



PARLIAMENT OF TASMANIA

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

REPORT OF DEBATES

Thursday 24 June 2021

REVISED EDITION

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Thursday 24 June 2021

The President, **Mr Farrell**, took the Chair at 11.00 a.m., acknowledged the Traditional People and read Prayers.

SUSPENSION OF SITTING

[11.02 a.m.]

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

That the sitting be suspended until the ringing of the division bells to continue our briefing.

Sitting suspended from 11.02 a.m. to 11.47 a.m.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY

Continued from 23 June 2021 (page 83).

[11.47 a.m.]

Mrs HISCUTT (Montgomery - Leader of the Government in the Legislative Council) - Madam Deputy President, members, as you know, it is always the prerogative of the mover of an adjournment to have a second go at things at the resumption of the debate. I will not be doing that today, except to once again acknowledge the return of our esteemed President back to the big chair, and the member for Windermere and Mersey's accomplishments. Well done.

I also note the appointment of the member for Rosevears to Deputy Leader and the member for Prosser with her many extra ministerial duties. I know that they will both be outstanding. I look forward to working with you all for the rest of the year and into the future. I note her Excellency's Address.

[11.48 a.m.]

Ms WEBB (Nelson) - Madam Deputy President, I rise to make my contribution to the Governor's Address-in-Reply. I congratulate Her Excellency, Barbara Baker, on commencing her term as Governor of Tasmania. I am particularly pleased, for only the second time in the history in this state, to see a woman appointed to this role. I also take this opportunity to very warmly extend my thanks to our outgoing governor, Professor Kate Warner, who fulfilled her duty with thoughtfulness, inclusiveness, warmth and grace. As the first female governor of this state, Professor Warner was an inspiration to the whole community in her exemplary approach to this role.

As this is the first time that I have risen to speak in the new term of government, I wish to acknowledge the palawa/pakana of lutruwita Tasmania, the traditional owners and ongoing custodians of this land. I acknowledge the muwinina people, originally of this place, nipaluna/Hobart and mourn that none of the muwinina people survived European invasion to be with us today. I pay my respects to the elders of the Tasmanian Aboriginal community,

past, present and emerging. I acknowledge the continued connection of the palawa/pakana to this land for over 40 000 years and the rich and enduring culture that lives in that connection. I acknowledge that after invasion by Europeans, this land was never ceded by the Tasmanian Aboriginal people. It always was, and always will be, Aboriginal land.

I congratulate the members who are new to this Chamber, the new member for Windermere. I wish him very well in this place. I particularly congratulate returning members to this Chamber also, the member for Mersey, who came through quite readily without a contest, and our President, the member for Derwent, who contested his election and was successful.

I also congratulate the Government on its election victory in the state election held in May and those who have been elected to the other place for the first time, Janie Finlay MP, Dean Winter MP and Kristie Johnston MP, and in particular Kristie Johnston MP as the first independent member elected to the other place in its current configuration. I add my acknowledgement to those members who lost their seats in the recent election and my thanks to them for the service that they gave in their time in parliament. In particular, I note the very worthy contribution, the laudable work ethic and the personal integrity of Alison Standen, who I have known for many years due to close work connections prior to both of us being elected to parliament.

Here we are, at the beginning of a new term of government approximately a year earlier than expected. Most of us here share a sense of urgency to make up for the three lost months of parliamentary business since the Assembly was dissolved in late March. Here we are, near the end of June, and in this place we are only in our second sitting week of the calendar year. Further, we will now find ourselves sitting for a mere two weeks and having a further break for winter recess, pushing back even further the ability of parliament to fully undertake its important role in our democracy.

Given that we are still emerging from a pandemic, health and economic crisis, this, I think, is an unacceptable situation. This state has been deprived of appropriate parliamentary scrutiny of the Government for many months. That is quite simply anti-democratic, in my view. My concern is that this orchestration of a protracted period with an absence of parliamentary oversight demonstrates the disdainful attitude to parliament from this Government which risks becoming too familiar.

In reflecting on the Governor's Address, at the outset I wish to warmly welcome the announcement that Tasmania will at long last investigate the truth-telling pathway to treaty process with our fellow Aboriginal citizens. I felt cautious initially in welcoming this long-awaited commitment due to the scarcity of information originally provided in the speech and the Premier's media release that went out, also on the same day. Specifically, I was hoping to be reassured that the Tasmanian Aboriginal community had been appropriately consulted with in formulating the key elements of this announcement, including the appointees charged with undertaking the facilitation process, which will culminate in an initial report to the Government in October.

Subsequent to Tuesday's announcement, I note that there has been a range of voices from the Tasmanian Aboriginal community embracing and welcoming this initiative. I am particularly reassured by that, to see the endorsement of this way forward. Progressing treaty with the Tasmanian Aboriginal people has been a very long time coming in this state. In fact,

Victoria was the first state to pass a legal framework for treaty negotiations in 2018. In 2020 Victoria also became the first Australian jurisdiction to commit to the creation of a truth and justice commission. South Australia had begun its treaty process earlier even, in 2016, when the Labor state government there at the time established the South Australian Treaty Commissioner, and allocated over \$4 million over five years to progress treaty negotiations with indigenous groups.

This process looked at establishing about 40 treaties across South Australia. However, it was parked with the election of a Liberal state government in 2018. I note Queensland also established its treaty working group and eminent treaty process panel in 2019, with the Premier accepting recommendations in August last year to progress the path to treaty with First Nations Queenslanders. In 2019 the Northern Territory Government appointed Mick Dodson as Treaty Commissioner to undertake consultation in progressing treaty there.

So here we are finally for our state. What a welcome move forward. I am reassured that key representatives of the Tasmanian Aboriginal community are endorsing and welcoming this long-awaited proposal for Tasmania to have a pathway to treaty process, which has been outlined in the Governor's Address. I welcome our state's move. Eventually we finally got there to do it.

Other than this one exciting announcement, I must confess my surprise at the lack of strategic government agenda provided during Tuesday's speech. While it is to be expected that would be a certain amount of recycled election commitments and previous commitments, I was waiting for a more detailed plan, not only the pre-announced action points, but also something more substantial and transformative for our state. Given the extent of Tuesday's speech relying upon Government self-congratulatory backslapping and recycled election announcements, many which were in turn derived from that PESRAC process - outlined in March in the Premier's Address - it again makes me wonder why did we have to go to an early election.

If the Government had just got on with delivering those announcements, instead of interrupting the potentially productive last three months with an early election, it is quite possible many of those initiatives could have been implemented or at least substantially progressed by now. Despite the Government's rhetoric, we are not presented in the speech and the Government's plan with a coherent comprehensive plan spanning the term of this re-elected government. Instead, we largely have a lacklustre list of piecemeal action dot points.

Again, I put the commitment to pass the treaty process separate to that and acknowledge it is new and very warmly welcome. Elsewhere, other jurisdictions are crafting and reiterating the need for long-term strategic and transformational reforms intended to address structural inequalities exposed even further by the COVID pandemic, as well as ensuring lessons from the pandemic are learned and opportunities seized as much as challenges are met. We did not receive that in this jurisdiction in Tuesday's speech or the Government's presented plan.

In my contribution today I want to focus on a theme of public confidence. Specifically, the fundamental need for the Tasmanian public to be provided with confidence in a healthy and respected democracy, in the highest standards of good governance, in a transparent and accountable government with the vision and leadership to drive transformational change to tackle the biggest challenges faced by our state. I believe this is an unmet need under this current Government and I would like to see that improve across their term.

With that lens of public confidence, I reflect in the recent election on some elements of the Government's agenda, both inclusions and omissions and want to extend an invitation to the Government for this historic third term Liberal government: to move beyond a day-to-day, week-to-week, grasping at and shoring up of its own power to a mature, visionary, accountable leadership for this state. Accumulated political capital should afford the perfect conditions for this.

It may be the Government does not have as much political capital as it thought it had before the election, given that beyond the Premier's impressive personal vote cribbed largely - I might add - from his own Bass colleagues, the result of the election was rather less than resounding when we look at the figures, to be honest. I challenge you to look at the figures if you have not already done so. But it is still likely this Government's current stockpile of political capital is close to what you may imagine will be at its zenith attained through competent management of the COVID-19 emergency.

Now is the time for the Government to put aside empty rhetoric, the tick-box lists of busy work, and the promises that lack accountable delivery. Now is the time for this Government to rise above the unfortunately low bar of simply being better than the alternative. Now is the time for this Government to earn the privilege it has been given by the Tasmanian people with a third term to lead this state in transformational change and to make meaningful progress on the entrenched challenges we face.

Reflecting on the most important aspect of public confidence, the first matter I would like to turn to is the recent election. This week I have tabled a motion to establish a joint select committee to inquire into the 2021 state election and 2021 Legislative Council elections and matters related thereto. Elections are a fundamental right of the citizens of Tasmania.

It is vital that public confidence in the conduct of elections is maintained. Parliament can and, indeed, must play a key role in maintaining that confidence. In other jurisdictions this is undertaken through the routine practice of conducting a parliamentary review or inquiry after each election. For example, the federal parliament has a Joint Standing Committee on Electoral Matters which undertakes a routine inquiry after each federal election.

Members from all parties, including the Government, participate freely and openly in that inquiry and as members of that committee. The inquiry I propose will deliver a general review of the administration of the 2021 elections as distinct - I would point out - from the outcome of those elections which are not part of the inquiry. It is in the public interest as an important opportunity to deliver increased public confidence and to strengthen our democracy and it should be a routine priority for this parliament to give this sort of matter due consideration.

We know that a range of serious and significant concerns have been raised by both political and community stakeholders about the recently held state elections. These concerns have included, but are not limited to, the legitimacy of the rationale for calling an early election; concerns over breaches of the caretaker conventions; issues with the preselection and subsequent resignation of Adam Brooks in the seat of Braddon; concerns over potential voter disenfranchisement due to the apparent failure to provide Legislative Council ballot papers at all voting booths; and, of significance for this Chamber, numerous concerns with the appropriateness and the impact of holding concurrent elections with the state and Legislative Council elections run on the same day. The only appropriate and accountable mechanism to

examine the many concerns raised is a parliamentary inquiry with broad terms of reference, as I have proposed. I believe it is important for our parliament to show leadership and accountability on this matter, given we have now experienced two state elections in a row that have given rise to community questions and concerns and have diminished Tasmanian citizens' confidence in our democracy.

It is appropriate for the Fiftieth Parliament to examine the circumstances of its formation and to provide the Tasmanian people with confidence in the electoral process. I hope to have the support of colleagues in this place to establish of a joint House select committee for this purpose. I look forward to speaking in more detail on this when we debate the motion.

I will now turn to elements of the Government agenda and some omissions which concern me. It is extraordinary that a Government which attributes its re-election in no insignificant manner to their handling of the COVID-19 pandemic has failed to prioritise providing a comprehensive, ongoing pandemic and COVID-19 response plan. A crucial aspect of a response and recovery plan must be an evaluation process.

As members may recall on 3 June last year, this Chamber voted in support of my motion to establish a joint House select committee on Tasmania's COVID-19 response and recovery measures. Unfortunately, the establishment of that committee was narrowly rejected in the other place. However, the purpose and intent behind the call for such a committee still stands. It would provide a mechanism to give continued oversight over pandemic responses; provide a forum where the community could raise their pandemic experiences and impacts as well as share potential positives and initiatives; and serve as a comprehensive repository of factual information detailing what did and did not work and lessons learned. This would provide a resource to help inform future crises of this scale.

During the debate on whether to establish that proposed committee last year, the point was made by some that it may be too soon for such an oversight and lessons learned forum and that it may make sense to wait until later. It is now 12 months later, and while we experience periodic déjà vu with outbreaks and lockdowns occurring interstate we also have a Government claiming more Tasmanians are employed now than ever before. Just yesterday, the Minister for Trade welcomed the state's largest ever international merchandise for a 12-month period. The state of emergency declaration was allowed to quietly expire in November last year. Although the public health emergency declaration, scheduled to expire on 30 July this year, is still in place, Tasmanians enjoy more social movement freedoms and fewer COVID-19-related direct disruptions in their daily lives than many of our interstate counterparts. I stress this situation is a result of much hard work and sacrifice across all our community, and we do not want to risk undermining that and our hard-won achievements by allowing ourselves to become complacent.

However, we are now 12 months after the Government said there may be a place for my proposed committee at a later date. Are we now at the time to establish a formal COVID-19 pandemic impacts and response review process, to ensure we capture all lessons to be learned and all relevant experiences, challenges and opportunities Tasmanians from every walk of life have grappled with over the past 12 months?

On some small level, it appears the Government does agree to the need to review and evaluate processes. An election campaign commitment, which is also included in the Government's first 100 days list of priorities is a review of the state's Emergency Management

Act 2006. This begs the question - why this act, and why review one act in isolation? The Emergency Management Act 2006 comprises one element of the Tasmanian Emergency Management Arrangements (TEMA). The TEMA comprises a range of emergency management committees, advisory groups, strategies, guidelines and frameworks. There is also the Office of Security and Emergency Management, housed within DPAC. Time prevents me from discussing all these different elements here and now, but suffice to repeat, given our experience of a pandemic lasting more than 15 months, why only review one act?

It would be timely for a comprehensive review of the range of measures, processes and arrangements that we have place. A range of discrete specific reviews and enquiries are also occurring on elements of the COVID-19 experience. Some are being undertaken by the Auditor-General and others by the Public Accounts Committee. All of these enquiries will be valuable, but they are, to some extent, ad-hoc and unconnected. There does not seem to be an evaluation and review mechanism in place to provide a cohesive repository to draw together these separate efforts and to identify, and then fill, the gaps in a comprehensive manner. We need a comprehensive and formal evaluation process. We need to rigorously examine what worked and what could be improved. That evaluation needs to be led by the Government, to ensure that we are well prepared for any future eventualities or challenges that may arise in a similar way to the COVID-19 situation.

Such a process could scrutinise and evaluate the role, functions and operations and interrelationships between our government structures and National Cabinet, as well as relationships between the Tasmanian Government, the parliament, local government and the implications for the Tasmanian community during this unique period of our history. How are we capturing all these complex interrelationships, to ensure that we learn from them for the future? A formal review and evaluation process is part of a responsible preparation for future events. I reiterate my long-held position that Tasmania needs to undertake this pandemic response evaluation in some manner. It should be an intrinsic component of any state government providing a comprehensive plan for moving forward.

I now turn to the important issue of gender equality. I acknowledge there are others here who share concerns and focus about needing to progress gender equity issues. I particularly thank you, Madam Deputy President, as the member for Murchison. You spoke about this in detail in your recent contribution and I believe our comments will align well. I also acknowledge and thank you for putting forward a motion to establish a sessional committee on gender equity. I support this initiative as an excellent proposal for this parliament.

This is not a new issue or challenge. However, the COVID-19 pandemic has shone a spotlight upon the entrenched gender fault lines impacting too many women and girls across the world. Tasmania is not immune to this very serious situation. In May this year, UN Women released a report entitled *The social protection response to COVID-19 has failed women: towards universal gender-responsive social protection systems*. This report notes that while the COVID-19 pandemic started as a major public health challenge, and I quote:

... it quickly morphed into a protracted socio-economic crisis with which countries are still grappling. This crisis ... has been a great revealer, laying bare pre-existing structural inequalities of class, gender, race and migration status, while exposing yawning gaps in social protection systems.

This report identifies that globally, the crisis has had a disproportionate impact upon women generally. For example, women predominate in temporary, part-time, self-employment and informal economies - all of which were hit hard by lockdowns and related economic constraints. Further, a high proportion of female workers compared to male workers are reliant upon sectors hardest hit by the pandemic, such as hospitality, food and beverage industries, wholesale and retail trade and arts and entertainment, to mention a few. Women are also over-represented in the essential frontline services in health care and other social services that are most at risk in pandemic circumstances.

Research and economics have established without a doubt that crises such as this pandemic are not gender-neutral. COVID-19 impact research reveals women internationally and here at home are affected disproportionately and differently from men, affecting access to employment and livelihood, to education, health services and safety from violence. At the national level in March this year, the AMA released a statement on the impact of COVID-19 on women, which corroborates the global research of the UN report. This statement from the AMA includes this:

Research suggests during times of crisis such as the COVID-19 pandemic, the challenges and burdens faced by women are exacerbated, with women's economic security, participation in formal employment, political representation, health outcomes and educational achievements negatively impacted and more so than men.

Further it notes that:

Within the health care sector, nearly four in five healthcare workers in the frontline tasked with managing the pandemic were women, increasing their exposure and potentially their family members to the virus. As pandemic-related work responsibilities increased, women were more likely to manage increased childcare and schooling obligations, coupled with disproportionate household responsibilities, even amongst dual-earning couples.

In light of the pandemic experience last year, with even more urgency, I called for the 2020-21 state Budget to include gender-impact statement, with other jurisdictions such as Victoria, for example, including it as a matter of course. While it did not eventuate that time around with the budget presented in November, the then minister for women, Sarah Courtney, did undertake during budget Estimates in November to examine the feasibility of implementing a Tasmanian gender impact budget statement.

While it was heartening to see the last federal budget restore the national gender-impact statement previously abandoned under Tony Abbott's prime ministership, that does not relieve this state from implementing a similar responsibility and accountability measure. Hence, I reiterate that call now and hopefully we will see a Tasmanian gender impact budget statement to be included when the forthcoming state budget is delivered in August.

Further, I reiterate my call to go further than that, to actually take the same concept and extend it to Cabinet consideration. I call for the template for Cabinet papers to also include, as part of its standard planning and approvals checklist, a gender implications component, as it is my understanding it does have already an economic and financial implication analysis

provided. Again, this is a well-established practice in some other jurisdictions, such as New Zealand. These are both a gender impact analysis of the budget and a gender impact component to a Cabinet consideration. These are only small initial steps, but what they seek to do is ensure gender equity implications and ramifications of the Government's decision-making processes upon the immediate and long-term wellbeing of Tasmanian women and girls is identified, is acknowledged and hopefully addressed in a more meaningful and effective manner.

I have been hopeful the Governor's Address would provide an update regarding the progress of the inquiry into the parliamentary workplace culture that was agreed to in March by the presiding officers, all three party leaders and the Assembly independent at that time, just prior to the election being called.

It is interesting to note the South Australian parliament has just established a joint committee to inquire into and report on recommendations which arose from the South Australian Equal Opportunity Commissioner's report into harassment in that parliamentary workplace. That committee has also been charged with drafting an MP code of conduct for consideration of both Houses of the South Australian parliament. They have not only done their harassment assessment of their parliamentary workplace, they now have a committee working on progressing that. We also noted the federal parliamentary inquiry of a similar manner is progressing.

It would be a shame to see Tasmania abandon this worthwhile endeavour and risk falling behind as a responsible parliament that ensures its workplaces are safe.

Something not mentioned directly in the Governor's Address but present in the Government's commitments for its first 100 days is the long-awaited and overdue political donations reform. This is a crucial matter when we contemplate public confidence in the integrity of our democracy.

