projects will have on Tasmanian lives.

Our commitment to Tasmanians remains genuine and focused and we will engage with our communities to plan together for a better and fairer Tasmania. We believe Tasmanians deserve better. We have a talented team that I am proud of and we will continue to hold this Government to account.

[3.33 p.m.]

Mr FERGUSON (Bass - Minister for Finance) - Mr Deputy Speaker, congratulations on your election by our House as our Chair of Committees. I know you will do a wonderful job. We have all seen you at work in the past and your committee management and understanding

of the Standing Orders has been admired and appreciated and reflected in the decision yesterday.

Equally I congratulate our Speaker, Mr Shelton, who is not only a colleague but a great friend and a tremendous person who with his experience I know will be able to act effectively fairly and firmly but of course impartially to administer the Standing Orders so that everybody in this House is treated and is expected to be treated in the same way.

Mr Deputy Speaker, it was truly heartening to listen to the Governor's speech yesterday to mark the opening of this, the Fiftieth Parliament. All of us in this place have really been given a great privilege and honour and I know that we separately know this. I feel it very strongly and the privilege of it is the privilege of service, the honour of being able to have responsibility for the care and welfare of the people of Tasmania and in my case for the people of Bass.

For us as a government we have the honour and privilege for the first time ever in history for a third term of a Liberal majority government, and that has been hard earned. The trust we earned under the leadership with Will Hodgman in 2014 has been rewarded as a repeat in 2018 and again in 2021. Tasmanians rejected the divisive failed politics of the left and the Labor Party at all of those elections in the choice that was provided and from the Liberal Party's point of view, we simply adopted the position of putting our best foot forward.

It was never about trampling on the Labor Party and its problems, but Tasmanians could see that for what it was. It really was an omnishambles and a disaster from the get-go and Tasmanians very quickly were able to see they could not possibly trust that rabble with governing Tasmania because they could not govern themselves, even within their party wing.

I believe that as much as anything, the strong vote we saw in all of the electorates and most particularly in the northern seats of Bass, Braddon and Lyons, with primary votes of 60 per cent, which is nearly unheard of, shows a strong admiration and support not just for the people who make up our Government but also for the policies we produced and were prepared to live by and be accountable for by submitting them to Treasury for costings, as major political parties are expected to do.

I say thank you to the people of Bass for re-electing me. I count myself as very fortunate. I have just had a meeting in the Long Room where all of our pictures are up there like postage stamps on some of those framed presentations, and you can see that whatever else is true, in 160 years of self-government here in Tasmania, there are not actually that many people who have been able to be elected to be part of our parliament. I am one of those, you are one of those, and I feel so grateful that we have that bond of trust with Tasmanians, whether you are Liberal, Labor, Greens or Independent.

People put a lot of trust in us because right now they are not thinking about politics or watching this speech. Right now they are busy with their lives, their work, looking after their family, maybe in some cases doing well and growing their business, and in other cases finding life a bit hard to even make ends meet and are more concerned about those issues that are their current confrontation, so they cast their vote where they did on 1 May and then trusted us to get on and deliver. As a Liberal government, we will achieve this, creating opportunities for everyone who lives in this state that we love so dearly.

We have hit the ground running and collectively share a determination and passion to see our vision come to life for the benefit of Tasmanians. For us, we put that under the banner of securing Tasmania's future, because we really have been at a crossroads, not just because of the pandemic but because of all the reform this Government has successfully introduced that opens the way for the next opportunities. We are delivering a vast range of exciting transformational projects in every region in every portfolio that will benefit Tasmanians for generations to come.

I was honoured to be asked to be the spokesman for the Liberal Party campaign throughout the period and I was glad to do that. I was also very pleased to be strongly supported by my small but dedicated office. I want to particularly single out Karen Matthews, my electorate officer in my Launceston office. She has only been with me a year and a half and is an incredibly hard worker who is loyal and profoundly insightful about the needs of people who contact my office. When they ring to speak to me and I might not be able to take their call, they get Karen and I would say in some cases they get a better deal. I am grateful to her because despite only having worked with me for such a short period of time, she threw herself into this campaign and supported me with the daily tasks and went indeed beyond that call.

I thank the rest of my team who in different ways assisted me, especially Kristin, who supported me on the ground and ran my campaign team, Matt, Andrew, Malcolm, countless others, Daniel and Mel. It would be wrong to keep going because I will start to miss people out, but these were the key people who really stood up in this campaign, with no notice virtually, and gave us the opportunity to get our campaign prepared in just a few days between when the previous Speaker decided to leave the Liberal Party and when we went to a formal election campaign.

We had some highlights during that campaign. For me, one of the clear highlights was getting to know even better some of my fellow Liberal candidates in Bass. I count them all as friends, particularly Premier Peter Gutwein and Sarah Courtney, my sitting colleagues in this place. To our candidates who were not elected on this occasion, I say thank you to them for standing by the Liberal banner and throwing everything they had at their local campaigns as well as our team campaign. Simon Wood, Lara Alexander and Greg Keiser- great job.

Mr Deputy Speaker, there were low lights in the campaign. I do not want to spend too long on those, but I want to mention them both, for different reasons. One was the Launceston debate at the Country Club Casino. It was an exceptional debate and it had the usual pros and cons for the leaders. I do not need to make any reflections on who won that debate; that is not my point. There was a pretty untidy protest there; I think it was by the Extinction Rebellion. It was one of the low lights for me because the *Meander Valley Gazette*, which holds itself as a credible newspaper, totally misinformed its readership and circulated to every letterbox in the Meander Valley that I, Michael Ferguson, got involved in the violence, when I was seated in my chair with my wife, Julie, and our supporters the entire time.

The journalist did not even bother to contact me to ask me if it was true. Only under threat of taking them to the Australian Press Council were they prepared to issue a very mealy-mouthed apology on the front page of the June edition.

That was one of the low lights. It makes the point that some people in our state will say anything because it suits them.

The other low light for me was the Labor Party's health policy on north-west maternity. I want to say something about this because it really did trouble me greatly. When I became health minister in 2014, I had doctors, nurses and experts who were very concerned about the risk to mums and babies in the north-west community - and I am not talking about the Mersey, I am talking about all of the birthing services in the whole north-west.

There had been reports to the previous government telling them change needed to happen. They were ignored. Lives were lost. Running a service on fly-in, fly-out locums, with one permanent employee expected to hold it all together, with a fractured model, trying to support services at the Mersey which had no paediatrics, and no ICU. To risk-manage that, they were told only low-risk births could happen at the Mersey.

What does that tell you? I can tell you something, Mr Deputy Speaker. Though I am not medically trained, I know enough about this because I lived it and breathed it for five and a half years. You might think it is a low-risk birth, but on arrival day, it may not be a low-risk birth, it may be a fatality.

Through the white paper process, I and this Government agreed that we were going to tackle these difficult systemic issues on the basis of safety, not financial cost. The Labor Party backed the white paper at the time under the then health shadow, Rebecca White, and said this is the way to go with the role delineation framework. It accepted that we do not offer a service in any public hospital facility unless it is safe, and it has the right staff cohort and the other services - in birthing in particular.

There were three risk areas. One was the staffing model, the second was the need for paediatrician support for when the baby is very ill on the day of arrival, and of course an ICU, when for a range of reasons mums can be in peril as well. We made the changes. They were hard to do, and I am proud of those, because people said to me it would not be possible. We made it happen because it had to happen.

The midwife of the year, Carol Nicholas, said to me, Michael, because of the changes you have made, I can show you the name of a baby who is alive today who would not have lived, because it was a low-risk birth presenting at the Mersey. The baby the woman birthed at Burnie under the new model had a profoundly low APGAR and would have died without the neonatal support. To see the Labor so-called expert shadow health minister trumpeting a return of birthing services on the basis that somehow Michael Ferguson had sat him down, convinced him of something, promised him the world, and then not delivered, was the biggest bare-faced lie I have seen in that campaign. It was wrong. It is all explained by the understanding that there were a few votes in it.

I will say every political party is guilty of doing populist policies from time to time, fine, score the point - but this one was in the full knowledge that lives would hang in the balance. The AMA called it out, RANZCOG called it out, it was a dangerous policy.

But do you know what? It did not work. The people Labor were trying to fool with this policy could see straight through it. Despite the disappointment, why would a family not want to be able to birth in their closest hospital? I appreciate that, but they saw straight through it. And I am thankful they did, because people can recognise that the changes that this Government has made to health - as imperfectly as we have done - have been about people's lives and the

safety of our health services. I stand by that, and I stand by everything I have said this afternoon.

The highlight of the campaign for me, of course, was election night, and to be gathered with my friends and family who travelled from around the state and my volunteers. I want to take this opportunity to say to them and the voters of Bass how profoundly grateful I am to be re-elected. And with the Governor's speech yesterday, outlining the range of areas where we will be focusing on policy in the next four years and outcomes for Tasmanians.

Mr Deputy Speaker, the revised Estimates report showed that we had invested nearly \$20 million more at this point in time than last financial year. We make no apologies for our record multi-billion-dollar infrastructure investment. It is clearly providing industry with much needed certainty and confidence. The record shows that we are spending, on average, nearly \$100 million more per year than the previous Government.

We have a strong track record on infrastructure delivery. Since being elected in 2014, the Government has delivered more than 150 discreet road projects. In the last financial year, State Roads delivered 37 projects, which was the biggest year in over a decade. And the delivery is continuing. In this construction season we have delivered 24 projects so far.

Some of them I mentioned this morning as being complete. As an example, the now \$565 million Midland Highway 10 Year Action Plan is tracking ahead of schedule, with 67 per cent now complete. I am thankful to the federal government for increasing the funding, so it lets us do more. No-one can deny that the Midland Highway is a great improvement, and for me it is not just about the enjoyment of the journey, it is about the safety of that major highway. Who could forget that for many years, the biggest risk factor for crashes and deaths on the Midland Highway was head-on collisions. I think many in this chamber would know people in their personal lives who have been involved in some of those crashes. So, building that project up to a three-star rated highway, with essential wire rope barriers, is virtually eliminating that risk of head-on collisions.

The Midland Highway investment has continued, with Spring Hill, Melton-Mowbray to Lovely Banks and Tunbridge and Powranna completed earlier this year. You can look forward to the final stages beginning construction later this year in the construction season, where we will get on with Ross, Oatlands and north of Campbelltown.

On the Tasman Highway we have the Hobart Airport Interchange. This has been a much-frustrated project, by a number of individuals, including from the Labor Party, who have supported the court action, but it is on track and development is moving at an incredible pace. It is a great credit to Hazell Bros and my department for getting on with that job, and the Clarence City Council, who have been great partners on the way through. The Planning Appeal Tribunal threw out those appeals on merit. However, that did not change the fact that there were delays associated with it. So, what did we do? We brought forward other projects.

The Sorell bypass project is now under construction, and the Midway Point intersection as well. I have checked them out myself. We are grateful to people for understanding that roadworks mean delayed travel time, some disruption, but of course those disadvantages are more than outweighed by the long-term benefits that we will get on our highways out to Sorell.

Late last year, the Morrison and Gutwein governments jointly funded the \$180 million needed to fully duplicate out to Sorell, including the causeways which were the missing pieces. We have now completed the set and brought the total project value to a staggering one-third of a billion dollars, or \$350 million. These are of course transformational road infrastructure projects for the south-east part of Tasmania and Hobart community and the Tasman Peninsula.

The governments have also provided \$150 million for improvements on the Bass Highway from Cooe to Wynyard and right through to Marrawah. Pleasingly, the Morrison Liberal government has now committed funding towards \$50 million in targeted upgrades of the highway from Deloraine to Devonport and together with the state's contribution, this now makes a \$200 million package of works for the north-west coast. That is \$54 million between Deloraine and Devonport, \$50 million between Cooe and Wynyard and \$100 million between Wynyard and Marrawah. I know that is of significant interest to the community, particular in Circular Head and west coast communities, and they are looking forward to construction commencing this construction season.

We took to the election a further investment of \$416.5 million into road infrastructure over seven years. You can see that we are maturing the pipeline, and this includes targeted investments across all regions of the state. We know that long-term thinking is the way to go, with 10-year strategic action plans for the Bass, Channel, Huon and Tasman highways to be commenced under our re-elected Liberal Government. To make the most of our infrastructure investments, it is vital that we improve public transport by making it faster and more efficient, but I have always said put more pride and esteem into it to make it a more attractive choice for Tasmanians.

To achieve this, we have put forward the boldest and, I think, the largest public transport policy. It has been praised by the Rail, Tram and Bus Union, who are not always the best friends of the Liberal Party, but they have held that out as a great policy and would have liked to have seen something similar from Labor - but I digress. With an \$81.5 million investment, this is about delivering more buses on high-demand routes, all-access and all-weather bus stops - we have to do better here and local government is a big part of the solution - more park and ride facilities and, importantly, common ticketing across all of the 17 general access bus operators and in real time so that people can see where their bus is. This is about delivering practical outcomes to encourage greater use of public transport and I believe Tasmanians at the end of this period of the parliament will see the benefits.

The Tasmanian Liberal Government is also doing work on the passenger experience. Apart from the \$45 million modernisation of the Metro fleet with now 100 new buses driving around the state, combined with improved bus networks which we have developed by consulting with the Tasmanian community and local government, these things have resulted in faster, more direct and more frequent services. This is going to be further enhanced by planned bus priority lanes, particularly for those people coming in from Kingborough and the Huon Valley into Hobart. There will be more park and ride facilities and a Derwent ferry which we will see in service soon.

Ms O'Connor - When?

Mr FERGUSON - If you would like to read the newspaper you will know that it is committed to for next month by Roche Brothers. From roads to rail, the first tranche of the \$120 million Tasmanian Freight Rail Revitalisation Program was completed on time and on

budget and tranche two is underway. Over the next four years we will provide nearly \$209 million to TasRail to deliver tranches two and three of the revitalisation program. The most pressing infrastructure needed at the Burnie port is the shiploader project, which is fully funded, brought forward and accelerated but has now been added to with an additional \$24 million from the Morrison government. This is now in the tender assessment stage and I look forward to an announcement in the near future.

These infrastructure investments I have described are just a small selection of the many major projects underway around our beautiful state, but of course they are by no means limited to roads, bridges and rail. There is the Macquarie Point Development Corporation with the expansion of their funding to complete the remediation works but also taking land to market which is currently in the market. The funding certainty will allow the next development stage to also come to market sooner, which we will be calling the district, and also provide the foundation for around half a billion dollars of investment to materialise so that this fantastic waterfront precinct can come alive for all Tasmanians to enjoy.

A confident private sector is investing its own capital in the knowledge that the Gutwein Liberal Government supports hard work and endeavour, and the impact of all of these investments, public and private, cannot be overstated. Briefly, we are unleashing a high-viz army. As I said this morning, we need to increase our building and construction workforce by about a quarter because they are busy. Those businesses are flat out, going gangbusters, and it is not all down to the credit of government, but we have been the driving force. The private sector has also come through the pandemic with a huge revival in their fortunes as well. The civils, the building sector, the commercial, residential - everybody is flat out. It is great to see but it means that we need to do more in workforce development and our coordination efforts.

I said 'briefly' because I want to mention that all parties to the round table we hosted last week agreed that the \$17 billion infrastructure project pipeline is our once-in-a-generation opportunity to grow the building and construction industry in Tasmania, to deliver for our workforce and to deliver productive value-for-money infrastructure, not over-cooking the industry or the market, but to have an outcome that has been built for us by Tasmanian firms and workers.

The parties also agreed to work more closely together to ensure that a whole-of-government approach is adopted to infrastructure investment timing and delivery of a pipeline of public and private sector investment so that we can genuinely can have longer-term certainty and confidence.

At the round table the Government undertook to review our procurement processes to ensure they are the very best practice, to investigate improvements to the 10-year infrastructure pipeline which we innovated, and to provide even greater certainty and transparency to industry, including better advice of upcoming opportunities.

We will be implementing the range of measures outlined in the Premier's Address and the recent election to increase the supply of housing and make home ownership more affordable for families. In fact, we will be debating legislation tomorrow which will deliver on this, so I will save my remarks for that time.

