



PARLIAMENT OF TASMANIA

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

REPORT OF DEBATES

Tuesday 19 November 2024

REVISED EDITION

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Tuesday 19 November 2024

The Speaker, **Ms O'Byrne**, took the Chair at 10.00 a.m., acknowledged the Traditional People, and read Prayers.

STATEMENT BY SPEAKER

Misrepresentations of Parliamentary Proceedings on Social Media

The SPEAKER - Before calling the Premier, I have a statement to make. I feel like I am a school teacher telling people off, but here we go. It has been brought to my attention that there have been a number of instances of the official broadcast being edited or doctored and placed on social media. This is a misrepresentation of the proceedings of the House because the clips no longer represent a true account of the proceedings of the House.

I refer members to Erskine May's *Parliamentary Practice*, which the previous Speaker, Mr Shelton, reminded the House of. It states:

... deliberate or reckless misrepresentation of the House's proceedings remains a contempt and is unlikely to attract qualified privilege ... this principle also applies to the posting of online clips of proceedings which are misdescribed or out of context.

I note that putting a disclaimer at the end of a post in no way changes the risk of breaching parliamentary privilege. Incidents such as this will be a matter for the House to pursue.

RECOGNITION OF VISITORS

The SPEAKER - I note the presence in the gallery of students from TasTAFE: the Learning English Language for Further Study group. Thank you very much for joining us. We are pleased to have you here.

Members - Hear, hear.

STATEMENT BY PREMIER

Ministerial Portfolios

[10.03 a.m.]

Mr ROCKLIFF (Braddon - Premier) - Honourable Speaker, I advise the House of the following portfolio changes.

The Attorney-General, the honourable Guy Barnett, has taken on the role of Treasurer.

The honourable Jacquie Petrusma has been appointed the Minister for Health, Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, and the Minister for Veterans' Affairs.

The honourable Kerry Vincent is Minister for Infrastructure and Minister for Local Government.

The honourable Nick Duigan is now Minister for Sports and Events.

Mr Ellis has taken on Consumer Affairs, which has been incorporated into the portfolio of Housing, Planning and Consumer Affairs.

Minister Howlett has taken on the portfolio of Hospitality and Small Business.

Minister Jaensch now holds the portfolio of Mental Health and Wellbeing.

Minister Ogilvie has taken on the portfolio of Environment, with Science and Technology now incorporated into a new portfolio of Innovation, Science and Digital Economy.

Minister Palmer is now also Minister for Women and the Prevention of Family Violence.

Mr Behrakis has been appointed Parliamentary Secretary to the Premier and Mr Fairs Parliamentary Secretary for Youth Engagement.

I also advise the House that minister Howlett will be absent from Question Time today due to illness. I will be taking questions in respect of all Ms Howlett's portfolios.

QUESTIONS

Trust in Government

Mr WINTER question to PREMIER, Mr ROCKLIFF

[10.04 a.m.]

The business community says that it will be very hard to trust your government after the way you have mismanaged our *Spirits* project. Your record debt and deficits show that you can no longer be trusted with the finances. Your plan to block UTAS from building 2000 new homes shows you cannot be trusted not to cosy up to anti-development groups if it suits your political interests. Despite taking it to the last election and the former Finance minister's full-throated commitment to the policy just a few weeks ago, you have just backflipped on your gaming policy. How can Tasmanians trust a single word that you say?

ANSWER

Honourable Speaker, I thank the member for his question, misguided as it is. I have a very good relationship and engage regularly with the business community. I commend our Treasurer and Deputy Premier for his engagement of recent times in a roundtable with business and industry regarding GBE reform and getting all the government businesses together to consult and discuss key aspects of reform.

We are a pro-jobs and economic government. That has been demonstrated by our record in government over the last decade. When it comes to job creation -

Members interjecting.

The SPEAKER - Members on my left and members on my right, the Premier has the call.

Mr ROCKLIFF - When it comes to key economic indicators, whether it is dwelling starts, economic credentials, wages growth, a range of areas we can compare with other states, and we are doing well under difficult circumstances for a state of 570 000 people. I am very proud of Tasmanians and the business community, who have come through adversity from the pandemic and are working alongside government to continue that economic growth and momentum.

The member might take a look in the mirror when he talks about being anti-development. Kangaroo Bay springs to mind, and the wishy-washiness of the Development Assessment Panels (DAPs) bill which you did not even realise it was out for consultation - an embarrassing blunder from the Opposition Leader there. There comes a time when you have to get off the fence and actually stand for something, Mr Winter, which we do as a government.

Members interjecting.

The SPEAKER - Settle down, please. I know we are excited to be back.

Mr ROCKLIFF - They have really made an art form of standing in the way of solutions - when it comes to these members -

Members interjecting.

The SPEAKER - Order, members on my left, we need to hear the Premier's answer.

Mr ROCKLIFF - particularly when it comes to the *Spirits*. We are all about solutions, we are all about economic growth and growing jobs and backing in business.

To your question, I have a longstanding and good relationship with the business and industry community.

The SPEAKER - The Premier's time for answering the question has expired.

Spirit of Tasmania - Communication with Business Community

Mr WINTER question to PREMIER, Mr ROCKLIFF

[10.08 a.m.]

The Tasmanian business community says the economic cost of your ferries fiasco will be felt by businesses and taxpayers for years to come. The Tasmanian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (TCCI) said that it would be difficult to ever trust your government again, and I do not blame them. You responded to a question on notice from Estimates saying that you became aware that the *Spirits of Tasmania* would not be operating this summer on 22 April this year. That is months ago, Premier.

Why did you not tell the business community, Tourism Tasmania, TICT (Tourism Industry Council Tasmania), THA (Tasmanian Hospitality Association) and businesses on the north-west coast who you represent? What do you say to those business owners who were still investing and still getting ready for the new *Spirits* right up until September this year because you kept it hidden? You chose to keep it hidden from them. They trusted you to tell the truth and you totally abandoned them. Where were you? Why did you not tell them the truth?

ANSWER

Honourable Speaker, I thank the member for his question, again, as misguided as it is. I do not accept the premise of his question in any way, shape or form. We are working with business and are very actively engaged with our tourism community. We have a commitment of over \$25 million to support our tourism and hospitality sector through until we get the new ships on line.

I was very pleased to be there on site the other day at berth 3, where we are driving the first of about 98 piles, which we expect to be completed by Christmas time. Work is actively underway -

Members interjecting.

The SPEAKER - Order, members on my left.

Mr ROCKLIFF - We intervened on the project and got Gemell and Moloney activated. They have come up with a significant amount of information and we have made our decision to move forward.

Members interjecting.

The SPEAKER - Order, members on my left.

Mr ROCKLIFF - We are very pleased with progress to date. When I was on site the other day, I was very impressed with the project manager, Paul Kirkwood, and the work he is doing in leading that. He has some considerable experience in these matters, including the Geelong terminal as well.

On 1 November, I chaired the second industry roundtable to provide an update on the *Spirits* where we detailed that significant package of support for the tourism and hospitality sector. More recently, I met with the Premier's Visitor Economy Advisory Council. It meets multiple times a year. The most recent meeting on 15 November provided an update on the project and the hospitality and tourism package as well.

The government has also formed a working group which will provide advice to government on the design and implementation of the tourism and hospitality package. This group met on 14 November and will continue to meet as we work through these challenging matters.

I have said many times that what has occurred with the *Spirits* is not good enough but I have also said that we will fix it. We will sort the *Spirits*, fix the GBEs and back our tourism

and hospitality sector, which we have done. You are standing in the way at every single opportunity, negative the whole time and offering absolutely no solutions.

The SPEAKER - Before calling the next question, I remind members of the House that I was once told by somebody very clever that we have to do the simple things well. The simple thing is to ask the question, answer the question, and not interject throughout the answer.

Supplementary Question

The SPEAKER - I am assuming I have a supplementary from you, Mr Winter?

Mr WINTER - Yes, Speaker. Just to re-ask the question. The Premier was aware on 22 April this year that the *Spirits* would not be operating this summer. Why did he not tell the business community, who were investing and getting ready?

The SPEAKER - Unfortunately, the Premier said he did not accept the premise of the question; that is an answer. However, you do have forms of the House if you believe the Premier has misled the House in that.

Gaming Industry

Dr WOODRUFF question to PREMIER, Mr ROCKLIFF

[10.13 a.m.]

After weeks of dishonesty, denial and dismissal, we finally have a concrete answer to your pokies policy. Whatever his faults, the Michael Ferguson model for pokies would have been nation leading. It would have saved lives and livelihoods and given kids a better life. It would have benefited the community and been better for the economy. What you have announced today is going to rip all that up into shreds. The Jeremy Rockliff pokies scheme will entrench disadvantage and poverty among vulnerable Tasmanians. It will ruin families and their futures. You might not want to hear it, but it is no exaggeration to say it will cost lives.

Premier, this will be your legacy: a plan for perpetual pokies harm, a plan for profits over people. You have let the pokies lobby win again. It is shameful. You promised to be a premier with heart, so how are you going sleep at night knowing that what you are choosing to do will affect vulnerable people? Is it that you are no longer going to make this system universal to all venues? Is that what is going on? Tell Tasmanians. It is shameful.

The SPEAKER - The time for asking the question has expired.

ANSWER

Honourable Speaker, I thank Dr Woodruff for her question, but do not agree with the way she presented the question at all. I have always been in the corner of vulnerable Tasmanians, and that is very clear. We remain committed and aligned with our election commitment when it comes to a precommitment card as soon as practicable. In that commitment, we also mentioned facial recognition technology -

Dr Woodruff - Useless.

Mr ROCKLIFF - the ARGS and third-party exclusion and remain committed to reform. It is complex reform, as I have said.

Dr Woodruff - Pathetic reform that will do nothing.

The SPEAKER - Dr Woodruff, the rules I reminded people of apply to you as well.

Mr ROCKLIFF - It is complex reform and much-needed reform when it comes to broader harm minimisation. We have also announced more support for wraparound services for people facing gambling addiction today. There is not one solution here. There are many solutions to supporting people with gambling addiction, including the increasing technology of facial recognition and third-party exclusion. Part of that is a precommitment card, as has been put on the table.

We believe the most practical way forward is to work with other states on this matter. We will be writing to other premiers about our reform process. Given that we are a small state, a practical way forward is to work with other states on a precommitment solution, as you put it. However, there are many other ways we can support vulnerable Tasmanians with gambling addiction, and we will do it. We can start rolling out other areas of harm minimisation and work with the community sector on that. Mr Jaensch will be leading that work with the community -

Dr Woodruff - You have abandoned your commitment.

The SPEAKER - Order, Leader of the Greens.

Mr ROCKLIFF - Our statement today -

Dr Woodruff - You promised.

The SPEAKER - Order, Leader of the Greens.

Mr ROCKLIFF - Our statement today aligns with what we said on 16 February this year.

Supplementary Question

Dr WOODRUFF - A supplementary question, Speaker?

The SPEAKER - I will hear the supplementary question.

Dr WOODRUFF - The Premier said, 'What we have announced today'. Before you made this announcement, did you speak to the Alliance for Gambling Reform, the Tasmanian Council of Social Service (TasCOSS) and all the charities and groups that have been campaigning for decades on this? Did you speak to all the people to whom you promised to bring in mandatory precommitment before you made this announcement?

The SPEAKER - The question is in order as it follows on from information the Premier gave in his answer.

Mr ROCKLIFF - Honourable Speaker, I have spoken to a range of views regarding these matters. I listen to all those views and read the views when I have correspondence coming my way. I have to get the balance right. As Premier, I listen to all views and get the balance right between harm minimisation -

Dr Woodruff - Answer the question. Did you have an honest -

The SPEAKER - Leader of the Greens, you are warned. I will also warn people who comment on that as well.

Mr ROCKLIFF - Harm minimisation, supporting vulnerable Tasmanians with gambling addiction and other wraparound services that we can provide, other measures of harm minimisation, including facial recognition technology and third-party exclusion. It is also providing Tasmanians with the freedom of choice. This is complex. It is important to get the balance right. I believe what we have announced today -

The SPEAKER - The Premier's time for addressing the question has expired.

Gaming Industry - Influence of the Tasmanian Hospitality Association

Ms JOHNSTON question to PREMIER, Mr ROCKLIFF

[10.18 a.m.]

The Tasmanian Hospitality Association (THA) was happy to benefit from big tax cuts to their pokies revenue in advance of the introduction of a mandatory player precommitment card. Despite their profits going up by 40 per cent to 60 per cent, they will now pocket their pokies tax jackpot having told you to walk away from the card. You have given them their dessert before they have eaten their veggies.

Why have you abandoned Tasmanians and squandered the opportunity to lead the nation by junking your government's evidenced-based policy to introduce a pokies mandatory precommitment player card? Why have you failed the moral test to show the backbone and integrity that your former deputy, Michael Ferguson, said was necessary for this card? You know the useless approach you have announced today only mops up the harm pokies have caused? Is the THA running this government?

ANSWER

Honourable Speaker, I refer to my previous answer. I gave a considered response to Dr Woodruff on getting the balance right in supporting Tasmanians with gambling addiction. We can introduce technology, in this case facial recognition technology and third-party exclusion. We can progress those soon.

The answer to the last part of the question is that I take the views of all Tasmanians. I balance up the economics, social, environment of which -

Dr Woodruff - Money first, every time.

Mr ROCKLIFF - The environment as well. Naturally, I like to see progress and economic growth in regional communities, but I have also made a political career out of ensuring I support vulnerable Tasmanians at every single opportunity. My views might not align with yours, Ms Johnston, but I have a view on it and I listen to everyone's considerations about these particular matters to get the balance right.

The answer to your last part of the question is an emphatic no.

Supplementary Question

Ms JOHNSTON - A supplementary question, Speaker?

The SPEAKER - I will hear the supplementary question.

Ms JOHNSTON - The Premier referred to listening to a range of views. Has the Premier received the Deloitte report? Will you release the Deloitte report if you have received it? Will you also release the MaxGaming report you referred to in your media release?

The SPEAKER - Unfortunately, Premier, I know you are telling me that it is a different question, but it did refer to information you gave in your answer about having received a number of reports. Therefore, I will rule the question in order.

Before we start the clock, I am happy to address the whole issue of supplementary questions to get some clarity because it is a difficult process. Where I believe the second question comes from the answer, I have to allow it under the provisions negotiated before parliament resumed.

Mr ROCKLIFF - Honourable Speaker, first, my firm view is that what we have announced aligns with our election commitments. That should not be a surprise to you. Second, the Deloitte work is ongoing. We will release the reports when completed. We will take advice on releasing aspects of the MaxGaming report, given that there are some matters of intellectual property (IP) in there which we will need to work through. However, we are fully committed to openness and transparency.

Housing, Planning and Consumer Affairs - Portfolio Responsibilities

Mr O'BYRNE question to MINISTER for HOUSING, PLANNING and CONSUMER AFFAIRS, Mr ELLIS

[10.22 a.m.]

Not only have your recent comments about planning upset a lot of people, they have shone a light on what your government is and is not prepared to do about planning. Your government has been sitting on at least one sensible residential development proposal that I am aware of for over a year. It requires a minor variation to the urban growth boundary to proceed. This project has been formally endorsed by the local council twice and has been referred to you to deal with. The proponents have been waiting long enough for you to take action so they can get on with the job. The entire project, which consists of over 100 housing lots, is at risk if you sit on your hands any longer.

You have been quick to blame others and talk about their planning responsibilities, but what about your responsibilities?

ANSWER

Honourable Speaker, it is great that we have people in this place who are pro-development, pro-more-houses and pro-more-jobs for people in Tasmania. That is exactly what our government is focused on delivering. This week we will see legislation to support more development for more renewable energy. We will see support for more retail and job opportunities for the people of the north-west coast. We will see legislation that will deliver more jobs, housing and opportunities across this state and give people who want to build Tasmania a fair go, particularly those coming forward with a good idea that meets the rules of our planning scheme.

I know the opportunity Mr O'Byrne is referring to. I have met with the proponent, and it is an interesting and exciting opportunity. There are huge opportunities for us going forward regarding the urban growth boundary, particularly here in Hobart. I thank my predecessor in this role for unlocking massive housing opportunities at Droughty Point. Mr Ferguson, in his time, was very proactive in this space. I think there are opportunities for us to continue to grow the suburbs of Hobart so we can provide more houses for Tasmanians.

The opportunities of better regional land use planning extend not just here in the south, but to the north, where there are major opportunities, and into the north-west, where our beautiful regional communities are looking for an opportunity to grow. That is part of the reason we are backing the Stony Rise development this week in parliament.

I will have more to say on the opportunities that come from the urban growth boundary. I look forward to continuing to work with you, Mr O'Byrne, about how we can lock in some of those opportunities for more housing supply and affordability for Tasmania.

Spirit of Tasmania - Communication with Business Community

Mr WINTER question to PREMIER, Mr ROCKLIFF

[10.25 a.m.]

You have told the parliament that you became aware that the new *Spirits* would not be operating this summer on 22 April this year. Do you not think a basic level of respect would have dictated that you tell the tourism and hospitality sector? Are you aware that, as of late August, West by North West Tourism still thought that the new *Spirits* were coming this summer?

What do you say to businesses who are still investing and still getting ready for increased capacity when you knew full well the whole time that they should not be doing it?

ANSWER

Honourable Speaker, we have quite clearly announced a support package for our tourism and hospitality sector.

A member - That is not the question.

Mr ROCKLIFF - Yes, it is, and that is exactly what we are doing - working alongside industry, having regular engagement with Gabby from West by North West and Amy Hills from the Tourism Industry Council of Tasmania (TICT). There was a round table, along with others. The TICT sits on the Premier's Visitor Economy Advisory Council. We are here and ready to support our tourism and hospitality sector, which injects some \$3.5 billion annually into our economy.

Some 85 per cent of people arrive in Tasmania by air, if my memory serves me correctly. I was reminded of those figures just yesterday when it comes to the work that Hobart Airport and our government in partnership with them are doing in bringing international flights from Asia directly into southern Tasmania. That brings with it economic opportunity through people coming to Tasmania, as well as opportunity for Tasmanians to explore the globe and, most importantly, opportunity for our high-quality producers to export product into the Asian region.

For example, if direct flights were going directly into Hong Kong, that is a catchment area of some 86 million people around the Greater Bay Area, which is a great market.

Mr WINTER - Point of order: Standing Order 45, relevance. The question is quite specifically about the *Spirits of Tasmania* and the lag between the Premier finding out the *Spirits* were not going to be operating this summer and him actually telling the business community.

I wonder if you could bring him back to the question?

The SPEAKER - I draw the Premier to the question, which was about the advice on the 22 April and the delay in the public announcement. I call the Premier to the question.

Mr ROCKLIFF - Thank you for the question. I am answering the question in terms of my engagement with and support for the tourism industry, the package that we have put forward and our regular engagement now that the decisions have been made on a way forward and a timeline. It was only a matter of weeks ago that we received the Moloney and Gemell report, which canvassed in great detail berths 1, 2 and 3 and settled on the decision of Berth 3.

Once we made the decision, we were then able to inform the community about timelines, particularly the tourism industry, given they have a lot of skin in the game, and indeed our primary industry sector as well.

I remind you that our two existing *Spirits* continue.

The SPEAKER - The time for addressing the question has expired.

Supplementary Question

Mr Winter - A supplementary question, Speaker?

The SPEAKER - I will hear the supplementary question.

Mr WINTER - I will re-ask the question. How can the Premier expect the business community to trust him and his government if he allowed them to continue to invest for five months when he knew full well that the new *Spirits* would not be operating this summer?

The SPEAKER - I will rule the question in order as it goes to the original question that was not addressed.

Mr ROCKLIFF - I thank the member for his question. I will not be verballed. We needed certainty about the Gemell report. I intervened to get Peter Gemell and Ben Moloney involved. They canvassed a range of views and provided that certainty with their recommendations. We are delivering on that certainty. When we received that advice, we developed an investment package for the tourism and hospitality industry to support them as we move forward to what I hope is a 26 October date. Of course, the 27 February date is there as well, but the best-case scenario is 26 October. If it all goes well - and to date, it is, talking to Paul Kirkwood, the project manager - we hope to achieve that. In the meantime, the two existing *Spirits* are working and operating well.

Gaming Industry - Political Donations

Dr WOODRUFF question to PREMIER, Mr ROCKLIFF

[10.30 a.m.]

The pokies industry has influenced Liberal and Labor politicians for decades and it is not a surprise to see it happening again. Even your former deputy called out the pokies lobby's efforts to pressure your colleagues. The THA has unashamedly thrown its weight around, but many Tasmanians have been wondering what is happening behind closed doors. They are sickened and concerned by the conflict of interest in the Finance minister's office.

Then there are political donations. We know the Tasmanian Liberal Party has received at least \$700,000 in gambling industry donations since 2017, but we have such weak laws and we have no idea what has happened since July last year. We will not get the full picture until 26 February.

Will you come clean, tell Tasmanians what the quid pro quo was for walking back on your policy and how much is the gambling industry donating? How much did it take for you to commit to this craven treachery?

The SPEAKER - Before the Premier answers the question, I remind members that substantive motions would need to be made if you wish to allege or impugn particular behaviours. I will allow the question because it is a matter of significant public interest, but there are forms of the House to make a substantive allegation in line with some of the things that were in the question. The question is allowed.

Dr Woodruff - We are aware of those, Speaker. Thank you.

ANSWER

Honourable Speaker, first, I reject the disparaging remarks. Shame on you for the personal attacks, which are hurtful to individuals.

Dr Woodruff - Let us talk about vulnerable Tasmanians.

Mr ROCKLIFF - Yes, and there is no bigger supporter of vulnerable Tasmanians than me, equal to everyone else in this room, I am assuming. Thank you very much. I have built a career on it.

I reject the assertion about conflict. The Treasurer, Guy Barnett, will oversee the regulatory component of gaming that sits within the Treasury department to ensure the appropriate balance is achieved between community harm minimisation, regulation and industry. I reject that part of the question and the assertion that you made.

I have an enormous amount of confidence and faith in our Minister for Community Services and his relationship with the community sector when it comes to developing and strengthening a harm minimisation package.

The most significant reforms made for decades to electoral donation laws were made by the Liberal Government.

Dr Woodruff - How much did they pay you?

Members interjecting.

Mr ROCKLIFF - I reject that. That is a matter for various political party organisations. I am assuming you also get support from sectors as well. Let us not play that silly game.

Dr WOODRUFF - Point of order, Speaker, Standing Order 45, relevance. The question is: how much money did the Liberal Party get from the pokies industry in the last year?

Mr Barnett - That is out of order.

The SPEAKER - Actually, it is in order to ask the Premier to be drawn to the question, which, notwithstanding the statements that were given in the question, was, 'What was the quid pro quo; what did it take?' Premier, you will now address that question.

Mr ROCKLIFF - We will comply with the law when it comes to donation law and disclosures, and that is a matter for the organisations of respective parties about who supports and who does not. I have been very engaged on this issue to ensure that we get the balance right between jobs in regional Tasmania, particularly, vulnerable Tasmanians, and aligning with our election commitment of 16 February 2024.

The SPEAKER - The Premier's time for answering the question has expired.

Supplementary Question

Dr WOODRUFF - A supplementary question, Speaker?

The SPEAKER - I will hear the supplementary question.

Dr WOODRUFF - On the question, Premier, how much in gambling industry donations did it take for you to give in to the pokies industry and walk away from the promise to Tasmanians? How much did you get in donations in the last year?

The SPEAKER - The Premier can address the part about the amount of donations - that is within the question - and he will ignore the imputations in that question. There are forms of the House that the member is quite able to use. I imagine we may see some of them used today.

Mr ROCKLIFF - Honourable Speaker, as I said, you comply with the law. That is a matter for various political parties and organisations themselves in terms of what entity, business or community group or whatever it might be, individual, provides to Tasmanian political parties at election time or others. I am ignoring the imputation in the question.

Members interjecting.

The SPEAKER - Order, members on my left.

Devonport - Road Infrastructure Around Ferry Terminals

Mrs BESWICK question to PREMIER, Mr ROCKLIFF

[10.36 a.m.]

The failure to upgrade Devonport's port infrastructure to accommodate the new *Spirits* is well documented, but there is potentially another major oversight looming. Concern is growing in the north-west that the road infrastructure near the port in East Devonport will not be adequate for the increased traffic flow. The community experiences significant congestion at peak times. The council has not seen a traffic management plan. Has one been developed, and what guarantees can you give that the first experience for visitors to our state will not be getting stuck in long queues of cars?

ANSWER

Honourable Speaker, I thank the member for her question. It is a very good question. A lot of work was done with the introduction of the first *Spirits* in about 2002 regarding the urban infrastructure to accommodate the arrival of more passengers and the terminal, which was some 20 or so years ago. I have some intimate knowledge of the project because there was a lot of discussion in the community at the time. More recently, I have discussed this, albeit briefly, with the Devonport City Council as to what is needed in terms of the infrastructure and their desire to have a good plan moving forward regarding infrastructure for the arrival of more passengers - we are expecting - and freight logistics as well.

Our member for Prosser, who is the Minister for Infrastructure, may well have some more detail about this, but I assure you that we will be actively engaged leading up to the time of the ships' arrival. The appropriate infrastructure will be in place and I look forward to seeing some designs shortly. I can find out more information for you if you wish about where State Growth is up to with that. If I obtain that, I am more than happy to detail that to the House when it is available.

The SPEAKER - Thank you. Did you wish to refer the rest of the question to the Minister for Infrastructure?

Mr ROCKLIFF - I think I have provided enough information and commitment to bring it back to the House.

Public Accounts Committee - Evidence Received

Mr WINTER question to PREMIER, Mr ROCKLIFF

[10.39 a.m.]

In an earlier answer, you seemed to dispute that you became aware on 22 April that the new *Spirits* would not be operating this summer. In a letter to the committee on 11 October, you said:

The secretary of the Department of State Growth emailed me on 22 April 2024 regarding the integrated report, which has been tabled in the Parliamentary Accounts Committee already. This was the first time I became aware.

Premier, are you saying that information provided to the committee was incorrect, or if not, why did you not inform the tourism and hospitality sector, particularly on the north-west coast, that the *Spirits* would not be here for another five months?

ANSWER

Honourable Speaker, I thank the member for his question, as jumbled as it was. We looked at accelerating interim options. This was the prudent thing to do and something that needed to be done and you would expect us to do that.

Mr Willie - You directed them to implement it.

The SPEAKER - The question has been asked, thank you, Mr Willie.

Mr Willie - You know what the costs are.

The SPEAKER - Mr Willie, the question has been asked. I can warn you but I would rather not.

Mr ROCKLIFF - I am advised that I received the integrator's report on 22 April, then looked at other options so we could potentially get *Spirit IV* in action this summer, as you would expect us to do. Of course, we are looking forward regarding these matters. There has been significant work done by Gemell and Moloney: a very detailed report.

Mr Winter - So, this is wrong?

Mr ROCKLIFF - Do not mix up words, thank you very much.

Mr Winter - No, it is written down. They are your words.

Mr ROCKLIFF - Do not mix up words. We are looking forward. We have a solution. It is working well. When it comes to the piles being driven at berth 3, we expect that to be completed by Christmas or thereabouts.

Mr Willie - What about the rest of it? It is 40 per cent.

Mr ROCKLIFF - As projects go, you do the next bit, Mr Willie.

Members interjecting.

Mr ROCKLIFF - It is not that hard. We are fixing it. I said we would sort the *Spirits*, fix the GBEs and back our tourism industry and that is exactly what we are doing.

Supplementary Question

Mr WINTER - A supplementary question, Speaker?

The SPEAKER - I will hear the supplementary question.

Mr WINTER - Premier, you provided the committee with information that said the first time you became aware that the new *Spirits* would not be operating this summer was on 22 April. Was that information correct?

The SPEAKER - Premier, I draw you to that question.

Mr ROCKLIFF - Yes, I became aware of the possibility of that, but we need to do our due diligence and continue to engage with our tourism stakeholders. We will continue to do so from this point forward. I am not sure what point you are trying to make.

Members interjecting.

Mr ROCKLIFF - This has been a very challenging project. We have been engaged -

The SPEAKER - Premier, I ask you not to invite interjections that I then have to deal with.

Mr ROCKLIFF - We will continue to engage. We have had roundtables with the tourism sector and other key stakeholders, including our primary industry sector, who also have some skin in the game regarding their expectation of freight capacity. We are also working through SeaRoad going offline for some time, which will put pressure on freight being exported out of Devonport. We are working through some of those issues now. The Tasmanian Agricultural Productivity Group and TasFarmers have also -

The SPEAKER - The Premier's time for answering has expired.

Spirit of Tasmania - Alternatives to Mooring in Scotland

Mr JENNER question to PREMIER, Mr ROCKLIFF

[10.43 a.m.]

Tasmanians are frustrated with the handling of the new *Spirit* ships after delays in construction and issues with the berths. Now, we hear your government plans to keep them in Scotland at a staggering cost of \$40,000 a day or thereabouts. Instead of paying them to sit idle for months, maybe years, why has the government not considered using the ships to cruise around Tasmania, or even reintroducing the Sydney to Hobart ferry even though that might only be foot traffic, of course?

If we are already spending tens of thousands on moorings in a different country, what is the risk in putting them to use in Tasmania? You can offset the loss they incur of \$40,000 a day that you are willing to spend on the moorings. Can you say, hand on heart, that you have explored every option that makes the most of these ships in Tasmania? From where I am sitting, it does not seem so.

ANSWER

Honourable Speaker, I thank the member for his question. We did look at a number of options, including Hobart to Sydney, for example. The Gemell and Moloney report looked at lots of options. I would have to get a better understanding of what your idea would be about, given the berthing infrastructure would still need to be there and present and built on. What I can say, though, is that we will get value for money for the Tasmanian taxpayer. I have recognised we are not in a good place and have taken responsibility for that, Mr Jenner, including taking responsibility for sorting this out. My motivation factor now is to ensure that, despite the previous challenges, we are moving forward. Also, the decisions we make now must be in the best interest of the Tasmanian taxpayer. That is why TT-Line is actively engaged. My advice is, regarding brokers and leasing options for the two new ships - and we expect the second ship to be completed by the middle of next year, is my understanding. We are looking at all options to ensure we get value for taxpayer money.

AFL - Hawthorn's Future in Launceston

Mrs PENTLAND question to PREMIER, Mr ROCKLIFF

[10.46 a.m.]

Hawthorn Football Club's 20-year-plus relationship with Tasmania has been socially and economically vital for the north of the state. While the Hawks will continue to play in Launceston next year, the city of Cairns wants to swoop in and pinch our content.

In light of the North Melbourne men's team cutting ties with the state, what assurances can you offer footy fans that Hawthorn will not follow suit? Why is it taking so long to lock in a new deal? Will you guarantee Tasmania's AFL content will not be lost to Queensland?

ANSWER

Honourable Speaker, I thank Mrs Pentland for her questions. I appreciate it. As the member for Bass, I know you have a great understanding of the value of the Hawthorn Football Club to Launceston and broader, in actual fact. I know myself, when I am in Launceston and the game is being played, there is a great deal of activity across the city, which is fantastic to see. It is a great driver of economic opportunity, so I can understand the question.

An existing agreement is in place with the Hawthorn Football Club of \$13.2 million over five seasons. That is to 2025. Under the terms of agreement, Hawthorn is required to play four games during the AFL season plus one pre-season game at UTAS Stadium. We know our agreement with Hawthorn drives intrastate visitation to the north of the state, particularly during the winter months, which I know is a real challenge for the tourism and hospitality sector. I know you have a good understanding of that.

The current sponsorship agreement with the Hawthorn Football Club concludes after the 2025 season. The Department of State Growth, through Events Tasmania, is currently in negotiation with the Hawthorn Football Club for sponsorship beyond the 2025 season. Our focus is on securing content for 2026 and 2027, and I know there is interest in Hawthorn's future beyond that. Even so, the Devils will be playing here in 2028. That will be part of the work being done by our departments in conjunction with the Hawthorn Football Club, Stadiums Tasmania and the AFL as part of a broader content strategy for our state. We know that Tasmanians support that high-quality content. Part of our third 100-day plan is to secure an extension beyond 2025 and we are actively working on that now.

Given your interest, it would be great to engage you in some ideas in terms of fixtures, dates and alignment with other times that may benefit the Launceston community, particularly regarding the business community. I give the commitment that we will actively engage with you. I know the Minister for Sport and Events, Mr Duigan, will also be keen to engage with you.

The SPEAKER - I am sure all members for Bass will appreciate that opportunity, Premier.

Government - Communication of Decisions

Mr WINTER question to PREMIER, Mr ROCKLIFF

[10.50 a.m.]

Your government is completely chaotic. Tourism Tasmania found out that the new *Spirits* were not coming on TV news. You also dumped the Clarence site for the high-performance centre, despite putting the community through a divisive and expensive elector poll, and yet the mayor said yesterday he had still not been told. Last night the former Liberal Party mayor said:

It's not the way we like to do business. If these are the people we look to lead our state and set an example, what hope do we have?

Last week, following our announcement on Stony Rise, it was left to us to tell the proponent that your government had hopped on too. What sort of show are you running, Premier? Why are these people finding out about their projects through the media? Is it any wonder that the business community says they can no longer trust you?

ANSWER

Honourable Speaker, I thank the member for his question. I remind the member that before 23 March, you did not even support the opportunity that AFL will bring to Tasmania. At least we have been consistent when it comes to that.

Members interjecting.

Mr ROCKLIFF - Okay, you can laugh all you like, but you were too weak prior to the last election to make a call, and you are still too weak. Great announcement yesterday, great announcement today by the minister, Mr Duigan. I commend him, and also his predecessor, Mr Street. This will benefit all Tasmania, but it is a fantastic opportunity for the Kingborough area. We are pleased we have chosen to locate the high-performance centre, and the training and administration centre, at the Kingston Twin Ovals.

This follows on the back of the JackJumpers' high-performance centre, which is also a tremendous opportunity for the region, and Tasmania more broadly, as we develop infrastructure right across Tasmania - the opportunity in Devonport with the multi-use stadium, and the \$130 million investment in York Park, a co-investment with the federal government, which we are looking forward to. It is great to see our Sports minister, Mr Duigan, working and getting that project well and truly started just a few days ago.

You can bring in all the negativity you like. We do engage with the Tasmanian community. This has been a long process. The Tasmanian football club has worked through a number of these matters and made a difficult decision about Kingborough, given the competing interests with Clarence, but we believe we have the balance right.

I note people's enthusiasm for the decision - the economic opportunity it presents but also for young people and people who do not yet see the opportunity that the AFL will bring. We really need to think about young Tasmanians, boys and girls, and their participation and aspiration in this sport and other sports. This has brought other people, other sporting entities together when it comes to netball, the Hurricanes, AFL together with TasTAFE -

The SPEAKER - The Premier's time has expired.

Electronic Gaming Machines - Precommitment Card

Dr WOODRUFF question to PREMIER, Mr ROCKLIFF

[10.54 a.m.]

You told the Tasmanian Hospitality Association (THA) that you were walking away from your pokies precommitment card policy, but you did not tell Tasmanians. In fact, you pretended otherwise every time you were asked. You had question after question in parliament and from the media, and you have been dishonest every single time. You knew Tasmanians, including

those in your own party room, would be furious that you are walking away from your harm minimisation measures. You have misled problem gamblers, you deceived Michael Ferguson and your colleagues, and you lied to the people of Tasmania. What do you say to them today?

Mr ABETZ - Point of Order, Speaker, I think all colleagues know in this place that personal reflections, such as accusations of lying and dishonesty, are against the Standing Orders. It detracts from the civility that ought to be in this Chamber. I would ask the member, through you, to withdraw those disparaging comments.

The SPEAKER - Accusations of lying can be made through substantive motions, Leader of the Greens. Other phrases of 'mislead', et cetera, were entirely parliamentary. May I ask you to withdraw and rephrase?

Dr WOODRUFF - Thank you, honourable Speaker. Premier, you deceived Michael Ferguson -

The SPEAKER - Sorry, I will ask you -

Mr Abetz - Withdraw.

The SPEAKER - No. Who yelled out 'withdraw'? Do not yell at me.

Dr WOODRUFF - I said I would withdraw, so I withdraw.

The SPEAKER - The member has withdrawn the comments of lying. She is now rephrasing the last part of the question. We are ignoring the timing because the point of order took that time.

Dr WOODRUFF - Premier, you misled problem gamblers. You deceived Michael Ferguson and your colleagues, and you were sickeningly deceitful to the people of Tasmania. What do you say to them today?

Members interjecting.

The SPEAKER - I will take the point of order. You need to say it is a point of order.

Mr ABETZ - Yes, the point of order is along the lines of the previous one. To accuse somebody of deception is the same as dishonesty and needs to be withdrawn. The member knows the forms of this House. I invite you to encourage her to withdraw.

The SPEAKER - I encourage everyone to be mindful of their language. However, if I ruled out every time someone in this parliament said that something was deceitful or dishonest, particularly on your side of the benches, Mr Abetz, we would have very few debates left in this parliament. I do not disagree with you in terms of the substantive impugning of motive. However, this is a matter of significant concern to the community, and the Premier is prepared to answer the question.

I do think we should all be mindful of the impugning of motives we make in this House. I remind members that there are substantive motions of processes in the House they can move if they wish to accuse members of dishonest behaviour. That would be a more appropriate way.

Question time allows some flexibility. It has in the past. However, I am mindful of the Leader of the House's commentary in terms of the way we behave and refer to each other in this House.

ANSWER

Honourable Speaker, I reject the member's accusations. I have always answered questions honestly. Our announcement today aligns with our election commitment. We are committed to engaging with other states on the introduction of precommitment. It is a complex issue. In the meantime, we will look at other areas about facial recognition technology, which is increasing in capacity, and third-party exclusion, and other areas, including investing in wraparound services to support vulnerable Tasmanians.

My responsibility is to consult and get the balance right for all Tasmanians. I believe the announcement today aligns with the election commitment and also gets the balance right.

Supplementary Question

Dr WOODRUFF - A supplementary question, Speaker?

The SPEAKER - I will hear the supplementary question.

Dr WOODRUFF - In the Premier's answer, it is clear that even right now he is still pulling the wool over Tasmanians' eyes. You are abandoning the policy. Why not be honest with Tasmanians right now, just once, and tell them you are not going to implement a mandatory precommitment card? Just be honest. That was the end of my question.

The SPEAKER - I am glad it was the end of your question. I will rule it in order because of the significant public interest and because it does go to the Premier's answer about the other mechanisms he was looking at employing. However, I will focus on the only part of it that was a question, which was about the mandatory precommitment card.

Mr ROCKLIFF - Honourable Speaker, I urge Dr Woodruff to read today's media release -

Dr Woodruff - I have read it.

Mr ROCKLIFF - which clearly outlines our commitments to these areas.

Dr Woodruff - You are deferring progress. That means 'never'.

The SPEAKER - I will call the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, who will be heard without other people interjecting.

Cabinet - New Appointments

Ms DOW question to PREMIER, Mr ROCKLIFF

[10.59 a.m.]

Can you confirm that, during negotiations over your new Cabinet, you told Simon Behrakis he was not going to be chosen for his own sake to prevent his career being damaged by being associated with your government? How can Tasmanians have faith in your government if you do not?

The SPEAKER - I remind members that questions are to be related to portfolios and ministers' areas of responsibilities. I will let you say something, though, Premier. Because the Premier is responsible for choosing ministers, he may choose to address this question, but it is flying pretty close to the edge about being an appropriate question for Question Time.

ANSWER

Honourable Speaker, that is a ridiculous question and is a question that is even beneath the Deputy Leader of the Opposition. At times you have been put up to these silly questions that are often very personal, which is beneath you, frankly, Ms Dow. I reject the question outright.

I will also say that I have a great deal of faith not only in the Cabinet but in Mr Behrakis, who is a fantastic member for Clark and will be a tremendous parliamentary secretary to the Premier in supporting the objectives of the government. These are about growing our economy, more jobs, investing in essential services, keeping Tasmanians safe and putting roofs over Tasmanians' heads. Every member of our team is to align to the 2030 Strong Plan for Tasmania's Future, and if that is the best you can do, I would look at your own team. Thank you very much.

The SPEAKER - I call the member for Braddon, Mr Garland. Conversations on my left will cease.

Spirit of Tasmania - New Vessels

Mr GARLAND question to PREMIER, Mr ROCKLIFF, referred to MINISTER for TRANSPORT, Mr ABETZ

[11.02 a.m.]

It was reported in the *Advocate* on 30 October that you indicated the new *Spirit of Tasmania* vessels in Scotland will not impact local businesses contracted to work on ship fit-outs. In a response to a Facebook comment on 15 November, you or your office stated that most of the local content has now been installed on *Spirit IV* in Finland and that the finishing touches, such as the Tasmanian artwork mattresses, have already been purchased from Tasmanian businesses, with final installation to be decided on following any leasing arrangements that are made.

Can you confirm which local companies were contracted for the local content for the new *Spirits*, if this local content is already fitted or ready to be fitted, and if it is being stored in

Tasmania or sent to Scotland for fit-out? Can you please detail exactly how fit-out will be completed in Tasmania if the new *Spirits* are in Scotland?

ANSWER

Honourable Speaker, I thank the member for his question and his interest in this matter. There is a bit of detail in that question. I believe that some items have been sent away from here to be fitted out and the ships will come back to Tasmania for their final fit-out in terms of tabletops and the like. That was my understanding, but I will take your question on notice and provide a more detailed answer to you as soon as I possibly can with more information, or I can refer to the honourable member, minister Abetz, to provide some more detail.

Mr ABETZ - Thank you very much, Premier and Speaker. I can inform the member that inclusions such as carpet and window furnishings for the cabins, appliances and equipment with local businesses and employers are already over at the ships, so material supplied by Tasmanian businesses has been taken over to Finland for inclusion.

Ms White - So, you are shipping it over there?

Mr ABETZ - The member for Lyons interjects. Would you prefer that this material was bought from the Europeans?

Members interjecting.

The SPEAKER - Members on my left will cease screaming at the minister.

Mr ABETZ - As soon as they get the facts, that is when they do not want the people of Tasmania to hear what the actual facts are. The finishing touches, such as artworks, mattresses, blankets and throws have already been purchased from Tasmanian businesses, with final installation to be decided on following any leasing arrangements that may or may not be undertaken. The local content, Mr Garland, is well and truly locked in for the benefit of Tasmanian businesses as promised.

Cabinet - Liberal Party

Ms DOW question to PREMIER, Mr ROCKLIFF

[11.05 a.m.]

Premier, your government is bitterly divided. You were unable to make a decision on your gaming policy for months. Your former deputy has effectively accused you of lacking a backbone. Now, speculation is rife that he will cross the floor today and vote against your new position. How weak are you if even your own side are not backing you? Premier, how long will it be before more of your colleagues join Michael Ferguson's rebellion?

Members interjecting.

The SPEAKER - Anybody who wants to participate in Question Time can be quiet. Otherwise, you can all go outside and have that conversation. It is the final question of the day.

I remind members that it is allowed to be asked because the Premier controls the Cabinet, the government and his party.