In March in my reply to the Premier's Address, I noted the conspicuous absence of discussion in that address of the Government's commitment to political donation reform. Indeed, there was nary a mention. I said in that speech in March it would be a blatant, untenable and unforgivable breach of public trust should Tasmanians go to the polls again without knowing who has given money to whom. Lo and behold, we soon came to see why the conspicuous silence was maintained.

The Government was, indeed, about to call a very early election that self-same week in advance of making any public progress on meaningful political donation reform. Now we find ourselves post-election with a promise that the reform we have been waiting for since it was first committed to in May 2018 will be brought to parliament apparently in the second half of this year. How convenient to have skated through yet another state election with entirely inadequate accountability and transparency about who funded that election.

It has to be placed on the public record at this time, clearly and unequivocally, that this exercise in political procrastination quite bluntly is unacceptable. It is shameful and it is insulting to the Tasmanian voters. People are becoming more and more cynical and distrustful of this Government as the political donations procrastination drags on. It is over three years now since former premier Will Hodgman's promise following that thoroughly tainted and

controversial state election thanks to the corrosive cloud of vested interest's money flowing into certain campaign coffers at that time.

After all this time and all these excuses, Tasmanians have a right to expect a nation-leading, platinum-plated proposed electoral funding and donations disclosure reform bill when it is finally released. It must provide for as close as possible to real time disclosure of political donations as we can possibly achieve. It must have a transparent disclosure threshold, not the outrageous \$5000 amounts nominated by the Premier as part of the ineffectual voluntary disclosure sham with which concerned Tasmanians were fobbed off during the recent state election.

Other states employ a \$1000 disclosure threshold and there would need to be a very good reason indeed presented for Tasmania to adopt any higher disclosure rate than that. Further, if the new disclosure system requires implementation and maintenance funding and resourcing, then it must receive the full required funding and resourcing. This is not a cost but an investment in restoring the perception of integrity to our system of governance.

We know from other transparency mechanisms in this state, such as our RTI system, that no matter how robust on paper, if the necessary adequate funding is not provided to operate the system as designed, it is rendered farcical in its inability to deliver public confidence in transparent and accountable government. For two consecutive general elections now, this Liberal government has dragged Tasmania's proud democracy into disrepute. Time after time we hear of the lack of trust and respect the community holds for elected representatives of all stripes.

Without swift and decisive transparent action now on political donation reform this loss of public trust and confidence risks calcifying into a crisis of governance in this state. As elected community representatives, all of us - both in this and the other place - must prioritise a firm focus and pressure on the revitalisation of governance, accountability, integrity and transparency. Comprehensive, nation-leading, platinum-plated political donation reforms will be one step in the right direction.

It is with that same intent of revitalising governance accountability and integrity and delivering public confidence that I have tabled that motion this week to establish a joint select committee of inquiry into the conduct of the 2021 state and Legislative Council elections. We should be making these things a matter of routine so the public can come to have confidence in the way we conduct ourselves with governance in this state.

Another matter from the Government's agenda that appears to have gone a bit quiet at this time after causing much consternation in the community, is the proposal to make TasTAFE a government business enterprise. While some actions to progress in planning activities related to TasTAFE's capital works, online campus, rural and regional sites do appear in the Government's first 100 days document, a dramatic plan to transform TasTAFE into a GBE is not present. I spoke about this intended plan in some detail in my reply to the Premier's Address in March this year, when the dramatic proposal to change TasTAFE to a GBE was sprung on the community via a recommendation in the final PESRAC report.

Along with all other recommendations in the report, this one was immediately accepted by the Government, apparently without any meaningful further consultation with key stakeholders such as TasTAFE teachers or students. Perhaps, the Government had assumed

that the recommendation had arisen out of thorough and wide-ranging consultation in the PESRAC process. Perhaps, the Government had imagined the PESRAC consultation provided a thorough examination of the issues and opportunities relating to TasTAFE, a rigorous examination of expert evidence, advice and due consideration of a range of potential options and solutions. If that is what the Government imagined when promptly they accepted that PESRAC recommendation to make TasTAFE a GBE, it was solely mistaken.

As it has been confirmed, the issue of TasTAFE did come up in the PESRAC consultations. There was broad agreement we need to support the upskilling, re-skilling and initial training of Tasmanians across all sectors and demographics. However, no robust examination of what problems actually need to be solved or new ways of working actually need to be adopted to achieve this was undertaken in that PESRAC context. Therefore, no convincing case was actually prosecuted that corporatising this entity into a GBE is the appropriate course of action. Put simply, I remain unconvinced of the nature and extent of the perceived TasTAFE problem. Nor am I convinced the GBE proposal is the best way forward. Concerningly, on closer examination it also came to light that the only submission to PESRAC that promoted this particular recommendation was made by the NCK Evers Network, of which the PESRAC chair Don Challen has been a key member.

I remain concerned this proposal has the clear hallmarks of the pre-COVID-19 ideological agenda, being implemented by stealth under the cover of COVID-19. And I hold particular concerns as to the appearance of special consideration being given to a proposal put forward by groups with personal connections to the chair of PESRAC. I highlight that concern because I know there were many worthy community groups and community stakeholders who made submissions and valuable recommendations to PESRAC - who, likely, lacked a personal connection to leverage for special consideration.

We know in a state as small as ours, when it comes to having your voice heard and influencing decisions it is all too easy for it to be more about who you know, than the merit of what you know. This is the dynamic that consolidates power and influence among a select few and leads to tainted governance. It actively erodes public confidence and trust and must be fiercely guarded against. It is the duty of those in power in decision-making roles to take particular care to reject and avoid circumstances in which they may perpetuate this kind of exclusive and entitled approach to governance in this state. Or even the perception of it. Given the doubtful provenance of the recommendation to make TasTAFE a GBE and the disruptive uncertainty, particularly for staff and students who are the stakeholders in the centre of this proposal, it is imperative the Government provide clear and timely information on the progress of this proposal. Indeed, whether it still exists as a proposal.

It will come as no surprise to those in this Chamber that when it comes to discussing elusive matters in the Government's agenda, one topic I will not let pass without comment is poker machine reform. I say elusive, because it appears this is the policy that must not be named, or at least the policy that must be kept out of sight, so as to be out of mind to the greatest extent possible. Why would this be? Why would it be that this policy, the policy most visible at the 2018 election, indeed the policy that funded the 2018 election for the Government, subsequently appears to have been hushed up and pushed down to the end of the queue? Originally promised to come to this place in the first half of 2020, COVID-19 appeared to provide a reason for its delay. However, if the bill was on track for the autumn sitting of 2020, the exposure draft should have been very close to being ready at the time that COVID-19 struck

and able to be progressed at some point during that year once the early stages of the pandemic had abated.

Despite then being promised to be progressed in the first quarter of this year, it did not rate a mention in the Premier's Address in March, not a whisper. In my reply to the Premier's Address, I spoke about the Government's long-stalled future gaming markets reform. Let me remind you briefly of what I said at that time:

... should we be in a position where an early election is called and will be held prior to political donation reform and prior to Future Gaming Market reform, I call on the Government here and now, and all other political parties, to make public commitment not to accept any pre-election donations from any poker machine industry entities or any entities directly associated and financial beneficiaries of the poker machine industry. I call on the Government right now to make that commitment to the Tasmanian people. We deserve to go to the next election with a clear understanding that it is not being funded, bought or influenced by that same industry.

That was a prescient call, as an early election was then immediately called by the Government. Tasmanians went to the polls in May, in the dark yet again as to the full extent of the financial influence brought to bear by the poker machine industry on that fundamental pillar of our democracy, our state election. Yet again. There is a simple way to put paid to the stain that this casts on the integrity of our democracy, a very simple way to restore public confidence. That would be for this Government, and all parties, to fully disclose right now exactly what financial gifts were provided to them by any poker machine industry interests prior to and during the 2021 state election campaign. Make it public, declare it openly.

If they are not ashamed of it, why would they not declare it to the Tasmanian people as a matter of transparency and integrity? The continuing buying of influence, indeed buying of policy and regulatory outcomes, casts a rank shadow over this Government until it has the decency to come clean to the Tasmanian people. We are right to ask questions about that influence. Via the budget Estimates process last year we were told to expect the pokies legislation in the autumn sitting of this year after an exposure draft was to be released and consulted on. During budget Estimates, on 24 November last year, in response to a question on the time frame, the Premier said:

The negotiations that are underway with Federal Hotels regarding casino taxes and fees in Keno are still on foot. I expect that we would conclude those, I would hope, before the end of the year. Next year, legislation, once drafted, will go out for public consultation and then we will introduce it in the autumn session.

That is interesting. So was it actually COVID-19 back in March last year that delayed the progress of this reform, or was it actually the ongoing, unresolved negotiations with the largest vested interest in the industry? Did those negotiations conclude, as expected, by the end of last year? If not, are they still underway? Importantly, most importantly, were those negotiations concluded prior to the election being called?

Well, what do we know about that? The Premier was asked on ABC radio in March, after the election was called, about whether the casino pokies tax rate had been decided and

what it would be. The Premier, point-blank, refused to answer that direct question. He did not say it was yet to be resolved and negotiations were continuing. He just refused to answer the question.

It was put to him that voters deserved to know, ahead of the election, what taxation rate a major donor to his party was going to pay. He refused to answer. Voters certainly did deserve to know what special deals had been locked in for Federal Group in regard to its pokies and Keno taxation rates. In refusing to answer this very straightforward question, the Premier deliberately kept voters in the dark on a key piece of information about state revenue which was related directly to the vested interests of a major donor to his party.

Why was not the Premier keen to seek a mandate from Tasmanian voters on that matter, I wonder? This is a government very fond of claiming mandates for things they have taken to elections. If it was resolved prior to the election, why did not this Government take its casino pokies tax rate and Keno tax rates to the Tasmanian people to have their say? If the rate had been decided the only reason to keep that piece of information secret prior to the poll is if the Premier believed it would be politically and electorally damaging to him and his party for it to be made public. Key information about state revenue relating directly to the vested interests of a major party donor. Surely, given the secrecy, we can only expect that a sweet deal has been made.

I wonder what proportion of the taxation discount provided under this reform for Federal Group - money that will go to the profits of a private company instead of Tasmanian hospitals and schools - what proportion of that gifted taxpayer money is making its way back into Liberal party coffers through political donations? Thanks to the deliberate delay in progressing donation reform by this Government we will never know the answer to that. It is disgusting.

After avoiding any voluntary mentions at all of poker machine reforms in the context of that election campaign the Government has also failed to mention it in its first 100 days plan. This is the policy that must not be named, indeed. Perhaps the Government hopes that if it delays long enough and sneaks out the exposure draft at some point the public might go all hazy on the circumstances around this appallingly bad reform. What is the bet that it will be done on a Friday afternoon as quietly as possible?

Let me wrap this topic up with a quick reminder on those circumstances. The policy being implemented by the Government literally was written by the vested interests of the poker machine industry. They wrote it and tabled it in the dying days of the parliamentary inquiry into future gaming markets in 2017. Time prevented the inquiry fully considering the industry proposal but the two pieces of expert comment that were obtained on it at the time by the inquiry both raised serious concerns at its appropriateness.

The first of those, the Tasmanian Gaming Commission, said it would be harder to regulate that model and likely cause increased levels of community harm. The second piece of comment and advice came from the expert economic group, Synergies, who were assisting the inquiry. Their advice questioned whether that model provided the most advantageous economic outcomes for the state or not. Despite those two pieces of advice, within months, the Government had adopted that industry-written policy. This policy, flagged by the Gaming Commission as likely to cause greater harm, is being progressed by this Government without any corresponding preventative harm minimisation which would be very straightforward to implement and commit to. We can easily make poker machines safer in Tasmania with no

negative impact on recreational use and no negative impact on jobs directly associated with that industry. We have simple evidence-based measures available. Most are just simple programming matters which would be effective in making pokies safer and protecting Tasmanian families and communities.

There is no reason a responsible government and a responsible parliament would not put the interests of its community first and choose to effectively regulate an addictive product known to cause high levels of harm. Especially when those protective measures will have no negative impact on the recreational use of that product or on jobs associated with that product. The only impact would be to reduce in some measure that proportion of the industry's profits which comes from users who are addicted. Why would a responsible government choose to protect the private profit derived directly from people suffering a harmful, diagnosable addiction above the wellbeing and health of the people and communities it is supposed to represent? I look forward to exploring that question once we do finally have this policy and legislation progressed. Presumably at some point it will emerge from the shadows.

I want to touch on another omission from the Government's agenda I believe is important for our state. Many here will be aware of my long-held focus on human rights and specifically the strengthening of human rights for all Tasmanians. There are many elements of my reply speech here, as well as contributions others are also making in this place that touch on, indirectly and directly, human rights issues. Tackling housing waiting lists and homelessness, gambling addiction, gender equity, tackling family violence, addressing discrimination in all forms, and protection of civil liberties to name a few. Currently, the Tasmania Law Reform Institute is reviewing the case for a Tasmanian human rights act which is expected to be released some time in the near future. I am hopeful the Government will keep an open mind regarding that report's findings.

As we plan for and transition out of the pandemic period, we must incorporate into all our planning and transitioning actions a comprehensive human rights recognition and protection for all Tasmanians, which leads to another gaping hole in the Government's so-called plan presented to this parliament on climate change. Asserting that Tasmania has achieved its annual net zero carbon emissions target, while encouraging, does not mean we can afford to relax, just as we cannot be complacent regarding COVID. We cannot afford to be complacent about the threat climate change poses to our economy, environment and quality of life.

Fundamentally, climate change is actually a human rights issue and Tasmanians need to see their government and parliament recognise it as such. They need to see them plan for and address the serious and broad human rights implications of climate change. Since the Paris Agreement became the first international treaty to explicitly recognise the link between climate action and human rights, international governments are developing holistic policy responses recognising the climate change implications for human rights as well as environmental and economic ones.

Further, the European Court of Human Rights has clearly established that various types of environmental degradation can result in violations of substantive human rights such as the right to life, private and family life, while also increasing the risk of inhumane and degrading treatment.

Earlier this week more than 200 groups wrote to the United Nations Human Rights Council urging member states to establish a new mandate for a special rapporteur on human

rights and climate change. These developments demonstrate climate change is not just some greenie issue. Governments, courts and other entities recognise climate change risks the calcifying and deepening of pre-existing and future intergenerational social and economic justice inequities.

I am hopeful the Premier, holding both the Treasury and Climate Change portfolios, will be as keen and diligent to address the current climate change crisis and its human rights implications as he has been tackling the pandemic crisis.

As we have heard, the Governor's Address sets out the Government's agenda for its entire term as well as some of its immediate priorities. In this context it is well worthwhile revisiting the role of the Tasmanian Legislative Council - us here in this place - as outlined on page 3 of the Legislative Council Annual Report 2019-20 as follows:

The Legislative Council as the Upper House of the Parliament of Tasmania can be described as democratic with an independent character. The role of the Council is three-fold:

- (i) To authorise the raising of revenue and the expenditure of State monies;
- (ii) To examine the merits of legislation; and
- (iii) To provide a Parliamentary check on the Government of the day. In modern times the role of the Legislative Council has expanded from the base of being a purely legislative body to a House that involves itself in the examination and analysis of actions, decisions and workings of the Executive Government.

Let me just repeat that third point in case any of us here missed it or perhaps in case the Premier might be listening at some point to this contribution:

- (iii) To provide a Parliamentary check on the Government of the day.

It is literally in our handbook. Madam Deputy President, this Chamber is well within its established remit, as outlined in the annual report, to critique, examine and deliberate upon the Government's priorities and actions. This includes the actions not taken in the context of achieving good public policy outcomes, on behalf of the electorates that we represent and the broader Tasmanian community.

The House of review does not need to be limited, to merely marking off a checklist of government election commitments or other action and busy lists. In this context, on behalf of our constituents, we have the right, and in fact the responsibility, to evaluate any policy shortcomings and identify refinements.

It is the responsibility of our Chamber and every member here, to play a role in delivering the Tasmanian community with confidence in the governance of this state. With that in mind, members here may recall that I and others in this place, including you, Madam Deputy President, have previously called for measurable benchmarking and progress indicators to be developed and incorporated systematically within key government processes, such as the state budget. I previously raised the need for such a genuine and transparent policy progress

reporting mechanism to enable meaningful monitoring and evaluation of the implementation of the PESRAC recommendation. I called for that last year.

The challenges and opportunities facing Tasmania in this brave, new post-pandemic world, present us with a once in a century opportunity to redefine all aspects of our social, economic and sustainability circumstances and priorities.

We have opportunities to shift the leavers pulled by government to address in a meaningful and long-term manner intergenerational inequalities. We have discussed some of these opportunities to some extent in the Chamber last year and earlier this year. We have stressed in those discussions how the manner of delivery of such reforms can be as important as the reforms themselves in strengthening public confidence if they are transparent, have integrity and demonstrate good governance.

The post COVID-19 focus on redefining and rebuilding Tasmania makes it very timely for the state now, as a matter of urgency, to develop and commit to a rigorous set of public policy priority benchmarks and progress performance indicators. Such a benchmarking and progress indicator system, prioritising transparent monitoring and reporting mechanisms, would encourage community confidence in the rationale for, and the delivery of, identified policy priorities and outcomes.

Importantly, a systematic performance monitoring and reporting approach should break our current reliance on short-term action or spending lists in isolation from any accountability mechanism, evaluating actual progress in addressing long-term entrenched challenges.

Let me put that much more plainly. It is very easy for the Government to do three things that give the impression of progress, while in no way holding themselves accountable to making an actual difference in solving the biggest challenges faced by our state. See if these three things sound familiar.

First, the Government says it is investing record amounts in a particular area of policy. It sounds impressive but it is completely meaningless in terms of actual achievement of outcomes. One dollar more than last year is a record investment. It is a meaningless statement. It is the outcomes of that investment that they are committing to achieve that become the meaningful measure of the Government's success, not the claim to record investment of and by itself. A commitment to accountable outcomes is what the Government must be putting on the record, not crowing about record investments.

The second thing that might sound familiar, is when the Government says it is adding X number of new positions to an area of public policy. Might be teachers, might be police or the like. Sounds impressive, sounds like a very good thing, but in itself it is completely meaningless in terms of accountability to achieve actual improvement in outcomes - its progress in achieving meaningful outcomes and improvements that the Government must be held to account for in the area into which those new positions are being added.

The third common sleight of hand to give the impression of progress that is often used by government is when it says it will establish a new special role or an entity to take lead responsibility for this policy area or identify issues. Those announcements sound impressive. It is a new commission; it is a very special new role with an impressive title but in and of themselves they are completely meaningless in terms of accountability to actual improvement

of outcomes. What progress on achieving meaningful outcomes and improvements will the Government be held to account for in establishing that shiny, new, often impressively titled role or entity?

