



PARLIAMENT OF TASMANIA

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

REPORT OF DEBATES

Wednesday 1 June 2022

REVISED EDITION

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Wednesday 1 June 2022

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

RECOGNITION OF VISITORS

Mr SPEAKER - Honourable members, this morning I welcome years 5 and 6 students from the Goulburn Street Primary School. Good morning and welcome to Parliament House.

Members - Hear, hear.

QUESTIONS

Homelessness - Cessation of NRAS - Government Action

Ms WHITE question to PREMIER, Mr ROCKLIFF

[10.02 a.m.]

Your Government has absolutely ignored the need to put roofs over the heads of Tasmanians. One of the most glaring and tragic examples of that is for the entire eight years of your Liberal Government, you have known that the National Rental Affordability Scheme (NRAS) was coming to an end, yet did nothing.

Today, in the gallery, are a handful of the many Tasmanians who face the cruel reality of your failure to act. There is Adrian, Gordon, Judy, Jean, Sally and Lorraine. Each of these people is aged in at least their 70s and each of them has been living in NRAS properties at Kingston for 10 years. Each of them in the past fortnight has been issued with an eviction notice to get out of their homes within the next four to five weeks. None of them have anywhere to go.

How do you explain your Government's lack of action and what do you have to say to them now that they face eviction and homelessness?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I thank the member for her question. I acknowledge the members and representatives of people who you have introduced to the parliament and thank them for coming in today.

I understand the anxiety and concern that you must be feeling at the present time -

Mr Winter - Do you really understand that? Do you?

Mr SPEAKER - Order.

Mr ROCKLIFF - The National Rental Affordability Scheme is an Australian Government program that is gradually fulfilling its obligations and is coming to an end for

some Tasmanian clients. Unfortunately, this situation is being felt across the country for tenants of the NRAS scheme in properties under private ownership across Australia. It is important to note that via agreement with NRAS participants between 2010 and 2014, the Tasmanian Government secured longer term use of more than 75 per cent of dwellings in partnership with not-for-profit organisations which house students and vulnerable Tasmanians. We will continue to do so for at least 30 years.

Our Government understands that the uncertainty caused by this federal program coming to an end is causing anxiety for Tasmanian residents.

Ms White - You evicted people last week.

Mr SPEAKER - Order.

Mr ROCKLIFF - The minister has met with -

Members interjecting.

Mr SPEAKER - Order.

Mr ROCKLIFF - The minister has met with some of the residents from Redwood village on Monday night to better understand their circumstances. That is what we will continue to do. Housing is a fundamental basic need and as the minister has already outlined we have a new Housing minister sworn in, Ms Julie Collins.

Members interjecting.

Mr SPEAKER - Order. It is a very serious question and there are people in here who wish to listen to the Premier's answer. I will not take any interjections.

Mr ROCKLIFF - As I was saying, there is a new federal Housing minister who has been announced, and our minister for Housing has written to the new minister for Housing to work through a number of these matters.

In recognition of the situation residents are in right now, the minister has asked the Department of Communities Tasmania to work closely with residents leaving NRAS to ensure they are offered whatever support they are eligible for under our new Tasmanian programs. We will work with our residents and people in need. That is what we have done, and consistently done over the course of the last eight years as a government.

That is a fundamental right for every Tasmanian to have a roof over their heads and for them to be safe, and we will act. This program is coming to an end and we will work with the new federal Housing minister and state and federal governments to ensure security for all Tasmanians when it comes to housing affordability.

Social Housing - Cessation of NRAS Program

Ms WHITE question to PREMIER, Mr ROCKLIFF

[10.07 a.m.]

You say that housing is a fundamental right. There are members of the public in the gallery today who are facing homelessness. You have the power to do something. You got to your feet and said you were going to do nothing unless they were eligible. One of the problems facing these people who are facing eviction and homelessness is that some of them are not currently eligible for any assistance from your Government. Will you act to do something to make sure they can all access the private rental incentive scheme?

The public housing waiting list means they are close to two years before they get help from your Government. Will you today commit to each of these people who are here with us and others who are facing eviction because of the end of NRAS, that every single one of them will be able to be supported under the private rental incentive scheme, so that they can remain in a home?

Ms O'Connor - Will you write to your federal colleague, Ms White? You have some power here too.

Ms White - Absolutely. She is only just being sworn in. These people have been in power for eight years to plan for this. I cannot believe you said that, Cassy.

Mr SPEAKER - Order.

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I thank the member for her question. Of course, we will do everything possible to assist -

Ms White - Will you do that? Will you make sure they are eligible?

Mr SPEAKER - Order.

Mr ROCKLIFF - Our Housing minister has met with a number of residents and made contact with our federal colleagues, the new government and the new Housing minister. I offer to meet the contingent that is here today following question time to understand from them the direct impact with NRAS coming to an end. As I have always done -

Ms O'Byrne - Will you meet with the people who you evicted last week? If you would like, I can organise a meeting with the people you evicted last week.

Mr SPEAKER - Order, last warning.

Mr ROCKLIFF - As I have always done, in my 20 years in parliament when people come to me seeking support, I do the absolute best to support them and that will continue today.

COVID-19 - Mask Mandate in Schools

Dr WOODRUFF question to MINISTER FOR HEALTH, Mr ROCKLIFF

[10.10 a.m.]

Daily COVID-19 case numbers remain very high. Another 829 people reported being infected yesterday. More than 150 000 Tasmanians have been infected since the borders opened - more than double what you projected. Of these, nearly 50 000 are children. So far, 40 per cent of primary and high school students have been infected. Meanwhile, evidence builds every week about the disabling long-term complications that can follow COVID-19 infection.

Young people have their whole lives ahead of them. Do you agree we should do everything we can to prevent them from contracting this airborne virus? Will you rule out removing the mask-wearing requirement for high school students and introduce mask wearing in primary schools?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I thank the member, Dr Woodruff, for her question. I understand her concern with respect to the pandemic and COVID-19, and her advocacy in terms of restrictions, mask wearing -

Greens members - Protections.

Mr ROCKLIFF - Protections. We have consistently said that we will follow Public Health advice and we have done. As I have said previously, I get the data from the day every single night and my heart sinks when I see deaths recorded, with COVID-19 or of COVID-19. Thankfully, our hospitalisations and death rates are comparatively low compared to the rest of the country. I know that brings no comfort to the many Tasmanians who have passed away as a result of, or with COVID-19. My condolences to their families, friends and loved ones.

We have consistently followed Public Health advice -

Dr Woodruff - There are protections that can keep children safe - 50 000 children.

Mr SPEAKER - Order.

Mr ROCKLIFF - Others states have not, Dr Woodruff, as you well know. There has been some separation between the Public Health equivalent in other states and the Tasmanian Government and other governments. We have worked very closely and been guided by Public Health advice.

Dr Woodruff interjecting.

Mr SPEAKER - Dr Woodruff, order.

Mr ROCKLIFF - We have been consistent in that. You have mentioned masks in primary schools. There are good practical reasons why we do not compulsorily require our primary school students to wear masks. Of course, they can if they wish. We will be following

the Public Health advice with respect to high schools as well. As you know, it is still a requirement to wear masks in our high schools. This will continue until we have the discussion with Public Health and their recommendation is to lift that requirement.

I can assure you, Dr Woodruff, that your concerns are not lost on me as Premier and Minister for Health and, indeed, as Minister for Mental Health and Wellbeing. We have been consistent in following Public Health advice and we will continue to do so.

Public Trustee - Compensation Process

Ms JOHNSTON question to ATTORNEY-GENERAL, Ms ARCHER

[10.14 a.m.]

You would be aware that Advocacy Tasmania has been representing many people who have been cruelly treated by the failings of the Public Trustee going back over decades, causing monetary loss, mental trauma and even death to homeless Tasmanians.

I note your response to the Advocacy Tasmania CEO that you may consider payments to victims in circumstances where there is actual loss. At least you have acknowledged that people have suffered but what will be the process, what is the test, what hurdles must be cleared? These people have been to hell and back. It is not acceptable if applicants for compensation have to prove loss through expensive, lengthy and distressing court or quasi-legal processes. That would be mounting cruelty on top of cruelty.

Will you establish a compensation scheme that is properly funded, timely, fair and easily accessible? Will your scheme acknowledge not just monetary loss but trauma and mental suffering?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I thank the Independent member for Clark, Ms Johnston, for her question. It is a matter of interest, I am sure, for all members of this House and our community.

Our Government is one that is leading with integrity, that is courageous, accountable and delivers on our commitments. We are 100 per cent committed to ensuring Tasmania is a place where everyone feels valued, included, encouraged and supported in the best way they can be.

Ms White - You are not helping people who are here in the gallery today.

Mr SPEAKER - Order.

Ms ARCHER - It is no more evident than in my portfolios and particularly in this area.

Not interested in this response?

Ms White - We want you to help people who are facing homelessness. Will you do something about that?

Mr SPEAKER - Order, Ms White.

Ms ARCHER - So you are not interested in Ms Johnston's question on the Public Trustee?

Ms White - Are you interested in helping people who are facing homelessness?

Mr SPEAKER - Order. Attorney-General, through the Chair, please. Interjections should cease.

Ms ARCHER - I am answering the question Ms Johnston put to me, which is an important question and I thank her for it.

Members would be aware that in response to the community concerns raised, I called for an independent review into the administrative and operational practices of the Public Trustee in June last year, and appointed the highly respected barrister, Damian Bugg AM QC, to carry out this important work.

I deliberately appointed someone independent of government so that he could make various recommendations. It is necessary for this review to be carried out independent of government to provide the opportunity for issues to be raised and appropriate responses identified so we could implement the necessary improvements to the way services are delivered. That was the purpose of the review and I am pleased that the Government was able to provide a response to the Bugg review.

As I have previously announced, the Government supports, in principle, all 28 recommendations of the Independent Review of the Public Trustee. I also am pleased to report that the Public Trustee itself accepts all of the recommendations.

Members would be aware from the Budget that the Government has put in significant funds to enable the Public Trustee to deliver these services and deliver on its community service obligations. There is \$4.3 million for each of those things.

In relation to the independent review, it did not suggest that there were any fundamental failings or individual harms that would warrant a special compensation scheme to be established. However, as a government, we will always consider appropriate ex gratia payments in circumstances where there are instances of actual loss. That does not involve legal proceedings, therefore it does not involve the usual costs and delays that may occur in court proceedings.

With any proposal to provide compensation to individuals impacted by an organisation, the matter is first considered by that organisation, in this case the Public Trustee. Ultimately, the decision, that is the ex gratia payment system, would then be made by the Treasurer, under the Treasurer's instructions.

I make that very clear because there is a process that people can go through in special circumstances. They are not common but I am saying this because the review did not recommend a special scheme. The reason I am saying it needs to first go to the organisation is because the Public Trustee is an entity in itself, being a GBE.

In closing, I acknowledge the role Advocacy Tasmania has played in these matters and in providing essential support and advocacy services to vulnerable Tasmanians. The

Government supports, or supports in principle, all 28 recommendations of the independent review. We will be continuing with this work, as demonstrated by the clear financial commitment to enable that to occur in the Budget. I also highlight the community service obligation aspect of the Public Trustee, which is in the sum of \$4.3 million.

Budget 2022-21 - Health Infrastructure

Mrs ALEXANDER question to MINISTER for HEALTH, Mr ROCKLIFF

[10.20 a.m.]

Can you update the House on the Liberal Government's investment in health infrastructure across the state? How does this investment compare to the Labor alternative? I need to understand what it looks like under the Labor alternative as well.

Ms White interjecting.

Mr SPEAKER - Order.

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I thank the member for her question. I know she has a considerable interest in this matter. Our Government is focused on delivering on contemporary health infrastructure. In fact, over the course of the next decade we have some \$1.5 billion of health infrastructure to deliver - including the Improving Patient Outcomes digital strategy which I have spoken about in this House. That is \$475 million over the course of the next 10 years, as expected, to deliver and support better patient outcomes and, over the forward Estimates, some \$150 million.

We are delivering projects to upgrade and expand facilities at our hospitals and community health services. The Launceston General Hospital redevelopment master plan is an investment of some \$580 million over the course of the next 10 years.

Opposition members interjecting.

Mr SPEAKER - Order.

Mr ROCKLIFF - There is also the expansion of stage 2 of the Royal Hobart Hospital redevelopment which will deliver over \$200 million in new and upgraded facilities, a \$60 million redevelopment of the North West Regional Hospital and a further \$20 million capital investment in the Mersey Community Hospital, which I had the pleasure to witness a few days ago in terms of the commencement of construction.

Yesterday the Leader of the Opposition had an opportunity to outline an alternative in her budget reply and failed to do so. No alternative, just personal attacks and no plans for our future, so it is no wonder that Tasmanians do not know what the Labor Party stands for.

Opposition members interjecting.

Mr SPEAKER - Order.

Mr ROCKLIFF - On one hand, they argue that we should not be going into debt to invest in critical infrastructure which we know is essential, and on the other hand they continue to criticise our 10-year \$580 million stage 3 development of the Launceston General Hospital.

As we heard yesterday, the Budget reply speeches of those opposite were negative, provided no useful alternative ideas and contained inaccurate and frankly misleading assertions. They criticised us for failing to deliver on the Glenorchy and Burnie ambulance superstations, but we are investing just over \$20 million to build these new stations to meet future demand.

Ms White - But you haven't even started; they are promises from two elections ago.

Mr SPEAKER - Order, Ms White.

Mr ROCKLIFF - Earlier this month the tender for the new Burnie ambulance station was released. Today, I am pleased to announce that following an extensive search for suitable land in Glenorchy, a site has now been acquired for the ambulance station at 11 Timsbury Road. Construction on this new exciting development is expected to commence later this year, with completion by mid-2024.

Members interjecting.

Mr SPEAKER - Order. The Premier has the call; no-one else in the Chamber should be speaking.

Mr ROCKLIFF - Today I am pleased to confirm that our Government has established a new ambulance station in Bridport, with a first branch station officer commencing yesterday and a second officer commencing later this week to provide an improved emergency response for the local area, and other members of Bass would welcome that indeed.

Given the state Opposition's ongoing criticisms of our infrastructure investment, just think for a minute what life might be like under a Labor government in, say, 2032. Let me paint a picture for you: it is 2032 and the Royal Hobart Hospital ED will not have been super-sized so there is no additional bedding capacity, there is no new 38-bed cardiology ward and no expansion of the ICU. This is a consequence of you not investing in infrastructure, which is clearly evident by your Budget reply. Under Labor, the Launceston General Hospital will have lost out on its new much-needed \$580 million development. This means no new mental health precinct, no new tower for inpatient and outpatient services, and no new inpatient unit for older people.

Members interjecting.

Mr SPEAKER - Order.

Mr ROCKLIFF - North-west residents will not have had the benefit of the North West Regional Hospital redevelopment, with no mental health facility, and similarly with the Mersey hospital. You have to make alternative -

Ms WHITE - Point of order, Mr Speaker, under standing order 45, relevance. If the Premier needs a reality check, maybe he should talk about the people in the gallery who do not have a house - if he wants to talk about failed infrastructure.

Mr SPEAKER - Order, Ms White. I can accept the point of relevance, but the question was put and the Premier is answering it. It is from his own side so of course -

Ms White - He should concentrate on the present, Mr Speaker.

Mr SPEAKER - You are in politics and when you ask a question, or when a question is put and there are some things you do not like to hear, you have a chance at a later date to rebut those, but not in question time and not through interjection.

Mr ROCKLIFF - Under a Labor government, which has criticised us for going into debt to fund critical infrastructure, there would be no plans for infrastructure. Our health system would not keep pace with the latest technology, as an example.

Tasmanians are wondering why Labor has no plan for health. It is the number-one issue and the number-one priority for many Tasmanians - and Labor has form on this. We are investing in critical infrastructure - the Royal Hobart Hospital, the Launceston General Hospital, the Mersey Community Hospital, North West Regional Hospital - and we are doing it for a very good reason, the massive underinvestment for 16 years under their government. This was a time when they were also sacking a nurse a day for nine months.

I expected more from the Leader of the Opposition yesterday when it came to an alternative budget. On one hand they are complaining about debt and on the other they have no plans for future infrastructure at all.

This is a government that will listen to Tasmanians. This is a government that will employ more nurses and health professionals, which we have clearly demonstrated. This is a government that will ensure we have the most modern, up-to-date, technology-driven infrastructure for our health future.

Australia Day - Support for Changing Date

Mr O'BYRNE question to PREMIER, Mr ROCKLIFF

[10.29 a.m.]

This week is Reconciliation Week. In asking this question I acknowledge your personal and your Government's ongoing commitments to truth-telling and treaty, and acknowledge your presence this morning at the reconciliation breakfast which, for those who attended, would have been inspired by some of the speakers.

More and more Tasmanians are feeling uncomfortable about celebrating Australia Day on 26 January, as this date is a date of great pain for our First Nations peoples. In 2021, former premier Peter Gutwein stated that he supported the national conversation around changing the date of Australia Day. In January this year he took it one step further, supporting the move from 26 January and outlined his preference for a January three-day weekend model to

celebrate a national day away from the pain and divisiveness currently experienced by many. This was a significant statement from a premier of our state with our history. It lifted hopes.

Do you and the Government you now lead share the former premier's views that the date of Australia Day should be changed and, if so, what steps are you taking to progress this change?

Ms O'Connor - Good question.

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I thank the member for his question. The event this morning in Reconciliation Week was organised by Reconciliation Tasmania. A number of our members, including our minister for Aboriginal Affairs and the Deputy Premier, attended. I can say how uplifting that event was, listening to Kaytlyn Johnson. There was an outstanding presentation as well from Thomas Mayor, who recited the Uluru Statement off the cuff, without a single note, and passionately advocated for a change to our constitution. Frankly, I supported his very clear argument in respect to that.

Australia Day is a national conversation and one that I am increasingly concerned is becoming increasingly divisive. By nature, I am not a divisive person, and bringing people together, Aboriginal people from Tasmania, and all Tasmanians to unite and celebrate Australia Day, on a day that we can all unite, is a clear objective of mine.

You outlined the previous premier's view on this particular matter, and I support that view. It is very clear. My position on the matter has been consistent. You mentioned the last day in January or last weekend in January. I support the previous premier's view on that; I was his deputy when he made that statement.