ANSWER

Honourable member, I thought you would have got the message in my last answer, when it comes to questions that are not worth the chop and beneath you, frankly. We are a united team on this side of the House working through a range of very complex areas that we will deliver on.

When I look around the state, I see new schools being built and hospitals being upgraded. I was with the Minister for Health, minister Petrusma, just the other day when we opened up the \$12.7-million new 20-bay ambulance station in Burnie that will service the entire region.

Our exports are going gangbusters; our advanced manufacturing is going gangbusters. We are building new roads, bridges, hospital upgrades, new schools and school upgrades right across this state. I am very proud of the achievements of our ministers and indeed all our local members as well in representing -

Members interjecting.

The SPEAKER - Order, members on my left.

Mr ROCKLIFF - their community. I am not going to engage in petty politics from people who are incapable of making a decision or making a stand and are always sitting on the fence when it comes to key matters of reform. We still do not know where you are on planning reform.

Members interjecting.

The SPEAKER - Order, members on my left. Mr Willie, member for Clark, is warned.

Mr ROCKLIFF - You stand for nothing but negativity; that is clear. Despite -

Members interjecting.

The SPEAKER - Mr Willie, I just warned you 10 seconds ago.

Mr ROCKLIFF - It is working also with other governments, both local and federal. I am very pleased that we have secured investment for berth 6 just down the road here from the federal government, and secured investment for the new heart centre at the Launceston General Hospital.

The Midland Highway is all but completed. The Bridgewater bridge, a very complex project, is going extremely well. I am very proud of the achievements of this government over the last decade when it comes to the thousands of people more who get out of bed every single day and have the opportunity to go to work.

The SPEAKER - The Premier's time for answering the question has expired. It is important to correct the record if you make a mistake, and I made a mistake. There is one

question left. I call the Leader of the Greens, Dr Woodruff, with what will be the final question of today.

Premier - Confidence

Dr WOODRUFF question to PREMIER, Mr ROCKLIFF

[11.09 a.m.]

You have walked away from your precommitment promise. You have deliberately misled Tasmanians. You put the interests of the pokies lobby ahead of vulnerable people. Premier, if you are willing to deceive them, how can Tasmanians have any confidence in you as Premier?

ANSWER

Honourable Speaker, I thank Dr Woodruff for the question. How about you read the statement today and how it aligns with our election commitments?

Dr Woodruff - How about you read *Losing Streak*?

Supplementary Question

Dr WOODRUFF - A supplementary question, Speaker?

The SPEAKER - I will hear the supplementary, reminding the member that she has had quite a lot of latitude in impugning motive.

Dr WOODRUFF - Tasmanians deserve an honest answer to that. How can they have confidence in you when you have walked away from your promise? Why will you not at least admit that is what you have done? You have walked away from it.

The SPEAKER - Given he sat down so quickly, I will call the Premier to finalise that answer.

Mr ROCKLIFF - Read the statement of 16 February and how it aligns with the statement today.

Mr Bayley - It does not.

Time expired.

CONSTITUENCY QUESTIONS

Lilydale - Unsafe Footpath

Ms ROSOL question to MINISTER for INFRASTRUCTURE, Mr VINCENT

[11.11 a.m.]

Lilydale residents have contacted me about an unsafe section of footpath in their village. The Lilydale District School and its school farm are separated by a few hundred metres of road which is uncurbed and has no footpath, meaning that access to the farm from the school by students is unsafe and has required expensive bus hire to take classes to the farm. Residents have raised this situation on multiple occasions over several years. The Lilydale District Progress Association has asked the City of Launceston and the Department for Education, Children and Young People to build a path from the school to the farm.

To date, community voices have been ignored and Lilydale residents have been left wondering when they will be listened to. Can the minister advise on any progress towards the construction of a path, or if there has been no progress, whether this will be addressed?

West Tamar Highway - Speed Limits Near Riverside

Mr FERGUSON question to MINISTER for TRANSPORT, Mr ABETZ

Recently, the Commissioner for Transport made a decision to reduce the speed limit for a 4.3-kilometre section of the West Tamar Highway from Cormiston Road to Deans Lane, including Elouera Street. The commissioner's announcement, made on 18 October, stated that this decision followed an assessment by the Department of State Growth and a high crash history.

My constituent, Marcus, has observed that the lower speed limit appears to cover long sections of the highway, including areas with no obvious crash histories through wider corridors. He believes that the decision regarding Elouera Street and Barnes Hill makes sense because they are so narrow and constrained. Would the minister please undertake to provide the assessment documentation so the community can review it? Second, would the minister please investigate if speed limits can instead be based on risk for each relevant section, relevant times of day and direction of travel?

Pioneer Lake - Community Working Group

Ms FINLAY question to MINISTER for PARKS, Mr DUIGAN

I have been contacted by a number of constituents from the north-east who have shared with me that at the Dorset AGM last night a motion was passed to set up a group of interested parties regarding Pioneer Lake to provide advice to council and the state on management of the area. The group is proposed to include Pioneer residents, council, Parks, lake users, police, Sandbar Proprietary Limited and Scottsdale High School as an example. One of the aims of the group would be to work through the camping issues with a view to continue to provide for camping at the lake, as has been the case for over 20 years. This is a clear demonstration of our

community working together. Minister, will you make sure our constituents are heard and support this process proposed by the community and supported at the Dorset AGM last evening?

Longford - Proposed Truck Refuelling Depot Site - Herbicides

Ms BUTLER question to MINISTER for INFRASTRUCTURE, Mr VINCENT

This constituent question is from the people of Longford. Last week about 100 rose bushes along Tannery Road, South Longford, were poisoned with what appears to be a herbicide. The Bicentennial Rose Garden is exactly placed where consideration for a bypass lane has been discussed between State Growth and the developers of the proposed Lowes BP large truck refuelling depot. Whilst the people of Longford are not making any accusations regarding who was responsible, they do find it a remarkable coincidence that the rose garden, which formed a major part of their opposition to the proposed development, has been destroyed. As a memorial garden, the rose garden is on crown land and under the control of State Growth.

Could you reassure the Longford community that State Growth has no information about the poisoning and did not sanction what the group considered to be environmental vandalism? As State Growth has ownership of the said verge garden, could State Growth confirm that it will report the poisoning of the roses to Tasmania Police for investigation?

The SPEAKER - The member's time has expired.

Electronic Gaming Machines - Precommitment Cards

Ms JOHNSTON question to PREMIER, Mr ROCKLIFF

My question is from Robert from Hobart. Rob has been relying on you to implement your mandatory precommitment scheme. He is deeply disappointed by the announcement this morning and says that you have been listening to the THA rather than those with lived experience such as himself. He asks: will you listen to people with lived experience of poker machine addiction and attend a forum where you can hear firsthand their suffering, and do you accept that more Tasmanians under your announcement this morning will continue to suffer from poker machine addiction and some will die?

Oatlands Ambulance Station

Mr SHELTON question to MINISTER for HEALTH, Mrs PETRUSMA

Recently, I was in Oatlands and talking to a few of the locals about health services available in the region. One of them asked me when the Oatlands ambulance station would be completed. Can you please provide an update on construction and when we can expect to see ambos move in?

PETITION

timtumili minanya/Derwent Catchment - Drinking Water

[11.17 a.m.]

Ms BADGER (Lyons) - Honourable Speaker, I have the honour to be the bearer of an e-petition signed by approximately 841 petitioners calling on the government to:

- (1) Recognise that access to clean and safe drinking water is a fundamental human right and ensure the water Tasmanians drink is clean and safe and that harmful substances are unable to enter our food chains through ingestion of water or residues in food from contaminated water.
- (2) Take steps to ensure community faith that water from the timtumili minanya/Derwent Catchment is safe to drink and applies the precautionary principle; and
 - (a) establish a dedicated coordinated Derwent Catchment Authority to reduce pollutants and runoff from industries and activities;
 - (b) develop strong water quality standards;
 - (c) ensure the Derwent Catchment water is regularly tested for harmful elements such as toxins and pollutants;
 - (d) ensure any breach of these standards is acted upon and communicated to TasWater customers and residents in an accurate and timely way;
 - (e) enforce strict safety guidelines, investigating any breaches of water safety and enforcing heavy penalties for breaches; and
 - (f) commit to continuous improvement and public engagement on water quality.

Petition received.

TABLED PAPERS

Joint Sessional Committee on Workplace Culture Oversight - Interim Report

[11.19 a.m.]

Mr ROCKLIFF (Braddon - Premier) - Honourable Speaker, I have the honour to bring up the following report of the Joint Sessional Committee on Workplace Culture Oversight. I move -

That the said report be received.

Report received.

Parliamentary Standing Committee of Public Accounts - Follow-Up of Auditor-General Report (No. 4 of 2019-20) - Rostering of Specialists in Tasmania's Major Hospitals

Mr WILLIE (Clark) - Honourable Speaker, I have the honour to bring up the following report of the Parliamentary Standing Committee of Public Accounts: follow up of the Auditor-General No. 4 2019-20 - Rostering of Specialists in Tasmania's Major Hospitals. I move -

That the report be received.

Report received.

Joint Select Committee on Energy Matters - Special Report on the Use of Excerpts from a Committee Hearing Broadcast

Mr BAYLEY (Clark) - Honourable Speaker, I have the honour to bring up the following report on the Joint Select Committee on Energy Matters: special report on the use of excerpts from a committee hearing broadcast. I move -

That the report be received.

Report received.

Joint Sessional Committee - Commission of Inquiry Recommendations Scrutiny Committee - Interim Report

Ms ROSOL (Bass) - Honourable Speaker, I have the honour to bring up the following report of the Commission of Inquiry Recommendations Scrutiny Committee. I move -

That the report be received.

Report received.

Parliamentary Standing Committee on Subordinate Legislation - Annual Report 2023-24

Mr FAIRS (Bass) - Honourable Speaker, I have the honour of bringing up the following report of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Subordinate Legislation - Annual Report 2023-24. I move -

That the report be received.

Report received.

MESSAGE FROM THE GOVERNOR

Appropriation Bill (No. 1) 2024 (No. 39)

Appropriation Bill (No. 2) 2024 (No. 40)

The SPEAKER - I am in receipt of messages from Her Excellency the Governor.

A bill for an Act for the appropriation of \$8,057,461,000 out of the Public Account for the services of the Government for the financial year ending on 30 June 2025, and a bill for an Act for the appropriation of \$53,235,000 out of the Public Account for the services of the government in respect of Parliament and statutory officers for the financial year on 30 June 2025, having been presented to the Governor for the Royal Assent, she has, in the name of His Majesty the King, assented to the said bills on 1 November.

INDUSTRIAL HEMP AMENDMENT BILL 2024 (No. 17)

**APPROPRIATION (FURTHER SUPPLEMENTARY APPROPRIATION FOR
2023-24) BILL 2024 (No. 3)**

HISTORIC CULTURAL HERITAGE AMENDMENT BILL 2024 (No 32)

Bills returned from Legislative Council without amendments.

MESSAGES FROM THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

Committee Appointments

The SPEAKER - I am in receipt of a message from the Legislative Council.

The Legislative Council has discharged the honourable member for Prosser, Mr Vincent from the Joint Sessional Committee to inquire into a report upon matters related to the recommendations made in the final report of the Commission of Inquiry into the Tasmanian Government's response to Child Sexual Abuse and Institutional Settings, and has appointed the honourable member for Hobart, Ms O'Connor, to the resulting vacancy.

Craig Farrell,
President
Legislative Council
30 October 2024.

The SPEAKER - I am in receipt of a further message from the Legislative Council.

Honourable Speaker, the Legislative Council has discharged the Honourable member for Prosser, Mr Vincent, from the Joint Select Committee on Energy

Prices and Related Matters, and has appointed the honourable member for Elwick, Ms Thomas, to the resulting vacancy.

Craig Farrell
President
Legislative Council
30 October 2024.

The SPEAKER - I am in receipt of a further message from the Legislative Council.

Honourable Speaker, the Legislative Council has discharged the honourable member for Prosser, Mr Vincent, Joint Committee of both Houses to manage the Parliamentary Library and has appointed the honourable member for Mersey, Mr Gaffney, to the resulting vacancy.

Craig Farrell, President, Legislative Council, 30 October 2024.

**JUSTICE AND RELATED LEGISLATION (MISCELLANEOUS
AMENDMENTS) BILL 2024 (No. 19)**

Bill returned from Legislative Council with amendment.

MOTION

Consideration of Messages

[11.30 a.m.]

Mr ABETZ (Franklin - Leader of the House) - Honourable Speaker, I move -

That the two last mentioned messages be taken into consideration at a later hour.

Motion agreed to.

FAMILY VIOLENCE AMENDMENT BILL 2024 (No. 51)

First Reading

Bill presented by Ms Johnston and read the first time.

**LAND USE PLANNING AND APPROVALS (STONY RISE DEVELOPMENT
APPROVAL) BILL 2024 (No. 52)**

**LAND USE PLANNING AND APPROVALS AMENDMENT (DEVELOPMENT
ASSESSMENT PANELS) BILL 2024 (No. 53)**

First Reading

Bills presented by Mr Ellis and read the first time.

STATEMENT BY SPEAKER

Chair of Committees - Resignation of Mrs Petrusma

The SPEAKER - I am in receipt of the following correspondence from the member for Franklin, Mrs Petrusma, dated 20 October 2024. It reads:

Dear Speaker,

I hereby resign the office of Chair of Committees. When the House assembles, I shall be glad if you will inform the honourable members of my resignation and at the same time convey to them my appreciation of and thanks for the courtesy and consideration which has been extended to me during my occupancy of the Chair.

Yours faithfully,
Honourable Jacquie Petrusma MP.

MOTION

Chair of Committees - Appointment of Mr Street

[11.33 a.m.]

Mr ROCKLIFF (Braddon - Premier) - Honourable Speaker, I move -

That the Honourable Nic Street MP be the Chair of Committees of this House.

Motion agreed to.

MOTION

Leave to Move Motion Forthwith

[11.34 a.m.]

Dr WOODRUFF (Franklin - Leader of the Greens) - Honourable Speaker, I seek leave to move -

That so much of the Standing Orders be suspended to move a motion of no confidence in the Premier, Mr Rockliff, forthwith.

Leave granted.

SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS

Motion of No Confidence in Premier

[11.36 a.m.]

Dr WOODRUFF (Franklin - Leader of the Greens) - Honourable Speaker, I move-

That so much of the Standing Orders be suspended as would prevent the following motion from being moved forthwith -

That the House has no confidence in the Premier for the following reasons:

- (1) In September 2022, his government announced a policy for a mandatory precommitment card to reduce the harm caused by electronic gaming machines.
- (2) During the 2024 election campaign, the Liberals put out a vague, dishonest media release which appeared on its surface to reflect their 2022 policy.
- (3) Meanwhile, the Premier made a promise to the Tasmanian Hospitality Association that a re-elected Rockliff government would walk away from the policy.
- (4) The Premier sold out the Liberals' policy to the gambling lobby and deliberately lied to Tasmanians about it during the election.
- (5) During Budget Estimates this year, the Minister for Finance, Nic Street, was unaware his Premier intended to back away from his policy.
- (6) It appears on the evidence the Premier lied to his former Minister for Finance as well.
- (7) The Premier is a liar who cannot be trusted by his own party room and Cabinet, or the people of Tasmania.
- (8) The only people who can trust the Premier's word are the gambling lobby.

The argument I present is the media release that was announced today which makes it crystal clear to Tasmanians that the Premier has walked away from his commitment to Tasmanians. This is an incredibly urgent issue for the parliament to debate because it shows that the Premier has been deeply dishonest, has misled, has tricked and, in fact, has lied to Tasmanians on repeated questions that have been put to him about whether his government would continue the commitment to a mandatory precommitment card.

During the election campaign, the Premier promised the THA (Tasmanian Hospitality Association) that he would ditch reforms, but he did not tell Tasmanians. On 16 February, the Liberals and the Premier, through a media release, announced their policy restating their support for the mandatory precommitment card. We know from the Premier's own words to the media that he said on camera that he was still committed to introducing, as promised, nation-leading reforms for mandatory precommitment cards. He did that knowing that is what the people of Tasmania wanted to hear and knowing that is what people expected him to say, because that was a promise that had been made, legislation had been passed and the work was heading in that direction.

Since then, under repeated questions in parliament by the Greens and other independent members, the Premier has refused to answer repeated questions about where the government stands. He also, during and around the Estimates process, refused to answer questions about the fact that he was, in the background, walking away from that commitment.

The Greens, independent members of parliament and people in the community have been concerned since the state election that the Premier was walking his party away from that commitment. We see today that he has abandoned the policy. To be clear, an indefinite delay - which is what the media release says today - is in fact an abandonment of the policy.

What we have now is a minister and premier of Tasmania who cannot be trusted. This is at the heart of the failure of him as a man, but also a failure of him as a leader of the Liberal Party and as a leader of the people of Tasmania to walk back on a promise that was so critical.

We have had repeated calls for him to be honest with Tasmanians about what he is doing, not just from the Greens and other members of parliament, but from people in the community. The Alliance for Gambling Reform wrote to the Premier on 13 November; they knew what was happening.

The SPEAKER - I draw the member to the Suspension of Standing Orders request which she is making now, not the substantive debate.

Dr WOODRUFF - Thank you, and there is a substantive debate to be had here and it goes to decades of the Liberal and Labor parties in Tasmania being bought lock, stock and barrel by the pokies industry. What we have here is evidence of that writ large. We cannot have another day where this Premier continues to lie to Tasmanians. He lies to them. We asked four straight questions this morning and he would not even be honest right now that he is abandoning the precommitment card. If you cannot have a premier who is honest with Tasmanians, then it is time for him to go. We have no confidence in him taking that role any longer and neither do the people of Tasmania.

It is not only the damage he is doing to people from the gambling harm that will continue because of the Liberals abandoning the policy, it is the damage he is doing to our democracy.

It is the damage he is doing when he continually says, 'I am a person with heart, look at my track record'. The legacy of the man will be in his actions today. That is why he has to be held to account. It is not good enough to say you have a heart when you are lying to people, deceiving them, being treacherous, being sneaky and refusing to say what is going on, refusing to say where the money is flowing and refusing to say how the pokies are controlling you lock, stock and barrel. We have no confidence in him.

Time expired.

[11.41 a.m.]

Mr ABETZ (Franklin - Leader of the House) - Honourable Speaker, let us be exceptionally clear: on this side of the House, we have absolute confidence in the Premier. The ongoing besmirching of the Premier and others in this place by the Leader of the Greens is something I think most in this place and, more importantly, in the public, are starting to resile from. They do not like this sort of politics being played, throwing around all sorts of commentary reflecting on members' integrity and honesty. You can have a proper debate about having disagreements on policy without having to label people in the sort of disgraceful manner we have just witnessed. During Question Time, we also saw an attempt to besmirch somebody who works in a ministerial office -

The SPEAKER - Minister, I will draw you to the fact that we are debating the motion for suspension.

Mr ABETZ - To suspend the business of the parliament for the purposes of this shoddy motion is something this House should not entertain. If we were to suspend Standing Orders, we would be setting aside other legislation for jobs growth, economic development and the wellbeing of our fellow Tasmanians for an attempt by the Leader of the Greens to besmirch somebody who has rightfully earned a reputation not only in this place, but throughout Tasmania, as a man of heart, a man of principle and a man who wants to get things done for our state.

In relation to the allegations and urgency - allegedly - that surrounds support or lack of support for the two major parties in this place, it befuddles me that the Greens so lack in self-awareness that they cannot remember that the biggest financial donation ever made to a political party was to the Greens. Not a few thousand, not a few hundred thousand, but \$1.6 million. If we want to talk about money influencing policy, the then leader of the Greens said it was very good investment of his time and the person making the donation said it was a very good investment on his behalf. They are the words of a person who donated a ship-load of money to the Tasmanian Greens, the Australian Greens -

The SPEAKER - Did you say 'ship'? Just checking.

Mr ABETZ - I did. It could have been another word, Speaker, and I think the people of Tasmania would have understood that as well. A huge amount of money, lest some people's ears should deceive them -

The SPEAKER - Mentioning ships is not probably your strongest feature right now.

Mr ABETZ - albeit I could imagine why their brain would suggest that they may have heard another word, but it was 'ship-load'.

Do we need to suspend Standing Orders because the government has refined a policy based on evidence, based on further information? The answer is absolutely not. There is no need for a suspension, especially when that suspension is designed to ensure that a motion of no confidence is carried in the Premier. There is no doubt -

Dr Woodruff - Well, we need to have the truth for a change.

The SPEAKER - Interjections will cease.

Mr ABETZ - There is no doubt the Premier and government are committed to ensuring harm minimisation. There is no doubt the government and the Premier are committed to protecting Tasmanians whilst getting the balance right in this debate. It is a difficult issue. We, as a government, especially through the leadership of the Premier, have been able to come to a landing which was announced today, fully transparent, fully indicative to the people of Tasmania as to what the government's motivation and what it seeks to achieve for the benefit of the people of Tasmania. All the inappropriate commentary about the Premier's character is categorically and utterly rejected by colleagues on this side from the Liberal Party. We have absolute faith and confidence in our Premier and we urge the House to reject the motion.

Time expired.

[11.46 a.m.]

Dr BROAD (Braddon) - Honourable Speaker, we support the suspension. That is because we believe this government has lost its way. We know that the tension has been building in the community regarding the competence of this government and we think today is a day where we should have this debate. A no confidence motion in a premier or a government is a big deal. We believe the debate should be broader than that, and that we should debate the competence of the government and this Premier because they are in complete shambles. We want to know that this parliament can have confidence in a government and a premier, and how they could possibly defend themselves.

We have seen a complete debacle building in terms of the *Spirits*. It is probably the biggest billboard for this government's incompetence. However, there are other issues, including this most recent backflip and the way the government has behaved recently.

This is a time when the tension that has been building in the community can be given a release one way or another. This tension has been building because this government has not delivered what it promised to deliver in the most recent election. This is a government that has been in turmoil. We have seen resignations and reshuffles. More importantly, we have seen the government making decisions and stuffing things up, causing major pain to the people of Tasmania. That is why we should have a full debate today about the confidence of this parliament in the Premier and, by proxy, the government.

We will be supporting the suspension, and we will be debating whether or not we have confidence in this premier and this government. It is up to this parliament to have confidence in the Premier and the government. It would be interesting to see how the members of the government and, indeed, the crossbench, could possibly defend the performance of this government given their recent behaviour, the decisions they have made and not made, and the impact that has had on the people of Tasmania. This is the time to draw a line in the sand.

Mr Ellis - Sounds like a Labor-Greens deal.

Dr BROAD - That is why we support the suspension and the full debate. Does this parliament have confidence in the Premier? That is an open question and a question that needs a full debate -

Mr Ellis - You want to do a deal with the Greens, do you?

Dr BROAD - The member who continually interjects will have the opportunity to defend his own performance because we have seen his own performance lacking. This is a debate we should have and we support the suspension.

[11.49 a.m.]

Ms JOHNSTON (Clark) - Honourable Speaker, this motion is urgent. We have five sitting days left this year and the House will rise until late February, early March. When we conclude parliament for this calendar year, it is incredibly important that we have confidence in the answers the government gives us to questions. It is important that people in this place know that when they ask a question of the government they get an honest answer. More importantly, the people of Tasmania need to have confidence that they will get an honest answer.

What we have seen this morning is nothing but an Olympic gold medal-winning performance from the Premier in terms of a backflip. He has let Tasmanians down big time. He has led them on in the hope that he would protect vulnerable Tasmanians. The announcement this morning at the eleventh hour, just before we arrived in question time this morning, knowing full well that I had intended to bring a motion on today, is nothing short of disgraceful. It is deeply troubling to Tasmanians. They need to know that over the next five sitting days in this place the government will be held to account, and that they can rely on the government and particularly the Premier to answer questions honestly.

What we have seen this morning during Question Time is the Premier dodging and refusing to answer basic questions. It is not good enough. What happens in the next five days matters in this place. It matters to each and every one of us here as members of parliament, but it matters most to Tasmanians who have been relying on this Premier to be honest and protect them. That is why we have to have this debate now. It is not good enough to put it off to another time - until next year.

Right now, Tasmanians are dying from poker machine addiction. Families are being broken. People are committing crimes to feed their poker machine addiction. They are the serious consequences. They need to know that this parliament can hold this Premier to account. This motion matters today and it matters now.

[11.52 a.m.]

Mr BARNETT (Lyons - Deputy Premier) - Honourable Speaker, I wanted to stand and share some remarks in support of our Premier and to reject the unfounded, baseless allegations that have been put during this debate, particularly by the Greens.

The SPEAKER - You can do that, but I will encourage you to address the fact that we are actually debating the urgency of the suspension.

Mr BARNETT - Exactly. That is why I wanted to reject those allegations and to say in the strongest possible terms: we have a job to do. In terms of getting on with the job, this is what you are trying to do; you are trying to block it. The government has a strong agenda to grow our economy and create more jobs. We have a legislative agenda. It is sitting there on the notice paper.

This little stunt by the Greens, which appears to be supported by Labor and indeed others, is exactly that. You are stopping the government getting on with the job. In the meantime, during the process, you are besmirching the Premier's reputation. You have used the most awful unparliamentary language to besmirch the reputation of our Premier. It is rejected and it is shameful. It is shameful that it is happening in this place. This is a place where we should be role models. We should be role models for those in the community to stand up and say, 'This is how we should behave'. It is totally and utterly rejected. The Premier has a lifetime of commitment, of public service since 2002, of hard work and dedication. He cares -

Members interjecting.

The SPEAKER - Order, members on both sides.

Mr BARNETT - The Premier is a man of heart. He continues to support the Tasmanian people, including vulnerable Tasmanians. He has a track record for doing that, again and again, year in, year out. The Premier has made very clear his commitment to harm minimisation and a balanced approach. He has outlined that today in countless answers to questions from honourable members on the other side. The Premier has responded each and every time.

It is quite likely and understandable that you do not appreciate or do not like the answer, but that is what parliament is about. We debate ideas and policies. The Premier has been very open and transparent about the consistency between the media release today and the commitment during the campaign. We know the Greens do not like it, but I am disappointed that Labor have come on board to bring support to the Greens. You are standing together again with the Greens. Labor and the Greens are at it again. We have seen this over a long track record.

The SPEAKER - Minister, I draw you to the matter before the House, which is the motion for the suspension.

Mr BARNETT - We have seen it when it comes to the economy. Back to the motion. It is not consistent with getting on with the job, and that is what we want to do. We want to grow our economy and create more jobs. Labor standing with the Greens again is consistent with the recession we had to have when they stood together in government. Thousands of people, in fact 10,000 people, were thrown out of work. We will not put up with that. We will not in any way, shape or form allow our Premier to be besmirched and have awful things said about his reputation. It is not on. You are simply trying to throw out the orders of the House to bring on this motion and to talk all day or all night - who knows how long - to upend this government agenda, when we want to get on with the job.

You have heard and seen the motions and the bills that have been brought forward; they are on the notice paper. We are wanting to get on with the job, focused on the things that matter. This is a joke, and frankly you should be called out for it.

The Premier, as I have said, has answered the questions. He has been very clear, time and again, for the last hour, and you do not like it. You are sharing and promoting disparaging remarks. You are defaming the reputation of our Premier, and on this side of the House, we will not have a bar of it. With regard to allowing the orders of the day to continue, that is exactly what we should be doing.

This is consistent with Labor's whining and whingeing and relentless negativity. You are trying to undermine our government, you are undermining the economy, you are undermining community confidence and we will not have a bar of it. You should not continue with your sniping from the sidelines and your relentless negativity. We are all fed up with it; the community is as well. We want to get on with the job and do the things that are very important to the people that matter in Tasmania.

[11.57 a.m.]

Mr O'BYRNE (Franklin) - Honourable Speaker, a matter of confidence in the Premier is a very serious matter for the House. In the Westminster tradition, I think it is important that that debate be allowed to be heard. It is very clear from the movers of the motion and the Labor Opposition that there is a want for this debate. I am not reflecting on the content of the motion; I would provide my views on that in a substantive debate.

The consequences of a no-confidence motion passing in the Premier are significant for all of us in this place and for the people of Tasmania, and that needs to be considered in the debate. Having said that, it is important that the debate be heard, and that those members defending the Premier and arguing for the Premier be allowed to be heard. The people of Tasmania can witness the debate and form their own views. I formed a view a number of months ago to deliver this parliament. As an Independent member on the crossbench, I undertook to provide stability. It is important, though, given this matter is serious and is of consequence for the Tasmanian people, and given there is a question before the House, that we resolve it. Not allowing the debate in my view is not an appropriate way to have that matter resolved.

I am not sure if the Labor Opposition has flagged any amendment to broaden the scope of the motion that has been put against the Premier. It would be interesting to hear their arguments on that because it will be on the matter they have put before. That is what we will be debating: the matter of gaming legislation and gaming reform in Tasmania.

I indicate that, not reflecting on the content of the motion or forecasting my contribution to the debate, it is important in the Westminster tradition that debate be had. I will support the suspension.

[11.59 a.m.]

Mr WINTER (Franklin - Leader of the Opposition) - Honourable Speaker, I want to comment on the Deputy Premier's contribution.

The SPEAKER - As long it is about the suspension, then you may.

Mr WINTER - It is about the urgency of the suspension. This is an urgent debate because it is very serious, as other speakers have said. The appeal from the Deputy Premier of Tasmania to the opposition to vote confidence in this government was extraordinary. The reason after the

election that we had the Premier running around looking for confidence and supply agreements with the crossbench was for exactly this situation.

He signed up for confidence and supply agreements with the Jacqui Lambie Network, which collapsed, with Mr O'Byrne, and with Ms Johnston. The importance of doing that was for moments like this, and it is quite extraordinary that the Deputy Premier of Tasmania is appealing to the opposition to vote confidence in a government. What Opposition would possibly ever vote confidence in a government? We would be fundamentally not doing our job. We do not have confidence in this government. We never have. Of course we have not.

The issue the Greens bring up today is an issue that they are really passionate about. It is not an issue that I would bring to the front when I talk about this government. For me, it is about the TT-Line; the *Spirits* debacle. It is about the state of the budget. It is about all the issues that they are failing Tasmania on.

This motion is urgent because there are discussions in the community about the competence and the ability for this government to get anything done and it is demonstrated by those on the government benches. The government should have done the work in terms of shoring up supply and confidence agreements. I know they have with the two former Jacqui Lambie network members. I know the Premier has talked about a verbal agreement with Mr Jenner. I know he has an agreement with Mr O'Byrne because transparently it is on the record. Ms Johnston has talked about her agreement being more of a working arrangement. Today, we get to see how well the Premier has negotiated those deals. Today we will support the Suspension of Standing Orders and we will have more to say on the substantive motion.

[12.01 p.m.]

Mr BAYLEY (Clark) - Honourable Speaker, how much longer in this debate?

The SPEAKER - You have time to do your five-minute contribution.

Mr BAYLEY - There is clearly a justification for the Suspension of Standing Orders in this case and it is utterly urgent to debate this motion. As the member for Franklin said, there is no more significant issue than confidence in a premier and that is not necessarily the confidence of this House, that is the confidence of the Tasmanian people. What has been revealed today is that we and the people cannot have confidence in the Premier.

I will start with the words of his former deputy in a talking point on this very issue about mandatory precommitment cards. He said:

Tasmania is at a political and moral crossroads. With the THA trying to stop our promised pokies reform, the integrity and backbone of every MP is under pressure.

That is absolutely the case. The integrity and backbone of us as MPs is under pressure here because this government, this premier and others, have made solid and regular commitments about this precommitment card, starting with its response to the Tasmania Liquor and Gaming Commission's report which recommended this precommitment card. The government said that it would mandate precommitment features as an essential part of the precommitment card framework and agreed that it would have the most impact on minimising

gambling harm and accepted the system functionally, including the concurrent default loss limits proposed by the commission.

The SPEAKER - Mr Bayley, I have drawn everyone else to the urgency motion and I will do so with you.

Mr BAYLEY - That is the government's position, but I come to that because this is the first opportunity we have had to debate this issue because it was only this morning that we had a statement from the government that they are clearly walking away from the precommitment card. It says that, 'A range of harm minimisation measures will be progressed' - that has been said for a long time - '... while the government defers progress on a mandatory precommitment card'.

We have had fears for a long time that they were going to delay a precommitment card to death, but what we are seeing today is the death of this card. It is clear that this premier and this government is going to look to other jurisdictions and let them take the lead, when Tasmania, at one point, had the opportunity to lead ground-breaking reform on this issue across the country.

We know this industry is doing harm to people across the country. We know there are incredibly powerful sectors all around the country and we had an opportunity to lead not only the country, but in many ways the world on how this is going to happen, but when it comes to today's statement, that is simply not going to be the case.

The Premier, even today, kept referring to the fact that one statement aligns with another, but if you compare the pair that is completely not the case. On 16 February 2024 the Deputy Premier put out a statement that said -

Importantly, we also remain committed to harm minimisation and will implement a mandatory card-based gaming system for electronic gaming machines as soon as reasonably practicable.

That is a world away from, 'The government defers progress on a mandatory precommitment card', and this only came out an hour or two ago. That is why this is urgent. That is why we need to have a conversation about this.

It is not just us that I am worried about. We literally just agreed to Mr Street taking up the Deputy Speaker's position. We have strong faith in Mr Street, but on questioning during Estimates on this very issue in relation to the government's commitment to the precommitment card, Mr Street said to me:

I can sit here and look you in the eye and tell you that the government's commitment to the precommitment gaming card has not changed.

It changed today.

This deception, these issues of mistrust, are not just with us as an opposition, or as a crossbench, it is not just with the Tasmanian people, but we know it sits deep in the heart of the Cabinet and we know it sits deep in the heart of the government as well. That is why it is

critically important that we take the time to debate this motion today and test the confidence of this Premier on the floor of this parliament. Thank you.

The SPEAKER (Ms O'Byrne) - The question is that the Suspension of Standing Orders be agreed to.

The House divided -

AYES 17

Ms Badger
Mr Bayley
Dr Broad
Ms Brown
Ms Burnet
Ms Butler
Ms Dow
Ms Finlay (Teller)
Mr Garland
Mr Jenner
Ms Johnston
Mr O'Byrne
Ms Rosol
Ms White
Mr Willie
Mr Winter
Dr Woodruff

NOES 15

Mr Abetz
Mr Barnett
Mr Behrakis
Mrs Beswick
Mr Ellis
Mr Fairs (Teller)
Mr Ferguson
Mr Jaensch
Ms Ogilvie
Mrs Pentland
Mrs Petrusma
Mr Rockliff
Mr Shelton
Mr Street
Mr Wood

PAIRS

Ms Haddad

Ms Howlett

Motion agreed to.

MOTION

Want of Confidence in Premier Rockliff

[12.12 p.m.]

Dr WOODRUFF (Franklin - Leader of the Greens) - Honourable Speaker, the Greens move -

That the House has no confidence in the Premier for the following reasons:

- (1) In September 2022, his government announced a policy for a mandatory precommitment card to reduce the harm caused by electronic gaming machines.

- (2) During the 2024 election campaign, the Liberals put out a vague, dishonest media release which appeared on its surface to reflect their 2022 policy.
- (3) Meanwhile, the Premier made a promise to the Tasmanian Hospitality Association that a re-elected Rockliff government would walk away from the policy.
- (4) The Premier sold out the Liberals' policy to the gambling lobby and deliberately lied to Tasmanians about it during the election.
- (5) During Budget Estimates this year, the Minister for Finance, Nic Street, was unaware his Premier intended to back away from his policy.
- (6) It appears on the evidence the Premier lied to his former Minister for Finance as well.
- (7) The Premier is a liar who cannot be trusted by his own party room and Cabinet, or the people of Tasmania.
- (8) The only people who can trust the Premier's word are the gambling lobby.

The Greens take this matter very seriously. We have been trying for months, during the election campaign and since then, in Estimates, in questions in parliament and to the media, to find out the truth of what is going on with the Premier's backtracking on the 2022 mandatory precommitment card position.

What we have known from today from the media release that has been announced is that this government, this premier, through the Premier and through his actions and his words, are walking away, abandoning, finishing any intention of bringing in a mandatory precommitment card. What we have in front of us is a Premier who, on multiple opportunities, multiple occasions, when given the chance to be honest with Tasmanians, has instead chosen to deceive, to mislead and to actively lie. On behalf of Tasmanians who are deeply concerned at our democracy and are protecting this institution, we have no confidence in a premier who is prepared to lie to Tasmanians to hide the truth of his actions and the actions of his government.

It is abundantly clear that in the election campaign the Liberals had already made a commitment to the Tasmanian Hospitality Association that they would abandon the precommitment card promise because when we heard the media release on that day, on the face of it, it did appear that they would maintain a commitment. The words were -

Importantly, we will also remain committed to harm minimisation and will implement a mandatory card-based system for electronic gaming machines as soon as reasonably practicable.

The warning bells were there by the absence of words. The word 'precommitment' was not in that statement and the time of bringing it on was not in that statement. On detailed questioning on multiple occasions from the media, the Premier said on 26 February 2024 that he promised he would introduce a mandatory precommitment policy and would not be abandoning the promise they made in 2022. It was a specific promise. It was not a generalised promise. It was a specific promise to implement the recommendations from the Tasmanian

Liquor and Gaming Commission for a mandatory precommitment system that would prescribe maximum concurrent default loss limits and initially be set at a daily limit of \$100, a monthly limit of \$500 and an annual limit of \$5000.

I want to draw you, Deputy Speaker, to why this matters. It matters because the community services who work with people addicted to gambling and the parliamentary inquiries and the debates we have had over decades in Tasmania have shown the truth that people who are addicted to gambling are vulnerable to predatory poker machines and electronic gaming machines that are designed specifically to addict people who are vulnerable to gambling and to hold them there until they continue to gamble well past the time it is good for them and their families. That is why we know that those specific changes are required to electronic gaming machines to protect problem gamblers.

This was the promise that was made by the Liberals in 2022 under Michael Ferguson as Finance minister. It was the reason that we had so many people in the community congratulate and welcome this change because it is something that the majority of Tasmanians want. We know that the majority of Tasmanians want to end the harm and damage that is done to individuals and their families from the losses by people addicted to gambling.

It is not too much to say the truth and it was said by the Alliance for Gambling Reform in their letter to the Premier on 13 November, just recently. They were concerned that this government and the Premier were walking away from the commitment. They were trying to stop him, trying to make a plea to his better self - 'Please, Premier, be honest, tell us that you haven't walked away from the promise that you made'.

The reason Michael Ferguson made that commitment was because he understood, and the rest of parliament understood, that people's lives are at risk. It destroys people's lives. People are dying as a result of problem gambling. Their families do not have food on the table today in Tasmania. These are real people's lives and the harm that is happening to them is harm that is seen by people who work in our community services sector, people like Chris Jones on behalf of Anglicare Tasmania. All the people who are working in Anglicare Tasmania know. They see people who come to them for support because they cannot put food on the table or pay their bills because it has all been lost on pokies.

So do the other people who signed on to this letter such as Dr Peter Hoult, the former chair of the Tasmanian Gaming Commission, and Michael Kelly, the CEO of Relationships Australia, on behalf of the people he works with. He knows that people ring in desperation. Their lives are broken as a result of pokies gambling. Rohan Pryor, the chairperson of the Presbytery of Tasmania for the Uniting Church, also spoke out and is part of the Alliance for Gambling Reform. The Gambling Impact Society of New South Wales, Lucinda Szczypior, the acting CEO of TasCOSS in Tasmania, TasCOSS, Anglicare, Mission Australia Tasmania, all the other organisations, the charities, the food banks, all the other community groups, they understand that it is people who are addicted to gambling who suffer so seriously and so do their families.

It is on behalf of those people that those community organisations and the majority of Tasmanians welcomed the Liberals' promise to bring in a mandatory precommitment card, but what we have seen from the Premier is that he has given in to the pokies lobby, but we do not know for how much. We know that there is obviously the influence of the pokies lobby writ

large. We could see from the fact that the Premier had no problem with the conflicts of interest in Finance minister Roger Jaensch's office -

Mr Jaensch - Be careful.

Dr WOODRUFF - Do not tell me to be careful, Mr Jaensch, because I am speaking the truth. In minister Jaensch's Finance office, one of his senior officers is a person who is married to the CEO of the pokies lobby. That is a disgrace. It is a problem that this person was not moved. It is not a problem with that person. It is a problem that the Liberals do not see this as a conflict of interest. When you have someone from the Hospitality Association having such a close connection with what is happening in the Finance minister's office, that is a concern. When the Finance minister ought to be responsible for bringing in a mandatory precommitment card, that is a problem.

Mr JAENSCH - Honourable Speaker, a point of order. I think we have all agreed here in the past that we need to be better at making this a safe place for people to work. I do not have a point of order to refer you to, but I am going to ask you, Deputy Speaker, to please consider the contribution that is being made, which goes to the professionalism of a member of our staff who cannot defend herself here. I will defend her, but I ask for the standard of debate to please respect and be safe to everyone who works here. This is not what we are seeing right now.

DEPUTY SPEAKER - Thank you, minister, and please respect the position I am in as well that I do not have a point of order to adjudicate on. I ask for some civility within the debate, Dr Woodruff. That is as much as I will say.

Dr WOODRUFF - Thank you, Deputy Speaker. It is pretty obvious, just on the face of it, that a relationship between somebody in the Hospitality Association and a person who is working in the Finance minister's office is a conflict of interest that should have been dealt with in the appropriate way. The fact that the Liberals do not see this as a problem speaks volumes about their relationship with the pokies industry.

It was Michael Ferguson himself who belled the cat. He spoke out in his talking point to the *Mercury* and he said it all. We are at a political and moral crossroads when we have a Premier who is leading a government who is incapable of standing up to the pokies lobby, but worse, is incapable of telling the truth about what is going on.

He should be a man of conviction. He should just say, 'We are not going to introduce a mandatory precommitment card'. That is what he is doing, but instead, at every chance, he will not answer the questions. He has been deceiving. He has been lying. He has been directly lying to people under direct questions. He said it again when he said to Mr Bayley.

Mr Street said to Mr Bayley in Estimates this year - and I do not want to put you in a difficult situation, you were not aware. I believe that you are a man of honesty. I believe you are a man who tells the truth. When you looked Mr Street and Mr Bayley in the eyes and said, 'I can sit here and look you in the eye and tell you that the government's commitment to the precommitment gaming card has not changed', we believed you.

We did not understand what was going on, because all the evidence was that the Premier had walked away from the precommitment gaming card. It goes to show that some people

cannot be believed, and the Premier has shown by his actions that he is not a man of his words, he cannot be trusted and in fact he lies to people.

That is at the heart of this no-confidence motion. At the heart of the no-confidence motion is the fact that the Premier is a liar, and that his lies and the result of what he is doing is going to cause direct harm to people who are seriously addicted to gambling. It will put at risk their lives, their livelihoods and that of their family.

It also shows the power of the pokies lobby and the craven lapdog capitulation by the Premier to the pokies lobby, as every Liberal and Labor premier has done before him. Every single time since the pokies have been introduced in Tasmania, Liberal and Labor premiers fall down and bow at the knees of the pokies industry. We never know how much money comes in, but we know that millions rolled in in 2018. We know it rolled in to shut up Labor and to stop them from their position.