We could almost play bingo with this Government using these three hollow tactics to appear effective. In each of those all too familiar refrains from government what we get is a description of activity without an accompanying commitment to achieving an outcome.

Activity is so appealing, is it not? It looks and sounds impressive. It is easier to have a big list of activities to tick off and crow about than to be held to account for progress on the outcomes of those issue areas.

This very familiar pattern, continuing unchecked, is why we can have a government merrily making announcements, for example, of planning to build impressive-sounding numbers of social houses year after year while across that self-same period of time, we see our social housing waitlist blow out to historic levels.

Ticking off a list of activity is easy. Being accountable for making change, for making progress on outcomes that we seek and prioritise as a community, is all too often completely avoided by this Government. This is why I believe that the opening of a new parliament, reflecting a newly re-elected government is a timely place and opportunity to again reiterate the need for a comprehensive whole-of-government meaningful set of progress performance indicators which are set with community input and are independently auditable.

I have been investigating models in place elsewhere for policy delivery, monitoring, evaluation and accountability reporting frameworks and I can report that in this regard Tasmania is falling well behind other jurisdictions, nationally and internationally. We were doing so even before the 2020 pandemic and definitely since.

The common element of different interstate and international models is a shift to budgetary reporting mechanisms focusing on policy outcomes rather than just financial inputs and outputs.

As the model in Victorian states, and I quote:

Good public policy and service delivery must demonstrate its value to the community.

In the past, government has measured what it does and not necessarily what it achieves. Often government focuses on outputs (what activities, products or services it is providing) and how much it costs to provide them. Just monitoring and reporting on outputs does not provide evidence of the impact of our work.

Focusing on outcomes instead of outputs allows us to better identify what we want to achieve for Victoria. It connects our work with communities, experts and service delivery sectors. It also provides flexibility and enables us to communicate what we want to achieve in a way that is meaningful for Victorians.

What an interesting and refreshing approach from the Victorian Government, and indeed in 2019 the Western Australian Government released its set of 12 key priorities in the *Our Priorities: Sharing Prosperity* program. It claims to set ambitions and accountable targets that, and I quote:

... will require a sustained focus and in some cases, the development of new and innovative approaches.

Currently the Western Australian Government acknowledges that this program has been temporarily suspended in light of COVID-19 as a priority focus. Ideally, a meaningful policy progress framework would incorporate the necessary flexibility to be able to revise and adapt with the purposes of that revision and learning important lessons.

Let us talk about Queensland. They also have a Financial Accountability Act 2009 which requires that the government prepares and tables in its Legislative Assembly a statement of the government's broad objectives for the community. These priorities are also made publicly available on the government website, along with an individual letter from the premier to each minister outlining each minister's portfolio priorities in accordance with those published government key priorities. They are referred to as the Premier's Ministerial Charter Letters. It is expected that the government provides regular status updates against those objectives that have been put forward as their accountable priorities.

I was interested to look at the New South Wales model, because it is quite comprehensive. In 2015, the New South Wales Government launched 12 initial Premier's priorities. They were subsequently updated to the current 14 priorities announced in 2019. These 14 policy areas are designed to deliver on key transformational goals, and those goals are defined as - a strong economy; highest quality education; well-connected communities with quality local environments; putting the customer at the centre of everything we do; and breaking the cycle of disadvantage.

These are not empty words. The model in New South Wales for each of the 14 policy priority areas lays out measurable baseline interim actual and target indicators that are reported on publicly, and made available online. New South Wales has a Premier's Implementation Unit - the PIU - to monitor and report on progress with input from the agencies responsible for delivering the specified targets. The Premier receives monthly progress updates, and reports are provided to the Premier and Cabinet every six months.

This approach is also reflected in the New South Wales state budget process and papers, with the 2018-19 budget papers outlining a shift to outcome budgeting rather than the more reductionist output and particular line items spend focus.

Significantly, the New South Wales progress policy performance model is independently auditable. In 2018 the New South Wales Auditor-General conducted a progress and measurement of Premier's priorities performance audit on the initial 12 priorities which made improvement recommendations. Importantly, social change advocates such as NCOSS, have seen an improvement in policy delivery and accountability. In speaking with them directly, I heard that groups like NCOSS utilise those articulated priority areas to advocate for the social issues that are their priorities. It gives them a common language to talk with government, particularly when it comes to targets, data collection and making measurable progress.

No system is completely perfect, and these New South Wales key goals and the 14 policy priority areas may not be the ones that would be relevant for us here in Tasmania. However, the point is that in other jurisdictions substantial progress is being made and significant acknowledgment is given to the fact that you cannot merely make a list of activities to be ticked off. You have to commit to delivering accountable outcomes. Those models from other jurisdictions demonstrate it is possible to implement models that can be evaluated and reported against, enabling a more transparent accountability mechanism with which the broader community and all stakeholders and policymakers - not only government and members of parliament - can engage.

It is also worthwhile to mention New Zealand in this benchmarking of real progress indicators. Since 2019 New Zealand has released three annual wellbeing budgets. They are structured around collaboratively produced living standards framework, the LSF, indicators. The intent of these indicators is to underpin the goals from budget to budget, to measure whether financial allocations translate into real improvements for people's daily lives. That is a government that is holding itself accountable to not just announce what they are spending and crow about it, but to measure and report on what real improvement in people's lives those investments are making. This shift to a wellbeing framework was announced by the New Zealand Government in 2018. Significantly, when announced it was introduced as a framework and management tool which would:

Assist the government in coordinating a cohesive government work program across portfolios. The approach seeks a more comprehensive and accurate representation of the issues New Zealanders are experiencing and that the government is responding to. It aims to provide a broader and more relevant measure of success.

Further, it says this:

At the centre of the Government's approach is a desire to change the manner in which the Government sets priorities, monitors progress and reports results. The approach seeks a more comprehensive and accurate representation for the issues New Zealanders are experiencing and that the Government is responding to. The Government's aim is to provide greater transparency across priority areas. What actions have been undertaken to achieve its goals and how have they resulted in change? This approach provides a more relevant and broader measure of success.

We know all this about New Zealand because part of that government's commitment to transparency is that it publicly releases Cabinet papers, within 30 days of Cabinet meetings. These papers outline all manner of things that have been dealt with in Cabinet, including this wellbeing approach and the recommendation that it be adopted by Cabinet.

Transparency steps in this manner would be wonderful to see with this Tasmanian Government. I am not going to hold my breath on it, but we can all live in hope. Following the 2019 release of the first wellbeing budget in New Zealand, the World Economic Forum held in Davos described that budget as ground-breaking and said that New Zealand wants to transform its politics to focus on kindness, empathy and wellbeing.

Who here would not agree that Tasmania deserves a similar focus from its government and parliament. However, such efforts need to extend beyond lip-service and dropping words

like compassion into speeches. Words are empty without clear and accountable actions and measurable outcomes to back them up.

There is a global push for a more purposeful capitalism implementing new metrics. For example, the *Guardian* reported in 2019 that Lord Richard Layard, a program director at the London School of Economics and the Vice Chair of the UK All Party Parliamentary Group on Wellbeing Economics, also publicly called for wellbeing to replace growth as the main aim of UK spending. We know this concept of community-developed, shared progress indicators and publicly reported updates on social measures is not entirely alien to Tasmanians. The community has previously embraced the notion of a transparent system of performance indicators in the format of the former Tasmania Together process, which intended to measure real progress of agreed priorities for the period 2000 to 2020.

Unfortunately, despite the dedicated and hard work invested into that process we saw it truncated early before its completion. It was picked up and integrated across operations of some sectors, for example local councils, but we did not see it become entrenched within or shape the state budget process in a transformational outcome focussed manner that we are now seeing in New South Wales and New Zealand.

One critical component of the Tasmania Together project which I consider is a strength is that the key priority areas at the heart of that initiative were identified and driven by a comprehensive community consultation process. In contrast, many of the examples that I ran through from other jurisdictions reflected more of a political prioritisation process imposed to a large extent from the top down by governments of the day, rather than developed in a collaborative manner up from the community.

I believe that should Tasmania move to catch up with these more modern responsive and accountable outcome-orientated policy progress frameworks implemented elsewhere, we can become global leaders through incorporating that invaluable Tasmania Together experience by ensuring any identified key priority areas are developed in collaboration with the Tasmanian community. Wherever possible, we should avoid being limited to the top political priorities simply of the government of the day.

I believe that Tasmanians deserve to have this Government invest in their immediate and long-term wellbeing within a transparent and accountable outcomes framework. Such a framework would deliver public confidence in a genuine commitment to achieving real progress on our entrenched challenges. I also believe it is incumbent on all of us, as elected representatives and legislators, to assist with that transition to governance that gauges and measures real, long-term impacts of government policy rather than short-term outputs.

I invite other members here to consider how we can more effectively establish an expectation on government to set, measure and report on progress towards important policy outcomes. I know most of us have areas of particular interest and attention in which we could readily contemplate outcome measurements that would be meaningful when it comes to government accountability. I look forward to exploring this further. There is much we can do to assist with this task.

Madam Deputy President, I note the Address.

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

QUESTIONS

Bass Highway Upgrade - Leith

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

[2.31 p.m.]

With regard to the proposed upgrade to the Bass Highway at Leith:

- (1) Please provide a copy of design concept(s) that was or were provided during any period of community consultation;
- (2) Which local residents within the community of Leith were directly consulted with by GHD and/or Department of State Growth;
- (3) When did this consultation occur;
- (4) What views regarding the traffic solutions were provided by residents;
- (5) What key concerns were raised by residents; and
- (6) Regarding the latest/current overpass proposal:
 - (a) how many properties will need to be compulsorily acquired and what is the address of each property; and
 - (b) when will final draft concept designs be made available publicly for consultation?

ANSWER

Madam Deputy President, I thank the member for posing that question on behalf of the member for Murchison. The answer to question (1):

- (1) The concept designs presented to the public during 2018 and 2021 are provided in this table.

I seek leave to table a document.

Leave granted.

Mrs HISCUTT - To continue with question (2):

- (2) GHD consulted with the following people:

In 2018 there was L and F Beurermann; R and C Killick; T and A Downey; K Hingston and S Morris; R and R Cooper; A and A Duff; C V Ellis; K P Farris; E and P Van Der Ploeg; D Evans; P Cosmetto; C and K Menzie; D and S Broadby; K Fontaine; C Cooper; B Gillard; M

Cassidy; B Murfet; P McCullough; T Atkins; M Ooi; and P and R Grubb.

In 2021 there was L and F Beurermann; R and T Wallace; T and A Downey; D and R Butler; R and C Killick; K Hingston and S Morris; and D and M Knowles.

- (3) GHD consulted with the above local residents in June 2018 and March 2021.
- (4) Residents' views include:
 - (i) Prefer roundabout at Braddons Lookout Road and Short Street;
 - (ii) Prefer speed reduction;
 - (iii) Do not want highway traffic through local streets;
 - (iv) If overpass is selected then configuration similar to Turners Beach;
 - (v) If overpass is selected then ramp configuration similar to Middle Road;
 - (vi) If overpass selected then configuration as per 2018 design without ramps; banning right turns will shift problem to different location; and speed reductions will not be complied with.
- (5) Key concerns raised by residents include: loss of family home, impact on property and financial impost of solicitors and property valuers.
- (6)
 - (a) there are two current overpass proposals (with ramps and without ramps), both require property acquisition. The overpass 'without' ramps does not require acquisition of homes but does impact driveways and views. However, no decision has been made and consequently property acquisition has not commenced.
 - (b) No design will be selected until public consultation has been completed. Public consultation will be held during July 2021.

Ambulance Tasmania - Paramedic Shifts and Travel Times in Remote Areas

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

[2.35 p.m.]

Regarding paramedics working in rural areas, such as Circular Head and the west coast, who do not live in the area and may have significant travel time between home and work of between one to three hours, my questions are:

- (1) Does the paramedic shift time commence and end at their home or at the station they are working in?
- (2) Is the minister aware of any occasions where paramedics are leaving the workplace prior to the relieving paramedic arriving, so as to arrive home at the completion of their allocated shift, therefore leaving the station reliant on volunteers? If so, how often does this occur? Is this practice deemed acceptable to provide appropriate ambulance cover to our regional communities?

This is of interest to all regional communities.

ANSWER

- (1) In accordance with the Tasmanian Ambulance Service Award, a paramedic commences and ends their shift at the station which they are assigned to work from.
- (2) I understand, or the minister understands, there is currently industrial action in the north-west regarding travel arrangements. Ambulance Tasmania is negotiating with HACSU to resolve this matter, which has resulted from an historic misinterpretation of the award. Ambulance Tasmania has a legal obligation as a government agency to ensure all payments comply with the award conditions. Employees are expected to abide by the conditions of their employment.

North West Regional Hospital - Patient Accommodation

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

[2.37 p.m.]

With regard to patient accommodation at the North West Regional Hospital, questions are:

- (1) What accommodation options are available for patients, including antenatal and their support person or persons who live a significant distance from the North West Regional Hospital, such as Circular Head,

King Island, and the west coast, and need to be close to the hospital for care?

- (2) Were any of these units repurposed during the COVID-19 outbreak and following period?
 - (a) If so, how many?
 - (b) What are they currently being used for?
- (3) How many of the purpose-built onsite accommodation units are currently available?
- (4) Is the number of available units adequate to meet demand?
 - (a) If not, will more be constructed and in what time frame?
- (5) What is the current process for applying to stay in these units?
 - (a) Is there a prioritisation process?

ANSWER

- (1) There are 10 shortstay accommodation units available to patients and family visitors on the North West Regional Hospital Campus.
- (2) No accommodation units used by patients and families or visitors were repurposed during the 2020 COVID-19 outbreak or in the following year.
- (3) As of 25 May 2021, five out of the 10 patient and family units were available. That is three two-bedroom units and two one-bedroom studio units. Whilst bookings can be made in advance when future treatment is planned, most bookings are made concurrently with care being required for the following 24 to 48 hours.
- (4) The number of accommodation units meets current demand. It is rare that the accommodation units are fully booked. As a result, there are no plans for further construction.
- (5) Bookings are made via reception at the North West Regional Hospital. In rare instances where demand for accommodation exceeds capacity, clinical staff (social workers and/or senior nurses) assist with identifying patients and/or families whose accommodation needs could be met by other local providers, relative to families whose circumstances necessitate onsite accommodation.

TasTAFE - Tasmanian State Service Award Employees

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

[2.40 p.m.]

- (1) Can the Government provide the current total FTE and number of the following TasTAFE personnel employed under the Tasmanian State Service Award:
 - (a) TasTAFE teaching staff; and
 - (b) Other non-teaching staff.

- (2) Provide the total number of all enrolments for both 2020 and 2021 calendar years and also the total number of courses offered during those same two calendar years.

- (3) Provide for the calendar years 2020 and 2021 as actual numbers and as percentages of the total enrolment for each category of course the following:
 - (a) The number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students enrolled in:
 - (i) Free courses;
 - (ii) Subsidised courses; and
 - (iii) Full-fee paying courses.

 - (b) The number of students with a disability enrolled in:
 - (i) Free courses;
 - (ii) Subsidised courses; and
 - (iii) Full-fee paying courses.

 - (c) The number of new migrants and humanitarian visa holders enrolled in:
 - (i) Free courses;
 - (ii) Subsidised courses; and
 - (iii) Full-fee paying courses.

 - (d) The number of students who are school leavers under 19 years of age without a TCE or equivalent enrolled in:
 - (i) Free courses;
 - (ii) Subsidised courses; and
 - (iii) Full-fee paying courses.

- (e) The number of students in low SES categories enrolled in:
 - (i) Free courses;
 - (ii) Subsidised courses; and
 - (iii) Full-fee paying courses.

- (f) The number of students in remote areas enrolled in:
 - (i) Free courses;
 - (ii) Subsidised courses; and
 - (iii) Full-fee paying courses.

- (g) A gender breakdown of all students enrolled in:
 - (i) Free courses;
 - (ii) Subsidised courses; and
 - (iii) Full-fee paying courses.

I am happy to have those numbers tabled if you have them.

ANSWER

The answer to question (1): Total FTE and number of the following TasTAFE personnel employed under the Tasmanian State Service Award. This is the data as at the end of April 2021:

- (a) TasTAFE teaching staff - 407.65 FTE
 - (b) Other non-teaching staff - 361.52 FTE
- (2) Total number of all enrolments for both 2020 and 2021 calendar years and also the total number of courses offered during those same two calendar years:
- For 2020 there were 21 1092 enrolments and 417 courses offered. The first quarter to 2021 there were 10 536 enrolments and 354 courses offered.
- (3) For the calendar years 2020 and 2021 as actual numbers and as percentages of the total enrolment for each category of courses the following is:
- (a) The number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students enrolled in free courses, subsidised courses and full-fee paying courses are:
- In 2020 free courses were 174; full-fee paying courses were 360; subsidised courses were 756.

In the 2021 first quarter free courses were 48; full-fee paying courses were 87; and subsidised courses were 488.

The percentages in 2020 were 0.8 per cent of free courses; 1.17 per cent of full-fee paying courses; and 3.6 per cent of subsidised courses.

In 2021, the percentages were 0.5 per cent of free courses; 0.8 per cent of full-fee paying courses; and 4.6 per cent of subsidised courses.

(b) The number of students with a disability enrolled in:

- (i) Free courses;
- (ii) Subsidised courses; and
- (iii) Full-fee paying courses.

In 2020 the numbers were 582 free courses; 496 full-fee paying courses; 1 373 subsidised courses.

In the first quarter of 2021 there were 170 free courses, 116 full-fee paying courses, 829 subsidised courses.

In 2020, in percentages, there were 2.7 per cent of free courses, 2.3 per cent of full-fee paying courses, 6.5 per cent of subsidised courses.

In 2021, in percentages, there were 1.6 per cent of free courses, 1.1 per cent of full-fee paying courses and 7.9 per cent in subsidised courses.

(c) The number of new migrants and humanitarian visa holders enrolled in:

- (i) Free courses;
- (ii) Subsidised courses; and
- (iii) Full-fee paying courses.

In 2020 there were 110 free courses, 246 full-fee paying courses and 31 subsidised courses.

In the first quarter of 2021 there were 55 free courses, 64 full-fee paying courses, 22 subsidised courses.

In 2020, in percentages, there were 0.5 per cent in free courses, 1.2 per cent in full-fee paying courses, 0.1 per cent in subsidised courses.

In 2021 there were 0.5 per cent in free courses, 0.6 per cent in full-fee paying courses and 0.2 per cent in subsidised courses.

- (d) The number of students who are school leavers under 19 years of age without a TCE or equivalent enrolled in the free courses and the subsidised courses and the full-fee paying courses:

In 2020 there were 57 free courses, 179 full-fee paying courses, 627 subsidised courses.

In the first quarter of 2021 there were 14 free courses, 37 full-fee paying courses, 328 subsidised courses.

In 2020 percentages, there were 0.3 per cent in free courses, 0.8 per cent in full-fee paying courses and 3 per cent in subsidised courses.