As the new Minister for State Development, Construction and Housing, I am acutely aware of the need to support people who need a home. As outlined in the Governor's Address,

our plan is based on principles of compassion and conviction but also using our role as government to get good outcomes. Our record \$300 million investment will help, I am told, around 5000 Tasmanian households out of housing stress or homelessness by June 2023. This is because it includes around 1500 new homes that we are on track to complete at that date. We have actually redoubled this commitment and will provide an additional \$315 million into social and affordable housing and homelessness initiatives across the state.

If you asked me 11 years ago when I first came to this place whether a government would be putting \$615 million into housing, I would not have believed it, but it is happening, it is needed and as Housing minister I want to work with members across the Chamber on both sides. If you can help me with any other initiatives and ideas that you feel we can value-add, then bring it on because we are serious about helping people to get into housing.

The challenge is real because people are coming here. They are not leaving any more the way they were before. Young people are not leaving in droves like they were before and people want to make Tasmania their home. Through a pandemic, with closed international borders, we have had net migration, so there is pressure on our housing stock and the Gutwein Liberal Government wants to make sure that we continue to enfranchise our own people who need a home but are finding that a little bit more difficult because of the cost of housing and rents.

We are providing an unprecedented and massive investment into public housing and home affordability. These include the initiatives I have mentioned, including HomeShare. It also means that increasing housing supply and making adjustments in our planning system to ensure that more land can come to market, not just be zoned residential but be subdivided and put on the market to allow somebody to build on it, are all part of our plan.

We will soon be making announcements about our ancillary dwellings incentive. Time does not give me much chance to detail it. This will deliver an extra 250 secondary, or you might call them ancillary dwellings, to boost supply and help keep prices lower. We see this as an effective way in existing homes and existing properties for an extra dwelling to be built, an extra home for somebody who needs it. There will be a \$10 000 incentive for the first 250 eligible land owners who construct a secondary dwelling and make it available for a long-term rental, at least two years, or for people within their own home to redesign it to make an extra ancillary dwelling.

In closing I would like to touch on some northern issues. I know and understand the importance of regional communities. I grew up there. In fact the Liberal Party has its roots in our regions. We continue to work hard to support regional communities with a range of key investments, many of which are partnerships with local government and local industry to create jobs and to provide economic and social value for our local communities.

We have a major highlight for the Tamar River, providing \$4 million dollars over two years to improve the river and the estuary with a site-specific dredging program but also infrastructure treatments to ensure that the amenity of the river can be enjoyed by its users. There is \$10 million to upgrade the Port of Bell Bay to improve berthing and landside infrastructure to support our exports. There is funding for the Bridport foreshore. There is funding for Ben Lomond to turn it into a year-round destination. There is funding for the Dorset Council towards the Victoria Street redevelopment, including underground works. We are also providing funding to the George Town District Hospital for upgraded hospital

equipment. There is a range of sporting initiatives which in the communities were welcome and warmly received. I am thinking Lilydale, Bridport, Scottsdale, just over the fence of my electorate unfortunately for me, in the electorate of Lyons. The Prospect Vale Park precinct got a big lick of cash which was supported. We look forward to rolling those out. There was significant support for Flinders Island, one of the favourite spots of my electorate of Bass.

We have a lot on. I take a lot of heart, including from my own colleagues the members opposite, while we have our squabbles and disagreements, and so we should, there is a lot we agree on. I want to deliver these outcomes for our beautiful community. They are counting on us to deliver. As part of the Government, I am keen as mustard to continue our work, get those great outcomes for our community and make Tasmania the place it is meant to be.

Time expired.

[4.03 p.m.]

Ms ARCHER (Clark - Attorney-General) - Mr Deputy Speaker, congratulations on your appointment as Chair of Committees, making you officially the Deputy Speaker. I also congratulate new members in this house, Kristie Johnston in our great electorate of Clark as well as Dean Winter and Janie Finlay. I am sure they will enjoy their time as local members and whatever other roles they may fulfil in their time as members of this parliament. It is an honour and privilege to be elected once again to represent the people of Clark. Back in 2010 it was the people of Denison. We are all used to now calling it Clark, although I was at something recently with Ms O'Connor where it was referred to as Denison not once but twice. We had a bit of a chuckle because it has not happened for so long. It is a great honour and privilege to be elected to the Fiftieth Parliament. While 50 does not seem like a large figure when you times it by approximately four you get two centuries worth of parliament and this house.

Tasmanians have once again voted for a majority Liberal Government, as they did back in 2014 and 2018. They have voted for certainty and stability at a time when our state needs it most. The COVID-19 pandemic has played a large part in our lives for over 12 months.

I am a proud and committed member of the Liberal Government, a team that has already delivered so much for Tasmania. We have all worked hard alongside the Tasmanian community and this House over the past year and a half to respond to the incredible challenges associated with the COVID-19 pandemic.

As a dedicated and proud member for the electorate of Clark since 2010, I thank my local community for providing me with another opportunity to represent them in the Tasmanian Parliament. I also take this opportunity to thank my long-suffering campaign manager and husband, Dale. He encourages me as the Attorney-General and Minister for Justice with responsibility for the Electoral Act to ban corflutes, being the person who puts them up and takes them down. This time it took us about three weeks to get them all up because he did not have work commitments as well and it only took two days to take them down. So go figure with the mathematics on that.

I am sure all members in this House will appreciate the dedication and commitment, not only of our campaign teams but our family members. Often they are one and the same. I also thank my very hard-working staff for the last term, indeed since I became a minister in

September 2017 and prior to that in the various roles that I have held, but particularly since I have been a minister and Attorney-General.

The amount of work my office pumps out is extraordinary. At the moment we are a little short-staffed and I thank them all for their incredible dedication and coverage of some very difficult issues and difficult law reform. In the Department of Justice I have responsibility for all areas except planning and the amount of law reform we do is incredible.

To OPC, the fabulous Robyn and her team, thank you. I thank them and single them out because I know what is heading their way this term in relation to law reform. It can be very complex at times, which is why we have delay with some things. Members do not always appreciate that. The complexity of some of the law reform we require is extraordinary.

I also thank all of my volunteers. I will not single people out because I will miss people, but they know who they are. They know that I appreciate them greatly, particularly those volunteers who helped Dale with my signage. I will continue to work hard to represent both my constituents and stakeholders to the best of my ability. I will do that with the same commitment, drive, integrity and, hopefully, sense of genuine humility and responsibility that I have had since I was first elected to this place.

I have always held off saying this, but I am not here out of self-interest or for some other egotistical reason. I am not suggesting that anyone currently in this place is but I never have been here for that reason and I never will be. I am sure everybody else feels the same way. It is a true honour to serve as a local member and even more so to serve as a minister of the Crown and the first law officer of this state.

The Government has laid out a clear plan to secure Tasmania's future, to continue building on our strong economic position and to create jobs and to ensure that we have the skills and training pathways that Tasmanians need. Our economy continues to recover from the impacts of COVID-19. Businesses are confident, investing and hiring. There are more Tasmanians in work than before the pandemic.

Our priority is to get on with the job of implementing the commitments we have made to the Tasmanian people, particularly our 100-day plan. Tasmanians can rest assured that the Government is delivering on our priorities. Tasmanians know from our proven track record over the past two terms that we can be trusted to deliver on those plans.

As the Attorney-General and Minister for Justice, I am proud to lead the Government's achievements in delivering a number of complex and significant pieces of law reform. We have ensured that Tasmania's legislation and sentencing practices prioritise community safety, that they enhance the rights of victims of crime and particularly survivors of sexual abuse, and also provide a strong deterrent to criminal behaviour, and also rehabilitate offenders, which I will touch on more under my Corrections portfolio.

We have a strong record on delivering a more efficient and effective justice system for all Tasmanians. Community safety has been, and is, a core priority for me as Attorney-General and Minister for Justice. Our Government will always stand up for the safety of our community, for victim survivors, and our most vulnerable.

Over the past two terms, I have focused on a number of different areas. I want to single out a few things listed as achievements, because they were not things that were tackled in the past. Firstly, section 194K of the Evidence Act 2001. This was an area of significant public interest relating to victims of rape, sexual violence and abuse, and their right to tell their stories if they wish. Congratulations again to Grace Tame for raising the profile of that issue, and the significant part she played in that, culminating in her Australian of the Year award - and congratulations in that regard, too.

We have also introduced new dangerous criminals and high-risk offender laws to deal with serious offenders - those most serious offenders who do unfortunately need to be incarcerated. We streamlined the process so the community can be confident that when the courts and prosecutors believe a criminal is too dangerous to be released from prison, appropriate action can be taken. And, of course, the reverse situation, so that when those orders need to be lifted, they can be lifted more easily, by not restricting it to the sentencing judge, who may not still be a judge in the court.

Also, ensuring appropriate sentencing for serious child sex offenders and family violence perpetrators, including continuing to work towards mandatory minimum terms of imprisonment for serious sexual offences against children, to ensure that our children are able to learn and grow in safety.

While I am proud that Tasmania is heading in the right direction through the progression of these important reforms, we know there is always more work to be done. This is why I will continue to pursue further appropriate law and order reforms to deliver better justice outcomes by keeping Tasmanians safe.

The highest of high priorities is holding perpetrators to account. This will include working to implement a comprehensive child-safe organisations framework, providing a consistent and best practice approach to child safety in organisations - which is, I note, a key recommendation of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse.

This is a stand-alone piece of legislation. It is quite complex and significant and will put in place a new framework that ensures organisations providing services for children prevent and appropriately respond to child sexual abuse. A lot of that work is whole-of-government. My department is obviously the lead agency for that, and I am the minister with responsibility and carriage of it. It is a significant body of work and I am continuing to consult on that issue, particularly with the Commissioner for Children and Young People. I thank her for her input; in fact, we are due to meet again shortly.

Another priority is tightening our bail laws by progressing reforms to modernise and provide a clear statutory framework for Tasmania's outdated bail laws, with a primary focus on ensuring community safety from high-risk offenders. Currently, the bail laws cannot be found in one particular piece of legislation, and are heavily reliant on the common law.

I will be continuing to progress our staged reforms in response to the Tasmania Law Reform Institute's review of the Guardianship and Administration Act 1995, which is receiving attention at the moment. This will include the amendments to establish a legislative framework for making and implementing advance care directives, with the second tranche to look towards entrenching further supports for vulnerable Tasmanians into the guardianship framework, including any outcomes from the recently announced independent review of the Public Trustee.

I expect that many of the stories coming forward and many of the circumstances and incidences that people in our community are experiencing will be taken on board.

An advance care directives bill was introduced before we had the election, so I will be reintroducing that bill. As I have said, work is currently underway in relation to the second tranche.

Again, this is a complex, significant piece of work, and to suggest that we have been sitting idle on this is not true.

In fact, the advance care directives were brought forward and were worked on by my department during COVID-19. I thank them for that, because it was a very difficult period where we had people seconded to different areas of the Government due to COVID-19, and yet they still managed to produce that important bill and continue to work on the second tranche, particularly in relation to vulnerable adults. Again, that is across-agency work. It is whole of Government work. It is not simple work - hence the reason why it cannot be done overnight, but is being progressed as quickly as possible.

Following the appointment of the inaugural president in March, progressing the remaining legislative amendments ahead of the commencement of the operations of the Tasmanian Civil and Administrative Tribunal later this year, I am also going to be introducing tranche three of this important reform, so I will be giving consideration to the transfer of further functions and powers to the tribunal - for example, those of the Residential Tenancy Commissioner. It has become apparent throughout COVID-19 that it would be very useful for those functions to be carried out by TasCAT, and indeed, that is what we will be looking at next.

May I take this opportunity to congratulate our new president of TasCAT, Malcolm Schyvens. He is very experienced in this area, having worked in the guardianship and administration area in New South Wales, and in my view the perfect person to initiate the inaugural TasCAT and work with all the heads of our current tribunals in putting that important tribunal together.

I will also be delivering on our commitment to reform police powers, which will consolidate the powers of arrest. It is important, obviously, that the police do not develop that work themselves, and so that is with me as the Attorney-General.

Of course, our Government is also committed to continuing to look into possible future areas of reform and improve Tasmania's laws in relation to family violence - an area of critical importance for us all, I know, but particularly the Government.

This includes introducing further reforms to fulfil our commitments to target persistent family violence offenders, in addition to the introduction of a new persistent family violence offence, as well as the introduction of a standalone non-fatal strangulation offence in Tasmania's criminal code in 2019.

Members will be aware that I recently announced that standalone offence. It has gone one step further than what the Sentencing Advisory Council looked at, but I am very happy to progress that as an indictable offence. Indeed, all of the recommendations of the Sentencing Advisory Council will be utilised, because some states have it as a summary offence as well as

an indictable offence, and so where there might be perhaps a summary offence, then recommendation one of the council will be relevant in looking at it as an aggravating factor.

All of that will be looked at in context of the draft bill amendment bill that I will introduce. It is important that it goes out for community consultation because of the high public interest in this, and that will be by the end of the year.

Obviously, we have limited sitting days this year because of the Budget session and the four- or five-week session that we go through, so we will utilise that time wisely by having that bill go out to consultation.

The amendments to give the courts the power to declare repeat offenders as persistent family violence offenders, and to enshrine the appropriate recognition that non-fatal strangulation, choking or suffocation are significant forms of violence, are intended to be consulted on later this year, as I said.

Importantly, these measures will build on our extensive reform agenda to ensure Tasmania has the strongest possible justice system in place, with accessible laws and better safeguards.

I will also continue to work with the Ombudsman, and take the necessary steps to ensure his office is appropriately resourced and can provide full, frank and open disclosure for the Tasmanian people.

I can update the House that we have been continuing those discussions with the Ombudsman as to what resources he requires with his backlog and to deal with the openness and transparency that he continues to provide. I know there have been some issues with the staffing of his office, not through anyone's fault, but certainly the \$245 000 we have already given the Ombudsman for his resourcing has not been able to be fully utilised, let alone what we provide on top of that. We continue to work with the Ombudsman in that space and it is certainly not through any lack of desire on the part of the Government; we are happy to provide him with the resources that he discusses with us.

We are delivering on our clear plan laid out during the election to secure Tasmania's future by keeping Tasmanians safe in a number of ways.

In my Corrections portfolio, one of my many long-term priorities is to further boost the correctional officer numbers. Correctional officer recruitment processes have been occurring at an increased rate over the past few years and despite interruptions due to COVID-19, our Government has maintained its resolve throughout 2020 to increasing correctional officer staffing levels through recruitment.

In fact, in 2020 alone there were still three recruit schools, despite COVID-19. A total of 75 new correctional officers have been recruited through those three schools. The next round of recruitment has commenced and the next recruit school will commence in August of this year, so this is recruitment at a rate not seen before and not held up by COVID, pleasingly. This major prison staffing increase demonstrates the strong commitment we have to providing a safe and secure environment for staff and prisoners. The ongoing recruitment drive is in conjunction with a strong plan to invest \$365 million to meet future prison capacity and

upgrade existing facilities, including the northern regional prison and a new southern remand centre.

I want to turn to rehabilitation now because that infrastructure gives us the option and the appropriate opportunity to have a strong focus on improving opportunities for rehabilitation and reintegration. It has always been a focus of mine. It is difficult in the current prison facilities to deliver the full suite of programs that are desirable in any prison system, so over the coming year I want to make this a strong focus for those working in our Corrections system. As a state, we have a strong opportunity to achieve better outcomes for individuals and reduce the rate of reoffending or recidivism in order to achieve beneficial outcomes for the whole community.

Our Corrections commitments during the recent election were all clearly focused on rehabilitation. I am proud to be leading this shift in focus and I look forward to seeing the outcomes of our increased investment in this area. I was very pleased to announce during the election campaign our commitment to funding rehabilitation opportunities within our prisons over the next three years.

We are investing almost \$2.5 million towards rehabilitation programs and staff within prisons over that three-year period. This includes \$780 000 over three years to partner with the Australian Red Cross to deliver their community-based Health First Aid program; and \$610 000 over three years to partner with Connect 42, a wonderful organisation led by Rosie Martin, to deliver the Just Time prison parenting program, a hugely successful program that we get great results out of, and I know a number of members will have attended those graduations, including Ms Haddad, who is nodding her head.