In the meantime, I say that I am deeply committed to delivering an Aboriginal-led treaty and truth telling pathway started by the previous premier, Mr Gutwein. We recognise the national day is a day that needs to be facilitated and discussed at a Commonwealth level. I want to make my views clear, and I believe I have done that today, which is consistent with the previous premier's views.

Housing - Cessation of NRAS - Impact

Ms WHITE question to MINISTER for STATE DEVELOPMENT, CONSTRUCTION and HOUSING, Mr BARNETT

[10.33 a.m.]

You know that each of these people in the gallery today faces homelessness. You know that they have nowhere to turn except you. Your Government has known this was a possibility since the day you were elected in 2014. It is distressing to see the lack of action by your Government to help. You know that they will either have to leave their homes in weeks, or face the prospect of paying market rent now that NRAS is ending. This means their rent will more than double from about \$412 a fortnight to about \$900 a fortnight, an impossible ask - even you would have to admit that.

What are you going to do to ensure that they do not become homeless, or face the prospect of spending the majority of their pension paying rent?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I thank the Leader of the Opposition for the question. I acknowledge in the Chamber Jean and her colleagues from Redwood Village. We caught up on Monday night. I specifically wanted to catch up with them and hear their concerns, the anxiety and fears about the weeks and months ahead. The reason I was there was to listen, to get that feedback, and to be better informed about the circumstances in which they live and the circumstances which they face under the National Rental Affordability Scheme, which is a national scheme, a federal government scheme.

I made it very clear in that meeting on Monday night that I would do everything I possibly could and I had a departmental representative at that meeting together with somebody from my office. There were three of us there, and we listened. We received the feedback and we made a commitment to do everything that we possibly could to support them and respond to the concerns that they had. They were aware that this is a national scheme. As a result of that I indicated some days ago that I would be writing to the new Housing minister and the new minister for Homelessness, Ms Julie Collins. We became aware of that last night and I have reached out to the minister.

Ms Finlay - Did you become aware of this issue just this week? Did you write to the Morrison government when they were in power for the whole time of your term in government?

Mr SPEAKER - Order.

Mr BARNETT - Mr Speaker, I rang Ms Collins this morning and further I wrote to Ms Collins to congratulate her on her appointment as minister for Housing and minister for Homelessness, and to say that I look forward to working with her on all of these issues on behalf of all Tasmania.

Ms Finlay - Did former housing ministers write to the former federal housing ministers and ask the same thing?

Mr SPEAKER - Member for Bass, order.

Mr BARNETT - I look forward to having those discussions with her and I sought a meeting at the earliest opportunity. In addition, I have asked my Department of Communities Tasmania to work closely with the residents who are in this Chamber from Redwood Village, and others around Tasmania, leaving the NRAS scheme to ensure that they are offered whatever support they are eligible for under our Tasmanian program.

I note that the Private Rental Incentives Program, which this Government has changed to enable tenanted properties under the NRAS scheme to be considered eligible for assessment under the state provided program. This budget has included a further \$9.25 million for that scheme, for which I am very grateful.

I want to put a little bit of context to the background because this is very important with respect to the scheme. The NRAS scheme program has different eligibility from housing

programs in Tasmania but, where possible, we will provide that assistance to those tenants. Regarding the background to the program, 422 properties have exited the NRAS scheme in Tasmania already with 1085 to come. However, of those 1085, there are 966 units that will be available long-term as they are either owned by UTAS - 770 - or are long-term units owned by community housing providers, 196. That leaves 89 privately owned units that will exit the scheme over the next four years with a further 30 units in 2029.

We take this very seriously. There is nothing more important than housing and homelessness in addressing the concerns here in Tasmania. It is not just here in Tasmania. That is why we have released the most comprehensive and significant housing initiative in this state's history, with the commitment of 10 000 homes by 2032, and \$1.5 billion investment; \$208 million in this year alone, \$538 million over the four years.

Ms Finlay - Who? How many of your previous housing ministers?

Mr BARNETT - Members opposite, rather than consistently interjecting, should be listening to the initiatives and concerns that have been expressed. Be assured, we will do everything we can to assist wherever possible.

NRAS - Contact with Former Federal Government

Ms WHITE question to MINISTER for STATE DEVELOPMENT, CONSTRUCTION and HOUSING, Mr BARNETT

[10.39 a.m.]

It is no surprise to you - or it certainly should not be - certainly it is no surprise to us, and it should not be a surprise to any of your former housing ministers that this scheme was going to end. The question we have is whether you or any of the former housing ministers of the Rockliff Government wrote to the federal ministers to ask them how they were going to help? Or have you left it to the very last minute when people like the people who are in the gallery today are facing eviction and homelessness? What have you done before this moment today? Did you ever contact your federal colleagues?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I thank the Leader of the Opposition for the question, and respond very directly: what have you done?

Members interjecting.

Mr BARNETT - Have you picked up the phone to the Prime Minister, Mr Albanese, and responded. Have you contacted the federal member for Franklin?

Members interjecting.

Mr SPEAKER - Order, order.

Ms WHITE - Point of order, Mr Speaker. I ask you to draw the minister's attention to the question. It is not about me. It is about the people who are in the gallery who are facing homelessness. He should turn his mind to that.

Mr SPEAKER - Point of orders are not an opportunity to restate a position. The minister has the call.

Mr BARNETT - It is very troubling to hear the concerns expressed by the Leader of the Opposition. I wonder if she has picked up the phone to the Prime Minister or Ms Collins.

Members interjecting.

Mr SPEAKER - Order. Minister, if you could. This is a very serious issue. There has been a series of questions on it. It is disrespectful, no matter how the minister is going about answering it, to keep interjecting. We have members of the public here. They would like to listen to the answer. I do not want to listen to too many more interjections.

Members on my left, be very careful in the next couple of minutes or you will find yourself watching Question Time from the screen outside.

Mr BARNETT - Thank you, Mr Speaker. This side of the House is doing everything possible to respond. I made it clear in my remarks that we have actually changed the scheme.

Members interjecting.

Mr SPEAKER - Order. Ms Butler, you can leave the Chamber.

Ms Butler - Mr Speaker, I was not speaking then.

Mr SPEAKER - I admit that it is very difficult with masks on but I indicated to the Opposition that I did not wish to hear any interjections. If it was not Ms Butler, I apologise. You can stay there for now. However, if there is any mumbling during the rest of this question, the next person I see speaking will leave.

Mr BARNETT - Thank you, Mr Speaker. We have actually changed the scheme -

Members interjecting.

Mr WINTER - Point of order, Mr Speaker.

Mr SPEAKER - Sit. I have asked the minister to continue. I did not hear the interjection. Obviously, there was something said but I did not hear it.

Ms ARCHER - Point of order, Mr Speaker. What I actually said, with respect, Mr Speaker -

Ms Finlay - What standing order are you referring to? What standing order has you on your feet?

Mr SPEAKER - Order, let us all settle down. The minister has the call. I have asked for some respect in the Chamber. He will be listened to in silence.

Mr BARNETT - Mr Speaker, we have been proactive. We have changed the scheme to allow for applications from those on the NRAS scheme. We have been proactive in addition to that. As I have indicated earlier, those involved with UTAS, 770 on the NRAS scheme now have long-term available accommodation. With regard to community housing providers, 196 have long-term accommodation. This is an initiative and effort where the state Government, through the department of past ministers and the past government, have done everything we can. I call for a bipartisan approach, in fact, tripartisan, across parliament, to make a difference for people in this space. I want everybody to make the effort.

I reflect on the comments of Prime Minister Albanese. I congratulate the Prime Minister on his election and look forward to working with him and his ministerial and parliamentary colleagues to make a difference for people in Tasmania who are doing it tough, who are vulnerable. He made the comment that his federal ministers would have 'free rein' in their ministerial responsibilities. That applies to Ms Collins, as it applies to all of the ministers. I hope to have a very cooperative, positive working relationship with Ms Collins, the federal member for Franklin, who represents our members from Redwood Village. When we met on Monday night, I asked if they had caught up with their local member, Ms Collins, and they indicated they had not.

Mr Winter - So it is their fault, is it?

Mr BARNETT - I hope there is an opportunity for the concerns raised in this place today can be -

Mr SPEAKER - If you could wind up please, minister.

Mr BARNETT - accepted and noted. I also acknowledge the offer of the Premier to meet with the Redwood Village residents, and I appreciate that. We want to do everything we can. I call for tripartisan support -

Members interjecting.

Mr BARNETT - and effort to respond to these difficult issues.

Member Suspended

Member for Franklin - Mr Winter

Mr Winter - Just fix it.

Mr SPEAKER - Mr Winter, thank you very much for that. You will be leaving for the remainder of Question Time

Mr Winter withdrew.

Ms O'Connor - Mr Speaker.

Mr Tucker - Mr Speaker.

Ms O'Connor - I beat you by about five seconds this time.

Mr SPEAKER - If you could sit down for a moment until Mr Winter leaves.

Ms O'CONNOR - Mr Speaker, I ask you to give me the call because I jumped first but also because I need to ask the minister who leaves at 11 a.m.

Mr Tucker - That is fair enough.

Mr SPEAKER - No, I make the call round here. Two people jumped together. I am giving the call to the member for Lyons.

Ms O'CONNOR - Point of order, Mr Speaker, standing order 122 is clear that the Speaker shall give the call to the member who rose first. I clearly rose about three seconds before Mr Tucker, who was slow off his feet.

Mr SPEAKER - I have made a call. Thank you. Member for Lyons.

Budget 2022-23 - Skills and Training

Mr TUCKER question to MINISTER for SKILLS, TRAINING, and WORKFORCE GROWTH, Mr JAENSCH

[10.47 a.m.]

Can you outline how the 2022-23 Budget is investing in skills and training to strengthen Tasmania's future? How do these investments reflect the priorities of Tasmanians? Why are they important to keep our economy strong?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I thank the member for Lyons for his question. The Tasmanian Liberal Government is strengthening Tasmania's future. We are ensuring that more Tasmanians can access the training they need to get a job. I am proud that this is a key focus of the 2022-23 Budget.

Following our significant TasTAFE reforms passed last year, which will deliver better outcomes for our learners and businesses for years to come, this Budget invests a further \$15.5 million into TasTAFE. This new funding includes \$7 million to support students and additional TasTAFE teachers. This bolsters our education commitment to deliver 100 more teachers and provide additional resources and administrative support for these staff.

There is \$5 million to complete the Water and Energy Trades Centre of Excellence at TasTAFE's Clarence campus - game-changing new facilities which will provide a modern, state-of-the-art training experience for our learners in growth industries like plumbing.

Other investments in TasTAFE infrastructure include \$3 million to improve ventilation and air quality across TasTAFE facilities as part of our commitment to providing the safest possible learning and working areas for staff and students as we continue to adapt to living with COVID-19.

The Budget also includes pre-existing funding to deliver on the other TasTAFE commitments we took to the election like the Freer Farm Agricultural Training Centre of Excellence in Burnie, a new trade training simulator in Devonport and upgrades to the Alanvale campus in Launceston. I look forward to seeing these progress over the coming months and years.

In total, the Tasmanian Government has now committed \$114 million in new funding for TasTAFE since the 2021 state election. There is nearly \$466 million for TasTAFE over the Forward Estimates in this Budget - a huge investment in Tasmania's future, up some 40 per cent when compared with the last Labor-Greens budget in 2013-14.

Our investments in schools and jobs go beyond TasTAFE. Alongside the Commonwealth Government we are extending the JobTrainer Fund by \$18 million in total, including \$8 million in state funding, a program that has created thousands of training opportunities for Tasmanians since it commenced in October 2020.

The Government has also recognised that while we are growing our local workforce, it is crucial that we ensure we are attracting workers to meet immediate demand as well. We must remain competitive with other jurisdictions for skilled workers and that is why we are delivering \$1 million in new funding as part of an extension to our High-Vis Army initiative. We will work closely with our High-Vis Army partners the HIA, Master Builders, Civil Contractors Federation and Keystone on this crucial work to attract new workers to our state.

Complementing these initiatives, we are investing through Jobs Tasmania in our nation-leading local Jobs Hubs and also in organisations that can deliver more support for employment opportunities right across the state. New funding includes \$332 000 for Youth, Family and Community Connections in Devonport to extend the Fit for Work program into Burnie; \$200 000 for the National Disability Services to deliver a new disability employment pilot program; \$300 000 for Dress for Success to support women to re-enter and re-engage with the workforce; \$370 000 for Hamlet to support Tasmanian jobseekers who face barriers entering the workforce, with a hospitality-focused program; and \$650 000 for Workskills Troublesmiths to support an expanded program into Glenorchy.

Last year we had nearly 30 000 students engaged in vocational education and training in Tasmania. This training is strengthening Tasmania's future and driving growth in our workforce, but we know there is still a long way to go. This is why we have listened to and continue to listen to both Tasmanians and Tasmanian businesses and we have made their priorities our priorities. They have told us they want more access to more training, they want to grow our local workforce and they need more skilled workers now, so we are putting investments in place to deliver on all these fronts. Our investments across the Skills, Training and Workforce Growth portfolio, with a strong focus on TasTAFE, will provide the training Tasmanians need to get a job and the skilled people we need to strengthen our future.

Salmon Industry - Impact on Drinking Water Supply

Ms O'CONNOR question to MINISTER for PRIMARY INDUSTRIES and WATER, Ms PALMER

[10.52 a.m.]

Esteemed water quality scientist Christine Coughanowr has identified systemic problems with flow-through salmon hatcheries in the Derwent, Hobart's primary drinking water catchment. The Derwent system is vulnerable to toxic algal blooms. Once established, they are almost impossible to eradicate. Do you agree our drinking water is the most precious resource for the people of Hobart and that your 10-year salmon plan has to recognise this unfolding disaster upstream? Do you agree alternatives must be found for flow-through hatcheries to protect our drinking water and river health? What are you going to do to ensure the salmon industry does not impact further on our drinking water supply?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I thank the member for the question. I can assure the House that Tasmania's drinking water is not at risk due to irrigation works and claims to the contrary are misinformed.

The Department of Natural Resources and Environment Tasmania (NRE Tas) is responsible for the management, allocation and monitoring of the state's water resources under the Water Management Act 1999. TasWater is responsible for urban drinking water. Water allocation decisions are made in line with objectives in the Water Management Act 1999, water allocation surety levels and the service water allocation decision framework, which establishes the highest level of water surety to urban water, then environmental protection, with irrigation only considered after these.

Ms O'CONNOR - Point of order, Mr Speaker, under standing order 45, relevance. I understand Ms Palmer is a new minister but this is not about irrigation. This about salmon hatcheries up-river. I ask you to ask the minister to address her mind to the question.

Mr SPEAKER - I take the point on relevance, but it is not an opportunity to restate the question.

Ms O'Connor - It's not about irrigation, it's about hatcheries.

Mr SPEAKER - The minister has the call.

Ms PALMER - Thank you, Mr Speaker. I am attempting to answer the member's question to the very best of my ability but it is important to have some background about water management, so I will continue.

The surety levels for allocating water are in this order, which goes towards the question about Tasmania's drinking water supply. First, we have domestic, town use and firefighting; then the priority is environmental protection; after that, historic water licences and rights; then special licences to generate electricity or similar; then irrigation and commercial users.

The Rural Water Use Strategy specifically provides for the support and ongoing development of policies to encourage water recycling and reuse. Water recycling and reuse is

one means to reduce the demand for urban water and irrigation from our waterways, and to this end the department has successfully supported TasWater to secure funds from the National Water Grid Authority for Penna and Bicheno water reuse -

Ms O'CONNOR - Point of order, Mr Speaker, under standing order 45, relevance. I ask the minister to address the substance of the question, which was about impacts from hatcheries, impacts on our drinking water.

Mr SPEAKER - I will allow the minister to continue. On that point of relevance, I am sure she will make the connection.

Ms PALMER - Mr Speaker, the bells are ringing in the other place and I can no longer be here. I have to go. I am more than happy to either write to Ms O'Connor with an answer or meet with her to discuss this; that would be my preference. I stayed far longer than I should have in order to answer her question, because she indicated that, but unfortunately I do have to leave now. If she would like to take me up on that offer I would appreciate that.

Cessation of NRAS - Access to the Private Rental Incentive Scheme

Ms WHITE question to MINISTER for HOUSING, Mr BARNETT

[10.57 a.m.]

You and the Premier just said that you will do everything you can to keep these residents in their homes in their communities. One thing you can do right now is guarantee that they will all be eligible for the Private Rental Incentive Scheme, and you should expand that eligibility to residents in other parts of the state who are already evicted and in some cases living in their cars. You know that some of these residents with us today have already been refused access to the Private Rental Incentive Scheme. Those who have been refused cannot afford a doubling in their rent; it would be their entire age pension if they were to afford market rent.

What do you propose for them? Is it 90 weeks waiting for public housing, or is it their entire pension going on private rental? Will you do everything, as you have said you will, and expand the eligibility so that every resident here and every other resident who is facing eviction under NRAS can access the Private Rental Incentive Scheme, and do it today?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I thank the member for her question. As I said earlier, I hope for a tripartisan approach to dealing with housing and homelessness in Tasmania. It is a priority and has been made clear in our Budget of our most comprehensive and record spending and investment in this space; it is really important.

The reason I responded to the concerns of the residents of Redwood Village - Jean and her colleagues who are in the Chamber today, and I visited with them with my departmental representative and someone from my office - was to listen, learn and hear back from them about their concerns. There are clearly serious concerns and a level of anxiety there. I understand that and I recognise that it is really important.

A commitment was given at that meeting that we would do everything we could, and the departmental representative made it clear that it would take a couple of weeks to respond and I made it clear on behalf of the Government that we would do whatever we could to respond as soon as possible. That was the time frame that was given.

Ms Finlay - Does that include the people you evicted last week? Do they get something now? No, seriously. Do you give something to those people now?

Mr SPEAKER - Order.

Mr BARNETT - Let me assure you and the residents of Redwood Village, and indeed others on the NRAS scheme that we will do everything we can to respond in a timely manner to these concerns regarding the national-funded rental affordability scheme. I indicate that we have already changed the criteria to allow for applications to be made under our Private Rental Incentive Scheme. I have already made it clear that we have increased the funding support of over \$9 million in the Budget just last week for the rental incentives scheme that we have in Tasmania. I know that is appreciated.