We knew that that happened. We could see the blue signs all over the state, and we never found out how much. We found out that 'Love Your Local' was an organisation set up to funnel money in by the Federal Group hotels and the THA to make sure that the money would flow, and the campaign led to the Liberal Party being elected. Labor went back after that election on their knees to the Tasmanian Hospitality Association and signed a secret deal, and it only came out by accident in 2021. It showed that Labor signed a secret deal and was prepared to do whatever is required to get elected.

This is at the heart of what is stinking in Tasmania. Vested interests run the Liberals, and the Premier, through this, is trying to lie to people. He is trying to pretend to people that he actually cares and is going to introduce something that he is never going to introduce. It is never going to happen. It is an abuse of his role as Premier, to continue to pretend he is going to do something and to actively lie and to refuse to tell Tasmanians what is going on.

The Deloitte report which they are getting to cook up something - they will not even be honest with Tasmanians. What are the terms of reference? What are the guidelines that he gave to Deloitte to get them to do the report - another report that we do not need because we have had so many? All the evidence is there. We do not need to know any more about the harms of electronic gaming machines. We do not need to know any more about the benefits of mandatory precommitment cards. It is abundantly obvious that they work, and the reason that they work is because it is the only thing that will stop people from continuing to put the money in, time and time again. They have to have a default loss limit. It has to be there for them, otherwise they will not stop spending the money.

Let us not be under any illusions that the majority of money that goes from people into poker machines goes to the gambling industry, the pokies industry, to Federal hotels. That is exactly why the Hospitality Association is trying so hard to discredit these incredibly essential and overdue reforms, because they are reforms that will put the power back, as Michael Ferguson said, into the hands of players so that they get to decide in advance how much money they are going to lose.

It is this failure of the Premier to be honest with Tasmanians about what he is actually doing which is at the heart of our reason for having no confidence in him anymore. How can he continue to tell Tasmanians, just as he did this morning, at the same time as he refused to say how much money the Liberals got from the THAA and from the pokies lobby in the last

year, he continues to try and rest on his legacy. His legacy is not enough if it is not real. We are calling on him to be honest with Tasmanians and to stand aside, because we have no confidence in him in his role.

How can it be that he continues to lie, apparently, to his former minister for Finance, Mr Street? It is clear that there is utter division in the Liberals on this matter. There is no doubt that there are those among them in the Cabinet, probably a majority in Cabinet, who find this broken promise disgusting. It is abhorrent. It stands against everything that people who genuinely care about the most vulnerable in our society should support. There is division, and it is because the Premier has chosen to go with vested interests instead of the people that he says that he will represent.

This is something that the people of Tasmania strongly believed the ship had turned on. The majority of Tasmanians want electronic gaming machines to be reined in. They want the predatory nature of pokies to be reined in, but most of all they want to have a Premier who is honest about what is going on. If there was to be a change to abandon the pokies precommitment policy, which is what has happened, they want him to be honest about it. We have no confidence in a premier who cannot be honest with Tasmanians. We have no confidence in a premier who is clearly speaking the talking points of the gambling industry. What we have before us is a premier who has decided to walk away from the people of Tasmania and to walk away from the things that really matter.

This has a long history in Tasmania. The pokies industry has splashed money around for decades, and in the first vote that allowed pokies in Tasmania in 1985, it is on the record that Dr Bob Brown was the only person in the lower House who voted against bringing those destructive machines into our state. They were not going to happen, and then the Liberal and Labor parties caved in. We have seen over the decades both parties give money to the Federal Group. They have given Federal a monopoly licence for pokies for free.

What we have now is the possibility of change - a possibility that the majority of Tasmanians supported - and a Premier who has been steadily crab walking back from that quietly ever since before the election. Now we are in a situation where we have had it confirmed today that that is exactly what he has done. The whole time since 16 February, when that policy announcement was made, at every opportunity the Premier has chosen to deceive, to mislead, to deliberately make Tasmanians believe that he was continuing with the mandatory precommitment card policy. He was asked at the election, and it was obvious that he had made a shift. The Greens were concerned. Community services were concerned. The Alliance for Gambling Reform was concerned.

It could be read in the weasel words and the absence of words in that media release by the Liberals in February during the election, that there was a shift in their policy. Of course, there is a shift in the policy because we just had Mr Abetz make comment to that earlier. He said refining - I think your words were, minister - 'refining the policy'. It has been refined so that it is an abandonment, effectively. When you are pushing something off into the never-never that is effectively never going to happen.

This is a policy that should have been in place now. It should already have started. It should already have happened in 2022. It was meant to be in place now. It has already been pushed off to next year. Now, we know it is never going to happen. It is never going to happen because the Premier pretends that we need to do more and more studies, more and more

evidence. He says we have to look at the evidence of impacts on the economy but we know from Mr Ferguson's comments that that is a lie, too. It is a lie to pretend that it is actually going to harm the pokies industry.

The money has been flowing into them, as he said, over the last period of time. He made it really clear in his talking point in the *Mercury* that in just one month, December 2023, the vast majority of pubs were up by between 40 and 60 per cent. The highest additional retained revenue was an additional \$73,000 in one month alone, in just one venue. There is so much extra profit coming into the industry. Thanks, as he says, for the policy announcement.

It has not done any harm. There is no harm to the pokies industry from the Liberals' policy. The harm from the pokies industry is to the people. The harm to the people from the Liberals policy is to the people who are addicted to gambling. It is to them and it is to their families. It is another lie to pretend that we need yet another study to look at the impacts on businesses as though they will be harmed.

We have been here before. This was always about being a delaying tactic. It obviously always was. The Premier could not even be honest by giving Tasmanians the terms of reference and all the information and correspondence that they gave to Deloitte. Why not? Why not just tell us? Yet again, hiding information.

We cannot have a premier who continues to go on and say to Tasmanians, 'Trust me, what I am doing is the right thing, trust what I am saying' - that is a dangerous place to go. It is dangerous to pretend that you are actually working in people's interests when at the same time out the back, you have vested interests in your back pocket and they are the people for whom you are working.

It is pretty clear since February that the Premier of Tasmania, Jeremy Rockliff, has been working for the pokies industry, working for their interests, working against the interests of Tasmanians, refusing to be honest with people about what he is really doing, refusing to even respond in good faith to the Alliance for Gambling Reform, to all the community sector who are so concerned and to the individuals who have written and spoken up about the change in the Liberals' policy.

We have had it confirmed today with the news that the Liberals will be abandoning their pokies mandatory precommitment card policy. This is an absolute lie by the Premier to pretend it is otherwise. He has lied at multiple opportunities. He is not putting the interests of Tasmanians first. It is not okay to continue to have a Premier who is untrustworthy. It is not okay to have a premier who is not true to his word. It is also terrible to have a person who continually stands on his own label for himself as a man with heart. It is actually sickening to hear him continue to say that. I have seen his track record, but it has to mean something. For people who have watched Jeremy Rockliff, it has come to a full stop, because you cannot continue to say you are a man of heart if you cannot be honest and, ultimately, if you cannot put the people who are most vulnerable first.

You have a premier who is choosing to put the interests of the pokies lobby above the interests of vulnerable Tasmanians addicted to gambling and their families, whose lives and livelihoods will be lost, who will not be able to put food on their tables. This is a large number of Tasmanians in a cost-of-living crisis. When you are choosing to go with the ultra-rich profit-

making pokies industry over vulnerable Tasmanians, I call shame. We have no confidence in a premier who does that. It is absolutely the rock bottom he could go.

We cannot have him in that role any more. We need a person in the important role of premier who is going to be honest with Tasmanians and put the most vulnerable people first because, if that is not his core job, what is? His core job should be to defend Tasmania, defend this place, these people, and to look after and defend our democracy. A premier must be honest and able to be trusted by the people in order for that to happen. We have no confidence that Jeremy Rockliff is that man.

Time expired.

[12.42 p.m.]

Mr ABETZ (Franklin - Leader of the House) - Honourable Speaker, this side of the House has absolute confidence in the Premier of Tasmania, Jeremy Rockliff. On election night, he was the only one to put up his hand to lead this state. The Labor Party found themselves incapable of putting their hand up, so he put up his hand and, with the support, he has become the Premier of Tasmania and has done a fantastic job.

I am sure I do not have to remind the House that there are serious consequences in relation to a no-confidence motion. If you have a no-confidence motion carried in the Premier, he may well be visiting Government House and advising the need for an election. This would be in circumstances where we had an election on 23 March. We may well have an election before Christmas, should this motion get through. Is that the stability and certainty that members in this House promised the Tasmanian people after 23 March? No. What they promised was that they would make this parliament work.

I have every confidence that, whilst certain members in this place like to entertain the fun and games of besmirching a premier and a certain staff member employed within government circles, they might think that is fun, and good luck to them. However, I am sure common sense will, and needs to, prevail at the end of the debate to ensure that the business of government for the benefit of the people of Tasmania continues.

I ran out, I think, at about 200 doing the word count on the Greens leader's use of the words 'lie', 'liar', 'untrustworthy', besmirching the leader of the government on a five-second basis. What I would say to the Greens, and those listening into this debate, is that mere repetition does not obviate the need for actual evidence. You can keep on saying it but, at the end of the day, people want and need some evidence for that proposition. That is what the Leader of the Greens singularly failed to achieve in her contribution.

From time to time, people do renew their policy approach or look at things a bit differently. I cannot help but look at my good friend, the Deputy Leader of the Greens, who supported the Tasmanian Forest Agreement. Some might say he walked away from that.

Mr Bayley - Some might say you tore it up, minister, and it does not exist.

The SPEAKER - Some might say you should not interject.

Mr ABETZ - I could, therefore, say that this man is - insert word of choice from Dr Woodruff's speech to describe the honourable gentleman. He, like everybody else, is entitled to nuance and change his position.

To continuously besmirch the character of the Premier is unworthy of the Greens and is indicative of what they do all the time. That is to play the politics of personality rather than the genuine politics of policy. I think everybody in this place accepts that 'man of heart' to describe the Premier is, in fact, not a self-description. It is a community description by the people of Tasmania. He has earned that reputation for a good reason: because he will always seek to do the very best for the people of Tasmania.

The Leader of the Greens suggested that Cabinet might be divided on this issue, or that there might be other divisions. Interesting proposition. Where is your evidence? Zero, nil, none offered yet repeated time and time again to try to make the case. Simply making an assertion without the delivery of facts and evidence shows how hollow this whole exercise being led by the Leader of the Greens is.

In the statement made today there are a few fun facts. Did we hear the Leader of the Greens mention those fun facts? No.

Mr Bayley - They are not fun if you are addicted to poker machines.

Mr ABETZ - Tasmania has the lowest density of electronic gaming machines of any state. We have the lowest spend per capita on electronic gaming machines and - this is a vital one, the lowest prevalence of problem gambling, with 0.4 per cent of our adult population having serious issues with gambling. That is with the whole suite of gambling opportunities available.

Are there people addicted to electronic gaming machines? Absolutely. Do I like electronic gaming machines? No, I do not. Do I like Keno, other forms of gambling and, if I was so minded, I could get rid of every red cent left in my bank account courtesy of this mobile phone. I do not have to visit a gaming premises to get rid of all my money through gambling. The issue is, why this concentration on one particular form of gambling?

There has been argument made in relation to that argument I understand. I must say, to the Greens in particular, that uncontrolled gambling is a scourge within our community. The question then becomes: what is the government seeking to do about it? It is all there in today's statement from the Premier. The very first line of the statement is:

The Tasmanian government remains committed to implementing harm minimisation.

Could anything be clearer than that? Ms Woodruff's answer to that is, 'Liar, liar, liar', without actually engaging on the merits of the debate. The second paragraph starts:

A range of harm minimisation measures will be progressed to reduce the harm associated with EGMs or electronic gaming machines. Has that been raised by the Greens? No. Rather, it's 'Liar, liar, liar', and that way you do not have to actually talk about the facts that are on the table for all to see.

Then at the bottom of the first page, the fourth paragraph:

The Government will develop a broader harm minimisation package that may include facial recognition technology (FRT) and other emerging technologies which are now in use in other states and can improve harm reduction outcomes in Tasmania ...

Would not that have been something that somebody might have welcomed in this debate? That is a positive move, something to be celebrated, something to be acknowledged? No, to try to cover that very positive statement, what do we have? 'Liar, liar, liar', coming out of the mouth of the Leader of the Greens, as though somehow that sort of childish repetition obviates the need for hard evidence to support a no-confidence motion: a motion that might talk about disappointment, or something like that. Indeed, the hard work might be for the Greens, should they so wish, to introduce their own legislation in this area but no, it is so much easier to call out, 'Liar, liar, liar', and not introduce your own legislation and hard work to achieve the alleged outcome that you want. Of course, it will undoubtedly make the evening news headlines and that is what the Greens love - make an outrageous claim, grab the headline and then hope nobody examines it.

Well, today people are examining the assertions being made by the Leader of the Greens, and those assertions are being found to want. They want for any evidence, for any genuine suggestion of that besmirching in relation to financial donations - they are all there on the public record. We have a public disclosure regime for political donations, and they are abided by. If you believe they are not abided by, show us the evidence. Do not just make the assertion. Provide the evidence.

The worst of all was, and I will use the term the 'misogyny' - the assertion that just because a staff member is married to somebody else who has another job, that she is incapable of independent thinking and will, as of must, follow her husband's views in relation to a particular matter. This exposes the mindset of the Leader of the Greens.

Members interjecting.

The SPEAKER - Members on my left, Ms Haddad, and members on my right, Ms Ogilvie, order.

Mr ABETZ - What a shameful thing to say about a qualified staff member in a ministerial office. Would you be requiring people to resign? What is actually being said here? It is a terrible besmirching of that individual staff member. To suggest that she is incapable of independent thinking and does not have a set of ethics, that it even finds room in your mind for you to entertain that thought and that concept - I believe this indicates your mindset.

It is not a reflection on the staff member. It is a reflection on the Tasmanian Greens and the way they do their political business, which is to besmirch anybody and everybody who they see as being in their way for achieving their political purposes.

Going through this statement further, the Tasmanian government has determined that implementing other harm minimisation measures is far more practicable, cost-effective for the Tasmanian taxpayer, and guarantees that help will be available for those who need it far sooner. Here we go. We have determined that it is more practicable, cheaper to the taxpayer, and

guarantees that help will be available for those in need sooner. No mention of all those very positive announcements in the Premier's statement, indicative of the view of the Premier and the government, that there is need to bring some harm minimisation to the table sooner, cheaper for the people of Tasmania, and a lot more practicable.

If there is a fault in that statement, let us expose it, let us explain it. Instead, we are fed this diatribe of 'Liar, liar, liar,' rather than in engaging with the actual facts and statements and the policy position announced by the Premier earlier today.

Mr Bayley - What about this one, minister, 'The government agrees the precommitment will have the most impact'?

Mr ABETZ - Possibly it is a rush of blood to the head of the Leader of the Greens -

The SPEAKER - The Deputy Leader of the Greens can make his contribution later or not at all.

Mr ABETZ - Having seen the statement, not having read it properly, not having researched it properly, thought, 'Here's a cheap opportunity to throw a grenade into the business of the House on the beginning of the last sitting fortnight, grab a cheap headline'. At the end of the day, what this disruption does is ensure that the people of Tasmania do not have the legislative changes and reforms in a host of other areas that are so important, such as getting on with a \$40 million development up in Devonport for the Stony Rise, something I think most people fully support, wanting to get things happening in Tasmania for the consumer, for the workers, for economic development: all the sort of things that are just so vitally important.

The government and the Premier have said they are speaking on behalf of the government. We are committed to helping all Tasmanians who have problems with gambling addiction. By developing a suite of harm minimisation measures we are confident we can target and assist this small number of Tasmanians. What has the Premier said? No, it is not only the EGM (electronic gaming machine) addiction but gambling addiction. This is a scourge wider than only electronic gaming machines. It is a sad matter of fact that before electronic gaming machines were introduced, and I, for one - chances are life might be better without them, but people used to lose their wages, their houses, gambling on horses out of the track -

Mr Bayley - Still do.

Mr ABETZ - They still do. On this rare occasion I can agree with the Deputy Leader of the Greens.

Mr Bayley - We need to do something about that, too.

Mr ABETZ - Where are the measures in relation to harm minimisation on horse racing?

Mr Bayley - End it.

Mr ABETZ - There we go. We just end everything and we will have the view of the Greens being restricting people's choices. You know, in a free society, people are entitled to make choices which we may well disagree with. Gambling and the scourge of gambling and

the consequences of gambling are not only limited to the electronic gaming machines which appears to be the view of the Tasmanian Greens.

The Premier also announced that as part of the package we will be increasing funding for wraparound support services so that we can help those who need it. I am committed to working with community service organisations to ensure the right supports are available: community organisations which the Leader of the Greens rattled off, but then refused to say and acknowledge that the Premier had committed to working with them to achieve the outcomes that I think we all want in this place.

We are about to come up to the luncheon adjournment, so can I say to this House, no confidence, absolutely serious -

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

MOTION

Want of Confidence in Premier Rockliff

Resumed from above.

The SPEAKER - Mr Abetz, you have two minutes and 27 seconds left.

Mr ABETZ - Thank you, honourable Speaker, and I will make very good use of it. Those of us on this side have complete and utter confidence in the Premier of Tasmania, the honourable Jeremy Rockliff. Let us be absolutely clear in relation to the assertions made by the Leader of the Greens. The simple fact is that the precommitment card is still on the agenda; it has not been ruled out. Indeed, what the Premier has said is that he would seek to cooperate with all the other state and territory jurisdictions in the nation to see how that can be implemented in a cost-effective and practical manner which will lead to genuine harm minimisation.

Speaker, the tirade we heard before lunch from the Leader of the Greens using all sorts of unbecoming terminology does her no justice and does the parliament no justice. You can throw around those phrases, but at the end of the day you need actual evidence to back in those assertions, and that is what the Leader of the Greens spectacularly failed to do prior to lunch in trying to float this motion of no confidence.

I remind the House by concluding that a motion of no confidence in the Premier is about as serious a motion as one can have in this place. People can have fun with it today and make all the accusations they want about the Premier, but at the end of the day I would invite them to take on the seriousness of the proposition and whilst they may have had fun on the way through, ensure that this motion is defeated. Otherwise, the people of Tasmania will rightly ask, 'Where is the promise of making this parliament work? Where is the promise of stability? Where is the promise that this parliament would help the people of Tasmania with the economic task in front of us, with jobs, with the cost of living and the other issues we are dealing with?'

Speaker, this side of the House has absolute confidence in the Premier and we invite the House to vote accordingly.

[2.33 p.m.]

Mr WINTER (Franklin - Leader of the Opposition) - Honourable Speaker, the leader of government business just asked, 'Where is the promise of stability?'. I would echo that question because it was only earlier this year that the Premier took this state to yet another early election promising stability. He said that minority government was bad for jobs, bad for our healthcare system, bad for our economy. The instability in this government is what is causing the problems in Tasmania.

Over the course of this Premier's time having led this government into minority, 6700 jobs have been lost. Everything he said about minority government is coming true and the instability in this place is directly related to the Premier's performance. The Premier's performance on a whole range of issues has caused the instability. He has wrecked the budget. He has overseen 6700 jobs lost. He stuffed the biggest infrastructure project in Tasmania's history, the *Spirit of Tasmania* ferries, which comes to this motion. There is a lot going wrong with this government and a lot going wrong with the Premier's performance.

Today, the Greens have brought on a motion in relation to card-based play, which I would not put in the top 20 issues facing Tasmania today. We have a cost-of-living crisis, a health crisis, an education crisis and a budget which is in severe crisis.

We do not have confidence in the government; we never have. We certainly do not have confidence in them at the moment. They are at their lowest ebb. The motion today is about confidence. You would never expect an opposition to vote against a no-confidence motion and of course we do not have confidence.

As I said earlier, this is actually about the government organising themselves in a minority parliament and getting supply and confidence agreements with the crossbench. This has been something that has not been publicly spoken about very much. Supply and confidence agreements are important for the working of this place.

I understand exactly where the two former JLN members stand. They have signed supply and confidence agreements and have put them in writing and made them publicly available. I understand where Mr O'Byrne's supply and confidence agreement stands. He has put it up, it is public. We all understand exactly what is in those agreements, but that does not make for 18, that does not make for a majority, and there lies the problem and the instability and the lack of confidence in this government and the reason why they are running around today concerned about their own position.

It is not up to Labor or the opposition to back in this government. It is actually up to this government to demonstrate to Tasmanians and this place that they are capable of governing and at the moment there is a very big question about their capability to govern.

I spoke to a number of very senior former bureaucrats, business people and political operatives over lunch a few weeks ago and one of them described this government as the worst Tasmanian government he had ever seen. Another interrupted and said, 'Actually, I think it's probably the worst government in Australian history'. That is what people are saying about this government out there in the community. They continue to change their position, particularly around gaming, but on other things as well and Tasmanians are not sure what the point of them is.

I want to talk about gaming in particular. As I said, this is being brought on today by the Greens because of their concern around the precommitment card. I want to explain what Labor's position is and what it has been. I was the shadow finance minister in 2021 who was tasked with formulating Labor's approach to the gaming bill. I did so as the only party in this place that consulted with everybody. I spoke to the social services sector, I spoke to people who have had problems with gambling and I spoke to the industry. I spoke to as many people as I possibly could to formulate our policy and out of that came our position. By the way, I also spoke to the United Workers Union, who talked about having well-trained gaming officers on the floor in our gaming venues, particularly our casinos, to identify and support people exhibiting signs of harmful gambling.

We talked about facial recognition technology to guarantee that anyone who has self-excluded cannot gamble. When we put that position, I can tell you there was a lot of pushback in the industry about that. I remember speaking to one operator and I went down and had a look and explained why I thought it was a good idea and they pushed back. I understand some people are sceptical about it, but I really believe in it and I think that the South Australian model is demonstrating that it can work, it should work and it is something that we could have implemented right back in 2021 instead of mucking around with a card-based technology which had not yet been invented. We supported voluntary card-based play to provide players with the tools to manage their gambling if they wished to.

We made that position clear and throughout these entire last two years of instability and uncertainty about what the government would or would not do on the card-based play, we said we would not stand in the way of it and, frankly, no-one has. In fact, it has been widely supported in this place, particularly by the Greens and Ms Johnston and in the other place by members, but we were the ones asking questions about this. We were the ones asking how much will the policy cost to implement and who will pay for it? What will be the impact on state taxes? Does this technology even exist and how will players' data be secured? We were never able to have those questions satisfactorily answered.

During Estimates this year, the former minister for finance could not say how much it would cost, yet he could not tell me what the impact on the Budget would be. The very basics of policy were not able to be answered by the government, demonstrating to me that they were not committed to it, and potentially because it could not be implemented.

I am not in the habit of calling on Liberals to implement a policy that is not ours, about which the Gaming Commission cannot answer basic questions. We asked the independent commissioner for a briefing twice, once late last year and once early this year, and both times we were declined a briefing on how this would actually work.

We cannot support the card-based play system that I know the Greens support because we do not know enough about it and I think it is too broad an approach for what people actually need. The problem with the card is that it impacts everybody. If you are a tourist coming to Tasmania, you cannot play and participate; you are treated like somebody who has a significant issue with gaming. It is a very blunt instrument for a problem that does not exist for everybody, and that is why we have taken the position we have - sensible policies that can be implemented now.

Today the government was talking about precommitment - according to the Leader of the House - still being on the agenda. It is already happening in other states, where they are

implementing it in New South Wales, and they are now talking about going along with other states. That is what they should have been doing the whole way through. South Australia has had facial recognition in place for a few years now and it is working. Other states have been working around these issues, particularly in New South Wales. Tasmania is too small a state to try to invent something new - well, on this issue anyway.

There are a couple of other things to put on the record about this. Reverend Tim Costello wrote in the *Mercury* recently that I had refused to meet him. That is totally and utterly false. When his office reached out to me last year I responded personally within a day and accepted the date that his office offered me. Reverend Costello then changed his plans and did not come to Tasmania. His office offered another date when he would be in Tasmania but unfortunately I was in Queensland. I never refused to meet with Reverend Costello. I never would have. I am deeply disappointed that he claimed that I would have done that.

I hope we get to hear from former minister and deputy premier Mr Ferguson today. In his op-ed in the *Mercury* a couple of weeks ago, he said:

The parliament was totally unified in 2021 when I led the Future Gaming Markets legislation through Parliament, which included the first publicly debated (and agreed) commitment to precommitment and cashless play in Australia.

Labor's Dean Winter, as the shadow spokesperson, was a strong supporter of these specific reforms and even challenged us to lock in the Commission's review into the legislation. I was more than happy to facilitate that!

However, I have noticed he has gone very quiet since he became Labor leader. Why?

The parliament was not unified in 2021 on this matter. In fact, it was - how would you describe it? - it was a brutal debate. It was a brutal debate in which the Greens called a division even on the first reading. We debated almost every single clause. It went for hours and days and days. There was not a unified debate.

Labor did not support these specific reforms. How could we have? They did not exist for almost a year afterwards. There was little to no support for card-based play anywhere that I could find even in this place. The people who were against gaming did not want gaming at all; they were not talking about putting card-based play in place.

The fact that the Liberals' policy was not consulted with industry, that is a fact. It was not consulted with the opposition. It has been clear for a long time that there was a huge divide in the Liberal Party about their position today. Michael Ferguson is and was the member for Bass, and was directly taking on his premier in that op-ed. It is the sort of division that has distracted this government.

We have issues across Tasmania that are very significant and very serious, and Tasmanians can see that this is a government that is really struggling. As I said, we do not have confidence in this government. I think, frankly, it is disrespectful to point to this issue as the reason why we have no confidence in this government when there are so many other issues that are facing Tasmania.

We have a housing crisis. We have rents that are going up and up. We have a *Spirits of Tasmania* crisis that is impacting our tourism and hospitality sector enormously, making it incredibly difficult for people who have invested and taken the time to actually make ends meet. I have been speaking to people who have spent over \$100,000 getting ready for our *Spirits of Tasmania* because they were told to get ready, and yet the government was not.

Honourable Speaker, I would like to move an amendment today to the motion. I move -

Delete the words after 'that the House has no confidence in the Premier'.

Recognition of Visitors

The SPEAKER - While that is circulated, I welcome to the gallery and acknowledge the presence of the Ambassador for Belgium, His Excellency Michel Goffin, Mrs Meagan Goffin, and the honorary Consul of Belgium for Tasmania, Paul de Moor. Thank you very much for joining us today.

Members - Hear, hear.

[2.44 p.m.]

Mr WINTER - Honourable Speaker, This is a government which has totally lost control and a premier who has totally lost control. The Tasmanian Chamber of Commerce and Industry recently put out a statement in relation to the *Spirits*. It said:

[This is a dark day for Tasmania. This is even worse than we thought first thought]. The economic costs will be felt by businesses and taxpayers for years to come, our brand has been damaged and it has impacted on business confidence. Worst of all, it will be very difficult to trust this government again because of this. It will certainly be difficult to trust them on the timelines they have set out today.

These are very serious issues, but what was in the motion that the Greens put forward today was pretty disappointing. I do not think the comments that they made in relation to the partner of the CEO of the THA both publicly and in this place fit with what any Parliamentarian should say. I have been around this place for a while now, and I have never seen an adviser being attacked like the Greens attacked one earlier.

The blatant claiming that minister Nic Street was unaware the Premier intended to walk away from the policy - I do not know that, I do not think you do, and you have not presented any evidence. In relation to paragraph (6), 'It appears on the evidence that the Premier lied to his former minister of Finance as well', I do not know the veracity of that. We have not heard from the former minister for Finance, but I cannot support making accusations like this without having a basis for them.

I agree with some of the comments from the Deputy Premier about this and on interjection or point of order from minister Jaensch about these issues. I think we should stick to the facts and the facts are that this is a very bad government. This is a government that has failed to deliver on a whole host of projects, but the way to do that is not by attacking individuals, it is not by calling people liars without evidence, and it is not by picking, in relation to the problems facing Tasmania, an issue that is certainly not as important as the health crisis,

the housing crisis, the cost-of-living crisis, the *Spirits* fiasco and all those things. For that reason, I believe that these issues should be deleted. I think that we should stick to the facts. That is why, honourable Speaker, I will move the amendment and then come back to the substantive debate.

[2.47 p.m.]

Dr WOODRUFF (Franklin - Leader of the Greens) - Honourable Speaker, to the amendment. We are here today because of the actions of the Premier this morning and over the previous eight months or so since the election. His actions have shown crystal clear that he is putting the interests of the pokies lobby ahead of the interests of vulnerable Tasmanians, that he has abandoned a promise that he made during the election point blank to Tasmanians when asked on repeated occasions, and that since then he has been deceptive and misleading on that matter. When asked in questions in parliament, in the media and from community groups, he has point blank deceived, misled, or lied on this matter.

We agree that there are so many reasons to have no confidence in the Premier, but we are here because of a serious matter of the Premier being dishonest with Tasmanians and the Premier abandoning a promise that he made on such an important issue. We have no confidence in Jeremy Rockliff. There are the reasons that we have stated here in the motion, but in simple terms, we have no confidence in Jeremy Rockliff because of his behaviour.

I think we have aired the reasons very clearly in the House. I do not accept that we have not made the case. The facts speak for themselves. It was clearly the case that the Premier had had conversations with the THA. It is clearly the case that they have been bullying him and pressuring him to change his party's position. We know that from the evidence of Michael Ferguson when he was Minister for Finance, and the op-ed he wrote. It is clear he was belling the cat. It was a plea to Tasmanians to see what was going on. It was clear this is about the pokies industry, the THA pressuring the Liberal government to get the outcome they want: to have the free-for-all they have always had since pokies were in Tasmania for decades, to do whatever they want and make as much money as they can, with vulnerable Tasmanians the people suffering. That has meant that the Premier has walked away from a promise he made to Tasmanians. He made it at the election when he knew that people cared, when he knew that eyes were on him and when he wanted to get those votes. He wanted to get the votes and he wanted to be here as Premier. It is a shameful act and an example of what he has repeatedly done.

He has certainly done it on the ferries. The *Spirits of Tasmania* fiasco had Jeremy Rockliff refusing to be transparent with Tasmania because he could have directed his Treasurer and Infrastructure minister to be clear with Tasmanians. He could have answered the many questions the Labor Party asked for months in parliament himself, as Premier. He chose not to do that. It was his choice to hide the truth from Tasmanians about what was happening with the *Spirits*. There is form here.

The reason we are here today is because we have clear evidence that, when under pressure, when pushed to give an honest answer, he will deceive, mislead or straight out lie. You have the evidence today because we have asked that for months, and so have the media and Tasmanians who represent people who are vulnerable and affected. Of course, we agree with the Labor Party that the House has no confidence in the Premier. We stand by the fact that the Greens have no confidence in the Premier.

[2.52 p.m.]

Mr BARNETT (Lyons - Deputy Premier) - Honourable Speaker, it was not clear whether the Leader for the Greens is supporting the amendment or not. However, the Leader of the Opposition moving this amendment is proof positive that this is a political stunt. This is a political stunt today where you had the leader for the opposition in this House, and Dr Broad, just a few hours ago prior to lunch speak in favour of the Greens and efforts to suspend standing Orders and to bring this motion on because this motion besmirches the credibility of the Premier. It is defamatory. If you walked outside today and said these things - and I am speaking with some understanding of these matters, not just in federal parliament or state parliament - if you said this outside this Chamber -

The SPEAKER - Thank you, member for Lyons. I will draw the minister to the amendment before the House, not the substantive motion, please.

Mr BARNETT - I am speaking to the amendment which has been put by the Leader of the Opposition because it is a political sham, a ploy. The Leader of the Opposition knows full well he is winding this up for political game-playing and political purposes. Why is this Chamber often referred to as Cowards Castle? You cannot walk outside and say what you have been saying in here. We talk about being role models. This is not a good example today. It is a shameful example where you are besmirching and defaming the Premier of Tasmania.

Members interjecting.

The SPEAKER - Members on my left have an opportunity to make a contribution on this amendment and on the substantive motion.

Mr BARNETT - Dr Broad, on behalf of the Labor Party, spoke a few hours ago in favour of bringing it on and supporting the ambitions of the Greens. This is Labor and the Greens standing together yet again, shoulder to shoulder, doing everything they can to not just undermine the reputation of the Premier, but besmirch his reputation.

The SPEAKER - To the amendment, Mr Barnett.

Mr BARNETT - In terms of the amendment, we will not have a bar it.

Members interjecting.

The SPEAKER - Order, Leader of the Opposition and the member for Bass.

Mr BARNETT - This is the Labor Party playing games. That is all they have been doing ever since the election. They come here and offer platitudes, then do everything they can to undermine the government, to undermine the economy. The Leader for the Opposition says he wants to remove points 1 to 8. We have had hours of debate, earlier today right through until 1.00 p.m. and then now 2.30 p.m., right until about 20 minutes ago when the Leader of the Opposition steps up and amends the motion. Why did you not do it from the start?

Dr Broad - Because we did not have the call, because it was the first speaker.

Mr BARNETT - Well, you have taken your time.

The SPEAKER - I will ask the minister to stop encouraging those types of interjections. Come back to the substantive motion. Members on my left, I can do that without your assistance, thank you.

Mr BARNETT - Dr Woodruff has made it very clear. She has walked through those defamatory allegations, those eight defamatory notes in the motion. They are shocking. They are disgraceful. If you walked outside this place and tried to mention some of those words in terms of the Premier being a liar and cannot be trusted, it is shameful and offensive. There is a call for you to give it a try. Well, give it a try. You will not like the consequences. The ramifications are very serious. That is with respect to the amendment. This motion is incredibly serious and I hope colleagues in this Chamber understand the consequences of following through on their actions. You are responsible and accountable for your decisions in this place. It has a flow-on effect.

When we came to government, the Premier made it clear, and I have made it clear, that we are to collaborate with good will. That is what the public want: collaboration and good will. We have tried to demonstrate that in different ways, and I think we have as a government. I think we have, largely, as a parliament. We have worked well in collaboration, with good will. However, this type of motion is upending that good will because the public will look on this with serious concern. The public want us to progress in a positive way, in collaboration, working together with good will to get the best interests of Tasmania forefront in everybody's mind. We will not support the amendment because we think it is two faced, it is a political stunt and you have been called out.

[2.58 p.m.]

Ms JOHNSTON (Clark) - Honourable Speaker, on the amendment, I have spent the lunchtime adjournment preparing my contribution for this afternoon on the substantive amendment, based on the eight points the Leader of the Greens, Dr Woodruff, has outlined, looking at how I would respond to that.

A no-confidence motion is an incredibly serious matter. In my correspondence to the Premier earlier this year, before the state election, I outlined how I would approach any issue of no confidence: that is, on merit with the key of transparency, accountability and integrity. That is how I have been framing my contribution this afternoon. That is how I expect every member of this place, whether they are a party member or crossbench member, to consider the seriousness of what we have before us: with transparency, accountability and integrity, and to hold this parliament to a high standard that Tasmanians expect.

The amendment moved by the Leader of the Opposition removes the substantive reasons Dr Woodruff has put forward for this no-confidence motion. However, it does allow every member of parliament to make a determination on the merits on particular issues they consider important in regard to the confidence of the Premier.

In responding to a broader motion that simply says the House has no confidence in the Premier, I will turn my mind to the issues of poker machines and of the commitment from the government. However, I will also take into consideration other aspects. I recognise that the Leader of the Opposition has outlined a number of other very important and pressing issues that Tasmanians are concerned with but I do not agree with his suggestion that poker machines and reform of this industry is not a high priority. It is an absolute high priority for this community. We know the harm is being caused right now. We know that the issues regarding

homelessness, the housing crisis, employment, all those kinds of things, can be impacted by poker machine addiction. They are not mutually exclusive issues but they are important issues and they need to inform each and every member's view on whether they should have confidence in this premier.

Whilst I will be speaking more broadly to the motion regarding the issue of poker machines, the government's monumental backflip this morning and the Premier's dishonesty and deception in relation to that, I have no doubt that other members ought to be taking this matter seriously and considering what their threshold is. I believe it is important that the threshold is integrity, honesty, transparency and accountability. That is what should matter. No matter what the wording is in the motion, it should be considered on its merits. It should not be fear of an election or scaremongering from the government about an election because while Tasmanians do not want an election, they want a government and a parliament that upholds integrity, transparency, accountability and honesty.

I support the amendment that the Leader of the Opposition has put forward, but in my contribution I will be putting quite clearly on the record how I have formed the view that I do not have confidence in the Premier and what the issues are that I think have merit in this debate.

[3.02 p.m.]

Mr BAYLEY (Clark) - Thank you, honourable Speaker. I rise to speak on the amendment and will save my substantive contribution on our motion after we deal with this. This amendment worries me a bit. This amendment lends itself to the opposition walking into this Chamber every day and moving motions such as this and that does not happen.

In saying that, I am going to indicate that we have moved this motion of no confidence in the Premier for a very specific reason. It is because of his betrayal of a commitment to Tasmania's people, an election commitment to dealing with the harm and scourge of poker machines by introducing a mandatory precommitment card. I want to read into the *Hansard* as part of this a conversation between the Premier and a reporter during the election campaign in relation to the card, and it goes like this:

Reporter - So you're committed to the \$5000 per year/\$100 per day limit on these cards?

Premier Jeremy Rockliff - We are committed to that reform. I've said that very clearly.

Reporter - So to be absolutely clear, you're committed to the limits?

Premier - We're committed. I've said we're committed.

Reporter - To the limits?

Premier - We're committed.

Reporter - To the limits?

Premier - To the limits, we're committed.

Yet we get a statement today which - amongst all the spin about harm minimisation and facial recognition which I will talk a little bit more about later - says that the government defers progress on mandatory precommitment. This was a nation-leading initiative. The former deputy premier and former treasurer, Michael Ferguson, articulated that when he launched it. It was nation-leading and now it seems as part of this statement that we will be looking to other states to do it together. We are going to watch and monitor and outline the progress of such a system in other jurisdictions.

Our motion was very specific and we Greens will continue to speak to that. In saying that, when we step back and ask ourselves, therefore, if we have confidence in the Premier, of course, we have to answer, 'No'. We have moved a no-confidence motion. On the simple words of the amendment from the Leader of the Opposition, we have to agree with that. We agree with the amendment. We agree with the proposition that we have no confidence in the Premier.

The member for Clark who just resumed her seat mounts a persuasive argument in my mind about this being now a simple proposition. Each and every member can speak to whatever issues they need to grab onto with regard to their lack of confidence in the Premier. The opposition can talk about the *Spirits* and other things all they want. From our perspective, we are going to talk about the mandatory precommitment card because that is what has triggered this this no-confidence motion.

We have brought this no-confidence motion into this House because of the developments of today and when you compare them to the history of this issue, to the statements of the Premier, to even the statements of his colleague ministers, you realise that this has been a litany of deception and a disgusting betrayal of Tasmanians, what they stand for and what they want. Tasmanians want this kind of commitment and it is clear that it should and needs to be delivered, but under this government, as of today, it is not going to be delivered.

While every member can pick and choose what issue they need to justify voting no confidence in the Premier, we will certainly be talking to the mandatory precommitment card issue and will anchor our arguments to that. In saying that, we do support the amendment and will back it accordingly.

[3.06 p.m.]

Mr O'BYRNE (Franklin) - Honourable Speaker, I expected to deal with the substantive motion and I assume, based on what people are saying, that they can count and we will be going to a substantive debate on the full no-confidence motion put forward by the Tasmanian Greens.

It is interesting that with regard to confidence and my understandings with the Premier, in my exchange of letters, I made it very clear to the Tasmanian people on what basis I would provide confidence and supply. Supply is an easier thing to define. It allows the government to pay the bills and to get on with government, regardless of whether there may be some elements of the Budget with which I would disagree.

In relation to confidence, as I said in my letter to the Premier, that is corruption, malfeasance and reprehensible failures of policy and governance. As the Premier, he has my confidence. I triggered that agreement when I made my judgment on the performance of the former treasurer and member for Bass, Michael Ferguson. I made it very clear that I thought that was a reprehensible failure of policy and governance and made my decision on that matter. Those matters were resolved before we came back to the House; the member resigned. I made

it very clear and I have been very consistent that in the absence of a single party having the numbers on the floor of parliament, we all have a responsibility to try to make this work as best we can.

There are moments and there may be moments where we cannot and therefore we go back to the Tasmanian people to seek their judgment. At that time the Premier, Mr Rockliff, was the only person who put his hand up to be Premier. No other person capable of delivering numbers put their hand up, so I was not able to make a choice between two or three people. I had one choice - a parliament that would be potentially disruptive, most likely be chaotic and create chaos not only for the public service but a whole range of our people in our community as individuals, business people, who wanted stability in the state parliament and asked us to get it on and provide that stability.

People know my background and they know it was not an easy thing for me to do to provide support to a Liberal premier for them to govern, but there was a narrow field of choices to be able to make a decision. I made it clear I did not support the Liberal Party or the Liberal government. My confidence was with the Premier and his Cabinet and I have been true to my word consistent with that.

The original motion which is now being amended needs to be debated. It is a substantive issue. I will reserve my comments if we get to the substantive debate on that. On the original motion and in terms of the amendment, it is highly unusual in two cases. One, when you move a motion of no confidence in the Premier, which will trigger an election, you probably need to have some detail in the motion to explain why you do not have confidence. It is unusual. I did flag this in the debate on the Suspension of Standing Orders - 'Are you seeking an amendment?' - but there was no response.

The second thing is you were about to close the debate and if I had not jumped, or the member for Clark had not have jumped, the only person who spoke in favour of a no-confidence motion in the Premier was the opposition leader. No other member sought the jump. We were very close to that debate being closed. If it is a genuine no-confidence motion, move it with details. It is highly unusual, if you are moving a no-confidence motion in the Premier, for only one person from the opposition to speak. That indicates to me that there is a level of - well, people can make their judgment, however they see -

Ms Finlay - We are speaking on the amendment.

Mr O'BYRNE - Pardon?

Members - We are speaking on the amendment.

Mr O'BYRNE - Yes, that is exactly what I am talking about. The amendment delivers a no-confidence motion in the Premier because the amendment gets rid of all the arguments of the Greens, full stop.

Members interjecting.

The SPEAKER - Both sides will allow the member for Franklin to be heard in peace.

Mr O'BYRNE - That is highly unusual.

Mr Winter - Yes, I understand that bit.

Mr O'BYRNE - Pardon?

Mr Winter - Sorry, I was not sure of your other part of the argument.

Mr O'BYRNE - The other part of the argument is that in Westminster - and I have been around a long time and I have engaged in debates of no confidence in a premier or minister, and a lot of people speak. The argument has to be delivered and argued. Therefore, I was surprised that no other member sought the -

Mr Winter - On the amendment?

Mr O'BYRNE - Yes, on the amendment, which means that there is no confidence in the Premier.

Mr Winter - Then it becomes substantive and we can debate on the substantive.