There is \$100 000 over three years to partner with Dress for Success, another organisation that has gone ahead in leaps and bounds from when it was first launched a few years back, when I was Speaker and we held the launch here at which I spoke. This is specifically to expand the Welcome Backpack initiative that was developed through the Tasmanian Leaders Program. One of the participants in that came up with that idea. She happens to work in our Tasmanian prison system so we were very happy to fund what was the pilot program and is now going to continue over the next three years. It is at this point in time a program developed for our women prisoners coming out of prison, providing them with a backpack of essential things and they are also introduced to the services that Dress for Success provide, helping with their CVs and the like. A lot of these women have not worked before or for a very long time and that service will significantly help them in that respect.

There is \$500 000 per annum for two years to fund five new therapeutic staff to work within the prison with a focus on delivering rehabilitation programs and drug and alcohol interventions. That is one of the key parts of our rehabilitation policy I am very proud of introducing. Those new therapeutic staff are greatly needed. Ensuring that we are providing effective rehabilitation within our prisons is critically important and this significant investment demonstrates we are serious about ensuring rehabilitation is a core focus in the Corrections space.

It is also important to me that our prisons are operating in a manner consistent with worldwide standards for the operation of prisons. To that end we will be introducing a bill later this year to introduce OPCAT, the Optional Protocol to the Convention Against Torture, which will be operating by 2022 and is a requirement of all states and territories from the Australian

federal government to sign up to that protocol. It is really important work again, with another bill being introduced to this house so the Justice department is leading the way with our law reform.

I want to say something about body scanners. We recently announced an investment of \$1.3 million to introduce body scanning technology in the Hobart and Launceston reception prisons and the Risdon Prison site, as well as Ashley Youth Detention Centre. This will reduce or eradicate the need for personal searches. We are introducing that as fast as we possibly can. There are all sorts of licensing arrangements and things we have to go through and health permits, but I am getting weekly reports on that and it is progressing on time so we are very keen to get those body scanners up and running as quickly as possible. In the interim we have changed the guidelines to ensure only personal searches occur when they are absolutely necessary. This will minimise the need for personal searches and at the same time make our prisons safer.

I want to also talk about Workplace Safety and Consumer Affairs. It is actually my old Building and Construction portfolio renamed appropriately. The construction part of it is appropriately with Minister Ferguson with dealing with the infrastructure in the building side of things, but what sits with me in the Department of Justice is the Workplace Safety aspect, workers compensation and all of the legal framework we have and WorkSafe Tasmania, and also Consumer Affairs that sits under CBOS, Consumer Building and Occupational Services.

I always like to say it is the regulatory framework and the legal work that is required to support the consumer, building and occupational services industry. Although I have similar and the same stakeholders, it is in that capacity, so I am very happy to continue with that important work like the Fuel Check Tas scheme that we introduced last term, providing fuel retailers with the requirement to update their prices as soon as changes occur, which provides a vastly enhanced level of transparency for consumers helping Tasmanian motorists find the cheapest fuel in their area in real time.

We have also taken strong and decisive actions to protect Tasmanian residential property owners and tenants throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. We were the first government in Australia to introduce legislative protections for residential property owners and tenants throughout COVID-19, as we know. In the limited time available I am not going to go through everything I have on those protections because I have mentioned them in this place before, but what I do want to emphasise is that in total we have provided significant financial support to Tasmanian tenants and landlords who have collectively accessed over \$4.228 million of assistance through both support funds, the Rent Relief Fund and the Landlord Support Fund.

As Minister for Workplace Safety and Consumer Affairs I am committed to ensuring that Tasmanian workplaces are the safest in the country and to this end it was recently agreed that the model work health and safety laws should be changed to broaden the scope of category 1 offences by including gross negligence as an alternative to recklessness, which should increase the number of prosecutions of category 1 offences where a person has been exposed to the risk of a serious injury, illness or death. This will help to ensure that workplaces are safe and Tasmanian workers return safely to their families at the end of the day. Tasmania will move to adopt these changes in a way that is appropriate for the Tasmanian justice system, once the model laws have been amended.

This year we will also be amending the Workplace, Health and Safety Regulations 2012 and the Road Rules 2009 to improve quad bike safety in workplaces and on public roads. The regulations will be amended to firstly impose a duty on a person conducting a business or undertaking to provide a worker with a helmet when using a quad bike, require that helmets be worn on quad bikes at all times and require quad bike users to undertake training. The road rules will be amended to require the wearing of helmets and put in place age restrictions. This is important work. There have been awful fatalities during the use of quad bikes. I had an experience in my school years of a friend passing away from the use of a quad bike on a farming property: first-hand experience of that awful type of fatality.

Arts is a portfolio very close to my heart and one in which I am proud to continue to serve. I have been minister since September 2017 and still thoroughly enjoy the role. I am a strong supporter of the cultural and creative industries; the Government is a strong supporter of the cultural and creative industries which support thousands of jobs across the state and add millions to our economy. I am particularly committed and focused on generating further job opportunities within the sector and building momentum in our creative economy for the benefit of all Tasmanians.

The Government has passed and implemented new legislation to reinforce the principle of expert peer assessment in government decision-making processes. We have also established the Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery Act as a statutory authority in order to provide greater clarity round the roles and responsibilities of the strategic direction of TMAG. We established the Tasmanian Youth Arts Strategy, a new initiative that supports and invigorates Tasmania's youth arts sector. We have invested substantially in our state's growing screen sector and helped to grow Tasmania's reputation as a viable and extremely attractive filming destination by supporting productions such as *The Gloaming*, *Rosehaven Series 1 to 5*, *The Tailings*, *Aussie Lobster Men*, *Left Off The Map* and many more.

I recently opened the new permanent \$1 million Children's Gallery at TMAG. I will talk more about that in the Adjournment tonight. It is a delight, it inspires the curiosity of the next generation of museum goers, which is one of my 2018 election commitments that has come to fruition.

We have provided new funding programs to the sector to allow artists to develop their skills and market their creative works both within Tasmania and further afield. We continue to support the Tasmanian Symphony Orchestra, Ten Days on the Island, things like that. We have provided a significant injection of funding due to COVID-19 - over \$12 million in support to the sector since early 2020 to help them recover from the COVID-19 pandemic.

Time expired.

[4.33 p.m.]

Ms O'BYRNE (Bass) - Mr Deputy Speaker, it is an honour to stand in the House today and my first contribution to the Fiftieth Parliament and my fifth state election on the land of the mouheneer people, lutruwita, traditional home of the palawa people who have loved this land for more than 40 000 years. I understand the significance and responsibility that comes with it. I note that we are still one of those few parliaments around the world, more so in Australia than in other places, that it is still more than 50 per cent women. That is a fantastic outcome of our last election.

I congratulate the Speaker on his election to the role. He held it for a short time. He had wanted it for a while and I wish him a fair and judicious term as Speaker. I am sure his family is very proud. From TAFE teacher to Speaker is not a bad transition in Tasmania.

I thank our former leader, Rebecca White, for her amazing work and the leadership of our party. I have rarely met anyone with Bec's work ethic. She is phenomenal and I am honoured to have served as her deputy. It was the first all-women leadership team of a major party in Tasmania. That is a first I am proud of. I am proud to have worked with her as leader. We will continue to work well together in our new roles.

I congratulate our new Leader, David O'Byrne. It is customary and almost obligatory in families to be a bit rougher on your siblings than others might be. That is particularly true in our family as we are reasonably harsh on each other. I hope he is not listening, because I cannot praise him where he can hear it. He will make an incredible leader of our party and a truly great premier after the next election, whenever that may be.

While he has my support, he is blessed by our relationship to know that I am not subject to the conventions of diplomacy between each other. I look forward to our robust working arrangements. I thank him for his confidence in me and the allocation of my portfolios and providing the role of Whip.

I wish my friend, Anita Dow, the best in her role as deputy leader. Anita is smart, she is decent, she is formidable. I have loved watching her in this place. I cannot wait to see how brilliantly she takes on this leadership role. She is going to be amazing and a force for her community and for the state.

I thank our new Governor, Barbara Baker AC, Her Excellency, on her appointment and welcome her to the role as only the second woman to be appointed Governor in Tasmania. I am confident she will be excellent in this role. I add my voice to the very many heaping praise on our last governor, Professor Kate Warner, our first-ever woman governor. She has performed her role with dignity and incredible energy overcoming significant health challenges but never missing a beat for the Tasmanian community. She is much loved. I wish her and Mr Dick Warner all the best and look forward to her work with our First Peoples on developing a pathway forward for reconciliation, for truth telling and a pathway to treaty.

Professor Warner has always engaged respectfully with our first communities. I know how much she enjoyed participating in those events, particularly mannalargenna Day. It is a fair trek for people of the south to get up there, but she always made that effort to do so. I look forward to the work that she will be doing. It is vital. I am going to bring to my new role as Labor shadow minister for Aboriginal affairs a decided passion to learn more, to hear more and to act in ways that do not make decisions for and about our First People to enable their truth to be told and to shape our future together. The voices of our First People must be given primacy if we are to effect a true reconciliation and a pathway to treaty.

I want to take a moment to mention the wonderful work of the guides on the wukalina Walk. It is the first tourism venture in Tasmania that is totally run and operated by Aboriginal community members. It is a life-changing experience. I was fortunate to be able to participate in it. I went there with my older daughter earlier in the year. It rained for most of the trek and it was still amazing, so that is a good sign. I encourage all members if you get the opportunity to experience the walk. The guides when we did the walk were Coletta, Jam and Uncle Hank,

who may or may not have tried to drown me. The jury is out on whether it was a deliberate attempt. They not only physically guide you, this far north-eastern Tasmanian walk can teach you crafts and bush tucker skills and recognising some of the significant heritage in that area. They tell their truth - their sometimes painful, confronting and gut-wrenching truth - with quiet dignity. I can only imagine the psychological impact and the pain that it must take to recount again and again the stories of dispossession and the atrocities committed against their families and their old people.

They are truly changing understanding in our local and wider community. I cannot give enough credit to the work that they have done and in developing those guides themselves, particularly women like Coletta who had not planned to be a guide of an Aboriginal walk in her life and is now well-recognised for the brilliant way that she engages and teaches. It is a wonderful opportunity for development. I encourage members to take the opportunity to do so.

I will commend them on their new partnership with Hawthorn Football Club. It was a fantastic launch at the Tasmanian Aboriginal Centre for a partnership to grow their capacity and their marketing reach, and to work with individual community members and the Hawthorn membership. I hope they are able to continue to receive the support they have had from the Tasmanian Government. It has made an incredible difference. It takes a long time for projects like this to be self-sustaining. I look forward to that continued support and I commend the support that has been given.

I want to raise a request from the Tasmanian elders who have had their funding cut. It was not a state Government decision but it has caused significant challenges to the organisation. The federal government removed their funding. When it occurred, the premier, Will Hodgman, met with Tasmanian elders at the council in Launceston. At that meeting he committed to fighting for the funding to be restored and that if that was not possible he would find a way to continue their funding so they would be able to continue operation. They have neither had their funding restored nor have they had it covered by our state Government. There has been some additional funding provided for other projects but those projects come with work and responsibility and what is missing is that core operational funding that allows them to do the work they do with community and the outreach work, and they are also the launching pad and final return of the wukalina Walk, so they play a vital role in that as well.

I do not think our path to reconciliation will be made easier if we seem to be failing supporting our elders, so I do hope that the Government can turn their attention to what is fundamentally a small amount of money to allow that organisation to continue its operation.

On the subject of our palawa people, I offer my sympathies to my colleague in Bass, Jen Houston, on her election loss. I know how hard that can be. Those of us who have lost all know how hard that is. We will miss her voice as a proud palawa woman in this place. It was a rough three years for her, both with her own health challenges and the significant challenges for her daughter Zara. I know Zara is doing a lot better and I am hoping the whole family is taking some time to heal now, but we will miss having a proud palawa voice in this place.

So too we will miss the voice of my very long-term friend, Alison Standen. We actually went to college together many years ago so we have been around each other for a while. Alison's work ethic and attention to policy detail is legendary and whether it be in our policy development space debates in this House or community work, we are all going to miss the

contribution Alison has made. She is a phenomenal person and I am also very sad to lose our first openly gay member of parliament in Tasmania.

I also pay tribute to those members' families and staff and volunteers of unsuccessful campaigns. We spend a lot of time being very sympathetic to the members who have lost their seats or candidates who are unsuccessful, but there are so many people behind those individuals who work so hard and the impact on them is also great, so I hope that all of them have been able to recover and reset. I know and I am sure the same is true of the other side, but on our side those volunteers are all great supporters of our Labor Party and I look forward to seeing many of them at conferences at branch meetings and on the hustings.

With that I congratulate all new members to the House. To Ms Johnston, it is always great to hear first speeches and what drives members. I wish her well in this place. To my colleague Dean Winter and my new Labor member for Bass, Janie Finlay, I am sure they will both bring great things to this House and I wish them well.

Congrats to all returned members. It is always lovely to come back again. It certainly makes you feel a bit better. Congratulations to the Premier for his Government's win and for his startling personal vote. Despite that significant vote I am very pleased we were able to hold two seats in Bass, that so many of them came back to us after him and that Janie and I will be working together. We are going to be working hard to get more of those seats back to Labor for the next time. With that I commend all those who put their hands up across the political spectrum, in particular my good mates Owen Powell and Adrian Hinds. I am convinced they will be in this House one day and they will be strong voices for their communities.

For me and my team and my family it was a very difficult campaign and I thank the many members of the House who reached out with love and support at the loss of our father. It genuinely was truly appreciated that people across the political divide made that effort to reach out. It meant a lot to Mum as well. Also thanks to the amazing team of friends who I had in my campaign. You went on with the campaign without me for the last week. My presence was absolutely required elsewhere and they were truly amazing, doing everything they could to get me across the line and they humble me. Thanks to everyone who cast their first or second or third or fourth vote for me. I will work hard for all of you.

On the subject of support, I am not quite sure what Dad would have thought of some of the things that have been said about him since he died. One local southern radio station referred to him as a local icon; not quite something he would have imagined he was. I wonder what he would have thought of the messages of sympathy from senior police officials including the commissioner and deputy commissioner. I am not sure when he was growing up what he thought messages from the cops would be about. I am sure when he was a boy in the rough-packed parts of Invermay he thought it would be more like a summons than sympathy. I am very disappointed that he was not here to see David and me both win the election and to see his son become Leader of the party that he loved.

On the subject of police, I am honoured to now be the shadow minister for police and I look forward to that role immensely. I think it is an excellent pairing of the portfolio of the Prevention of Family Violence and I am sure Ms Petrusma will agree with me, because whilst I will talk a bit more about family violence later, so often the response of police as first responders to these incidents is absolutely crucial in setting the pathway for people who have been subject to the actions of perpetrators and the way the police respond at that first time can

be absolutely crucial in terms of people's placements forward. We know that the actions of perpetrators of gendered and family violence shape the lives of many and we need to make sure that every time we engage with those people we are doing it well.

We have talked a lot about the pressure on police and the continued education and training needs. Anything that changes the cultural way that we respond to something needs training to be embedded again and again and again; you cannot do one course and suddenly unpick all of the things that we have been taught since we were children. We know that around gendered attitudes, we know that around racism, we know that around so many areas, so significantly investing in ongoing education and training for all is really important.

We have been really concerned about under-resourcing for police and the pressure it is placing on our serving officers. Workers compensations claims are on the increase and that indicates there is significant pressure within the workforce in terms of meeting their day-to-day demands. Those of us in Launceston know that gun crime is also on the increase. My own street was subject to a search for one of two alleged perpetrators of a carjacking at gunpoint. It is impacting on our whole community. Everyone is experiencing the fear of that and there is an increased level of insecurity in the north, in Launceston in particular. I know there is a task force being set up but there is a lot of work to be done and a lot of resourcing to be provided because that has been a significant concern.

Response times have increased by 70 per cent; they are out from 23 minutes to almost 40 minutes. That does not always give the confidence the community needs nor the response the community needs. There is ongoing pressure on our court systems, in prosecution and in staffing. There is a need to address the appropriate backfilling, particularly in those rural communities. We have police officers who are not taking the time off that they need because they are worried there will be no-one there to serve their communities. We have to resource our police service properly and treat our officers with respect.

I am delighted to have the portfolios of fire and emergency services. As we do with the police, we rely on those people to be there when we need them, so we should also be there when they need us. One of the phrases I often use is that these people run directly towards the danger, the fire or incident that most of us are fleeing from, and if we ask them to do that then we have to back them when they need that support.