Absolutely, we - and I - will follow up. I wanted to make it clear because we had an earlier question from the Leader of the Opposition that we have already acted some time ago, and together with UTAS there is now available long-term accommodation, 770 places in fact. That is very substantial. In terms of community housing providers, there are 196. There was speculation and allegations in the media that there were 1000 or thereabouts on this scheme who are at risk of coming off in coming weeks and months. Well, that is not the case.

The advice I have is that there are 89 privately-owned units that will exit the scheme over the next four years, with a further 30 units in 2029. We are looking at this very closely. In the recent weeks in this role I have said that there is a priority, and on behalf of the Government it is a priority. We will respond in every way possible and get back in a timely manner. We will continue to consult and I made it clear that my office was available to have ongoing consultation and discussions, and with me directly. I make that commitment again today, and I thank the Premier for his offer to meet with the residents of Redwood Village if they so wish.

NRAS - Evictions from Properties

Ms WHITE question to MINISTER for STATE DEVELOPMENT, CONSTRUCTION and HOUSING, Mr BARNETT

[11.02 a.m.]

We have been writing to your Government for a very long time, raising concerns on behalf of Tasmanians living in NRAS properties, in some instances for 18 months. You failed to act to support people who have already been evicted, some of whom are now living in their cars. Despite months of warning of people being evicted into homelessness, you have just said that it will still be weeks before we have a solution for the residents who are here with us today, if at all. Why have you taken so long to act? Can you guarantee that the residents who are joining us here in the parliament today will not be evicted into homelessness?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I thank the member for her question. I indicate that the Government will respond as soon as possible. The indication by the department representative at the meeting was in and about two weeks, and I have indicated that we will respond as soon possible. I want to make that clear on the record here; that is the Government's position. I indicate that the Government has acted by changing the criteria for the scheme to allow them to apply to that private rental -

Members interjecting.

Mr SPEAKER - Order.

Mr BARNETT - to allow those coming off the NRAS scheme to apply for the private rental incentive scheme which has been boosted in this budget by over \$9 million for which I am grateful and I know those around Tasmania are also grateful. There is a lot of work going on behind the scenes. I encourage a tripartisan approach where we can all work together to get a result for Tasmanians doing it tough who perhaps are vulnerable, who are feeling anxious.

I encourage those on the other side to reach out to the federal member for Franklin, the new minister, Ms Collins. I ask if that has already occurred?

Members interjecting.

Mr SPEAKER - Order.

Mr BARNETT - I called Ms Collins this morning and I have written to the federal minister this morning, as I said I would several days ago. This Government will do everything we can -

Ms White - Did you care and take action?

Mr SPEAKER - Order. If you are not listening to the answer then I will ask the member to sit down and we will have the next question. If you could wind up, please.

Mr BARNETT - We will do everything we can to support those in need, those who are perhaps feeling anxious at the moment. My door is open, my phone is on and I will do everything I can. I thank those in my department for responding in the way that they are.

Budget 2022-23 - Support for Tasmanian Community

**Mr ELLIS question to MINISTER for COMMUNITY SERVICES and DEVELOPMENT,
Mr STREET**

[11.05 a.m.]

Can you outline to the House, how this year's budget supports the Tasmanian community, particularly through his portfolio of Community Services and Development as well as his other portfolio area of responsibilities?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I thank the member for his question. Through the 2022-23 Budget, this Government is delivering on our commitments for all Tasmanians. Despite the impact of the pandemic, the Tasmanian economy remains strong, and having a strong economy has allowed the Government to invest more into health, education, housing and community infrastructure.

As the Community Services and Development minister, in every region and community across Tasmania, I want to help people to be better connected and supported and to encourage and enable greater participation to support their health and wellbeing.

This budget will help achieve this by funding a range of initiatives, including an additional \$74 000 for Phoenix House on King Island, \$440 000 to extend Volunteering Tasmania's Safe Going volunteering program, \$300 000 to support place-based solutions identified in the Food Relief to Food Resilience Action Plan and \$1.25 million across four years to enable the Council of the Ageing Tasmania to continue conducting Seniors Week annually. COTA CEO, Sue Leitch said it was pleasing to see the State Government's continued acknowledgement of older Tasmanians via the ongoing funding of these important projects.

One of my key priorities as minister for Sport and Recreation is increasing participation at the grassroots and community level. As part of the 2022-23 budget, we will provide \$75 000 per year over two years to Reclink Tasmania. This funding will allow Reclink to continue providing support for at-risk and disadvantaged Tasmanians to enjoy sporting activities. Reclink State Manager, Richard Allanby said, 'We are pleased and encouraged and grateful to receive this funding as part of the 2022-23 Tasmanian State Budget which will mean these opportunities can be extended to students in the north and north-west of Tasmania'.

To increase female participation in sport, we are providing \$185 000 per year over four years for a strategy to achieve outcomes aligned to the national policy framework for girls and women in sport. To assist with growing the game of netball in Tasmania and provide a pathway for young players, we have committed \$200 000 in the 2022-23 year for Netball Tasmania to support the game at the grassroots and elite levels.

We are providing \$300 000 for the Sport and Recreation Grants Program, which continues to support capacity growth for the sector and ongoing provision of safe, fair and inclusive sport and recreation in the state.

Sport allows people to be part of something bigger than themselves and the same can be said for the events industry and the vital role it plays in supporting our visitor economy, especially in our regions. The Liberal Government is a strong supporter of the events industry and this has been demonstrated through the support we have provided to events of all sizes to ensure their survival through the pandemic. Events take years to develop and we were not going to see them fall over and need to start from scratch. The same can be said for our support of the hospitality industry.

We will continue to champion these sectors and I am proud to be the minister representing them. We also recognise that the performance of the Local Government sector is vital to the future of the Tasmanian economy and the wellbeing of our communities. That is why the Government has committed \$1.64 million in the budget over two years to continue the

important review work of the review of local government, chaired by the highly-respected Sue Smith.

The 2022-23 budget outlines the Government's clear plan to strengthen Tasmania's future, unlike the Labor Party who have no plan, no alternative budget and can only deliver cheap pot shots.

Yesterday, Ms White's politicking was on display for all to see with her ill-timed criticism of the southern stadium vision. The contrast could not be clearer: on our side, a strong plan and a bold vision; over on their side, only zero vision. Today's *Mercury* article summed it up perfectly:

Tassie deserves an AFL side, but the state also deserves politicians who keep their powder dry until all cards are on the table.

Ms White - We should pay \$750 million for a side, should we? That was never part of the deal.

Mr SPEAKER - Order.

Mr STREET - We have seen stadium projects right across the world deliver significant transformation to cities, creating vibrant precincts for locals and visitors and we need to look no further than Perth, Adelaide and Townsville. Ms White, these visionary projects were all backed by Labor politicians.

Just as Tasmania's bid for its own AFL and AFLW teams is about more than just a game, our vision is about so much more than just an oval. It is about about urban transformation and renewal and delivering a world-class multipurpose entertainment venue that maximises local economic and social benefits. There is no reason with a multipartner funding model that we cannot do this and unlock significant returns on investment for Tasmania.

Feasibility assessments need to be undertaken and that is why funds have been included in the 2022-23 Budget to allow this to happen. It is only by being aspirational that we can achieve better outcomes for Tasmania and that is exactly what we plan to do.

Homelessness - Cessation of NRAS

Ms WHITE question to PREMIER, Mr ROCKLIFF

[11.10 a.m.]

There are six people sitting in the Gallery today and there are many other NRAS tenants around Tasmania who are going to become homeless if you do not act. Some have already been refused support through the only solution you seem to be offering, which is the Private Rental Incentive Scheme. You have heard the stress this is causing them. You have heard what happened to the people you ignored last week which we raised in this place, some of whom are now living in their car. Will you give the people who are here with us today what they really need, which is to reduce their anxiety so that they can eat and sleep again? Will you give them a guarantee that you will not allow them to become homeless?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I thank Ms White for her question. I thank the residents for coming in today. My offer still stands and I welcome the opportunity to sit down and meet with the residents to listen to their very real concerns. Of course we will do all we can. Every single Tasmanian has a right to be safe, secure and have a roof over their heads. That is my objective as Premier. We have made it very clear that we want all Tasmanians to be included, supported and encouraged. When there are circumstances such as the residents are facing today, as Premier, I will take action to ensure that no-one is left out in the cold and that every person is safe and secure and has a roof over their head.

I give that commitment and welcome the opportunity, as the Minister for Housing has done this week, to sit down with the residents and listen and talk through their very challenging circumstances, as well as work alongside our new federal government, new Housing minister, in a collaborative way to address what I know are very real and serious issues.

Budget 2022-23 - Investment in Emergency Services

Mr WOOD question to MINISTER for POLICE, FIRE and EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT, Mrs PETRUSMA

[11.13 a.m.]

Can you provide an update on how the Rockliff Liberal Government's latest investments into our emergency services will help secure Tasmania's future and help ensure the safety of our communities?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I thank the member for Bass for his question and his interest in this very important matter. Tasmania is one of the safest places in which to live because of this Government's commitment to tackling crime and investing in our emergency services. The 2022-23 Budget continues our unprecedented investment into emergency services to ensure that Tasmanians continue to remain safe and enjoy our peaceful way of life. That includes capital funding of nearly \$107 million as well as nearly \$18 million in other funding initiatives to provide the infrastructure and systems that our emergency services rely on in their duties.

This Government has a strong track record for rebuilding our police services. In this budget we are investing in a further 21 additional police officers, meaning we are now recruiting 329 new officers, a 31 per cent increase in policing numbers since we came to government. This means that Tasmania Police will reach a historic establishment of 1449 police officers by July 2026.

I am pleased to note the highly successful PACER program, which will fund six of the 21 additional police officers, and \$15.1 million over two years to establish pilot multi-disciplinary centres in the north and south of Tasmania that will provide wraparound support to victims/survivors of family and sexual violence will also fund 15 of the new officers.

The Budget also invests \$3.7 million over four years to upgrade our forensic scientific instruments to provide high levels of result accuracy, therefore assisting with prosecutions, and

will also increase the storage capacity of forensic exhibits, which means that victims/survivors can report to police knowing that their evidence will be kept indefinitely.

To ensure our emergency service workers are safe when on the job, this Budget includes \$6.2 million to replace automatic vehicle location systems. An amount of \$500 000 is also provided for the Emergency Dispatching, Messaging and Alerting Project. This project will ensure emergency services have communication infrastructure that enables them to respond in all environments and terrains.

The Budget also includes an additional \$460 000 for continued usage of drone technology to help bring offenders to justice and help crack down on hooning, and this is on top of the \$400 000 already invested which has delivered 29 remote pilots across the state and more than 935 aerial operations carried out.

This Budget also invests \$760 000 to provide new Glock pistols for Tasmania Police, continues our investment over the forward Estimates of \$10.6 million for the Country Police Station Relief Policy, and \$3 million for the health and wellbeing program.

We have also recently delivered the new \$5 million New Norfolk police station, the \$5 million Longford police station and the \$1 million northern Special Operations Group facility. This Budget also provides \$1 million to upgrade the Rosebery police station, \$12.5 million to upgrade the Bridgewater police station and \$7.5 million for a new police station in St Helens. A new \$3.6 million southern Special Operations Group facility is currently being delivered, along with a \$7 million upgrade to Launceston police station and upgrades to police housing across Tasmania. The president of the Police Association of Tasmania has welcomed all of these budget commitments, saying that these commitments will help protect the Tasmanian community, assist in the safety of members and make the state of Tasmania safer.

Tasmania faces increasing climate-related threats and challenges, which is why we are responding and planning for these threats to ensure our communities are ready and resilient by providing over \$120 million across the forward Estimates for bushfire and flood prevention. We are also investing into our fuel reduction program with \$11.95 million annually for fuel reduction.

There is so much more I could outline to the House, because we have increased our remote area team capacity, we have invested into the SES and we also have our new Sorell emergency services hub opening earlier next year, but what I can say to the House is that the Rockliff Liberal Government is the strongest supporter of Tasmania's fantastic emergency response, in contrast to those opposite. It is a fact that when Labor left government in 2014, Tasmania was left with 10 per cent fewer police officers than when Labor came to office 16 years before in 1998. That was Labor's legacy, and Labor's budget reply showed yesterday that they still have no plan for emergency services, no policy, no alternative and no substance.

Time expired.

YOUTH JUSTICE AMENDMENT (SEARCHES IN CUSTODY) BILL 2022
(No. 9)

Bill agreed to by Legislative Council without amendment.

MATTER OF PUBLIC IMPORTANCE

Cuts to Health Funding

[11.20 a.m.]

Ms DOW (Braddon - Deputy Leader of the Opposition) - Mr Speaker, I move -

That the House take note of the following matter: cuts to health funding.

It is my pleasure to rise on this matter of public importance. This Government has put on appalling show here this morning when it comes to the mental health and physical wellbeing of elderly residents of our community, older Tasmanians who are incredibly concerned about what the future holds for them, whether they will have reliable safe accommodation in the coming weeks. This Government has failed to give them any empathy or confirmation that they will do the right thing by them. You only have to look at the series of events this morning in question time. It is absolutely disgraceful.

That brings me to my matter of public importance, which is closely related in looking at health cuts across the Budget and the forward Estimates. This Government has \$126 million of cuts in the forward Estimates. The Premier has come in here this morning and talked proudly about his Government's record in health infrastructure investment when we know that is not the case. There are significant delays.

To say that we do not have a policy or vision for the health system, or for the health and wellbeing of Tasmanians is simply untrue. We took a comprehensive policy to the last state election which would have made a difference to many Tasmanians' lives.

You only have to look across our community. We hear it every day, Mr Speaker, you would hear it every day in your electorate office, how Tasmanians are suffering at the hands of this Government. Over 9000 Tasmanians are waiting for elective surgery across the state, living in pain. I hear from them every day. What is that doing for their mental health and wellbeing, their ability to function across our community and within our economy? It is very debilitating. Over 57 000 Tasmanians are waiting to see a specialist. That is the hidden elective surgery wait list. These Tasmanians will eventually require surgery.

The system is in crisis. I cannot understand why this Government would then make cuts in its Budget to health services across Tasmania. I want to know why. I want to hear first-hand from the Premier today as to why these cuts are being put in place and what that will mean for Tasmanians. What services will we see cut across our community?

We have an ageing population. We have a decentralised population. We have high levels of chronic disease across our community. We have many people waiting for elective surgery, as I have said, living with chronic pain and discomfort, and poor mental health and wellbeing because of that and this Government thinks that it is okay to cut health services.

This morning they were talking about the benefits of a floating stadium. What does that mean for the Tasmanians who joined us in the Chamber this morning? Not much when they cannot get a roof over their heads. What does it mean for the people waiting for elective surgery? Not much. What it says is that this Government has its priorities all wrong.

I want to hear from the Health minister and Premier today about how he plans to curtail these health cuts.

I want to read into the *Hansard* the experience of one of our health workers in the moments I have left. Yesterday we came into this place and talked about how the 2.5 per cent wage increase across the Budget is a slap in the face for healthcare workers across Tasmania. We called on the Government to do something about that. We called on the Government to fix the structural problems in the Budget and across the health system, which is primarily related to chronic staff shortages and the inability to retain and recruit health staff across our health system and in Tasmania. One of the primary reasons for that is the fact that we have the lowest paid health workers in the country.

Let us hear firsthand from them on their experience because there is nothing more powerful:

I do not want to work a double shift. I want to go home to my family. It is so horrendous in that workplace that at the end of my eight- or 10-hour shift, I do not want to say another eight or 10 hours. I want to go home.

But it is so unsafe. I just cannot leave my colleagues. I cannot walk out. My conscience will not allow me to say, 'Sorry, my shift is up, I am going home', even though I am exhausted. And I am certainly not the only one. So many of my colleagues are doing exactly the same thing for same reason because they cannot, in good conscience, walk away from their patients because something terrible is going to happen because you just cannot look after all the patients with the small number of staff we have got.

And the staff are so fatigued. I mean, I have been nursing for 30 years. If I could swap my job tomorrow, I would be gone. And I never ever thought that I would say that. I thought this would be the job I would stay in until the day I died. Retired. Hopefully not the day I die, the day I retire. And I have always loved my job and been passionate about it. But in the last two years I have never been so miserable in my job due to the pressure and the stress and the expectation. That is the other upsetting thing. You ring and say, 'we need more staff', but there is no one. You will just have to fill out an overtime sheet. It is not about the overtime. I do not want the overtime. I need help.

That is a cry for help in a system that is completely overworked and in crisis. I want to understand why, at a time like this, this Government would cut funding from the Budget for health. The Premier has every opportunity to provide that today. I also want him to commit to providing an appropriate response to the older Tasmanians who have made their way to the Chamber today to have their plight heard and, hopefully, to finally have some action from this Government. Not for their cause to be deflected to the new federal government, but for this Government, the Tasmanian Government, to take some responsibility.

Time expired.

[11.27 p.m.]

Mr ROCKLIFF (Braddon - Minister for Health) - Mr Speaker, I thank the member for bringing forward the matter of public importance. I hope the member is not giving up on her federal colleagues. That is what I took from her last statement - that will she not be advocating for more funding with respect to the Commonwealth as the previous premier and I have to the previous Commonwealth government and this Government. I hope the member, being a Labor member in the state parliament, is not going to shy away from advocating for more health support from the Labor Commonwealth Government. Unfortunately, I got that impression from her last statement.

Health is consistently the top priority for this Government when it comes to supporting Tasmanians. We know that health is a priority for Tasmanians. That is why it is our priority. That is why I retained the Health portfolio when I became Premier, to ensure that our Government's priorities reflect what is most important to the Tasmanian community. That is clearly evident with the \$11.2 billion of funding for health over four years, which will see an average health spend of over \$7 million a day in our health system.

The 2021-22 estimated outcome by health included approximately \$250 million to cover COVID-19-related expenses. As we are now transitioning out of COVID-19, the 2022-23 Budget COVID-19-related expenditure will instead come out of the Treasurer's reserve, which is there to meet unforeseen costs. To compare apples with apples, you therefore need to take the COVID-19 funding out of the 2021-22 estimated outcome. When you do that, the 2022-23 Budget actually represents an increase of some \$123 million on health. There is a simple explanation for you.