Mr O'BYRNE - No, you vote on the amended motion.

The SPEAKER - I will stop members now. I am seeing a glaring misunderstanding about how this works. The member for Franklin has the call. He is speaking to an amendment which substantially changes the motion. He is allowed to do so, and can be heard in silence.

Mr O'BYRNE - If the amendment moves, it is done. If there is a view of the House that there is no confidence in the motion for more than what the Greens have articulated in their motion, then a properly drafted and argued motion needs to be put forward. I will be more than happy and open to that debate. I will never suppress a debate on matters of confidence, particularly in the Premier, particularly when we all agree there have been some calamitous decisions by this government that have caused great grief across Tasmania.

However, I think a motion that simply says, 'We do not have confidence in the Premier', lets Westminster down and lets this parliament down. It does not give the level of credibility to a debate that would be required for such a significant decision that would trigger an election.

If that is what happens, bring it on. I am not afraid of that. I think it tells the Tasmanian people that we just cannot work it out and, if that is the case, then we will go. However, let us argue it on the merits of the case; let us argue it on the merits of what options we have in front of us. I am more than happy to vote on this amendment. If the amendment fails, as some of the contributions already seem to indicate it will, we will go back to the substantive motion and I will provide my arguments on the basis of the position put forward by the Tasmanian Greens. If there are other motions of no confidence, I will debate them on their merits.

[3.14 p.m.]

Ms BURNET (Clark) - Honourable Speaker, I will add my comments in relation to the amendment. The amendment is, in many ways, a significant departure from the original motion of no confidence, and yet it is not. A no-confidence motion is a very grave motion to consider in any parliament. For this to happen for any ordinary minister is one thing, but we are talking about the Premier and it is even more significant. As someone who trades on his concern for people who are vulnerable, he has previously been health minister and he has been minister for

education. He has also been possibly the greatest champion for those with mental health issues when he held the Mental Health portfolio.

This amendment before us from the opposition is a no-confidence motion without limit. The very specific concerns about the walking back from the mandatory precommitment card, which the Leader of the Greens has so eloquently provided, has now broadened like a lotus flower to all and sundry. This allows us to think about those things that have been of great concern for this parliament.

We have heard many considerations about things like housing and homelessness. We have talked about TT-Line and the great ferries debacle, the problem with the quay at Devonport and everything about the ferries. How that has been delivered by this government is of huge concern. It has been a failure, and we have seen this unfurl in the term of this parliament in particular. The stadium is another issue the Premier has considered and has been pushing without due regard to many other things. There are many reasons why we can consider this in a broader context. Do we have confidence as a parliament in the Premier in so many of these things, without just limiting it to the mandatory precommitment card?

We can talk about politics, but this is something we know is affecting many people in Tasmania. We know people personally affected every day on issues that we could bundle up together and think about in the context of this amendment. I have talked about TT-Line and the billion-dollar-plus stadium, all the ongoing concerns for the environment and what was revealed in the interrogation of the State of the Environment report once that was tabled. People, businesses, health workers, those people addicted to pokies need us to consider this.

This is such a grave and significant motion. A motion of no confidence is something that is huge for any parliament to consider, particularly for consideration of the Premier. There is a significant amount to consider for this parliament, but we are representing the people who elected us and the Greens support this amendment.

[3.19 p.m.]

Dr BROAD (Braddon) - Honourable Speaker, we have moved this amendment because we have a lot of problems with this government and that is why we have no confidence. It is not about the particular issue the Greens have brought before the place. We have massive issues and there is a whole shopping list. We did not instigate this motion of no confidence. The Greens did, and we are still in other formal business, so we were not aware they were going to do this.

Mr Barnett - Come on.

Dr BROAD - It is true. I am standing up in parliament saying we did not know and you have been caught out.

Members interjecting.

The SPEAKER - The Deputy Premier can spend some time sitting outside if he would rather.

Dr BROAD - That is exactly right. You are the Deputy Premier of this place now. You are not the class clown.

The SPEAKER - You will speak through me, Dr Broad.

Dr BROAD - Thank you, Speaker. We do not have confidence in this government, absolutely. That is why we have simplified this motion. In regard to the details, we do not have to have a shopping list of the issues in the motion itself, because this parliament, the motion itself and the debate that gets us to an end point are the important things.

The motion of no confidence in the Premier is a serious motion to be debating. We will have a debate, and the points made in the debate and the end vote are what is important. We have massive issues with this Liberal government and we have never had confidence in it. There is a whole list of issues that we have no confidence about.

This is a government that has wrecked Tasmania's budget and driven us into record debt and deficits, and the Deputy Premier is now tasked with cleaning that up. We have warned about this looming budget crisis and this government has made it worse, not better. That is a reason why we have no confidence. We have no confidence because this is a government which, when they launched into minority government way back, even before the last election, has overseen the loss of 6700 jobs, nearly all which are full time.

They have completely stuffed up the biggest infrastructure project in Tasmania's history, which is the *Spirits of Tasmania* project. This should be a moment for the whole state to be proud of and indeed the country to be proud of, and instead they have turned Tasmania's biggest infrastructure project into the laughing stock of the country. It has become an international embarrassment. There are articles on the BBC website, for example, that highlight just how much this government has stuffed that project up.

That is why we have no confidence in this government. They have trashed business confidence. Their wishy-washy backflipping nature has meant that the National Australia Bank (NAB) survey shows that business confidence has collapsed in recent months, and we know through statements from the TCCI that they cannot trust the government anymore and they have lost confidence in the government.

They have sent Tasmania to the bottom of CommSec's economic rankings, or near the bottom. This is a government that trumpeted and almost proudly put on billboards when they were at the top of CommSec's rankings. Now they are near the bottom. That is how much this government has slipped in recent history.

Once again there is a planeload of young people leaving this state every four days. It is a record number. We have not seen people leaving this state for a long time. That is why we have no confidence in this government.

We have seen a massive collapse in housing approvals. They have fallen about 50 per cent since just 2021. Furthermore, the government keeps deliberately misleading the people of Tasmania with its 10,000 houses promise, saying that they are a third of the way, with a third of the houses built in a third of the time. That is just complete nonsense. We know that the housing wait times are getting worse. We know that the housing waitlist is growing, and yet this government continually misleads and says they have reached a third of their target in a third of their time because they are counting beds in shelters and empty blocks of land. This is a government that keeps repeating that same lie over and over and over.

That is why we have no confidence in this Premier and this government. How can it be that they can repeat something which is plainly nonsense to anybody who notices those people sleeping in the bridges, those women fleeing family violence with their children with nowhere to stay, or those people coming into my office begging for a place to live? We cannot get them one and we cannot help them because we know that there are no houses. This government continually says they are building them and they are absolutely not.

How can we have confidence in this Premier and this government? They have broken their promise to implement a cheaper, faster, fairer, simpler, single statewide planning scheme. It takes more time to build a house now than it ever has. The time it takes to build a house is up four months in recent years, and that is data from the industry itself.

They have failed to deliver a raft of major projects including the Cradle Mountain Cable Way, the underground bus mall, the Tamar Bridge, the Tasman Bridge upgrades, and a four-lane Midland Highway. How much of it is actually only two lanes? Here was Will Hodgman all those years ago with a billboard for four lanes, but how much of it is actually two lanes? We do not even get three lanes. We get two. And the potholes; it is an absolute joke. After the rain, potholes pop up everywhere. The Premier fixed one pothole, but there were 1300 more to do just on the Murchison Highway. That is how ridiculous the state of the roads has gotten to.

Of course we do not have confidence in the Premier and the parliament. We do not have confidence that that pothole that he fixed is going to stay fixed either. They have delivered their budget cuts. We see the risk now that their departments are going to have to start slashing their budgets, which means jobs. Now they have started to announce a privatisation agenda.

Of course we do not have confidence in this government. They have done nothing about Ashley and nothing about the commission of inquiry apart from handwringing and pushing stuff off well into the distance. We are going to have a government here, if they continue with the way they are going, talking about the perfect solution for Ashley and the recommendations of the commission of inquiry in 2047, waiting for that perfect solution before they can act. They need to have a perfect solution before they can act. There are children in harm's way today because this government and that Premier are sitting on their hands.

There has been a bit of talk about the debate that Labor has been having today in this place, but there has been a notable absence of the members of the government standing and defending their Premier. Indeed, the Premier himself has not been in the Chamber for most of the debate. The Premier himself is not defending his own reputation. All we get is the now Deputy Premier of Tasmania standing up and giving his one speech when it comes to debates like this. He has one speech whenever there is any sort of procedural motion, and that one speech is, 'This is a disgrace; it is a stunt'. That is his one speech. This is a serious debate that cannot be dismissed as a stunt. This is as serious as it gets. He is only one track.

Members interjecting.

The SPEAKER - Deputy Premier, I do not want to have to warn you as well.

Dr BROAD - If he is outside this place, he is holding something for the cameras; if he is inside this place, it is a stunt. They are his two playbooks and he needs to grow up. This is as

serious as it gets. We have no confidence in this Premier; we have no confidence in this government.

If people would be happier putting a laundry list down, then I do not think we have time to do it, or actually, the word count may trip us up. We absolutely have no confidence in this premier and it is up to this premier. He should be in here defending himself instead of hiding away. We absolutely support this amendment and that is why we have brought it on.

There are other colleagues who may consider continuing and speaking about their lack of confidence if we get into a substantive debate, but we will put the motion. We stand by the amendment.

[3.28 p.m.]

Mr ABETZ (Franklin - Leader of the House) - Honourable Speaker, let us find out who said this -

We cannot support the card-based play system that I know the Greens support because we do not know enough about it and I think it is too broad an approach for what the people actually need. The problem with the card is that it impacts everybody. If you are a tourist coming to Tasmania, you cannot play, you cannot participate, you are treated like somebody who has got a significant issue with gaming.

Mr Winter - I said that an hour ago.

Mr ABETZ - You know who said it because it was you, Leader of the Opposition. You went on:

It is a very blunt instrument for a problem that does not exist for everybody. That is why we have taken the position we have - sensible policies that can be implemented now.

I say to the Tasmanian Greens, your no-confidence motion, which at first Labor was sort of flirting with supporting - Labor then realised that if they actually supported it with its eight paragraphs, they would be breaching their own policy. They placed themselves in a huge position of embarrassment, and the hapless Leader of the Opposition, then realising that was his dilemma today, moved an amendment to simply delete all the inconvenience of the no-confidence motion by saying that the House has no confidence in the Premier. I adopt the approach of my fellow member for Franklin, Mr O'Byrne, that with something as serious as this, and I go back to the days when I used to do bit of defence work, it would be like the Crown saying we charge this individual with, let us say, shoplifting, but the evidence does not support shoplifting so they delete shoplifting and say, 'We want this person convicted anyway, but we won't tell you, members of the jury, the reason for it. We just want him convicted.'. A motion of no confidence needs to have delineated in it the rationale for it.

So desperate was the Leader of Opposition Business, Dr Broad, that he even said a no-confidence motion could be justified because of the number of potholes in Tasmanian roads. Really? This is the extent to which Dr Broad and the Labor Party have descended. Having been completely plucked of every feather and no longer having any feathers to fly, they were plucked of every single feather they may have had in supporting of this motion moved by

the Greens. Realising the dilemma they put themselves in, they then had to get a grab-bag of all sorts of things to try to justify no confidence and the take-out of Dr Broad is the potholes in Tasmanian roads.

Members interjecting.

The SPEAKER - Order, member for Lyons, member for Bass, member for Clark. All three of you can go outside if this continues.

Mr ABETZ - Really? Is this the extent of the intellectual acuity and contribution of Dr Broad to this debate?

Members interjecting.

The SPEAKER - I will stop you for a moment, minister. It is a no-confidence motion. A lot of latitude is allowed in the speeches, particularly given the amendment is so broad, but I cannot have continued interjections. This is actually one of the most serious things that the parliament ever does, so take it seriously, all of you. I do not like this amount of humour being applied to such a significant issue taking the time of the House today. The motion is important, the amendment is important and the commentary on it is as well. I call the Leader of the House to his contribution.

Mr ABETZ - I thank you for your protection, Speaker. A no-confidence motion, as you have indicated to the House, is a most serious proposition. If there is to be a motion of no confidence passed in anybody, there should be at least some strength to the argument, some propositions and some evidence, and what we have is just a bland statement that the House has no confidence in the Premier. You need more than that.

Dr Broad - You do not.

Mr ABETZ - Dr Broad says you do not and technically he is right, but in relation to treating the people of Tasmania with respect, you do, and that is the big difficulty you have. You are not treating the people of Tasmania with the respect they deserve. Let us keep in mind that only six or so months ago, you and the Labor Party agreed that you were not fit or ready for office. You did not offer yourselves as the government of this state. Premier Rockliff did and was reappointed as Premier. Is there anything about the opposition today, six months later, that could convince any of our fellow Tasmanians that they are ready for government? No, their big issue is the potholes in Tasmanian roads which is deserving of a no-confidence motion in the Premier. Really? Is this the strength of your argument?

If you were to succeed in the motion of no confidence, where would we go with the government of our state? You would allegedly never do a deal with the Greens, but here we see you in lockstep seeking to pursue a no-confidence motion in the government. Very convenient. In these circumstances, I would say to Mr Winter, your actions speak so much louder than your words. Anything to try to destabilise the government and you will get into bed with the Greens to achieve that outcome. Shame on you and the workers that you allegedly represent.

I know what the people in the salmon industry on the west coast want. They want a motion of no confidence in Tanya Plibersek in Canberra. What are you doing about that? Not

so much. I know what the forest workers want. They want a vote of no confidence in New South Wales and other state governments that are trying to stop native forest harvesting. Where are you in relation to these matters? What you are doing is obfuscating and saying, 'Look over there, look over there, nothing to be seen here', but when you look at the Labor Party in this state, you know it is still in disarray. Tell us how your federal endorsements went. It was not the membership voting for who would become the candidates. There was no membership involvement, was there? It was from on high.

The SPEAKER - I draw the minister to the matter before the House -

Members interjecting.

The SPEAKER - I can do it without anyone's help - which is the amendment moved by Mr Winter.

Mr ABETZ - The amendment is to delete a whole lot of matters in a motion so it just reads that we have no confidence in the Premier. If that were to be carried, it is appropriate for the House to consider what the alternative or what the consequences might be. The alternative or consequence might be a Labor premier in cahoots with the Greens ensuring policies are implemented in this state which would devastate the salmon working families of the west coast and the forest working families right around this state.

Let us be very clear that there are genuine consequences to a motion of no confidence. Dr Broad said, 'We have never had confidence in this government'. If that were the case, you were duty bound to say to the governor, 'We want to form government', but you could not form government because it was pretty obvious more people voted for one group than another group and you found yourselves in a position. Look, all political parties find themselves in this position from time to time and I accept that, but when you know and recognise as a party that you are not ready to govern, when your own administration is in real strife needing to be run by Canberra -

Mr Winter - They just kicked you off your administrative committee.

The SPEAKER - Leader of the Opposition, you will get another shot.

Mr ABETZ - the question becomes, 'Would the replacement of Premier Rockliff by the would-be hapless Mr Winter be any better for the people of Tasmania?' and the answer is a resounding 'no'.

The Greens should be voting against the amendment because they must realise the opportunistic nature of the Labor Party in this. The Greens' broader motion is on a specific issue on which it appears Labor are in lockstep with the government and there is no dissent. Uncharacteristically quiet.

Members interjecting.

The SPEAKER - Order. The member for Clark is warned and the member for Bass is warned. I will continue warning people and people will leave the Chamber.

Mr ABETZ - The uncharacteristic quietness of the opposition, which I welcome, and I am sure you do as well, Speaker -

The SPEAKER - Leader of the House, do not tempt people to interject after I have ruled. That is not helpful, and I may ask you to sit down as well.

Mr ABETZ - Speaker, I was just seeking to back you in.

The SPEAKER - I do not feel very supported at all.

Mr ABETZ - Keeping on, Speaker, this is a very serious matter and as to discussion about potholes and all manner of things justifying this motion, I say to the Greens you came into this place, right, wrong or indifferent, with a definite reason or rationale to say you have no confidence in the Premier. I disagree but I can understand and respect your point of view. I vehemently disagree but I accept that.

The Labor Party is, in fact, in agreement with the government's policy position, so to save themselves the embarrassment, they want to delete all your rationale for the no confidence motion and just say, 'We just have no confidence'. I would say to the Greens, if you want to stay true to the issue on which you brought the no confidence motion, you should be backing in your original motion. You should not allow the opportunism of the Leader of the Opposition to trump that which you sought to bring to the parliament.

Dr Woodruff - Thank you for mansplaining that to us, Mr Abetz. I think we can work that out for ourselves, what we do, what our motives would be.

The SPEAKER - Thank you. The leader of the Greens will cease interjecting.

Mr ABETZ - Why on earth would that be mansplaining?

The SPEAKER - She has an opportunity to speak on this again, I believe, and can take her contribution then.

Mr ABETZ - What I would respectfully recommend to members of the Greens, irrespective of their gender, because this is a matter of serious concern: why is it that Labor want to delete those eight paragraphs because they actually support the government policy? If we were true - how many of us over this side, 14? How many over that side, 10? There are 24 out of 35 in this Chamber. Possibly some more, I do not know. A minimum of 24 out of 35 actually support today's policy position.

Opportunistically, the Labor Party are going to jump on the back of a Greens motion to try to have a motion of no confidence in a government on a proposition that has, as a minimum, 24 out of 35 people in this place supporting the policy position. This is opportunism writ large. It does the opposition no credit. Should the Greens succumb to the Labor Party amendment, it will do the Greens no credit either, because the matter on which they sought to bring a motion will have been completely erased.

The people of Tasmania this evening may well be scratching their heads saying, 'A motion of no confidence got carried in the Premier but we do not actually know why'. Some people started off with gaming policy, but they then allowed those eight paragraphs to be

stripped from their motion to placate somebody else. It is a little grab bag of everybody, anybody with a little complaint about the government all getting together and saying, 'Well, we cannot agree amongst each other what the actual issues are, but we can agree that we do not like them, so we are going to have a motion of no confidence'. This is sort of schoolyard tactics -

Ms DOW - Point of order, Speaker.

The SPEAKER - I will hear the point of order. Sorry, I was distracted. My apologies.

Ms DOW - It would be remiss of me not to state this fact, that earlier on in this House, minister Jaensch, who I might mention does not seem to be in charge of this area of the government anymore, we are not really sure why, but he got up and he defended his staff. He defended the derogative nature of the substantive motion that was before the House. The leader of government business is now defending that and saying that is the right thing to bring before the House.

The SPEAKER - Sorry, I am really not sure that is a point of order. It is a debating point that you may be able to make.

Ms DOW - Well, actually, it is really important and shows the inconsistency of this government.

The SPEAKER - There is no point of order, but your point is now on the record. I will call the Leader of the House.

Mr ABETZ - Taking on the deputy leader's point, talk about inconsistency. You are willing to support a no confidence motion, then you say, 'Oopsie', these are all points that we actually agree with, so we better get rid of them so we can support them. Deputy leader, I suggest you do not lead with your chin in relation to this particular debate.

This is a matter of great moment for the people of Tasmania. I would encourage people to consider that motions of no confidence in a Premier, in a minister or indeed anybody in this place requires a bit more substance than this sort of opportunistic grab bag of all sorts of things, including potholes. Really? Potholes is going to be part of the reason that we have no confidence -

Mr WINTER - Point of Order, Speaker.

The SPEAKER - I will hear the point of order and I would like to know what it is.

Mr WINTER - Tedious repetition. That is the fourth time, I think. I think he is trying to waste time. I do not know. Perhaps if he is finished his contribution, he could just sit down and let others speak.

The SPEAKER - Thank you. That is actually a Standing Order. It is repetition. However, it is a no-confidence motion. I am inclined not to stymie anyone's participation in the debate. However, I will draw the minister's attention to the nature of 1.4.2. - I think it is.

Mr ABETZ - I may have repeated that matter a few times, but is it not interesting that no point of order was made by the Leader of the Opposition when the Leader of the Greens referred to 'liar' literally dozens and dozens of times in her speech? Why is it -

The SPEAKER - In a substantive debate on no confidence, the motion allows that sort of latitude to be applied. It can then be used in the content of the speech given by the mover, but it also can be used by anybody else in the Chamber during this substantive debate. Only during this substantive debate. Whether or not we think the language is appropriate and a broader term is a different debate, but it is not unparliamentary.

Mr ABETZ - Speaker, I was not saying it was unparliamentary. The point of order from the Leader of the Opposition was 'tedious repetition'. It was in relation to that I was referring to the Leader of the Greens, who tediously and repetitiously referred to the term. I did not say it was unparliamentary. I try to get my head around the Standing Orders. When the Leader of the Opposition has the gall to get up and say, 'Oh, tedious reposition, that repetition', yet listened quietly to the Leader of the Greens referring to 'liar, liar, liar', I do not know how many times without getting on his feet. What it tells me is that Labor and Greens are well and truly signing up a deal again. You have to wonder whether they went for a bike ride this morning, because that is the last time Labor and the Greens -

Ms BUTLER - Point of order, Standing Order 45.

The SPEAKER - Standing Order 45 does not apply to substantive debates.

Ms BUTLER - There you go. It was a good chance.

The SPEAKER - For future reference, there is actually a standing order, it is [inaudible]

Mr ABETZ - Speaker, a motion of no confidence is absolutely serious. In the parliamentary Liberal Party, we have absolute confidence in our leader, the Premier of Tasmania. He clearly enjoyed the largest number of votes only six months ago with the people of Tasmania. I would say to them, to the Labor Party in particular, set out all your reasons, including potholes, as to why you support no confidence. This original motion over which you were salivating and hoping to get the numbers, you suddenly realised that that is all your policy anyway. You had to jettison it all bar half a sentence. That is opportunism writ large. The people of Tasmania will judge you harshly for it. They should. I have every expectation that they will. We on this side have absolute confidence in the Premier.

[3.48 p.m.]

Ms DOW (Braddon - Deputy Leader of the Opposition) - Honourable Speaker, the irony of it, really. We are only here today debating this motion because of a decision that was made by the Premier to make an announcement this morning, perhaps to stifle his former deputy crossing the floor and voting against the government. I mean, what a mess. This whole thing is driven by the instability in your cabinet and in your parliamentary Liberal Party. Minister Jaensch, Minister for Finance - but he is not taking any responsibility, only as the Minister for Community Services, over your announcement that you made this morning.

Mr Winter - Why is that?

Ms DOW - Why is that? This motion, the substantive motion that was before the House, has details in it. I want to read out one thing and I want to read that to the leader of government business. It seems to me that he is actually agreeing with this point in this motion by what he said in his previous contribution to the House. I find that extraordinary. That is point 7 in the substantive motion:

The Premier is a liar who cannot be trusted by his own party room and Cabinet, the Parliament, or the people of Tasmania.

Mr Winter - They are backing it in; they are backing that in.

The SPEAKER - Perhaps not interrupting your own speaker would be a good idea, too.

Ms DOW - I take it from your contribution, leader of government business, that you support that, by not supporting our amendment to the motion?

Mr Abetz - Logic was never your strength.

Ms DOW - Look, I am not distracting from the significance of a vote of no confidence in the Premier in this House. Nobody is. The state of politics in Tasmania at the moment is pretty appalling - very appalling. If we were to write a list to underpin that amendment to our motion, we would be here forever, because quite frankly there are so many things that this government has got wrong. The number one thing that it has got wrong is that it has lost sight of what is important, and that is the wellbeing of Tasmanians. That is being upfront with Tasmania, that is being honest with Tasmanians and that is respecting Tasmanians.

Yesterday, we had the Premier of the state shirking responsibility fronting the Public Accounts Committee. He did not present. He shirked that responsibility. He did not give the Tasmanian people an update. He did not give them the right to have that opportunity to question him through the Public Accounts Committee, and that was appalling. It speaks volumes about the behaviour of this government. It is a pattern of behaviour that has existed over the seven years that I have been here and probably even before that, no doubt.

You think back along the lines of Terry Brooks, Adam Brooks and questions about integrity. Every step of the way this government tries to hide information from the Tasmanian people. You know what, leader of government business? Potholes are important. They absolutely are, and you obviously have not been down and spoken to the people on the west coast I have spoken to that have had hundreds of dollars of damage done to their vehicles. They are frightened to drive at night because of the potholes.

I do not know whether you have travelled down the Murchison Highway, but it is in a terrible state. It is important to people. The roads that people drive on are important, and you should know that as Transport minister. I find that so insulting to the people of Tasmania, in particular the people of the west coast who you continue to be a champion for and talk about all the time in this place. You should think about the impact of those potholes on their safety and on their road networks and what it means for them to drive out of the west coast, or to get a specialist appointment, for example.

You have run services into the ground on the west coast. There are hardly any services available in their local community, particularly health services. They do not have any choice but to get on the roads and drive out of the west coast, and they need a road network that is safe. I proudly stand here and support our leader, Dean Winter, in this amendment to the motion. It should not mean that we need 1000 speakers up here speaking day in and day out about the faults of this government, because the facts are absolutely clear. They have trashed the health system and they have ruined the state budget. Our economy is in decline.

We have had the worst infrastructure project stuff up in Tasmanian history in the *Spirit of Tasmania* vessels. They are looking for any distraction at all to deter people from looking at that issue and just how poorly and incompetently they have managed that on behalf of the people of Tasmania. It is an absolute disgrace. They did not even have the courage to provide an update to the Parliament of Tasmania about what their plans were about those timelines for berth 3, about whether they would pursue berth 1 after they were given advice about the safety of it, but continued with the political intervention to that berth 1 solution.

The set of events is absolutely extraordinary. You have criticised us for being focused on asking questions in this place about the *Spirit of Tasmania* vessels project, but I can assure the Leader of Government Business that if we were not asking these questions from day one, Tasmanians would still be in the dark, because that is the way that you like to treat Tasmanians. It is the way that you go about your business as a government. It is the way that you have spoken this week - disrespectfully - to respected mayors of communities across this state about your planning legislation, about your inability to deliver real planning reform across Tasmania and the fact that you have not done anything about the regional land use strategies which underpin housing development. Your whole planning reform is a joke. You have not achieved a thing through planning reform. You can see the consequences of that with delays to housing, with a project like Stony Rise which you only did something about after we said that we would do something about it.

You react to things. You are all about spin. You are all about being in the media saying that you are getting the job done. This is the Premier that we have before us. It was this Premier who made a promise to Tasmanians that he would take on the Infrastructure minister role and that he would get the job done and that he would take over the project, only to relinquish that role a couple of months later and give it to his newest MLC, Kerry Vincent. Has MLC Vincent not got a huge task ahead of him? I wish him well, because he has come in to pick up the pieces of this government's failures.

I could speak for a long time, but there are important things on the blue that we need to get to today. There is legislation about vaping. There is also legislation about delays to investment in energy projects across the state, which is a hallmark of this government. There are also other pieces of important information about the future of the University of Tasmania in this state, another Tasmanian institution whose reputation has been damaged by this government.

I make these points. We have not come to the table today being frivolous about this amendment. We have given it consideration. I am shocked that the leader of government business wants to continue in this manner and in the vein of the substantive motion that is before the House, particularly given how it is insulting to government staff. As I said before, minister Jaensch certainly pointed that out in a point of order earlier on in the debate today, as well as how it characterises the government and the Premier as being a liar. The inappropriateness of that is something that you have taken aim at quite a few times in this place today, leader of government business, so I am shocked that you want to continue down that line.

[3.56 p.m.]

Mr ROCKLIFF (Braddon - Premier) - Honourable Speaker, I appreciate that. I will not take up too much of the House's time because the House has some work to do when it comes to the important legislation -

The SPEAKER - And the substantive motion to deal with still.

Mr ROCKLIFF - before it, and that legislation is all about doing what this government has been very good at, and that is creating jobs and opportunity for Tasmanians.

I can come to the Greens' motion a little later on, if we get to that point, which I utterly reject. If you want to bring a motion to this place about policy and not personality, then do it. You should have the courage of your conviction to bring forward a policy.

Dr Woodruff - It is not about your personality. It is about your honesty.

Mr ROCKLIFF - It is very much a personal attack when it comes to the language that you have used, and I reject it.

I have a responsibility as Premier of Tasmania to listen to all sides of the discussion when it comes to gaming reform. We put our commitment out there on 16 February and the announcement today aligns with that. We need to do more work to get this right. It is a very complex and challenging project, and we will seek the assistance of other states when it comes to the precommitment card. In the meantime, we want to support people with gambling addiction now through other areas of action, which we also said in our policy announcement on 16 February.

Dr Woodruff - It will do nothing.

Mr ROCKLIFF - You do not know that, actually.

Dr Woodruff - Everyone else who has done the research knows that.

The SPEAKER - The Leader of the Greens will stop interjecting, and the Premier will direct his remarks through the Chair.

Mr ROCKLIFF - I reject utterly what you have said. Yes, we have a policy difference on this issue and I respect that policy difference, but this is not the time to go and overreach, which is what this is, about want of confidence.

The Tasmanian people do not want an election. They want a government that was elected on 23 March to get on with the job. Should this motion pass, I will go to the governor and I will have no choice but to call an election. Let it be on your heads - and I ask for an election.

Members interjecting.

The SPEAKER- The Leader of the Greens will stop, and the Leader of Opposition Business is now joining the list of people who I have warned. Ms Butler is very close in joining him in that.

Mr ROCKLIFF - Be it on your heads for the petty politics that you are playing today with regard to what is only a policy difference. The Labor Party cannot even articulate what they are on about. At least you have said something. I disagree with it all, but you have outlined some reasons why. What you have very clearly demonstrated, Mr Winter, is that you have nothing. You have nothing and you have proven by your actions today that disruption is the

number one game in town for the Labor Party. You cannot accept the fact that you squibbed it on 23 March.

Every government across the world and Australia is having challenging times right now because there are global cost-of-living challenges. There are housing challenges. Look around the world where governments have changed because of this issue and around this country, indeed. In fact, in the last 12 months we are probably the only government that has been successful in retaining government because we have reached in and listened to the Tasmanian people.

We have looked at ways that we can improve people's lives and make people's lives more affordable. I can come to that in just a moment, but what the community does not want is an election right now. They had their say on 23 March and they entrusted every single person in this Chamber to work together. By all means have policy differences, which this is, albeit not too far apart, I would have to say, when it comes to the number one game in town, which is supporting vulnerable Tasmanians which we have always stood for but I will have no choice, should one of these motions pass, but to go to the Governor and seek an election and Tasmanians do not want that. They do not want the disruption that the Labor Party and others have caused.

This year there has been largely a great deal of maturity when it comes to the new parliament, particularly the crossbench, and we all have got something out of this parliament. The Labor Party has moved legislation and it has been passed in the upper House. The crossbench has been successful in influencing policy and legislation, and the Greens, from memory, through working across the parliament, have had some policy advances when it comes to the expungement bill.

Tasmanians are looking at us very seriously right now in terms of whether we have the capability to argue policy difference without blowing up the show. Does this parliament have the maturity to do that? I accept more than anyone, as I have said in committees, Ms Dow, and in the media every week. You could not accuse me of shying away from responsibility.

Dr Broad - Except yesterday when you did not show up to a parliamentary committee.

The SPEAKER - You have been warned, Dr Broad.

Mr ROCKLIFF - I was invited as Minister for Infrastructure. I had Cabinet all day, so our new Minister for Infrastructure attended and I will be attending on 29 November at 8.40 a.m., okay? Do not get me started on me shirking my responsibility for scrutiny. You could argue on the day's events that we could have issued a media release on 5 December about the matter that Dr Woodruff has moved her motion on, but we did it before Question Time today, with two weeks of scrutiny about that and other issues. We were upfront and honest. This is our position but that is a policy difference.

Dr Woodruff - Why could you not have just done what you promised to do?

The SPEAKER - Leader of the Greens, this is your substantive motion. I do not want to ask you to leave.

Mr ROCKLIFF - Your policy is different from ours. We remain committed to precommitment. We have deferred it because I want the support of other states and the input, as simple as that. I also want to act right now on the issues when it comes to harm minimisation, on which we can all agree. It so happens the Labor Party agrees with us, largely, on the policies and that was demonstrated by the Mr Abetz when it comes to quoting Mr Winter, I am not sure when.

Mr Abetz - Today.

Mr ROCKLIFF - There you go. We could have a policy discussion and keep the politics and personalities and game playing and accusations and personal attacks, which I am happy to wear. What I will not wear is personal attacks on any staff member of any person in this Chamber. I will not stand for any attack on anyone's staff in this Chamber because we have to get on with the job. It just so happens, despite all this, I was at the Workplace Culture Committee at lunchtime talking about workplace culture in this parliament, which we are trying to improve. I reject reaching in and criticising other members' staff, as you have done.

Dr Woodruff - I did not. I criticised you for not recognising a conflict of interest.

The SPEAKER - If the member claims to be misrepresented there are forms of the House that she may use, otherwise I will have to warn her for a second time. I do not want to have to do that. This motion is yours.

Dr Woodruff - Thank you, Speaker. On that, I would ask the Premier to withdraw. I did not criticise that staff member. I criticised them for not recognising a conflict of interest.

The SPEAKER - You cannot make an argument about it. If the member has been being offended, I would ask the Premier to withdraw the comment.

Dr Woodruff - I am offended by that.

The SPEAKER - Premier, I ask you to withdraw the comment.

Mr ROCKLIFF - Well, people are offended -

The SPEAKER - No, just withdraw and then you may continue your contribution. They are the Standing Orders and we are going to use them. Premier, I ask you to withdraw.

Mr ROCKLIFF - I withdraw, but make the point that your commentary, Dr Woodruff, could end up on the front page of a major newspaper where a family could be deeply hurt, so we need to be very careful of what we say in this place. I am up for it. I stand for election. I have stood for seven. I know I will be criticised, particularly through campaigns, and particularly as leader of a party and Premier of Tasmania, but keep other people out of it who are just doing a job.

Let us argue about the policy. This is a difficult policy, which I am happy to come to, if it comes to the substantive motion once again and the amendment is rejected, and take the politics or the personality and the personal attacks out of it. I am going to be very clear. We have almost survived the year as a new parliament, I would argue a far more mature and constructive parliament than 12 months ago, and have got more done, frankly, where everyone

has had a win, but if you are going to blow up the show today because of a policy difference, because we disagree on a matter, which is yours and my right, then that is a great shame on behalf of the people of Tasmania, who I believe will take a very dim view of people who choose to do that.

I am the first to admit that nothing has gone 100 per cent right this year. Light-bulb moment. We know there has been some challenges, we have got things wrong, but what government around the nation gets 100 per cent of stuff right? It is difficult because the scrutiny is intense, because people are really hurting in Tasmania. You do not think that I do not know and feel responsibility for people who cannot afford to put food on the table? This is despite the fact that we reach in and support people with their power bills and renewable energy dividends, and \$450 million of concession support increasing, which is taxpayers' money.

Of course, I could halve that and halve the other investments we are making in certain areas. We could not put as many police on the beat or nurses in our hospitals or teachers in our classrooms. We could choose not to do that and, yes, the business community might congratulate us for having responsible, so-called, financial management, and managing the debt, for which we have worn criticism because of the investments we have been making over the course of the last three to four years, since the pandemic, particularly. Yes, we have invested enormous amounts of money. We could have chosen then not to keep people, or do the best to keep people well, alive and in work, if we put the balance sheet over people. We can do that every day of the week.

We do not do that because this side of the House, and I know all members of parliament here, if they are worth half their salt in being out and amongst their communities, and you all are. I see you all out there working hard. I see your Facebook. I do not read all the comments. I do not read all my comments on Facebook. I have to look after my own wellbeing.

People are hurting and I recognise that, and they do not like to see stuff-ups by any stretch of the imagination. What they do want to see is people acknowledging when things have gone wrong, taking responsibility, owning up to mistakes and doing something about it.

If we had not intervened on ships or other concerns, some of it beyond our control, if we had not intervened and we had ignored it, fine. However, no one can criticise us for not at least stepping in when needed. It should have been sooner, yes, I accept all that, but we are where we are, taking responsibility, which is very clear, all that and why I am so vigorous in the defence, not of me but my team, who are working very hard, like you all are. Everything is relative, but we have ministers, we have our backbenchers doing some seriously solid work because of the circumstances people find themselves in. It is worth doing a list.

The Labor Party does not have a list when it comes to its amendment to the motion. I take Mr Abetz's very good points on that, because your amendment lacks substance at that point.

We have been very diligent, beyond some of the challenges that have been magnified in the media. I am not criticising that; these are challenges and mistakes we would expect to be of media commentary and front pages. However, we have been very diligent when it comes to our success in delivering our first 100-day plan: 78 deliverables done; 187 additional initiatives completed. We have now completed the next 100 days, and the people behind me are responsible for that delivery, despite the challenges and despite a minority government, delivering a further 298 initiatives. In our first 200 days, this government has delivered. We

have got things wrong and we have taken responsibility for that. However, we have delivered 683 commitments to Tasmanians, and we are just getting started because we are now in our third iteration of the next 100 days. We will not be taking our foot off the pedal, just as we have not taken our foot off the pedal since we were elected in 2014.

I take great pride in and great responsibility for my job and the work of our government. I take responsibility for where we could have done better. I also take pride in what we have achieved. When it comes to those cost-of-living measures, we are the government that has halved bus fares, reduced power bills for households and small businesses, doubled school lunches - and I see criticism of that. Why should governments be reaching in and wasting money on supporting children when it is the parents' responsibility? I see those on the Facebook comments as well. That would save a lot of funds and make the balance sheet a little better. That is not reality, though, because we know that thousands of kids go to school every day without a single drop of food in their tummies. Without the school lunches, many of them would get nothing. We know that when you invest in these areas and supporting young Tasmanians and our students, they learn. When I talk to Julie Dunbabin from the School Lunch Project, Julie tells me, along with the teachers, that they have seen kids engaged in education for the first time ever because they have food in their tummy at lunchtime. That is something we should all be very proud of. It is a bipartisan, tripartisan commitment, I get that, but we have it. Extra funding for food security.

We have enhanced the MyHome shared equity scheme, abolished stamp duty, provided that aspiration for young Tasmanians to own their first home. Why are we doing that? We are doing that because we have all heard that a home is out of reach for young Tasmanians. It was a little easier in the days of my parents, of course, but it is really hard now. We listened and we had a policy solution. It is expensive, but it is worth it. We have helped Tasmanians buy energy-efficient appliances, the No Interest Loans Scheme (NILS), which Mr Jaensch knows an enormous amount about.

Most importantly, we are providing that aspiration for young Tasmanians. That is why it is relevant when we talk about jobs and job security. If I look around the world to the United Kingdom, the United States, as well as Queensland and the Northern Territory, when there have been changes of government of all sides, job security and the ability to put food on the table is the number one thing.

We can have these policy debates, and I am not saying we should not, but we all have a responsibility to provide for the families of Tasmania. When the families of Tasmania and the members of those families need a hospital bed or a GP, we are also there in that policy sense as well. That is why we have a GP guarantee. That is why we are building new ambulance stations. That is why we put on another two-and-a-half thousand extra health professionals on the front line in the last number of years. In fact, in the last six-and-a-half months, we have put on over 1296 new staff in health, with a net gain of 247.

We are building contemporary facilities, delivering innovative models of care, investing unprecedented amounts into health infrastructure, mental health and community-based services, and reforming at the same time. I am saying this and I am producing a list because it is worthy of our team to accept responsibility for what has not gone well, but also take a great deal of pride in what we have done and what we continue to do.

Following the 23 March election, where we did not have a majority, we chose to be in minority government. I accepted that Tasmania gave us a kick up the backside. Despite all our efforts, they gave us a kick up the backside - like they did in the United States, like they did to the conservative party in the United Kingdom, like they did to Labor in Queensland, like they did to Labor in the Northern Territory. They did this because they are hurting and they want governments to do more when it comes to access to health care, better schools, cost-of-living relief, action on power bills, providing a roof over people's heads, and family violence initiatives.

We could have chosen not to be in government. That would have been the easy thing to do. Go back into opposition, have the most members on that side of the House, leave all the hard stuff to a coalition of a number of colours and waited to come back into government again but that is not what I wanted; that is not the party or the government that I lead.

We take on responsibility despite all the challenges. We accept responsibility for the things that we do not do well, but we are also taking pride in the many things that we have done well. Irrespective of which motion we end up voting on today, I want this parliament to recognise the responsibility that we all have; the gains that we have made, where we have all had a win and the setbacks as well with some of the things that we have put forward.

I am happy to debate policy every single day of the week, as I have said publicly a number of times. Good policy outcomes are actually what drives me most, and I would prefer to achieve 80 per cent of something than 100 per cent of nothing. That is the value of this parliament, because many of us could point to where we have achieved 80 per cent of something and the community is better off for it.

It might be a conflict of interest but I will not be supporting the amendment, nor will I be supporting any other form of no-confidence motion, because this government has got too much to do and this parliament also is well and truly on notice from the Tasmanian people.

They do not expect us to agree on policy areas such as gaming reform or whatever it might be. I will tell you what, we are more than 80 per cent in agreement, but we cannot have everything our own way. We have to find a balance, and that is what this parliament should be most proud of since 23 March.

The SPEAKER (Ms O'Byrne) - The question is -

That the amendment be agreed to.

The House divided -

AYES 14

Ms Badger
Mr Bayley
Dr Broad
Ms Brown
Ms Burnet
Ms Butler (Teller)
Ms Dow

NOES 18

Mr Abetz
Mr Barnett
Mr Behrakis
Mrs Beswick (Teller)
Mr Ellis
Mr Fairs
Mr Ferguson

Ms Finlay
Ms Johnston
Ms Rosol
Ms White
Mr Willie
Mr Winter
Dr Woodruff

Mr Garland
Mr Jaensch
Mr Jenner
Mr O'Byrne
Ms Ogilvie
Mrs Pentland
Mrs Petrusma
Mr Rockliff
Mr Shelton
Mr Street
Mr Wood

PAIRS

Ms Haddad

Ms Howlett

Amendment negatived.

DEPUTY SPEAKER - We now return to the substantive motion before the House as moved by Dr Woodruff. Leader of the Opposition, you have the call and I understand you have about 18 minutes left of your time.

Mr WINTER - We are still on the motion that says the Liberals put out a dishonest media release. It says that the Premier sold out the Liberals, policy to the gambling lobby. It says that Nic Street was unaware the Premier intended to walk away from the policy and that, on the evidence, the Premier lied to his former minister for finance. Paragraph 7 says, 'The Premier is a liar who cannot be trusted by his own party room and Cabinet, the parliament or the people of Tasmania', and the Liberal Party, the government of Tasmania, just voted to keep that in the motion.

The leader of government business and the Deputy Premier spoke specifically in support of this motion. They said they wanted to keep in the motion that the Premier is a liar. The government of Tasmania, in support of their Premier, just voted to keep the words, 'The Premier is a liar'. I am looking forward to a counter-argument because that is what the motion says now. It continues to say that because the government made it so, because the Deputy Premier stood up and said they do not support the amendment that would have taken those words out. The leader of government business stood up and said he did not support it because it would have taken those words out and so here we are still debating words that say the Premier is a liar.