In 2021 percentages there were 0.1 per cent in free courses, 0.4 per cent in full-fee paying courses, 3.1 per cent in subsidised courses.

- (e) The number of students in low SES categories, there again the same free courses, subsidised courses and full-fee paying courses:

In 2020 there were 1075 free courses, 3219 full-fee paying courses, 5335 subsidised courses.

In the first quarter of 2021 there were 356 free courses, 781 full-fee paying courses, 3568 subsidised courses.

In 2020 there were 5.1 per cent in free courses, 15.2 per cent in full fee-paying courses, 25.2 per cent in subsidised courses.

In percentages, in 2021 there were 3.4 per cent in free courses, 7.4 per cent in full-fee paying courses and 33.9 per cent in subsidised courses.

- (f) The next section is the number of students in remote areas enrolled in the same categories:

In 2020 there were 22 free courses, 198 full-fee paying courses, 234 subsidised courses.

In 2021, quarter 1, there were four free courses, 42 full-fee paying courses and 123 subsidised courses.

In 2020, in percentages, there were 0.1 per cent in free courses, 0.9 per cent in full-fee paying courses and 1.1 per cent in subsidised courses.

In 2021 there were 0.0 per cent in free courses, 0.4 per cent in full-fee paying courses and 1.2 per cent of subsidised courses.

The next breakdown is of gender breakdown of all students enrolled in the same categories:

In 2020 females, there were 1528 free courses, 2135 full-fee paying courses, 4414 subsidised courses, that totals 100 per cent with rounding.

Female in percentages, there were 7.2 per cent in free courses, 10.1 per cent in full-fee paying courses, 20.8 per cent in subsidised courses. The total 100 per cent with rounding was 38.1 per cent.

Males, there were 941 free courses, 5067 full-fee paying courses, 7105 subsidised courses. Males in percentage were 4.4 per cent for free courses, 23.9 per cent for full-fee paying courses, 33.5 per cent for subsidised courses and 61.8 per cent of the totals with 100 per cent with rounding.

Others were:

One in free courses.

Two in full-fee paying courses and 12 in subsidised courses.

Percentages of others is 0.0 per cent in free courses, 0.01 per cent in full-fee paying courses and 0.06 per cent in subsidised courses and 0.0 per cent in total with 100 per cent with rounding.

Females 2021, quarter 1: free courses was 459 and there were 674 full-fee paying courses, 3071 subsidised courses. Females in percentage was 4.4 per cent of free courses, 6.4 per cent of full-fee paying courses, 29.1 per cent of subsidised courses with 39.9 per cent totals.

Males, there were 311 free courses, 1365 full-fee paying courses, 4638 subsidised courses. Males in percentage was 3 per cent of free courses, 13 per cent of full-fee paying courses and 44 per cent in subsidised courses and 60 per cent in the totals with 100 per cent with rounding.

Others were three free courses, two full-fee paying courses, 14 subsidised courses. Percentages: 0.03 per cent of free courses, 0.02 per cent of full-fee paying courses, 0.13 per cent of subsidised courses with 0.16 per cent totals, 100 per cent without rounding.

TasTAFE - Reforms and Consultation

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

[2.52 p.m.]

With regard to the proposed TasTAFE reforms, can the Government:

- (1) Detail whether any consultation occurred before the Premier's Address 2021 regarding the proposed TasTAFE reforms and, if so, with whom and when that consultation occurred?
- (2) Detail any formal stakeholder representation received outside the Premier's Economic and Social Advisory Council (PESRAC) process, whether via correspondence or in person, raising issues with or concerns over TasTAFE operations as a public education provider delivering vocational education and training services? If so, when were those representations received?
- (3) Inform the House whether the Government was aware that the chair of PESRAC was a member of the NCK Evers Network which made the one submission to PESRAC that suggested the specific reforms to TasTAFE that were subsequently adopted as a recommendation in the PESRAC final report? If so, when and how was the Government made aware?

ANSWER

Madam Deputy President, I thank the member for her question.

- (1) The Premier's Economic and Social Advisory Council (PESRAC) recommended that the Government re-establish TasTAFE as a government business. TasTAFE and its ability to be flexible emerged as a key theme in the PESRAC workshop which formed a part of the consultation for the development of the final report. PESRAC flagged in its interim report that phase 2 of their work would focus on longer term recovery measures including skills reform. As these recommendations are implemented, there will be engagement with staff, students, unions and industry and the Tasmanian community as we work towards a TasTAFE with more flexibility and choice for learners and training delivery in ways that meets their needs.

Ms Webb - Just to clarify, through you, Madam Deputy President, so the answer to that first question was no. Under the PESRAC process the Government did not engage in consultation before the Premier's Address?

Mrs HISCUTT - I am not going to put words in the minister's mouth. These are her words.

Ms Webb - Right. I have to resubmit it then perhaps to clarify and seek an actual answer to the question.

Mrs HISCUTT - You might want to rephrase your question, yes.

- (2) The need for TAFE reform is well understood, locally and nationally, and has been the focus of considerable attention over a long period of time by the business community, the Australian Government and the Productivity Commission, amongst others. Ministerial forums held with Tasmanian industry stakeholders in 2018, 2019 and 2020 reflected a common theme that greater flexibility in the delivery of training is needed, as well as the ability for training providers to adapt quickly to changing industry needs. As noted above, TasTAFE and its ability to be flexible emerged as the key theme in the PESRAC workshop. PESRAC flagged in its interim report that phase 2 of their work would focus on longer term recovery measures, including skills reform. As the state's only public training provider, TasTAFE needs to have greater flexibility to allow it to be more adaptable to learner needs and flexible to changing industry priorities and work opportunities.
- (3) The NCK Evers Network made a submission to PESRAC, which amongst other matters, had recommendations in relation to TasTAFE. It is a matter of public record that the PESRAC chair is one of many members of the Network.

Non-Fatal Strangulation - Offence

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

[2.55 p.m.]

With regard to the commitment made during the election to introduce legislation to create a separate offence of non-fatal strangulation, what is the proposed time line for introduction of this legislation?

ANSWER

Madam Deputy President, I thank the member for her question.

Our Government recognises that non-fatal strangulation, choking or suffocation is a significant form of violence which can be a precursor for escalation in the severity of family and domestic violence.

Non-fatal strangulation, choking or suffocation is never acceptable. The protection and safety of victims of family violence and their children is a priority for our Government. That is why we announced at the election that we will move to strengthen our laws, informed by the

receipt of final advice from the Tasmania's independent Sentencing Advisory Council, which was asked by the Attorney-General to review our sentencing laws and practice in this area.

The Sentencing Advisory Council has delivered its report on non-fatal strangulation, choking or suffocation under the Criminal Code Act of 1924 to the Government and has made three recommendations in relation to sentencing laws in Tasmania.

Our Government will now legislate to introduce a standalone offence of non-fatal strangulation in Tasmania, which will recognise the seriousness of this behaviour by allowing it to be charged and prosecuted as a specific criminal offence. In doing so, we have listened to our stakeholders and the community and are taking on board the extensive work of the Sentencing Advisory Council regarding the various laws that operate in most other states and territories.

The Department of Justice will be immediately commencing consultation with relevant stakeholders on the elements of the offence, including intent, harm and recklessness. This work will inform a draft bill to be circulated for broad community consultation by the end of 2021, with the intent to table the legislation in early 2022.

Assessed and GFS Actual Health Expenditure

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

[2.58 p.m.]

I refer to the occasional paper *GST and the Commonwealth Grants Commission's assessment of health expenditure needs*, specifically chart 3 on page 10, titled 'Assessed and GFS Actual Health Expenditure'. With regard to the 2019-20 year:

- (1) Is the CGC assessed amount in the table based on an average of the three years 2015-16 to 2017-18 as suggested on page 6 of the paper?
 - (a) If not, what are those figures based on?
- (2) Is the GFS actual amount based on actuals for the 2019-20 year?
 - (a) If not, what is the basis?
- (3) Is the GFS actual amount before or after the adjustments referred to in the first paragraph on page 7 of the paper?
- (4) If the two measures cover different data sets in different time periods, how is it possible to draw meaningful conclusions?
- (5) Are any additional caveats required to assist a lay reader interpret that data, for example, to understand if our actual spending in 2019-20 was greater than the assessment based on the 2015-16 to 2017-18 years?

ANSWER

Madam Deputy President, I thank the honourable member for the question. The assumptions and methodology applied in the preparation of the report have been independently determined by the Secretary of the Department of Treasury and Finance.

- (1) No. The CGC assessed expenditure as shown in chart 3 reflects single year expenditure assessments. That is, the 2019-20 assessed expenditure is based on the 2019-20 data. The assessed expenditure for individual years is subsequently used to calculate the three-year averages that the CGC uses to recommend GST relativities.
- (2) The 2019-20 Government Finance Statistics (GFS) data is collected by the Australian Bureau of Statistics from state and territory governments' 2019-20 Annual Financial Statements. Therefore 2019-20 GFS data reflects actual 2019-20 general government expenditure.
- (3) The ABS GFS data does not reflect any adjustments made by the CGC for the purpose of its assessments.
- (4) The CGC assessed expenditure and ABS GFS data sets cover the same period.
- (5) As stated in the response to question 1, the 2019-20 assessed expenditure reflects a single year assessment and is not the average of 2015-16 to 2017-18. The CGC's individual expenditure and revenue category assessments are not intended to inform the states on how much they should be spending in each expenditure category or how much revenue they should be raising. Rather, their primary function is to enable the CGC to recommend the distribution of the GST consistent with the principle of Horizontal Fiscal Equalisation.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY

Continued from 23 June 2021 (Page 83).

[3.02 p.m.]

Ms HOWLETT (Prosser - Minister for Sport and Recreation) - Madam Deputy President, it is an honour to be in this place today and have an opportunity to give my Address-in-Reply to Her Excellency the Governor's speech. It is a privilege, and I do not take it lightly.

At the outset I congratulate Her Excellency the Honourable Barbara Baker AC on her appointment, and her recent award of Companion of the Order of Australia in recognition of her service to the people of Tasmania through leading contributions to the law, judiciary and the administration of justice. Her Excellency was also recognised for her work in the area of family law, to professional legal organisations, and as a mentor and role model for young women. Notably, Her Excellency was the first female partner of the law firm Murdoch Clarke in 1993 and the first Tasmanian woman to be appointed as a federal magistrate in 2008.

Her Excellency has also excelled on the sporting field, having represented Tasmania in the sport of hockey and real tennis, and crowned national singles champion in real tennis.

I look forward to working with Her Excellency in her endeavours to encourage young children to participate in sport from an early age.

I thank Professor the Honourable Kate Warner AC for her dedicated service to the Tasmanian community and the integrity, passion and strength that she brought to the role for over six-and-a-half years. I am pleased that Professor Warner AC has agreed to facilitate a process to understand directly from Tasmanian Aboriginal people themselves how best to take our next steps forward to reconciliation.

Tasmania is an incredibly fortunate place to have such brilliant, eminent women in our community who have contributed enormously towards making our great state an even better place.

I welcome my fellow Legislative Councillors to this place, particularly my new colleague and friend the recently elected member for Windermere and the re-elected member for Mersey. Congratulations to the member for Derwent, Mr Craig Farrell on being re-elected, and for his continued role as President.

Representing our constituents and the faith they place in us to advocate for their interests and make their lives better, is something we all take very seriously. My congratulations to the three of you and I know you will serve your constituents well over the next six years.

I also congratulate and welcome Janie Finlay, Kristie Johnston and Dean Winter to the parliament.

I thank the former member for Windermere, Ivan Dean, for his 18 years of passion and dedication to this place and his electorate, and to the people of Launceston. He has been a fierce advocate for his community and we will miss him dearly. Someone will have to take over the fight for the fox.

It is an honour to stand here today as a minister in a majority Gutwein Liberal Government. Tasmanians voted for certainty and stability, at a time when our state needed it most. We outlined a clear plan at the election to secure Tasmania's future, and it was backed by the people who elected a majority Liberal government for an historic third consecutive term. We laid out a number of key actions to deliver across our first 30 days of taking office, and we have delivered each and every one of them. This includes important actions in a number of vital areas, such as health, skills, training, job creation, tourism, and building the infrastructure our growing state needs for the future. Over the coming weeks we will continue the momentum and deliver the remaining elements of our 100-day plan.

We have a clear vision for Tasmania, to be a state of opportunity for all to call home, no matter who you are, where you live, your circumstances or background. Our plan will help us to deliver the vision, as we secure Tasmania's future. Our plan will deliver a stronger and more diverse economy to provide more jobs, as well as the revenues we need to continue to invest more money into health, education and our essential services. It provides for record investment into housing. Through our reform of TasTAFE, we will deliver the training and skills that

Tasmania needs to be able to take on the jobs that exist right across our strongly performing economy.

I am privileged to retain the portfolios of Racing and Sport and Recreation, two areas that I am passionate about and dedicated to. I am also honoured to be taking on the role of Minister for Small Business and Minister for Women. Small business is the engine room of our economy, with more than 39 000 small businesses across our state, employing more than 100 000 people. It is paramount that we continue to support them. As a former business owner for more than ten years, I am passionate about supporting the sector.

The Tasmanian Liberal Government has a clear plan to secure Tasmania's future. That includes a \$20 million investment package to support small business. We are wasting no time in getting on with the job, and are delivering on the commitments outlined in our first 100-day plan. Our Government's plan will be anchored by a refreshed Small Business Growth Strategy 2022-26, which will be informed by the Tasmanian Chamber of Commerce and Industry and the Tasmanian Small Business Council. We are also establishing a new \$2 million small business incubator and accelerator pilot program, which will support Tasmanians to create sustainable startups and small businesses through private sector partnerships, specialist advice and support. Work is currently under way to investigate what incubator and accelerator programs are already in existence in Tasmania. And following that work, we will move to request more proposals to find partners for this initiative. This program will complete existing government-funded business support services such as the enterprise centres, Tasmanian Networks, and digital-ready programs and build upon the Tasmanian Small Business Support Package which has helped us keep local business operating and thousands of jobs in Tasmania. We are also delivering our commitment outlined in our first 100-day plan to continue to provide access to specialist financial counselling through our COVID-19 Small Business Financial Counselling Support Program.

We will provide an additional \$200 000 in funding to this initiative, taking the program's total funding to \$1.2 million. The program will give small businesses access to professional business advice from the private sector and will be informed by consultation with the Tasmanian Small Business Council and the Tasmanian Chamber of Commerce and Industry and regional chambers across Tasmania.

As part of our clear plan to secure Tasmania's future, we will also provide up to \$75 000 per year to continue the No Interest Micro-Business Loan program run by the No Interest Loans Scheme and activate more land for development of privately-owned vacated residential zoned land across Tasmania to ensure small businesses continue to have a strong supply chain participation.

We will double the Building Projects Support Program with an additional \$10 million to get stalled projects off the ground, bringing forward shovel-ready projects and further underpinning Tasmania's building and construction sector to create more local jobs. We will provide an additional \$5 million to lower headwork costs for new subdivisions, on top of the \$10 million committed by our Government.

We will support small business owners to manage their mental health and wellbeing, which is so important right now, with an extension to our Small Business Mental Health Support Package so that Tasmania's Lifeline can continue to work with small business around the state. We will provide funding of \$300 000 over three years for regional chambers of

commerce to support their small business members and promote collaboration and business development in their regions, while \$50 000 per year over three years will be committed to the Tasmanian Small Business Council to support their members.

To help small business access the skilled workforce it needs we will also invest \$98.5 million into TasTAFE over the next four years and provide \$13.8 million through our Jobs Tasmania local network for people initiatives.

Our policy backs Tasmania's competitive strengths and helps business to create jobs in Tasmania.

Over the past month, I have been meeting with many small business owners to hear firsthand what works, what does not work, and I have been impressed and so inspired by the resilience each and every one of them has shown as our economy emerges from the biggest health and economic challenge in a generation. I look forward to working with this sector to grow, invest and create more jobs and implement our plan to secure Tasmania's future.

The Gutwein Liberal Government is committed to creating a more inclusive Tasmania that empowers and enables women and girls to fully participate in our economic, social, political and community life through policies and actions that increase financial security, leadership, participation, safety, health and wellbeing and gender equity for women and girls. We know that all people prosper when women are equal participants in society.

Equal participation of women is critical to reducing economic disadvantage, enhancing economic growth and democratic governance and increasing the wellbeing of girls, women and their families. We are committed to making improvements in the lives of women and girls through addressing the problems of family violence and achieving more equitable outcomes for women and girls in the areas that prevent them from achieving their potential.

During our previous two terms our government has made significant progress in improving opportunities for women in our state. We have established the following: the Tasmanian Women's Strategy 2018-2021, the Financial Security for Women Action Plan 2018-2021, the Health and Wellbeing for Women Action Plan 2020-2023, the Women on Boards Strategy 2015-2020 and the Leadership and Participation for Women Action Plan 2021-2023.

We all know there is a lot more work to be done. As our economy continues to rebound from the impacts of COVID-19, we want to ensure that women are able to participate through all aspects of our community, economy and in non-traditional fields. It is important that women feel inspired and empowered to participate. We all know that participation in the workforce is a major contributor to financial security and independence. In recognition of this, our government re-established the portfolio of Minister for Women, focused on equality, access to opportunity and for women.

The representation of women on government boards and committees has increased to 46.4 per cent in 2020. Women now make up 46.2 per cent of senior executive roles in the State Service, up from 29.7 per cent in 2015. As part of our plan to secure Tasmania's future, our Government will continue this support through a number of new initiatives, including providing an additional \$350 000 each year over the next three years to boost attraction, recruitment, retention of women in non-traditional fields by Supporting Women to Succeed Grants Program. This, in addition to the \$2.5 million committed in the 2020-21 State Budget

to this initiative and applications for between \$10 000 and \$200 000 in grants, opened last week.

We have also committed \$75 000 to develop a specific Women in Building and Construction Strategy to help raise awareness of career options in this field, and \$20 000 to deliver the Girls in Property pilot program with the Property Council of Tasmania. We are also committed to supporting women in leadership and recognising women's contributions and achievement. We have doubled the funding for the Women in Leadership Scholarship Program from \$50 000 to \$100 000 annually, to expand the opportunity for women to develop board and executive leadership skills.

Commitment to developing a third family and sexual violence action plan with fully-funded evidence-based initiatives in consultation with the Family and Sexual Violence Consultative Group and people with lived experience. This important work will be led by my colleague, Jacquie Petrusma. I am very much looking forward to working with her in this space. We will also commission a feasibility study for a safe emergency accommodation facility in the Northern Midlands to better support women in rural areas. We also have increased funding for the International Women's Day small grants program to \$20 000 annually, expanding support for events and activities that celebrate women and their achievements, right across Tasmania.

We will also establish a diversity action plan in partnership with the Tasmanian Minerals, Manufacturing and Energy Council for the inclusion of women employees in these traditionally male-dominated areas.