Yesterday, we had the Budget reply from the member: no vision, no alternative. Just personal attacks and a lack of substance. We are investing some \$1.5 billion into contemporary health infrastructure over the next decade. Those opposite have indicated by their statements about debt that they are not willing to have that as part of their plan.

The Launceston General Hospital Masterplan has an investment of \$580 million over 10 years. Expansion of stage 2 of the Royal Hobart Hospital redevelopment will deliver over \$200 million in new and upgraded facilities, including a new 38-bed cardiology ward and a super-sized emergency department. The \$60 million redevelopment of the North West Regional Hospital and a further \$20 million capital investment at the Mersey Community Hospital - these are important projects that will ensure our health infrastructure meets the service needs now and into the future for future generations.

One of the initiatives that I am most excited about - and I have spoken about quite a lot and will continue to - is the \$150 million commitment over the forward Estimates with respect to our digital health infrastructure. This will transform the way that we deliver patient care across Tasmania. The \$150 million represents a down payment of \$475 million over the next 10 years as we further scope and develop the digital health strategy to achieve a digitally-connected network that will transform patient experience, improve patient care and ensure greater equity in health outcomes across Tasmania's dispersed population.

We are also investing in innovative service models, making our health system more responsive, more efficient and providing a better experience for Tasmanians accessing health

services. Just a few of these examples - GP after hours; PACER; ambulance secondary triage, which has been shown to ease the pressure on our emergency departments and paramedics. Another innovation which I spoke briefly about yesterday, is that across the Tasmanian health service we are implementing the bedside medication management program. The 2022-23 budget provides \$4.7 million to implement this innovative model.

To support us in that, we will need the support and will value the support of people right across and working within our health system, irrespective of the health setting. Our greatest asset within our health system is our people. For the last two years, not only have we seen investment in infrastructure but we have also seen investment in our people with a total of 1259 new health FTEs from 1 July 2020 to March 2022. In response to the many questions I have recently received, these, I am advised, are net FTE increases. That means it works out to nearly two additional FTEs being recruited every single day in our hospital system over the course of the last 20 months. A considerable proportion of FTE growth in the Department of Health is in front-line patient care: our nurses, our doctors, our paramedics and our allied health professionals.

I thank the member for bringing forward the MPI today. I actually enjoy speaking on the MPI, particularly when it comes to health-related matters and particularly when it allows us to talk about what we are doing in health, how much we are investing in our people, and how much we are investing in health infrastructure. Our innovative models of patient care, such as secondary triage; PACER; bedside medication; GP after hours; our Hospital in the Home; Mental Health Hospital in the Home; COMAS initiative; community response service; all these are innovations over the course of the last few years that will ensure that patients around Tasmania, our health consumers, get their health care in the right place and at the right time.

[11.34 a.m.]

Dr WOODRUFF (Franklin) - Mr Speaker, there is no doubt that the Government has made some good investments. It is very important that Tasmanians have high-quality facilities and it is really important that we plan for the future. There is no doubt there have been gaps in future planning for facilities from this Government in the past, so we welcome the commitments that have been made in that area. However, the first order priority is to keep the wheels running and what we continue to hear from nurses and paramedics is that they are in a desperate situation. Although it is true that the Government is continuing to increase its spend year-on-year on health, other factors are at play which show that the Government is not keeping up with the need.

The need is coming from the increasing number of people who access health services every day. That is just an inexorable fact related to our increasing ageing population and our increasingly sicker population. This has been well forecast by epidemiologists, statisticians and demographers for a long time now. That was the reason that the Liberals, when they came to government in 2014, made the heroic promise that by 2025 Tasmania would have the best health in the country. Sadly, they dropped that promise, they dropped that commitment and they dropped the effort to put into what we would need to do to make that happen.

Since the current Premier and Minister for Health has taken over from previous minister, Michael Ferguson, there has not been a substantial change that has been needed in the investment in ambulance, paramedics particularly, and nurses and midwives. I accept that there have been some welcome additions in this Budget. However, given our ageing and sicker population, given the extra complexities that we are seeing in our people turning up to GPs

because of a range of non-specific, hard-to-manage symptoms that come from the complexity of things that people are exposed to at the moment - including COVID-19 infection which aggravates a whole range of other underlying chronic diseases - but most importantly, very high rates of cancer, diabetes, and other chronic muscular-skeletal problems, Tasmanians really have a huge burden and a great need.

This Budget does, as every budget must, increase the overall spending on health but it does not invest in the people who are on the front line every day, still continuing to work in unendurable conditions of double shifts and overtime. When we have crews not being filled, shifts not being filled in our five ambulance stations around southern Tasmania on a Friday night, that is deeply concerning.

This Budget does not invest in the health cost increases that we know will be coming as a result of inflation. Our inflation at the moment is at Australian record highs that we have not seen for over 20 years. The ABS figures are very clear about this: the quarterly increase went from 3.5 per cent at the end of last year and the recent quarter is at 5.1 per cent; 5.1 per cent inflation eats up all the increase in the Budget, and more.

The total operating services budget that is allocated this year, relative to last year, has been an increase of 4.7 per cent. Inflation is running now at 5.1 per cent. It is predicted to increase, but that also does not account for the fact that the cost of health services is higher than the cost of inflation for Tasmanians. Some work that was done by the Australia Institute makes it very clear that for Tasmanians in Hobart, their out-of-pocket health costs have increased by 27 per cent, compared to the 12 per cent increase in the cost of all prices and all goods. That is unsupportable. That is a function not of this Government, but that is the context in which a budget has been delivered that is inadequate. It is not supporting the nurses, midwives, paramedics and all hospital and health staff who are working on the frontline every day.

It is not enough to dig them out of the trench they are in at the moment, working under incredible pressure without any sense that anything is going to change. People are burning out. People are leaving Tasmania and going to the mainland for a workplace that is showing they are intending to do something about the unending suffering they have to put up with every single day they go into work. They turn up day after day and are asked on a Friday to yet again fill again a shift, when they are empty shifts. Volunteer paramedics are not there to fill shifts on Friday and Saturday nights because of the stress of having to sit ramping all night, knowing that you are not able to do your job because there is nobody else to take your place and no other ambulances to go into the regions.

It is not good enough. We will deliver our alternative budget and show how it can be done better.

Time expired.

[11.41 a.m.]

Mr ELLIS (Braddon) - Mr Speaker, you can always tell when the Labor Party has overstepped political comment to get into the point of political absurdity when the Greens slap them down with a bit of economic reality. We know that the Greens deliver an alternative budget roughly every year but the Labor Party will not deliver one at all. You can tell that at least the Greens have done some work because Dr Woodruff acknowledged that we have an increase in our Health budget this year.

It reminds me of when Mr Winter came in here advocating for price controls on liquid fuels supplied internationally to Tasmania. That paragon of economic rationalism, Ms O'Connor, had to tell him that he was dreaming. These people are losing credibility by the day, and to be told even by the Greens, their comrades in arms, that there are actually increases to the Health budget in this year's Budget truly shows how absurd this motion is.

I am pleased to rise on this matter of public importance. I am very surprised by the topic but of all people, the Opposition should be the last ones who want to talk about Health cuts because our Government is prioritising Health. We are delivering a record \$11.2 billion into Health over the next four years over the forward Estimates of the Budget. That could not be more strongly contrasted with the \$500 million of actual cuts delivered under the previous Labor-Greens government.

Ms O'Connor - That is not true.

Mr ELLIS - There is \$500 million more in this year's Budget for Health than last year's as well. You could not get a bigger contrast. Labor simply has no credibility when it comes to Health anymore. They only feign interest in this portfolio for the sake of trying to score cheap political points and maybe to keep Dr Broad - the apparent shadow treasurer, perhaps the shadow treasurer in name only - from speaking in this place.

The facts are simple. When Labor was last in government they cut Health funding by \$500 million and they sacked a nurse a day for nine months. Those were valued colleagues and much-loved carers. They closed whole hospital wards, they axed the Hospital in the Home service and they put hospital beds in storage. Those were beds that could have been helping the communities of the north-west, the west coast, King Island and right around the state, but because they could not manage the economy or the budget, they were simply putting those beds into storage.

At the time they directed health managers to outline - and this is a very Orwellian term, I have to say - 'staffing controls' that would have been immediately implemented, crucially noting that, 'all frontline service delivery positions are not exempt from staffing control processes', and we all know what staffing control means. It means cuts to nurses and cuts to services. That is the record. Those are the facts.

While the Opposition may find these facts uncomfortable, the Leader of Opposition - also in name only - had a chance yesterday to outline an alternative budget. She could have told us about all the extra spending that she would have put in there. She could have told us about her grand plans for the health system, but unfortunately they did nothing. We got absolutely nothing. There was no plan, no alternative budget, and Tasmanians are left with absolutely no idea what that rabble opposite stand for.

In contrast, our Government is backing the health system and the dedicated professionals working there doing such a fantastic job caring for people across our state. We are committed to delivering a better health system to support staff, to drive better care and most importantly, to deliver the best possible outcomes for patients in Tasmania.

When Labor were last in government their record was to sack a nurse a day for nine months. They sacked 287 nurses. In contrast, over the past 12 months alone we have recruited an additional 200 full-time equivalent nurses to ease the impact of COVID-19 and to continue

to actively recruit more staff in line with the increasing demands on our health system and our COVID-19 emergency response. At least the Greens could acknowledge that yes, there are some challenges that we all need to work through, and this is an intergenerational challenge we will have moving forward, with an ageing population as well as a COVID-19 pandemic.

If the Opposition cannot even understand where the challenges are coming from, they will not understand where the solutions will lie. Our Government understands that. We have seen an increase of 1259 new full-time equivalent jobs in the health sector from 1 July 2020 to early March 2022. A considerable proportion of this growth in the Department of Health is in direct frontline care services - nurses, doctors, paramedics and allied health professionals. We are proud to have them as part of the team delivering health services in Tasmania. Those are real people working real jobs and caring for real patients and the falsehoods that the Opposition are putting out are simply rubbish. It works out to nearly two additional people being recruited every single day in Tasmania into our health system for the past 20 months. That should be celebrated because those are people who are caring for our community.

When it comes to infrastructure investment, the best indicator of future performance is past results, and Labor's tragic record speaks for itself. They did not lay a single brick at the Royal Hobart Hospital despite years of promises and waffle. It took a Liberal government to deliver this vital health infrastructure which the Premier has just outlined. In my own patch, it took a Tasmanian Liberal government to secure the future of the Mersey Community Hospital with a 10-year \$730 million agreement with the Australian Government. Unlike Labor's former shadow health spokesperson who believed we have too many hospitals and said the Mersey only exists due to political pork-barrelling and parochialism, we will continue to back that hospital. The moment I first saw my baby son in this world was at the Mersey hospital during a scan. The services they provide are so vital for our community in the north-west.

[11.48 a.m.]

Ms FINLAY (Bass) - Mr Speaker, there is nothing more important in our community than the health of our community, the education of our community and that members of our community, as we have so heart-wrenchingly heard this morning, have a safe place to call home. Within Health, Education and Housing, the Health budget is an area for us to look across in this week as we make our budget replies and scrutinise what the budget papers say versus what ministers and others from the other side say verbally about the documents before us.

On that, if possible just with eye contact, could I confirm from the Premier and Minister for Health whether in his comment about the cuts he said that there had been a transfer from the Health budget of \$250 million to the Treasurer's reserve and that was what accounted for the documented cuts in the Health budget as we are allocating and looking at this week? I am not getting any eye contact from the Minister for Health so I will assume that is what he said.

From my first glance across the Budget papers as they were delivered last week, I noted with great interest that the Health budget indicated a reduction in investment from this Government. It is in black and white.

The Minister for Health might talk about moving the deck chairs but the reality is that the estimated outcome for the Health budget in the 2021-22 year is \$2.7 billion, and in the 2022-23 it is \$2.6 billion. There is actually a reduction in the indicated spending for health of \$126 million.

Some people in this place might not feel that that is a material figure. Some people in this place operate and live in such a bubble that they forget the impact and the reality of these vast numbers that we deal with and talk about all day, every day. The reality is, it is not just that there is a cut recognised in this Budget in the 2022-23 year, but further again compared to the position as an estimated outcome in 2021-22, there is also a cut in the 2023-24 year of some \$53 million. I question if this Government sees that this number is not material? It in fact speaks to allocations that we are discussing all the time of where \$50 million could make a big difference in our community. Also, curiously, as I speak a little later about the Launceston General Hospital and investments there, the complete figure that is invested in what they talk about as their second stage of the masterplan, which was meant to be a \$580 million investment, is talked about in their Budget papers. It seems that Budget papers can say one thing, you would assume that that is fact, but members and ministers can stand and say anything.

I would like a clarification, if that is in fact what the Health minister said, and if there is a moving of the deck chairs. When you go back to look at the Treasurer's reserve in the documents, there is only \$150 million allocated in the Treasurer's reserve. It is what was allocated last year. Going forward, there will be only \$50 million allocated each year and so that movement does not make sense.

What also does not make sense is that when the Launceston General Hospital is under so much pressure, when its results - not for want of trying or not for the passionate delivery of services by our incredible nurses, our paramedics, our support staff in the hospital - we unfortunately see really bad outcomes: bad bed block, bad ambulance ramping and extraordinary waiting lists.

We see and we have heard personal accounts this morning from our shadow health minister about the impact that nurses are feeling. I have friends and family working in the LGH who are expected, sometimes - and I am sure it is not the normal way of behaving - but they feel like they are guilted into doing extra shifts. People who have just started in their career and have said, 'I cannot believe that when I started this, if I knew what this was like, I would never have entered this area'. People are leaving the sector. We cannot afford to do that. People that are choosing to take leave because they cannot cope anymore; managers are taking leave because they cannot cope with the pressure. What does that say to the people who are working their teams?

It is an extraordinary set of circumstances that we find ourselves in, in the Launceston community and, I am sure, no doubt, in other communities across Tasmania.

When we have such dire situations, the community looks to leaders for honesty. They look to leaders for integrity and to tell the truth about the realities so that they can trust that real action and real work will happen. When in two elections in a row, an announcement is made of \$580 million for the further development and redevelopment of the LGH, they expect that to be a reality. When you read your Budget papers, and I am sure many Tasmanians do, there is a statement of fact in there, and it says: 'Funding of \$580 million is allocated'.

It is not allocated. When you read the papers, and I can remember being dumbfounded in my first year in parliament last year, where I went to reference some of the commentary that was in the Budget papers to the actual allocation in the line item, and that line item for the LGH stage two of the masterplan, which was this, 'I will bring in the votes by announcing \$580 million' had zero dollars allocated. Four dashes along the line, with zero allocations.

It is not actually not much better this year. Again, these massive announcements and determined statements of investment. When you do the maths, just in the 2022-23 year, \$2 million. Then \$5 million, and I talked about \$50 million which is a lot of money. That \$50 million is the amount that the cuts continue to be from real turns, two years ahead in the actual health budget, but it is only nearly \$50 million of the \$580 million that this Government said it was going to deliver.

People in Launceston and northern Tasmania are used to the way that this Government makes announcements to try to please the community. There are announcements about the Tamar Bridge - not in the Budget. There are announcements about dredging; there are announcements about the LGH. Our community deserves better. There are real cuts in health at a time where our system is in crisis and the people working on behalf of our community need greater respect and greater care.

Time expired.

Matter noted.

APPROPRIATION BILL (No. 1) 2022 (No. 23)

Second Reading

Continued from 31 May 2022 (page 84).

[11.55 a.m.]

Ms O'CONNOR (Clark - Leader of the Greens) - Mr Speaker, so much has changed since the Tasmanian Greens handed down our last evidence-based and fully-costed alternative budget late last year. While the planet is not getting any cooler yet, the political temperature has changed for the better. We have had two ministers and a premier step down; there has been a change of premier at the state level, one we will hold to his promise to lead a kind, accountable government; and blessed relief for our national character, there has been a change of government in Canberra.

The election on 21 May was a watershed moment for our great country. Climate and integrity are now front and centre in the national debate, and not before time. There is new hope in the air. With the election of the Albanese Labor Government and a swathe of new Greens MPs and senators, as well as climate-focused independents, there is cause for optimism, that this country will be able to hold its head high again on the international stage. We have been a coal-kissing pariah for too long.

With these changes come new opportunities for our island. Ours is an alternative budget that reflects and responds to the imperatives of the time we live in.

Mr Speaker, I seek the leave of the House, to table our alternative budget, which has been circulated.

Leave granted.

Ms O'CONNOR - Thank you, Mr Speaker. I acknowledge we stand on Aboriginal land, lutruwita, a country that was never ceded, and I recommit the Greens to working constructively with Tasmanian Aboriginal people and across the parliament to deliver the truth telling and treaty so necessary for us to move forward as a community. We have much good, important work to do together.

The Premier has done the right thing and announced this parliament will be restored to 35 seats. In the committee inquiring into the Greens restoration bill, which this parliament established and I chaired, there were only two recommendations: to restore the numbers to strengthen the representation and democracy for Tasmanians and to start the process of delivering Aboriginal seats in parliament. The Greens want to see this happen. It is the right thing to do. Again, we will work cooperatively to ensure Aboriginal Tasmanians are represented in Tasmania's parliament, as they should be.

Tasmania's enviable status as the only state or territory to sequester more CO2 than it emits is being brought into sharper focus. It is a natural and competitive advantage we cannot afford to squander. Having stood with the conservation movement and civil society to deliver wilderness and forest protections, the Greens will not stand by and allow our natural beauty and wealth or our carbon stores to be squandered. We will work tirelessly every day to ensure the carbon wealth banked in our forests stays in that bank, and that more opportunities for carbon banking are available.

Key to maintaining our strength as a national climate leader is protecting these island's vast life-giving carbon banks. They are our gift to the world, our gift to carbon sequestration and oxygen to the planet. Instead of introducing or supporting legislation that cracks down on peaceful protests in order to increase corporate profits under the lie of workplace safety, we respect the will of young people and increasingly, people across the generations, that there be courage in politics, leaders who see something as wrong and are moved to do the right thing.