The Premier spoke for some time today. Welcome and congratulations to you, Deputy Speaker, on your new role. The Premier spoke in relative silence and he talked at length about things he wants to see happen for this state, ambitions he has and things he wants to see happen. We have heard all these things before. The question I was asking myself as he spoke was: can you name one thing that is better since Jeremy Rockliff became Premier of Tasmania? Name one thing.

Since he took this government into minority, 6700 jobs have been lost from our economy. This Premier has taken Tasmania from having some of the highest business confidence levels anywhere in Australia to some of the lowest business confidence. You have a situation where the Tasmanian Chamber of Commerce and Industry are putting out statements saying it will be

hard to ever trust this government again, so when the Premier stood up and talked about the things he wants to see and the things he is concerned about, I wonder whether anything will actually happen, because if there is one thing this government is known for it is a failure to deliver. It is things they have been talking about for years and years.

For example, Project Marinus is now 11 years old in concept but still without anything having happened. There are things like the four-lane Midland Highway, the underground bus wall, the Tamar Bridge - things that they promised Tasmanians. They promised Tasmania that would be the healthiest state in Australia by 2025. Here we are at the end of 2024 - we are about to tick over to 2025 - with Tasmania still being the least healthy state.

Members interjecting.

DEPUTY SPEAKER - Mr Shelton.

Mr WINTER - The Premier said, 'We got things wrong' and said he was owning up to his mistakes. Deputy Speaker, we have seen nothing of the sort. The decision yesterday to bypass the Public Accounts Committee for no good reason demonstrated a lack of ability to take responsibility and to answer simple questions.

Members interjecting.

DEPUTY SPEAKER - Members on my right, please.

Mr WINTER - The Premier did accept to attend the Public Accounts Committee but he did not arrive yesterday and that speaks to a failure to take responsibility to answer questions about some of the biggest issues across Tasmania.

It was an extraordinary contribution talking about the policy they have on gaming when we know that the government is completely split on this. We know that Michael Ferguson, the member for Bass, is still sitting on the back bench having written an op-ed criticising his government's new position now, saying they should grow a backbone and keep the same position. Incredibly, the Minister for Finance, who has always, in my experience, had carriage of gaming issues, as of this morning does not have carriage of gaming issues. I wonder why. Why is it that Roger Jaensch, the new Minister for Finance, is not taking carriage of that? Is it because he does not want to, because he told his Premier that he would not?

They are completely split on this issue. When the Premier says, 'Our position on gaming', I am not sure what position he is talking about. Is it his position? Is it Michael Ferguson's position? Is it Roger Jaensch's position? Is it Eric Abetz's position? Whose position are they talking about? What is their position? Who would know what their position is, Deputy Speaker, on this issue?

Today the Premier of Tasmania talked about a policy that aligns with a policy from 16 February this year. If it aligns with a policy from 16 February this year then why is there a backbench revolt about it? Why is Michael Ferguson so upset about it? Why is the Minister for Finance no longer taking carriage of the pokies issue? If it is the same as they had in February, then why has this been such a massive issue for them?

None of this makes sense and it goes to the same question. This was a policy that they promised and they could not deliver, the same way as the health system that they promised would be the best by 2025 and they could not deliver. They said that Ashley would be closed by 2024 and they could not deliver. This is a government that continues to fail to deliver. They have the Premier talking about wanting to protect services and not the balance sheet. The problem with his budget is that it makes it harder and harder to protect services because the debt keeps growing and growing and growing - \$8.5 billion worth of debt by the end of this four-year cycle. That makes it harder to deliver services. There is \$441 million paid in interest repayments every year, twice the size of the spend on our ambulance, because of the size of the debt and the mismanagement of the budget.

This is a government that has sent Tasmania from the top of the CommSec economic rankings to near the bottom and has driven young people away from Tasmania. The big conversation that I am having with Tasmanians is that they are concerned that young Tasmanians continue to leave. On average, every four days, a planeload of young Tasmanians choose to leave this state. They are leaving because they do not see the job prospects. They know they get paid on average 20 per cent lower and they feel like we have a Tasmanian government that is not able to grasp the opportunities. The opportunities in Tasmania are vast. They are massive, and they have never been greater.

The opportunity for offshore wind is being squandered by this government right now. Right now, we should be getting on with building the port infrastructure at Bell Bay that would allow for an offshore wind sector to be built and serviced right here in Tasmania, but we are not because they are not ready, and the opportunity looks set to pass Tasmania by if we cannot get on with it. They have a plan about having more plans, not a plan to actually build it. Project Marinus is 11 years old and they still have not put any cable down because they cannot deliver on projects. We have an education system that they promised would lift Tasmania to beating the average outcome for students by 2020, and instead we are still at the bottom of the pack.

When the Premier talks about what he wants to achieve, I have heard it all before. I have heard all these things before. I have heard promises about being the healthiest state; I have heard promises about opposing privatisation - that they would not privatise assets. Then two weeks ago we got a paper from the government that instead of dealing with GBE governance, deals with privatising them to create a distraction. We heard from the government that they would have a single statewide planning scheme that would make it better, cheaper, fairer and faster to get something delivered, and we still do not have one almost 11 years later. They have made planning harder in this state, and all they can do is patch up all the problems that they have with planning, like they do everything else.

DEPUTY SPEAKER - Members on my right need to be quiet. Mr Winter, you need to come back to the substantive motion.

Mr WINTER - We do not have confidence in this government, but they are very broad reasons why we do not have confidence. Tasmanians are losing confidence in this government. The government is no longer united and that is clear to see on this gaming policy. The split is evident to everyone. The ministerial -

Mr Jaensch - What does Bec White think about your policy?

Mr WINTER - arrangements have had to change. I will be interested in whether minister Jaensch wants to speak on that. Perhaps he wants to provide a retort to what I have said about his position on these matters. Perhaps he wants to stand up on this debate and outline why it is that the Finance minister is no longer taking carriage of the gaming issue. Perhaps there is a reason that is not the one I said, but I suspect that I am correct in the issues that he has had.

This is a government that has failed to deliver time and time again. I cannot think of a single thing that has got better since Jeremy Rockliff became the Premier of this state. We have serious concerns about their ability to get the basics right. We have serious concerns about the stability of this government itself. We have serious concerns when we hear the Tasmanian Chamber of Commerce saying it will be very difficult to ever trust this government again, and talking about the ramifications that it has for business confidence. Business confidence in Tasmania requires a government that is clear about what it stands for and delivers on its promises, and that is not what we have. They promised and they could not deliver, the same way that they promised a health system that would be the best by 2025 and they could not deliver. They said that Ashley would be closed by 2024 and they could not deliver.

This is a government that continues to fail to deliver. They have the Premier talking about wanting to protect services and not the balance sheet. The problem with his budget is that it makes it harder and harder to protect services because the debt keeps growing and growing and growing - \$8.5 billion worth of debt by the end of this four-year cycle. That makes it harder to deliver services. There is \$441 million paid in interest repayments every year, twice the size of the spend on our ambulance, because of the size of the debt and the mismanagement of the budget.

This is a government which, on the TT-Line, made a quite extraordinary blunder. It is the biggest stuff up in Tasmanian history by far, and potentially one of the greatest in Australian history. People keep asking me, 'What happened?', and we need to get to the bottom of it. We absolutely do.

When the Premier says that they have intervened, it is a little late for that. We now know that the project is almost three years delayed and that the project should have started a long time ago. We also know that the Premier said he did not know anything about it until April. When he did find out on 22 April that those ships would not be sailing into the Mersey and would not be operating full of passengers and freight, he chose to keep it quiet.

Those people he talks about, those people he says he respects - he chose not to tell them. He decided he should not tell his local community in Braddon on the north-west coast that was so excited about it. He thought, 'No, it is best I do not tell them'. You have businesses talking about how they bought brand new coffee machines getting ready for the peak season during summer because of all these new people who were going to be coming. There were people in the aquaculture sector who invested \$100,000 into new equipment and kit because there was going to be capacity and they could grow their business, and he chose not to tell them.

How many millions of dollars were invested by the private sector who were getting ready because this Premier chose - deliberately - not to tell them? He made a conscious decision, 'I know they are not coming and are not going to operate this summer, but I am not going to tell them'. People who have supported this Premier for many years were investing, and he was letting them down.

There are a whole host of issues across Tasmania's economy, our health system, the failure to deliver for our kids at Ashley, and the failure to deliver on the commission of inquiry and actually holding people to account. It is not an issue that has gone away. It is an issue that Tasmanians are aware of, and the cover-ups continue.

We have members of this government who are under investigation by the Integrity Commission, and a government that is slowing down the process of actually investigating. This is a government that is in very big trouble. Those issues about Ashley, health care, education, the economy, jobs and wages are massive issues, and we do not have confidence in the government.

This motion today on gaming does not resemble anything like the biggest issues facing Tasmania. It simply does not. The motion saying that the Premier is a liar without evidence, the motion focusing on a single issue, which, as I said, is nowhere near the biggest issue facing Tasmania, does not reflect the big issues that are facing Tasmania.

This motion calls out the government on their massive backflip on this issue. Tasmanian hospitality, in particular, were getting ready to invest after the 2021 gaming legislation went through. I have been and spoken to businesses with that certainty. With 20 years of certainty, they were getting ready to invest in their venues, getting ready to invest in Tasmanians, in workers, in growing our economy and creating great Tasmanian hospitality experiences, but the threat of this card over the last two years has led them to not invest. It has had a negative impact on our economy because of the uncertainty that it has brought.

The one good thing about today is that it has finally brought some certainty for that issue. The government has finally done what we have long suspected they would do and dropped the policy. It is not universally dropped on that side of the House. I can see some people are very disappointed, and perhaps we will hear from them during the debate today but as I said at the start of my contribution, which was some time ago now, Tasmanian Labor have never stood in the way of this policy, but it is not our policy and that is why we cannot support this motion.

[4.49 p.m.]

Mr FERGUSON (Bass) - Deputy Speaker, I will begin by congratulating you on your appointment to that office earlier today. We all know that you will do a wonderful job.

I am glad that the Leader of the Opposition remains in the Chamber for me to be able to read back to him what he said to this House when the debate on the legislation went through this House, because what we just listened to is Mr Winter trying to recast history. He would have this House believe his new mythology that he was never supportive of a mandatory precommitment and cashless play card. You have all just heard him say it. Mr Winter will need to eat his words. In fact, he has already been doing it through the course of this debate today. Mr Winter said a number of things throughout that debate and it would be fair to say that Mr Winter clearly has a number of influences on him.

Let us not forget that in the 2018 election, Mr Winter and his party, including the then leader of the opposition, Ms White, took to the election a very different policy to that of the Liberal Party, a policy to only allow pokies, electronic gaming machines, poker machines, call them what you will, in the two casinos and nowhere else. That was the position of the Labor Party at the 2018 election. We all know they were not successful at that election. The Liberal government was successful. The Hodgman government was returned with a majority.

During the mid-term period of that term, we faced the COVID pandemic. The government said we would, nonetheless, push forward with our important reforms, which I will summarise briefly in a moment. The Labor Party, in dealing with that on the floor of this Chamber, said, 'Well, we lost that election. We kind of stand by it, but we are now not in a position to implement our policy. So, what we will do is we will come up with a different set of words'. The set of words were: 'We will not stand in the way of what the government intends to do now. After all, they have won office'. Anybody hearing any rings of familiarity? 'We will not stand in their way'.

We had a long and challenging debate, with a lot of division, in October and November of 2021. The COVID pandemic had come and mostly moved on. By then, Mr Hodgman had retired from politics. Mr Gutwein was then premier. We had a small consideration of timeframes for our future gaming markets legislation and we waited until about October 2021 to take it through the House. It enjoyed the support of this House with a lot of conjecture, a lot of disagreement. Ms Johnston and Ms O'Connor were very strong in taking a determined position against the one I was advocating. Labor was much floppier to deal with because they were sort of walking this strange line, sitting on that strange fence, that uncomfortable fence.

One thing that did unite this House was something I brought to the table which was supported. I did that in my role at that point, not as treasurer, but as minister for finance under premier Gutwein, and it did somewhat unify this parliament. A lot of people at that time did not believe I would honour the commitment I was making. The commitment I was making, not on my own terms but with the authority of the government at the time, was that we would direct the Tasmanian Liquor and Gaming Commission to investigate mandatory precommitment, which, by the way, I did not invent. The Productivity Commission recommended it in the late 1990s. It has always been considered the unobtainable gold standard for harm minimisation - not harm reduction, harm minimisation. The two are different.

It greatly shocks and annoys me that Mr Winter, who would have himself put out there as the future premier of Tasmania, would attempt to cast a new mythology: that the position he holds today of not supporting mandatory precommitment and cashless play is somehow the position he has always had. That is not true, it is not borne out by the facts or supported by any evidence. It should not be for me or members of this side of the House, or the crossbench to have to highlight this falsehood from Mr Winter. However, I will do that because, unfortunately, Mr Winter's behaviour today dictates that he must be corrected.

It is the case that during that debate, in the second reading speech itself, I introduced the concept of that direction to the commission and we said it would involve consultation with industry so that it would be properly explored and evidence based.

Mr Winter - Did that happen?

Mr FERGUSON - Mr Winter, you ask me did that happen?

Mr Winter - Yes.

Mr FERGUSON - It shocks me that you would ask me that question across the floor. Yes, of course it happened. The Tasmanian Liquor and Gaming Commission did a brilliant job of publishing a discussion paper and it received dozens of submissions, most of which were from gambling interests. Of course, the care and concern sector, the churches, the social

organisations, the community service organisations are all there, but by far the majority of submissions were from individual venues. The THA was there. That is why it surprises me that you repeated again today, Mr Winter, that industry had not been consulted. It is still on the Treasury and Finance website. Consult it for yourself.

The fact is that there was a unifying moment. The only qualifier I put on that was that some people did not believe I would follow through. I did. I do not want to make this about me, and it should not be. My name has been mentioned far too many times through this debate. It should not be about an individual person's policy preference. It ought to be about that one thing that briefly united this House. During that debate - it was a long debate, tens of hours went into and a lot of good comments were made. One of them was from Mr Winter. He was talking about technology and he said:

But there are models of card-based play which will not work. Again, that is evident in the research. Some of the research I read - and I forget which one, I am sorry as I have many of these papers - was talking about loyalty card programs. Let us not get this confused. A loyalty card program is not harm minimisation. Just because it is card-based does not mean it is harm minimisation.

He then went on to say:

From the outside, the trial across multiple venues in New South Wales looks promising and, hopefully, one day across all venues -

He is talking about using people's IDs:

So that if you set a limit of say \$100 for the day, you simply cannot go back and get more money out and go somewhere else. You are locked in. You are unable to gamble more because you will have set your limit. That is a really promising aspect of harm minimisation that will assist.

That is 14 October 2021, Mr Dean Winter, at that time the shadow minister for finance.

The same day, the then leader of the opposition, Ms White, was referring earlier in her contribution to a New South Wales piece of work in response to the Bergin inquiry. She said:

We want to see the same technology implemented in Tasmania for all machines and for it to be in the legislation. That is why we will move an amendment on that matter.

She goes on to say:

I was also very heartened to hear the contribution by the member for Braddon, Mr Ellis, when he spoke about mandatory precommitment. If that is the Liberal policy, then that is good.

You laugh, you smile. If I do not hear that was a position of the then Labor opposition, I would be very shocked with your new mythology, Mr Winter. I have more, Mr Winter, with a question mark over you as to what you have and what is the best you bring to this debate.

Ms White on the same day also said:

The amendment before the House has our support, but I want to flag a couple of things. One, that it is very good to see the reference in 4(c) to precommitment, which is the amount of money that is determined by the players before they begin to use the cards.

I come back to Mr Winter. I just checked for the time. This was late at night and maybe Mr Winter was getting tired. Maybe that explains his confusion. In the summing up of the debate on Wednesday 27 October, he referred to the amendments he was laying credit to. He talked about facial recognition technology. Time will not permit me to discuss that in any detail, but he went on to talk about card-based play. He said:

This would mean an end to using cash in pokies and a move toward player precommitment. That is the ability for a player to nominate an amount that they want to spend in a day, a month or a year, and to be held to that. This has been long advocated for by many advocates for change within the operation of EGMs.

This is dated Wednesday 27 October. Why should I have to remind Mr Winter of this? He misled in his contribution earlier today in trying to create a new mythology that he was never for cashless cards and a mandatory precommitment scheme.

Members interjecting.

Mr FERGUSON - I hear more muttering, but the icing on the cake, or rather the cherry on the icing, was when we accepted a number of amendments from the Legislative Council in this Chamber in Committee. I believe it may have been the last sitting day for the year. It was Thursday 25 November 2021. We went through and agreed to those amendments and Mr Winter felt the need to say these words:

Without this bill, there was no new attempt at harm minimisation put in place by this government. It was not in their policy in 2018. The only place it has been put in is within this bill.

This place is putting a lot of faith in the government and in the review about harm minimisation. I hope the government will act on its word and bring back meaningful harm minimisation, particularly when it comes to card-based play, because it is a very broad approach that you could take. As we have said several times, we believe that this is about card-based play linked to licences. That is in line with the harm-minimisation approach suggested by people when it comes to a driver's licence or identification. ... I hope the government will act on its word.

That was three years ago, to be fair, and maybe Mr Winters has suffered a little bit of forgetfulness.

I will not be supporting this motion and it would surprise me that anyone might consider that I would cross the floor on a want of confidence motion in a government that I believe in and the Premier. I make that very clear. It surprises me that my record and my great love for

the Liberal Party would be called into question by Mr Winter and Ms Dow, I think it was. Forgive me if I am wrong about Ms Dow, but two speakers from the opposition flirted with this.

I just see this as a corrosive debate. From the Greens' point of view, I can only say that I am not disappointed because I am not surprised. You always go too far. I looked at your motion - not that I was entertaining it, but I looked at it. I will not read it all out because it is pointless. There is only one truthful statement out of eight. Number one is the only factual one that I could say is accurate. The rest are untrue, and before Mr Winter puts his arms up in the air and says, 'Well, why did you vote against our amendment to get rid of them all?', it is because we are not playing your stupid games.

I want to move off the politics and onto the substance of this issue. It is fair to say that I am deeply committed to these reforms. One day I will die but until that day I will stand by my record on fighting for those people who do not have a strong voice in this House.

I fundamentally disagree with many things that Ms Johnston and the Greens stand for. It is hard to not notice, of course, that in praising me so often in recent days they were in part the architect of my new real estate here on the back bench. It is hard not to notice that, therefore it is a little hard to accept the praise, but on this particular issue there is a level of agreement because deep in my heart is a focus not just what is best in gambling policy, but what I can do while I am a member of this House to make a positive difference, something I could feel pleased about and that perhaps others may feel proud about.

I believe that we have a journey yet to go. I am not going to give up on these reforms. While tonight I express my great disappointment that the government and the Cabinet have made the decision that they have, it may be that they have information I do not have access to and I respect that. I am nonetheless disappointed and I would be less than honest if I did not say that.

I am heartened at least that the statement made by Treasurer Barnett, minister Jaensch and minister Howlett this morning made very clear that this is a deferral, not a destruction of what is a nation-leading, evidence-based, pro-family, pro-freedom policy. I challenge the opposition to match it, to say to the government, 'We are willing you on and we want to help you', because I believe - and I have no evidence to support this, but I will back my gut on this - I believe the Labor Party has been got at.

I believe the evidence is clear, because I have outlined a very discernible, real shift in their policy position on this, if you could call it a policy position. I am determined to support minister Barnett, Treasurer Barnett and all my colleagues in finding a sensible pathway to achieve this very good, very wholesome, very necessary and very overdue reform.

I could share many stories. I will share only two, because there are only three minutes left on the clock. The first is when I was a candidate at that 2018 election. I took up the opportunity to put up one of my election signs in a licensed venue, because as Liberals we were invited to do so. I walked into the gaming floor waiting for the manager to come and meet me and allow me to know where I could put that sign, and one of the customers with coins in her cup took one look at me and said 'Michael Ferguson, what are you doing here? You should be getting rid of these things'. She had another story which is not mine to tell.

Secondly, many years ago, I was speaking to a friend who is a soccer coach. He worked at Federal casinos on the gaming floor, and he told me of his hatred for the machines. I said, 'Why? What is wrong with them? It is just freedom, isn't it?' He explained to me that on Christmas Eve he was going around powering all the machines down one at a time, and he passed the last patron and he said to her, 'I am going to come to your machine last. You can keep playing; I will let you keep playing,' and she said, 'That's fine, thanks mate'. He powered down all the other machines, came to hers and she blasted him: 'You can't turn this off. My kids' Christmas presents are in this machine. I've got to get them back'.

Those two moments taught me so much: not only do people have the right to play these games, they also have the right to a government and an opposition that will turn up, that will show up, defend their interests and defend them against their weaknesses, which we all occasionally have.

When I took on the portfolio of Finance and I told premier Gutwein I would be more than happy to take up the role and to take this legislation through the House, for all the right reasons, I said, 'Yes, of course I will be happy to do that', but I knew, and I persuaded my colleagues, that we needed to do more in the harm minimisation space. That is the back story that I have never told.

The rest you know. It has been a tough road, and I have seen so many opportunities for us to fall off this good policy wagon. I have seen so many times where temptation has come into our path. I can therefore only know that the same lobbying and temptations have been brought to members opposite.

I want to take this opportunity to back in the Premier and our team on this. I think it is an appalling motion. It is disappointing and somewhat beneath contempt in the way it has been framed up, although we all know that it is motivated by pokies. I respect the difference of opinion on pokies matters, but I want to see this parliament try to find a way to restore the bipartisanship, because that is what I have seen be lost, and that has been one of the barriers to real reform.

In closing, I will not be supporting this motion. I never considered it, and I lay out the challenge to every member of this House to hold on, go for evidence-based, good practice, best policy, and focus on restoring this policy in the long term.

[5.09 p.m.]

Ms JOHNSTON (Clark) - Honourable Speaker, I rise to provide my contribution on this motion and in doing so, I have to compose myself after having heard the contribution from the member for Bass with his personal stories about why he thinks poker machine reform is important. It makes me reflect on what I know from my community too, and why I think this is a deeply important matter for our House today.

This is a dark day for Tasmanians. I know that there are lives at risk right now. I do not take what I do in this place as a joke or as fun. What we have is a serious motion before us. It is not fun, as the leader of government business suggested it might be. In determining these kinds of motions and in my consideration of them, I outlined to the Premier back in April how I would approach motions of no confidence, and I put on the record - and it is publicly in the record, but I am comfortable to reiterate - that my approach in representing the constituents of

Clark and the Tasmanian people would be to consider each and every issue on its merits after hearing the debate and considering the evidence before me.

In doing so, I am guided by key principles: these are the need for transparent and accountable government, a high degree of integrity within parliament and its processes, and a decision that will promote the interests of Tasmanians and improve Tasmanians' lives. Where these principles are met, then I can provide confidence. Where on merit they are not met, for example, where there is corruption, wrongdoing or gross mismanagement of a portfolio, then I cannot provide confidence. I note that in these circumstances, no other elected member properly representing the constituency should provide confidence either.

That is the approach that I have taken to today's debate, Deputy Speaker. It is a serious one. I have considered the motion. The motion is in regard to the Premier's massive backflip on poker machines and a mandatory precommitment card. It is about whether this Premier can be honest and trustworthy, whether we can say he is acting with integrity, and whether I can hand on heart say I have confidence in him to do his job. I have been framing it in that way. I have gone back and looked at the representations that the Premier and the government have made not only to me but to this House, to committees of this House, to the media and, most importantly, to the people of Tasmania. I think it is important to put on the record what has been said because it is quite a timeline.

I go back to 16 September 2022, when the then deputy premier and treasurer announced a nation-leading, card-based gaming scheme with precommitment to help problem gamblers. It was indeed nation-leading. As the member for Bass has indicated, it is not the first time this has happened elsewhere, but it is the first time it is been done in a jurisdiction entirely. I recognise that it is nation-leading. It is not rocket science; it has been done before, but it is nation-leading. That was in September 2022.

I was eager to see this card implemented but nervous, because I know the powerful nature of the gaming and gambling industry. I asked then Premier Rockliff on 28 September 2022 about the commitment. I indicated that we had been down this path before at a federal level, where promises were made, the gambling influence was so strong and governments had changed their minds. I asked the Premier:

Will you stand by the policy announced by your Deputy Premier no matter what the poker machine and hospitality industries throw at you? Are all members of your government rock solid behind the policy? Will you guarantee none will buckle under industry pressure? Have you met with industry representatives since the announcement and told them the government is absolutely committed to these reforms and is not for turning?

In answer to my question, the Premier said:

I thank the member for her question. On 15 September, the Treasurer announced the government's response to the Independent Tasmanian Liquor and Gaming Commission's investigations into harm minimisation measures. We accepted the recommendations in accordance with our commitments to the parliament, and while this has material influence in securing the passage of our future gaming markets reform, it also demonstrates our commitment to harm minimisation and indeed a cooperative approach. The harm reduction

model follows a comprehensive investigation, public consultation process and report to government by the Independent Tasmanian Liquor and Gaming Commission.

He then says:

We will implement a statewide cashless gaming card that enables players to decide how much they want to gamble before they start playing.

September 2022 - we have seen changes then. We were starting to get quite nervous because what we saw was slow progress. We heard rumours that the THA were having conversations behind closed doors. The community sector was nervous about what might be happening.

In May of this year, I had a phone call from the then Finance minister's office and chief of staff to advise me that the precommitment card would be delayed a year, but to reassure me that the government was committed to it. He begged me, 'Don't slap the minister over the head. We are completely committed to this policy; it is just delayed. We are doing it. I promise you we are doing it'.

I took that on good faith. I went out to the community and said, 'It is going to happen. This is a really important commitment, and the government are committed to it. It has been delayed but it will come. In December 2025, we will have them'.

The media at the time asked the Premier questions about this and were concerned. The media at the election were concerned about the statements the government made. They asked, 'Are you backing away from the precommitment card?' 'No', the Premier told them, time and time again. 'It is government policy' was the response we constantly got. That was what this House was told over and over again; it is what members of parliament were told over and over again; it was what the media was told over and over again. Most importantly, it is what the community heard from this Premier over and over again.

We know that he was not being truthful. How do we know that? Because moves were afoot to change the policy back then, and by either direct lie, or lying by omission, he was dishonest and misled the Tasmanian community.

Another example of where this government said that they were committed to the policy goes back only to 16 October of this year. Questions were asked, because again the community was nervous that the government might be changing its position, but the government was trying to reassure us through the Premier that that was not the case.

I asked directly the then minister for Finance, Nic Street, about it, and in his answer he said, 'I can only reiterate the Premier's answer from this morning, as well as my commitment as Finance minister, to implement the player card gaming system, as we committed to at the election'. Again, a recognition that at the election they committed to doing that, and they have misled again.

I do not believe at all that in answers to Estimates or in answers to this question that minister Street misled this parliament at all. I believe that he firmly thought that that was the view. What has happened is the Premier has not been truthful with his own Cabinet ministers. He has not kept them up to date with what is going on.

Again, in response to those questions on 16 October, a number of us were so concerned with the Premier's position and the vagueness of his answers that we felt compelled to write. Dr Woodruff, Meg Webb, the member for Nelson, and I wrote on 16 October to the Premier and asked him a direct question: 'Can you give an ironclad assurance that decisions relating to the decision, design, delivery and implementation time for the player card will be informed by publicly available submissions and discussions, whether by industry or members of the public and other stakeholder groups, and by the evidence?' We asked about the precommitment card and whether he was committed to that.

Interestingly, the Premier never even acknowledged our correspondence. He never acknowledged it; he just ignored it. That is a lie by omission, because he knew at that stage that there was no way he was going to be implementing the precommitment card as he had outlined in his policy previously.

Again, on 1 November, more concerns about the government's commitment and what the Premier was saying publicly. He was very vague with his words. He would not directly answer questions put by the media to him about a firm commitment to a mandatory precommitment player card. I wrote to him on 1 November seeking assurances that he was committed to it, asking for him to provide a conscience vote on this. Again, not even an acknowledgement. Whilst he might not have been prepared to lie to my face, he certainly was going to lie by omission. He was not going to tell the truth - that he had ditched it.

We have had numerous community sector organisations who have been so deeply concerned, particularly over the last two weeks, the last week, and the last few days, about the government's position. They have written widely and openly raising their concerns. The Alliance of Gambling Reform have contacted members of parliament raising their concerns. I have circulated an invite to all members of parliament today to attend a very important briefing on Monday next week so they can hear for themselves the lived experience of those addicted to poker machines. They can hear for themselves what the impact of this important policy and initiative would have been, had the government not ditched it today.

It is concerning, and what we have is a deeply disturbing situation where the Premier has listened to industry ahead of the Tasmanians he is supposed to represent. The industry has bought him, and in doing so he has been keeping it secret from members of his Cabinet, from members of the government, from the media, from members of parliament and, most importantly, from members of the community. He has ditched it at the eleventh hour, just before we came into parliament.

It is interesting that in doing so, the Premier is spouting the rhetoric of the industry, saying it is impractical to implement. That is not the case. It is a blatant lie to suggest it is impractical. What we know is that Crown Casinos have implemented this technology in all 3000 of their Electronic Gaming Machines (EGMs) in their casinos in Victoria. Every one of those EGMs in Crown Casinos has this very technology already implemented, and it has been working. Crown Casinos felt so concerned by the debate today that they felt the need to write to some members of parliament - I was one of the members included in that - to outline the success of the mandatory precommitment card that they operate within their casinos. They debunk the myths the THA have been telling the Premier and the Premier has been reiterating to the community.

It is very interesting that the Premier is now suggesting that we should be relying on facial recognition technology as some kind of harm minimisation strategy. That is the biggest lie ever. Facial recognition technology is not harm minimisation. It is the ambulance at the bottom of the cliff. It is only effective when someone has lost everything - when they have hit rock bottom and realised that they cannot go any further.

It is the same with the exclusion system. That is the ambulance at the bottom of the cliff, and on the very day the Premier and his government have announced that they intend to pursue facial recognition technology as a potential harm minimisation measure, recognising there is no harm minimisation in either of those positions, it is interesting to note that Bunnings has been caught out with their facial recognition technology. The Privacy Commissioner has raised serious concerns about the use of facial recognition technology. I would also point the Premier to an evaluation report from a South Australian experience of facial recognition technology, which shows it is completely ineffective.

We have the situation before us today where we had at the beginning of the day evidence-based policy and an evidence-based commitment. We had members of the government, including the member for Bass, the previous Deputy Premier and Treasurer, committed to this policy. Over a period of at least eight to 10 months, we have had members of the community concerned that the government might walk away from this commitment. The Premier has been asked over and over again whether he is committed and the answer has either been 'yes' or avoiding answering the question. We get to today and we find out that was not accurate or truthful. He has been working with the THA to overturn this decision. He did not even bother to tell his Cabinet colleagues, necessarily. That is an issue of integrity. That is an issue about personal integrity and honesty for the Premier. I want to know that when I walk into this House and ask the Premier a question about whether he is committed to something, that I am going to get a straight answer. I need to know that I can have confidence in his answer, that he will be telling me the whole truth. That is what we ask witnesses to our committees to say: the whole truth, not just a bit of it, the whole truth. I cannot, hand on heart, say I am confident the Premier will do that.

I think it was George Orwell who said that omission is the most powerful form of lie. I think we have seen that time and time again from this Premier, failing to be honest when questioned about what his intentions were with this particular policy. If he cannot be honest about poker machine reform, about the harm caused to Tasmanians, what else can he not be honest about?

When I have asked him about his personal commitment to conversion practice therapy bans and he said yes, he is committed to that, is that true? I do not know now. How can I trust the Premier on that particular statement? I cannot. When I ask the Premier if he is committed to trying to make sure that Tasmanian children are safe and closing Ashley, can I really trust what the Premier says? Can I trust that he has informed his other Cabinet or government colleagues? Based on today's performance, I cannot. If I cannot trust it, how am I supposed to go out and tell the members of the community that they can trust this government and this premier? I cannot. That is the simple answer.

In concluding, I want to go back to why we are debating this motion. It is an issue of integrity, ethics, being honest in our dealings with the parliament and the people of Tasmania. It is also about the gravity of the issue about which we are talking. It is not a small lie. It is not a small omission to tell the truth. We are talking about an issue that deeply impacts many

Tasmanians. I go back to where I started: the personal stories of Tasmanians. I have sat in the living rooms of Tasmanians who told me they want to take their life because they say there is no other way out of their poker machine addiction. I recognise that the Premier has worked on the Lifeline phonelines and I am sure he has taken difficult conversations like that before, difficult calls. Surely, he must feel compelled to do something about that.

I have talked to family members who cannot feed their children because their partner has gambled away not only that weekly budget, but their life savings. I have talked to members of the community who have gone to a life of crime to try and fund their gambling addiction. The only place they will not gamble on poker machines is in prison, but they are worried that when they come back out of prison, they are going to start gambling again on those poker machines.

These are real Tasmanians. They are Tasmanians who matter. They deserve honesty. The Premier had no intention of implementing this policy and could have put them out of the misery months ago. Do not lie about it. Do not give these Tasmanians false hope, because that is what we have had. We have had hope that there might be some protection for months and months, and he has dashed that.

Time expired.

[5.30 p.m.]

Mr BAYLEY (Clark) - Honourable Speaker, it gives me absolutely no pleasure to rise tonight to talk to this motion because I think the one thing we probably all agree on here in this House is this is an issue of significant gravity. A no-confidence motion is not to be taken lightly. Irrespective of many of the comments I have heard, certainly from the government side, today, the Greens considered this very deeply and felt we had absolutely no choice but to move this motion.

The Premier has long said he is leading a government with heart. The pokies precommitment card, in many ways, was central to that. It was the one demonstration that the Premier and this government, with the assistance of the member for Bass, Mr Ferguson, would make hard decisions that their traditional stakeholders would not like. The reason we are debating this motion is because we were let down. We and every other Tasmanian who cares about their fellow Tasmanians were let down.

Much has been made in this House this afternoon about stability, about making parliament work. We are absolutely committed to that. However, making this parliament work is a two-way street. If we are going to take assurances from government and government ministers at face value, we have to have some confidence that they are true. What has been revealed today is that, through exercising our responsibility to hold government to account, we have unpacked the fact that the government, through the Premier, has been utterly untruthful when it comes to the pokies precommitment card.

It is a nation-leading reform. Do not take my word for it; take it from ex-minister Ferguson in his release announcing it in November 2022, in which he said:

The Tasmanian government is leading the nation in the area of gambling harm minimisation and it is strengthening measures to further reduce problem gambling.

We were going to lead the nation. Now, we are just going to watch the rest of them and try and work with them to get it up. That is an utter betrayal of Tasmanians and their desire for this.

This concept did not come out of the blue. As the member for Bass said, he did not invent it. It is a recommendation from the Liquor and Gaming Commission. They wanted a precommitment system in their report to the Treasurer on it. They wanted a precommitment card and the government made it clear:

The government will mandate precommitment features as an essential part of the gaming framework. The government agrees that precommitment will have the most impact on minimising gambling harm.

The most impact. When we heard the Premier today talk about harm minimisation and facial recognition, and all these other initiatives, they are second best and the government itself has acknowledged that a precommitment card is the best and most impactful way of minimising gambling harm. Pokies do cause harm, much harm, and pokies are designed to addict. They are hardwired to ensure they suck more out than they spit out. They make a point of ensuring that their users lose, and lose they do. Since the infamous 2018 election, where gambling money had such a profound and insidious influence on our democracy, government data demonstrates that Tasmanians had lost over \$1.1 billion. In the 2022-23 financial year, a single year, \$189.6 million was lost to Tasmanian poker machines. That is over half-a-million dollars a day being sucked out of the most impoverished and vulnerable communities into the coffers of some of the wealthiest.

Advocates estimate that 40 per cent of losses on poker machines are borne by someone already experiencing gambling harm, and the harm from gambling extends well beyond the direct impacts on the gambler. Families get caught up in the crisis. Pokies ruin lives, they increase poverty in already vulnerable communities, they contribute to mental and other health conditions, drive domestic violence and crime and, in the worst-case scenario, contribute to suicide. They are the facts. This is what these parasites do to our people.

Pokies cost more than just the cold hard dollars lost. The public expense of the impacts of pokies extends well beyond the health expenses, the police cost and the lost productivity. They are parasites tapping and sapping the public good. My electorate of Clark has the highest density of poker machines in the state with Glenorchy hosting the Golden Mile and the corresponding costs of losses and impacts. That is why the Liberals' pledge to a mandatory precommitment gaming card was such a welcome commitment in 2022.

Pokies have corrupted our politics since before they even arrived on our shores in the 1960s and 1970s. When the casinos arrived, the licence was granted on the promise that no pokies would come. The Liberals formed a minority government in 1969 with a crossbencher, Mr Kevin Lyons, who was made deputy premier. In 1971 the Liberals moved toward a Launceston casino licence for a direct competitor of Federal, and it did not end well. Kevin Lyons, the crossbench deputy premier, shocked the state in 1972 by resigning from the government without warning. A former Labor staffer alleges in a sworn statement that Lyons' resignation was the result of corruption.

In the 1980s, Federal achieved bipartisan backing for their operations. The Liberal legislation to allow pokies wins the support of Labor and passes in 1985. As was mentioned

before, Bob Brown was the only lower House member to vote against it. In 1990, pokies spread. The Liberal government moved to allow pokies in pubs and clubs in 1993. Federal Hotels were a major roadblock, campaigning strongly against the plan until they bullied the government into giving them a monopoly licence to operate all pokies until 2008. Despite the huge guaranteed profits, they got the licence for free and the tax rate for their profits is set way lower than recommended.

In the 2000s, local federal supporters Jim Bacon and treasurer Paul Lennon delivered the company another huge win. They did a secret deal to extend Federal's pokies monopoly until 2023, and they increased the number of pokies allowed in the state. In the 2010s we have the infamous 2018 election, where the campaign led by 'Love your Local' effectively bought the election. In the 2020s we have had just a small piece of shining light, with the commitment of this government to introduce a mandatory precommitment card.

That brings us to the Ferguson announcement of the election this year, when the government re-committed its commitment to the precommitment card. On 16 February, then minister Ferguson said:

Importantly, we also remain committed to harm minimisation and will implement a mandatory card-based gaming system for electronic gaming machines as soon as reasonably practical.

They are his words. They were the words in the election context. The Premier reiterated them during the election, and I read this again into the *Hansard*. The reporter said:

Reporter - So you're committed to the \$5000 per year/\$100 per day limit on these cards?

Premier Jeremy Rockliff - We are committed to that reform. I've said that very clearly.

Reporter - So to be absolutely clear, you're committed to the limits?

Premier - We're committed. I've said we're committed.

Reporter - To the limits?

Premier - We're committed.

Reporter - To the limits?

Premier - To the limits, we're committed.

That is the history of pokies in this state. They have had an insidious impact on our politics, on our body politics, and there have been allegations along the way of direct corruption. When the Ferguson announcement of a mandatory precommitment gaming system was made, it came with a \$268,000 sweetener for the Tasmanian Hospitality Association. Even when announcing that policy, it had to come with a sweetener for the lobby group.

In June this year we were told there were going to be delays, and I think that everybody accepted at face value those delays. This is a complex situation. We are talking about new programming. It is a complex card and system to roll out but it did beg the question as to who was contracted to do this - MaxGaming, the very company that is in partnership with the Hoteliers' Association and also delivering the gaming machines in the first place. Issues of conflict of interest were raised and batted off by the government. They were batted off by the then minister in Estimates this year basically saying, 'Well, it is a contract; they are obliged to deliver on their contract, nothing to see here. There is no conflict here'. We do not accept that, but a delay is a delay. A delay is not a deferral and there is a very big difference.

Much has been made of an exchange between me and minister Street, then Finance minister, during Estimates, and whether the Cabinet and minister Street actually knew that this backflip was even happening. I believe this goes to the heart of the motion. The deception is that the Tasmanian people have been deceived, the Parliament has been deceived and it seems that the Premier's own colleagues have been deceived in this case.

I asked minister Street:

There is a lot of fear that with Mr Ferguson no longer responsible for this card, the government's commitment to it and its ability to deliver it will be lost with him. Minister, I am looking for an ironclad guarantee from you that it is still this government's policy and you are still pulling out all stops to overcome the challenges and get this card in place as soon as possible in the interests of vulnerable Tasmanians.

This is where Minister Street said to me across the table,

I can sit here and look you in the eye and tell you that the government's commitment to the precommitment card has not changed.

I accept that. I accept that at face value. I accepted it at the time and I continue to accept it now. We do not have any doubt about that commitment from Mr Street but it took questions from the Greens to actually tyre lever the truth out of this government about exactly what it was doing.

On 17 October, Dr Woodruff, the Leader of the Greens, was asking the Premier very straight,

Are you ditching default loss limits, are you allowing more than one card per person, or is it that you are no longer going to make this system universal across all venues?

At that point, the Premier said,

We are working towards the implementation of a mandatory card-based system for electronic gaming machines.

The questioning went on quite significantly on that day because we were not satisfied with that answer, and it was not until that evening that the Leader of the House, Mr Abetz,

came to the podium and conceded that the government was doing some work to look at this issue. Minister Abetz said:

The Premier was asked about the government's commitment to harm minimisation and the implementation of electronic gaming machine reform during question time. The Premier repeats that our government remains committed to harm minimisation. We acknowledge that there are concerns about economic impact and the effect on jobs, which we must consider in the implementation. The Premier advises that the government has requested advice from the Department of State Growth on the current government policy impact on the hospitality venues across the state, including the tourism and hospitality election commitment, the government's electronic gaming machine existing policy, and the government's 2030 Visitor Economy Strategy commitments - regional events.

The Department of State Growth has engaged Deloitte Access Economics to undertake an analysis of the social and economic impact of the above. A report will be publicly released by government.

It has not been publicly released. We have not even got to see the terms of reference of that review by Deloitte Economics, but we now have this policy backflip. We now have the precommitment card put on the absolute backburner and deferred into oblivion.

It is simply not good enough. We still need, and there is still an obligation of the government to actually come clean on whether they have done that piece of Deloitte work. Is this decision to defer based on anything that Deloitte gave you? We do not know. No one has said it in this place. We have not even seen the terms of reference, and we just do not know. The reality is card-based play is the most effective. That is what the Liquor and Gaming Commission said. That is what the government accepted.

With all this talk of facial recognition technology, you just need to look at the results of a study recently released in the *Journal of Gambling Studies*. It has looked at the South Australian model. We heard a lot about South Australia today and the impact of facial recognition technology. A paper published in the *Journal of Gambling Studies* this year says:

This paper reports on the government-led implementation of facial recognition technology as part of an automated self-exclusion program in the city of Adelaide in South Australia - one of the first jurisdiction-wide enforcements of this controversial technology in small venue gambling.

The South Australian case illustrates how this technology does not appear to better address the core issues underpinning problem gambling, and/or substantially improve conditions for problem gamblers to refrain from gambling.