We need to be there for our employed brigades and units and for our volunteers. I have loved my visits to all the volunteer fire brigades and emergency services units across my electorate and I look forward to going to many more. They absolutely are the salt of the earth and embedded in their community. They are really important services and roles and are really connected with their community. I look forward to learning more and acting as their voice when they need me. I know how important the standalone statutory service is to our fires. I know they have been calling for increased resourcing and I know they have significant concerns about access to training.

We need to make sure the equipment they use is safe, not just their turnout gear and there are issues for turnout gear for many, but also things like the use of chemical responses to fires such as PFAS. We are lagging behind other jurisdictions in their response and we need to get that right because we need to make sure we keep people safe. We have had to - and we led the nation in this - create specific workers compensation support to ensure those significant cancers that feature more amongst firefighters and other communities are immediately accepted. I am

very concerned that if we do not do something on PFAS soon we are going to have to have similar legislation to accept the kinds of conditions that come from that, so we must take action as soon as possible. That also requires us to ensure that we do the appropriate testing, which is also falling behind.

We will be keeping an eye on this Government and resist any attempt to force amalgamation of brigades. The Government did rule out closures after being questioned and challenged about that but a forced amalgamation is a closure by stealth and that will not be something we will allow through this House.

We will continue to campaign for increased investment in the State Emergency Service vehicle fleet. There is a lot of ageing equipment and we need to make sure that when people turn out they have the best equipment to do so.

I once again have been given the portfolio of Women, a subject I raise regularly. No-one is surprised that it is an area of significant passion for me. It is work that I have done on the local level and outside of parliamentary level as well. I was very proud of the policy and the commitments we made and I note the announcements recently were around additional funding to the women's sector. One of the things that often comes with additional funding, though, is additional responsibilities. What is really lacking is the ability to meet that already overburdened service demand. The wait lists are simply not acceptable, particularly when we come to areas of family violence. If we do - and we do - encourage people to leave unsafe situations, then we must make sure that the services we provide them are there when they need it, otherwise we are culpable. If the most dangerous point is leaving, then the second-most dangerous point - or perhaps even more - is going back because you have no option.

Almost 20 women are turned away every day from our emergency accommodation. We have all had it in our electorate, and we are all representing constituents of people who are sleeping rough - sleeping rough with children, sleeping in cars, couch surfing. If we encourage people to leave to be safe, then we have an obligation to be there for those people.

The other area I will continue to advocate for is the need to understand and reshape the economic structures in which women work. Victoria is just about to undertake some really interesting work in this. It is something that we advocated for. One of the problems we have is that when we respond to particular areas and times of crisis, whether it be an economic crisis, social crisis or a pandemic, we know how to respond to particular sectors of the workplace, and we know that it is women who invariably bear the brunt. They are the first to lose their jobs, they are the first to be in insecure work conditions, they are the first to be in economic stress.

Ms Archer spoke before about the Dress for Success Model, which is fantastic. When that kicked off in Victoria, one thing that grew out of it is a partnership between one of the major banks and Dress for Success. The banks identify women who have suddenly not been able meet their loan payments for their business or their home, or simply find themselves not being able to cope because they have been the first ones to lose their jobs. The program mentored those women with other women who are leaders and business leaders to support them, and almost all of them have been able to get their economic situations back on track. The banks have said, here are the women we need to work with. Dressed for Success has said, here are these mentors. They have created that connectivity, because they recognise that there

is something fundamentally wrong in our economy, that women are always first to bear the brunt of economic crisis.

We need to understand the economic drivers for participation and engagement of women. We need to start finding different ways to use levers, or changing the way our economy operates, so that it is not women who always lose when something goes wrong.

Nobody wants another pandemic, but nobody can assume that we are not going to have another pandemic. We have to be prepared. It is all well and good to say, well isn't it great, lots more women have got jobs back again. Of course it is great that women have jobs back. But they should not have been the first casualty in the first place, and what we do know as many of those women are working two, three, four, maybe more, jobs simply to make ends meet and respond to the demand. We do not, as an economy, know how to respond to the demand.

We do not, as an economy, know how to respond to women, and we see this across political parties and across states. One of the things that we know supports women is child care, so let's try to make child care more accessible. We absolutely should, because it is a significant cost for women in the workplace. Not all women have child care as their barrier, or child care as their cost. We need to understand in a better way what it is in our economy that has this impact.

Women are too often in underpaid work, too often in insecure work, too often in the industries where they will get sick first. That has to change.

I want to talk a bit about family violence. So much has been done in this state on the recognition of prevention of family violence. We were the first state to bring in Safe at Home legislation. We should be proud of that. A number of other firsts have occurred in Tasmania across political parties; we should be proud of those things.

However, I come back to the point that I raise again, and again: it is our language and our responses that shape the situations that people are in. It is no wonder the Premier has to vacate that portfolio. I am very pleased Mrs Petrusma has it. She is passionate about that area and she will do an excellent job.

I think the Premier had to vacate it, because his response to both the issues raised by the former member for Clark, Ms Hickey, about her allegations and comments made by Senator Abetz, and his willingness to ignore serious allegations against his Braddon candidate Mr Brooks, showed that in the time he has had the portfolio, he did not come to understand the nature of escalation of gender violence. It starts with language and respect; it can end anywhere. No all disrespect ends in violence, but all violence starts with disrespect.

His comments and failure in question time today to answer why he ignored the voice of women and believed his friend, Mr Brooks, shows a complete lack of understanding of the need for agency.

I quote the Premier from today regarding this case. He said:

... women who have anonymously made complaints about Mr Brooks, iff those matters are found to be true, then it is a very unfortunate set of circumstances they find themselves in.

These women did not find themselves in this situation. They did not take action. They did not undertake acts that made it their fault. The agency and the responsibility lie with the alleged perpetrator at all times. It is why we should not be talking about women who were raped, but people who rape women. Agency has to sit with the perpetrator, because that is where blame sits. If this is the fault of the women who found themselves in this position, then the indication is that the blame lies with them, and it does not. For the many women who have come forward, the blame does not lie with them.

Agency and responsibility are really important in shaping our response, and our protection of women into the future. I also make it clear that it has nothing to do how good-looking the Premier may find him. Creating fictitious personalities in order to trick women into being with you is not having a love-life. Language shapes reality. If this Premier really sees and hears women, he has to start believing them.

I have spoken many times in this House about ways to make women safer. I am not making these things up. These are the evidence-based outcomes of women's organisations and researchers from across the world about ways that we make women safer, and the first thing is that we have to believe women. We cannot discount their truth because it is unpalatable. We cannot discount their truth because he is a man, and we particularly cannot discount their truth because that man is a friend or a mate. Women's concerns cannot be belittled. They cannot be talked off about whether they are having a love-life, or the bloke might be good looking. We cannot laugh it off, which is what the Premier did. We have to call it out, and we have to act to give women agency always - not only when it is politically expedient, or personally easier to do so.

We talk about it a lot. There is not a person in this House who cannot talk about how to make women safer, but unless we all act - and sometimes we have to challenge ourselves to make sure we are acting in the right way, because sometimes our go-to response is not the right response.

I talk about this with racism. I am married to a person of colour. My children are of colour, and I still have to check my racism because I was brought up that way. I was brought up with values and language and structures. We have to challenge ourselves all the time. If I can do that and I am married to someone of colour and have children of colour, then I have to also do it with women. I have to think about my response and think about my language, but I am not the only one in this House that has to do that.

What we saw from the Premier was someone who was not capable of doing that. I heard his speech when the motion came on about rape culture. I heard the things he said, about how he seemed to suddenly be understanding how difficult it was for women. I heard him say, 'I see you and hear you'. That is all lovely, it really is, and maybe that is a massive road to Damascus for him, but he also needs to believe that we all also need to believe.

I am also pleased to have the portfolios, albeit from the Opposition benches now, of heritage, the arts and creative industries. I had those before and absolutely loved them. There is so much that makes our state great. Our beautiful built heritage is a significant point of

difference and has to be supported. We are blessed to walk around our cities, towns and our communities and see our built heritage.

We are also a crucible of creativity, and our professional high-quality arts industry is the envy of many. We see it when people flock here, and we see it when our artists travel. During the campaign, we put up many suggestions for the community around innovation, access to increased participation of young people and support for community arts, as well as significant physical infrastructure and innovation. I really do look forward to working with all parts of our arts and culture and creative industry.

I was proud of Labor's policies on health, housing, infrastructure, education - so many of them. I wish we were able to convince the Tasmanian people of them. However, as our Leader has said, the new Labor team will act on the people's message. We will listen to and learn from all parts of the Tasmanian community. We have responsibility to re-establish Labor as the united party of alternate government with a positive vision to govern for all Tasmanians. The Tasmanian people expect nothing less.

We will do that. The Tasmanian people should expect nothing less of us. We have much to do to rebuild our state. The facts belie the Government spin. We have poor productivity growth, we have the lowest economic output per capita of any state. We have an older population with greater dependence on Government benefits than the rest of Australia. We have a deep pattern of regional and social disadvantage. We have significant health and education barriers. Too many people are being left behind. I remind this Government that we all do well when we all do well. As long as this Government is focused on the few rather than the many then they will continue to fail our state and its people. No amount of spin can unpick that.

Contrary to popular belief opposition parties, or at least ours, want governments to succeed, not because we want you to have political greatness but we need governments to succeed. We need governments to do well to ensure that they can be what everyone needs. When they fail, as they have, it is those least able, least connected, least wealthy, least healthy, least educated that are hurt. That cannot be the way we conduct our business if we are a just, fair and decent state.

We will continue to listen to the community. We will continue to be their voice. We will continue to be their advocates to make sure that no one is left behind, that all voices are heard, that all Tasmanians can have confidence that their state, their Government, their public services that they rely on and all of their elected members are there for them. That is the work that has to happen over the next period of time. That is the work we are committed to.

I look forward to the next four, three, two years. Who knows how long it will be? I look forward to that time. I look forward to that process. I look forward to robust debate and engagement. I look forward to all of us working to make sure that we provide the best future for all Tasmanians. We all do better when we all do better. We need to make sure no one is left behind.

Thank you for the opportunity to give my first address in the fifth parliament I have been elected to, in the Fiftieth Parliament in Tasmania. It is an incredible honour. I commend the Governor's Address-in-Reply to the House.

[5.02 p.m.]

Ms WHITE (Lyons) - Mr Deputy Speaker, it gives me great pleasure to rise to respond to the Governor's Address. I congratulate Her Excellency Barbara Baker AC on her appointment. It is an excellent decision by the Government. Given that process occurred during the period of caretaker I thank the Premier for his consultation at that time and the work DPAC did in ensuring that we were made aware that that was the appointment the Government wanted to make. She will do an excellent job. She does have big shoes to fill.

The Honourable Professor Kate Warner AC is an extraordinary woman. Many Tasmanians including me have come to love her and her husband, Dick, in her time as Governor of Tasmania and wish them all the very best for the future. I am very pleased to see her appointment to the new position announced in the Governor's Address yesterday. She is an outstanding person who will give her all to that role. I hope that as an outcome of that process we can see a pathway to treaty for Tasmania, with a clear framework for reconciliation, land handback to Tasmania's First People and a much greater understanding across our community about the truth of our history.

Each of us in this place who has spoken so far has shared the same view, which is an excellent place for us to start as a parliament.

I congratulate everyone who has been elected, either returned or newly elected to this place. It was great to hear Kristie Johnston's first speech. As my colleague said first speeches are some of the best speeches that we hear in this building. I certainly enjoyed hearing her talk about what motivates her and what we can expect from her contribution in this place.

I am very excited to take on my new responsibilities: shadow treasurer and shadow minister for hospitality and events. There is a lot to get my teeth in to, particularly in the treasury portfolio. I reflect on the most recently released Fiscal Sustainability Report. If members have not read it they should because it lays out over the next 15 years some projections for the state of our budget, which we all need to have a mind to as we make decisions in this place for the future of our state and future generations.

I congratulate my colleague, David O'Byrne, on his election as the leader of the parliamentary Labor Party and Anita Dow as deputy leader of the parliamentary Labor Party. They have my full support and I wish them all the very best in their roles. I fundamentally believe that a Labor government is the best political party to improve people's lives. They each share values that represent the Labor movement incredibly well - values of fairness, equality and social justice, standing up for working people and making sure that vulnerable people have their voices heard. As a political party we will always fight to reduce inequality and to support our state's prosperity with sustainable economic development. As always, I am very proud of the Labor team I am a part of. Every one of them is deserving of being in this place. I wish them all well.

I also thank everyone who was a part of the Labor campaign. This is the first opportunity I have had in this parliament to talk about that. It was a very short election compared to elections I have been involved with in the past. I commend our campaign committee, our amazing volunteers, and our candidates for their tireless endeavours to ensure we spoke to as many people as we could in that time and made sure that we saw nine Labor members returned to this place.

Some commentators expected that the Liberal Government going to an early election, which was a year early, to take advantage of the Premier's COVID-19 popularity would result in a whitewash and there would be an overwhelming Liberal majority government returned to the parliament. That was not the case. Yes, they have won an election - I congratulated the Premier on election night - but they only just scraped in with their majority. The gamble to go early only just paid off. If nothing else the people of Tasmania have given notice to the Liberal Party as the Government of this state that there are issues that need to be addressed and they cannot be ignored. I have heard the Premier talk about some of those things in speeches he has given since. It has to be more than lip service. People rely on us to make those decisions as their leaders to improve their lives. I heard some resounding statements from the community from the last election that need to be responded to by this Government, and responded to quickly in the case of people who are most vulnerable in our community.

The next four years will require all of us to work hard. The Premier continues to talk about his commitment to providing compassionate government. I hope that is the case. I hope that we see that delivered through policy outcomes and a commitment to make tough decisions. I referred earlier to the Fiscal Sustainability Report, which projects some pretty dire financial scenarios that will need to be addressed in this term of government. I hope we are here for the full term. Maybe I do not, maybe we should go to another early election. I hope the Premier does not give up on the job early, like he did earlier this year, particularly at a time when so many people need us to be concentrating on the delivery of better essential services, the roll-out of infrastructure projects to create jobs and getting on with doing our job as members of this parliament.

There are serious and real problems in health and housing. They have been well documented for a long time, not just during the course of the last election. Life is becoming harder for so many Tasmanians. We are seeing waitlists grow for public housing, for health services, whether it is elective surgery, which for many people is not elective it is necessary, or for outpatient appointments, which has grown to more than 50 000 Tasmanians. One in eight Tasmanians is on a health waiting list. It is incredibly difficult for thousands of Tasmanians who cannot afford to get in to see a GP, who are living in pain. These Tasmanians deserve better, they deserve a government that is going to address that. I wish the new Health minister all the very best in his role because it is a big task, but an incredibly important task.

I am concerned that this Government has a track record of announcements but a terrible record of delivery. That is not just in infrastructure where we have seen a complete failure to keep up their end of the bargain but also their failure to deliver the promises that were made around access to essential services that is impacting on the lives of thousands of Tasmanians who are living in pain waiting for healthcare or living in fear because they do not have secure accommodation.

I hear the Premier and others on his side bleating about record funding. Record funding for infrastructure commitments really means nothing to somebody who has just found out that their cancer has progressed beyond the point of treatment because they could not get in to see a specialist, and rather than being able to have a treatment plan that sees them recover, they are now looking at options of pain management and relying on hope. They are some of the horrible heartbreaking stories that I am sure many of us have heard in this place because people simply cannot get in to see the specialist they need at the time they need and their illness progresses, they become more unwell and in some cases their situation becomes terminal.

For those people the rhetoric about the Premier's Government's commitments to compassion seems a little like the cold winter wind in your face. Particularly I think of those women escaping family violence, and again I am sure many of us have had instances through our offices or interactions where we have spoken to exactly these women who are forced to go back into untenable situations because they cannot access emergency accommodation. Shelters are turning women and children away. These are the forgotten people in Premier Peter Gutwein's Tasmania because not enough is being done to support them right now.

I want to say again that I fundamentally believe that the Premier and his Government have been put on notice this election. Yes, he won and he won with a particularly strong vote in Bass and I acknowledged that on the night of the election as well, but they were only just returned in majority and it included Adam Brooks in the count at that time. The issues that continue to be raised without prompting by the community throughout that election campaign were health and housing, their deep concern that things are not right, either within their own family or what they are seeing happen to other people, and the feeling that was starting to creep in was that the Liberal Government might have something to do with that.