We will boost health services in Tasmania for women through Family Planning throughout Tasmania. We will also provide free sanitary items in government schools to ensure that girls do not miss out on learning because they do not have access to basic items that females need.

As the Attorney-General stated last week, we will strengthen non-fatal strangulation laws through the creation of a standalone offence. We will also continue Tasmania's monitoring of high-risk family violence perpetrators to increase the safety of victims. An additional \$2.2 million a year will be provided over four years to the legal assistance sector to support organisations, including Women's Legal Service Tasmania. We will also partner with Dress for Success Hobart to expand the Welcome Back(pack) initiative to support women exiting from prison to help them obtain employment and we know how successful this program has been.

Another initiative I am most excited about is our commitment to work with the hospitality sector to support greater representation in leadership roles for women across the industry. These initiatives are in addition to the significant initiative we are already implementing designed to ensure Tasmanian women feel safe, supported and empowered.

Ensuring Tasmanian women are empowered, safe, supported and equal is not solely the remit of government. It is something up to every single Tasmanian to think about and champion. It is something every business, organisation and individual right across Tasmania needs to be thinking about and actively working to create a long-term cultural change.

The women's portfolio has the power to connect all of us on a pathway to that long-term meaningful cultural change and I look forward to working with the members in this House to help achieve better outcomes for women. The Gutwein Liberal Government is committed to helping more Tasmanians to get active no matter where they live, what their age is or circumstances and is part of our plan to secure Tasmania's future. Our Government believes that every Tasmanian deserves to lead an active and healthy lifestyle and we will do everything we can to encourage and support them to achieve this.

Sport is the lifeblood of communities across Tasmania and the Tasmanian Liberals continue to invest and will provide more opportunities for Tasmanians to participate in sport and recreation. That is why, as part of our plan to secure Tasmania's future, the Gutwein Liberal Government will double the Ticket to Play voucher, providing \$200 in vouchers to help eligible children become involved in sports and activities by investing an additional \$3 million over three years. Double the Improving the Playing Field Grants program next year from \$5 million to \$10 million to assist sporting clubs and facilities upgrade change rooms, toilets and security. Provide \$10 million solar power for sports clubs, a no interest loan scheme for a solar system installation including solar panels, hot water systems or battery-operated systems to support clubs to save more money. Invest \$10 million towards football facility upgrades across the state and work with Football Tasmania to deliver better facilities for players, spectators and increase participation. Provide \$500 000 over three years to Reclink to support at-risk and disadvantaged Tasmanians to enjoy sporting facilities and continue negotiations with the Northern Tasmanian Netball Association to develop a future dedicated netball club at the Launceston Silverdome.

We have also committed to the establishment of the Stadiums Tasmanian Trust within the first six months of forming government to oversee the development and management of major stadiums across the state to maximise economic and community benefit for Tasmania. As part of this commitment, a number of investments will be made to our iconic assets, including Blundstone Arena, UTAS Stadium and the Silverdome.

These initiatives are in addition to the significant initiatives already being implemented, designed to ensure more Tasmanians participate in sport and an active lifestyle. Tasmanians voted for stability and certainty and we laid out a clear plan to secure Tasmania's future.

Madam Deputy President, my other portfolio area of Racing is an area I am very passionate about. Tasmania's racing industry generates more than \$103 million a year into our economic activity in Tasmania, particularly benefitting rural and regional areas. The Gutwein Liberal Government is continuing to back the Tasmanian racing industry with a further investment, including an annual stake increase across all three codes of 16 per cent over four years.

Increased stakes are the single most important driver for participation in the racing industry. Growth in stakes has been delivered under a Liberal majority government. We have already delivered 19 per cent stakes increase over three years to February 2021. Total stakes money across all three codes has increased from \$20.75 million in early 2018 to annualised \$24.7 million in the current financial year.

The introduction of the Point of Consumption Tax from January 2020 provided the racing industry with a new stream of revenue, with 80 per cent of the additional tax to be allocated across the three codes to help fund stakes, infrastructure and animal welfare measures. A

healthy racing industry requires a strong and vibrant breeding sector. The Tasmanian breeding industry supports job creation, economic activity, particularly in regional Tasmania. Under this Government, we have already provided additional funding support to the thoroughbred and harness breeding sectors, with \$350 000 a year committed to the end of the 2023-24 financial year. A majority Liberal government will continue this support until the 2024-25 financial year, with \$300 000 through the Thoroughbred Breeding Incentive Scheme and \$50 000 to harness breeding incentives.

We will also invest \$3 million to infrastructure upgrades across numerous training venues, including Longford, Brighton Training Centre and the Devonport Racing Club. Within 100 days we will commence discussions with Tasracing and determine the funding allocation. In addition, the majority Liberal government will also complete the development of the \$8 million new harness and greyhound racing track on the north-west coast. As part of our 100-day plan, we have already commenced planning for the reintroduction of mandatory training packages linked to licensing, including apprentice jockey training. Our election policy for the racing industry is sustainable, unlike the Opposition's, which would have put a significant uncertainty into the industry.

Finally, it is an honour and a privilege to represent the wonderful people of Prosser in this place. From Sorell to Oatlands, to the east coast and Tasman Peninsula, it covers some of Tasmania's real treasures and it is full of vibrant growing and thriving communities. It has some of Tasmania's leading attractions, from stunning Bicheno to Port Arthur, the incredible Midlands and the wonderful Freycinet Peninsula. It is where we all go to sample some of Tasmania's best food and wine. It is where we go to experience some of the best bushwalks, lie on our best beaches and experience the best of what our beautiful state has to offer. It is always an honour to represent my people of Prosser, and indeed, Tasmania. My door is always open and I am the happiest when I am out in the community talking to people, hearing from my constituents and listening to their concerns.

Across my electorate we have made a number of commitments, including an additional funding of \$50 million towards the upgrade of the Arthur Highway; \$2.5 million towards the construction of a function centre at Pembroke Park in Sorell; \$1.5 million towards the expansion of facilities in the Sorell trade training centre; \$3.5 million to refurbish and upgrade the Midlands Multi-Purpose Health Centre at Oatlands; a 24-hour paramedic coverage at Dodges Ferry and Campbell Town; \$200 000 for the Campbell Town Health and Community Service and May Shaw Health Centre at Swansea, to upgrade and purchase new equipment; \$4000 000 for the Carlton Park Surf Life Saving Club to complete the redevelopment of their clubhouse and training rooms; and \$14 million towards the development of a new visitor gateway adjacent to the Freycinet National Park.

We will provide \$6.8 million for stage 3 of the Maria Island Rediscovered project, provide \$200 000 to May Shaw for upgrade of equipment over four years, to support additional staffing and to help support the demand for urgent care services in the area; commit \$50 000 towards completion of the master plan for the east coast visitor economy; provide \$1 million towards the resurfacing of Wielangta Road; and deliver \$600 000 in grants towards a statewide electric charging vehicle network in our regions and key tourism destinations, including Bicheno and Triabunna. We will develop a new visitor information model with the east coast used as a pilot program and continue the \$30 million investment in the Great Eastern Drive.

The Tasmanian Liberals are the strongest supporters of our regional communities and we have worked hard to support our communities. Our support of these regional communities with further initiatives under a majority Liberal government involves setting out a clear plan to secure Tasmania's future. We will continue building on our strong economic position so we can create more jobs and ensure that we have the skills and training pathways in place that Tasmania needs. This will allow us to continue to invest heavily in health, education and housing and to continue to deliver a record infrastructure program which is building better and safer communities.

We have worked hard since 2014 to turn Tasmania around. Our plan has worked with our economy leading the nation. There are 28 800 more jobs in Tasmania today and business confidence is driving investment and opportunity. It is a great honour to work alongside every member in this House. Sometimes we may have differences on occasions but we are all here for the right reasons and I look forward to working with each and every one of you.

Recognition of Visitors

Madam DEPUTY PRESIDENT - Before I call the member for Windermere and give the member an opportunity to claim the lectern there, I welcome to the Chamber the family and friends of the member for Windermere: Amanda Duigan, his wife; Millie and Eliza Duigan, his daughters; sister Kate Duigan; Megan Duigan as well as his sister; and friends Andrew Hart, Mike (Wally) Nesham and Sally Wilson. I welcome them to the Chamber.

As I call the member for Windermere I remind members to extend the usual pleasantries to members making an inaugural speech which means you get to make your comments and contribution in silence from the rest of us. It will be the only time. I welcome you to the lectern as you give your inaugural address.

[3.33 p.m.]

Mr DUIGAN (Windermere - Inaugural Speech) - Thank you very much, Madam Deputy President and thank you, fellow members. It is my great honour and my privilege to stand before you here in this venerated Chamber to give my inaugural speech. I am sure if you each cast your minds back you will recall that vague prickly, clammy sense of anticipation that I am feeling now. Much of my professional life has involved standing up and speaking in front of people but I do not recall any one of those previous occasions having me as keenly focused as I am right now, so thank you for that.

I must say it is very nice and comforting to have some friends and family and friendly faces in the House today so thank you very much for your attendance. I acknowledge the Tasmanian Aboriginal people, traditional custodians of the land upon which we meet today and pay my respects to elders, past, present and emerging.

I take this opportunity to recognise and congratulate other returned members of the Council: Mike Gaffney, member for Mersey, who demonstrated how much his work is valued by the community, elected unopposed, and has incidentally broadened my grasp of the political vernacular. I had no idea that a 'skinner' was something to be so dearly cherished and I look forward to a glass of skinner celebration juice in due course. And, of course, our absent President, Craig Farrell, returned in the seat of Derwent.

This was my first experience of standing for public office and my first election campaign and, as members would, I am sure, agree, it is not for the faint of heart. So, my congratulations to all returning members securing a further term to serve the people of your divisions, and more broadly, the people of Tasmania. I extend that congratulations to new MPs in the other place, Dean Winter, Janie Finlay and Kristie Johnston.

While on that subject I publicly acknowledge the 18 years of service given by the outgoing member for Windermere, Mr Ivan Dean. As members are doubtless aware, Mr Dean was a determined advocate for the people of Windermere and I thank him for that. I have been told his will be big shoes to fill. Confusingly, I have also been told to walk in my own shoes, so, clearly there is some work to be done around shoes. What I will endeavour to do is give an authentic version of myself.

I live in the suburb of Newstead in the city of Launceston, in the division of Windermere, and have done for most of my adult life. It is my home, the place we have chosen to raise our family. In fact, my connection to the electorate stretches back some 171 years when on a calm January day in 1850, Captain John Duigan after, safely navigating the 1500 miles from London, England, ran his ship the *Phillip Oakden* with full sails up onto Hebe Reef in the mouth of the Tamar River. Fortunately, no lives were lost. The ship was lost, but not before she was fully salvaged and one of my favourite possessions is Captain Duigan's sea trunk, which has made its way down through the family, and now sits safe from the elements in my bedroom at home.

Perhaps, no surprise, but the wreck of the *Phillip Oakden* heralded a career change for Captain Duigan. He went on to be signal master at Low Head, and in fact, tapped out the very first electronic message to pass between Tasmania and mainland Australia. Subsequent to that, you may be interested to know, he was the lighthouse keeper at Cape Wickham on King Island. Indeed, the TasPorts trading vessel that now services King Island, is named in his honour, Captain John Duigan. And I must tell you, as a person who grew up on Flinders Island, this is seen as a huge win in the very competitive world of inter-island point scoring.

I mention Flinders Island because it was there that I spent my formative years, the family having moved to the island during the never quite eventuating land boom of the mid-1970s. My parents raised sheep, cattle, horses, cats, dogs, wombats, wallabies and kids - myself and my two older sisters, Kate and Megan, both who have travelled to be here with me today, and I thank you. Mum said she would give it six months. She stayed 40 years.

It was Aristotle who said, 'Give me the child until he is seven and I will give you the man'. Well, Madam Deputy President, at seven I had a very severe case of the mange and was shoe-less. I was about as feral as any child would want to be. Growing up on a farm on Flinders Island was a great adventure. It was there that my love of fishing and the sea developed. It was there I earned my pocket money in the abalone boats, sheepyards, and shearing sheds of the island. It was also the place where I learned to fly. Aviation has always loomed large in my life, not just because on Flinders the only way on and off is by light aircraft, but also, because my grandfather was one of the Duigan brothers, Australia's answer to the perhaps more widely known American siblings, the Wright brothers.

Again, it was a John Duigan, not the ship captain but a few generations down the line, who designed, built and flew Australia's first heavier than air, powered aircraft. It all happened on the family farm 60 kilometres north of Melbourne back in 1910. Now, sadly, the Duigans were not the first people to fly in Australia. They were beaten to that record only by a couple

of weeks by the famed escapologist, Harry Houdini, who had shipped a French aeroplane out to Australia for the purposes of claiming the record, beating him by a couple of weeks.

However, the Duigan biplane was Australia's first aeroplane. Its frame was made with local mountain ash, its spars were held together with the metal straps used to pack wool bales, the engine was a one-off built by J.E. Tilley Engineering in Melbourne - the same Tilleys that for more than half a century ran Tasmania's famous Birchalls bookshops. Neither John nor Reg had seen an aircraft in the flesh, but they keenly followed developments in Europe and the Duigan biplane eventually completed more than 70 successful flights. Most unusually, for an aircraft of that vintage, it did not end up as a smoldering wreck but survives to this day very deep in the bowels of the Melbourne Museum.

As you might imagine then in my family when it comes to flying there is some implied pressure. John Duigan went on to receive the Military Cross for his flying - for gallant and distinguished service during the First World War. He was a pallbearer at the funeral of Baron Manfred von Richthofen, the Red Baron.

My uncles, Brian and Terry Duigan flew with great distinction during the Second World War. My aunt, Sue, was an avid private pilot and my father, John, was an early pioneer of ultralight aviation. It was here in the lawnmower engine, rag and tube world of ultralight aviation that my flying career began. Inspired by my sister who had developed this training technique, at age 13 or 14, I would take off in a single seat aeroplane at one end of the paddock and then fly along a couple of metres off the ground before landing safely at the other end. All went well and I became reasonably practised at this skill and the height I flew along at incrementally increased - until one particular morning which will remain etched in my memory forever.

Our runway was a paddock bounded at one end by a row of large macrocarpa pines and at the other end the jewelled blue waters of Bass Strait. As I flew along ever higher, it suddenly dawned on me that I had not left enough runway on which to land. If I was going to come down it was going to involve tussocks, rocks and probably the sea. I was faced with a fairly binary proposition - throttle back and crash, throttle up and fly. Madam Deputy President, I feel there are parallels between that day and this.

I am pleased to report I did not crash that day. I completed not one, but two terrifying circuits. The first time around I climbed to about 1500 feet in order to clear the pine trees which I did - with 1400 feet to spare and again not enough room to get down. The second time I cleared the pine trees by about 30 centimetres and completed the landing about 20 metres up the strip. As I came to a stop I could see my father running down the paddock waving his arms in a fairly agitated state. I did not know what to expect. Was he furious at my foolishness or was he thrilled with my daring? He was beaming. He leaned into the open cockpit, shook my hand and asked me if I wanted to have another go now that I had the hang of it. He was a good man; an irresponsible parent, but a good man. I declined the offer, climbed out white and shaking.

I learnt some valuable lessons that day. First and foremost, a little knowledge is a dangerous thing. Second, and perhaps more important, it is a good thing every now and again - whether it is a conscious decision or not - to step outside your comfort zone. I come to this Chamber without a great deal of legislative experience, but what I lack in that area I believe is compensated by strong family foundations, by a long business and professional record, a

connection to people beyond social and political lines and a commitment to the people of Windermere. They have handed me this responsibility and whatever my future holds in this place, I will act with the people of Windermere foremost in my mind.

While I am excited and genuinely humbled to be standing here today I must admit one of the most common questions I received as I campaigned around the electorate was - 'Why?' Why would I forsake what might be the best job in the world for one here in Parliament, in politics?

The answer to this question is multi-layered. It resides in jobs and opportunity, energy and the Tamar River, but above all it lies in Tasmania and her people. I have been extremely fortunate in my work life, as one of the people who has truly made a living doing what they love. I was a jackaroo who became a journalist, a journalist who became a fisherman - not just an ordinary fisherman, a professional recreational fisherman. The past 20 years spent travelling around Tasmania, mainland Australia, and indeed, on occasions, exotic locations overseas has been a joy. *Hook, Line and Sinker*, the fishing show, is now in its twenty-first year of continuous production and its sixteenth year as a nationally aired program, which I suspect, in the annals of Tasmanian television production, is getting up there.

I recall when we struck our first national broadcast deal. We sat down with the big city network executives who told us we could have the slot as long as there was not too much Tasmanian content in the show; remember - only 2 per cent of the population. It is fair to say we took that advice with the grain of salt that it deserved. Tasmania has always been the star of *Hook, Line and Sinker*. Last year, during COVID-19 we produced a series that had nothing but Tasmanian locations in it and it was one of our best rating series ever.

Television has been a wonderfully varied career - the cut and thrust of the newsroom, a decade spent working with the forest and wood products sector in every state and territory in the land. And of course, who could forget the children's TV wars of 1994, when TasTV's Boss Poss squared off against the northern rival, Howie the Yowie? Now, for any members who are not aware of the detail, our absent President has intimate knowledge of those TV wars. Sadly both those programs and many others have disappeared from our screens. A Tasmanian program is a rare thing. Whether it is TV, print or online, local voices are important and we are poorer for their loss.

While I am predominantly known in the electorate and around the state for my work in television, my first foray into the world of business, in my early 20s, was in fact in public transport - a school bus run which served families in Hillwood, Windermere, Swan Bay and Dilston. The business grew and more runs were added: Lebrina, Turners Marsh, White Hills and Upper Blessington, with all but one of my runs within the boundaries of Windermere. I can tell you from personal experience it is a great way to get to know an area and its people, to ferry the kids to and from school. I can also tell you that halfway up the White Hills hill is an inconvenient spot to replace the clutch plate in a Bedford bus.

The electorate of Windermere is, of course, diverse. From rolling hills of Relbia in the south to the coastal plains of George Town in the north, in rough terms a 60-kilometre-long by 30-kilometre-wide section of regional Tasmania that follows the eastern side of the Tamar River. It is rich in a variety of assets. To use education as an example, there are 22 schools, that is in the order of 6000 children receiving primary or secondary to year 12 education in Windermere. Along with the schools, there is the Alanvale campus of TasTAFE, the Newnham

and exciting Inveresk campuses of UTAS and the unmatched suite of research and teaching facilities on offer at the Australian Maritime College (AMC).

The AMC holds a special place in my heart. A few years ago I enrolled in the business school at the college. As I travelled around the country making my fishing show, I was able to complete a degree in maritime management and logistics. Tasmania is served by a long, complex supply chain. I believe it is useful to have an understanding of the mechanics of that process. Windermere itself has a number of industries which rely on the smooth running of those supply chains, for traditional beef, lamb and wool. It is one of the state's most productive fruit growing regions, traditionally apples and pears, and more recently cherries and berries. It is, of course, as I pointed out to the member for Rosevears, one of Australia's premier wine growing regions, Pipers Brook, Clover Hill, Bay of Fires, to name but a few of the nationally and indeed, internationally significant labels.