There we have it. We actually have some evidence and some research by some experts in South Australia that are showing that the things that the government is pointing to in terms of harm minimisation as a substitute for this card-based play do not work. They are not as effective. That is not new; we knew it all the way along and the government accepted it. I read again from their response to the Gaming Commission's report:

The government agrees that precommitment will have the most impact on minimising gambling harm and accepts the system functionality, including the concurrent default loss limits proposed by the commission.

That is why the commission proposed it, and that is why the government accepted it. It is precommitment cards that will work and do the job.

Speaking of jobs, we heard a lot about jobs, and jobs are going to be the excuse for ditching this precommitment card, but some other research from way back in 2005, which I will read from directly, has demonstrated that:

The results indicate that \$1 million of gambling income, 'including income from sources other than electronic gaming machines', is associated with 3.2 jobs, which is significantly lower than the number of staff associated with the sale of liquor and other beverages (8.3 persons employed per \$1 million dollars of income) and takings from food, meals and sales (20.2 persons per \$1 million dollars). Such a low level of employment intensity would largely explain why the fall in gambling expenditure has not translated into a significant fall in employment from gaming venues.

When they introduced smoking bans indoors in gaming venues, there was a reduction in income, but it did not translate into a significant reduction in jobs.

The reality here is that this government, secretly until this morning, has been backpedalling on the one effective harm minimisation action that can be taken, that can protect vulnerable Tasmanians, that can protect their families, and that can protect people from the parasites that are pokies. In exchange, they are talking about ineffective facial recognition technology, and are going to point to jobs and economic loss as a result of the card. It simply does not stack up.

In the minute or two I have remaining, I want to speak to the Premier's contribution. The Premier talked about policy difference, and we are always happy to debate policy issues, but we need to do it openly, accurately and honestly, and that is the substance of this motion. The debate we have been having on this issue has not been honest. The government has not been honest about its intention. This is not about a policy difference between the government and the Greens; this is a policy difference between what the government said they would deliver and what they unwound secretly until they were called out, until we actually tyre-levered the truth out of them and got them to acknowledge that they have absolutely capitulated to the gambling lobby. Despite the fact that the government complies with the law on its donations, we do not know how much they received before the last election. We simply do not know that yet.

There is no way of determining how much the gambling lobby donated to the Liberal Party and how much of an impact that has had in regard to buying this policy backflip. The Premier has been consistently untruthful about it. Scrutiny is intense - absolutely. People are hurting and it will cost families. To finish, I want to read into *Hansard* a statement from TasCOSS, which says it is:

... deeply disappointed that the Tasmanian Government has today turned its back on implementing a nation-leading mandatory precommitment gaming card.

The Premier's mantra of 'promises made, promises kept' has rung hollow with this policy backdown. That is absolutely the case. This is a backflip of monumental proportions and it is to absolutely no credit that the Premier has been deceitful, destructive and disingenuous when it comes to his contributions and his discussion about this issue over recent time.

Time expired.

[5.50 p.m.]

Mr GARLAND (Braddon) - Honourable Speaker, I do not have much to say except that I grew up in a gambling environment. It destroys lives, it destroys health and it is a terrible thing. The emotion today in this room, I would suggest to this government that this is a warning shot across the bows. We need to deal with this and we need to deal with it quick smart. If anything comes out of this today going forward, let us deal with it, let us get that precommitment card done and deal with this scourge. Pokies is not gambling. The game is rigged. It is a fixed game and it is for the benefit of a very small few, but it is destroying our communities. By all means, have the debate, but actions speak louder than words. I hope the Premier is listening. I respect him and I hope he does what needs to be done going forward. Thank you.

[5.51 p.m.]

Mrs BESWICK (Braddon) - Honourable Speaker, I will not be supporting this motion of no confidence. Our commitment to Tasmania was to provide confidence and supply. I do not believe the Greens motion meets the threshold of corruption, malfeasance or serious misbehaviour. I do not support the debate being brought on today because I believe parliament has pressing matters to attend to. There is legislation such as the Stony Rise approval that is very important to the people of Braddon.

However, I will take this opportunity to express my disappointment that the government has put the issue of a mandatory precommitment card in the too-hard basket. The former treasurer, Michael Ferguson, made a compelling case for this reform and my thoughts are with him today. His recent opinion piece demonstrates his passion and conviction. For the government to now abandon his reform agenda is extremely disappointing.

Tasmanians lost nearly \$190 million on the pokies in 2022-23 alone. According to Anglicare, Tasmanians who gamble on poker machines lose an average of \$3350 a year. For some in the grip of addiction, that figure is much higher and we know it is often the most vulnerable in the community who are impacted the worst. In my electorate of Braddon, the density of poker machines is way above the state average. According to Anglicare, the north-west and west coast have 64 poker machines per 10,000 people, compared to 23 per 10,000 people here in the south. We know that too many people in the region also struggle with other forms of addiction, including drugs and alcohol, and that there is a correlation between those things and the region's alarmingly high rates of domestic and family violence. Poker machine addiction ruins careers, relationships and, in some cases, even lives. I applaud those in the community who work tirelessly every day helping other Tasmanians put their pieces back together, but this policy is about getting on the front foot because prevention is always better than cure.

I believe it was worth exploring a cashless card system. It would have made an impact on the bottom line of venues across the state, but that is not a reason to completely abandon a policy. We can do this in Tasmania. We are not too small. What happens in the report looking at the impact of this policy? Why not put all the facts on the table before dumping a policy this important? I feel for the community groups that fought hard for serious gambling reform. They must feel extremely let down by today's announcement. I am committed to pushing for genuine and effective ways to reduce the considerable harm caused by these machines and I hope the government now reconsiders its path.

While I am critical of the government's change of policy, I appreciate the fact it was released at a time that allowed for us to now scrutinise it. First thing on a Tuesday morning is better than a Friday afternoon. Let us hope that is a sign of some of the things that this parliament can start to trust in.

I note the opposition leader's comments regarding supporting a no-confidence motion. He appears to suggest that, naturally, the opposition would always lack confidence in a premier. We also heard this from the Leader of the Greens. While I recognise that it is the opposition's role to hold the government to account, I do not believe that mindset is healthy in this parliament, where a crossbench has the balance of power. I urge the opposition to consider everything that comes before this House on its merits. After all, there are many examples of Labor and Liberals voting together.

The Greens' motion itself goes way beyond agreed facts. While I voted against the opposition leader's amendment because it cannot support that motion, I agree with much of what he said about the Greens' language. It includes claims of secret commitments and conspiracies without the evidence to prove them. They are unsubstantiated assertions full of hyperbole and politics, rather than cold hard facts. This is not a motion about whether the government has capacity to lead. There is certainly an argument to be made when it comes to the government going back on its commitment, but this motion is overreach.

While I respect and share the frustrations of members who want to see these reforms progress, I do not believe a vote of no confidence in our Premier is an appropriate or proportionate response. The motion proposed by the member for Clark, which was tabled this morning, was designed to test and support the precommitment policy itself, and this was a much more sensible approach. Perhaps we could have changed their minds.

Tasmanians do not want another election. They want us all to work hard to make this parliament function.

[5.56 p.m.]

Ms ROSOL (Bass) - Honourable Speaker, I echo the words of the member for Clark, Mr Bayley, who began by saying that he took no pleasure in speaking to this no-confidence motion. I also take no pleasure in speaking to this no-confidence motion because to be debating a no-confidence motion indicates that something has gone seriously wrong along the way somewhere. To have a no-confidence motion being brought forward means that there is serious doubt about the actions that have been taken by people in this government.

What has gone wrong here is the government has misled Tasmanians about the action it will take on mandatory precommitment cards. There are three layers going on here, probably many layers, but three layers I would like to draw out this evening. There is the matters of the

no-confidence motion specifically that refer to the misleading of Tasmanians. There is the damage of gambling and the gambling industry, and we know the effect that has on Tasmanians. That is another layer. There is also the power of the gaming industry and their lobbying, and the corruption that has led to in Tasmanian politics over many years. I would like to respond to each of those aspects.

Much of this has already been referred to, but we know that in 2018 the election was lost by Labor off the back of attempts to phase out poker machines in pubs and clubs. Since that time, Tasmanians have lost more than \$1 billion on poker machines. We had an opportunity at that moment to turn things around, to phase out poker machines in pubs and clubs to help protect Tasmanians from the rapacious gaming industry and their need to make money off vulnerable Tasmanians. That opportunity was lost and since then \$1 billion has been lost to poker machines.

The losses to poker machines in Tasmania continue to be enormous. In the last three months, since the beginning of this financial year, Tasmanians have lost \$15 million to \$16 million a month on poker machines. It is horrifying to think of so much money being lost. I know the gaming industry and the Tasmanian Hospitality Association would say that the introduction of mandatory precommitment cards is an expensive measure that is difficult to implement. However, I think it was estimated that the cost would be \$10 million to implement the system. That \$10 million sounds like a lot of money until you compare it to the amount of money being lost every month to gambling in Tasmania. That \$10 million pales into insignificance when we think about \$16 million every month.

We have a gambling industry that continues to make huge profits from Tasmania despite all the efforts to introduce reforms over many years. The scaremongering and protectionism of the pokies industry continues, and the industry has deep pockets. It has deep pockets because it is taking money from the pockets of Tasmanians and it uses that money to lobby and protect its own interests within our political system. The industry is effectively robbing vulnerable Tasmanians, using those profits to shore up its own interests within political parties and make sure its interests and needs are protected. Too bad about the impact this will have on the people of Tasmania who are suffering the impacts of problem gambling in a system designed to take their money, trick them and cause addiction.

The community impacts of gambling are well documented. We know there are significant impacts on the health and wellbeing of individuals, families, communities and society. The harms are diverse. They affect people's resources: the money they have for the things they need. We have heard about the impact on children who are living in families where their parents are addicted to gambling and those children are missing out. We know relationships suffer due to gambling, and people's health and mental health are deeply affected by gambling.

I have some statistics that were shared by community service organisations during the state election campaign. Tasmanians lose over half-a-million dollars a day in poker machines. That added up to \$189.6 million lost in poker machines in 2022-23, and 40 per cent of poker machine revenue is from people who are experiencing gambling harm. Research commissioned by the Tasmanian government a few years ago found that the majority of people in a pokies lounge at any time are likely to be clinically defined problem gamblers and that people experiencing negative impacts from their gambling account for about half of poker machine expenditure. In other words, pokies addicts are not just customers of Tasmania's gambling industry: they are its core business.

Tasmanians contacting Gamblers' Help increased by 33 per cent in 2022-23 and of those people contacting Gamblers' Help, four in five mainly used poker machines. We hear about the other forms of gambling and how, if we take away poker machines, people will go to the other forms of gambling. The evidence does not back that up, as we have seen in other research. Poker machines are the form of gambling most commonly linked to suicide, and people without a diagnosed gambling disorder accounted for over 95 per cent of gambling-related suicides.

This is a significant scourge in our community and our state, having significant effects on people, causing great damage. We cannot turn away from this and we cannot step back from evidence-based interventions that we know make a difference, that the research has clearly shown does make a difference.

The Premier had an opportunity to stand up for the people of Tasmania and resist the pressure of the gambling industry. The Premier had an opportunity to speak for the people of Tasmania and work for their interests, to demonstrate his care for the people not just with words but with action, by sticking to the commitment to implement the mandatory precommitment cards. This would have been significant action that would have kept Tasmanians safe. It would have protected them when they became addicted and found it difficult to make that choice for themselves.

We have had outlined here the history of the mandatory precommitment cards, starting in 2022 when Michael Ferguson, the then minister for finance, announced a policy for a mandatory precommitment card to reduce the harm caused by electronic gaming machines. We have heard from Mr Ferguson today that the policy had support across the parliament, across the House, from all sides. It was a good thing. It is still a good thing. It could be a good thing for Tasmanians. However, here we are today with an announcement from several ministers this morning that they are going to defer the introduction of these mandatory precommitment cards. How disappointing. It is more than disappointing. It goes beyond disappointing. It goes to the Tasmanian people having been misled.

The Government has tried to tell us this morning that they did not say that they would implement mandatory card-based gaming systems during the election campaign and that they had not misled Tasmanians. I have a copy of a media release from 16 February here. It says:

Importantly we also remain committed to harm minimization and will implement a mandatory card-based gaming system for electronic gaming machines as soon as reasonably practicable.

That is in writing. The government were at that point committing to implementing mandatory card-based gaming systems. That is not that many months ago. The Greens have asked in parliament on a number of occasions whether the government still committed to this. They have hedged and they have tried to sidestep the question and tried to suggest that they are still committed to it.

Here today we have the evidence in the media release that the government are no longer committed to this mandatory precommitment cards. This is a shameful decision on so many levels. It is shameful because of the gambling industry and the terrible impacts that it is having on Tasmanians, but it is also shameful because it goes against everything that the government, the Premier, that multiple ministers have said about the government's commitment to doing this. People went to the election thinking that the government was going to introduce these

cards and here we are a few months later hearing that that is actually not true, that the government is not going to introduce the cards: the only evidence-based measure that we know causes reduction of people losing money, and helps them with gambling addictions - and yet they have walked away from it.

It has really been quite interesting listening to the debate today. I have not heard the government or speakers from the government really respond to the specific points of the Greens' motion. They responded to the idea that they have not done anything wrong. They have suggested they have not done anything wrong, but they have not specifically outlined how they have not. They have said that this is about policy and a policy change. It is not really about a policy change when until a few weeks ago the Premier was still saying that he was committed to the mandatory precommitment card. That is not a policy change.

The government has tried to say this is about personality, that we are attacking the personalities of people and we are attacking the personality of the Premier. It is not an attack on somebody's personality to point out actions that they have taken, to point out things that they have said and then point out the way those things have changed. That is not a personality attack. That is just a statement of fact outlining the history of what has happened over the last few months and few years in Tasmania.

We have had this no-confidence motion and we have been given a connection between, 'This will cause an election. We will have to go back to an election. The people of Tasmania do not want that' - to me that just sounds like manipulative argument. It is like a threat to us. 'If you bring a no-confidence motion, this will result in an election. That is a terrible thing'. It is totally acceptable and reasonable to bring a no-confidence motion to the floor of parliament when we consider that there have been actions taken that mean we cannot have any confidence in the Premier after he has done these things. We are not playing politics here, we are deeply concerned by the things that the Premier has said that he will do and then has turned around and now says he will not do. This has deceived the people of Tasmania.

To the final point about either of the layers I was talking about before, we have the content of the motion, we have the terrible gambling industry and the impacts it has on Tasmania. We also then have the corruption, the way that the gambling industry has been able to work its way into the major parties in Tasmania to influence their decisions. We have seen that happening this year. We have asked questions about it. We have asked specifically what has been offered to the Liberal Party in exchange for them stepping back from the commitment they made to introduce these cards. We have not been given an answer. We have been given slippery sideways steps and worming their way out of the question.

It is very difficult to look at what has happened here and not to reach the conclusion that the gambling industry has a hold and continues to have a hold, has an unnatural, unhealthy influence on our government in Tasmania. That is unhealthy. It is unhealthy for democracy. It is unhealthy for the people of Tasmania. This no-confidence motion seeks to call that out, to draw attention to it, to say that this is not okay what has happened here, how can we trust the Premier when he has changed what he is saying from a few months ago, a few weeks ago, a few days ago to today with this announcement?

We make no apology for this no-confidence motion because it needs to be said that what has happened is not okay, and the people of Tasmania are the ones who are going to suffer

because of this deferment, stepping back, moving away from something that could make a positive difference in people's lives.

[6.11 p.m.]

Mr JAENSCH (Braddon - Minister for Finance) - Honourable Speaker, I will not support the motion today. I have known Jeremy Rockliff for about 20 years, 10 of them as a colleague. It would be safe to say that Jeremy Rockliff is the reason that I ever contemplated entering politics in the first case. He has continued to be my gold standard for leadership and integrity. He is a statesman. More than anyone I know, he is prepared to make tough decisions required of a leader. He has my full support and that of our team and he always will.

I respect the Greens' entitlement to bring matters before this parliament, including this motion today. I reject their tendency to characterise and attack individuals and their motives, including my party, my Premier and members of my staff. For the record, I will confirm that when I was appointed as Minister for Finance - acknowledging the circumstances of individual staff in my office - in discussion with me, my chief of staff put in place arrangements to ensure that information in relation to the gambling harm and liquor licensing matters that might pass through my office came in the first instance through my chief of staff. Also, that that correspondence not be directed to or through, or managed in such a way that my community services adviser would be involved with it, and that she would also be excused from any meetings or conversations with constituents or stakeholders or the departments in relation to these issues.

I am confident that the conflicts that have been mentioned have been anticipated and managed. I have the utmost trust and respect for the professionalism of everybody who works in my office. I believe that everybody whom we deal with in our roles, who is a professional in their role, ought to be afforded the presumption of being able to do their job well, to manage interests, to keep themselves and everybody else safe. We expect a high level of performance from our people. We get it. I deeply regret the opportunities that have been taken to suggest it might be otherwise. I stand by my staff at all times.

The Greens are entitled to bring matters here. We understand that the Greens are also entitled to hold firm to very pure policy positions. That is one of the hallmarks of the Greens - there are no shades of green. They are very locked in on absolutes and the purity of a policy approach. That is entirely fine to have in a policy debate, and we expect that in any group of people in a parliament or in a party, there will be differing views and people will hold their hard lines on various matters from time to time.

As I have said before with our Premier, who this motion is directed at, when you are the Premier, when you are the leader, and when you are in government, you need to manage a wide range of interests in your party room, in your economy, in your community, in the media, across Tasmania with all its diversity of life experience and circumstances and opinions and perspectives and abilities. We need to make sure that we are listening to everyone.

We also need to ensure that from time to time we have to pick a course which involves change. It involves compromise, and that is how you manage a complex thing like a state. Jeremy Rockliff is a master at that because he listens and he understands the perspectives and viewpoints of all constituents. He is not afraid of that complexity, but he is also not a ditherer. He makes decisions. He chooses a course and sticks with it. I respect him for that and I will always look up to him for the tough decisions he has made.

In terms of the government's recent decisions that were the subject of the statement that was put out this morning and the discussion that we have had all day since then, I would like to provide some context. Certainly, at the time of the election, the statement in February that we made, that we carried through the election, was that our government will implement a mandatory card-based gaming system for EGMs as soon as reasonably practicable. That has not changed. What has changed is that we have not reached 'reasonably practicable' at this point, and today the statement reflected that we will defer progress. I want to put that into some context as well.

As those who have watched this closely would know, the government has commissioned work on the design and development of the player card gaming system from MaxGaming, and they from various providers of elements of that package of that system - it is a very complex system, as has been referred to, necessarily so to do this job. That package has been delivered to the government not long ago for decision. If we were going to meet a delivery deadline of December 2025, a complex program of work had to be entered into with its costs, all its moving parts and all the elements required to make it work as per the template to be locked in.

The decision to do that was not taken. We need to do more work to deal with some of the outstanding matters, the questions and possibilities that have been raised with us by industry and others which might provide a slightly different path of getting to the same outcome, and which also address some of the issues that have been raised with us in relation to the model itself in consultation as recently as in October this year. I will raise some of those matters here to give an indication of the things that may be involved.

There were certainly some questions raised regarding the choice of technology for the card itself. We have talked about card-based gaming quite a bit. I think probably more accurately, we are talking about the principle of account-based gaming, and what you have to signify your ownership or your identity, and the key to your account or to playing. The physical card is the one that has been recommended because of its simplicity and cost of deployment. There are other ways of doing it though, and I am interested to see how there might be a range of different technologies used to give access to the same sort of account that may not present some of the barriers to recreational use of EGMs that registering for a card might.

We note that there is a range of other gambling-type platforms that require accounts to be created, many of them online, incorporating things that include facial recognition technology as part of the security system. Facial recognition technology has been talked about, like a CCTV version for venues for people entering and leaving gaming areas, but it also exists in our phones in the form of Face ID, et cetera, and that may be a use of that technology which may make the card-based system in a digital wallet more like many of the other things we are already used to using as well. That is one of the elements that bears more examination and that may address some of the issues that have been raised - concerns about people needing to remember to take with them, to lose or to have stolen a specific card particularly for this purpose.

We have also heard in that context from people who are concerned on the one hand that those cards might be too difficult to procure in the first instance and therefore deter people without gambling problems from participating in an occasional, recreational use of EGMs. On the other hand, we have had people raise the concern that cards may be too easy to procure and that people might be able to have several of them in their name and, therefore, get around the protective value that having a card-based gaming system might offer.

We are prepared to believe that there are solutions out there that we may be able to draw on and insert into the model for delivering Tasmania's system that offer more solutions to the questions that have been raised by some parties in recent consultation.

I am also very interested to look at the way that the power of an account-based system to generate data and identify people at risk can be better used to ensure that we have more targeted interventions earlier for people who are potentially at risk of gaming harm. This may provide a smarter approach than the default loss limits for all players, which we know has also been raised as a concern by some, but may also offer a far more powerful mechanism for providing people with real time data about their own playing behaviour, their losses and their risks as a basis for proactive interventions to offer them information, supports and ultimately interventions to address their gambling harm risk.

I believe it is very important that a system that is capable of generating data about player behaviour is able to provide that data to the player so that they have a greater ability to monitor their own risk status and act on it and be supported to do so.

I would also like to raise the issue of links with the Tasmanian Gambling Exclusion Scheme. One of the great features of the card-based system or account-based system is its ability to allow all people who are currently on the self-exclusion or third party excluded list to be automatically excluded from gambling on the machines that recognise them, not just from venues but from actually procuring gambling.

The problem with this at the moment is that, from what I have learnt in my enquiries, under the Special Education Information System (SEIS) latest reports, of the estimated 27,000 or so Tasmanians who may have some level of risk of gaining harm from low 27,000 Tasmanians- I think I have got that right- of gambling harm from low risk, medium risk through to problem gamblers. At the moment there are only 373 entries on the Tasmanian Gambling Exclusion Scheme, a very small proportion of the people who may be at risk and any system which relies on their best interests being served simply by excluding those who are self-identified in that way is missing the majority of people who may have a problem.

About the broader package of protective measures and harm minimization measures that were announced this morning that will be undertaken, I propose that a significant effort needs to be put into a review and an upgrade of the Tasmanian Gambling Exclusion Scheme to ensure that it is capturing a far greater proportion of people who are experiencing harmful gambling or at risk of harmful gambling so that they can be afforded supports. These supports include interventions in severe cases that prevent them from accessing gambling again, including self and third-party venue-based and court and police-based exclusions. It has been reflected to me as well that the current scheme can take six to 12 weeks to process and give effect to an exclusion. The point that has been made to me by advocates has been that sometimes you need to capture that moment where a person realises they have a problem and decides to take action on it and not give them 12 weeks within which to change their mind or for that to take effect if we are serious about removing harm and removing people from harm's way.

These are amongst the initiatives that I look forward to contributing to and bringing back to our government for consideration as part of a package alongside my colleagues, minister Barnett, the Treasurer, and minister Howlett, through her work with the industry as well, and to share with all our colleagues in this parliament about how we can bring forward a version of the system that we talked about for harm minimization with complementary and

supportive initiatives regarding things like the Tasmanian gambling exclusion scheme. On this basis, I would again point to a matter raised in the Greens' motion regarding misleading and accusations of lying.

The Premier has been consistent in stating our government's commitment to implement a mandatory card-based gaming system for EGMs as soon as reasonably practicable. He has been consistent in talking about the priority that we place on harm minimization and assisting people, targeted assistance for people who need support with their gambling problems. Our intention to, on top of doubling the Community Support Levy and Community Support Fund resources that are available to build more capacity and to resource more services that can assist people who we know have a problem, as well as through some of the measures that I have referred to today by way of example only, to ensure that we are identifying more of those people earlier and where those elements can be built into an improved and better version of our gambling harm minimization programme, we will do them.

We will look to all other jurisdictions. We are not Robinson Crusoe; larger state governments, government departments, and liquor and gaming commissions elsewhere are on this same road. We need to be able to learn and borrow from them where possible and where that will give us a faster road to creating more powerful ways of supporting people and to support venues to acquit their responsibilities to take care of their patrons as well as part of their role as licenced operators of gaming and liquor venues. We need to work together with them. We need to keep listening to them. They know their clients as well and we need to respect the insights and the relationship they have with the people who use their venues, whilst assisting them to meet their obligations under their licences with good information and tools that are going to work for everybody so that we can enjoy safe gambling in Tasmania whilst supporting people who are at risk of harm, to not have that harm, to put more gates at the top of those cliffs to support them as part of what we do.

I thank those who have contributed constructively to the debate today. I think we share a care for our fellow Tasmanians and a will to do better for them through systems that work and that are proven. I do not debate that there are elements of the model that my colleague Michael Ferguson and others, our Liquor and Gaming Commission, have brought into our government and our parliament would not work. I believe that they would, but I believe that we can improve on them further and I look forward to being part of that. Thank you very much.

[6.31 p.m.]

Mrs PENTLAND (Bass) - Honourable Speaker, I voted against bringing this debate on today because I do not believe it is the best use of parliament's time. Yes, it is an important issue, but a debate of this length is overkill in my opinion. Having said that, I respect that it was the will of the parliament to bring on this debate, so I think it is important that I make a contribution.

I will not be supporting the motion of no confidence because it does not meet the standards detailed in the commitment we made to the Tasmanian people via our agreement with the Premier. It is clearly a policy change, but it does not constitute corruption, malfeasance or serious misbehaviour.

To fight passionately for policies you believe in is completely understandable, but a motion of no confidence in a Premier is an extremely serious step. It is not the first time a political party has gone back on a policy commitment. We have seen it from both sides. Labor

has done it multiple times on pokies and the stadium as well, but is it a policy shift worthy of potentially government ending motion of no confidence? I do not believe it is.

This vote of no confidence in the Premier is embarrassing for us as a state and only serves to promote instability. We were elected by the people to get the job done, and this is far from getting the job done. It is one thing to debate the mandatory card, but to bring on a no-confidence motion because you do not like policy change is blatant politics.

Elements of this debate have also become overly personal: to suggest an experienced and professional woman cannot do her job because her partner's position is offensive. I do not know about other women in this House, but I do not take political writing instructions from my husband. I think for myself.

The Premier continues to have my confidence and I believe he remains the right person to lead state through challenging times. He is the leader Tasmanians voted for, but I was shocked by the government's announcement on pokies this morning. The Premier and his ministers have repeatedly stated their commitment to a mandatory precommitment scheme. Today's announcement will be a huge disappointment to those in our community who invested in this reform including the former treasurer, Michael Ferguson, whose conviction on this issue has been so impressive. I respect his position on this issue very much and note it would have taken courage to publicly speak out as we have seen him do. I do have to say it is ironic that those baying for the former treasurer's political blood only a few weeks ago are now lamenting his new found lack of influence. Be careful what you wish for.

The following remarks were written in preparation for a different motion, so I apologise if I use the wrong tense now.

Cards on the table: I occasionally play the poker machines as a form of mindless entertainment, a silly distraction from the stresses of life. I know that for many in our community, poker machines are the stress of life. They have a vice-like grip that I could not possibly begin to understand. It is not fair for me to see this issue for the prism of my own personal interaction with machines, but even as a very casual user, I can appreciate their addictive qualities. The sounds stay with you long after you have left the venue.

I assure you, I am not naive about the harm caused by poker machines and other forms of gambling. I saw it firsthand while working in venues as a much younger person. The impact problem gambling can have on individuals and their families is heartbreaking and not for a second do I want to downplay the importance of supporting those who need help. However, I balk at the mandatory element of the original reform. Yes, I know we make many things mandatory by law all the time, but this would be a massive departure from the status quo. To go from trusting people to make their own decisions about how much they want to risk, to setting a mandatory limit regardless of their financial situation is a big change.

It would make electronic gaming a vastly different product to any other form of legal gambling in Tasmania. For many casual players, those who have a healthy relationship with poker machines, it would be a significant deterrent from using them. No matter how simple the sign-up process was, many people would be reluctant to share their personal details to gamble, especially when other forms including Keno and racing will not require the same precommitment.

I agree that technology would be effective to allow those who wanted to limit their risk to set a firm limit. I acknowledge that a voluntary scheme would be far from foolproof. While I am more comfortable with it in principle, it would fail to capture some problem gamblers.

If people are going to gamble, it is preferable that they do it in a licenced Tasmanian venue where the state receives some benefit, rather than online filling the coffers of businesses interstate and overseas. Yes, I understand that not all gambling would switch to online apps or websites and for many, poker machines are the only form of gambling that they are interested in. For those people, this reform will be particularly effective, but I hope they would also take advantage of the voluntary scheme.

If we started with a voluntary scheme, we could assess its success and decide whether the evidence supported making it mandatory, as opposed to the cold shock of a mandatory scheme on the industry. I note the former treasurer's commitments regarding the increased revenue being enjoyed by venues across the state. Thanks largely to the recent regulatory change, it appears venues could absorb some reductions in venues from poker machines, but it is unclear just how impactful the mandatory scheme would be. It has a potential to have a double whammy for venues, decreased venues due to the limits imposed, and decreased revenues because the cards will act as a deterrent for casual players. A voluntary scheme would give a much better idea of the potential impact.

A voluntary scheme would mean the same physical changes to each and every machine across the state to make them compatible with the cashless card and this would be no small task and would come with a considerable cost.

I appreciate the industry's willingness to adopt facial recognition technology, which could be helpful to those who have already excluded themselves, but we also need a measure to help Tasmanians before they get into trouble.

I think we need to be tempered when it comes to painting one society's vices as evil at the expense of others. Some members of this place, including myself, have a financial interest in the whole hospitality sector and while we do not offer gaming, we do offer alcohol, which is, as we all know sadly, as harmful. As is smoking, which some licenced venues facilitate by setting up designated areas. I raise this not to point any fingers. These are all legal things for adults to partake in. I simply urge us all to be reasonable when discussing addiction because it comes in many forms. None of us are pure. I am sure every single member of this House supports a cause or an industry that others find abhorrent. For some it is alcohol, for others racing, smoking, pokies or any number of vices and for some they are harmless and for others debilitating. These debates should be respectful and based on the facts.

[6.40 p.m.]

Ms BURNET (Clark) - Honourable Speaker, this is our first day back, the last fortnight of the sitting before we go into GBE scrutinies and end the parliamentary year. The number one person accountable to the people of Tasmania, the Premier, Mr Rockliff, has faced significant scrutiny about all manner of important issues raised today and facing this state. This goes to the heart of what is important in public life and, arguably, the most important attributes of community leaders: honesty, integrity, transparency. These are the attributes that the community expects from those in public life.

During the election on 16 February of this year through a media release, the government stated that:

The Liberal Party is strongly committed to poker machine harm reduction, while also providing the opportunity for people to exercise their free choice. And it goes on to say:

Importantly, we will also remain committed to harm minimisation and will implement a mandatory card-based gaming system for electronic gaming machines as soon as reasonably practicable.

Those were the statements that the government took to the election. Elections are important times for the community to hear those strong positions and strong policies and platforms that the government wants the community to trust them with. This is, unfortunately, not what we heard today. If you compare that to today's press release, unfortunately for the people of Tasmania what the Greens have revealed today as part of this distraction - this conversation - is that the government has walked away on the fundamental promise of introducing the mandatory precommitment card.

Let us compare this to the other media releases this government loves to put out, espousing their ability to meet election commitments. There are promises within the first hundred days, which seem to be so important for this government and the Premier. There are promises within the first 200 days now that the government seems to roll out as if they have done something because it is an election promise and, yet one of the fundamental promises to the people of Tasmania has been broken.

One could argue - and I think it has been today, unfortunately - that there is no problem in not delivering on all promises, from one or two promises. Why, then, is it so important that this specific promise of introducing a mandatory precommitment card has been broken? We have heard quite compelling arguments from the Greens and from the member for Clark, Ms Johnston. We have heard of the devastation occurring on the north-west coast as well from Mrs Beswick, so there is a problem. Who should be concerned about this problem of this particular broken promise?

This is important because it is a significant promise to the voting public at the state election. In some ways the then treasurer, Michael Ferguson - and his convictions which he spoke about from the backbench today, about the significant harm minimisation he was intent on bringing in as part of a harm minimisation strategy and this was key and fundamental to it, was trotted out as part of this lie. It is so unfortunate for those members of the government benches who believe in this mandatory precommitment and the intention of their government to deliver on this harm minimisation and this best practice, as we have heard.

Unfortunately, there are members of Premier Rockliff's government benches that have been duped. This concerns every member of this House and our communities, because right at this stage, pokies have a gnawing negative impact, but especially in areas such as the Golden Mile in my electorate that both Ms Johnston and Mr Bayley have mentioned as members for Clark. Those suffering because of pokies along the coast, as Mrs Beswick has mentioned, in country areas during a cost-of-living crisis, in migrant communities, everybody and every community across Tasmania, but particularly the vulnerable communities, do suffer the most.

I want to share with you about someone who lived under our roof for some time and who suffered from many addictions and certainly had a particularly troubled life. He was no angel in many respects in a past life, but he suffered many addictions: crack cocaine, ice, pokies. He said when he described the addictions - and he was clean from them all - but the hardest one to break was pokies addiction. 'It is worse than crack cocaine', is what he said.

His life was ruined by some of the addictions, such as pokies, and he was reduced, unfortunately, and it is not easy to pick up your life after recuperating from such a devastating addiction. To his credit, he advocated against pokies and the harm it was causing to communities.

Our community, individuals and their families have been betrayed. This House, specifically the Premier's colleagues who would wish harm minimisation through introducing this mandatory precommitment card - something that was going to be a hallmark of this government - have been betrayed.

In politics, the public, this parliament has the right to expect of the Premier the truth. They have the right to expect honesty, integrity, transparency on all matters but under the spotlight is this particular matter of the mandatory precommitment card.

Unfortunately, the Premier has not delivered in this case and this parliament and Tasmania is the poorer.

In conclusion, this has been a significant first day back after a break and before the end of the parliamentary year for this parliament to question the Premier's actions, with good reason. We have heard questions from across the floor. He is on notice, as we all are, so that we can make this parliament effective, but we have to be responsible for our actions.

[6.50 p.m.]

Mr O'BYRNE (Franklin) - Honourable Speaker, I speak in relation to the motion of no confidence in the Premier. It is a matter of confidence. It is a series of accusations made about the Premier and his government's conduct. It is not a debate necessarily about pokies, but we understand gaming reform is the underlying issue that has created this debate. I would say at the outset that I respect the advocacy of those people who are seeking significant gaming reform. I respect their intentions and their desire and wish and hope to make more Tasmanians safer from this form of gaming addiction. It is an honourable advocacy and I completely respect it.

I have never used a poker machine, but I am not against gaming. I believe that the government and authorities have a responsibility to manage and to mitigate some of the excesses and some of the outcomes that can occur from gaming. I am not a prohibitionist in alcohol and in drugs, and in gaming, I am not a prohibitionist. I think governments have an obligation to act when they see harm being done that is completely avoidable.

On the record in debates on gaming in this House, I have made it very clear that I support reasonable measures that are able to best play a role in today's society in terms of how we manage some of those appalling outcomes. There are many people who have suffered at the hands of gaming addiction, and my heart goes out to them and their families and those who have been impacted by that.

I absolutely respect the Greens and other members of parliament and community advocates in their desire for change, but in all these matters, this is not a debate about gaming policy. This is a debate about whether the Premier has lied. That is the accusation that has been put in this motion. When you read through it, I do not believe the case has been made. There is clearly a difference of opinion. The Premier has characterised it as a policy difference. I think it is partly that. There is a significant level of frustration in people who have been advocating for change to see a delay.

I will touch on that in a minute, but with regard to the motion that has been put by the Greens, I do not believe the case has been made. For example, point (2), 'during the 2024 election campaign, the Liberals put out a vague, dishonest media release which appeared on its surface to reflect their 2022 policy'. If we are to hang people on vague and dishonest media releases in election campaigns, let those without sin cast the first stone. Let us be honest about that.

With regard to the media, the Premier made a promise to the THA that a re-elected Rockliff government would walk away from the policy. There is no evidence to say that. You can make the assertion, but you cannot say that he did that. There is no evidence for that case. 'The Premier sold out the Liberal policy to the gaming lobby and deliberately lied to Tasmanians about it during the election. Again, there is no evidence of that. We can make assertions about whether there was no wholehearted support for the policy, but it is a matter of difference of opinion in an election campaign on policy and various commitments, but again, there is no evidence to say that the Premier deliberately lied to Tasmanians. There is just no evidence to suggest that. You may disagree with him. You may not agree with where he has landed or the process he has gone through, but I do not believe the case has been made.

Point (7), 'The Premier is a liar who cannot be trusted by his own party room and Cabinet, the parliament or the people of Tasmania'. Without the evidence and without the argument that substantiates that, that really is a statement that cannot be made without that evidence and without that support. I cannot support that because I do not believe he has.

In the debate, there has been a lot of discussion about the fact that they have abandoned policy. Based on my reading of the media statement and the announcement today, they said they have delayed it. People can be frustrated by that, but I saw the briefing from the Gaming Commission on these matters and had a very long and intense meeting with them where I asked them a series of practical questions about the operation of the card. They were good people. They are clearly smart, they are intelligent, they are across their brief, but there are serious questions about how it is fundamentally going to work.

Ironically, the fact that we have moved away from a monopoly operator to multiple operators has created a significant challenge in the implementation of this card. I also got the email from Crown Casino - and I will be clear that whilst Crown Casino mandate the use, they do not mandate caps or limits. They allow players to have caps and limits and that can be changed, but they mandate the use only, not the limits. The thing is, they are a single operator. It is probably not one bank account, but it technically is because it is one entity.

When you move from one entity to potentially hundreds - I do not know how many individual ones - I did ask the question and they could not answer within the briefing - and I am not judging them for that because it is a level of detail that is required. If you go from one entity to, potentially, let us say it is 15, how do you make all that work technically? How do

you protect the data? Who holds the money? I was not able to get satisfactory answers on how that would work smoothly without risk to the punter, those people wanting to be excluded, the operators, and also the security of the information and the data that could potentially be compromised.

What I see out of this - and it is characterised as an abandonment of the policy - is a process where we are the first state that is proposing to do this in a complex way, and the smallest state, and the only places where it has worked is where there is a single provider like Crown Casino. I assume that Star Casino and the other operators around the country will follow suit in a kind of card play.

I think people broadly support the card play, but when you are moving from a single operator with a single account which can quickly and easily move money in between venues and between operators et cetera to potentially 150 operators, that is a level of detail and technical comprehension that I do not think a system could easily do.

Whilst the intent of the policy is to deal with the issues that have created the policy, what I saw from the press release was a delay. I know people are frustrated about that. People have said it is delayed indefinitely, but that is because they do not know when they are going to be able to do the technology.

I think that as a smaller jurisdiction, talking to larger jurisdictions is quite a sensible thing to do. I know people will disagree with that. I understand people are frustrated with the delay and I respect that, but in terms of the debate before us today, this is about whether the Premier lied or not. This is not about card technology.

In terms of my agreement with the government, I have been absolutely consistent with this around my commitment to him as the Premier. I do not have a confidence and supply agreement with the Liberal Party. I have a confidence and supply agreement with Jeremy Rockliff, the Premier of Tasmania. At no stage in my dealings with him in this period of time I have been on the crossbench - actually in any dealing I have had with him over the years - do I believe he has lied to me. I have not had any information before me that would suggest he is a liar. I do not accept that. I do not agree with him on a number of matters of policy that we disagree on, but I do that in a respectful way. I made it very clear that I would provide confidence to the government on the basis that I am not being lied to, on the basis that there is no corruption, malfeasance, but also a reprehensible failure of governance and policy. I have been true to my word.

I recently withdrew my support for the former treasurer, the member for Bass, Mr Ferguson. I did not do that lightly. That could have triggered an election. That could have triggered more chaos in the parliament, but I felt a line had been crossed. Of all the people in this House, I believe my word in terms of my judgment on the conduct of the Premier and his ministers has been sound to date. History and others will ultimately be the judge of that.

In relation to the motion as set out by the Tasmanian Greens, I believe the case has not been made. They have asserted he has done these things, but there is no evidence to say he has, so I cannot support this motion. I have sympathy with their argument about the policy on gaming. I have sympathy with that. The Greens have been absolutely consistent in their advocacy for that. I acknowledge them for that, but we are not debating gaming policy, we are

debating the honesty of the Premier. The case has not been made, so I cannot support this motion of no confidence.

[7.02 p.m.]

Ms BADGER (Lyons) - Honourable Speaker, this is a terrible day for Tasmanians, to see MPs in this place having to be debating a no-confidence motion in our Premier, to see the Premier stepping back from mandatory precommitment cards. It is not just stepping back from those cards in themselves as helping mitigate the problem of pokies and gambling, it is all the interrelated issues that come along with that. It is the family violence, it is suicide, it is the unnecessary deaths that are caused by unessential poker machines that go along with it. To hear today as a part of this debate the bragging that we have the lowest addiction rates in the nation in Tasmania - you still have a problem and it still needs to be fixed. There are still Tasmanians who are being harmed by this. We can do better, so we should do better. The commitment from the Premier and from the government was to do better. To see them walk away from that, how can Tasmanians have confidence?

Tasmanians are facing a myriad of crises at the moment. They voted for this incredible, eclectic array of talents in this place on the basis that we would best represent their views. They wanted to see not just the commitments that were made, including the mandatory precommitment cards, but everything else that went along with that: all those other issues. There are Tasmanians who are facing a cost-of-living crisis and a housing crisis. Everything is then exacerbated for those families who are at harm because of pokies addictions. They do not want to just see us all here today continually repeating the same quote, saying the same thing.

My colleagues have done a tremendous job of articulating what the issues are. Tasmanians do not want to tune and hear us for a full day in the final sitting fortnight repeating the same arguments.

My colleagues have absolutely articulated the evidence in terms of the mandatory precommitment cards. They are the best consumer protections to prevent and reduce gambling-related harm, including the precommitment cards and the safer program for poker machines. The implementation of the mandatory precommitment cards was an essential step in reducing the impact of poker machines on Tasmanian families and communities. As I said, this is not just the financial loss that people would be facing, but the domestic violence, the viability of regional businesses, and reducing the unnecessary loss of life from the impacts of unnecessary poker machines.

This harm is all a result, and it is going to continue being a result of the Premier's decision to walk away from the mandatory precommitment cards, to put profits for a select few over the Tasmanian people. We have heard a range of views with the series of quotes that have been made from various ministers over this time, from 2022 and the work that Michael Ferguson has done, through to pre the election, on 15 February 2024. Mr Ferguson said:

We acknowledge that implementing such a system ...

Being the mandatory precommitment cards.

... is a complex task and as such, the development and full and efficient implementation may take more time than originally anticipated.

That is what we have been repetitively hearing today. If that is the case, if everything that my colleagues have outlined in terms of the statements that have been said, if the Premier is not lying, then where is that plan to implement the cards? Over whatever timeframe it is, where is the full set-in-stone plan? We do not have that in front of us.