For me, on election night, as those results came in, it was for those people that I felt most distressed for. The heartbreaking stories that have been shared with me and other members of my team and the hope they had for some change that would bring relief to them, that would provide the change they needed would not be realised because the Government was not changing. They are who I call the forgotten Tasmanians. I truly hope this Government can turn its mind to them and I hope that with new ministers in a couple of different portfolios we can see some changes there because those Tasmanians deserve better, the thousands of Tasmanians who have had their lives put on hold while the Government has put them on a waiting list, the thousands of Tasmanians who get sicker because they cannot access the healthcare that they need, and the thousands of Tasmanians who are without safe and secure housing or a place to call home.

I think also of our state's public sector workforce and I wanted to acknowledge them in my contribution today and thank them for the work they have done. I am sure that having an early election was not something they expected either, drafting incoming government briefs and all of the work that is required when an election is called, and dealing with caretaker mode that seems to go on forever when you are waiting for the results to come in from any election we have in Tasmania. I want to thank them for their hard work and dedication and in particular I want to acknowledge our health workforce because they do an incredible job, but they want more than our praise. They need resourcing. They need to be supported with additional staffing because staffing levels are critically low in some areas because the Government appears happy to use vacancy control as a way to manage the budget rather than actively recruiting to fill positions as they open up.

Our health workforce is not just a balance sheet item. They are the backbone of the health of our state and without them waiting lists will grow longer, people will get sicker, the productivity of our state will decline and we will lose more of the workforce if we walk away from a system that fails to recognise their work and support them to do their job. I have to say that I thought the Government's promises and commitments to Health at this election were completely inadequate to stem the bleeding and unless more serious corrective action is taken, the situation that our health system is currently in faces the bleak possibility of becoming terminal.

I said it earlier, but I really wish you all the best, Jeremy, in your role as Health minister. I also know that Dr Bastian Seidel would be willing to work proactively with you, as we all would, to invest in the areas that need urgent attention, supporting the decision-making that is required to identify those areas and putting in place a clear plan to tackle the more serious structural problems that will require commitments that go beyond election cycles.

The fiscal sustainability report again projects a future where Health spending continues to consume more of the state's budget and it is important that if future governments commit to that type of allocation, that spending be strategic and makes a difference, otherwise future generations stand to lose big time. I personally am not willing to sacrifice the prosperity of the state or their prosperity because the Government today failed to make the right decisions, even if they are difficult ones.

The Labor Party set out a pretty solid health plan at the most recent election and I encourage you to draw from it, examine it, pull it apart, take out the best bits, do what you need to, because there are some good things in there that could be used right now to make a difference. This is one situation where I encourage plagiarism. Go for your life because in this case every good idea should be adopted.

It is not only in the delivery of essential services where this Government needs to make big improvements. There is also a need to fundamentally reassess their approach to economic development and particularly skills and training. For years now, the Labor Party has led the debate on TAFE and vocational education and the important role it plays and continues to play in our state's social and economic development.

I believe the Government fell asleep at the wheel and failed to take action early enough to address the looming skills shortage that we saw coming across a range of industries and sectors years ago. We set up our industry advisory councils after the 2018 election across a range of different industries, hearing consistently, no matter which industry we spoke to, that skills shortages was their number one issue and they needed better support to be able to fill the vacancies they had.

It is not a new problem, but what is happening right now is a consequence of failing to take action by the Government when they should have done. It appears when it comes to this issue that complacency is the Government's middle name and unfortunately for Tasmanians who are looking for work or a new career or for businesses looking to grow, the Government's inertia has been exposed and is having an impact on our state's economic development. Just this week a hospitality business in Launceston closed its door for two weeks because they could not find skilled staff and they lamented what is happening in our skills and training system.

What is the Government doing? Instead of what they should be doing, which is funding TAFE appropriately and working with the teaching cohort in industry to meet the needs of students and the workforce, the Government instead thinks that meddling with the governance structure is the way to fix the problem.

The attack on TAFE and some of the insulting dot points the Premier continued to read from in his remarks during speeches or debates that he and I had during the election campaign to justify his Government's plan are just plain wrong. What the new Education minister needs to do is to take the time to talk to the workforce, to the students, to industry and do the hard work of addressing the problem rather than flicking it off her desk into the lap of a GBE. A

new minister means there can be a reset in policy and if the government really cares about the future of vocational education in Tasmania, taking a hands-on interest in this issue would be a pretty good place to start.

I will reflect a little on the economy and the budget, noting the remarks made by our Leader, David O'Byrne, that the economy needs to work for everybody. I could not agree more. At the moment we have a situation where the Government cherry-picks data to talk about what is happening across the Tasmanian economy, but ignores some of the structural problems that are becoming worse for some who are looking for work, in particular those who are underemployed, and youth who are looking for work. Our youth unemployment rate is too high, and our general unemployment rate is too high, especially once you get out to the regions.

The Fiscal Sustainability Report outlines a number of challenges for our state to address if we are going to deal with the projections that it makes, because under every single scenario that it projects, the state is heading into worsening levels of net debt and a declining budget position, with deficits as far as the eye can see. The executive summary makes it very clear. It says:

This analysis undertaken in this and previous Fiscal Sustainability Reports has established the importance of the following:

- early action to correct fiscal deterioration will mitigate the severity of measures required to effectively maintain fiscal sustainability;
- given the composition of the state's revenue base, it is not possible to rely entirely on economic growth to maintain fiscal sustainability;
- any action to maintain fiscal sustainability must recognise and address major drivers of a deterioration in the Budget position;
- it is likely that effective action to maintain fiscal sustainability will require the successful implementation of a range of measures.

Those measures could be a number of things, but I have not once heard the Premier, as the Treasurer, outline what action he intends to take. What are those measures, and how will he protect future generations from inheriting the growing debt and deficit problem with the Tasmanian state budget?

It cannot be put off into the future. I read his press release when this document was released and he talked about Tasmania's strong position. It might be all right for him right now, Mr Deputy Speaker, but there is no doubt that future generations will pay for our lack of action if we continue to put the matter off, and I want to again recommend this document to members of this place if you have not read it. I know everyone is pretty busy, but it is fundamentally important to what needs to happen in our state in order to ensure our children do not inherit a legacy from us that we should all be ashamed of.

I think back to the 2018 Budget that was handed down by Peter Gutwein, where he called it the golden age. The so-called golden age. What do we see for it today? Waiting lists are blowing out, whether it is health or housing, infrastructure projects not being rolled out, and deficits and debts as far as the eye can see when you look at Tasmania's state budget. It is not all because of COVID-19, because in 2019, pre-COVID, the budget that was delivered by the Government at that time, by Peter Gutwein as the Treasurer, forecast net debt to rise to over \$1 billion. What action has this Government taken since it started to see the deterioration in the budget? What are they doing to protect future generations against inheriting a complete mess?

We will do our job in holding this Government to account, and in particular holding the Premier to account for his promise to bring the budget back to surplus by 2022-23, and to make sure that they do keep debt levels manageable. It is also important that they keep their promise not to privatise public assets like TAFE or to introduce new taxes, because those things will have a detrimental impact on the cost of living for Tasmanians.

The situation for many Tasmanians, particularly this winter as the bills are rolling in, is pretty bleak. We need to make sure we have a much better response to support people, particularly families, particularly those who are vulnerable or with children, so that they can get through.

On this, I would like to quickly reference what is happening on the east coast before I conclude. I wrote to the Premier earlier this week on behalf of residents of the east coast about the impacts they have felt since the Tasman Highway closure, because I believe the Government has failed to acknowledge the broader social impacts that are being felt there. They have certainly talked about the impacts on business, and the package of support that has been released is a good first step, but again I outlined to the Premier that I think more will need to be done.

The social impacts on this community have been quite profound, from Swansea to Buckland, the road closures are having a significant impact on families, children travelling for school, people who have been displaced from one another particularly those with caring responsibilities, who have had to move away in order to continue to go to work or maintain their study.

The impact on their vehicles - the wear and tear of travelling on Wielangta Road. The cost of fuel. The cost to the workforce, because there are workers on the east coast who have lost hours, or have had their hours reduced, because they have had to factor in travelling on Wielangta Road, as that can be quite tricky, particularly at night time.

I have spoken to workers who are starting work later and leaving work earlier. They are not being paid during that time, so they have lost income during this period. Further to that, I was frustrated and concerned to hear, when I met with them, that the council had not been consulted at all around the development of the hardship grants, or in any design of the support package of that community. I hope that has been rectified now. Surely you would talk to the level of government close to the community before you roll out a package of support. The same goes for the peak organisations supporting that community.

Just to illustrate the impact on people's lives, both professionally and personally - and I would like to acknowledge Bella Hart for compiling this for me - here is a story of a woman

travelling to Sorell for her 10-year-old's footy training each Wednesday afternoon. That has had to stop because there is not a suitable car to travel along Wielangta Road and this has upset the child immensely because they were starting to make new friends.

Another person has had to cancel her son's hospital treatment, which was needed to prepare him for upcoming surgery, because she cannot travel on Wielangta Road, and cannot justify going the alternative way through Lake Leake, as she is a single mother and there is not time to do this trip within school hours.

Someone else has had to pick up extra shifts at work, impacting on the time she has with her children on weekends, and this is because staff cannot get through from the Buckland end because the road is shut.

The Eightball association has been impacted, because the current roster and the formation of the rounds mean that it works between Buckland, Triabunna and Swansea, and they cannot compete. The same goes for the footy club, which was put in a position where it might not be able to hold games at home, which means they do not get the gate takings or the revenue over the canteen or the bar, because other teams did not want to travel the long way around. The impact on sporting clubs has been quite profound.

Transport businesses - bus companies that will lose money because they cannot do school excursions because of the road closure. The road closure is affecting a mother who has a son who is severely autistic and attends a southern support school in Howrah. He would usually get a taxi to school, but unfortunately he is unable to attend school because of the closure. The taxi was willing to drive along Wielangta Road, but because of insurance issues and no phone reception, it was decided it was not safe.

Another woman has been impacted because her son had to go to hospital because of his tongue-tie. The appointment that was scheduled now needed to be changed, and she is going to have to wait even longer to get in because, as we know, the waiting list to access healthcare in this state is woefully long.

Somebody else who is faced with her dad's upcoming cancer surgery in Hobart had to be at the hospital very early in the morning on 15 June. She is terrified - obviously that is in the past now - going through Wielangta Road because of the wildlife, and the fact that it is a gravel road. It is very different to drive on if you have never travelled on those types of roads before, and she expressed her anxiety when driving due to an accident caused by a tourist on the Tasman Highway. So, just this simple change in roads and the condition of the Tasman Highway makes her incredibly nervous.

Someone else whose daughter is currently having regular visits to the orthodontist in Rosny is worried they will not be able to drive Wielangta Road because of their anxiety, so they will have to go through Campbelltown.

Someone else who manages holiday houses in Orford as their job has just had a large number of bookings for next month cancelled, as guests do not want to go through Wielangta Road and are not willing to travel the extra distance.

None of those scenarios have been considered when the Government is thinking about how they support that community, which is why I wrote to the Premier about that road closure,

because whilst there is a prediction that it will reopen sometime in the middle of July, there is no certainty about that, Mr Speaker, as you are well aware. I want to put that on the record as an example of where the Government needs to act a little more urgently.

As I conclude and reflect on the past year and particularly the past few months, what comes to my mind is I suppose what matters to all of us and what the priorities are for us, particularly as I am about to have a baby, thinking about what really matters, and I just think about some of the structural problems we have in our state. My children are lucky. They have grown up at home where they are loved, they have somewhere safe to live and they have food in their tummy, but there are so many other young children in our state who do not have that. I hope that my children never know what it is like to live in poverty but there are so many other children who sadly do and their experience of growing up will not be so lucky.

One in four Tasmanians is living in poverty. Thousands of children across our state are living in poverty and whilst many of them were lifted out of it when the JobSeeker payment was doubled and JobKeeper was introduced, thousands of them have been plunged back into poverty since it has returned to a much lower level. Families could afford to pay their rent, feed themselves and pay their bills all in the same week during that time and it was life-changing for them, but they are now finding themselves scrimping and saving while making difficult decisions again.

The necessity to tackle structural disadvantage in our state is our highest priority and a focus this Government must have is how it is going to improve the lives of thousands of children in our community. Future generations are already demanding that we do more and we hear their voices on the lawns of this parliament as they march for climate justice and action on climate change. They stand up bravely and unite in the chorus of 'enough is enough'. They are telling us that we have to do better. Not only do we need to hear them, Mr Speaker, but we need to act. If our future is in their hands, as we so often hear people say, then we need to pay closer attention, because their hands are small and the problems are so big.

Mr Speaker, I give my commitment to work with this dedicated Labor team and this parliament to do all we can to make a positive impact in the lives of all Tasmanians and my resolve to make Tasmania a better and fairer place has not changed with the outcome of the election.

[5.32 p.m.]

Ms COURTNEY (Bass - Minister for Education) - Mr Speaker, in May this year the Tasmanian people voted to re-elect the Liberal Government, with a clear focus on keeping Tasmanians safe and continuing to deliver the best possible outcomes for our state. I am very grateful to the people of Bass who overwhelmingly supported the Liberal team of Peter Gutwein, Michael Ferguson, Simon Wood, Lara Alexander, Greg Keiser and me. I particularly congratulate the Premier on his strong personal vote, a clear reflection of his outstanding leadership during COVID-19 and congratulate Michael Ferguson on his re-election as well.

I also acknowledge the high calibre of the other candidates that we had in Bass. For Simon, Lara and Greg to each put their hands up in this election and run very strong campaigns is a credit to them. They worked incredibly hard and all three of them have strong futures and indeed in their current roles are already continuing to contribute to the community in northern Tasmania.

I am very excited to have taken on the Education portfolio. We know that education is the single most important driver for economic and social outcomes in our state, opening doors for our young people and providing them with the opportunities that they deserve. I step into this portfolio following the significant achievement by my colleague and friend, Jeremy Rockcliff, who has overseen an incredible record of reform and improvement in our education system since we came to government in 2014.

The Deputy Premier drove the extension of Tasmania's high schools to year 12, oversaw the passage of contemporary education legislation through the Education Act 2016, resourced the recruitment of hundreds of new teachers, implemented the educational adjustments funding model for students with disability, ensuring all our learners' needs are met, and delivered record investment in infrastructure for education to upgrade facilities all across our state. He has truly been a champion for Tasmania's young people and our educators and I am grateful for the opportunity to continue to build on his good work.

There is no doubt Tasmania is fortunate to have some of the best educators in the nation and I acknowledge the work of those dedicated professionals. Education has been a priority of this Government since day one and it is my firm commitment that this will continue. Indeed, one of the key catalysts that made me put up my hand for politics all those years ago was wanting to see better educational outcomes for our young people and wanting to ensure that young people remain engaged in education.

Our strong plan for education will see further investments into our system and in a moment I will elaborate, but firstly I would like to take the opportunity to reflect on the significant achievements that have happened to date. We have delivered record funding to education and in the 2020-21 Budget we committed \$7.5 billion over the forward Estimates with an additional \$204 million in capital works.

There are now hundreds more staff in our system, including 269 more FTE teachers, 250 FTE teacher assistants and 80 more professional staff. There has also been a steady increase in students completing year 12, from 46.5 per cent in 2012 to 58 per cent in 2019, and we are committed to further improving the retention of students beyond year 10 as part of our plan to create a job-ready generation of young Tasmanians because more Tasmanians completing high school and other relevant training means more Tasmanians gaining employment. It also means better overall outcomes for those young people. I want young people to have the opportunity to be able to grasp all the exciting things that are on offer in Tasmania and education provides that opportunity.

Nine schools have extended their course offerings to years 11 and 12 this year, bringing the total number to 56, and next year will add the finish to this process with the addition of Tarooma High School, meaning all high schools will be extended to year 12. Our plan for education is all about providing students with greater choice in vocational and academic pathways while addressing the needs of Tasmanian students across education, health and wellbeing.