Protecting Tasmania's forests, the carbon layer they keep safe and the complex web of life they sustain, is the right thing to do. The Greens listened to the scientists and young people and we know this to be true. The only sane, scientific and moral response to the climate emergency is to take urgent action. We have to protect this island's carbon-rich forests. We fund start-up work to establish the Tasmanian Carbon Bank to not only protect our forests but to ensure those not currently within a reserve are valued beyond woodchips that are shipped to China and generate revenue in evolving carbon markets. This is work that started under the Labor-Greens government, then abandoned by the Liberals. We want to see it rejuvenated to benefit nature and increase the wealth of the Tasmanian people.

Our alternative budget invests in accelerating the transition to electric vehicles, in emissions abatement planning and expertise, and strengthens adaptation planning so that people, the natural and built environment and infrastructure are resilient in the face of a rapidly heating atmosphere.

Mr Speaker, there is an urgency to this work which we recognise and respond to in our alternative budget. We invest in greening up our cities and towns, increasing healthier transport options and provide refuge from the growing heat, as well as homes and buildings that are designed or refurbished to withstand extreme events. The scientists will tell us the safest place in the world to be in an accelerating climate emergency is where there are the strongest

communities where we are resilient, adaptive, connected, supported by governments, informed and where we look out for each other. In this, Tasmania also has a unique advantage.

Our alternative budget invests \$20 million over four years in establishing community resilience hubs in every municipality to provide connections and advice to help our people withstand the inevitable climate shocks barrelling towards this island. We invest in our volunteer fire brigades and more remote area firefighters to defend people, nature and the built environment. We will also help farmers reduce emissions from the meat and dairy sector and fund the development of low-emissions farming guidelines, coupled with Treasurer's Instructions to support agricultural businesses that employ climate-positive practices.

We should always be looking for ways to reward good behaviour and I am sure you will agree all of this work will be guided by the Safe Climate Commission, a statutory scientific body tasked with advising government, parliament and industry and the wider community on sustained effective climate action.

The change in climate is a moral imperative of our times, as is the pandemic. This island's COVID-free status which we enjoyed for two years is now a distant memory, with almost one in three Tasmanians infected since the border was reopened. The protections that kept us safe have been abandoned and we are now told we 'just have to live with' a rapidly mutating dangerous virus. Tragically, 76 Tasmanians to date did not live with COVID-19. They died with it: 63 since 15 December last year. For the disabled and the immunocompromised, living with COVID means living a half-life. Many are staying at home and in fear.

How far we have fallen as a society that once cared about the marginalised. Now we are apparently prepared to accept that living with COVID is a nightmare for plenty of our fellow Tasmanians. We are prepared to accept a staggering level of mass infection, more than double what the Kirby Institute forecast in its work for the Tasmanian Government. As a society, we are apparently prepared to accept a high death rate, with no sign the government is listening to the science or independent experts, or is prepared to prioritise public health over the economy.

The current numbers in the weekly surveillance report are nothing short of alarming. They point to an epic Public Health failure and a weak Opposition which has stayed silent as cases and deaths continue to climb. It is shameful. Since the border was reopened with no child under 12 vaccinated, around 165 000 Tasmanians have been infected with the novel coronavirus. Since unvaccinated primary school students were sent into poorly ventilated classrooms to start the school year, almost 9000 have been infected, about one in three. Almost 50 000 children and young people under the age of 19 have had COVID.

While overseas, public health authorities are becoming increasingly alarmed about the likely link between a new spate of severe childhood hepatitis and prior COVID infection. Here, it seems the plan is to infect as many children as possible as fast as possible with a virus that research tells us can shrink the brain, enlarge the heart, attack the liver and every other organ in our body.

Mr Speaker, our alternative budget heeds the independent health experts who are clear that much more can and must be done to prevent mass infection, disablement and death. We would reinstate indoor mask protections and invest in local long COVID research, as well as ventilation upgrades to assist small to medium businesses and community organisations make sure the air is safe for the people who work in and visit those spaces to breathe.

This is a workplace safety issue too. As I understand it, a significant number of the Hansard staff is out with COVID and yet still we have people swanning around this building unmasked. It is both disrespectful and unscientific. Anyone who actively invites a virus that accelerates biological ageing into their body is not thinking clearly. Anyone who thinks you can only catch COVID once is not paying attention. Not that governments are being honest with you, but you can most certainly be infected repeatedly, and each time the virus does more damage.

We can and must do better to prevent this unfolding public health failure. We strongly urge the Premier to start paying attention to the evidence and to advocate federally for every Tasmanian to have access to the antiviral medications which are freely available in other countries but rationed out here for no good reason, at an untold cost to human health.

Since this time last year, more Tasmanians have been cast out into the cold as the housing crisis deepens. This year's state Budget allocates more than half the infrastructure spend again to roads and bridges and woefully underspends on building more homes for Tasmanians who need them. A cruel lie is at the heart of Mr Michael Ferguson's first Budget as Treasurer. It exposes eight years of neglect, broken promises and false hopes for Tasmanians looking for a secure, affordable home, eight years of promising to build thousands of new homes and delivering less than 600 as the housing crisis rages, driving Tasmanians closer and closer to homelessness.

Over the past eight years the Liberals have promised thousands of homes but the Productivity Commission data shows only 578 additional properties have been delivered. The state Budget continues the con. The Government's big pre-Budget announcement was for \$1.1 billion over 10 years into housing, but the actual Budget delivers only \$35 million or 3 per cent in new money of the big spending promised in the billion-dollar headline. No new money is allocated next financial year.

This is just the latest Housing funding spin in the Liberals' history of gaslighting Tasmanians to cover their inaction on housing. In 2016-17 the Liberal treasurer claimed the budget would construct 941 new homes across the Estimates, but the Productivity Commission confirms only 186 were added over this period. In the following budget Peter Gutwein said the Liberals were already delivering on its commitment to build 900 new homes, when the data shows Tasmanians suffered a net loss of 212 public and community homes. In 2018-19, the Liberals said they would build 1500 new homes, but so far there is only 697 reported. In the past four years, the number of liveable public homes has decreased by 34 down to 6944 and in this time, while the housing waiting list grows, the number of new households helped each year has also declined by nearly half.

The Liberal's housing promises are cynical trickery. Tasmanians without stable homes are suffering and many Tasmanians who have stable homes are struggling to afford them. Housing is a human right. We have a crisis and real people are suffering; we saw that here in question time this morning. It is not good enough to treat housing as a good-news story budget announcement and to forget about actually delivering on your promises.

Our alternative budget recognises the urgency of the housing crisis and allocates \$850 million across the forward Estimates to deliver the secure, affordable home so many Tasmanians so desperately need. It establishes a Housing First program similar to those in places like Wales, that recognises that when someone is homeless and in distress, the first thing

a government needs to do is find them a home, then wrap whatever supports are needed around that person. This approach turns lives around and provides security, support, and new opportunities.

We prioritise a proportion of this bloated roads budget towards essential social infrastructure, more affordable energy-efficient homes for Tasmanians. We recognise countless Tasmanian tenants live in fear of rent increases and eviction. We will again move to rein in short-stay accommodation and soaring rents, and we have legislation on the table to strengthen tenants' rights which we will bring on for debate this year. The real estate agents will not like this, but our alternative budget recognises the housing affordability crisis is at least in part on agents who continually bump up asking prices in order to increase their commissions. We will move to regulate and prohibit commission-based fee structures for property agents, removing the incentive for them to inflate rental rates and house prices. The gouging has to stop.

As always, the wellbeing of children and young people is a central focus of our alternative budget, as it should be. We want every Tasmanian child, no matter the circumstances of their birth, their cultural background, family dynamic, gender identity and level of ability to feel safe, loved and wanted. We want to ensure they are given every opportunity to find their own unique gifts and passions, and to be able to harness them for a happy life.

We want them to be hopeful about the future. In so many ways, that is about what we do, the laws we make, the ambitions we share for them in this parliament. That is one reason why Dr Woodruff and I are so determined that this parliament and this Government treats the moral imperative to act on climate as the most serious and urgent of our work. The kids deserve nothing less.

Tasmanians now know that not all children have been safe in our schools, hospitals and other institutional settings over the generations. They know that as a society we have failed children. The previous and current Tasmanian premiers are to be warmly commended for establishing and supporting the commission of inquiry. Even in a few short weeks of evidence, the inquiry has laid bare the structural and cultural weaknesses that have caused lifelong harm to children who become victims/survivors.

Our alternative budget commits funding to full implementation of recommendations from the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse, with funding allocated to accelerate the delivery of child-safe organisations and a reportable conduct scheme. The inquiry heard this work could take up to three more years. That is not good enough. Either we are serious about protecting children or we are not, and every day of delay is another day where children are not safe enough.

We also invest \$97 million over four years into more school social workers and psychologists, \$41 million into equality guarantee in education and, critically, we have reprioritised funding to allocate \$120 million towards more child safety officers. This investment will keep children safer, save lives and futures, and support the vital work of our overstretched, under-resourced child safety workers.

We strongly support the closure of that century-old child torture chamber that is Ashley Youth Detention Centre - an outcome we fought for, for years - and the Budget allocation to

deliver two new therapeutic facilities north and south. This is Greens policy which we are so glad a Liberal government has adopted.

The Working with Vulnerable People registration system, which I worked to introduce as minister for Human Services, clearly needs tightening up to prevent predators from being registered to work with children. It also needs extending to prevent all cohorts of vulnerability in our community, as it was always intended to do, but from which the Liberals, on coming to government, walked away. We allocate \$4.5 million over four years to extend the Working with Vulnerable People registration system to better protect vulnerability in all its human forms.

To make sure the services that deliver support across the community are held accountable, we fund a community services commission with \$4.5 million to provide recourse for those let down and oversight of services that receive taxpayer funds to meet community needs.

Dr Woodruff will outline in more detail the attention and investment our alternative budget gives to health and mental health. We recognise this Government has made a record investment in health. However, every government does, as our population increases and ages. Whatever happened to this Government's goal of the healthiest state in the nation by 2025? Talk about over-promising and under-delivering.

Too little invested in ill-health prevention. Too little over eight years into the people who every day hold up our health system and almost nothing invested in that time in preventative health.

Our alternative budget prioritises the health of Tasmanians through preventative health funding and it invests in the people who deliver quality healthcare every day, who work so hard to be there for them in times of crisis. We fund more nurses, more paramedics and more Ambulance Tasmania staff. We understand the urgency of the need to recruit more paramedics and ambulance staff, and fund an extra 224 full-time positions. It is simply unacceptable and heartbreaking that a man in acute distress dies alone in his home seven hours after calling for an ambulance. That is not on Ambulance Tasmania staff - that is on the Government. We have to do better. When Tasmanians call for an ambulance, they need to know it will be there for them.

We often overlook the suffering of creatures great and small. It would be so positive for our clean, green but continually threatened brand for us to become a cruelty-free state. Instead, this Government pours twice as much money into subsidising the cruel racing industry than it does into environmental management. The promised second tranche of reforms to the Animal Welfare Act have still not been delivered. Battery hen farms and sow stalls have been reinstated after the Labor-Greens government moved to modernise and make more humane the farming of animals for food.

To oversee our evolution towards being a cruelty-free state, we establish an animal welfare commission with \$5.5 million over four years. We can do this. It just takes political will and the recognition that animals are sentient beings deserving of respect and a good life. The Greens will always be the strongest, clearest voices in this place for the voiceless.

Our alternative budget funds a ban on greyhound racing and battery hen farming, as well as a phaseout of all factory farming. It establishes animal welfare standards and compliance measures through the reform of the Animal Welfare Act. It also supports that outstanding, manifestly underfunded organisation, the RSPCA, to strengthen its inspectorate, animal shelters and community engagement capacity.

The rights of citizens are inadequately protected in Tasmania. We are a national laggard in strengthening these rights. The Greens' alternative budget funds the development of a human rights act for Tasmania and establishes the human rights commission and unit. A healthy democracy with an engaged, respected and protected citizenry is something to which we should all be aspiring. The Greens will never give up on our sworn duty to advance the human rights of everyone who calls this island home.

We also better fund our outstanding community legal centres to expand access to justice and we deliver genuine donations and electoral reform, unlike the self-interested bill tabled by the Attorney-General in this place yesterday - a bill that will still leave Tasmania with the weakest electoral laws in the country. What a wasted opportunity to clean up democracy. As ever, the Greens will show the way with electoral reform, real-time disclosure and a political advertising commissioner to curb some of the rubbish and deception we get from the major parties during election campaigns.

Instead of slashing funding for environmental management, as the Treasurer's first Budget does, we increase it. We make sure the Environment Protection Authority is there to protect this island's natural environment and competitive advantage, not bend over backwards to enable corporate profits, as it has for too long.

Our alternative budget reprioritises funding towards forest protection and the restoration of degraded landscapes, delivering much-needed environmental repair and jobs to this beautiful island we share. It is the UN Decade of Ecosystem Restoration and we sure have some projects ready to go here in Tasmania as a result of poor misguided land management in the past and to this day. We will establish a stand-alone environment department, in recognition of the natural environment's central place in Tasmania's way of life, health and economy.

We fund ecosystem restoration grants for community organisations such as Landcare and Coastcare to continue their outstanding work. We also fund the phase-out of single-use plastics, which are choking our island and its waterways, and invest in mapping and better managing Tasmania's extraordinary biodiversity, the richness and uniqueness of its flora and fauna. We reverse the Liberals' shameful cuts to the Threatened Species Unit with \$8.4 million over four years to restore management plans and programs that reverse the march of our rare and endangered species towards extinction.

We end the shameful neglect of this Government's statutory obligation to deliver state of the environment reporting, with \$800 000 allocated over the forward Estimates to restart this vital public benefit science work.

To better protect and value this island's amazing marine environment, we fund the restart of critical work to establish a network of Marine Protected Areas in Tasmanian waters. The evidence is clear: MPAs deliver more adaptive marine ecosystems and ensure fish for the future. It is a win-win for the environment, for recreational fishers and the economy. That is why in New Zealand the fisherfolk are the fiercest defenders of no-take marine reserves.

Members will know that the Greens join anglers, farmers, oyster growers, scientists and recreational users of Tasmania's beautiful rivers in being extremely worried about water management under the Liberals. We are thankful there is a new, less divisive and hopefully more straight-up-and-down minister on the case.

Water is life. Without access to clean healthy water, we are in deep trouble. The unscientific free-for-all has to end. Our rivers need better management and protection. Our alternative budget funds integrated catchment management to end the arbitrary separation between different water users. It funds the restoration of riverbanks and removal of invasive species. It funds the reinstatement of water management plans to address the sorry fact that only 34 per cent of the state's water entitlements are covered by statutory plans compared to 100 per cent on the mainland.

We also refuse to ignore the water scientists, as this Government has done repeatedly, ensuring continued decline of the health of our rivers over the past eight years. Our alternative budget allocates \$4 million towards the science of river health. This funding is for assessment, monitoring and reporting on the health and condition of the state's freshwater resources; this is long overdue.

So too is the need to monitor and meter all water allocations to primary producers. The current situation where those on Tas Irrigation licenses are metered and those licensed by the department are not is both inequitable and unacceptable. We will also continue to advocate for parliament to have a thorough examination of water management in Tasmania to ensure we are looking after those Tasmanians who will need it in the future.

To fund our budget priorities, we unashamedly take the axe to a number of Liberal spending priorities. We cut funding to the Office of the Coordinator-General, which is overseeing dodgy visa recommendations, selling out the state and facilitating the Liberals' expressions of interest process for development in public protected areas. We end the public subsidy to the cruel racing industry. We also end the free ride given to big mining, fish farming, logging and developers, who pay the lowest royalty and licence fees in the country as they exploit the shared wealth of Tasmanians.

Dr Woodruff - Hear, hear.

Ms O'CONNOR - We show how it is possible to generate around \$580 million in revenue and savings each year to put towards public good infrastructure and public benefit programs. In total, we can generate \$2.3 billion over the forward Estimates. Key to this is making corporations pay their fair share. If Tasmanian royalties had been set at even the average of other states and territories over the past decade, the budget bottom line would be around half a billion dollars better off than it is today.

Tasmania has the lowest royalty and licence fees in the country and this is ripping Tasmanians off. We are all the poorer for giving entities like the Brazilian butcher JBS access at bargain basement lease prices to exploit our near pristine public waters. We are robbed when a Chinese state-owned mining company pays a pittance for its Rosebery mine lease and gets permission to smash down and drown in toxic waste a rainforest ecosystem you will not find anywhere else on Earth. Over the past decade, Tasmania has charged 60 per cent less in royalties on mining and company profits than the rest of the country. In our alternative budget,

we raise mining royalties by 150 per cent to bring them into line with the rest of the country, an increase recurrent of around 4 per cent of mining gross profits to 10 per cent.

We are ripped off when the Federal Group, which has corrupted our democracy for generations, gets a sneakily negotiated and dishonestly sold tax rate on pokies and casinos, which is pegged to a casino in far north Queensland, and when developers seek to cash in on the housing crisis when land is rezoned to become residential without making any improvement to that land, we are also duddled. These windfall gains for developers enable corruption. We all know there is an unhealthy nexus between governments, developers and the property industry more broadly. These are the same people who, under the weak electoral law amendments tabled yesterday, will still be able to pour cash into the coffers of major parties in the justified hope of increasing their profits. Our alternative budget introduces a 75 per cent betterment tax on any increase in the value of land that results from a rezoning decision by planning bodies.

These revenue-generating measures are reasonable, sensible and responsive to a budget situation where revenue is a major challenge. They will end the free ride to corporations who profit from our shared wealth.

In conclusion, Mr Speaker, we invest heavily in real climate action and in giving young people hope for the future. We invest in emissions reduction, landscape restoration and community resilience. We end the subsidies to Forestry Tasmania and repurpose it so it is a forest conservation GBE, and we end the subsidies to Tas Racing. We invest these moneys in housing, health and education to lift Tasmanians out of disadvantage and ensure every Tasmanian has access to the services and supports they need and deserve.

We show how genuine cost-of-living relief can be delivered through energy-efficiency programs, school fee and levy relief, free bus travel and TasTAFE courses, and an increase in the too-low concessions budget. Every measure in our alternative budget we regard as sensible and possible. It is, as always, brimming with good policies and ideas that, like so much of our work, in time will become mainstream. We are proud to present it to the parliament, to people who believe in us and recognise what we are about, with a promise to work hard toward these goals every single day, as we always do.