Here we are today in a situation where the government and the Premier talks about the importance of getting the balance right. What exactly are we trying to balance? Is it the right balance where Tasmanians are losing over half a million dollars a day in poker machines? Where since March 2018 Tasmanians have lost over \$1.1 billion to poker machines? Is that the right balance that Tasmanians are supposed to be getting? That contacting Gamblers Help has increased 33 per cent in the 2022 and 23 financial year?

In response to questions by the ABC on 29 October 2024 regarding the government's promised nation-leading pokies reform, the Premier said that the government was working through its commitment on the mandatory scheme and that it needed to take into account the impact on businesses, particularly in regional areas. The impact of poker machines in regional areas is already incredibly well-researched. Anglicare's Social Action Research Centre clearly found that poker machines were concentrated in our most disadvantaged communities. That is indeed the north, the north-west, and west coast municipalities. This is the Premier's own electorate. This is where we see an increase in family violence disproportionately compared to the rest of the state.

Those communities have almost twice as many poker machines per 10,000 people as those in southern Tasmania. The top 10 local government areas in Tasmania with poker machines losses include Sorell in my own electorate. Poker machines in the last six years have estimated to cost that community \$18 million. That is a true cost to our regional communities. That is money that has been spent on poker machines that could have otherwise been invested into our regional economies. *Fifth Social and Economic Impact Study of Gambling in Tasmania 2021* found that the poorest Tasmanians spent the most on electronic gambling machines, that 60 per cent of hotel and club EMGs are located in the 13 most socio-economically disadvantaged local government areas.

In October, the Premier said, in that same ABC article, that you, the Tasmanian people, would expect us to be very considered in our approach. Is this approach considered: just walking away without a concrete plan, without anything to give the Tasmanian people confidence that you are going to help fix this problem? Tasmanians trusted the Premier and that is not just on the mandatory precommitment cards to help mitigate the problem with poker machines that we have here in the state, but for every single other issue that flows on from gambling addiction and from poker machines, to help mitigate the family violence that comes from that. Yet we have heard they are doing wonderful things on family violence. You have also neglected to do something here: that is the suicide and the unnecessary loss of life and not to mention the financial hardship, especially in a cost-of-living crisis. We should have done so much better for Tasmanians, as they expected us to do.

Sitting Times

[7.09 p.m.]

Mr ABETZ (Franklin - Leader of the House) - Honourable Acting Deputy Speaker, pursuant to Sessional Order 18A, I move -

That for this day's sitting, the House shall not stand adjourned at 7.30 p.m.
and that the House continue sit passed 7.30 p.m.

By way of explanation, the purpose is to deal with order of the day No. 14.

Ms White - What time will we be sitting until? It is very family un-friendly hours already and I am keen to understand what time you plan to go to.

Mr ABETZ - Until the bill is resolved or dealt with by the House.

Motion agreed to.

[7.10 p.m.]

Mr BARNETT (Lyons - Deputy Premier) - Acting Deputy Speaker, I have a contribution to share on this motion, which is of total and utter support for the Premier, Jeremy Rockliff, who I have known for 33 years. We first met in 1991 when Jeremy joined the Young Liberals. By 1992 he was president of the Young Liberals in Tasmania. I joined the Liberal Party in 1980, so I was certainly not a Young Liberal. I was a Liberal student for some time and a youngish Liberal.

I can vouch for Jeremy Rockliff. I know he is a man of honour. I know he is a man who has dedicated his life to his community. He loves his family. He works hard. There is a reason he has consistently topped the poll on the north-west coast. That is because he is respected and admired on the north-west coast and across the state.

I remember his late dad, Rick, who I knew for many decades; his dear mum, Geraldine, who kindly hosted the launch of the Liberal Party campaign earlier this year on their family farm and that was greatly appreciated. He loves his family: Sandra, Ruby, Lucy, and Holly. He cares. He was a Lifeline volunteer. I have the privilege of following in the footsteps of the deputy premier and minister for Health, taking over the health portfolio. Tasmanians know that he cares.

He has been in this parliament since 2002. I joined the Senate in February 2002, but he was a loyal deputy to Will Hodgman and to Peter Gutwein and is now our Premier. He has shared today the seriousness of this motion, which we agree with. This is about disrespecting the Tasmanian people. This is about the probability, if passed, of the Premier going to Government House and seeking the support, and providing advice, for an election.

The Premier, in good faith, came into this place and put his hand up and we joined in that. He has been the Premier, acting in good faith, to make a difference with collaboration and goodwill across this parliament. He expects us to undertake and fulfil that commitment for and on behalf of the Tasmanian people because he wants to put people first and do what is best for Tasmania.

Over 33 years I have known Jeremy Rockliff to be hard working, diligent, dedicated, community minded, resilient, and buffeted through the ups and downs of political life. He has served his community with his family, who he loves.

I cannot think of a motion so disgracefully put, in my view, by the Greens where they have so overreached and accused the Premier of the most outrageous things that I am not going

to repeat because that is exactly what they want. They are defamatory. They are self-serving and that is why, sadly, this place is known as Cowards Castle because it gets reported. They are entitled to say these most offensive words about our Premier. They are entitled to do that, under Standing Orders, because it is privileged, but it is poor form. The standards that we demonstrate in this place are the standards that the Tasmanian community see. We need to be good role models; we need to be better role models. This act of political stuntery today, which is opportunistic in the extreme, defaming the Premier unfairly, unwarrantedly, with baseless allegations is frankly outrageous.

I could not be prouder of our Premier and his efforts to stand up and serve this community, to act in its best interests, and deliver in a collaborative way. We have a minority government. We are working across the parliament and we respect the different views on pokies harm minimisation, and a whole range of things. People are entitled to those views, but when it gets personal, that is when we need to call it out. That is exactly what has happened today. Yes, Labor has acted in an opportunistic way, supporting the political stunt with their no-co grab bag of complaints.

I say thank you to the crossbench contributions. That is greatly appreciated. They have been shared in good faith from their own personal stories and from their perspective. I acknowledge that and recognise it.

As far as today goes, the government business has been upended and the Leader for our government in this Chamber has made that very clear. The entire day has been put to this political stunt by the Greens, supported, sadly, by Labor standing shoulder to shoulder on this attempt, which has upended the business of the day. Importantly, we want to see an end to that. We would like this motion to be put and we will be strongly opposing it.

To vouch again, the Premier has my full support, the full support of everybody in our government. We hope that this Chamber will respect the efforts to collaborate and progress with goodwill.

The SPEAKER (Ms O'Byrne) - The question is that the motion be agreed to.

The House divided -

AYES 6

Ms Badger (Teller)
Mr Bayley
Ms Burnet
Ms Johnston
Ms Rosol
Dr Woodruff

NOES 26

Mr Abetz
Mr Barnett
Mr Behrakis
Mrs Beswick
Dr Broad
Ms Brown
Ms Dow
Mr Ellis
Mr Fairs
Mr Ferguson
Ms Finlay
Mr Garland
Ms Haddad

Mr Jaensch
Mr Jenner (Teller)
Mr O'Byrne
Ms Ogilvie
Mrs Pentland
Mrs Petrusma
Mr Rockliff
Mr Shelton
Mr Street
Ms White
Mr Willie
Mr Winter
Mr Wood

Motion negatived.

MOTION

Leave to Suspend Standing Orders

[7.27 p.m.]

Dr WOODRUFF (Franklin - Leader of the Greens) - Honourable Speaker, I seek leave to move a motion without notice for the purpose of moving the suspension of Standing Orders to debate the following motion:

That the House refers the Premier, the Honourable Jeremy Rockliff MP, to the Privileges and Conduct Committee to investigate and report upon whether he deliberately lied to Tasmanians about his mandatory precommitment card during the 2024 election and whether or not this is a breach of the Code of Conduct contained in the Standing Orders of the House of Assembly.

It is obviously a serious matter after the debate that we have just had and the Greens have taken on board the range of speakers who have made comments about our motion of no confidence in the Premier's motion being overreaching. We do not believe it was and we believe our statements are grounded in fact. We do not believe that you can besmirch a person by speaking the truth. We have taken on the statements that we have heard, made by members. We have taken them seriously. We accept that there is further information that members would like to have to understand the validity of the statements that we made, that we stand by. This is why we are presenting this motion.

The Deputy Premier said just before that we were using parliamentary privilege in a cowardly way. I say to him that I did go outside and say the things outside the Chamber that I said inside this Chamber. They are matters of fact and I stand by them. There is nothing cowardly about speaking the truth. There is nothing that I have said, or other Greens members have said, in here that is not based in fact and we stand by that.

We have heard the debate. There are critical questions hanging around, still unanswered about the Premier's behaviour. We believe they relate directly to a breach of the Code of

Conduct to the Statement of Values in Standing Order 2, the Statement of Values which says as members of parliament we value integrity, honesty, accessibility, accountability, fairness, transparency, courtesy, respect and understanding without harassment, victimisation or discrimination.

We believe that the Premier has not demonstrated integrity, honesty, accountability or transparency in his dealings on the matter of his honesty with Tasmanians about the mandatory precommitment, hard commitment he made at the election campaign and that he has made on subsequent occasions since the election campaign. We believe he has not been honest in response to the questions that have been asked in here, and we believe he has been deliberately deceiving Tasmanians through their elected representatives in this place.

It is a serious matter, as members have said. The no-confidence motion we brought goes to the heart of honesty, integrity and transparency in this place and, in particular, from this person. It is not just a policy switch we are talking about here. This is not about policy. This is about the Premier's words. In the context of the debate we have just had and the questions asked by members in the House that are still hanging, we believe it is important that we now move to seek leave to have a debate to refer the Premier to Privileges. We do not think it is appropriate to have this debate at another time. I know we are all tired and that there are matters to get onto. However, this is such a huge issue for Tasmanians.

We have only to see the tenor of the comments that have been made publicly today, at the outrage and the shock at the Premier abandoning the promise to implement the mandatory precommitment card. We cannot wait to do this job. It is outstanding matters on the basis of the no confidence motion we brought before the parliament. That was just voted down, partly on the basis that members said they felt our evidence was not clear. That is why we want to have the debate to refer the Premier to Privileges, which we think is the appropriate manner to look at breaches of the code of conduct and matters of dishonesty.

Time expired.

The SPEAKER (Ms O'Byrne) - The question is that leave be granted.

The House divided -

AYES 16

Ms Badger
Mr Bayley
Dr Broad
Ms Brown
Ms Burnet
Ms Dow
Ms Finlay
Mr Garland
Ms Haddad (Teller)
Ms Johnston
Mr O'Byrne
Ms Rosol
Ms White

NOES 16

Mr Abetz
Mr Barnett
Mr Behrakis
Mrs Beswick
Mr Ellis
Mr Fairs
Mr Ferguson
Mr Jaensch
Mr Jenner
Ms Ogilvie
Mrs Pentland (Teller)
Mrs Petrusma
Mr Rockliff

Mr Willie
Mr Winter
Dr Woodruff

Mr Shelton
Mr Street
Mr Wood

PAIRS

Ms Butler

Ms Howlett

The SPEAKER - The results of the division are ayes 16, noes 16. I had always intended when I had my first casting vote to leave the Chair to think about it for a while. However, the requirements of the House under Standing Order 167 mean that I cast a casting vote and as is the practise of former speakers, I will abide by my party vote. I will join with the ayes. Therefore, leave is granted.

Motion agreed to; leave granted.

SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS

Move Motion Forthwith

[7.40 p.m.]

Dr WOODRUFF (Franklin - Leader of the Greens)(by leave) - Honourable Speaker, while I speak here tonight, I am thinking in my mind of the many Tasmanians over the decades, but particularly over recent years, who have campaigned on this important issue. It is for them that the Greens have moved the motion of no confidence today and this one on moving of privilege.

The SPEAKER - You need to move that motion.

Dr WOODRUFF - I move -

That the House refers the Premier, the honourable Jeremy Rockliff MP, to the Privileges and Conduct Committee -

The SPEAKER - You need to move the motion for the suspension of the debate. You must move to suspend Standing Orders to allow the debate.

Dr WOODRUFF - I move -

That so much of Standing Orders be suspended as would prevent such a motion from being dealt with forthwith:

That the House refers the Premier, the honourable Jeremy Rockliff MP, to the Privileges and Conduct Committee to investigate and report upon whether he deliberately lied to Tasmanians about his mandatory precommitment card during the 2024 election and whether or not this is a breach of the code of conduct contained in the Standing Orders of the House of Assembly.

As I said, honourable Speaker, I have in my mind, and we had before us today in bringing the no-confidence motion that we prepared, the voices of Tasmanians who have campaigned for decades to end the scourge of pokies in Tasmania and to put in place policies to protect vulnerable Tasmanians. A range of speakers said during the no-confidence motion that they felt what we said was overreach, and they did not think our statements could be substantiated. On behalf of the Greens, I stand by our statements. They are grounded in fact and we do not believe that it is possible to besmirch a person by speaking the truth.

Words might hurt, but the truth speaks for itself on this matter. What we saw during the election campaign was a Premier who presented a policy commitment that was not crystal clear, and he was asked repeatedly by members of the media with the encouragement and the voices behind them of people in the community, people in the community sector, people from TasCOSS, people from Anglicare, people from all the other organisations who work with vulnerable Tasmanians addicted to gambling, whose lives and livelihoods are damaged by the current pokies free for all, which takes money from them and gives it to Federal and the THA, a number of specific questions. He made absolutely crystal-clear commitments to continuing on with that promise to implement the mandatory precommitment card to prevent people from being harmed.

This is not about a policy switch. This is about the Premier lying to the people of Tasmania, repeatedly, and not being honest. What I am speaking about now is the code of conduct, which says, regarding the accuracy of statements:

A member must not mislead parliament or the public in statements that they make -

The SPEAKER - Leader of the Greens, I will bring you back to the procedural motion before us, which is the suspension of Standing Orders, not the substance of the debate.

Dr WOODRUFF - It is pretty important to understand what it is that we are trying to do here.

The SPEAKER - I will ask you to at least refer to the suspension to make it -

Dr WOODRUFF - That is why it is important to do this tonight, because we have just come off the back of a no-confidence debate where members have asked and said repeatedly - that they did not think that there was the information before them and that they felt that some of the statements that we had made were overreach. We stand by our statements.

We know we have evidence to back them and we believe that we need to now, as a matter of urgency, refer the Premier to the privileges committee so that he can be properly investigated by a panel of his peers in parliament, who can look at the questions that have been raised and to look at the allegations that have been made and to specifically look at the code of conduct for members of parliament, because we do not believe the code of conduct in the Standing Orders has been adhered to by the Premier.

We believe he is in breach. It is a serious matter of betrayal and a lack of honesty and transparency, and we believe that he needs to appear before the privileges committee and have the capacity for a proper investigation, a formal investigation, so that people can appear and witnesses can be called.

Time expired.

[7.45 p.m.]

Dr BROAD (Braddon) - Honourable Speaker, as the leader was not jumping, I thought I had better. We have a principled position in opposition that Labor more often than not will grant the seeking of leave. However, in this instance we will not be supporting the Suspension of Standing Orders, and the reason why is that we think that the Greens have had a fair go today in making a case.

In effect, the previous vote was an assessment of the list of allegations that the Greens have made against the Premier, and that motion was lost. We supported the previous suspension as laid out in the debate, because we believed there should be a general discussion about the parliament's confidence in the Premier, and that amendment of ours was lost. That is why we did not support the allegations that the unamended motion in effect put.

I think the parliament has actually dealt with this matter. The Greens have had a fair go at testing the allegations. The parliament has decided otherwise, and we think at this late hour it would be more productive to get on with the rest of the day's business.

[7.47 p.m.]

Mr ABETZ (Franklin - Leader of the House) - Honourable Speaker, I thank the Opposition for the stance they have taken in relation to this matter. The phrase 'two bites of the cherry' springs to mind. This issue has been ventilated at some length today. The allegations of lying, et cetera, that were made in the previous no-confidence motion has been overwhelmingly voted down by the House. Therefore, having been overwhelmingly voted down, one wonders why anybody would then want to refer that matter to Privileges.

Privileges, as I understand it, is designed to do the work of the House to determine these matters. The House has already determined the matter by voting against the no-confidence motion with its eight paragraphs outlining allegations of lying, which were not supported by evidence and were not supported by the House.

The government will, of course, be voting against the motion.

[7.48 p.m.]

Mr BAYLEY (Clark) - Honourable Speaker, it is disappointing to hear Labor abandoning their longstanding process. I hear the argument but I do not necessarily accept it. I think there is sufficient justification to suspend Standing Orders in relation to this. This is not two bites of the cherry. This is an acknowledgement that the debate was had, the vote was lost and significant questions were raised about the veracity of the details of the motion and the allegations within it. The logical place, given the questions of the House in that context, is -

The SPEAKER - I remind the member that he is speaking to the suspension and must take care not to reflect on a vote of the House.

Mr BAYLEY - is to take that to the Privileges Committee. There has not been time to provide a day's notice for this motion. This comes on the back of that lost no-confidence motion, and from our perspective, it is entirely reasonable and justified to suspend Standing Orders so as to have a proper debate about what the Privileges Committee could do in terms of

interrogating and investigating the allegations and the claims and the observations that we have made.

We think it is entirely appropriate, it is a matter of urgency and the House really should be granting a Suspension of Standing Orders so we can debate that motion.

[7.50 p.m.]

Mr O'BYRNE (Franklin) - Honourable Speaker, I voted in favour of seeking of leave to hear and see if the Greens had any new arguments to justify a further exploration of the matter that we have been dealing with since approximately 11.30 a.m.. There is no new information. It is effectively 'we just do not agree with you'.

If there is a disagreement, it does not mean that you have a right to suspend the House further into the day to have a debate that we have basically already had. It is not a second bite of the cherry. It is a further overreach into this area. We allowed an unlimited debate all day on this matter. A referral to the Privileges Committee and to allow a debate on that on the basis that clearly the House did not agree with you is not justification enough.

We talk about collaborative parliaments. We talk about how minority parliaments are good. I think there are many elements of this parliament that have been good, but we are moving into areas where it is pure politics. I respected the right for you to raise the no confidence motion in the Premier. We had all day to debate it. The argument was not sustained and a referral to the Privileges Committee is just a repetition of that debate. No further information was provided to the House in your seeking of leave. Whilst I will agree with the suspension to allow this debate to see if we can move forward, I think enough is enough. Can we just move on to the day?

The SPEAKER - There are still 10 minutes left for the time for the debate. With there being no further speakers, I will put the question to suspend Standing Orders to allow the motion to be brought forth with.

The question is that the Suspension of Standing Orders be agreed to. The ayes will move to the right of the Chair and the noes to the left.

And the House proceeding to divide -

The SPEAKER - Order, minister Abetz, you will return to that side of the House now.

Mr Abetz interjecting.

The SPEAKER - I am sorry. The votes have been called. You have to stay where you were. You cannot cross over once the count has commenced. It is awkward for you. We can always re-put the vote at the end of it. You just walked from the right-hand side to the left. You need to go back.

Mr Abetz interjecting.

The SPEAKER - No, Mr Abetz, you do need to go back. If you wish, because I appreciate it was an error, you may call for another vote if you think the vote was incorrectly managed. That is a matter for you to do so. You cannot, once the count has commenced, cross

to the other side. No member can. Mr Tucker allowed it once. I was pretty crabby with him at the time. I am not letting anyone else get away with it.

Mr Abetz interjecting.

The SPEAKER - You may ask. Obviously, you can ask for a vote to be redone if you wish. You have to wait till the end of this. I would be careful where you are walking, Ms Ogilvie. You can ask for the vote to be recommitted and I am happy to do that, but we do have to go through this process now.

AYES 7

Mr Abetz
Ms Badger
Mr Bayley
Ms Burnet
Ms Johnston (Teller)
Ms Rosol
Dr Woodruff

NOES 25

Mr Barnett
Mr Behrakis
Mrs Beswick
Dr Broad
Ms Brown
Ms Dow
Mr Ellis
Mr Fairs
Mr Ferguson
Ms Finlay
Mr Garland
Ms Haddad
Mr Jaensch
Mr Jenner
Mr O'Byrne
Ms Ogilvie
Mrs Pentland
Mrs Petrusma
Mr Rockliff
Mr Shelton
Mr Street
Ms White
Mr Willie (Teller)
Mr Winter
Mr Wood

The SPEAKER - The result of the division, unfortunately for minister Abetz, is 7 ayes and 25 noes. Therefore, the motion is lost.

Motion negatived.

The SPEAKER - There is an opportunity, minister Abetz, to ask to recast it if you want. Your voting record is now going to look quite odd. You cannot say from over there that you wish to recommit the vote. If you would like to return to your seats, any member can ask for the recommittal, I believe.

Could members return to their original seats? Given that there was a case of genuine confusion, you may now ask for a recommittal of the vote. We do not need to ring the bells, we just immediately do the vote.

[7.59 p.m.]

Mr ABETZ (Franklin - Leader of the House) - Thank you, Speaker. I ask that the vote be recommitted.

The SPEAKER - I do not think we need to vote on that. We will accept that there was a genuine confusion. The House allows us to do that. The ayes will pass to the right of the Chair and the noes to the left. Do not wander off out of your space once you have found your place to vote.

The House divided -

AYES 6

Ms Badger
Mr Bayley
Ms Burnet (Teller)
Ms Johnston
Ms Rosol
Dr Woodruff

NOES 26

Mr Abetz
Mr Barnett
Mr Behrakis
Mrs Beswick
Dr Broad
Ms Brown
Ms Dow
Mr Ellis
Mr Fairs
Mr Ferguson (Teller)
Ms Finlay
Mr Garland
Ms Haddad
Mr Jaensch
Mr Jenner
Mr O'Byrne
Ms Ogilvie
Mrs Pentland
Mrs Petrusma
Mr Rockliff
Mr Shelton
Mr Street
Ms White
Mr Willie (Teller)
Mr Winter
Mr Wood

The SPEAKER - Mr Abetz will be delighted to know that the new result is ayes 6, noes 26. With that, the motion is lost.

Motion negatived.

MOTION

Standing Committee on Government Administration B's Inquiry into the Assessment and Treatment of ADHD and Support Services - Reporting Date

[8.03 p.m.]

Ms WHITE (Lyons)(by leave) - Honourable Speaker, I move -

That the recording date for the Standing Committee on Government Administration B's Inquiry into the Assessment and Treatment of ADHD and Support Services be extended until 13 May 2025.

Motion agreed to.

The SPEAKER - With that, formal business has finally concluded some eight-and-a-half hours since it began, and I call on the matter of public importance.

MATTER OF PUBLIC IMPORTANCE

Trust in Government

[8.03 p.m.]

Mr WINTER (Franklin - Leader of the Opposition) - Honourable Speaker, I move -

That the House take note of the following matter: trust in government

The matter of public importance is trust in government today. It dawned on me over the course of the break that trust in governance has been well and truly lost. It dawned on me as I read the media release from the Tasmanian Chamber of Commerce which said, 'It will be hard to ever trust this government again'. That was over the government's appalling handling of the *Spirits of Tasmania* berth build. Not just the appalling performance when it came to building the berth, but then communicating the impacts of that with the Tasmanian people.

Time and time again, his government had the ability to tell Tasmanians, to be upfront and honest and tell them exactly what was going on. Instead, they covered up and refused to tell Tasmanian businesses exactly what was going on. The admission from the Premier in his response to the committee that he has known since 22 April that those ships would not be sailing this summer into the Mersey is an admission that he allowed the tourism and hospitality sectors to continue to invest in their businesses, to continue to get ready, when he knew the whole time they were getting ready for something that was not going to happen. That decision to omit important information has caused huge ripples across the Tasmanian economy. People asking whether they can trust this government and that has led to real life examples.

Gavin from Upper Latrobe, at the caravan park who spoke last week, said, 'Where are you Jeremy, where are you?' He has been looking for some leadership, he has been looking for some answers and he wants to know what went wrong. Why is it that when he went to the Tourism Tasmania meetings last year in 2023 and he had Tourism Tasmania telling him and other industry members, 'Get ready, invest, now is the time to invest. We have this huge opportunity coming to Tasmania. Now is the time to invest'. Businesses like his decided to

make big decisions, take out loans, invest more money and employ more people. Some of these businesses employed more people getting ready for this summer, all under the misapprehension that the ships were coming. Right up until September this year, members of the government were telling businesses that they were coming.

It is one thing not to know in the first place that their berth was not going to be ready. That is extraordinary in and of itself that the Premier of Tasmania did not find out until April when the berth should have been under construction well before that. It is another to find that out and then not tell the people most important to this whole story. That is the people who are investing and getting ready, not telling Tasmanians who are paying for it. Tasmanians who have paid almost a billion dollars for the new ships, who are now paying almost \$500 million over budget for two ferries that are going to be six years delayed for the people who are going to lose \$3 billion over six years on these ships not being operational.

Three billion dollars lost from our economy because of this mistake and the willingness of the Premier and others to dilute this and make it sound not important is quite extraordinary. It is a massive, massive stuff up. It leads businesses to question if they can trust this government. It will be hard for them to ever trust this government again. I met with Jacob recently. He is over at Lindisfarne. He has invested over \$100,000 into new facilities to support his wrasse business. He goes out and catches wrasse, he keeps them alive in tanks ready to go to markets in Melbourne and Sydney. He needs the *Spirits*. He needs those sailings to get the fish live from Tasmania to the mainland. He invested in that new equipment because he thought with larger ships, 40 per cent more capacity, that would mean for his business he would be able to get on the ships more often, sell more fish and the investment would be worthwhile. He listened to the advice from government. They would be here this summer and that is why he invested. He cannot trust the government anymore. How could he trust the government?

The TCCI cannot trust the government. Then you have all the other business groups, the Tourism Industry Council, who did not find out until way too late. Tourism Tasmania found out by watching the news. Tourism Tasmania, a government agency, found out that the biggest infrastructure project in Tasmanian history, and particularly for the tourism industry, was not coming on the news after we asked about it in Parliament.

That is the way they have communicated. It is the disrespect that I cannot abide, the disrespect for our business community from this government regarding this project. It is shocking. Repeated questions today to the Premier. He will not admit the way that he has let these businesses down, not just through the project being so far delayed, but the abysmal communication. The lack of trust in this government is leading to job losses of 6700 since this Premier took this government to minority.

[8.09 p.m.]

Mr ABETZ (Franklin - Leader of the House) - Honourable Speaker, we have just had another dose of five minutes of relentless negativity from the Leader of the Opposition. To think that after so many hours of debate in this Chamber today, there is still a vestige of negativity to be drawn upon by the Leader of the Opposition. Eight and a bit hours of spewing false negativity and now they have moved another motion.

Mr Willie - Stop giving us so much material. If you were a better government we would have less to talk about.

The SPEAKER - I know it is late but I am going to remind Mr Willie he is still under a warning. Do not get kicked out now.

Mr ABETZ - They have moved another motion so that they can give expression to further negativity. There seems to be no end to the negativity. In relation to the issue that the Leader particularly wanted to mention, when it comes to trust and issues of that nature, I would simply invite them to have a bit of self-reflection and ask themselves: is there a member in their midst who promised they would not run for a federal seat and now is doing so? Are there members, indeed one who got a petition up against the stadium and we have never seen the petition tabled in this House. We have seen a bit of a backflip -

Mr Willie - The House was dissolved at the election.

Mr ABETZ - On the issue of the stadium?

Mr Ellis - You cannot defend that one, surely.

Mr ABETZ - Can you track all the people on that side -

The SPEAKER - Order, Mr Ellis and Mr Willie will both stop helping the minister.

Mr ABETZ - All those on that side who were elected on a promise to oppose the stadium? What are they now doing? Realising -

Mr Willie - Do not lecture us about backflipping.

The SPEAKER - Mr Willie, if you get one more warning, you will be out of the Chamber for the rest of the day and it is a very long day, so that is some time. Thank you.

Mr ABETZ - If only it were so easy.

The SPEAKER - Stop helping, Mr Abetz.

Mr ABETZ - The Leader of the Opposition said it dawned on him during the break that there was an issue of trust. However, we heard from the Leader of Opposition Business in this place that Labor never had confidence in this government, so it is just an affectation to claim that this is suddenly a new revelation, a light bulb. We know that Labor have opposed this government from day one, despite the fact that they never put their hand up to say that they were fit and ready for government. They simply did not do it, and, might I add, I think for good reason.

In relation to trust, when there is a problem, what should you do? Exactly what the Premier has done: acknowledge it, own it and fix it. That is exactly what the Premier and the government have done in relation to the *Spirits*. In all this debate, there has not been one positive suggestion from Labor as to how to handle this. They have these hare-brained schemes of parliamentary committees adding red tape or whatever. However, an actual support or celebration that the first pile has been driven at Devonport for the construction of the necessary berth facilities, that there is now a person capable and competent to manage the project, namely Paul Kirkwood, that we have oversight specialists such as Peter Gemell and Ben Moloney: these are not mentioned by Labor because to acknowledge that things are moving on, the

caravan's moving on, does not suit their relentless negativity. It is their agenda to be negative, to be as critical as possible without offering any positive alternatives.

I say to the Labor Party, which had certain Treasury policies online suddenly disappear, how is that trustworthy behaviour when you try to hide your mistakes, rather than owning them and coming into this place and admitting you got it wrong, that the finances were wrong, that your addition was lacking. No, none of that. You just try to wipe it off as though it never existed. We, on this side, when there is a problem, when there is an issue, we will acknowledge it, we will deal with it, we will own it and, most importantly, we will fix it for the people of Tasmania.

[8.14 p.m.]

Mr BAYLEY (Clark) - Honourable Speaker, I thank the opposition for bringing on this matter of public importance. It is plain to see, through the debate across the course of the day today, that we have lost trust in government and we believe we share that with the Tasmanian public. We have seen in the last few days the latest polling shows a significant dip in public support for the government. There is a myriad of reasons as to why that is. I will go through some of them, but it looks like the polls are dipping on the government and the sun is setting.

When it comes to trust, I think there is no greater issue that affects people's trust in government and politics more broadly than political donations. We Greens have been strong advocates for reform in the space of political donations in regard to bringing in truth in political advertising, in terms of expenditure caps and mechanisms to ensure that big money does not have an undue influence over our politics and influence over the outcome in elections. It is still a significant source of concern for the Tasmanian people that we have weak donation laws and that is still unfinished business when it comes to the work of this House and we hope that that can get resolved as a matter of urgency.

We have heard over the course of the debate today by various members on the government's side talk about what the public does not like and what they believe the public does not like about the conduct of the House here. We all know and we can agree that the public does not like deception. It does not like politicians not keeping their word. It does not like policy failure and non-delivery of promises. That is where I think the trust that we have lost in this government significantly stems from. We have just had hours of debate when it comes to pokies and pokies reform and policy backflip when it comes to precommitment cards despite repeated statements and assurances that it would be delivered. We can sort of pick other issues along the way as well making sure that they are seen in a similar light and the stadium at Macquarie Point is exactly one of those.

We had the Premier as recently as August 2022 still making the statement that is actually still on the AFL's website, that the stadium will not be part of Tasmania's bid. Of course it was. Of course we signed a deal with the AFL that had the stadium front and centre in that deal. We signed up to every single dollar of cost overrun that will come and it is clearly a spectacular dud deal. The RSL has been completely clear on the lack of trust that it has with the government, feeling as if it has been misled and deceived, I think the words were, by the government, by the Macquarie Point Development Corporation on behalf of the government and by the architects who are working on the stadium project. I mean that is a significant indictment on this government to have an institution as significant as RSL Tasmania articulating a lack of faith in the government and the fact it feels misled and deceived.

We have seen the situation over the last few weeks play out where TasNetworks, without even informing its relevant minister, looking like it is going out to tender to contract out its work to a single tier one corporate entity or commercial entity. It is a significant problem. It tries to fly in the face of the GBE and state-owned company review, and we called consistently for the minister to step in and intervene. To his credit, today we learned that perhaps he has, and that contract has been paused and it is that kind of action, I guess, I want to leave on in a positive note. That is the kind of action that will restore trust in government when there is a problem that has been identified, when it has been called out loudly and significantly by stakeholders and by members of this place and they actually take action. It is very welcome. The next step now is for that minister to ensure that there is no privatisation direction by TasNetworks and its workforce is secure.

[8.19 p.m.]

Mr WILLIE (Clark) - Honourable Speaker, it is my pleasure to rise on the matter of trust in government. Before I start, I will address a couple of issues raised by the Leader of Government. He talked about relentless negativity. When the government says that, it really means it is relentlessly being held to account and it does not like it. I wear that as a badge of honour that we are holding them to account and they do not like it. If they do not like it, they should start being a better government because there is plenty for us to talk about all the time, pointing out issues where there has been a failure of governance or they have let the Tasmanian community down. I will point that out.

Of course, we are offering solutions. You want to talk about GBEs? We offer the biggest shake-up of GBE governance in 30 years. What did the government say when we announced that? More red tape. What did they do a month later? Copied and pasted a lot of the ideas from our policy. We were putting forward ideas, being constructive. The government thought, 'That is a good idea. It is not actually more red tape. We should do our job and keep an eye on these businesses that should be serving Tasmanians. We took our eye off the ball. We have had the biggest monumental infrastructure stuff-up in Tasmania's history.'

We also put forward more day sailings to support the tourism and freight sector. Again, the government was not very welcoming of Labor's idea. They cannot have it both ways. They cannot say, 'You are being relentlessly negative and you are offering no solutions', but when we do offer solutions, they say not a good idea at the time. A few weeks or months later: 'We might borrow that one.' You cannot have it both ways.

Trust is being lost in this government. It is extraordinary. It is a myth that the Liberal Party thinks they are better economic managers. They have completely trashed that on the mainland. Scott Morrison's government with a trillion dollars worth of debt. You had Colin Barnett's government in Western Australia. This government has completely trashed the state's finances. The business community is now losing trust in them. I get about the community. There are people in business who are coming up to me and saying, 'How do we help you, Josh? We are sick of this government. Can we do anything to help and support you? We want to see a change of government because they are not supporting us any longer.'

The most extraordinary thing, being a member of parliament for nearly nine years, I have never seen the peak business lobby put out a statement like this. I am going to read it in full. It was extraordinary to have the peak business body, some people would say part of the Liberal Party base, to put out a statement like this. This was in response to the government's

announcement, which they covered up for some time, just the sheer extent of the stuff-up when it came to the TT-Line *Spirits*' berthing:

The TCCI is the voice of business in Tasmania and notes the Government's announcement regarding the new *Spirit of Tasmania* vessels.

TCCI CEO Michael Bailey said that the business community was appalled by the way the Government had mismanaged this project.

'This is a dark day for Tasmania,' Mr Bailey said.

'This is even worse than we first thought. The economic cost will be felt by businesses and taxpayers for years to come, our brand has been damaged and it has impacted on business confidence. Worst of all, it will be very difficult to trust this Government again because of this. It will certainly be difficult to trust them on the timelines they have set out today, but we hope that they will prove us wrong.

'We are calling on the Government to ensure that there is independent and honest oversight of the Berth 3 project that reports directly to the public so that we can closely monitor how the project is tracking.'

There is an argument for an oversight committee right there. The business community does not trust them, the parliament should step in and hold the Liberal government's hand because they cannot be trusted to deliver this project.

'It's difficult to see how we can rely on the Government to continue to mark its own homework after today's announcement.

'Importantly, we need the Government to work with the business community to ensure our interstate friends know that Tasmania is open for business despite this complete fiasco. Additional day sailings must be scheduled and while the support for the tourism is welcome, the impacts are widespread and affect primary industry, small business and transport sectors to name a few, which the Government seems to have forgotten.

'This just highlights that there are significant cultural and leadership issues in the Tasmanian Government and our GBEs and it is now time for an independent arms-length review...'

They go on to call for a commission of inquiry, which is extraordinary, because of the lack of trust in this government. Not only is the peak business body putting out statements like that, we have become not only an embarrassment across the nation in national media, but international media, and it is hurting our business confidence. People have lost trust in this government.

Time expired.

[8.24 p.m.]

Mr ELLIS - This debate is obviously a contest of trust as well. There is a contest between the Liberal Party in government, the Labor Party in opposition at the last election, and the Labor Party when they were in government with the Greens.

We know that right back from that moment when they promised to never do a deal with the devil, then took a bike ride up the mountain that there was something amiss in Labor's DNA when it comes to trust. People in our community have seen it; they have seen it over many years of opposition. There is a reason why they have spent 10 years in opposition, and the Tasmanian people willing, hopefully they will spend plenty more time there as well.

We saw at the last election the fiasco that was Labor's finance team. They failed on every measure. They could not count, they could not add up, they could not put together a credible plan for our future because they simply did not know how to do the numbers. We see this time and time again from the shadows who occupy those seats there.

They fail when it comes to the test of credibility. They got their numbers wrong time and time again. They somehow managed to promise \$4 billion worth of extra spending, yet complain about debt; they also promised \$2 billion worth of cuts and then complain about modest efficiency dividends.

The Opposition talks out of both sides of their mouths because they do not actually have a credible strategic path for our state. They have whingeing and complaining, which was rejected roundly by the Tasmanian people at the last election.

Even more than that, the Labor Party was rejected by the Labor Party, because after the last election we had a minority situation, and the Labor Party itself decided that it was unfit for government. It took the Labor Party executive to say to Ms White, who is leaving this place in disgust with her party, that they could not form government, that they were unfit for office, that the people who are shadows here today that would seek ministerial positions should not take up those roles.

You do not have to believe us, you just need to believe the most senior people in the Labor Party in Tasmania. Frankly, we all know it around the country as well, because they have been in federal administration for far longer than most of those people on that side of the House have had their shadow portfolio roles.

You compare that complete failure of trust in themselves with the trust and the delivery that we are seeing here in Tasmania. Obviously, the Premier has taken responsibility for the *Spirits* and will be delivering that project within the time frame that we have now set out, but that should not distract from the broader record of delivery. I can tell you that every time I drive on the old Bridgewater bridge and I see sections being put together by the incredible men and women of Tasmania, that should stand to the Tasmanian people as a beacon of what our word means when we say that we will deliver something for the people of Tasmania.

The money used to be there for the Bridgewater Bridge. If I am not mistaken, the Leader of the House, when he was in another place, secured the funds from the Howard government for Tasmania to build the Bridgewater Bridge. That was 20 years ago. I will not tell you what level of school I was in at the time, but that money was spent by the Labor Party on something that was not the Bridgewater Bridge. They simply could not deliver.

You look at the Royal Hobart Hospital that this government delivered thanks to the hard work of Mr Ferguson and the team at the time. They delivered that project and rebuilt the Royal Hobart Hospital, the most important hospital in our state, inside out, brick by brick, to ensure that people can get decent health care in this state.

You know what the Labor Party did when they were in government? Absolutely nothing. They did not lay a single brick, and that is what the Labor Party in government's word means. That is what the Liberal Party in government's words mean. When we want to do something and when we take it to the people of Tasmania, we deliver, and the Tasmanian people can trust that we will do that.

You compare that to those opposite who, even when they make promises, they are garbage, and even when they get an opportunity to put themselves up, they say themselves that they are not fit. Then they have the gall to whinge and complain in this place as if they know better.

[8.29 p.m.]

Ms DOW (Braddon - Deputy Leader of the Opposition) - Deputy Speaker, it has been a big day and here we are debating the MPI this late into the evening. If this government spent less time focusing on us and living in the past, talking about 10 years ago, and actually concentrated on doing their job rather than our job, the state might be in a better place right now.

It takes a lot to earn Tasmanians' trust and I know that the Labor Party knows that. Tasmanians do not give their trust frivolously, and they certainly have lost their trust in this government. You can tell that when you go out into the community like I do, like many members in this place do, speaking with people across the community. For a party that prides itself on being the greatest supporter of small business, you have let small to medium enterprise down across this state and that is exemplified through the *Spirit of Tasmania* fiasco.

There are hardworking Tasmanians across this state, particularly in regional Tasmania, who have spent their hard-earned dollars investing, employing more Tasmanians, investing in new products, looking to new markets in preparation for the new *Spirit of Tasmania* vessels. They are left wanting, they are at the end of their tether and we have spoken to some of those Tasmanians and we have highlighted their stories through the media.

The fact is this government cannot be trusted to deliver this project and that is why we have done our job, which is as any responsible opposition would do. It is not about being negative; it is about calling out this government and holding them to account and that is our job in this place and across the Tasmanian community. We made a commitment at the last state election that we would not form government with the Greens and we maintained that commitment.

One of the things that others have spoken about were our policies at the last state elections. Well, I can tell you we had excellent policies. We did not have three-word slogans like 'ban ambulance ramping'. We had good thorough health policies that would have made a difference to Tasmanians lives. People have not just lost trust in the government about the *Spirit of Tasmania* fiasco, they have lost trust in this government when it comes to accessing an ambulance, when it comes to getting a hospital bed, and when it comes to having a baby on the north-west coast with the way in which maternity services have deteriorated significantly

under this government. These are the things that matter to Tasmanian families and this government is letting them down.

They have lost trust in you to deliver the housing targets that you have set. They have lost trust in you when it comes to planning reform and they have lost trust in you in the way in which you do business across our community - with our mayors, with business, the way in which you communicate, the way in which you are not transparent with the Tasmanian community.

Trust in government is absolutely essential for the wellbeing of the state. We are seeing unprecedented times in Tasmania where we have got the business community speaking out loudly and strongly against this government. They have lost trust in this government and your ability to deliver the *Spirit of Tasmania* vessels. You might say that we should be celebrating the pile driving exercise at the Devonport berth.

What Tasmanians really want to celebrate is when their vessels arrive here in Tasmania so that they can utilise that additional 40 per cent capacity and get their caravan on the *Spirit*. What our primary producers want to celebrate is having that additional 40 per cent capacity so that they can access new markets, that they can grow their businesses, and employ more Tasmanians. These vessels are the most significant economic driver in Tasmanian history, albeit for the Hydro.

This is not a game. It is incredibly serious. We have a Premier who will not provide answers and front up to the Public Accounts Committee, which is absolutely unacceptable and we have a government that has hidden information from the Tasmanian people about the state's most important infrastructure project.

We are doing our job. Get on and do your job. Tomorrow we will move that the parliament establishes an oversight committee as the business community has highlighted the need for and others across the community. That is because we are doing our job. You have not done your job. Tasmanians have lost trust in you.

Matter noted.

LAND USE PLANNING AND APPROVALS AMENDMENT (SUPPORTING DEVELOPMENT) BILL 2024 (No. 49)

Second Reading

[8.35 p.m.]

Mr ELLIS (Braddon - Minister for Housing, Planning and Consumer Affairs) - Mr Deputy Speaker, I move -

That the bill now be read a second time.

The Land Use Planning and Approvals Amendment (Supporting Development) Bill 2024 will amend the *Land Use Planning and Approvals Act 1993* to allow for extensions to permits that relate to complex or technical developments. This proposed amendment recognises that

complex projects can require additional time to commence more than the currently available six-year time frame provided by the act.

The bill proposes to extend this time frame by inserting additional provisions at section 42C and 53 of the act to allow the minister to grant an additional two-year extension of time for an applicant to substantially commence a use or development in accordance with a planning permit. This covers planning permits issued in combination with a local provision schedule or an LP's amendment along with those normally issued by councils acting as planning authorities under the act.