Madam Deputy President, Windermere holds the manufacturing, economic engine room of our state, Bell Bay. A tick under 60 per cent of all Tasmania's manufactured exports are produced at Bell Bay. It is and has been for generations a driver of employment and stability for the region. I can also tell you from personal experience the stretch between Bell Bay and Low Head represents one of the finest King George whiting fisheries anywhere in the planet, but that is another story.

Windermere is also among our most socially diverse areas. Much of my campaign effort was spent walking the streets and suburbs of the electorate knocking on doors and asking people to give me their time. It was in fact my favourite campaign activity. There is nothing like a good walk interspersed with some spirited conversations to keep you on your toes and I would like to thank those many people who did give me their time and share their thoughts and issues with me.

Health, housing, jobs and fishing were among the common topics. Often these were a general chat on the state of things, but at other times people would share with me their deeply personal stories. There is a gulf between the people that have the opportunity and wherewithal to enjoy the many gifts that Windemere has to offer and the people who have not.

Since embarking on my campaign, I have had the opportunity to attend a number of industry forums and events and almost without exception there is a common and emerging challenge of labour. The access to enough skilled people to fill the jobs. As an example, Master Builders of Tasmania forecast \$16 billion dollars in private and public construction works over the next ten years. To meet this demand the Tasmanian building and construction workforce needs to grow by 25 per cent during this term of government. That is 6500 well-paid skilled new job opportunities. The story is similar across community and aged care, tourism and hospitality, agriculture and health. Access to a suitably skilled workforce looms as one of the key challenges to meeting forecast growth. While this may be a challenge for industry, for the people of Windermere and the people of Tasmania, I believe it presents enormous opportunity.

While exploring the topics of opportunity in Windermere, I must mention the opportunities I believe exist in the realm of the fast-emerging hydrogen industry. As one of the very rare jurisdictions worldwide that enjoys 100 per cent renewable power, Tasmania is uniquely placed in this area and the potential is immense. If I may, I will use some of my maritime industry knowledge to illustrate the point. Currently, the global shipping fleet burns

350 million tonnes of fuel oil each year, but the industry has a stated commitment to halve omissions by 2050. To do this, it will require an alternative fuel source and hydrogen - in the form of green ammonia - is being locked in as the lead technology to achieve this omissions reduction. This represents an emerging market in the hundreds of millions of tonnes and shipping is just one such example. Bell Bay currently enjoys three critical early adopter advantages; renewable power, abundant fresh water and a deepwater port. While these factors are in our favour, this will be a highly competitive space. To realise this opportunity, we will need to pursue it. It is my great hope we will see Bell Bay and the Tamar as key assets in Australia's renewable energy future.

Another of my great hopes lies at the other end of the Tamar Estuary. For the past 40 years of my life the river has been a key reason for choosing to live in Launceston. For me and thousands of others it has been at the centre of recreation, sporting and leisure activities, early mornings rowing, Wednesday night sailing, summer days waterskiing and fishing. The river has been a pivotal asset to the people of Launceston and beyond. In its current state however, many of those activities have been either lost or seriously curtailed.

The Launceston and Henley rowing regatta was on 6 February 2021 - I believe the 180th running of this annual event - it was late in the program and my wife Amanda and I stood on the bank watching an unfolding drama. One of the boats, a single scull had midrace become stuck in the mud. At this stage it did not look like mud, there was a centimetre or two of water over the top of the mud, but not enough to float the boat. In the ensuing 20 minutes or so it took to organise a rescue, the boat was high and dry, 15 or 20 metres from the water's edge. The end result was a 15-year-old rower having to crawl through the stinky mud - her words - on her belly to the rescue boat. I understand there is no silver bullet and I am a believer in science above all things, but I also believe the Tamar is the heart of our city. For the Tamar, we can do better.

Watching from the bank, my decision to stand in the electorate of Windermere was galvanised on that day. Four-and-a-half months down the track and here we are. This has been anything but a solo pursuit. There are people I would like to thank. To my old friend, Tim Robertson, you planted the seed, you managed my expectations. It was a great comfort to have you steering my ship. I have great respect and admiration for our Premier, Peter Gutwein. Thank you for your strong leadership, your wise counsel and continued support. To another old friend, the Deputy Premier, Jeremy Rockcliff, who made time for me when literally there was none, thank you very much.

I felt embraced by the Tasmanian Liberal Party. My cards were stamped at a pretty young age when on the farm on Flinders Island Mum and Dad would fly off to buy their rams from Malcolm Fraser. We were then, and remain, a Liberal family. My thanks go to state director, Stuart Smith, state president, Rod Scurrah, party stalwart Dorothy Dehais, faithful lieutenants, Simon Wood, Steve Miller, Geoff and Leah Page. I value the guidance and wisdom of federal member for Bass Bridget Archer; Bass MHAs Sarah Courtney and Michael Ferguson; Lyons MHA Guy Barnett; and Senators Wendy Askew, Richard Colbeck and Eric Abetz.

I should probably confess that up until a couple of weeks ago my last visit to Parliament House was in 1981, with my grade 6 Flinders Island classmates. To the Leader of the Government Leonie Hiscutt; the member for Prosser Jane Howlett; and the staff of the Legislative Council, thank you for your warm welcome. I greatly appreciate it. It has been my privilege to know the member for Rosevears Jo Palmer for many years as a friend and as a

colleague, as a person of the highest integrity; a person, I am learning, of huge political ability and with a very solid sense of humour. I am grateful to the entire Palmer family including Andrew, who cannot be here today. I cannot begin to thank him enough for his warm generosity, for his time and energy.

I acknowledge my business partner, my co-producer, but mostly my friend, Andrew Hart, who has generously supported me through this transition. I cannot imagine a better person to work with over a long period of time. Thank you. To the world's best cameraman, Michael 'Wally' Nesham who captured it all, and to Sally Wilson, the genius editor who stitches it all together, thank you.

Thank you also to the Smith family - Harry, Jan, Raymond and Jacinta; the wider Duigan family - my sisters, Kate and Megan and cousins John, Jenny and Mick. Thanks also to my mum and dad who are sadly no longer with us. They gave me a great start, and I thank you for giving me that start and the confidence to have a go, as well as the humility to understand that it is better to have tried and failed than not to have tried at all.

Of course, my family - my girls, Millie, Imogen and Eliza. Unfortunately Imogen is not here today, she is dealing with not one, but two, year 11 exams. Madam Deputy President, you know things are good at home when your three teenage daughters agree to go wobbleboarding with you in an election campaign. Girls, you make me so proud, you often surprise me and I love to watch you grow. Finally, Amanda, my wife, my partner. I would not be standing here today without your strength, your continued love, support and belief in me. Thank you. I would not have done it without you.

Members, colleagues and friends, I thank you for your attendance. To the people of Windermere, thank you for your faith and Madam Deputy President, I note the Governor's speech.

Members - Hear, hear.

Madam DEPUTY PRESIDENT - I take this opportunity to commend the member for Windermere on his inaugural speech. The manner in which he delivered it had a very good mix of humour, history and humility. He spoke about those important influences in his life and the matters of importance to the people who put him here. I am sure you will do a fine job in representing them. I am sure I can speak on behalf of all of us in saying that we look forward to your further contributions - which will not be uninterrupted.

[4.01 p.m.]

Ms LOVELL (Rumney) - Madam Deputy President, it gives me great pleasure to make a brief contribution in response to the Governor's Address. It has been quite some time since we were in this place, turning our minds to those issues that matter most to Tasmanians.

I wish to acknowledge the traditional owners and continuing custodians of the land on which we meet in this Parliament and of my electorate, the Tasmanian Aboriginal community. I pay my respect to elders, past and present, and acknowledge that sovereignty was never ceded. I was very pleased to see the Government's commitment to a pathway towards Treaty. It has been a very long time - far too long - since there has been any significant commitment to Treaty from a state government. While I am pleased to see the commitment made, I will be watching closely to ensure this work progresses without delay.

The appointment of Professor Kate Warner AC and Professor Tim McCormack to undertake this important piece of work is a smart and sensible choice. I have confidence that Professor Warner, supported by Professor McCormack, will conduct this work with the respect and importance that it deserves.

I wish to acknowledge and pay tribute to Professor Warner for her tenure as governor of Tasmania. Professor Warner was well known in the community for her commitment to Tasmanians, her warmth and approachability as well as her inclusive nature. Personally, I admired her willingness to speak openly about issues that may have been deemed by others to be somewhat pushing boundaries for a representative of the monarchy. I have long been appreciative of Professor Warner's approach and believe she conducted herself at all times with dignity of the highest order.

I extend my congratulations to her Excellency Barbara Baker AC on her appointment as Tasmania's 29th Governor, and I wish her and Professor Don Chalmers well for the coming term. I am very much looking forward to observing how our 29th Governor takes on the role, especially after meeting her Excellency and Professor Chalmers earlier this week.

I welcome and congratulate the member for Windermere as the newest member to the Chamber. I am very confident that he will enjoy his time here. He will be challenged, and there will be times when he will find it difficult. There will also be times when he feels as though he has always been here. However, my experience has been that there is enormous goodwill and support among members in this place and I am sure he will find his feet quickly. I also congratulate him on a very warm and heartfelt inaugural speech, and wish him well. I look forward to his further contributions.

I congratulate the member for Mersey for his re-election, unopposed, as others have noted, which is a testament to his commitment to his electorate and the obvious esteem in which he is held. I know this past term, particularly the past few years, have not been without significant challenges for you; but the enormous amount of work that you undertook to bring about an important moment in the history of the Parliament of Tasmania has benefitted us all.

I also congratulate Mr President for his re-election as member for Derwent and also as President of the Legislative Council. I see all the time how deeply he cares about his electorate and about the Legislative Council as an institution, and as a group of individual members. His re-election to both of those roles is no surprise to me.

Congratulations to the member for Montgomery on your re-appointment as Leader of the Government in this place - again, a testament to the work you do wrangling us all and guiding legislation through this place. I congratulate the member for Rosevears on your appointment as Deputy Leader. Congratulations to the member for Prosser on your appointment as Minister for Sport and Recreation, Racing, Women and Small Business.

I congratulate the new members elected to the House of Assembly: the member for Bass, Janie Finlay; the member for Franklin, Dean Winter; and member for Clark, Kristie Johnston and all members on their re-election.

I also acknowledge the former member for Franklin, Alison Standen, and former member for Bass, Jennifer Houston, two women who both worked hard as local members for their

electorates and as part of the Labor team. They represented their electorates with passion and dedication and their contributions will be missed. As I said earlier, it has been quite a long break since we had the last year in the parliament and I am pleased we can get back to focusing on the issues that matter most to Tasmania.

The Government was re-elected on 1 May and I congratulate them for that, but they were elected with a list of commitments for which, as both a member of the Opposition and a member of this place, I will be holding them to account. Nobody needs reminding about the dire state of our health system. In the seven years the Liberal government has been in power in this state we have had waitlists for elective surgery blow out from less than 8000 people to now over 12 000 people. The waitlist to see specialists has progressively deteriorated and is now at over 51 000 people.

I watch the statistics as they are updated each quarter and every time I am shocked to see those numbers getting worse. More people are waiting longer for more surgeries and more treatments. Our ambulance response times are among the worst in the country. Our emergency department waiting times and our health outcomes are poorer. On almost every measure we are performing poorly compared to the rest of the country. On almost every measure our system is deteriorating further and further. On almost every measure more Tasmanians are suffering for longer from chronic pain with conditions that significantly impact their lives. It is just not good enough. More people are waiting longer for oral health services, just to see a dentist. The waitlist for an adult to see a dentist in the public system, according to the Government's own data in December last year, was sitting at over 15 000 people. Inability to access dental treatment can result in constant severe pain. It can impact on your ability to obtain work, to socialise, and to eat even a reasonably healthy, let alone enjoyable, diet and yet we leave so many Tasmanians to suffer in this way. It is not good enough.

The commitments the Government has made in health I will monitor closely, as I know many members will, as this is an area of the greatest concern to many of us. But I am disappointed by the lack of vision of our health system, the lack of investment, again, in preventative health and early intervention measures. We cannot keep doing the same things the same way and expect different results. It is not good enough. Tasmania needs more and Tasmania deserves more.

Housing and homelessness are deeply troubling issues for Tasmania. The Government has promised 3500 new social housing properties. We have heard these promises before, year after year, and year after year we have seen this Government fail to deliver time and time again while more Tasmanians are living without a safe place to call home, sleeping in tents, on couches, in sheds and garages and in caravans. We have all heard the stories. It is heartbreaking. More people are waiting longer and longer to be housed - over a year for even the most urgent application. It is not good enough and the Government cannot continue with their track record of failing to deliver their promises in this area.

There have been a huge number of infrastructure commitments made. We have the 2020 infrastructure budget. We were going to be building our way out of the pandemic and having made these promises to Tasmanians, the Government now must deliver. Our communities need delivery, they need improvements to infrastructure, not more empty promises followed by delay after delay.

Something else that became clear to me throughout the election campaign was the importance Tasmanians place on publicly owned and delivered services, institutions and assets. A well-resourced public sector with secure, direct employment is vital to ensure that critical public services can continue to be provided for Tasmania - public services provided by the state for the state.

Our state assets and institutions should remain in public ownership. Too many Tasmanians are in some form of insecure work which makes it harder for Tasmanian families to meet rising costs of living. Without job security, people worry about paying bills, buying food, and have little chance of not just buying, but even renting a home. The Government should be looking for opportunities to bring jobs back into direct employment, rather than relying on contract work and labour hire in the public service. To ensure people working in these critical roles, such as security, in our courts, in our hospitals, can be employees of the state. Too many Tasmanians are underemployed, while employment data on the surface gives the impression of improvements, the method of reporting means workers with as little as one hour of employment in the reference week are defined as employed. According to the ABS around 25 000 Tasmanians want more hours from their employer. An exploitation of workers continues to occur in Tasmania, particularly amongst vulnerable groups of workers, such as students, young people, migrants and women, involving wage theft, racism, illegal and unsafe working conditions.

The COVID-19 pandemic highlighted more than ever the importance of secure meaningful safe employment. And while they were a number of measures put in place to support people throughout the pandemic, this is an opportunity for reform. It is not enough to think the worst of it is over and we can go back to the way we were doing things before. We have seen the problems with that approach with recent outbreaks in Victoria. The union movement has been fighting for more secure work for years. We just lived through the best real-life demonstration of why that is so important. So, now is the chance to take action. And the state government can absolutely play a role in that and I would encourage them to do so. Start by looking at how public sector employment is managed in Tasmania. Now it is our chance.

Tasmania deserves better than what this Government has delivered over the seven years in power. They have been granted another 4 years by the electorate. Four years to improve their track record of failing to deliver and of outcomes in health and housing getting worse and worse. Tasmania deserves better and I look forward to continue to work with members in this place to ensure this Government is a government that can be trusted, that is of their highest integrity and delivers for our state. I note the Governor's Address.

[4.12 p.m.]

Ms SIEJKA (Pembroke) - Madam Deputy President, I too, would like to congratulate the Governor on her appointment and thank her for her address and to the former governor professor Kate Warner AC for her contributions. I also take this opportunity to congratulate the Government, Premier, and those who have formed part of the Cabinet; and particularly congratulate the member for Montgomery on her appointment as Leader of the Government in the Legislative Council, the member for Prosser on her appointment as minister and the member for Rosevears on being appointed the Deputy Leader.

I congratulate the newly elected member for Windermere for his election to the Legislative Council and on his speech which I quite enjoyed. It is a shame that Mr President

missed some of those transport stories. I welcome him to the Chamber and look forward to working with him. And to the member for Mersey for his re-election, and of course, to our own President on being re-elected as a member for Derwent and as President.

Given the timing of the election, I also want to briefly mention the former member for Windermere. Mr Dean's work ethic and commitment to the job were undeniable and impressive. Admittedly, he grew on me over time, and I also think he softened somewhat in the past year. I keep expecting to see him in the tearoom with his Crown Casino mug that has been around long before the pokies debate - he always had his Crown Casino mug - or even just going for a walk at the end of the day, which just goes to show how much he really was part of the place here. But I wish him well for his future endeavors.

In her address, her Excellency outlined the agenda for government. The Liberal Party came to the Fiftieth Parliament with a large number of election commitments made to the Tasmanian community. Her Excellency spoke of a number of these ideas, issues and commitments. It is now the Government's third term. They have governed for seven years, plenty of opportunity to tackle many of the wicked problems that for too long Tasmanians have had to put up with.

I agree with the Governor that we are so fortunate to call Tasmania home. I can certainly appreciate a glass half-full point of view. But without acknowledging the many challenges our community faces, we will not ever be able to tackle the problems.

A strong, inclusive and positive future for our state depends on achieving equitable outcomes for our community, particularly those who are our most vulnerable. In Tasmania, one in four people identify as living with a disability, which is the highest percentage in the country. In fact, this is likely to be much higher, as a large number of people with a psychosocial disability may not have reported having a disability in the Census, and some may not have even participated at all.

Additionally, it is well documented that Tasmania has the highest rates of MS, cerebral palsy and autism in the country. Just over 10 000 Tasmanians are eligible for the NDIS. This leaves approximately 90 000 Tasmanians living with a disability, relying on the Tasmanian state Government to provide the care and services they need. Anyone can see that this is a fair chunk of our population, yet the Government has been cutting services and resources to this group of people. Many individuals are not, and never will be, eligible for the NDIS. We have organisations who previously were able to provide support to these people but whose funding has been cut or has now gone entirely. They have been told to apply for federal grants. Of course, grants are time-limited, project-orientated and generally attempt to address a specific concern. Clearly, a grants program is not the answer. This leaves an already marginalised group further marginalised by our system, making it even harder to access health, education and employment opportunities.

For example, many people living with a disability struggle to access public transport or accessible taxis and problems have plagued the taxi subsidy scheme. The latest Human Services Dashboard reported more than 3800 people on the housing waitlist. Of these, one third are recognised as living with a disability. Another issue is the increased demand in both the disability support and aged care sectors. There is a jobs and skills shortfall of up to 5000 workers in Tasmania in these industries. The peak body has been asking for investment into a workforce development strategy, something that has continued to be ignored.

A potential consequence of all of this is added pressure on Tasmanian carers. More than 80 000 Tasmanians provide care and support to family members and friends. As our population ages, demand for informal care is projected to increase rapidly, outstripping the supply of informal carers. Improving the quality of life for carers not only provides them with support and recognises their selfless work, it improves the quality of the care relationship.