[12.25 p.m.]

Mr WINTER (Franklin) - Mr Speaker, I rise to make my contribution on the Appropriation Bill. I acknowledge the alternative budget put forward by Ms O'Connor, Leader of the Greens. I have not had a long time to read it, but what I have I will make a contribution on as well.

Ms O'Connor - You're welcome to any of the ideas or policies in there.

Mr SPEAKER - Order.

Mr WINTER - I am only new to this place but it is unusual that the Treasurer has not been here, I do not think, for almost the entire debate.

Mr Street - He's on a pair at the minute.

Mr WINTER - He is on a pair. Fair enough. If that is the case then that is obviously understandable.

I was writing this while I was listening to Mr Barnett make his contribution yesterday. He started by thanking the Premier, Mr Rockliff, for his vision for the state. I must have been listening to a different contribution from the Premier because I have no idea what minister Barnett was talking about.

This bill was yet another opportunity for the new Premier of Tasmania, Mr Rockliff, to outline his vision for the state but I still do not know what that actually is. He started his time in the role of Premier with a rambling 45-minute press conference which the press pack is still recovering from. We had the return to the parliament after it was prorogued where he had an opportunity to come in here and make a ministerial statement about what his vision was for the state and what sort of government he would lead. We did not hear it.

Here we had another opportunity to hear what the vision was from this Premier. How different is the Rockliff Government going to be from the Gutwein government? We still do not know. I do not know if he is planning to be a continuation of the Gutwein government. Certainly it was a different government to the Hodgman government, so I suppose we are just waiting to see whether a vision materialises at all, but I thought it was an unusual comment from the minister to make in relation to that contribution.

I want to talk about the state's finances, predominantly because that is what the Budget is about and that is what is concerning me. The officials from the Department of Treasury and Finance are not here but, as a former Treasury cadet, I want to say what an outstanding job they do. Try to find a mistake within this Budget in a number or missing comma or dot point, and you will not find one. It is meticulously put together and delivered by the Department of Treasury and Finance. They do a fantastic job and we thank them for it.

When it comes to the Budget itself, though, there are significant problems. We have been saying for years that the budget is unsustainable. The former treasurer, Mr Gutwein, was able for years to play with the numbers a little bit. We saw him extracting money from TT-Line, \$40 million a year, to go into the budget to help prop up his bottom line. We saw it with dividends from Hydro Tasmania to ensure that he always got to his operating surplus. By doing that, we saw relatively small operating surpluses - \$62 million in 2015-16, and if you take out the Mersey hospital one-off funding injection, it was about \$74 million in 2016-17. It was \$126 million in 2017-18 and the surplus was \$66 million in 2018-19.

Operating surpluses, as I said, have been manufactured in some years. However, when you compare them with the deficits we have seen since, in 2019-20 we saw a record operating deficit of \$338 million. In 2021 we saw a new record being set of \$344 million in operating deficit. It is predicted that by the end of this financial year it will be a new record of \$456 million. That will be the deficit for this year. Next year, the new Treasurer is planning to set his own record, a new record of almost half a billion dollars, a \$475 million deficit. Four years in a row. Those numbers are staggering and every single year they set a new record for deficit.

When you compare them with the relatively small surpluses from the years before, the outcome is about \$1.2 billion in deficit over the course of this Government. That is what the

economic management of the Liberal Party and this Liberal Government is. It is deficits. It is huge debt - \$5.2 billion in debt predicted by the end of these Estimates.

I have been struggling to understand the narrative from the Premier, or the lack of a narrative or vision for the state coming from the Premier. I have also been struggling to understand what their economic message is. On one hand they are saying that Tasmania's economy is the best in the nation. They continue to point to this CommSec report, which they deliberately misinterpret or do not understand, to say that we are leading the nation. Compare this with our history, and esteemed economist Saul Eslake outlines this very well and frequently, that it does not actually say what they say it says. Yet they continue to say it anyway. If they are saying that the economy is so strong and they are doing such a good job, how is it that we continue to have these massive deficits?

Ms O'Connor - Because we have a revenue problem.

Mr WINTER - That shows how little Ms O'Connor understands about the Budget and how little she has read it.

Ms O'Connor - What an insult. I have read the whole Budget.

Mr WINTER - Within this Budget, revenue has gone up by 23 per cent over the last two years. There is not a revenue problem within this Budget. There is a spending problem. If you look at previous economic shocks that have impacted Tasmania, for example the global financial crisis, revenue was cut. There was less revenue during that time from the year before. During this global pandemic there has actually been more revenue coming into the Budget - 23 per cent up, Ms O'Connor. When Ms O'Connor says 'there's a revenue problem', I do not know what she is talking about. In fact, let us get to the alternative budget from Ms O'Connor.

Ms O'Connor - Please talk about our budget. That would be great.

Mr WINTER - What Ms O'Connor does every year is she falls into the trap, she is still falling into Peter Gutwein's trap now, after he has gone. I have only had about 30 minutes to flick through the alternative budget and I wish that I had longer.

Ms O'Connor - I would be stoked if you would spend the rest of your time talking about our budget. That would be wonderful.

Mr WINTER - No, I will not. Ms O'Connor wants me to spend the rest of my time talking about her alternative budget. They have included an investment in a total of 600 new graduates; 120 permanent full time nurses and midwives, and 10 psychiatric emergency nurses; 25 clinical educators and 50 clinical coaches. The Budget amount they have next to that is \$13.31 million, going up to \$60 million a year, for that level of staffing.

The interesting thing about it is that even the Greens have a smaller deficit than this Liberal Government this year. They have a \$380 million operating deficit in the coming year. Perhaps they are better economic managers than this Government. I do not want to dwell on it, because as I said, it is a distraction.

The Government does not want to talk about their Budget. They want us to do an alternative so that they can talk about it. They want to talk about anything but their own

numbers. Ms O'Connor, the Leader of the Greens, comes in here to create her own distraction from our actual job, which is to scrutinise this Budget.

Ms O'Connor - That is excuse-making of the worst order. Tell us what you would cut. Tell us what saving we should make.

Mr WINTER - There is not a single opposition in Australia that does an alternative budget. Adam Bandt does not do an alternative budget. Perhaps that make him no good. No one has done one except for Peter Gutwein and he did a terrible job.

I could not believe it when the Premier came in here the other day waving around his alternative budget from 2013-14. That should be something he is embarrassed about, not flaunting it as though it is something to be proud of. It is a document where they made the promises to Tasmanians about us catching up to the rest of the states when it came to education, about cutting the elective surgery waiting list, which now has almost 10 000 people on it; over 50 000 Tasmanians waiting to see a specialist. In that document, which they took to the 2014 election, they promised to lift education attainment and fix our health system. The health system has become worse. Students are performing worse on NAPLAN in 2021 than they did in 2008.

In the lead-up to the 2018 election, the Liberal Party pledged that by 2020 Tasmanian students would be at or above the national average in reading, writing and maths. Yet in 2021, our results are the worst of any state in every age group in reading, the second worst in every age group in writing, the worst in every age group in spelling, the worst in every age group in grammar and punctuation, and the worst in years 5, 7 and 9 for numeracy.

Do you know what this Budget from the Government promises to do for students, for those education figures? Nothing.

This glossy brochure, which is not put together, as I understand, by the Department of Treasury and Finance, certainly has their logo on it.

One of the highlights from Mr Jaensch, the Minister for Education, is \$8 million to upgrade electrical switchboard infrastructure in schools. That is one of the highlights of his Education budget. Despite the fact that we have students going backwards under this Government, we have no plan for education, no plan to lift attainment. Just more of the same - an education system that is not delivering for our students, that is not delivering for our economy and will not, in the long term, deliver for wages.

Mr Deputy Speaker, we know that the best thing we can do in the long term for wages is to improve education outcomes, to ensure that our kids, our students get the best chance they can in life, the best chance to learn, to get the skills they need to become really successful in life in Tasmania or elsewhere. But there is no plan for that. They have given up. There is now not even an attempt to reform education - just fix the switchboards, according to the glossy brochure.

The glossy brochure was a nice addition. As I listened to Ms O'Connor, when I was not going through the numbers, I looked at some of the glossy photos. I counted eight glossy photos of the Premier. Mr Ferguson, the Treasurer, only had four. That will be disappointing for him but I am sure he can come back next year and perhaps get more glossy photos.

Mr Street could have been better treated. He did not get on there until page 23 and he only had two photos, so perhaps he can work on that a little bit more for next year as well.

The issue that I predicted to my colleagues would be a big focus of the Treasurer's Budget speech and this Budget was the cost of living. I thought there would be a huge focus on this issue because Labor knows, and Tasmanians know, that this is becoming more and more of an issue. If you look at other states and territories, because we know the cost of living according to CPI figures, the problem is arguably worse here in Tasmania. It is an issue right across the country and you have seen other states and territories, the one I note is in Western Australia, Premier McGowan announcing a huge cost-of-living support for Western Australians, and Queensland, where Premier Annastacia Palaszczuk again had a big focus in their budget on the cost of living. There is almost nothing in this Budget, in fact the amount they have allocated to cost-of-living support is actually less in this Budget than it was last year. It describes to me a government that is out of touch, that is not attuned to the biggest issue for Tasmanians.

It is not just about housing anymore, it is about the increase in prices that Tasmanians are seeing for electricity, water and sewerage and through the new bin tax that the Government will implement from next financial year. Tasmanians have not been hit by it yet but when they are they will certainly know about it.

I knew the Government was out of touch when Mr Street spoke for just 10 minutes on the cost of living last week when he had the opportunity to speak about the Government's plan for cost-of-living support. Ten minutes was all he could conjure up. There were opportunities for other members to jump and speak about cost of living and what the big issue was and what we heard was 10 minutes from the minister, Mr Street, and we heard nothing else.

From that, it would not appear to be an issue that was dealt with in the Budget. We are hearing more frequently about the cost-of-living issues and that is why we have been fighting against the cost-of-living increases from this Government and sometimes with success.

When I heard in the Budget speech the recognition of the attempt to charge Tasmanians for the Aurora+ app, whether or not they could access it, I was delighted. That was a very good thing campaigned for by Labor, and successfully so. We were very pleased to get that win. That will save Tasmanians about \$3.8 million and that is something we are proud of. It is bizarre that it turned up in the speech. It is something that the minister for Energy knew about for a long period of time. He sat during GBE hearings when I asked about it, he knew all about it and then once he saw some commentary and newspaper articles, he decided to direct Aurora Energy not to pass on that cost.

When the Leader of the Greens asks 'what would you do', we would not put the prices up. We opposed the bin tax; we said we would not do that. In Leader Rebeca White's outstanding Budget reply, she said exactly what we would do and she talked about using the Queensland model which we talked about during the debate, a model that provides the right incentives and disincentives to waste. I think Ms O'Connor and the Greens fell in love with the idea of the waste tax or the bin tax -

Ms O'Connor - It has been Greens policy for around 30 years.

Mr WINTER - and backed it without actually looking at the model. The model does not provide any incentive for Tasmanians to produce less waste.

Ms O'Connor - Have a chat to Brian Wightman, your colleague and former environment minister, who actively considered a waste levy.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER - Order.

Mr WINTER - It does not provide any disincentive at all.

Ms O'Connor - When we were in government it was Labor policy. They just did not have the guts to do it. We could not make them do it.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER - Order. The member is having trouble.

Mr WINTER - Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker. I am sure you will continue to keep order.

The approach outlined by Ms White is to undertake the Queensland model which is the one we talked about during debate on the new bin tax. It is one where we provide the rebates back to councils so that Tasmanians do not get a hit in the hip pocket during a cost-of-living crisis, which is what we will see. The charge will be \$19 by the Glenorchy City council and we are likely to see prices at or around that figure for Tasmanian residents next year, and two years after that it goes up and two years later it goes up again to the point where you are likely to see, on those numbers, around \$60 or \$70 per household for your wheelie bin. Every time you take your bin out to the kerb, that will be contributing towards the new bin tax that this Government has put on Tasmanians. There is no incentive to reduce your waste, none at all, because they got the model wrong.

I have spoken about the Aurora+ app and welcome the fact that the Government listened to Labor and listened to our suggestion on that which was to not do what they were planning to do.

I now want to talk about the TasWater price increases that are about to hit Tasmanian households, families and businesses over the next four years. The Government likes to say we are only a 5 per cent shareholder in TasWater but the truth of the matter is that back in 2018 when the MOU was signed, local governments signed up and agreed to the request from then Treasurer Gutwein to increase prices by 3.5 per cent this coming year, the year after that and the year after that. The increase for an average Tasmanian household will be \$450 over that period of time, as directed by this Tasmanian Liberal Government back in 2018. That is the reality of it.

Yes, they are a 5 per cent shareholder, but the deal that they struck when they could not take it over was to increase prices. In the determination by the Economic Regulator, it talks about how interest rate rises are going to have an impact on TasWater's bottom line, and that is leveraging the balance sheet, which was what Treasurer Gutwein used to like to say instead of take on debt. The legacy of Peter Gutwein's impact on TasWater was to accelerate the capital program, after they had already fixed the issue of potable water that was used as the excuse for doing the takeover in the first place. That is why it has been laden with debt and now requires a Treasurer's Guarantee to continue. That is the issue.

Ms O'Connor - What's the solution?

Mr WINTER - Again, Labor opposed that, Ms O'Connor; that is our job. It is always important that we undertake our role thoroughly when we are scrutinising the government because our job is to scrutinise this Government and that is we will continue to do.

I want to talk about and reflect on the cost of living a little more and the fact that we have had some brave and outstanding residents from Kingston here this morning who are victims of the cost-of-living crisis and have been forgotten about. I want to put on the record a couple of things that perhaps because I was not in the Chamber did not come through as clearly as I would have liked. These residents have not started asking for support in the last couple of months; in fact they have not started asking for support in the last year. They have been asking for support for well over a year. In fact, when I first met them they had been dealing with my outstanding predecessor Alison Standen, the former member for Franklin, that is how long they have been asking for support. They knew that the end date for their NRAS support was coming in June of this year and because they are stressed and anxious they wanted certainty, which is incredibly reasonable. It is so reasonable that they would want some certainty about that. They were coming to the end of a 10-year lease, they knew that NRAS had been axed by the Liberal Government back in 2013, and so they wanted some certainty.

They saw that the PRIS scheme was in place and all they had been asking for was to get access to that scheme so they can continue to live in that beautiful community they had built there. This is a community that cares for each other and loves each other; they take each other to hospital and medical appointments. They are the most fantastic group of Tasmanians and it should not take us to bring them into question time to get an answer. They have been asking through so many different Housing ministers. There has been a succession of Housing ministers in this Government. We have been writing to them. I think Ms Standen was writing to them as well. They have been calling HousingConnect and other housing providers. They have been going through this over and over to try to get an answer, and here we are on 1 June, only a couple of weeks away, and they still do not have the certainty they need.

Adrienne Stevens has been very public in saying she is struggling to eat and sleep during this really stressful time. It does not need to be like this. I do not know why we have to do this: why we have to actually bring them in to question time. Some of the contribution from the Premier made it sound like he was perhaps going to take a personal interest to ensure they do not go into homelessness, which I appreciated. I hope he does take a personal interest. I do not know why he has made Mr Barnett the minister for Housing. It seems the oddest fit that I can imagine.

Ms O'Connor - If he invests as much energy in that as he does into destroying forests, we might get some homes built.

Mr WINTER - I want to respond so that can go into *Hansard*.

I have a few minutes left just on my portfolios. I have spoken about the Aurora+ app. In terms of energy, again we are still in the same situation with Project Marinus that we have been in for years and years, in fact six years, with no idea who is going to fund Project Marinus. We know from RTI documents that were released recently that an offer was made by the former Morrison government. It appears as though it has been rejected by the Gutwein government so what does that mean for the project going forward? Who is going to pay the \$3.5 billion at least that it will cost to deliver that project?

It cannot be Tasmanian taxpayers doing this on our own. Marinus' projections themselves say that only 8 per cent of the benefit from Marinus comes to Tasmania. If only 8 per cent of the benefit comes to Tasmania, which is only a very small amount in the scheme of this massive project, then we should not be the ones paying for the whole thing. Why would we?

That is where we at. He could not strike a deal after six years of dealing with the Morrison government, which did not really have an energy policy. We still do not know who is going to pay. It will fall on the new Labor minister, Chris Bowen, the new minister for Energy, and what an outstanding policymaker he is. I am sure he will do an outstanding job with the energy portfolio nationally. I am really looking forward to seeing what he does, because the policy that he put forward at this election was an outstanding policy, and one that I am looking forward to seeing him work through over the next three years and beyond.

The city deal: we would be remiss not to talk about the economic development portfolio that I have and the city deal that falls within that, the Hobart City Deal. We still do not know where the underground bus mall is going. We are sniffing around looking for it. No idea.

Mr Street - You might find a policy while you are doing it.

Mr WINTER - Well, we will be digging for a while to find the underground bus mall. Perhaps it is under the floating stadium. Perhaps that is where it is. It could be found there.

It is extraordinary that the cities and the municipality of Kingborough that add to the three cities in the city deal have come up with these priorities for their city, working with government about what the priorities are. Now there was not always agreement, but it is a guide to the 10-year infrastructure build supported by the federal, state and local governments.

Yet three years into the project, the Government is now flashing around this floating stadium as what appears to be its biggest infrastructure priority. They are saying it could be up and running by 2027. There is no money within this budget apart from the feasibility study. There is no capital money in this budget for the floating stadium. We have seen RTI documents that talk about it potentially costing \$750 million. I have it here, in fact.

Using the above, very high-level guidance - and I say that because there is no design; this from one of the consultants - no site information and no defined scope at this stage, you could come up with the following cost. It says 25 000 seats at \$13 000 equals \$325 million, add a roof at, say, just ballpark, \$250 million, for a total of \$575 million. Add escalation, \$57 million to \$58 million. Add the Tas market loading at 20 per cent, \$115 million, and you have a total of \$747.5 million, and then he says 'add site-specific costs'. Presumably that is pylons or it is reclaiming land, or it is floating. Who knows what this stadium is going to be looking like. That is what this price is going to be. It has to be more than \$1 billion now.