The minister will be able to provide one additional extension of two years in circumstances where the minister is satisfied that, due to the technical or complex nature of a proposed use or development, the use or development is not, or is unlikely to be substantially commenced before the permit would lapse, and that the extension by the minister would enable the use or development to commence. This time frame is comparable with permits issued under the major project pathway under Part 4, Division 2A of that act, which provides for extensions of time of up to eight years.

This is a minor amendment to Tasmania's planning framework yet will enable certain complex developments to proceed, or to continue to proceed where they may otherwise have lapsed, including in circumstances beyond the proponent's control. I commend the bill to the House.

[8.37 p.m.]

Dr BROAD (Braddon) - Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise this time of the evening to say that Labor will be supporting the Land Use Planning and Approvals Amendment (Supporting Development) Bill 2024.

We agree that this is a minor amendment to our land use planning and approvals laws and one that is needed, hopefully really.

First, I thank the staff for a briefing; that was Nell Nettlefold and Sean McPhail. Sorry that you have had to come in at this late hour, but that is the way parliament works.

I will make a few brief comments. There is a matter at hand that has brought this to a head, and that is the Port Latta windfarm. I think my colleague, Ms Finlay, might want to speak specifically about that particular instance, but what has happened to the Port Latta windfarm is that their approval is about to time out through things that have been out of their control, including COVID delays.

Now this does highlight that there is this issue potentially or actual issue within our planning system. At the moment, if somebody is granted a permit for a development, then they have two years to substantially commence and then they have two lots of two-year extensions which are available to the council. From what I understand from the briefing, there is actually no criteria for the current extensions by councils, so that means that a developer or proponent has approximately six years to substantially commence if the council agrees to an extension.

What this bill before us does is it gives another two-year extension as a one-off. There are some conditions to granting that extension, including that:

... additional time granted by the minister is subject to being satisfied that the project is of a technical or complex nature that warrants an additional period of time in which to demonstrate substantial commencement of the use or development.

This is a development that has already been approved. It is not something new, but it is something that because of some sort of hiccup has not substantially commenced.

We know that with some large projects there are times they had to recommence and go through the whole process again, getting new approvals. First of all, it clogs up the process. It means that the council's resources will then have to be allocated to reapproving. To go through that whole process again, in some instances may include some very technical data that people have to get their heads around and also it might mean the proponent has to go through a whole new process to get the approvals up to date. That may include having to redo studies, having to get new data, and maybe even having to go through the Environment Protection Authority (EPA) or the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act* (EPBC Act) approvals process, which, for a project that had already been approved, may not be in the best interest of the state.

This bill gives the minister the ability to grant a one-off extension. I do not think this is an overreach. I do not think that this is a massive problem. Nobody has raised any issues with me personally about this particular change to planning. I think it is sensible, but should typically only be applied to significant projects rather than somebody who has not managed to get their garage built in time. This is about complex projects that are of a technical nature. The minister has the ability to grant two years. We think that this is a good move and it is required right away because the last thing that we need when Tasmania is short of energy is for us to be knocking off a windfarm project like the Port Latta windfarm. That is something that we need.

The Port Latta windfarm has brought this issue to a head. We, as a party, were pushing the government to take another pathway, which was to grant the approval for just that one particular project and we were certainly pushing hard for that but the government has taken a different approach, which is to make that general ability for the minister to grant two-year extensions for any complex project down the track. We agree with that approach and that is why we will be supporting this bill.

[8.42 p.m.]

Ms BURNET (Clark) - Mr Deputy Speaker, congratulations on your elevation. This is the week of the minister trying to rewrite the way that planning is undertaken in Tasmania. It is the week of handing himself greater powers. It is the week when Mr Ellis wants to introduce precedents. The planning ministry under his delegation is with this bill, Stony Rise and the development assessment panel's *Land Use Planning and Approvals Act* (LUPAA) amendments will be grabbing at as many levers as possible to interfere with planning in the state of Tasmania.

To the first of these bills, the LUPAA Supporting Development Bill, which is before us, likely seen as the least innocuous, as Labor seems to think, of the planning legislation before this House when you compare this with the unnecessary interfering Stony Rise Development Approval Bill or the corruption of process -

Dr BROAD - Point of order, I would like to point out that the member who is on her feet should be careful not to pre-empt orders of the day by discussing bills that are on the notice paper. She should stick specifically to this one, rather than casting forward to what may happen as another order of the day.

DEPUTY SPEAKER - A reasonable point.

Ms BURNET - Thank you. What we have before us is the LUPAA Supporting Development bill. It is not the LUPAA Supporting Development at Port Latta bill. So, it is not a spot rezoning if you like, or not spot-specific, as is quite unusual and unprecedented here. The LUPAA Supporting Development bill has a specific intention in two parts. One is to tack on another two years to allow substantial development to commence. The other is to allow the minister to grant that extension.

The minister, not the planning authority, who may have already granted the extension twice and who arguably knows what is happening in its patch, so the municipality or council would understand whether or not substantial commencement of works had been obtained. There are significant questions to ask regarding why either of these are necessary. Why would there be an extension of time required to allow land not being used in most cases for six years or over? Is there any benefit to a proponent to not develop for that length of time? It might sound perverse, but land banking does occur. Is there a possibility that any approved development application may benefit from land banking? This may not be the situation for all development approvals that have not yet started substantial works. What benefit when we get to the end of the time again, then what? Will it be a question of this parliament making yet another extension?

What we have before us in relation to LUPAA Supporting Development bill, is we are not considering something that is being considered under major projects legislation to which minister Ellis has referred. This should not be confused with this piece of legislation and that planning pathway, as flawed as it may be.

The other component of this bill that is troubling is the grab for power and the corruption of process, which fundamentally erodes the robustness and the arm's length relationship with planning and development authorities as they stand. The minister wrests the decision-making away from the planning authority even for this extension. It is just that erosion of the planning authority's actions and responsibilities. It gives the opportunity for political interference to occur. This is not limited to Port Latta, as I have already said. There is nothing in this bill that refers to Port Latta.

I thank the staff for the briefing that I received. It certainly provides some food for thought and for some further questions.

There are a number of questions. If I may, before I finish, list those questions which have arisen from the second reading speech. The first one is always a complex question when you are talking about planning. The minister referred to extensions to permits that relate to complex or technical developments. I wonder how that is described or how that is interpreted, depending on what development approval is being considered for this extension of time. What is a complex or technical development? How do you interpret that?

The bill proposes to extend the time frame by inserting additional provisions at sections 42(C) and 53 of the act to allow the minister. The question is why the minister? Why not the planning authority, as it stands and not the minister? We do not break away with how planning is undertaken, how those extensions have been arrived at by the planning authority in the past, and what other factors might be at play as well, when they are making the consideration, rather than a political decision by the minister interfering.

It says, in the notes and perhaps in the second reading speech, that the minister will be able to provide one additional extension of two years in circumstances where the minister is satisfied due to the technical or complex nature of a proposed use or development, the use of development is not, or is unlikely to be, substantially commenced before the permit would lapse, and that the extension by the minister would enable the use of development to commence.

Another question in relation to this is what happens - whilst we have this in front of us, that is part of the proposed legislation, that it is one additional extension of two years. It begs the question of what does happen when they are almost started but they have not quite started substantial works. What happens then? If it is a Port Latta development or another development, it is unclear to me exactly what that may or may not be. Is it something as small but still complex as a development in an inner-city block or a country town? Those questions need to be answered with this bill.

I have touched on the comparison to major projects pathway. This is not a major projects pathway. It was not considered by its very nature with this development approval, unless I am wrong. It did not get ticked off by that Major Projects process. These are the questions that I hope to receive answers for.

There are a number of amendments to which I have made the changes in relation - and it is quite an easy change, to change from the minister making decisions back to the planning authority. That would provide a lot more surety for communities. It would probably provide a lot more surety for planning authorities who seem to be in the firing line currently, reading some comments from the minister in the papers this week, and on the airwaves. For clause 4, it is my intention to move those amendments which were distributed earlier.

Otherwise I look forward to the further discussion and some clarity in those questions.

[8.53 p.m.]

Ms FINLAY (Bass) - Deputy Speaker, I rise this evening to make my contribution on the Land Use Planning and Approvals Amendment (Supporting Development) Bill 2024. It is always of interest to hear other people's contributions and the perspective that they bring to their contributions. You can be someone who seeks to be supportive and ensure that developments that are appropriate occur and can support our Tasmanian economy, bring on jobs and generally be useful, particularly with the development that has been mentioned by others in regional Tasmania.

One of the things that I find interesting about this matter before us this afternoon is it is really only this government bringing forward this item kicking and screaming at the last possible hour in order to provide support for a renewables project. The scope has been broadened. Yes, it is for complex developments, not just a particular development, being the

Port Latta Wind farm, but it is through our advocacy and our relentless calling on this government to act to ensure that a renewable project in Tasmania could get across the line.

Those people with an interest in renewables will know that it has been four, nearly five, years since a wind farm development has been activated in this state. We have done the appropriate and respectful thing. We advocated directly to the minister through correspondence. We raised questions in the parliament and we prosecuted this at Estimates. It was only after all that pressure and continued representation from the developer of the Port Latta Wind Farm as well, that the government has finally decided to act.

If there is one thing that I have learnt today, people have raised a whole lot of things that they are hearing and learning in the community about the performance of this government. I hear time and time again that this government has lost the capacity to understand the impact of their inaction and they are not able to demonstrate an urgency or an understanding of actually taking action in the community, and particularly in the area that I talk about with renewable energy.

We stand here to support this. We welcome it. In fact, one of the other interesting things that is happening across Tasmania at the moment is that when the threat of Tasmanian Labor taking positive action for the people and the economy of Tasmania occurs, that is when the government acts. The government knows that in support of the proponent, we were prepared to do this work if the government did not, and only then did they attempt to take action.

I would like to say in response to the Greens contribution that, although there might be all sorts of conspiracy theories, threats and suggestions of negative ways this could be approached, there are positives for Tasmania about supporting this.

The concerns about land banking and others - if you had taken the time to understand, with the particular activation for this bill before us, what the Port Latta wind farm had been through, then you would know that they have been investing significant amounts of funds in the development of their project. They have taken a significant amount of action but could not be assured that someone would determine that they had made substantial commencement.

This was put to the government and the minister has seen fit to have a broadened application. I support that. I believe that it is reasonable that what is being brought on as a response to the needs of Port Latta could be used for others. As we know, this extension is a single extension of two years, so the risks with land banking and other things are minute. Extensions can only be granted when the minister is satisfied that a project is of a technical or complex nature and it warrants an additional period of time in which they can then demonstrate their substantial commencement, and it is only one additional period of two years.

We support the broader intentions that the minister has brought forward, understanding that it came from the pressure and the need of Tasmania to support a wind farm that has had an approval, had the challenges of COVID, and all the supply chain impacts that have gone with that, and that are willing and committed to investing in Tasmania into bringing on a project.

We support this bill. We would have hoped that this government did not need to be brought kicking and screaming to the table and that they did not leave things to the eleventh hour. That is not how you create certainty in the community. It is not how you secure private

investment in Tasmania, while people are having to wait for this government to act. Not all capital is patient, and we are losing opportunities here.

I am grateful for this bill at the very last minute to support Port Latta and in the future other projects. However, there are many proponents around Tasmania who would hope that any support provided to them to get their projects across the line does not have to be so hard as it has been for Port Latta.

[8.58 p.m.]

Mr ELLIS (Braddon - Minister for Housing, Planning and Consumer Affairs) - Deputy Speaker, I am happy to move into the summing up.

Dr Broad stated that councils currently do not assess against criteria to provide the extensions already afforded under the act. That is right. There are no criteria or conditions for the local council to assess the need for a proponent to secure an extension of time to their permits under the existing provisions of the act.

In terms of Ms Burnet's contribution, in which she spoke about this bill providing the minister with great new powers, it is concerning and unfortunate for the member for Clark to make such statements, particularly because the member's statements seem highly contradictory. She seemed to oppose these important provisions to provide for extensions of time for critical and complex projects for our state including renewable energy, and then also suggested that it should have been progressed through project-specific legislation instead.

This is, unless I missed it, a very strange approach given that we are proposing to take that approach in relation to another project which I understand the Greens strongly oppose.

On this side of the House, we want to ensure that approved developments progress to construction and operation, and provide clean energy for our state, in this case, Port Latta. The *Land Use Planning and Approvals Act* was amended in 2014 to enable extensions of up to six years to be granted to substantially commence. We think six years is appropriate for most use and development that gets approval under the normal planning permit process.

However, we know that the commencement of more complex or technical projects can be delayed due to the need to address detailed permit conditions and seek other approvals. These projects can be delayed by matters well outside their control, such as labour and supply chain issues, as well as financial matters. We have had a great example, sadly, in recent years where more projects have experienced difficulties since the COVID pandemic and the uncertainty caused by unrest in other parts of the world, like the wars in Ukraine and the Middle East. The ability for a further two-year extension to substantially commence will enable more complex projects to progress. The bill allows the minister of the day the discretion to provide an additional two years to demonstrate substantial commencement, helping to reduce the risk of that permit being invalid and, therefore, the need to reapply for a new permit.

Ms Burnet made a comment about eroding the control of the council with overarching powers of the minister. The additional two-year extension the minister may provide is only enacted after the council has already provided two lots of two-year extensions. They do not currently have a power to do further, and the minister does not have a role in granting extension of time until all possible council extensions of time have been exhausted.

She asked how complex projects are determined. I would say that the technical or complex nature of the project will often mean it needs to address more detailed permit conditions, for example, or gain a number of separate approvals, such as Commonwealth approval under an EPBC act. This can sometimes take longer to complete, particularly if additional analysis is required or the preparation of management plans are needed to satisfy permit conditions prior to the commencement of work. A planning permit does not take effect until all other approvals have been granted and relevant permit conditions have been addressed. Some additional approvals cannot be progressed until after a planning permit has been issued.

Developments of a technical and complex nature can also be significantly impacted by issues outside the control of the applicant, such as labour shortages, supply chain issues and fluctuations in financial markets. The bill allows the minister to consider the range of applicable issues and to be satisfied that, due to the technical or complex nature of the project, an additional two years is required to allow the use or development to substantially commence.

Ms Burnet asked why it is the minister who provides these extensions of time. As I have made clear, the additional two-year extension to substantially commence a permit is for extenuating circumstances only. For this reason, it is considered more appropriate for the minister to make that decision, rather than the council. The decision to further extend the timeframes requires weighing up the need for this additional time against set criteria, and the minister has a role in providing general oversight of the planning system in Tasmania. The government is conscious of avoiding placing further burdens on local government in making these decisions to extend timeframe. The minister would always seek relevant advice from the council in making this decision, given they have already provided two lots of two-year extensions as part of the process. The minister would always seek advice from the State Planning Office, and I thank them for their presence here tonight. The minister may also choose to seek advice from others with relevant experience when determining the issue of an extension of time.

Ms Burnet asked what happens if they have almost started or met substantial commencement. There are no statutory mechanisms for councils to declare that a use or development has substantially commenced to validate the permit. The concept of substantial commencement is something that cannot be generally codified. There is only a handful of cases that have been challenged, so there is limited case law to guide its interpretation. Consideration of whether a project has been substantially commenced requires a case-by-case approach, based on fact and degree. In other words, it depends on the scope of works that have been undertaken in the context of the approval that has been given. For example, a recent Supreme Court decision found that a mining project had substantially commenced in accordance with a permit because the proponent had undertaken testing of ore to determine its composition and quality, taken delivery in Australia of major equipment items and components for the processing plant, and cleared a specific area of land at the mine site to facilitate the installation of various structures and facilities.

We were asked if this project was not a major project under that pathway. A decision to go through the major projects pathway is a matter for the proponent to commence lodging a proposal to the minister. It is important to note that our government advanced major project legislation in 2020, after this project received approval, the two not necessarily related. If the proponent had wanted that, it was not even available to them at this time.

Ms Finlay, in, I do not know whether I would call it bipartisan, but there was some interesting commentary anyway. I am glad we are on the same side on this one. She made commentary about the government acting on the basis of Labor Party advocacy. I appreciate that Ms Finlay may wish to take credit for the work, but our government has been advancing a significant body of work with the proponent and the local council in relation to the project.

What we want to see in this significant project is that it gets up and running, with construction work and substantial commencement to be met at the earliest possible opportunity. However, we recognise that in some cases there is a genuine need for an additional period of time for proponents to meet substantial commencement. Importantly, this bill gives certainty to proponents and the Port Latta wind farm to get started, deliver and bring to operation this renewable energy project for our state.

Ms Finlay seemed cranky that we worked to deliver some legislation that the Labor Party was supportive of. If you are supportive of more development and further changes that will back that, that is a good thing in that we are really open to that because ultimately -

Ms Finlay - You might have missed the bit where I said that there had not been a wind farm approved in the last five years. So slow. No urgency. No willingness to get things done.

Mr ELLIS - bipartisan support for getting stuff done is a good thing. I do not mean to incite interjection, Ms Finlay.

Ms Finlay - You are doing a good job of it.

Mr ELLIS - I try my best. If there are opportunities for us to streamline planning and cut red tape in this state in a bipartisan way, then we are all up for it.

Sadly, in the past - and admittedly a lot of this was before your time - we have had significant debates with the Labor Party where Labor has tried to block certain aspects of major projects legislation, the Statewide Planning Scheme and a whole range of important matters to get more stuff done for our state. I note there has been a change of heart and change of focus from your side of politics, and we welcome that. We think there are future opportunities, including two other bills that we will, hopefully, debate in this place this week, and a whole plethora of opportunities now that we are in the brave new world we are in.

With regards to the Greens' amendments, the additional two-year extension to substantially commence a permit provided for in this bill is extenuating circumstances only. We believe six years is more than enough time for most use and development that gets approved under the normal planning permit process. Our government is ensuring that approved developments have all opportunities to progress to construction and operation. For this reason, we believe it is considered more appropriate for the minister to be the decision-maker in this particular circumstance, rather than the council. However, we welcome the debate.

Bill read the second time.

**LAND USE PLANNING AND APPROVALS AMENDMENT (SUPPORTING
DEVELOPMENT) BILL 2024 (No. 49)**

In Committee

Clauses 1 to 3 agreed to.

Clause 4 -

Section 42C amended (When permit that relates to LPS amendment takes effect)

[9.11 p.m.]

Ms BURNET - Chair, these are all fairly straightforward clauses. I have amendments.

Dr BROAD - On indulgence, is the member's intention to move? These are all basically the same thing. Is your intention to move these all in one or to go clause by clause?

Ms BURNET - I was getting there, Dr Broad, but thanks very much. Thanks for your assistance. I would move these all at the same time for clause 4.

All those amendments, first, second, third, and forth, if we can have those read or taken at the same time. By way of explanation, it is taking the minister out of planning and putting the planning authority back into planning in these clauses.

CHAIR - Ms Burnet, I have been advised you do have to read those amendments in.

Ms BURNET - I need to read all those in?

CHAIR - Yes.

Ms BURNET - I move -

First amendment

Page 4, clause 4, paragraph (b), proposed new paragraph (d):

Leave out 'Minister'.

Insert instead 'planning authority'.

Second amendment

Page 4, clause 4, paragraph (c), proposed new subsection (7A):

Leave out 'Minister'.

Insert instead 'planning authority'.

Third amendment

Page 4, clause 4, paragraph (c), proposed new subsection (7A) paragraph (a):

Leave out 'Minister'.

Insert instead 'planning authority'.

Fourth amendment

Page 5, clause 4, paragraph (c) proposed new subsection (7A) paragraph (b):

Leave out 'Minister'.

Insert instead 'planning authority'.

Dr BROAD - We sort of had this debate in the substantive. The question is, basically, who should have this job of granting the extension, whether it be the minister or the planning authority. The minister, Mr Ellis, in his summing-up, has given reasons as to why that power should lie with the minister instead of the planning authority.

I do not really think a case has been built to put this power back onto the planning authority. To get to the point where the minister has to make a decision, the planning authority has already twice agreed that an extension be granted with no criteria. There is no certainty anybody would have an extension granted by the planning authority because there are no guidelines for it. There is no criteria for these extensions to be granted by councils.

In effect, this piece of legislation, while it does grant an extra two years. It does actually outline criteria, albeit the criteria are not terribly extensive. If this was open to legal challenge, then the minister's words would be part of the reference that the judge making a determination would use.

The minister gave some extra comments in his summing up, but basically it says that the minister is satisfied that due to the technical or complex nature of the use or development in respect of which the permit is granted, it is unlikely to be substantially commenced before the permit would otherwise lapse. This actually gives some criteria, whether it is the planning authority that does that or the minister. I think that putting it back into the planning authority again means that the council has to go through a process itself again. It has to reassess, it has to make a recommendation to council and the council has to vote on it.

Ms BURNET - Not necessarily.

Dr BROAD - That may be the case. I do not know. I think that this is a bill that is not massively flawed. It does give power to the minister, but there are guidelines in place, and I do not think the case has been made to hand that back to the planning authority.

Mr ELLIS - I have already outlined the key thinking behind not supporting. Just to flesh that out further, the decision to further extend the timeframe requires weighing up the need for this additional timeframe against set criteria. The minister has a role in providing general oversight of the planning system in Tasmania. This proposed approach complements the various roles that the minister has in granting other extensions of time under the *Land Use Planning and Approvals Act*. The nature of projects that are likely to need additional two-year extensions are those that will likely have some significance to the state or area greater than the council area. For this reason, it is important there is a broader state oversight and consideration.

The government is also conscious that avoiding placing further burdens on local government is making these decisions to extend the time frame against specific criteria. The minister would always seek advice from the council in making the decision, given they had already provided two lots of two-year extensions as well, as seeking advice from the State Planning Office (SPO). They may also choose to seek advice from others with relevant expertise when determining to issue an extension of time.

CHAIR - The question is that the amendments be agreed to.

The Committee divided -

AYES 7

Ms Badger (Teller)
Mr Bayley
Ms Burnet
Mr Garland
Ms Johnston
Ms Rosol
Dr Woodruff

NOES 25

Mr Abetz
Mr Barnett
Mr Behrakis
Mrs Beswick (Teller)
Dr Broad
Ms Brown
Ms Butler
Ms Dow
Mr Ellis
Mr Fairs
Mr Ferguson
Ms Finlay
Ms Haddad
Ms Howlett
Mr Jaensch
Mr Jenner
Mr O'Byrne
Ms O'Byrne
Ms Ogilvie
Mrs Pentland
Mrs Petrusma
Mr Rockliff
Mr Shelton
Mr Street
Ms White
Mr Willie
Mr Winter
Mr Wood

Amendment negatived.

Clause 4 agreed to.

Clause 5 -

Section 53 amended (When does a permit take effect?)

Ms BURNET - There are a number of amendments to clause 5.

First amendment

Page five, clause 5, paragraph (b), proposed new paragraph (d):

Leave out 'Minister'.

Insert instead 'planning authority'.

Second amendment

Page 5, clause 5, paragraph (c), proposed new subsection (5D):

Leave out 'Minister'.

Insert instead 'planning authority'.

Third amendment

Page 6, clause 5, paragraph (c), proposed new subsection (5D) paragraph (a):

Leave out 'Minister'.

Insert instead 'planning authority'.

Fourth amendment

Page 6, clause 5, paragraph (c), proposed new subsection (5D) paragraph (b):

Leave out 'Minister'.

Insert instead 'planning authority'.

Those are the amendments and, just to satisfy Dr Broad, because I think he was missing out on hearing me speak to this, the Greens certainly feel it is important, as do many of our constituents, that the minister is not part of these decisions, and that it is the planning authority instead.

We have heard debate as to why the minister should be doing this, but in my experience, and from speaking to many people in local government, planning authorities actually know planning better than ministers. That is why it is so important they have the information before them. They understand planning. That is why 'planning authority' should be inserted.

Mr ELLIS - I will be very brief. We are going to be opposing these amendments for the same reason that we opposed the other ones.

Dr BROAD - Apologies to the member for Clark, but she should have done that on the previous clause because now her amendment does not make any sense, because she has lost the previous clause. This clause is, 'When does a permit take effect?' By omitting 'Minister' and then inserting 'planning authority', the decision in the previous clause is by the minister, not the planning authority. Therefore, this amendment does not make sense.

It is not consistent with the bill because you have lost the previous amendment. Therefore, this amendment cannot be supported by this place. That is my reading of it. I do not know if the minister has any opinion on that.

Ms BURNET - Chair, I take Dr Broad's point. Can I withdraw?

CHAIR - You can seek leave to withdraw.

Ms BURNET - I seek leave to withdraw. I take Dr Broad's points.

Amendments withdrawn.

Clause 5 agreed to.

Clause 6 agreed to.

Title agreed to.

CHAIR (Mr Behrakis) - The question is that the bill be reported without amendment.

The Committee divided -

AYES 25

Mr Abetz
Mr Barnett
Mrs Beswick
Dr Broad
Ms Brown
Ms Dow
Mr Ellis
Mr Fairs (Teller)
Mr Ferguson
Ms Finlay
Ms Haddad
Mr Jaensch
Mr Jenner
Mr O'Byrne
Ms O'Byrne
Ms Ogilvie
Mrs Pentland
Mrs Petrusma
Mr Rockliff
Mr Shelton
Mr Street
Ms White
Mr Willie
Mr Winter
Mr Wood

NOES 7

Ms Badger
Mr Bayley
Ms Burnet
Mr Garland
Ms Johnston
Ms Rosol (Teller)
Dr Woodruff

Bill reported without amendment.

**LAND USE PLANNING AND APPROVALS AMENDMENT (SUPPORTING
DEVELOPMENT) BILL 2024 (No. 49)**

Third Reading

The SPEAKER (Ms O'Byrne) - The question is that the bill be read the third time.

The House divided -

AYES 25

Mr Abetz
Mr Barnett
Mrs Beswick
Dr Broad
Ms Brown
Ms Dow
Mr Ellis
Mr Fairs
Mr Ferguson
Ms Finlay
Ms Haddad
Mr Jaensch
Mr Jenner
Mr O'Byrne
Ms O'Byrne
Ms Ogilvie
Mrs Pentland
Mrs Petrusma
Mr Rockliff
Mr Shelton (Teller)
Mr Street
Ms White
Mr Willie
Mr Winter
Mr Wood

NOES 7

Ms Badger
Mr Bayley
Ms Burnet
Mr Garland
Ms Johnston
Ms Rosol (Teller)
Dr Woodruff

Bill read the third time.

ADJOURNMENT

[9.42 p.m.]

Mr ABETZ (Franklin - Leader of the House) - Honourable Speaker, allow me to move the most popular motion, Speaker, and that is -

That the House do now adjourn.

Answer to Question - Devonport - Road Infrastructure Around Ferry Terminals

Mr ABETZ (Franklin - Leader of the House) - Honourable Speaker, in answer to a question from Mrs Beswick during question time to the Premier and taken on notice, I can advise TT-Line is undertaking a traffic impact assessment associated with the berth 3 works on the East Devonport site. TT-Line is and will continue to work with Devonport City Council regarding this work.

In addition, to further strengthen the work undertaken by TT-Line, the Department of State Growth is progressing a traffic assessment across East Devonport, including the impact on the Devonport local road network and the impact on the state road network, specifically the Bass Highway. The department is working with council and will be undertaking a site visit early in December.

Launceston General Hospital - Emergency Department Staff Shortages

[9.43 p.m.]

Ms ROSOL (Bass) - Honourable Speaker, I rise this evening to speak about a situation that occurred at the Launceston General Hospital emergency department last night and this morning. The situation was so dire that the Australian Nursing and Midwifery Federation (ANMF) put a call out on social media for any nursing staff who might be available to come in and offer their services at the emergency department last night. A number of people did put their hands up on social media. Looking at some of the comments people made, there were apologies by staff who had had to take leave from the night shift and were feeling bad about it. There were other staff who had offered to swap from the morning shift to work the night shift, but were told that the situation was similarly bad this morning and they would be needed in the morning, so that they would not be able to swap over to help the situation.

This is a crisis that has happened in the emergency department in the last 24 hours, but it is a crisis that has been going on for a very long time, which kind of goes against the meaning of crisis. However, this is a prolonged situation that has been happening in the emergency department at Launceston General Hospital. In August this year, the ANMF called a Code Yellow Protocol, and called on the government and the Department of Health to call a Code Yellow, which is an internal emergency escalation that recognises an emergency situation within the hospital due to internal issues. This was called for by the ANMF back in August and has been in place on and off since that time, as the staffing levels have dropped at times well below the agreed staffing levels within the department. The ANMF has called on the management of the hospital, the Department of Health and the government to all call Code Yellow and recognise the situation, and, in so doing, to trigger a response that would result in improvements and address the issues. The ANMF have been calling for additional resources for LGH emergency department, including increased staffing and increased resources.

We have become aware in the last few days of a situation where some potential applicants have been trying to become staff at the Launceston General Hospital, but the recruitment process has been taking such a long time they have been unable to help. We have heard it can take a minimum of four months to hire staff for the casual pool. Also, while on one hand the government is talking about a recruitment blitz, on the other hand, other people are telling us there is a recruitment freeze, which fits with vacancy control measures. There seem to be contradictory reports on what is happening in this situation. However, it is clear there are people

wanting to be employed, to join the staff and help out in that situation, but due to the recruitment processes, the procedures and bureaucracy, and all the things that need to happen to employ staff, that is not able to happen at the moment.

The implications of this are twofold. The staff are working in an incredibly stressful situation in incredibly stressful conditions. The roll-on effect when there are reduced numbers of staff on the ward is that patient care is compromised. It is important that every action possible is taken to address this situation. For that reason, the Greens call on the Health department to listen to the ANMF and the calls of staff to ensure that safe staffing solutions are put in place, that there is an increase in staffing and increased resources for the LGH emergency department as soon as possible, and that all those blockages to people being employed in the recruitment process are explored and removed so that we can have an improvement in the staffing levels at LGH for the benefit of the staff and for all the patients who go there for care.

Devonport Senior Citizens Guide to Computer Lingo

[9.48 p.m.]

Mrs BESWICK (Braddon) - Honourable Speaker, I recently had the pleasure of attending the sixtieth birthday of the Senior Citizens Club in Devonport. Jill, who is a member of both the Mersey Singers and the Senior Citizens Club, entertained us at this event. She mentioned how her grandchildren loved to teach her all about the fancy computer lingo like they are the clever ones. She tells them, 'My little darlings, we Aussies have been using these terms for years. You think log on is something new? We invented that.' Jill shared with us how she educates her grandchildren about all those tech words and what they really mean. She spoke about a little bit of Aussie computer culture:

For starters, log on is just adding more wood to the barbie. Nice and hot, simple, and when you are done, you log off. That is stopping the wood supply before you create a bonfire.

Monitor: just keeping a good eye on the barbie so the snags do not go up in flames.

Then there is download. That is unloading all the firewood off the ute after a long haul. If you have a hard drive, it is nothing more than the trip home when you have run out of cold tinnies in the esky. A real struggle.

Keyboard: that is just what you hang the ute keys on. That is a handy spot.

Now, a window is obviously what you slam shut when there is a cold breeze and screen is what you shut down in mozzie season to avoid becoming dinner yourself. Speaking of bites, a byte is what those pesky mosquitoes do while a megabyte is a Darwin mozzie bite, a whole new level of pain.

Then there is chip, which is just a classic pub snack and if you have a microchip, that is just the crumbs left at the bottom of the bag when you finish.

When you mow the lawns, you are doing a modem.

And where is the cat? Sprawled across your laptop, of course.

When it comes to cutlery, software is just those plastic forks and knives from Maccas, and hardware is the good stainless steel stuff you get from Kmart that will last you.

Now, a mouse, just a little fella who nibbles the grain on the shed and a mainframe? That is the structure keeping the shed upright.

The web, that is what the spiders make, and naturally, the website is where you would like to put it, under the verandah along the shed walls.

The search engine is what you get to know when the Ute will not start and a cursor that is the word you use when it will not start, and when it finally does, that is when you yell yahoo!

If you are upgrading, that is simply tackling a steep hill in the Ute.

Server though, that is the lovely person at the pub bringing you your counter lunch. If you are a regular then the mail server is the same friendly bloke serving up your counter lunch every time.

Then there is user. That is the neighbour who keeps borrowing your tools and never brings them back. We all know a user or two.

Network is what you are doing when you have got to repair the fishing net after a big haul, while internet is where you would ideally like the fish to end up. If they find a hole in the net that that will netscape off to freedom they go.

Now when we hang the washing, it is online, but if the pegs are not strong enough and it all blows away, that is offline. When you are done with all this nonsense, there is only one thing left to do. Shut down, time for a cold drink, put your feet up and forget your Ted Talk.

Next time someone tries to wow you with the computer knowhow, just remember we Aussies have been doing it for ages.

I had a lovely, entertaining moment with Jill while she read that out to us.

Jan Dunsby - Tribute

[9.51 p.m.]

Ms JOHNSTON (Clark) - I rise tonight to pay tribute to my dear friend Jan Dunsby, Alderman Jan Dunsby, who sadly left us last week after significant illness. I had the great pleasure of meeting Jan as my neighbour. When I lived in Claremont, I moved into a little gorgeous new development and this lovely lady approached me across the fence when I had a nine-week-old baby. She was an absolute gem. She offered me so much advice and support as a new mum and as a neighbour. We soon began to be very good friends. We would often

talk across the fence. My children would jump on the trampoline and yell out to Jan when she came home from work. We became firm friends.

She then became a good colleague at local government. Jan cared deeply for her community. That was a bond that we formed over the neighbourhood fence quite early on. We talked a lot about what we were concerned about in our community. She talked about her advocacy in so many roles, in particular Neighbourhood Watch Tasmania. We talked about our passion for making sure that Glenorchy thrived. We loved our community, absolutely.

Jan was the first to come on board to the Hobart Northern Suburbs Rail Action Group and we formed that. In fact, we held our first community meetings in her loungeroom. She could come across to my house and sit in our loungeroom and we would talk strategy about how we were going to try and influence our local members of parliament to try and reinvigorate passenger rail in the northern suburbs.

Jan cared so deeply about her community. She ran a number of times for local government before she was finally elected in 2014. I know she took that with such great pride and such seriousness. She brought to council a real grassroots commitment to advocating for her community. She put her community first, over and over, time and time again, the many illnesses that plagued her. She would go to council meetings when she was not feeling well, but she would be there and she would stand up and talk on behalf of her community. She would attend community events and hang around right to the end. She was available all the time whether that was during a council meeting or at a council event or committee meeting or whatever it might be, she was available.

We had great times. We would go together and spent quite a few New Year's Eves celebrating on the dance floor with the Granada Tavern to Eagle Rock. She absolutely loved Eagle Rock. She would come to council meetings and talk passionately about her commitment and her passion for the Collingwood team. I know, honourable speaker, that is something you share with Jan as well.

She would bring absolute joy and delight to our council meeting. She would always make sure that we were really grounded in the people that we were there to represent. It was a real pleasure to know and work with her. When times get tough on Glenorchy City Council, as they very quickly did after that 2014 election, Jan stood with integrity. She stood up to the maladministration and the dodginess of a cabal of aldermen who were doing the wrong thing by the community. That took enormous bravery on her part. As a first-time member, she spoke up, and was heard by the Board of Inquiry. They listened to her. It was her evidence in particular that was pivotal to many of the Board of Inquiry recommendations and findings against the previous council administration.

I commend her for her bravery and her integrity. She was a tireless advocate, particularly for those people in the community living with disability. She was constantly reminding us that we must do better for those people living with disability in our community. She wanted to make sure Glenorchy was the most inclusive community you could possibly live in and she lived that every day. She worked with ParaQuad and so many different organisations where she committed her time and effort. It really should be commended.

Finally, I note that towards the end there, Jan had unfortunately failing health, but she did not stop. She absolutely would not stop. I vividly remember chairing council meetings

where she would sit in her hospital bed and join online with drips and bells and things going off because she wanted to make sure that her voice was heard on behalf of her community. That is dedication, to be doing that in your hospital bed.

Jan will be missed by so many, in particular her family and her friends. My heart goes out to them. She has left a big hole in our lives and we miss her greatly. Jan, my dear friend, Alderman Jan Dunsby, may you rest in peace. Vale Jan Dunsby.

The SPEAKER - Thank you. I am sure all members join in passing on our sympathy to Alderman Dunsby's family. She was a very fierce woman and a very strong Collingwood supporter. One of my Magpie mates.

Spero-Wanderer Wilderness

[9.57 p.m.]

Ms BADGER (Lyons) - Honourable Speaker, I rise this evening to talk about the magnificent Spero-Wanderer Wilderness. For many people, the Spero-Wanderer might not sound like a familiar name. It is not something that we talk or hear about a lot. It is commonly referred to as the Southwest Conservation Area, termed the Spero-Wanderer Wilderness after two of the four magnificent wild rivers that run through there, the other two being the Lewis and the Mainwaring.

The Spero-Wanderer sounds very mystical, very intriguing, something that we could put our name to here in Tasmania as another great wild place to discover. Unfortunately, the names are not quite from the origins as mystic as that. They are, in fact, the name of two of Thomas Bather Moore's dogs from the early 1900s. He was an early track cutter in that area and one of the first to discover the riches of that area.

The Southwest Conservation Area, or the Spero-Wanderer Wilderness, is 138,000 hectares right adjacent to the Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area. It is also jovially known as the area on the map called Christine Milne's Hand. For members who might not be familiar, when some of the initial Wilderness World Heritage Area boundaries were being drawn up, legend has it that in a debate of where the boundary lines should go, rather than have a nuanced debate about different ecological communities and values of the area, there was a hand slammed on the table, said, 'No, there will be no more extensions,' and a line was simply drawn around that hand. Thus was the boundary. Very scientific.

As a result we have an incredible wild landscape that is under protected that could be an incredible asset to our west coast if it was included as a part of the Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area. I have been incredibly fortunate to be one of many who walk through this area and visit it. It is incredibly special. The Huon pine stands, particularly along the Spero and Wanderer Rivers, are like nothing else that I have had the pleasure of seeing in this state. There is a tree that we affectionately called the Dixon Tree after photographer Grant Dixon that has a girth of over five metres. It is simply staggering how old that tree must be. This is home to the incredible and endangered Azure Kingfisher, that just flutter along the river, abundant unlike anywhere else. It is home to a healthy Tasmanian devil population with incredible biological genetic diversity. We know this is essential as the devils are facing the facial tumour diseases. To have that population is incredibly special.

I am told if thylacines still exist anywhere, this would be the spot. There are certainly plenty of stories of early trappers being stalked by thylacines and pups along the beach as they were pining along the Spero River there. As the tides come in on the beaches and recede of a morning, you wake up to just a highway of footprints of every conceivable animal that you could wish to find in Tasmania. So if someone said they found a thylacine footprint down there, I do not think too many people would be surprised.

It is also an incredibly rich cultural landscape. The sites that you see that show the rich habitation for thousands of years by the palawa people are extraordinary, and those sites deserve the utmost protection. It is a landscape that is wild, rugged and remote and it has immense solitude, but it is not a place that feels solitary. It feels like it has been inhabited before. You do not feel alone, despite the remoteness there. You are certainly not alone. Often you will find fishermen who are seeking retreat from the wild west coast weather in a lot of the bays around there.

Indeed, some of the threats to the area also include ocean waste. There is a fantastic team, Clean up Tasmania, that do a trip down there every year to help clean up some of the waste that washes up on those otherwise very wild beaches. We have to do all that we can to support them to continue to keep that area clean. Some of the other threats include some illegal quad bike activity. There is a series of scattered old mining exploration leases that are sitting abandoned at the moment.

This is an incredible part of Tasmania that is so under-protected and unknown. We have to do all that we can to help ensure that the outstanding universal values that the Spero-Wanderer Wilderness has are properly protected. I note that photographer, Grant Dixon, has an exhibition on at the moment at Wild Island, just across the road. I encourage all members to have a look at this magnificent wild place. The exhibition is called *Forgotten Wilderness: the Spero Wanderer Region*, and it is showing until 1 December.

Statement by Mr Garland - Committee Proceedings

[10.02 p.m.]

Mr GARLAND (Braddon) - Honourable Speaker, I rise to speak about an important matter. This is an important matter because it highlights that I have been learning and developing as a member of parliament.

I was inspired by the Premier's comments in parliament earlier that he and his government had got things wrong and that he said that Tasmanians were interested in members of parliament taking responsibility and owning up to their mistakes. I do not make light of making mistakes, but I want to highlight that being a new member of parliament without the support of a party has been challenging for me as well as my staff. This has not been without mistakes.

I cannot thank other members of parliament enough and the staff of the parliament who have been helpful at every turn. From IT staff and the Clerks to staff of other members, the Premier's office and all members of the House of Assembly and the Legislative Council, thank you. I have learnt so much in the past few months about parliament and I am still learning each day.

I wish to speak about an issue that was brought to my attention today during the tabled paper of Mr Bayley on behalf of the Joint Select Committee on Energy Matters. This relates to the special report on the use of excerpts from a committee hearing broadcast. I thank the committee members for raising these issues and bringing it to my attention. I apologise to members of parliament and to committee members for not keeping the standards expected of this parliament. I am still coming to grips with how parliament works and take this opportunity to learn from a mistake.

I hope members can find it in their hearts to give me a little grace, and I ask for forgiveness for not fully grasping the requirements of the responsibility of a committee member.

For context, proceedings from a recent Energy committee were republished with some video editing on my public Facebook page. I wish to apologise for any offence caused to the witness in the video that was republished from committee broadcast onto my social media page.

Yes, I have strong opinions on a range of matters, including matters related to the Energy committee, but I now know that when undertaking committee work, I must be impartial and objective when considering witness comments and not make public comment on proceedings until the committee work is concluded.

When this matter was raised with me by the Chair of the committee, I spoke with my staff and then directed my staff to remove the video. A member in my office removed the video and associated commentary from my Facebook page the following day, and the video has been removed from publication. In placing an edited version of that broadcast on my Facebook page, neither I nor my office intended to deliberately misrepresent the evidence given before the committee during a public hearing.

By not reproducing the broadcast in absolute chronological order, along with partially overlaying the video with additional content intended to engage Facebook followers, I accept that this placed the evidence out of context and, on reflection, was misleading. For that, I apologise to all members of this parliament. I respect the decision by a fellow committee member to raise this issue about actions in the committee. I thank parliamentary staff for answering my questions and questions from my staff, and now my office and I are aware of the responsibilities I have as a member of a committee.

Over the past week I have sought more clarity on what is and is not able to be republished and what commentary can be made on proceedings of parliament. My staff and I will honour the wishes of the committee and the parliament to not reflect on committee proceedings of committees that I am a member of and will take more caution on how proceedings from parliament are used on my social media. I encourage other members to reflect on this also.

I thank the Speaker for further clarity before Question Time and after this experience. I might apologise for a little indiscretion also that has occurred since. I have more understanding on what is acceptable. Video is a great way to communicate to constituents and I continue to seek a balance between informing my electorate and meeting my commitments to honouring the conduct expected of me as a member of parliament and making sure that my actions meet the standards expected of me in this place. Thank you, Honourable Speaker.

The House adjourned at 10.06 p.m.