We do not often hear about the work carers do and the personal sacrifices that they make. Carers need support and recognition. Their work is crucial and their contribution great. Whilst it is good to see that the Government intends to introduce a carer's recognition charter, there is clearly more that needs to be done to support this cohort. Carers often find their work of caring means that they are not able to participate in paid work to the extent that they would like to, or need to, to provide for their families. Whilst recognition is a wonderful and much-needed piece of work, the Government must consider what other ways they can take to support and better resource our carers. Noting the support to be extended to kinship carers, it is clear that more still needs to be done.

As we are all well aware, Tasmania has an ageing population. Older Tasmanians make a significant contribution to our community's prosperity, cultural richness and wellbeing. They provide a wealth of valuable experience, knowledge and skills and make a significant economic contribution. Many older volunteers perform vital roles in organisations and community groups. Many others make a positive economic contribution as primary carers for their spouse or grandchildren. It is key that we harness the valuable input and resources of older Tasmanians and identify ways to keep them engaged and participating in community life.

As the Governor said, a strong, connected, healthy and safe community is important. Unfortunately, many older Tasmanians continue to face barriers, preventing their full social and economic participation, as are other vulnerable cohorts, such as those living with a disability.

We must ensure that we are fostering age-friendly communities in all aspects and if we do, it is the community that will ultimately win. It is important that work is done to ensure older Tasmanians' mental health, with social isolation and loneliness being a significant concern, particularly given this year of COVID-19.

Age discrimination, including the language used around ageing, has predominantly been negative, implying that older people are a burden. Mature aged workers are reporting more discrimination in the workplace. The Government needs to tackle this age discrimination in the workforce and to provide resources for businesses to help them become ageing-workforce ready, an opportunity missed.

The past year has shown us how vitally important it is to prepare older Tasmanians to be digitally ready, with the digital divide being of particular concern in rural and remote areas. Elder abuse is a growing problem that can occur in the privacy of a person's home or in aged care institutions. A transparent and independent complaints system for investigating and addressing elder abuse is crucial. Tasmania now lags the opportunity behind other jurisdictions.

There is clear evidence that there is greater demand for housing, particularly affordable housing and support for our homeless in Tasmania. It is shameful that this problem has become significantly worse under the responsibility of this Government. Many Tasmanians are

prevented from entering the market and accessing this growth and opportunity. An increase in affordable housing is desperately needed by many in our community. In recent years, we have heard many stories about the difficulty people have in finding affordable and appropriate accommodation.

We have heard from worried, stressed and frightened people who do not know where they and their families will sleep at night. There is so much demand that is unmet by any of the work currently underway. This has very real consequences. Jane, who was placed in temporary accommodation, was given an eviction notice despite having nowhere to go. The purpose of this accommodation was to provide housing until such time as an appropriate, alternative was available. Jane presented to my office, terrified of what the future would hold for her and her daughter.

Others who have asked for help have tragically been sleeping rough, in their cars or tents in local bushland. Families are being separated because parents struggle to find suitable housing. Unfortunately, there are far more people we do not see who are also in need of support. In Tasmania, we have seen youth homelessness increase significantly in the past decade. We have seen many on the brink of homelessness or who are homeless, where previously they were able to make ends meet.

There are many reasons in addition to a lack of affordable housing that prevent people from being able to live in safe and appropriate accommodation. For example, violence, abuse and an unsafe environment at home are key contributing factors as to why young people may need to leave home and seek to live independently. These experiences can be traumatic and leave lasting mental health issues and a lack of support networks.

In my view, the Government has not made nearly enough effort to address these complex issues that contribute to homelessness, despite the number of people suffering continuing to rise.

Under this Government we have seen housing waitlists continue to grow, building targets not met, and even more people needing help to put food on the table. Too often, universal design principles are not considered with the result being a significant lack of appropriate and affordable housing for some of our more vulnerable cohorts.

Access to housing is a human right and the Government is not doing enough to ensure that this human right is provided to all in our community.

The member for Elwick raised numerous concerns regarding young people, such as the ongoing issues relating to Brahminy, the wider youth justice system, young people in care and educational attainment. I concur with all of the issues raised by the member and for the sake of the Chamber I will not be repetitive.

Whilst it was heartening to see that a health and wellbeing strategy has finally been committed to by this Government after many years, I am somewhat disappointed that the opportunity for a much broader, holistic and interconnected piece of work examining the needs of young people is being missed. In my view, the strategy would be more valuable if it were to consider other key aspects that affect this cohort such as youth unemployment or access to transport, especially given the Governor's statements regarding the Government's priorities in the areas of employment, education, skills and training. The youth unemployment rate is 14.8

per cent and in the south of the state it is 22 per cent - a shocking figure. According to YNOT, every young person who remains unemployed for 2.9 years is estimated to cost our communities nearly \$330 000. Many more young people are underemployed. Of those working, many would like more hours of work and many have had to take jobs that are casualised, less secure than if they had a permanent position.

There are many young people who are keen to work and contribute. However, some are not job-ready and require further assistance. Young people need targeted support to enter the workforce before they become disengaged, disadvantaged and lose hope. Additional complications or misguided system changes, such as a privatised TasTAFE, will not help if the Youth Connectors pilot is to be a success. Of course, I welcome that investment but it really does need to connect with the other pieces of work.

Job opportunities such as apprenticeships, traineeships across industries such as tourism, agriculture and fisheries, cannot be looked at in isolation. Completion rates of apprenticeships and traineeships are low and there are many things that can be done to improve retention and completion for better outcomes for young Tasmanians. Businesses also need to be encouraged to understand the value young people can contribute to their workplace, particularly if they have been out of work for a period of time or are entering the workforce for the first time. A targeted and tailored approach is needed. The funding of the Youth Connectors pilot is welcome but, of course, the devil is always in the detail and, in my view, in the implementation. I hope that these two pieces of work are not done in isolation in the hope of making a real difference for our young people.

The last time I participated in an Address-in-Reply I remarked how wonderful it was to see more women in parliament than men and to see women in leadership positions. Some of that has changed. Whilst this achievement was celebrated, I note that we still look forward to the day when we can celebrate our parliament for its diversity across all levels, be it gender, cultural diversity, age, disability or religion. I note the proposed diversity action plan and will watch the progress of this and, hopefully, the next time I am giving one of these replies, things will have shifted in that regard.

In addition to those issues already raised, there are a number of key concerns that I will closely monitor on behalf of the community I represent. Within Pembroke there are many who remained concerned and disillusioned about the implementation of the statewide planning scheme, issues about Rosny Hill, Kangaroo Bay and other sites. The opaque nature of the Kangaroo Bay development and concern over developments on public land has led to grassroots advocacy from active and coordinated community members.

Much of the angst of these groups is the lack of opportunities for them to be involved in the consultation of key projects. There are limited resources for members of the community to seek information and to engage in planning processes, which leads to increasing frustration. Issues previously raised here that greatly concern my constituents are still yet to see action, such as the dreaded Mornington roundabout and the Shoreline intersection. I actually cannot believe however many years on that action has not been taken and there is not even a clear plan to fix this dangerous intersection.

The ferry system is only now making some progress. At this stage it seems that the ferry service has been considered in isolation to many other factors that will determine its success,

such as parking and coordinated public transport. It is no wonder that people are frustrated with these things.

I will continue to advocate on behalf of these issues for the people of Pembroke. As with my colleagues in this House, I intend to monitor the Government's progress in this term. I thank you, Madam Deputy President, and look forward to other members' contributions.

[4.29 p.m.]

Dr SEIDEL (Huon) - Madam Deputy President, I begin by congratulating Mr Craig Farrell on his emphatic return to this House as the member for Derwent and for being elected its President pretty much unopposed. He has truly been outstanding in both roles and I am pleased that he has received recognition from his community and from us, his colleagues here in the upper House of parliament. I am looking forward to seeing him back in the Chamber, hopefully next week.

I welcome and congratulate the new member for Windermere on his election to this Chamber on 1 May. I am looking forward to working with him for many years to come. I am sure he will find his new position exciting and rewarding. I acknowledge the significant contribution that the former member for Windermere, Mr Ivan Dean, made to this House. It was a privilege sitting next to him in this Chamber. The diligence and professionalism he has demonstrated pretty much each and every day has been inspirational.

Honourable members, I have now moved into the former member for Windermere's old parliamentary office. I am pleased to advise you that he did not leave any smoking products or fox paraphernalia behind.

Madam DEPUTY PRESIDENT - They are probably there. You just have not seen them yet.

Dr SEIDEL - I am not going to comment. Congratulations to the member for Mersey on being returned unopposed to this House. Your hard work and dedication have been recognised by your community. It must be nice celebrating your re-election before a single vote was actually cast. By introducing legislation on voluntary assisted dying and carrying it successfully through this Chamber, you have demonstrated to all Tasmanians what this House, and indeed, all members here are capable of and I thank you for that.

Congratulations to her Excellency, the Honourable Barbara Baker AC on being appointed Governor of Tasmania. I trust her Excellency will meet the substantial demands of her new role with distinction.

Madam Deputy President, I thank you for the opportunity to respond to the Governor's Address. Of course, I am aware that the Governor's Address was conceived, written and approved by the Government itself. That is why the self-congratulatory undertone was puzzling at times. I probably should not have been surprised. When superlatives such as 'significant and historic outcome', or unprecedented personal endorsements are used within the first 100 words of a speech, I really cannot help myself but point out that the Government did indeed win the election, but it also won an election that Tasmania did not have to have in the first place.

Throughout the campaign the Premier mentioned over and over again that the Government had unresolved business. He pointed out the many issues that needed to be addressed. I think it was fair enough, but the role of Government is actually to govern. It is about getting on with the job. It is about calling for an election when absolutely necessary, not when politically opportune.

To tell the Speaker of the House that she could no longer remain a member of the Premier's own party three years after being the star recruit and candidate, using that as an excuse to advise the former governor that the Government had lost its majority on the Floor of parliament, only to then recruit a former member of the opposition who turned Independent, only to become the star recruit within 24 hours, was just odd at best. Or as many commentators said, Tasmanian politics at its worst.

Going to an election one year early for fabricated reasons is one thing, holding the election on the same day as the three regular elections for the Legislative Council was historic and unprecedented. I do not mean that in a good way. I have to say, after the spectacle, fixed-term elections for the House of Assembly does not sound like a terrible idea after all.

Tasmanians appreciate an active and vibrant democracy and a political contest. They do not appreciate political spectacles. It turns out, after the election not much has changed for the Government. Same number of seats, same people, same stable majority they had before, so it is more of the same, but how stable would the majority be? I guess only time will really tell.

Tasmanians are rightly wondering what this was actually all about and personally, I am still a bit puzzled by it all, but it is the Government that dictates the narrative. It is the Government that has the speeches written. It looks like the Government is very much ready for the first 100 days. The first 100 days - it sounds like the last 2555 days, the last seven years, are meant to be forgotten. Well, not so fast. Seven years is a long time. Many patients waiting to see a neurosurgeon for just as long can attest to that. Their lived experience is real and this Government should not even try to whitewash its own record. It should not try to hide it left too many Tasmanians behind under its watch.

The Premier reshuffled the deckchairs again. It is not that new members of parliament were commissioned to become ministers of the Crown. No, it has been a switch and swap.

We now have the third health minister in three years. What does it mean for being held to account? What does it mean for taking responsibility?

A stable government in my opinion looks different so apparently, after seven years of making us be the healthiest state of the nation, annual record investments in health, record employment of medical staff, setting up the Mersey Community Hospital as the elective surgery epicentre of Tasmania, redesigning the health system under the One State, One Health System program, years of consulting on the so-called Our Healthcare Future initiative, we are now back to square one.

It is all starting again now. A flurry of activity within 100 days. Even within 30 days now being announced. More focus group approved buzz words such as 'elective surgery blitz', 'roundtable', 'MOUs', have been recycled over the last weeks. To me, it sounds more of the same. To me, it sounds like the Government really is trying to overcompensate for its shortcomings in the last seven years.

Why, for example, would you rush in a hurry to sign an MOU for the Calvary Hospital co-location within 30 days of the election when the proposal for it has indeed been sitting on the minister's desk since 2018? The proposal has not changed. Labor actually supported the proposal at the last election three years ago. That hospital could have been built already. That hospital could and should be commissioned and operational right now. How do you actually explain the inactivity over the last three years? How do you do it?

I am sure that I will never receive an answer to that. There certainly was no answer or acknowledgement in the Governor's Address. Let us be clear, the proposal for the co-located Calvary Hospital in Launceston has been gathering dust in the minister's office for well over 1000 days. That is unbelievable and it is disappointing.

Labor took a comprehensive health action plan to the election. Our initiatives were supported and endorsed by many health peak bodies, academic colleges and health unions such as the Australian Medical Association, the Rural Doctors Association, the Australian General Practitioners Association, the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners, the Pharmacy Guild, the Health and Community Services Union and the Australian Nursing and Midwifery Federation.

Good health policies are developed by co-design and they are based on best evidence that can at times be confronting and it is at times difficult to communicate. Good policies are usually more than just sound bites.

In a speech at the National Press Club a few years ago I said designing good health policies is a bit like making a cake. The core ingredients, the substance, has to be evidence-based. The flavours can be political but if it is all about flavours and not substance, everybody gets sick.

On Tasmania's health policy, Martyn Goddard said in the *Mercury* just three days before the May election, that Labor's health policy action plan was the only comprehensive health reform program on offer. He said if successfully implemented it would be the most significant reform in this state's health system in half a century.

I have offered my support to the minister, Mr Rockliff and am grateful he found the time to meet me over coffee. I also want to be clear that just because he paid for my flat white on one occasion, does not mean that I am going to rubberstamp each and every one of his policy initiatives over the next four years.

Mr Valentine - At least you are transparent.

Dr SEIDEL -That is right. There has to be a grain of decency left in politics and I really hope that the Government can find ways to work sincerely with the opposition parties and independents in both Houses of parliament to make a meaningful and lasting difference to our health system and to the wellbeing of all Tasmanians.

There are many policy areas a government and opposition can fight over, but it should not be health. We are losing too much time and we are losing Tasmanians. Let us work together. Let us have health policies informed by meaningful debate, logic and common sense. Let us have health policies informed by evidence, confronting as this may be. Let us have

health policies designed to stand the test of time and political cycles. Let us have health policies designed for Tasmanians with Tasmanians.

I am offering my commitment here today in the first session of the Fiftieth Parliament. Let us overcome political barriers. Let us work together on health for the benefit of all Tasmanians.

Mr Valentine - Hear, hear.

Dr SEIDEL - And on that I conclude my remarks and note the Governor's Address.

[4.42 p.m.]

Mr VALENTINE (Hobart) - Madam Deputy President, while I have offered my congratulations personally, here in this Chamber I formally congratulate Her Excellency the Honourable Barbara Baker on her appointment to such an important position in the formal structures of governance of our state. I am sure Her Excellency and, indeed, her husband, Professor Don Chalmers in support, will carry out her duties well and will no doubt make the role her own, as, indeed, did our former governor, the honourable Kate Warner with her husband, Dick Warner, in support. I wish both well - the honourable Kate Warner and Dick Warner as they settle into life after Government House.

It must be a rather surreal experience now, not having to wake up and look at the diary and think, 'I have to be in half a dozen places today before I have dinner tonight'. It will take some getting used to, but I am sure they will.

That leads me to the important acknowledgement of the Indigenous members of our community that today we are on the land of the muwinina people who inhabited this area nipaluna/Hobart, suffering invasion and dispossession and against great odds over many years Aboriginal Tasmanians still continue to maintain their culture.

That is something our previous governor always said whenever she was at a function and she was asked to speak, she would go through that - suffering invasion and dispossession. Reflecting on that I can only start to imagine what life must have been like back in that day when they first encountered foreign people on their shores intent on taking over their lands, who slaughtered their wallaby and kangaroos, slaughtered Aboriginals too, with their muskets from a distance. Not a fair fight I imagine. It certainly was a different type of encounter to that of the French some years earlier, who thankfully were mainly interested in recording the culture that existed here at the other end of the earth from their homeland.

However, when the British arrived, how frightened the little Aboriginal children must have been as they saw their parents and siblings suffer at the hands of the invaders. We can only imagine how we would react if some foreign power were to try and do the same here to us today. Would we fight back? I imagine we would do - as the Aboriginal people did. Those encounters were variously referred to as the frontier wars or the Black War. Many lost their lives, as did quite a number of the invaders.

It was reported in March of this year that the Aboriginal community and the RSL have agreed to work together to institute an annual day of commemoration, dedicated to those who lost their lives in those wars and from both sides of those conflicts. It seems right for us as a

community to join with the Indigenous people of this island in remembering those who lost their lives during those terrible days and years of conflict.

If that commemoration takes place I am sure it will serve the continuing journey of reconciliation well for us as a community, providing there is joint decision-making with the Aboriginal community. It is obviously a sensitive issue. As a community we must genuinely walk together on that path if we are to see good progress made. It is not to be dictatorial. It has to be genuine camaraderie or strength of purpose from both sides.

As another member noted, we are privileged as a community to have people among us that are from a culture that is over 40 000 years old and could be as old as 60 000 years - one of the oldest continuing civilisations on this planet, who are the original custodians of this land that we are meeting on today. Therefore, it is at the start of this new parliament that I acknowledge them, their elders past and present, and especially any in this Chamber or the other place who may have Aboriginal heritage.

I consider one of the most important aspects of our Governor's speech related to information on how the Government is intending to progress the continued building of a relationship with the Aboriginal people. That is why I dwell on it. We learnt that the Government is engaging our past governor, Professor Warner, to work with the Aboriginal community to talk about ways forward and I wish her well in that regard. It has been way too long since the 2013 Land Hand Back inquiry which some of us were engaged in. I recall the member for McIntyre and possibly yourself, Madam Deputy President, were involved in that Land Hand Back inquiry. We went up to larapuna, to Rebecca Creek.

Madam DEPUTY PRESIDENT - I was. It was the GAB committee inquiry. I do not think any of the others were here at the time.

Mr VALENTINE - No. Perhaps I am showing my age. Nevertheless, it is a long time since there was an active move to address land handbacks and it needs to be resolved. At that time, I spoke about my own ancestry, and that I am a fifth or sixth generation Tasmanian, and - I think - a seventh generation Australian. I reflected on those who were Indigenous and remarked that allowing around 25 years for the span of a generation, the Tasmanian Aboriginals have been here for over 1600 generations. Some might say it is 3000 if you go right out to 60 000 and if you say it is 20 years a generation which it might have been for the most part of that time. Our time here on this land really counts as seconds against the backdrop of such Aboriginal habitation. We owe it to them, as a parliament, to do all we can to steer a path that will see us provide the respect to Aboriginal Tasmanians that they deserve. We need to deal with matters that the speech referred to, such as truth-telling and treaty.

The Governor referred to the 1 May election. I congratulate our new member for Windermere. He will find the processes and procedures fascinating, indeed stimulating. I do not expect he will learn it all in two minutes. Indeed, I am still learning. There are some committees that I have not been on. They all have their nuances and quirks and members learn these things as they go through. I expect at the end of my present term - which is likely to be my last, just for the record - in three years time there will still be things that I have not uncovered.