Every time he has an opportunity to talk about the floating stadium, the Premier does not answer the question. He does not want to talk about it. He sent the minister for Sport out this morning to talk about the floating stadium, to try to back it in, but it is a hard one to sell. It is difficult to sell that project when we are in a housing crisis, a cost of living crisis, when infrastructure projects like the underground bus mall, the fifth lane on the Southern Outlet, the northern suburbs light rail, have not been delivered. In fact, they are so far down the track you wonder if they will ever be built at all.

That is what this Government has done. It continues to promise more and deliver less, does not deliver on its promises, you have to vote for it at least twice to get anything. The Algona Road intersection that I know Mr Street and I are both passionate about, according to the budget will not be delivered until after the next election. They put these pretty signs up to tell Tasmanians they were going to build it; there was nothing there.

To wrap up, this is an unsustainable budget. It is visionless and I do not know how this is supposed to be heading Tasmania in the direction of financial sustainability.

Time expired.

[12.55 p.m.]

Mr STREET (Franklin - Minister for Community Services and Development) - Mr Deputy Speaker, the 2022-23 state Budget is about strengthening Tasmania's future, and it is about delivering for all Tasmanians. Tasmanians have faced their fair share of the challenges and uncertainties brought about by the global COVID-19 pandemic. The pandemic caused economic volatility, and we have responded with strong actions that secured a more resilient economy. I pay tribute to my former colleague and our former premier and treasurer, Peter Gutwein, for the extraordinary leadership that he provided to all Tasmanians during this period.

The Tasmanian Liberal Government took swift action, leading the nation in protecting our community, in business and social supports, and in bold initiatives to rapidly recover and rebuild. Those challenges are not over. The Rockliff Liberal Government's vision is for Tasmania to be a place where everyone is encouraged and supported to be the best they can be. To achieve this, we will harness our comparative advantages, we will create more opportunities for Tasmanians and we will maintain a robust economy. This budget will build business and community confidence through strengthening our economy and by delivering on our commitments. This means we can focus on what matters to Tasmanians: health, education, housing, and building safe, inclusive, and thriving communities.

This is a government committed to making a difference for all Tasmanians, and as minister for Community Services and Development, I reiterate my commitment to working to ensure Tasmanians across the state can access the services they need when they need them. This includes investing in our vital volunteers so that they can support others. We acknowledge the critical role of volunteering to the social fabric of our communities, without which many events, services and supports across the state would otherwise not be possible.

That is why the 2022-23 Tasmanian Budget includes \$440 000 across the next two years to ensure the continuation and extension of Volunteering Tasmania's safeguarding volunteering project. The project will help increase the number of people volunteering across Tasmania through engagement with selected councils, utilising local knowledge to drive place-based and community driven solutions to support and build capacity of volunteers across the state. This comes on top of our funding for Volunteering Tasmania of more than \$2.3 million over the four years since 2018 to support its peak functions and projects.

With an estimated 140 000 volunteers in Tasmania stood down in the COVID-19 pandemic, we are continuing to invest in Volunteering Tasmania to ensure it can provide the leadership and direction needed to rebuild our vital volunteer workforce. It was an absolute pleasure to attend the Volunteering Tas Awards some two weeks ago to recognise the winners

in various categories across the state and to acknowledge the contributions that volunteers make all across the state.

This Budget is also delivering on the Tasmanian Liberal Government's commitment to ensure all Tasmanians have access to healthy and nutritious food. Through our food mapping data and consultation with groups representing the food relief sector, Tasmania's first-ever Food Security Strategy has set out our direction for implementing the Premier's Economic and Social Recovery Action Council's (PESRAC) interim and final report recommendations in this vital area.

While we finalise our action plan from the strategy, \$300 000 will be provided to kickstart the first year of our food relief to food resilience action plan. This will support place-based food solutions and collaborative partnerships, connecting the Tasmanian food sector to help ensure all Tasmanians can learn about an access healthy, nutritious food wherever they may live. Initiatives include a Tasmanian first community garden grants program which acknowledges the important health and wellbeing benefits associated with community gardens. This also addresses the PESRAC recommendations regarding food security and will help increase the knowledge and capacity of individuals and communities towards self-sufficiency regarding accessing food.

While we are building community and individual resilience, we also understand that some people will continue to need direct assistance, and food relief provides a critical opportunity to connect Tasmanians to services that address the circumstances that led to food insecurity.

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

APPROPRIATION BILL (No. 1) 2022 (No. 23)

Second Reading

Resumed from above.

Mr STREET (Franklin - Minister for Community Services and Development) - Mr Speaker, the new action plan funding in this year's Budget is on top of our previous 2020-21 increase in emergency food relief funding to \$3 million over three years, which includes increased base funding for critical food distributors Foodbank Tasmania and Loaves and Fishes, as well as increased funding for Gran's Van, Loui's Van and Missionbeat so they can take the food and support to people in their communities.

The 2022-23 Tasmanian Budget is also about strengthening Tasmania's future. We want our state to be the best place to live, work and invest, as well as a place where we can be part of the community we live in as we grow older. That is why the Budget includes an investment of \$1.245 million to support older Tasmanians to participate and connect with their communities.

Building on the success of our Strong, Liveable Communities: Tasmania's Active Ageing Plan 2017-22, this funding will help deliver our new comprehensive whole-of-government 2023-29 Tasmanian Active Ageing Strategy. The strategy will continue

supporting older Tasmanians and the Council of the Ageing Tasmania is currently funded to review the plan, with community consultations running until July this year.

As a government with heart, this funding also ensures COTA Tasmania can continue to plan for and deliver its annual Seniors Week event which is so important for our community. By promoting healthy and positive ageing and building connections between older Tasmanians and their community, our funding of these events provides an opportunity for older people to have an active and social week to try new things and meet new people. Funding of \$80 000 over two years is also provided for in the Budget to support COTA Tasmania to promote and support workplaces to recruit and retain older workers, acknowledging their skill base and experience.

We want to provide opportunities for economic as well as social participation in our communities and raise awareness of age discrimination. Improving digital literacy among older Tasmanians is a really important part of this going forward. As Tasmania and Australia's population profile ages, harnessing the skills of older people will be crucial to accessing the skills and labour required to maintain a high-functioning economy.

Our investments represent significant increases in support for Tasmanians in need across our state, totalling well over \$10 million since 2018. We will continue working with all organisations funded to provide support to those in need, working alongside TasCOSS to ensure organisations are linked up and informed. It is through maintaining a robust economy that the Tasmanian Liberal Government can create more opportunities for Tasmanians in every corner of our state to build thriving, connective communities. We thank all of our community sector workers and their volunteers across Tasmania who have provided their time and skills to help build stronger and more connected communities across the state.

We are working hard to get more young Tasmanians moving and into sport. I have said on numerous occasions that one of my key priorities as Minister for Sport and Recreation is increasing participation at the grassroots and community level. Every Tasmanian deserves to lead an active and healthy lifestyle and we will do everything we can to encourage and support them to achieve this. That is why we are investing significantly into grassroots and community-based sport and recreation initiatives.

As part of the 2022-23 Budget, we will provide \$75 000 per year over two years to Reclink Tasmania. This funding will allow Reclink to continue providing support for at-risk and disadvantaged Tasmanians to enjoy sporting activities. Reclink state manager Richard Allenby said this following the Budget announcement:

We are pleased, encouraged and grateful to receive this funding as part of the 2022-23 Tasmanian State Budget which will mean these opportunities can be extended to students in north and north-west Tasmania.

In an effort to increase female participation in sport, \$185 000 per year over four years from 2022 to 2026 is being provided for a strategy to achieve outcomes aligned to the National Policy Framework for Girls and Women in Sport. The strategy will consider and address all aspects of sporting participation including coaching, officiating, leadership, administration, player support and participation.

To assist with growing the game of netball in Tasmania and provide a pathway for young players to aspire to, we have committed \$200 000 for Netball Tasmania to support the game at the grassroots and elite levels. Netball Tasmania CEO Mitch Coulson wrote:

Netball Tasmania warmly welcomes this new funding from the Tasmanian Government which will enable significant investment into grassroots participation and our elite development programs. Netball holds a unique place in the Tasmanian sporting landscape as the number-one team sport for females and girls.

To help get more Tasmanians active we are providing \$500 000 for the construction of a new St Helens pump track to facilitate use by scooters, skateboards, BMX and mountain bikes. An amount of \$100 000 has already been provided and \$400 000 will be allocated in the coming financial year.

In acknowledgement of our state's proud football history we have allocated \$250 000 for the development of a new AFL History and Heritage Museum to house and preserve Tasmanian football memorabilia.

Sporting clubs are the lifeblood of communities around Tasmania. That is why \$300 000 is being provided in 2022-23 for the Sport and Recreation Grants Program which supports the continued capacity growth of the sector and ongoing provision of safe, fair and inclusive sport and recreation in the state. In 2021-22 we doubled funding for our Ticket to Play program with an additional \$3 million over three years from 2021-24 and we are proud to see the continuation of this vital program which reduces the cost of participating in sport for eligible children by providing them with two \$100 vouchers towards sporting clubs memberships.

Our Government is also strengthening Tasmania's future by delivering the sporting infrastructure our state deserves. Elite-level sport not only provides content for Tasmanians to enjoy but importantly also provides pathways for men, women and children and supports the wider effort of our clubs in bringing people together.

When our Government talks about delivering elite sporting content and infrastructure for our state we know the positive impacts this will have at a community and grassroots level. A total of \$25 million is in the Budget forward Estimates for further developments at the Dial Regional Sports Complex. This vital piece of sporting infrastructure will help to support the community and the aspirations of young people in the north-west and help them to dream big. The complex has been designed to AFL specifications and when we have secured our own men's and women's AFL, A-League and VFL teams we want games to be played on the north-west coast. This investment will give Dial Park the status it deserves as an important regional asset and recognise its role and capacity to be an important feature in a statewide network of stadium assets.

Facilities like these are critical to keeping our communities connected. They are not only places of sport and recreation but the function centre aspect means this site can become a host location for key events on the central coast and in the wider north-west region. The further development of this facility shows our commitment to ensuring we have the appropriate stadium infrastructure not only for sporting clubs at the local, regional and state level, but also for furthering Tasmania's ability to host and participate in national and international competitions. Our aspirational vision for our sporting future also includes the plan for the

multipurpose stadium in Hobart that will deliver significant social and economic outcomes and create a spectacular and iconic entry to Hobart.

As part of this Budget we have committed \$1.25 million towards the AFL team taskforce and progressing stadium feasibility assessments. The funding will continue the work of the AFL licence taskforce aimed at securing the support of the commission and presidents in the case for granting a Tasmanian AFL and AFLW licence and progress the feasibility planning for the infrastructure necessary, including a new entertainment stadium in Hobart. The feasibility planning will initially have a technical focus, including the collection of information about the site through geotechnical, indigenous heritage, cultural and surveying assessments, for example. A scope for these works is under development for release to the market in early 2022-23 and will be awarded prior to the end of the 2022 calendar year. This preliminary feasibility work will also explore a more detailed definition of the project's scope and inform a program for the planning and delivery phases of the project.

Our goal is to develop a multipurpose stadium that includes the best design standards and trends and is flexible to allow for the future evolution of the facilities and infrastructure. The stadium will put Tasmania on the national and international stage for both sporting and entertainment events on a scale that simply has not been possible in the past. It will be an important part of our sporting and entertainment evolution, growing and supporting Tasmania's visitor economy and inspiring infrastructure and transport systems to support industry, business and community growth, filling the city and the state with accommodation, hospitality and retail activity.

As I said earlier this morning, this is more than a stadium. It is about urban transformation and renewal and delivering a world-class multipurpose venue that maximises local economic and social benefits. A southern stadium supports the aspirations for Tasmania securing its own AFL team, which would be based in Hobart, but it would also be able to host rectangular sporting codes, supporting ongoing discussions regarding an A-League football team. The new stadium will be subject to ongoing stakeholder consultation and planning approval and achieving an AFL licence later this year.

As Minister for Sport and Recreation, I will work to make certain that a Tasmanian AFL club is one that gives back to the community and has a culture of inclusiveness. When our Government talks about delivering elite sporting content and infrastructure we know the positive impacts that it will have at the community and grassroots level. Through the 2022-23 budget, this Government is delivering on our commitments for all Tasmanians.

The performance of the local government sector is vital to the future of the Tasmanian economy and the wellbeing of Tasmanian communities overall. That is why the Government has committed \$1.63 million in the Budget over two years to continue the important work of the review of local government, to create a more robust and capable system of local government, that is ready for the challenges and opportunities of the future.

The review is being undertaken by the Local Government Board, chaired by the highly-respected Sue Smith AM, and will make recommendations on the future role, functions and design of local government and the structural, legislative and financial reforms required to meet its objectives.

The board has identified seven key theme areas for the review based on the services that local government currently delivers. These include community wellbeing, economic development and local promotion, the environment, finance and administration, governance and accountability and representation, infrastructure provision and management and land use planning and other regulatory service. After a detailed and comprehensive community engagement research data collection and analysis program in which all interested stakeholders are being given adequate opportunity to contribute, the board will deliver to the Tasmanian Government, a clear, credible and actionable set of reform recommendations in a report which is due in mid-2023.

The 2022-23 state Budget is all about strengthening Tasmania's future. We want to continue to build thriving, connected communities. We want to harness our competitive advantages and create more opportunities for Tasmanians in every corner of our state and to maintain a robust economy, so that we can invest where it matters most.

Our events industry is a vital part of that economy, and this Liberal Government is a strong supporter of our events industry and the positive impact events have on the economy and community. Over the last decade, events have been a huge catalyst for change in visitation to our regions, and increased economic activity through the traditionally quieter winter months. We will continue to support this vital industry. They are businesses that rely on a single point in the year to make their revenue and do not have the flexibility to spread that risk that this brings over months. The Tasmanian Government's Events Strategy ensures that we should look to events that make a positive economic impact on our broader visitor economy.

Events Tasmania aims to bring three things when it invests into events: bring people to our state from the mainland and overseas; encourage these visitors and local Tasmanians to move around our state, especially in the regions; and ensure there is plenty for people to talk about that is aligned to our brand and our sense of place. These principles sit alongside benefits of events like their ability to bring people together and allowing people to be part of something bigger than themselves.

We have stayed true to this plan for our support of events. With the impacts of COVID-19 hitting hard and fast, we have spent the last two years ensuring that as many events as possible can continue into the future. We have facilitated the Regional Events Recovery Fund, that has provided over \$1 million to 14 recipients, ensuring that they are well prepared for COVID-19 recovery, and acknowledging that it is a different environment and there are certain costs that did not previously exist.

We have worked with Austrade to deliver \$1.7 million in funding to another 14 events through the Recovery for Regional Tourism program. This fund works to drive interstate visitation, create jobs in regions and improve product diversity to attract domestic visitors. We are pleased to have had such success in the program through our event partnerships.

In the current financial year, we have provided funding and support to ensure that over 60 events could take place. Events Tasmania's portfolio includes our partnerships with entertainment sports like Basketball, Australian Rules Football and Super Netball, through to iconic Tasmanian events like the Point to Pinnacle, DerbyFest and the upcoming Festival of Voices, Dark Mofo, Huon Midwinter Festival and the Junction Arts Festival. There is no question that the events sector was hit hard in the last two years through the pandemic, and this

Government has provided vitally important additional support programs so that our industry remains strong and can continue to grow with confidence.

As quickly as COVID-19 impacts were felt, as a government we responded to ensure that events could ride out the wave, and now that density limits and caps have been removed, ensure that we could get back to normal. This growth is visible through our ability to attract events that are new to our state, like the upcoming Iron Man Tasmania championship being held in Hobart for the first time. The \$1.25 million investment over the full program will allow competitors from all over the world to dive into the River Derwent next February, watched by viewers all over the world. We know the exposure it will bring for our state and the Tasmanian brand will deliver a significant return to our state's tourism and hospitality businesses.

It is also important to note that as the nation was still feeling the greatest impacts of COVID-19, our management of the state allowed us to take advantage of our safe environment and bring events to Tasmania in a way that we have never seen before. We have attracted more AFL games than ever before, supported the inaugural and highly-successful season for the Tasmanian JackJumpers, and who can forget the historic fifth Ashes cricket test match held at Blundstone Arena earlier this year. These events provided huge exposure for our state and during a time when travel was difficult, allowed Tasmanians to keep on experiencing the best events right in their own backyard.

We are all aware of the 'big name' events we are proud to support but we may not see many of the smaller events that sit so well with our island's uniqueness. From celebrations of garlic in Koonya on the Tasman Peninsula, to scallops in Bridport, sparkling wine in the Tamar Valley, and apples and cider in the Huon Valley in my own electorate of Franklin -

Mr Ellis - Do not forget the Forth Carrot Festival.

Mr STREET - I will allow you to talk about that, Mr Ellis, when you get up. These events all celebrate a sense of place that you can only find in Tasmania, and we will continue to support events that show it all off to the world.

This Government's support of the events sector has been clearly demonstrated, in particular the support we have provided through COVID-19 that has included financial support for the industry, workers and suppliers. We will continue to support our events sector, and we will continue to ensure that the events we support represent our state, our brand and our sense of place.

In the time I have remaining, I want to mention a few specific projects for my electorate of Franklin that have been funded in this Budget. It is particularly pleasing to see the \$15.1 million for Cambridge Primary School and the \$6.4 million towards the Lauderdale Primary School, both investments that were championed by my colleague in Franklin, Jacque Petrusma. It was a pleasure to be able to announce those during the election campaign and to see what that money is going towards and the improvements that are going to be made was terrific.

There is another \$5 million to complete the \$26 million Water and Energy Trade Centre of Excellence at TasTAFE's Clarence Campus, \$18.85 million to deliver the Derwent ferry service ongoing, \$55 million for the South Arm Highway upgrades from Pass Road, Rokeby

to Oakdowns, and \$6.95 million in additional funding to upgrade outdated classrooms statewide, including at East Derwent Primary and Rison Vale Primary School.

Across the river, down my neck of the woods there is \$20 million towards the \$30 million stage 2 Kingston Health Centre, and \$300 000 for the construction of the Dover Helipad. Anyone who has had to drive to Dover would know that when accidents happen down there, as they often do when Dover is flooded with visitors in the summertime, the ability to get air access for people in and out of Dover is very important.