We want our young people to stay longer in school and finish school achieving qualifications, whether that be a TCE or a VET qualification, so we will further improve access to specialist resources and staff, deliver more shared support and enrolments across schools and colleges as well as greater flexibility for students to learn online. I take the opportunity at this point to thank our amazing staff for what they have done over the course of COVID-19.

The delivery of education to Tasmanian students was nothing short of extraordinary and the hard work that so many did within the department, within schools and within communities to support that learning, has been absolutely critical for these young people to ensure that their education has not been interrupted by COVID-19. Many of the learnings we have seen through COVID-19 will have the opportunity to provide further options for many students across Tasmania and ensure we have even more tools in our toolkit to be able to keep engagement high.

We will increase the number of literacy coaches, recruit more school nurses, add more professional support staff and ensure there is free access to speech pathologists, psychologists and social workers in every child and family learning centre. The Government also recognises that we must continually look at our teaching and what we can do to achieve better outcomes. It is becoming increasingly clear that phonics is essential for children to become successful readers, spellers and writers in the early years of schooling. Under our plan we have provided access for all Tasmanian primary and district schools to year 1 phonics and are providing additional professional support for teachers. This adds to our investment of over \$35 million into literacy initiatives as well as striving to achieve our goal that by 2029 no government school student will enter year 7 without being above the national minimum standard for reading.

There will also be new investments in trauma support for students with behavioural challenges, with a further 100 students able to receive the support they need, and we will extend the Stay ChatTY in Schools program to support the mental health of our young people.

Having seen the benefits the Tasmanian School Canteen Association school lunch pilot program is providing for many students in improving concentration, increasing school attendance and reducing behavioural issues for our young people, this program will be extended to include an additional 30 schools over two years. This means that more students will not have their learning impacted by hunger so they can focus on learning and development.

As minister for Women in the last parliament and a member who received a thoughtful and articulate representation on this issue from students of Exeter High School, I am proud to support the needs of female students by making sanitary items freely available in government schools. We look to be rolling that out shortly.

An important part of education is TasTAFE. The Government and I believe in TasTAFE and the opportunities it provides to hundreds and thousands of Tasmanians every year. I want to see it thrive. To ensure that TasTAFE is best placed for this we took a clear plan to the election.

I want to ensure that TasTAFE delivers choice for learners, better pay for teachers, more flexible hours to ensure it is meeting the needs of students, business and industry. Our plan will see \$98.5 million of new funding go into TasTAFE, delivering 100 extra teachers to train more young Tasmanians, upgrading critical facilities and equipment, providing new buildings and student accommodation and increasing access for rural and regional students through a \$16 million initiative, delivering a new online TasTAFE campus and expansion of delivery sites across the Libraries Tasmania network.

These initiatives, particularly around the virtual campus, have the opportunity to ensure that we are transforming our delivery, maintaining it as being contemporary and providing

greater flexibility and options for Tasmanians to access training. Many people with a job and caring responsibilities are located a long distance from the training facilities.

If we can look at the ways to deliver training flexibly, in partnership with Libraries Tasmania so that we have the sites of access for Tasmanians, we can open up the world of vocational training to far more Tasmanians. That is at the core of this. This is ensuring that more Tasmanians can access the opportunities for VET training and therefore be able to access the opportunities in our growing economy.

We see across a range of different industries the acute demand there is for workers. By partnering with TasTAFE, we can ensure we are delivering outcomes for industry, working with our teachers to ensure they have the conditions that they deserve and to deliver the educational outcomes for Tasmanians, whether they are young people embarking on an industry for the first time or older Tasmanians wanting to retrain and take advantage of our changing economy. These forms will deliver more diversity in training courses, training models, especially in our regional areas, and will better equip Tasmanians with the skills they need to participate in the workforce to drive the state's economy.

TasTAFE is a core part of Tasmania's future. We want to ensure that it remains a leader not only in Tasmania, not only in Australia, but internationally. I have had the opportunity since becoming minister of having a number of site visits, including visiting the students at Newnham who are currently studying a diploma of nursing to become enrolled nurses, and to see the innovation that has been driven by those teams to deliver not only an uplift in numbers to respond to the demand for enrolled nurses, but in the way it is delivered through innovative online learning modules, ensuring they can be delivered around people's ongoing work.

Not only does this provide opportunity for new entrants into a workforce, it provides opportunities for Tasmanians who are currently working to upskill. This is an important part of TasTAFE's offering.

It is a huge honor to be named the first minister for the new portfolio of Skills, Training and Workforce Growth. Every Tasmanian should have the opportunity to live and work in Tasmania and enjoy the opportunities our strong economy is delivering for our state.

The Government is committed not only to continue this momentum but ensure that Tasmanians can be part of that. Our policies are all meeting the key pressures associated with improving employment, ensuring we have the skills that we need or can access the skills and that Tasmanian businesses can be connected to these skilled staff.

A key part of that is a new Jobs Tasmania unit in the Department of State Growth which is now operational. It was established as a priority and the team is getting on with the job of delivering their important work.

We recognise that successful training systems are built on the collaboration of government, industry and education and training organisations. Last week, along with Mr Ferguson and the Premier, I took part in a round table to look at the partnerships in the buildings and construction sector. One of the positive outcomes of this round table was the signing of an MOU to grow the building and construction workforce by 25 per cent. I was very pleased that many of the conversations and opportunities identified by participants included opportunities for increased participation for women and girls. We know these industries are

strong employers, particularly in regional areas, and we know they can provide long-term work for our community.

The bold plan underpinned by the MOU is backed by a strong agenda for skills training and workforce growth. The Premier has already announced a \$20.5 million package aimed at boosting jobs in Tasmania, especially for those living in our regional areas. It was a delight at lunch time today to deliver a facility that has been the successful recipient of part of the \$3 million grant to provide 600 additional places across disability services and aged care. While visiting these organisations and seeing what they are doing, I spoke to Tasmanians who through this free training will be able to return to work. I met people who had been raising a family. This was their pathway back into work. I met someone who was retraining from child care to enter aged care. I met somebody today who was a fork lift driver who wanted the opportunity provided by these growing industries.

About 40 000 Tasmanians are employed in these sectors. Over the next three years about 4400 more people will be needed. This partners with industry to ensure that we understand the demand. I congratulate the leadership role that the industry sectors are playing in this. It provides opportunities for Tasmanians to train in the way they want and in a way that is accessible to them.

This will work well with our locally led jobs hubs which are already delivering outcomes and are needed in some communities. These locally led jobs hubs know the community, they know the businesses and they know how to get outcomes. We will establish four new local jobs hubs in Burnie, Brighton, Huonville and St Helens. We will extend the coverage of the Northern Employment and Business Hub to assist more Tasmanian job seekers and businesses in regional communities. This builds on our previous investments in jobs hubs in Sorrell and Glenorchy and is expected to help more than 2000 Tasmanians find jobs. Many in this Chamber have engaged with jobs hubs around Tasmania. These jobs hubs are a credit to the people involved. Their success has been driven by local people wanting to get outcomes for their community. As we continue to work with local communities across the state, it is imperative that we listen to local communities so we understand the outcomes that are best for them.

We are bolstering our support to get young Tasmanians into work and training through our Youth Connectors program in conjunction with the Sorrell, Glenorchy and George Town hubs and it will help address transport barriers by investing \$3.2 million to expand the Area Connect service.

Further, to support those Tasmanian jobseekers who find it difficult to meet the costs of training to enter the workforce, our \$2 million Job Ready Fund will assist with the purchasing of essential tools, clothing and licences to become job ready. We know that many industries are crying out for workers and indeed for Tasmanians who want to participate in those industries there are costs associated with starting in those industries. It could be a white card, it could be working with vulnerable people or it could be some specific equipment. We want to ensure we are working across the full suite of areas to ensure we are minimising any barrier for somebody who wants to get the job. My vision is to ensure that all our industries have access to the skilled workers they need to grow and we stand committed to addressing these barriers for those Tasmanians who want to access work and training opportunities.

I also have the privilege of the Children and Youth portfolio. There is nothing more important than the safety and wellbeing of children and young people across our state. During the last two terms the Government has taken strong action to improve outcomes for children, young people and families at risk. One of the Government's most important investments has been the implementation of our \$5 million Child Safety Redesign - Strong Families, Safe Kids. Along with our redesign, this Government has increased staffing resources in Child Safety, ensured stronger independent oversight and review mechanisms and created more opportunities for children and young people to contribute their views.

Importantly, we now have a new plan to build on our achievements for our Strong Families, Safe Kids Next Steps Action Plan 2021-23. The Next Steps Action Plan will focus on consolidating the changes we have already made and embedding the intent of our reforms in new key areas. Our suite of election commitments for young people and children will complement work that is already underway, with investments to come in new stable permanent placements for children in out-of-home care and progressing priority access to government services and supports. We are extending supports for informal kinship carers and investing significantly in youth homeless initiatives, especially for those under the age of 16.

We are also progressing two key initiatives to further embed the Aboriginal child placement principle for children in out-of-home care. We are committed to working with the Aboriginal communities to achieve better outcomes for Aboriginal children and young people. The Department of Communities Tasmania has already initiated discussions with the Tasmanian Aboriginal community organisations regarding these initiatives as part of our 30-day commitments. As the new Minister for Children and Youth I look forward to working across my portfolio to enhance our responses to the needs of children and young people and particularly those who are most vulnerable or at risk. Indeed the suite of portfolios I have, Education, Training, Disability, Children and Youth, provides a strong opportunity to look at what more we can do and making sure we have strong collaboration across systems and making sure we are protecting Tasmanian young people.

I have also retained the portfolios of Hospitality and Events since the election. Like so many other states in Australia, our tourism and hospitality industries have been significantly impacted by COVID and while it is pleasing to see there are really solid gains in rebuilding these important sectors with the reopening of borders at times and renewed consumer confidence, I am very cognisant that there is great pressure on skills and labour for these vital industries. This is why we have taken swift action to prioritise training and development to fill as many gaps as we can in the short term as well as to look to meet the longer-term workforce needs.

Led by industry for industry, visitor experience training is now operating. This new organisation is designed to complement courses offered by TasTAFE's Drysdale, providing even more access to accredited and non-accredited training for Tasmanians, including those in regional areas. We will continue to work with industry to address hospitality workforce issues and we will also work with key stakeholders including the THA to develop Hospitality 2030, a long-term plan for industry.

Mr Speaker, I would like to thank the participants within the hospitality sector. It has been an incredibly challenging year. However their resilience, tenacity and ability for sheer hard work has been demonstrated time and time again over the past year and a half. It has been a devastating time for many of them. The Government has shown our strong support for the

industry and will continue to back the industry, not just through Covid but long term into the future, and that is what our Hospitality 2030 is about, making sure we are resilient now and resilient into the future. We know the hospitality industry underpins jobs, underpins investments and underpins the lifestyle in regional communities and also our visitor economy. It is an incredibly important sector and the participants in that industry can hold their heads high after what has been one of the most horrific years many of them will ever experience in their businesses.

Our Tasmanian events are important in connecting community, promoting arts and culture and driving economic outcomes in regional areas. They are a key driver of the economy, as we have here in Hobart over the past few days with Dark MOFO, and there are huge flow-on effects and benefits for the broader hospitality and tourism industries. These industries, like hospitality, have been significantly impacted, not just by COVID but by ongoing restrictions. We will continue to work with the industry. We have a range of initiatives we are rolling out to encourage regional visitation to look at how we can support new events to stand up. We also continue the support we provide to ensure that events can be COVID safe.

We know that regional events in particular not only provide economic activity in regional areas but are a great way of celebrating what is special and unique about Tasmania. We see that all across the state, underpinned by volunteers, and it is important that for this sector we continue to support the large iconic events we have committed funding to through the election period but also the small, bespoke, unique events that drive visitation and ensure our sector remains vibrant. To help rebuild our vibrant industry we are delivering \$31 million to deliver our iconic events, as well as included within that \$8 million to establish an events support and attraction fund which will draw tens of thousands more visitors to the state. I want to say how incredibly excited, optimistic and ambitious I am about our recovery. I know the men and women who have worked within this industry have worked hard and they will deliver into the future.

I also have the privilege of being the Minister for Disability Services. Our Government is committed to supporting Tasmanians living with disability to access the best possible services and support they need. It is this Government that has overseen a successful transition into a full NDIS scheme and Tasmania is now delivering more than \$1 billion over four years to meet our NDIS obligations and provide the resources our community deserves.

This funding is seeing a record number of Tasmanians being actively supported by the NDIS, with over 10 400 people benefitting from the early childhood intervention recipients, including nearly 6000 Tasmanians who are receiving support for the first time.

We are providing more training places and better facilities to meet the future needs of our disability sector workforce and we will be embarking on a comprehensive review of the Disability Services Act to ensure it is a contemporary framework that supports the rights of Tasmanians living with a disability.

I look forward to delivering on the strong plan we took to the 2020-21 election, including establishing the first-ever Tasmanian Disability Services Commissioner, boosting the Tasmanian Autism Diagnostic Service with three additional assessors to meet demand, continuing our investment in independent advocacy and supporting ParaQuad Tasmania's physical disability sports program. Tasmanians living with disability and their families can

trust that we are committed to accessibility and inclusion as a key part of building a stronger community.

In closing, I acknowledge and thank all those who have thanked me being able to be back in this place again. It is indeed a privilege and an honour. I know others have said it, and I know that everybody believes it: being able to represent your community is wonderful.

Debate adjourned.

ADJOURNMENT

Diane Nailon OAM - Tribute General Mills Workers - Industrial Action

[6.00 p.m.]

Ms O'BYRNE (Bass) - Mr Speaker, I have two quick matters. The first is that while I am delighted to be elected to parliament, I am sorry that I am not going to be at an event in Launceston tomorrow and I wanted to explain why. Diane Nailon, who has been heavily and powerfully involved in early years and children's development, was awarded an Order of Australia medal in the Queen's Birthday Honours, which will be celebrated at the Northern Early Years Group tomorrow afternoon.

Di is a long-term academic consulting in early childhood education and care. For more than 35 years she has coordinated courses and lectured in leadership, curriculum and child development at Queensland University of Technology, University of Tasmania, James Cook and Torrens University.

Her academic roles have taken her to China, Singapore and Papua New Guinea, where she has shared current theory and practice for teachers and administrators. As a consultant, Di worked with the Queensland and South Australian governments and facilitated numerous professional learning experiences with early childhood practitioners in schools, long day and family day care settings, and of course outside school hours care.

Di is on the organising committee of Early Childhood Educators Tasmania (North). Her research is focused on leading and learning in children's services and prioritises collaborative approaches. Her belief in the power of collective impact is incorporated into her role chairing the Northern Early Years Group, and as educational leader consultant to the northern children's network.

For several years she has participated in a range of collaborative projects in the Tamar Valley region, working to enhance the wellbeing of young children and their families. She is an advocate for respecting children's voices and decisions that affect them. I have watched Di work for some years now with educators, parents, all levels of government, those passionate about children, and particularly with children themselves.

She is driven, she is quite brilliant, she is truly lovely and very much loved, creative, energetic, and able to effect change in the most positive, constructive way. We all come away from our engagements with Di just a little better, a little more informed, certainly more

empowered, and often with craft and projects you have either made, or in fact are required to do at home.

I heartily endorse her recognition, and I know members here would all join me in congratulating Di Nailon.

The other matter I wanted to raise is that a lot was said in the pandemic, and today in fact, recognising and thanking essential workers who faced increased risks as they kept working to ensure that we could stay home and stay safe, as we were asked to do.

Not unexpectedly, those workers thought we had their backs, so it is with sadness and not just a little anger that I rise today to talk about the type of nation we are, and the way we treat our workers, and in particular those essential workers we were so quick to praise before - those who have been working throughout the pandemic so our families and communities were able to access the food we all need.

United Workers Union Members at General Mills in Rooty Hill, Sydney are now on strike for fair wages, secure jobs and to protect the conditions that they have fought for and won over the years. General Mills is one of the world's largest food manufacturing companies. It made over \$US17 billion last year.

Over the last five years, their profits have increased 40 per cent and despite this, they are refusing to properly acknowledge and respect the incredible workers who make the business run: those same workers who kept turning up during the pandemic, who have been putting in extra-long hours during an incredibly high-stress period to keep up the enormous demand for the food that they make. The foods they make are all household names - Old El Paso, Latina and Betty Crocker are just a few. We have probably all bought and enjoyed the food that is made by those proud and hardworking union members. I know I have.