I congratulate our President on his return to both this House and the chair as President, as well as the member for Mersey, Mike Gaffney. Contested or not, it is a testament to the

community's faith and trust in you. I simply believe that no one was willing to get metaphorically beaten up at the polls by facing you, to be quite honest. Well done. I congratulate our Premier on the personal endorsement he received. It must be most affirming for him to receive such a mark of confidence from his own electorate, as indeed it will have been for the other members of parliament re-elected to serve the people. I, too, congratulate new members, Kristie Johnston, Janie Finlay and Dean Winter. I am sure it is not lost on them the absolute privilege it is to be elected to represent their community in the other place.

To Rebecca White, I would like to congratulate her for keeping her focus while under significant pressure, all while approaching the birth of her baby, which is due tomorrow. I am sure we all wish her well. I congratulate David O'Byrne and wish him well. No doubt he will put his own mark on that role. For those whose terms have ended at this election I wish you well in whatever path you choose to pursue in your careers. Of course I speak firstly of Ivan Dean. He is probably the member with whom I most often disagreed, to be honest. I have not checked out Kevin Bonham's latest.

Madam DEPUTY PRESIDENT - I think Kevin Bonham would agree.

Mr VALENTINE - I did agree with him on many occasions; just not as often as I disagreed with him. I valued his opinion. Like the member for Launceston, I had lots of banter with him. I was occasionally told I should have simply held my peace instead of lengthening the exchanges. It is called succumbing to temptation.

Ms Rattray - Perhaps your former seat partner should have had more influence on you.

Mr VALENTINE - Well, that is right, yes. I will miss him in this Chamber and his wisdom on policing matters, for sure, I will. He always had a different perspective. Even though I did not agree with his perspective, it probably strengthened my own, hearing another view come across. On occasion, it might persuade me to think differently about the matter.

Ms Rattray - Interestingly, his views often came from personal example and experience. It was really quite enlightening.

Mr VALENTINE - I also acknowledge the efforts of the previous Speaker, Sue Hickey, who - like the song - did it her way, for what she saw as the betterment of society, and also Alison Standen and Jennifer Houston. I thank them for their service in the parliament. I am sure many will have appreciated the assistance they were able to provide in their roles.

I realise the Government may claim a mandate on a number of their policies. My firm view is - and it has not changed - that it is a mandate to place things on the agenda, not to have us, in this place, simply rubberstamp them. It is incumbent on us to continue this scrutiny in an effort to see the best legislation implemented for Tasmania. This is even if the major parties agree on certain legislation, which means it will automatically flow through this place which to me is very disappointing. With due respect to people who have been re-elected, it is disappointing we now have a situation that if major parties agree downstairs, we can say what we like up here but it is not likely to change the outcome too much. We might see some change, some amendments accepted or whatever, but that really disturbs me. For good legislation we cannot simply accept promises made during the election campaign with all the positives promoted but the negatives remaining unscrutinised. We must scrutinise.

This House, as I have often said, goes through every clause in a bill and it is so important that occurs. How many bills have we seen come through this place where we have picked up errors or amended fundamental components to improve them? This House must continue to exist and we have to do our best to see that scrutiny continue. It may be, as we have read in the press not that long ago in an article by John Cleary talking about this House, there are attempts to see this House go by the way. That would be an absolutely backward step if we are to do that.

I would be supportive of a formal scrutiny around the whole situation with regard to the calling of the election, but there is one thing that I would want to see - it is with regard to election times and they should be fixed. I find it difficult to understand why a party in power and this is any party of any colour, should be able to choose when they go to the polls. We do not get to choose. It is always the first Saturday in May. We do not get to choose. I know it is not this House I am talking about here. I am talking about the general issue of polling time frames. It should be that it is fixed.

If they do not have the capacity to choose when they go then they will simply orchestrate things earlier and allow it to get an advantage that way but I do not think it is right they should be flexible in that regard. It needs to be a fixed term.

Ms Webb - No other state other than us does it. They are all fixed.

Mr VALENTINE - I have not done that level of scrutiny and is probably one of the reasons why we need to have a good look at how things happen.

Back to the speech. It says there are 25 000 more jobs in Tasmania now than in 2014 when the Government was first elected and more jobs than before COVID-19 hit. That is great. It is a great thing, but it would be interesting to see an evaluation of the nature of those jobs - casual versus permanent, part-time versus full-time split, which sectors? That work will have been done, I am sure of that, but I may have missed it. It may have already been stated but if it is possible, the Leader when she provides her response -

Madam DEPUTY PRESIDENT - She is not responding to this.

Mr VALENTINE - Of course, she is not responding.

Mrs Hiscutt - It may be a question for Parliamentary Research. They might be able to find that out easily enough.

Mr VALENTINE - That is fair. Sorry, of course, there is no response. I forgot about that but it would be interesting to know.

Obviously, when it comes to employment, permanency is an important aspect as people do not make life decisions such as buying houses or cars or indeed taking holidays without knowing the permanency of their employment. It actually inhibits the economy. We can only hope that as the Government stimulates the economy that it has a mind primarily on job permanency, not just temporary employment related to development because at some point growth has to stop; it is not eternal. Growth is not eternal. If it is, we really do have a problem on our hands as a society; there is no question about that.

I have reflected before on the growth paradigm in that it is not sustainable long term, it is simply not and if we think it is we are fooling ourselves. We need to be sustainable and cement in place achievable aims that do not rely so much on growth. Governments do not wish to confront this but, if we do not, society in the long term will eventually pay the price if we do not put our minds to a different paradigm.

It probably needs addressing more at a federal level than at a state level, but whatever the case, if it is not addressed eventually we will go down the gurgler. We need to plan for tomorrow, not create problems for the next generation to fix, blithely going ahead with this growth paradigm, as the world is not a finite thing. We can support a finite number of people.

Yes, as an island we might grow and we might have capacity to grow and to take on more people. You only have to look at the density of Tasmania compared to Holland. They are 64 times as dense as we are. The point is we need to lead in this, we need to be leaders. When we look at housing and how the present environment in real estate sales is shaping up, I despair for our young people who are trying to live an ever-fading Aussie dream of owning their own home.

The headlines trumpet rising prices as if it is a fantastic thing to think our assets are attractive to others and the market is so buoyant. Every time we see that, there are young hopefuls out there who think their dream is so much further away. It really is soul-destroying for them. Yes, it makes investing in rental property worthwhile under the present negative gearing scenarios, but it drives up rents because investors are having to borrow more. Driving up rents equals homelessness for some.

Social housing is so important that we need a better, more efficient way to see people with a roof over their heads. Yes, there are affordable housing programs that seek to improve things, but I am not sure they are designed in such a way that it perpetuates affordability. Once they occupy the property they then, of course, want to capitalise on the ever-increasing value their investment provides and sell it at market value. That is the very thing they are going to want to do to keep pace.

We need to think of a way that governments are involved in capturing some of that value and placing it into affordable projects so others can benefit as the cycle goes on. We need to do it some way like that. There needs to be some clever boffin - and I do not think it is me - that could devise a more sustainable strategy. Perhaps it is in the wings, let us hope so, but something has to happen. The more house prices rise, the more people will be homeless; it is as simple as that. The community is crying out for something to be done.

We were told the Government has adopted a bold agenda in the speech. I sometimes think that means there is likely to be significant community angst created and it is likely to mean significant winners and losers and risks the community as a whole not being brought along on the journey. I can only hope the bold agenda does not result in significant community division as they focus on extractive industries. The community is over it.

When we look back at 2014, I would have thought the forestry debate taught us that. It may suit a government of the day of any colour to capitalise or even create division for political purposes but the impact it has on the community should not be underestimated. The approach to COVID was done in a cooperative manner in large part. We have seen good outcomes as far as community stability is concerned, again in large part.

As the member for Nelson has expressed, it would be good to see a proper 'warts and all' analysis of what worked well and what did not. Some time ago I think you stated that. The community has shown an amazing capacity to adapt and step up to the task of making sure we keep each other safe and supported. Yes, Public Health, from the director down, continue to do an amazing job in keeping the whole thing on an even keel and the Premier still takes a strong unwavering response to the advice he receives and provides that steady but firm focus that continues to bring the community along on this most unusual of journeys.

We have much to be thankful for here in Tasmania and I believe as a result we have become that more caring yet careful society. The question is, if we cooperated so well for COVID, why cannot we approach other things that matter with the same level of cooperation? Even at the service immediately prior to the opening of parliament, for those that attended, the bishop called for cooperation and how powerful it would be for that to occur. I absolutely agree with him on that particular matter and thank him for bringing that to the fore. We have just heard the member for Huon say with respect to the health portfolio that you are prepared and have already sat down with the minister.

It needs to happen and we need to take the angst out of it. We need to sit down and bring our minds together to find the best way forward. If there were rewards for the best ideas rather than how well you can cut the opposing party off at the knees it would be great. I have stated that here on a number of occasions now. It was the member for McIntyre who noted my desire for long-term strategic frameworks that enjoy multi-partisan support.

For the benefit of those members in this Chamber who have not heard my thoughts on this, it is a strategic framework that has various strategies embedded in it, so whichever party is in power, they choose the strategy they want to pursue. Debate might be had on the effectiveness or efficiency of such work in pursuing those strategies, not the big picture, and the parties do not go outside the framework. It is a concept that has the capacity to talk about that with the minister if you choose. That way we are more likely as a state to see those strategies achieved to the benefit of the whole state, given the areas of conflict are reduced.

Others have talked about the concept of long-term strategic frameworks too. I know that and it would be such a game changer. Now is the time. It does not work like that, you hear some say. Well, it will not unless like these COVID times we put our heads together to see how best it might be implemented. We cannot teach our children to respect each other's opinions and work within the family protocols for a harmonious existence and then turn around and demonstrate the opposite in a place like this.

Another part of the bold agenda in the speech was to harness our natural strengths and competitive advantages and realise our true potential. Then they outlined some of those aspects of the bold agenda: advanced manufacturing, agriculture, mineral resources, fisheries, forestry, tourism, arts and iconic events which show our cultural heritage and ingenuity. A number of those are significantly contentious in the extraction industries.

Not all are extractive. Under-recognised is the arts. We think about the performing arts being there for people's enjoyment. There is a lot more to the performing arts than just people performing on a stage. I go to the *Kickstart Arts and Health*, their 2021 state budget submission and you read the different projects they are involved in - urban food project, creative exchange, creative engagement, digital inclusion and access, culturally and linguistically diverse community support, therapeutic jurisprudence, literacy programs, emotional health education,

social engagement, cross-sectoral partnership, peer support groups, health promotion classes, allied health services, consultancy, network weaving, research partnerships, creative advocacy, creative work for the dole and in the pipeline, TAFE partnerships, shower and homelessness support.

That is an arts organisation. Good on Jami Bladel and her people. That is an arts organisation, no longer in my electorate I might say. It is in the member for Elwick's electorate.

Mr Willie - Very close to my house.

Mr VALENTINE - Close to your house. There you go. It points up how the arts can be used in a positive way and that funding the arts is important when you see these sorts of things being achieved. I put that on the record, Leader, just to think more particularly with regard to how the arts might be able to help deliver some of the Government's programs. I am happy to leave that with you to pass on. I am sure that the minister probably has it but you do not know. Nevertheless, it needs to be stated.

The Government's strategy in the Governor's speech, delivered in this House to the whole parliament, is to pursue Marinus Link and the development of a hydrogen production plant. I attended a forum, 'Climate challenges and the path to mitigation', last night. I caught a glimpse from two seats away of the member for Mersey, who has just left the Chamber. He was also there. It was very informative and I think he would agree if he was here, he probably would. They looked at all sorts of scientific facts and shared on all things climate change and strategies being employed. It was organised by the Royal Society and the Australian Academy of Technology and Engineering and it should be interesting. If you are interested in checking that out you can go onto the Royal Society's webpage and they have some YouTube links and they will have a YouTube on it. I urge you to listen to that. It is a very interesting presentation.

With regard to Marinus Link, it was one of the issues brought up and it raised questions for me, given the burgeoning interest in solar and wind energy across our nation and the sense or otherwise of investing in such a link. Before we have a commitment on that course of action, we will have the benefit of further detail and business cases to help us in that space before it comes to this Chamber, which one hopes it does.

One can only hope its viability is well and truly demonstrated before the decision is taken, that it is simply not to mainly benefit those involved in privately generated electricity. To my mind, whatever the outcome, it needs to primarily benefit the Tasmanian community through a reduction in electricity prices and not impact significantly on our environment.

However, I have to say I have yet to hear any murmurs against the strategy of a hydrogen production plant. Yes, it is early days but it would seem to be the type of project that is not likely to have any elements diametrically opposed to the agendas of any party and might serve as a great opportunity for this cooperation the member for Huon was talking about across the spectrum of individuals and parties in the other place.

It would be a great game changer if we could be seen to be coming together on something like that, to iron out the wrinkles, ensure it ticks all the boxes, including environmental sustainability - which I believe the majority of Tasmanians want to see - and provides fair, ongoing returns to the people of Tasmania. There may be visions of a public-private partnership in this area.

I was listening on radio to the CEO of Twiggy Forrest's company - I cannot think of the name of the company - charged with pursuing a hydrogen generation plant. It certainly sounds like an exciting development, being the catalyst for significant environmental benefits when it comes to how the product might be used to reduce greenhouse gas emissions with global benefit. It is the sort of project we should be in, on the face of it, and indeed it is that company's intention. It would seem they have very significant plans to establish such a plant here in Tasmania in the north of the state at Bell Bay, as the member for Windermere said who is not in the Chamber at the moment.

The PESRAC report which was put in place to provide advice to the Government - which they are not bound to take I might say - has a couple of things to say and I want to read one thing on page 63. It is under 6.1. Part of the way down, it says:

The message from all nine of the cross-sector workshops was that, first dot point, Tasmania's environment directly and through brand association will be a major contributor to our future opportunities and therefore to economic and social recovery.

Second dot point:

Doing nothing or modest approaches to sustainability will not cut it in light of global trends.

Third dot point:

To retain Tasmania's premier brand positioning for tourism, export, investment and liveability, our environmental and sustainability credentials need to be stronger than other places across all the domains of energy, emissions, air and water quality, land management, waste and biodiversity.

And last dot point:

Collective action is required by all sectors, governments and communities to ensure our brand is authentic and remains a positive point of difference globally.

They are wise words.

The last thing that I want to read from this and they are by no means the last words under this section, it is just a part of the section:

There was strong support from our consultation for economic development and major investments but there were notes of caution about selling short our long-term environmental advantages in the pursuit of quick wins on the economic front.

How true is that? So, given those views, one of the concerns I have is the pricing of the electricity needed to make this generation plant viable. There are few locations in our nation where such sustainable electricity is available. That indeed is a competitive edge we have.

The concern I have is that we do not simply give it away like we have in the past to attract major industry. Our water is a natural resource and we are blessed with it and have something in the order of 12 per cent of the nation's water. We need to maximise the true value of that resource and not immediately roll over at the sniff of attention from those who could probably buy us as an island. We have to make sure what we have in the resource side of things is to get a fair price for it, because we are one of the few places that has the capacity to be able to produce this green energy at 100 per cent. We want to capitalise on that. Do not let us flick it away because we might get a few jobs. We need to make sure we get the proper return on our investment. We need to maximise that true value.

Another part of the bold agenda is their climate agenda and it talks about the first in Australia to reach net zero emissions and we have reached our 2050 target early for five years in a row. Is the job done? Well, no, it is not. I expect the Premier may understand that. I will be maintaining a keen interest in the progress reports that emanate from the Climate Change Office. We are relying on 1950s developments for our accolades of sustainability. I hope we can see that hydrogen generation plant come into fruition in a way that it improves even further. The job is not done and we can do better. Some will say we are but a small component of what is a global problem. Let us not underestimate the power of being a leader. As I have gone through life, and at the various functions I have attended, I have kept a bit of a diary. It is a diary of Tasmania's firsts. I will read a few; I am not going to go through them all because there are many. At least by doing this now means that we probably do not have to come back for a quorum call tomorrow.

Mrs Hiscutt - No, I still have one more to come.

Mr VALENTINE - To continue - Australia's first circus, Launceston 1847; the first Australian dog show in 1862; the oldest brewery in Australia - in Hobart; the first hydro-electric development of any state - Mount Bischoff in 1883. Hobart was the first Australian capital city to have an electric tramway, in 1893. Tasmania was the first state to formally apologise to the Aboriginal community for past actions connected with the Stolen Generation, that was in 1997; I believe that is the case. Tasmania had the first Congregational church in Australia, in 1832; the first public library in Australia, in 1825; the oldest theatre in Australia, in 1837. The first theatrical performance in Tasmania was on the site of the Welcome Stranger Hotel, 58 Harrington Street, in 1833. The first original Australian play was written in 1834 here in Tasmania; the first wireless, wi-fi apparently was the CSIRO here, in the early 1990s. The first Australian horticultural society was in Launceston in 1838, and the first Australian cook book, that was going back quite a while but I do not have a date for that.

The RHH was the first all-electric hospital in Australia, in 1930. I could go on. We have led for quite some time - including the first laminated tennis racquet, who would have thought that? There are all sorts of things. But the point is, as a small state, some would say, what difference could we possibly make? We can make a heck of a difference. It is what impetus it provides to others that matters. When it comes to climate change - no, we have not made it yet. Yes, we have zero net emissions, but there are still cars and equipment out there burning fossil fuels. We have the opportunity to lead in that regard too.

In conclusion, I will make some comments regarding TasTAFE becoming a GBE, if that is the intention of the Government. It might provide an opportunity for particular expertise to be brought to the table to see some matters progressed, but there is less scrutiny. You get one

chance. You can ask the minister, and the minister says, 'That's up to the board. You had better ask them when it comes to government business enterprise scrutiny.'

I have concerns that more GBEs are created. The workers go on to different awards and they are subject to enterprise agreements and the like. They do not come under the umbrella of the public service. There are all sorts of things that happen when you go to a GBE, so I will be scrutinising it if that comes to this place. I would like to think that what we do is the best for Tasmania, not necessarily what is best economically for private companies, and that we are not outsourcing the people's sovereignty, or accountability. I note the speech.

Address-in-Reply to Her Excellency, the Governor's speech, agreed to.

MOTION

Presentation of Address-in-Reply

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

That the President, accompanied by the mover and seconder and so many other members as think proper to attend, present the Address-in-Reply to Her Excellency at Government House at a time to be advised.

Motion agreed to.

SUPPLY BILL (No. 1) 2021 (No. 10)

First Reading

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

SUPPLY BILL (No. 2) 2021 (No. 11)

First Reading

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

TREASURY MISCELLANEOUS (COST OF LIVING AND AFFORDABLE HOUSING SUPPORT) BILL 2021 (No. 12)

First Reading

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

ADJOURNMENT

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

That the Council does now adjourn.

Motion agreed to.

The Council adjourned at 5.30 p.m.