General Mills workers should be able to have good, secure jobs with wages that they can raise a family on. They should not be faced with worse working conditions and being asked to give up more of their precious weekend time with family, for pay that does not match the work they do or the rising cost of living. It is only fair that these workers have secure jobs, good wages and maintain all of their conditions. It is what all of us expect, and frankly, what they should have been able to expect as well.

It is disrespectful to our communities for large multinationals to refuse workers jobs that they can count on to build a life on. Even the Reserve Bank of Australia knows that workers need to demand higher wages. Economists recognise that wage stagnation is bad for our community. Less money for workers to spend in the local economy, in local business, is bad for all of us, especially as household essentials have risen by 44 per cent over the last 15 years.

Wages are not 44 per cent higher. This is unsustainable, and workers need good wages they can build a life on.

General Mills and other wealthy multinationals need to show that they are good global corporate citizens and respect our communities by respecting their workers and offering their staff a deal that acknowledges their hard work and skill, and particularly after what they went through during the pandemic for all of us.

Workers are asking today for us to support them, to tweet that, as consumers and Australians, we have expectations that this company will support their hardworking staff.

I am using my voice and my role in parliament to support those workers and call upon General Mills to do the right thing, not only because decent wages and conditions should be the norm, but because it is the height of hypocrisy to applaud these workers during the pandemic, and then turn our back on them when the spotlight has been turned off.

They need more than our thanks and applause. They need our strength and our backing and I encourage all members to support them.

Endangered and Threatened Species, Tarkine Respect in the Chamber

[6.06 p.m.]

Ms O'CONNOR (Clark - Leader of the Greens) - Mr Speaker, I rise after being challenged by the Premier this morning when he described me, as the self-proclaimed Leader of the Greens, to address the matter of the traps and cameras in takayna that were put in place by the Bob Brown Foundation and the forest defenders. There are a few facts we need to lay on the record.

The carcass was roadkill. It was strung up so that it could not be eaten. It is about the scent and attracting threatened and endangered species there. It is the same process for wildlife monitoring that was used for a long time by the Parks and Wildlife service (DPIPWE), and to some extent is still used by the Tasmanian Land Conservancy. Our understanding from scientists with expertise in Tasmanian devil behaviours is that devils rarely ever travel more than 500 metres at a time.

Dr Broad guffaws over there, this soul-less member for Braddon, who describes 200 hectares in the Tarkine as just like any old place you can stick a toxic dump. You know nothing about Tasmanian devils. I am actually very good friends with a devil scientist, and the fact of the matter is that MMG Australia Pty Ltd only spent two days at the site monitoring wildlife for their assessment, and they confirmed that in their correspondence to the federal environment minister, Sussan Ley.

The Bob Brown Foundation denies absolutely that there has been any breach of the Threatened Species Protection Act or of the Animal Welfare Act. I point out that since the Liberals came to government in 2014, there have been substantial cuts to the Threatened Species Unit in DPIPWE. As I understand it, they are now down to around two people in the Threatened Species Unit, and there has also been a substantial decline in monitoring of threatened and endangered species in Tasmania.

For example, the draft recovery plan for the Tasmanian devil (*Sarcophilus harrisii*) is 11 years old. This work is not being done by either the proponent, or the state Government, so we commend absolutely the Bob Brown Foundation for undertaking testing to determine what threatened and endangered species are in that gorgeous patch of rainforest that MMG Australia Pty Ltd wants to put a toxic mine dump on.

We are in a biodiversity crisis. It might only be the Greens in this place that listen to the scientists on that issue, but the time for casually dismissing the plight of threatened and endangered species is well and truly over.

As we know, the Parks and Wildlife Service and other research bodies increasingly rely on citizen science to understand our shifts, our changes in species and in habitats. Absolutely we support the Bob Brown Foundation.

I also want to address the issue of the disrespectful manner in which, as the Leader of the Greens, I was addressed in this place this morning. I simply made the point that all the presiding officers in this place now are men. The Premier is a male, the Leader of the Opposition is a male. Thankfully the Deputy Leader of the Opposition is Ms Dow, and I wish her very well in her role. However, it is disrespectful not to give the title to someone who has worked hard, is recognised by her own party members and supporters and voters as the Leader of the Greens, not to address them by their correct title.

I have written to the Speaker of the House of Assembly this afternoon pointing out that there is nothing in statutes or the Standing Orders or by convention that legitimises not calling me by my correct title. I do not do this because I have a massive ego. I do this because the Greens in this place should be respected. We are a registered political party. We are the only party that contested this election that got a swing towards us.

It is completely unacceptable to diminish a woman in leadership in this place. I will read into the *Hansard* just briefly some of the contents of our letter to you.

The Leader of a party other than the Government or the Opposition consisting of at least four members, that is standing order 115(iv), does not say the Greens are not a party, nor does it say I am not the leader of a party. This standing order simply says we do not qualify for additional speaking time because we do not have four members.

The Standing Orders and the Sessional Orders do, however, explicitly refer to Greens members. We have a Whip, a position that is not denied by yourself as Speaker or the Government, and I also point out that the other argument that has been used in the past is that we do not qualify as a recognised non-government party under the Parliamentary Salaries Superannuation and Allowances Act of 2012. This does not make the case that we are not a party in the House of Assembly; this Act has no such purview.

For the sake of the argument, Mr Speaker, we are defined as a political party in the Integrity Commission Act of 2009, the Parliamentary Disclosure of Interest Act of 1996, the Electoral Act of 2004 and the Charter of Budget Responsibility Act of 2007.

I have also asked the Speaker to note explicitly that I am explicitly considered a leader of a party under the Charter of Budget Responsibility Act of 2007, and a parliamentary leader of a party under the Electoral Act of 2004.

I note that the Premier this morning, when he realised he was sounding a bit churlish and a little bit sexist, backtracked on not addressing me as the Leader of the Greens. I simply ask on behalf of all Greens and on behalf of women who aspire to leadership, that I be addressed by my correct and appropriate title.

Rowing - MAST Safety Rules

[6.13 p.m.]

Dr BROAD (Braddon) - Mr Speaker, I rise on the adjournment tonight to talk about one of the dumbest things I have heard in quite a long time. As we currently speak we have MAST going around all the rowing clubs in Tasmania insisting that - and I quote from the MAST website:

A person in a rowing shell must wear an approved life jacket unless accompanied by a powered craft which is at all times within 200 metres of the rowing shell and is carrying sufficient level-50 life jackets or higher for each person on the rowing shell.

This is completely impractical and one of the dumbest decisions I have ever heard. Somebody like me has not had any coaching or anyone following me in a speedboat for some years because, to be honest, I do not need coaching. I enjoy the sport; I am not trying to compete at an elite level. I can balance, I can row and I do not really need it. This would mean I would not be able to row anymore. A life jacket in a rowing shell would mean that I would not be able to row.

Rowing is not like kayaking, where your body is stiff and you are paddling. I wear out my rowing suits where my thumbs especially rub my body. If I am wearing a life jacket, my hands would get caught and the oars would get caught in the life jacket. It would be impractical to row and would be uncomfortable. In the act of taking a rowing stroke, your body presses up hard against your legs and you repeat that 18 to 20 times a minute. Wearing a life jacket would mean that rubbing would become a problem and it would just be uncomfortable. You would not be able to go through a full range of motion unless you have a coach's boat within 200 metres.

What this would mean practically for me is that I would not enjoy rowing anymore. It would ruin rowing for me. I would not be able to row in a level-50 life jacket, which is quite a high-level life jacket. Tas Rowing has asked for an exemption and it seems like MAST is not willing to grant that exemption. I urge the Minister for Infrastructure and Transport to intervene on this.

We would be the laughing stock of the rowing movement around the world. There is nowhere else in the world where this is enforced - we have looked - and nowhere else in Australia. This would mean that we would not be able to compete at the elite level because it is absolutely impractical to row in the full motion with a life jacket on. It beggars belief that this would ever be considered. It talks about being accompanied by a powered craft at times within 200 metres and if you are, you have to have life jackets for each person in the rowing shell.

When I was coaching I coached at the Ulverstone Rowing Club, and I coached girls at Friends'. Quite often I would go out with three quads or a bunch of kids, so one rowing coach or there might even be two of us in the dinghy. We would have to have 20 life jackets in that dinghy to be able to do that coaching session. This is just insanity and it has to stop. The minister has to intervene.

Fair enough, beginners need to be supervised and they always are. When you have a beginner out there rowing they can fall in, absolutely, but they are always supervised. Somebody is out there in a speedboat following the beginners, but once you get to a certain level and especially when you are in bigger boats, you do not need it. This is a problem that does not exist. I am not aware of anyone who has drowned in Tasmania or indeed Australia falling out of a rowing shell. Maybe there has been but I do not know of it. This means we will be the absolute laughing stock.

Life jackets can be dangerous because if you do manage to fall out you can get caught up. There are other practical steps MAST could take like enforcing lights when you are rowing at dusk and dawn to make sure you are visible so that you do not get hit by a speedboat. Those sorts of things are fantastic, absolutely do that. Make sure that the coaches' boats have the right equipment in them. Making rowers wear a life jacket is insane. It is equivalent to saying that hockey players must wear full protective gear like a goalie to play hockey. It is like saying swimmers need to wear a life jacket. It is like saying a cyclist in a cycle race needs to wear full leathers and a motorcycle helmet. It is like saying footballers need to wear those blow-up sumo suits to compete. That is how ridiculous this is. The minister has to step in and say it is just not practical.

Rowing shells have sealed compartments at either end and they float. I have been in plenty of bingles. At nationals once we ran into a schoolgirls' quad and we destroyed their boat. They went through our rigger and it trashed their boat but the boat did not sink - you had four girls and a cox sitting there waiting to be rescued.

You do not need life jackets. It beggars belief and I urge MAST to see common sense and listen to the rowing fraternity. If the Government insists that MAST classifies rowing shells as light craft under their regulations and enforces wearing life jackets you will ruin rowing.

I will not be able to go rowing because I always go rowing either by myself in a single or sometimes during sitting weeks I go to Sandy Bay Rowing Club and go out in a quad with some friends and have a great time. I love the sport and I still like doing it. I am not competitive anymore, but if I had to arrange for a coach to follow me all the time I would not be able to do it. I would not be able to say the tide is really good at Ulverstone here today, there is no wind, the water is dead flat, I am going to jump in my single that is in the shed like I have done for 30 years and go out for a row. I will not be able to do that because I will have to wear a life jacket and it will just feel like wearing a helmet to bed or something. It would ruin the whole experience not only for me but for everybody and would be completely impractical.

The minister just has to say it is not practical. We are not talking about kids in a floaty kayak on the beach that could be blown offshore. What we are talking about are people who know what they are doing in rowing shells that float, and have done it before, being able to go out and enjoy the sport and not have to wear a life jacket making it completely impractical.

Please, minister for Infrastructure, step in show some common sense and tell MAST to let this one go.

Allen George Hansen - Tribute
Dr Victor Raymond Leonard - Tribute

[6.20 p.m.]

Mr BARNETT (Lyons - Minister for Primary Industries and Water) - Mr Speaker, congratulations on your appointment. I am sure you will do an outstanding job. I have every confidence in that, particularly as a member for Lyons as well.

I would like to share some tributes tonight. First, to Allen George Hansen, known fondly as Al. A giant of a man. He was a fantastic contributor to the local community, to the seafood industry in Tasmania and in so many other respects. Tasmania hosts the largest wild catch abalone fishery in the world. It has been brought to life with value adding downstream processing and more jobs on the back of a man who emigrated from the United States with just a few dollars in his pocket but with a spirit of enterprise and love for his community as wide and deep as the Pacific Ocean.

I shared those remarks in a tribute to Al just a few weeks ago. It was a wonderful opportunity to pay respect to Al and his legacy. I was joined by Roger Jaensch, Felix Ellis, Anita Dow and many other business and community leaders who wanted to pay their respects to Al.

He was a Marine. He served and was prepared to sacrifice his life for his mates and his country. He served in Vietnam and in Cuba at the time of the Cuban Missile Crisis, which many of us will recall as a key part of our history. I thank him and all other veterans, including Australians, who were prepared to serve and sacrifice their lives for us for the freedoms we enjoy today.

Al cared for his community. He was generous. He was kind. He gave a lot of support to sporting organisations and community groups, especially in the Circular Head community. Tas Seafood employed so many people. I first met Al and his son Darwin about 20 years ago when I was a young senator. Darwin was a bit more than out of nappies at the time but he is now leading Tas Seafoods.

Al always gave wise advice. One piece of advice is that you need a strong economy to afford funding support for education, health, welfare and other essential services. He was a big supporter of private enterprise, the private sector and individual responsibility but he also believed in caring for others. Do unto others as you would have them do unto you was a key message Jesus shared with us. Al certainly implemented that in his life. I want to pass on sincere condolences to Al's family at this difficult time. His legacy will live on.

I want to pay a tribute also to Dr Victor Raymond Leonard. Ray was the final survivor of the HMAS *Armidale*. It is an important time to reflect on his service and his sacrifice. He passed away last weekend.

He married his wife Beryl on D-Day, 6 June, 77 years ago. Beryl rang me on Sunday to let me know he had died very early Sunday morning. I got to know Ray and Beryl over many years as part of the cause to gain a Victoria Cross for Teddy Sheean. They were a lovely

couple. They loved each other dearly right to the end. I visited them on a number of occasions in Kew. They lived independently and had that determination to fight for a VC for Teddy Sheean.

Ray was determined, he was intelligent, he was sharp, he was kind, he was generous, he was really thoughtful. He told the story of jumping off the ship, swimming away from the sinking *Armidale* and getting to the two life rafts. As he got in he heard his mates ask, 'Did you see what Teddy did? Did you see what Teddy did?' They all knew what Teddy Sheean did and as he was swimming away he could hear the Oerlikon gun which Teddy Sheean was firing to stop his mates from being shot at in the water.

The way he was treated on getting safely back to Darwin was appalling. I still feel somewhat ashamed for the way he was treated and cared for, which was totally un-Australian and sad. He fought on and 49 of the 149 onboard survived.

Ray stayed in the Navy for the rest of the Second World War and then, living in Victoria, became a psychologist. He later became the chief psychologist for the Department of Veterans Affairs.

It has been an honour to know Ray Leonard and to know his tenacity in trying to gain a VC for Teddy Sheean. I am so pleased that occurred on 1 December 2020, 78 years after the ship went down on 1 December 1942.

Ray, what a wonderful thing that you have seen that award justly given to Teddy. Thank you for your submission to the tribunal, to the Brendon Nelson review. Your evidence was pivotal in ensuring the VC was justly given to Teddy Sheean.

To Beryl and all of your family - Beryl, the great love of your life - you celebrated so much and so well. I pass on sincere sympathies and condolences to you and let us never forget his bravery and that of his ship mates.

Lest We Forget.

Richard Flanagan - Tribute

[6.27 p.m.]

Dr WOODRUFF (Franklin) - Mr Speaker, Richard Flanagan is a Tasmanian writer who has been described by the *Washington Post* as one of our greatest living novelists. He has written numerous books of fiction attracting major prize awards and honours. He is definitely one of Tasmania's great treasures. He has also had a career as an investigative journalist in Australia and overseas.

Richard has never hidden from telling the truth no matter how controversial the topic. His latest gift to Australian conversation is *Toxic: The Rotting Underbelly of the Tasmanian Salmon Industry*. It was released in late April and has been a sell-out success ever since. The last time I heard it was into its fourth print run. *Toxic* is a chilling expose of a salmon industry that is secretive, polluting, destructive and produces a product that is questionable from a health point of view. It is especially an indictment of gross and culpable government mismanagement of this industry.

Richard documents his own experience living on North Bruny when salmon companies shifted gears and became ASX share market corporations. From that point, governments were no longer interested in listening to community concerns about environmental impacts or social impacts. I quote from his book when in 2005 he spoke to a senior bureaucrat at the marine farming branch who was very clear:

'Tassal', he said, 'was a nightmare. I can't do anything', he said, leaning back in his chair and folding his hands behind his head. 'If I do something Tassal rings the minister's office and the minister's office rings me. So I can't help.

Richard has thought about that strange day since.

Government no longer seemed to be Governments, regulators no longer were burdened by the need to regulate, rule-breakers had been through an incomprehensible metamorphous become rule-makers and the new rules seemed to be made not by parliament but by a profit and loss ledger - by, in other words, greed.

The senior bureaucrat advised that the only hope was to deal directly with Tassal and for 15 years our community tried to find an honourable compromise with Tassal.

None of us wanted a fight. ... We didn't like the salmon farm but we felt compelled to accept it in a live and let live spirit. But while we let Tassal live, things began to die.

Every promise made by Tassal to the community, they finally broke. Every agreement they made, they ultimately dishonoured. Tassal would argue the farm was within regulations, though there were very few regulations, and what regulations existed were weak and never enforced.

We were condemned to live amid the immense damage done when government abrogates its responsibilities and the only legislator is greed.

As well as noise, algae and slime kept increasing. As they increased other things mysteriously disappeared. The penguins vanished, then the cod, then the tiny maireener shells - the same shells that Truganini and her people once gathered at the north end of Langfords Beach to make their necklaces.

The water lost its clarity as more and more fish shit poured into the Channel. More algae, more of the strange bubbly brown broth on the once-clear waters. No-one saw dolphins anymore. We did not see seahorses. The weedy sea dragons disappeared, the seagrass started vanishing and then the flathead were gone.

We were being played as fools by Tassal. We were tricked into colluding in the slow death of everything we loved. They have stolen our water, our serenity and our beauty. They are killing our Channel, one of Tasmania's most beloved and iconic waterways, and worse, its creatures.

Unless checked, they will destroy so much more of what is unique and offers Tasmania a future in the 21st century.

Flanagan also details in his book *Toxic* the corrupted Orwellian scientific process for new farming developments, which has the marine farming panel incapable of rejecting a development and only referring it to the minister for approval - something the expert scientist who resigned from the panel described as 'soul-destroying'.

He also describes the extreme levels of nutrient discharge from salmon smolt hatcheries flowing into Hobart's drinking water supply, equivalent to a sewage plant from a town of 5000 to 10 000 people, which the EPA has never investigated.

He describes the epic fail of the EPA to protect the maugean skate and the World Heritage values of Macquarie Harbour. An EPA that stopped using dorval worms for salmon farm monitoring indicators in the harbour because they kept indicating that severe oxygen levels were being depleted in the water. The same EPA deaf to the clarion warnings of scientists about the need to cut salmon stocking levels in the harbour before it was too late - and it was too late. All the marine animals within 500 metres of Tassal's lease were declared dead.

Flanagan also describes the Tasmanian salmon feed, which comes from factory farm chickens, and he outlines the equivalent of ten times Tasmania's sewage effluent that is pouring into, and will pour into, the wild beauty of Storm Bay. The floating debris littering once-pristine beaches and threatening boaters' lives, the micro-plastic pollution that may be re-entering the food chains of recreational and commercial fisheries. The shooting, killing and dumping and relocating of seals on a large scale.

This book makes a lie of the Liberal and Labor parties' pretence that we have a salmon industry that is being regulated by any meaningful environmental protection standard, let alone the sham of pretending that it is world's best practice. I strongly commend this book to the House. It is required reading for all members of parliament. I would like to table a copy in the House tonight. I have provided a copy to Mr Jaensch, and he has informed me he already has his own copy, but he is happy from the Government for it to be tabled. I have also provided a copy to Dr Broad, who has also indicated the Labor Party is happy for it to be tabled.

We have to heed the warnings of this book, and understand that consumers will vote with their wallets. As a state, it is an extremely dangerous position for us to continue to ignore the realities of this essentially unregulated salmon farming industry.

We want to have a future for Tasmanian salmon farmers. We want to have a future for our marine environment, so we must have regulations that are strong. We must have an independent EPA. We must transition onto land-based, closed-cycle loop processors.

Mr Deputy Speaker, I table this copy. I commend it to the House and encourage members to read it.

Leave granted.

Homelessness - Assistance

[6.34 p.m.]

Ms BUTLER (Lyons) - Mr Speaker, congratulations on your appointment to the Speakership. I am sure you will do a wonderful job.

I rise on this adjournment to speak to a constituent matter. It is opportune that the minister, Mr Ferguson, is in the House, because I sent this correspondence to his office today, so I am hoping we can work on it together.

The constituent has been in contact with me in relation to his ongoing homelessness. I have contacted your office, so you have a copy of everything that you need.

Mr Ferguson - I have not had a chance to consider it yet, before you put it on the record.

Ms BUTLER - I am going to bring it to the attention of the House as well. I would like to say that this person's plight is a one-off, but it is not, and I have regularly brought people's stories to the House over the years on the adjournments.

Most nights as I tuck my children into bed, I wonder how the parents living in cars on the street, or staying in crisis accommodation, sleeping in tents or couch surfing feel. Over 1600 Tasmanians are homeless this evening. Our community service sector believes this will double next year.

One in 83 Tasmanians receive homeless support - higher than the national rate - and on any given day, 36 requests for help are unassisted. More women than men require homeless support, and more than 120 000 people live below the poverty line. This is also expected to increase. We, as elected members, need to be cognisant of these realities. There are a lot of gaps in our system. Our system is quite broken.

This constituent who attended my office has been on the priority list for public housing for one year, and has spent the last year living in their car. The constituent's GP has provided me with information as an advocate on their behalf, which provides alarming information pertaining to the constituent's diminishing health and feelings of homelessness.

I have only brought this to the attention of the minister's office today, so it is pure information for you.

Mr Ferguson - Have you got a consent form with the letter?

Ms BUTLER - It is all there. Everything is there.

Mr Ferguson - Okay, that will help.

Ms BUTLER - You will have everything you need. Consent, photo IDs, everything, minister. We do things properly.

The correspondence provides evidence that the constituent has a wide range of illness that could be significantly relieved if they were able to access appropriate accommodation instead of living in a car. The doctor documented the following conditions. They have

insulin-dependent diabetes, chronic pain due to osteoarthritis, morbid obesity, hypertension, developing chest pain issues and depression.

The information also states that the constituent was recently admitted to hospital with an acute kidney injury acquired from the use of anti-inflammatory medication taken for chronic pain. The constituent has engaged in various shelter accommodation facilities over the past year, and it is my understanding that the constituent has been actively working with service providers such as Anglicare and Centacare Evolve Housing. The constituent's experience at one of these facilities resulted in the theft and destruction of their personal property; hence they are not returning.

I am advised that the constituent and his advocates have attempted to contact the department on a number of separate occasions before requesting my assistance to have these matters raised. The constituent has previously extended their location options as well.

Mr Ferguson, with your assistance, I hope we are able to find accommodation for this person as soon as possible. According to the advocate, the situation for this person is that they are experiencing feelings of hopelessness and depression and they are very concerned about where this might end up, having been sleeping in the car for 12 months now.

I would appreciate if we could work on this together, because I am very concerned about this constituent. Thank you very much.

World Public Service Day

[6.39 p.m.]

Ms HADDAD (Clark) - Mr Speaker, I stand today to mark World Public Service Day, which is today, 23 June. In doing so, I wish to acknowledge the profound contribution made by public servants in our state of Tasmania, around Australia and across the globe.

The United Nations Public Service Day has been recognised and marked since 2003 and it celebrates the value and virtue of public service to the community, highlights the contribution of public service in the development process of policy, recognises the work of public servants and encourages young people to pursue careers in the public sector.

Rightly, the remarkable contribution made by public servants during the COVID-19 pandemic worldwide has been widely noted and celebrated. However, as many in our community know, the dedication and professionalism our public service has shown during the pandemic is not unexpected or surprising, rather it is exactly the commitment we know our public servants display every single day, often underappreciated and undervalued.

I have seen this first-hand as a former public servant working in the then Department of Health and Human Services before being elected to this place. In coming to this place I know that the call to service of the community is not something limited just to us in this place as elected representatives but rather it is something that is felt across our community by those who pursue the many different types of careers available in the public sector, for example, health workers caring for the health and wellbeing of Tasmanians when they fall ill, park rangers looking after the thousands of tracks and trails in Tasmania's parks and reserves and more that they do, or child protection workers supporting families when they are in greatest need. The

work of public servants transforms lives, strengthens communities and shapes our future, and indeed Tasmania was built on strong public services.

Mr Speaker, the state secretary of the Community and Public Sector Union in Tasmania, Thirza White, today marked UN World Public Service Day and noted that her members protect our children and support Tasmanian families, care for the sick and get them back on their feet, keep the community safe and turn lives around, promote our export industries and unique island state, protect our world-renowned natural environment, build the skills Tasmania needs for the future and deliver expert advice to move our state forward.

The national secretary of the Community and Public Sector Union, Melissa Donnelly, wrote an opinion piece that was published today and said, 'The health crisis of COVID-19 has again proved what most Australians already know, that to have a fair society we need a strong public sector.'. I thank our public servants for being there for our community for the last two years and the many years and decades before that. I am committed to standing up for our incredible public servant institutions and employees, those who work on the front line and those who work behind the scenes.

We must as a parliament oppose outsourcing, oppose moves to undermine the security of employment of public servants and oppose attempts to undermine the conditions of work for the thousands of public sector workers that we as a parliament represent.

The Solstice Splash - Loaves and Fishes Tasmania

[6.41 p.m.]

Mr FERGUSON (Bass - Minister for Finance) - Mr Speaker, on Sunday morning I will be going for a swim at Greens Beach. I believe Ms Finlay, the member for Bass, will be there, as will the member for Bass, Michelle O'Byrne. We will be there because Loaves and Fishes Tasmania are hosting a solstice swim, also known as the Solstice Splash. Of course it is in the winter solstice and one of the rules of this particular engagement is that you must wear appropriate bathing apparel. In the north we do these things the right way, okay? I am so pleased that three MPs of the House will be supporting this wonderful organisation.

Those of you who represent Braddon and many others who have worked in the community sector would be more than aware of the wonderful work of Loaves and Fishes Tasmania. Reading from their website they deliver food and hope to locals doing it tough in partnership with local community agencies around the state who distribute food on their behalf. Their vision is for all Tasmanians to have access to enough affordable, safe, nutritious and tasty food.

The organisation partners with many organisations - in fact I am advised more than 220 - to rescue, reduce and redistribute food waste, deliver food, provide employment and address the causes of food insecurity. The organisation started in 2018 from an agreement with SecondBite, who you would all be familiar with, to continue and expand on its Tasmanian emergency food relief work. Aaron Croft, former Tasmanian state manager of SecondBite and a qualified chef, joined with Loaves and Fishes Tasmania as general manager after meeting Devonport chaplaincy CEO Andrew Hillier, who is just a wonderful man who was trying to source food for a school breakfast programs in the north-west.

Loaves and Fishes is a faith-based organisation motivated by the life of Jesus, who fed a large crowd with a few loaves and a fish and who calls us to serve all with justice and compassion regardless of an individual's personal beliefs or circumstances. The organisation's staff, volunteers and food partners come from a variety of faith and non-faith backgrounds, but what a wonderful mission and what an incredible opportunity to serve, just like many people in service want to do, want to give of what they have, which is not just material possessions but sometimes it is your skill and your passion and your networks, and that is exactly what I see here.

Andrew and Aaron have seen the potential and the need to start a Devonport kitchen to produce more products, ready-to-eat meals, and offer training opportunities for at-risk youth, those with disabilities and the unemployed. They have established that kitchen and it is now capable of producing up to 10 000 meals a week and they have also developed a range of condiments for sale online and through some retail outlets as well as a catering business and food production facility to help fund the emergency food relief work.

They told me that for \$1 they could produce two meals. How wonderful. The target for the solstice swim is \$20 000 and from a quick look at the website this evening it appears they are tracking towards that goal but they need some help. Congratulations to everybody who is participating but just as much congratulations to those who are donating. I am looking at the list of some of the big fundraisers. I was leading for a while but I have been overtaken by Hydro Tasmania, and so they should lead ahead of me - maybe they could even find some more dollars - and local legend Phil van Ryn has surged ahead by about triple my total. Many others are donating, and I do not think it matters the individual donation amount, people give what they can. The little boy in the Bible who took those five loaves and those two fishes took along what he had.

We all have something we can bring to this task. To members of this House and those listening, if you would like to sponsor me on Sunday please jump on the website. If you would rather sponsor Janie Finlay or Michelle O'Byrne please jump on the website and please make your donation. In closing tonight, I want to endorse the work of this great organisation and all of their staff and volunteers for the work that they do which is entirely oriented around caring for people who need their support.

Trevor Duniam OAM - Tribute
Group Captain Paul Willmot AM CSC - Tribute
Eric Mobbs - Tribute

[6.48 p.m.]

Mr ELLIS (Braddon) - Mr Speaker, I rise tonight to embarrass a few old friends. The Queen's Birthday awards are a great time of year to be doing such a thing and there were quite a number of people in the north-west who were fortunate and well deserving of the awards they received. A couple of them are old friends so before I give the full list I would just like to give a bit of a personal tribute to Trevor Duniam OAM, and Group Captain Paul Willmot AM CSC - I hope I have got that right.

Trevor is my old fire brigade chief and a pretty amazing man. He won the Medal of the Order of Australia for services to the community of Wynyard. I can tell you those services rendered have been extraordinary over a very long period of time. The headline was for the

Wynyard RSL. Trevor is a Vietnam veteran and signed up for the RSL there when he first came back so he could make sure that he was at his first Anzac Day march. He has been president of the Wynyard RSL for 25 years. It is extraordinary. When he retired as president of the Wynyard RSL he became the secretary. The talent and the people involved at the Wynyard RSL is amazing. One of my federal parliamentary colleagues, Gavin Pearce, is a member of the Wynyard RSL and has been an office bearer there, as well as a whole range of people across many age groups including a few young guys, some contemporary veterans who have come back and are now serving their community just as Trev did when he was a skinny young lad after Vietnam.

To be an office bearer of such high note in such a wonderful institution with such incredible people around him says a lot about my old mate Trev. He has a fantastic handshake which we have not been able to share quite as much over the last little while. Perhaps even more than his services to Wynyard the way that he has cared for his wife over the last little while has been an inspiration to many people.

The other person I mentioned is Group Captain Paul Willmot AM CSC. He was awarded the Member of the Order of Australia in the military division for exceptional service in aviation workforce sustainment for the Australian Defence Force.

Paul Willmot is a former fighter pilot. Just like a fighter pilot he flew under the radar on this one. I do not think *The Advocate* picked up that he won such a high honour. Admittedly it was sitting in an office pushing around paper, but Paul has served our country with distinction both in the air and on land. There will be a lot of female fighter pilots one day because of the work of Paul. It is a big part of why he received this award. He is also a resident of Boat Harbour so it must be the most over-represented 100 people in Australia at the Queen's Birthday Honour Awards this year.

He is the president of the surf club. Like Trevor you can tell the great character of this man because of the people around him, a fantastic family many of whom volunteer in the surf club and have served our country in our armed forces. We are very lucky to have people such as Trevor and Paul in our community in the north-west.

I want to read out the names of the other people with connections to the north-west or who live there who received Queen's Birthday Honours: John Bowe AM for significant service to motor sport as a touring car driver, John Gibson OAM for service to the community of north-west Tasmania, Graham Kent OAM for services to the community of Devonport and to yachting and Roxley Snare OAM for services to the community of Wynyard. The Wynyard district has been over-represented. It goes to show what a fantastic community it is. It is Jaensch country. Roger probably knows these people even better than I do, the ones that I have been bagging out tonight. We are all very grateful for the work they do.

The other person I wanted to embarrass tonight is Eric Mobbs, who is known to many on this side of the House and probably on that side as well. He is the outgoing president of the Devonport Chamber of Commerce and Industry and has come back for one year to steward the next generation through for the Devonport chamber. I think I am right in saying that Eric is the longest serving president of the Devonport Chamber of Commerce. He has mentored many and has butted heads with many more. He is a true fighter for the many causes which he believes in, chiefly among them the wellbeing and prosperity of businesses in Devonport, our job creators who do so much to provide a future for young people in the north-west of

Tasmania. His presence will be missed. I am sure he will not leave us completely. There will be many constitutional duties he will turn his hand to, knowing Eric and his love of constitutions of many kinds.

I am sure I speak for many businesses in Devonport to say that it has been great to have him in Devonport's corner for such a long period of time.

The House adjourned at 6.54 p.m.