There is \$23.8 million in the Budget toward six new Child and Family Learning Centres, and it is really pleasing to see that one of those is going to be in Kingborough; and \$1.7 million to improve vehicle access and carpark facilities at Cape Bruny - another one that is in my colleague's portfolio area of Parks.

There is \$166 million to continue the \$204.8 million Greater Hobart Traffic Solutions, and there is \$21.7 million for the Channel Highway bypass of Huonville. This is important for anybody who knows the area, not just getting traffic in and out of Cygnet without having to go through the main street of Huonville, but by putting that road through it is actually going to open up a raft of residential developments at the back of Huonville, something that is sorely needed in that area as the population continues to grow.

The last thing I wanted to mention was the \$41.7 million towards the \$60 million Algonia interchange and Kingston bypass, which Mr Winter mentioned in his budget response but derided because of the time frame on that particular project. The fact is that a project of that size needs to be planned appropriately. We have a massive infrastructure portfolio across the Estimates. That means some projects are going to take longer than we would like to deliver. However, I can guarantee that when that project is done it will be done correctly the first time, unlike the Kingston bypass, which is going to be duplicated as part of that road project only 10 years after it was initially built by Labor with only one lane in each direction. We will make sure that when we upgrade the bypass and do the interchange, it will be done properly so that it does not have to be touched again.

In conclusion, the Rockliff Liberal Government's vision is for Tasmania to be a place where everyone is encouraged and supported to be the best they can be. To achieve this, we will harvest our comparative advantages, create more opportunities for Tasmanians and maintain a robust economy. This State Budget will build business and community confidence through strengthening our economy and by delivering on our commitments. This means we can focus on what matters to Tasmanians: health, education, housing and building safe, inclusive, thriving communities.

[2.21 p.m.]

Ms FINLAY (Bass) - Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise this afternoon to give my contribution in reply to the State Budget handed down last week. It is interesting, as the minister leaves the Chamber on the closing comments about what is important to this Government, is how we are open about what is worrying about this Government's position and the Budget just handed down for Tasmanians. I have been here a year. This is my second chance to respond to a budget. It has been a year of listening to this Government talk up things that are not reality. Being positive is important but our community would much prefer for governments to be honest with them so we can understand how we have to work together to make improvements in our community.

It is disappointing when the Government presents a budget and says it is about strengthening the future. It would be great if this Government had the ability to deliver on strengthening our future. Probably most insulting is that it says it is delivering for all Tasmanians. From question time this morning, we know that this Government does not deliver for all Tasmanians. We had a number of older members of our community who are deeply anxious about their housing situation because after months and months of advocacy, they still have uncertainty about their living arrangements in a few weeks.

There is no way that this Government can say they are delivering for all Tasmanians so they should not say it. It riles me in my seat at the back when I have to listen to minister upon minister talking about things they are doing when they could just say: 'It is really hard right now. Things are tough right now, the economy is going okay, but not fantastic.' They talk it up. The minister, in his closing, talked about business confidence. If you guys were as honest with the community as we are, we could work to provide outcomes for the community that are really real.

I want to unpack a little bit about the difference between the economy and the Budget in my Budget response today, because they are not the same thing. Sometimes I think this Government thinks the economy and Budget are the same thing. I also want to unpack a little bit about how this Budget delivers effort, hopefully action and outcomes that put in place their policies.

Many people talk about figures and percentages and line items when they talk about the Budget but what we are talking about is impact on people and community.

The minister just closed by talking about thriving communities. The Premier in his own response talked about how this is going to be strengthening for the future, delivering for all Tasmanians and creating thriving communities. I can tell you that many of your policies are undermining and collapsing communities. Where those challenges are real, you have to be honest with the community about the challenge and struggle you are going to have to work through to rectify these challenges and impacts.

When we talk about the economy, it is good to defer to competent organisations. The CommSec report is often referred to. Others here, our shadow treasurer, our shadow finance minister, our leader and deputy leader, have talked about how you can say whatever you want, but people can read the charts. People understand what these things say. Despite the Government saying that Tasmania is leading the nation, part of the contribution from the shadow finance minister earlier was that you have to be real about what it is actually presenting. It is presenting a relative position, relative to our past.

Tasmania is leading on one measure, on equipment investment, and that is great but when you go through the other elements of the economy, on economic growth, Western Australia is leading; and on retail spending, Victoria is the strongest. Tasmania is the strongest in equipment investment but Western Australia has the strongest job market. South Australia is strongest for construction work. Queensland leads relative population growth. In housing finance, Victoria is in the top spot for home loans. South Australia leads the way on dwelling starts.

When you cherry-pick statistics from a document, you have to trust that someone is not going to go back and read the entire document, and say that yes, CommSec says on equipment

investment Tassie is doing all right, but on every other element, we are no longer at the top. Tasmania did hold the mantle for the best performing economy but, after leading on four of the eight indicators in the previous survey, Tasmania now only leads on one.

The Government continues to talk about business confidence. In the area of Bass, northern Tasmania is the place where we actually get out and do the work. The south has often been the heart of government, the north the heart of enterprise. I know a little bit about business, having had businesses myself. I know how to read the results of surveys and I understand, as the shadow spokesperson for small business, how small businesses across the entire Tasmanian community, particularly in rural and regional communities, not just in the bubble of Hobart, are feeling.

Two months ago, the NAB monthly business survey showed that Tasmania was the only state where business confidence is negative. Worryingly, it has been negative now for three consecutive months. Roy Morgan Business Survey showed that Tasmania had the lowest business confidence in the country. In April, the NAB group, a leading team of economists who provide accurate, timely and relevant updates on the domestic economy and economic trends, said that business confidence remains relatively high across industries and in most states; however, Tasmania is showing noticeable weaker levels.

Conditions and confidence in Tasmania have softened. People feel that under the cover of parliament you can stand up and say anything. It worries me that people do not seem to have this internal expectation that you would tell the truth. We are doing okay but we are not topping out on every element to do with the economy, and business confidence has softened. That should cause problems. If the small business minister was able to leave Hobart and go out into the regions, she would hear from businesses that are finding it tough, and we would be positive about what we could do to work together to turn that around.

When we talk about the Budget and the Budget position of this Government, they would have us believe that things are going swimmingly. They would have us believe that the things they say are included in the Budget, and the announcements they make in the community are things they either expect or intend to deliver and, in fact, have the capacity to deliver. I, for one, having being in this place for a year now, am seriously questioning that.

One of the first documents that dropped just after I was elected last year - it was perfect timing because it gave me an insight into the way Treasury looks at the Tasmanian system and how, then, the Government would, you assume, take the advice or read up on these documents from Treasury - they delivered the Tasmanian Government Fiscal Sustainability Report. That report considers the longer-term sustainability of the state's finances. It gives it under four different scenarios. Those scenarios are about early - and that word is important - early action to correct fiscal deterioration, to give consideration to the composition of the state's revenue base, to consider any action to maintain fiscal sustainability and also look at the likely effect to manage fiscal sustainability which will require early action.

I do not know whether members of the Government have read this report but to reference page 26, there is a chart of the four different scenarios if we just continue on the forward Estimates - and this was prior to last year's budget but this year's Budget is not drastically different - the most positive scenario possible is considering the forward Estimates and they are going to be positive because you write those documents. If you consider historical trends, that is the next worrying likely scenario over the forward Estimates. Then there is a low

revenue base but a high expenditure. The worst possible scenario for Tasmania is continued high expenditure without any early and significant action.

This Government will announce whatever it wants to and say it will deliver whatever it thinks the Tasmanian community will believe in order to continue to support them, but it does not necessarily translate into the Budget documents and it does not translate into outcomes.

This Government keeps blowing its budgets. My understanding, when I have done some quick calculations over the life of the Budget, is that it is about \$1 billion-worth of blowouts. What we now see in the documents is that we are estimating \$5.2 billion-worth of debt now growing. If you read this fiscal sustainability report projected over the next 10 years, and we are on the trajectory at the moment for the worst possible scenario, that could blow out and head towards \$30 billion.

What does that mean for the things that are really important to Tasmanians? We hear everyone talk about it, the Government included - health, education and housing. What does it mean for the people who were in the gallery today who for 18 months have been sharing their concerns with the Government about the need to have support for their housing circumstances when the NRAS comes to an end.

I was embarrassed to be a member of this parliament this morning, embarrassed to be in this Chamber, when a minister would stand up to answer legitimate questions - with members of our community present who are anxious about their circumstances - and talk about being a government with heart. No heart was provided in the response and it was all politicised that perhaps our new federal minister for housing could fix it. For the full lifetime of the Government here in the state of Tasmania when there has been a Liberal government in the federal government, we have brought to your attention these concerns although you should already understand them all on your own, and you could have been doing this work and taking action.

I have learned in my last year here that this Government does not take responsibility. They do not take the time to understand the real issues and they definitely do not, or do not know how to take action. I am seeing people in my office all the time with challenges around housing and I am also seeing a number of people who are sleeping rough and do not have a permanent place to call home.

I understand from conversations I have had that there could be 300 or as many as 500 people sleeping rough every night in the Launceston community. It is great to see extra funds in the Budget for homelessness support; 11 extra spaces in Launceston at Safe Spaces. Safe Places is fully occupied night on night. There are at least 300 people sleeping rough. Coming into winter, that is going to get worse. With the end of NRAS, low wages and a rising cost of living, these statistics are going to get worse. Having 10-year plans and \$1.5 billion strategies does not do anything for Tasmanians now, tonight, who need shelter.

Yes, you need to consider the future, but this document says that you are delivering for all Tasmanians. You are not, as a government, delivering for all Tasmanians. Although you stand there and say it is everyone's right to have a home, to have a roof over their head, we know that tonight in Launceston 300 people do not have that comfort, safety and surety and something needs to be done now to turn that around.

The other thing I have been appalled about in my year here - and it would never have happened at the Launceston City Council - was this trend to make announcements never intended to deliver. They always seem to be curiously around election time and always seem to be the solution to a massive problem that generationally has not been attended to because perhaps it is not deliverable. This Government's examples are the Tamar Bridge, dredging and we have already talked about the LGH.

This Government announces to a community that they are going to invest \$580 million in the redevelopment of the local hospital which has the worst bed block in the country and ambulances ramping. Across Tasmania we see massive waiting lists, people waiting for specialists, but they say, 'We've got the solution', which is a big carrot for the people to come and vote for you, but then year on year you do not deliver in the budget the funds that you have said are allocated, even in your own budget documents. That \$580 million is not allocated. There is \$50 million, far short of the \$580 million, in the forward Estimates. The people in our community want to trust the people in this place but the performance of this Government makes it harder, day on day, for the members of our community to trust them.

I can remember just before the former premier left there was a tight moment. It was a tough week of parliament. We had ministers leaving and all sorts of drama. We know they were feeling under pressure and the lack of integrity in their ranks was coming to the fore and it was all falling apart so they made an announcement about the Commonwealth Games. You can tell when they are really struggling and desperate because that was just ridiculous. Nobody who would have been involved with that had heard about it, but it was just a good idea that would start to distract from the really important issues facing the people of Tasmania.

It is a bit like the floating stadium. Again, I cannot get away from what happened this morning when the minister said, 'Give me two weeks, trust me, I will find you a solution.' We have people in our community who cannot sleep and are finding it difficult to eat because of the level of anxiety about their current housing situation. We have people who last week were evicted from their homes under the end of the NRAS deal and are now living in their cars, but this Government thinks it is appropriate and reasonable to invest over a billion dollars for a stadium in the south when the Government's own report said very clearly to reinvest further in the stadium we have in the north at York Park, where people come from across the state who enjoy that sport. We know that people will travel from the south to the north because it is great where I come from. We know that people will do that.

The Sports minister seems to be the only person advocating this. The Premier seems to have stepped away at a hundred miles an hour, but the minister talks about the benefits of having a stadium in your community. We know the benefits in the north. We know, in Launceston, the benefits because we have lived through that, through winter, in the stimulus to the economy, but we already have that infrastructure and that investment. It requires a marginal improvement to those facilities to have the seating numbers for football, but there are also proposals for multisport courts, which would see a far greater outcome for all Tasmanians, delivering for all Tasmanians, than a billion-dollar stadium in the south when we cannot house Tasmanians right now. To me, making those sorts of investments is just way off the mark of what people expect in Tasmania.

In the time I have left to make my contribution I want to reflect that these sorts of things come, announcements are made as an attempt to distract, but I have also learnt that announcements are made without consultation to completely shift priorities in different

industries that support communities. We talk about thriving communities. I visit the cities but I also visit the rural and regional communities and I see the types of industries that make a difference in those communities.

Last week a really weird thing happened when we asked further questions about the salmon industry that we did not get any clarification on. I am shadow minister for primary industries and water, and aquaculture, fishing and agriculture are all parts of that. I am proud to represent those people and work with the people in these industries. Last week it was weird. There was a sort of correction. There was an update to a very significant policy, which in itself came out of nowhere. At the end of last year there was a moratorium announced on the salmon industry. In terms of all our primary industries, it is the greatest contributor to employment and to local communities, really smart and great jobs. There was a correction made after a response in the parliament, where in response to a question about the finfish industry the minister, quite rightly, made a whole lot of positive comments about the industry and then made a mistake and said that while the plan is being developed there will be no further increases in the leasable area. I think she meant to say no net increases - fine. She sent in Mr Street later in the day to correct that. However, instead of being three lines long the correction was seven lines long and then it said, just from nowhere:

Importantly, one of the principles undermining the development of the plan, which is for 10 years, not a one-year moratorium, there will be no net increases in total leasable areas.

That is a massive shift. Mr Ellis is in the Chamber right now; I do not know what he thinks about that.

I do not know what this Government is trying to do in undermining one of the greatest contributors to regional and rural communities in Tasmania. When we sought to clarify that the very next day, there was silence. The salmon industry is full of great and clever jobs. I have met with people at Whale Point who work on the net lab. I have worked and met with people in East Devonport in processing, and with divers at Rowella. I have been into the CBD where they have these incredible feed centres.

Tasmania should be proud and should support this industry. To have policy decisions thrown out in the middle of question time seemingly without consideration or consultation, this industry deserves much better.

I am going to talk about another industry that deserves better, and tie in the allocations that are in the Budget to do certain work that will drive policy outcomes. I am the shadow for small business. Small business - everyone says it in lots of different ways - is the lifeblood of Tasmania. Of the almost 41 000 businesses in Tasmania, 97 per cent are classified as small.

What I think people forget, and I am hoping that the minister hears this, is that small businesses are all types of businesses, and when you look at the Government's own interim Business Growth Strategy, it identifies that agriculture, forestry and fishing is the second largest industry sector by number of businesses in Tasmania. I am across agriculture and fishing, our shadow treasurer across forestry, but in the fishing sector - we talk about small businesses being the backbone of the Tasmanian industry, while in the wild fisheries we talk about rock lobster being the backbone of the wild fisheries sector.

Right now, as a result of a budget impact which is going to drive a policy, this Government, which says that they are - and I am going to pick up this document, because I cannot believe, so I cannot ever remember what it is - says that they are, 'strengthening the future, delivering for all Tasmanians'. Seemingly, it is going to make a decision that is going to collapse the local fishing fleet in the rock lobster fishery.

Recently, I received a letter from the mayor of Break O'Day. He was and has been for many years a commercial fisherman in his own right, so he gets this. I am going to read in a few of the comments he makes about connecting up - just in case anyone does not quite understand it, and if the minister can read this back later, so she does not quite understand it, which really highlights the connections between the budget, the economy, policy, and communities, about people, about delivering for Tasmanians. There is a review process. It is reviewing the rules. There is a particular concern about a rule which is to expand the 60 pot area. This letter was written on 5 May. It reads:

The review process is of particular interest to council, as it has significant economic, social and environmental implications to Tasmania. The orthodox economic efficiency argument is at the expense of smaller operators. This inequitable approach benefits larger commercial fishing operators and is feared to have long-term impacts on the continued consolidation of these operators in the Tasmanian rock lobster fishery.

It is of Break O'Day Council's belief that in the absence of an economic and social analysis of the proposed rule and policy changes, a precautionary principle approach must be applied. As the discussion paper outlines on page 30, there are significant economic and social contributions local vessels offer to eastern Tasmania. It is easy to quantify some contributions, however contributions such as sense of community and indirect economic impact are not considered. It is of our belief that the risks presented to the east Tasmanian economy have not been adequately considered. As such, we ask that the committee apply a precautionary principle approach to the proposed rule and policy changes when considering the economic and social risks to the east coast of Tasmania.

The Break O'Day Council's approach is underpinned by the belief that long-term impacts must be considered over short-term gain. Break O'Day council strongly opposes the proposed rule change of expanding the 60-pot area, and requests an in-depth economic analysis of the proposal to be delivered before implementation. This proposal is a reactive and ill-advised response to the current market, and does not consider long-term implications. This includes detrimental impact on the viability of smaller operators, as well as impact on local businesses such as slipways, the boilermakers, who all depend on these operators.

The economic efficiency reasoning is not adequate to justify its implementation, and is of clear inequitable benefit to the larger operators at the expense of smaller operators. We expect this proposal will further consolidate quota and pots, forcing out small operators who cannot afford to increase their quota based on the size of their boat. The impact of such an occurrence will be detrimental to the Break O'Day region's economy.

The east coast is unique in the rock lobster fishery and I note with interest a number of responses that the minister has made to questions in regard to regional communities and supporting communities through our fishery policy. I have asked a number of questions either through the upper House or the lower House about the minister's support for small family fishers. In her responses, she has said that she does support small family fishes. However, there are complex and diverse views to consider.

I went to a really tight community ecosystem to consider the diverse views, an area where you can clearly understand a case study for the implications of this rule change and that is King Island. Again, it might be of interest to the member in the Chamber. There are about 15 fishers on King Island and I have the chance now of running through a list of ringing them all. I have called almost everybody, but I just wanted to share some of the comments that I have heard so far from 12 of the 15 fishers, who all, without exception, do not support this rule change.

When we are linking in budget implications of policy changes that have an impact on our economy, and have an impact on the people in our small communities, I want to talk about what this means. Something like the rock lobster fishery is a tradition in Tasmania. It has been handed down, in many cases, through generations. As the former minister might say, it is a Tassie way of life. It can be said in no clearer terms, than by talking to the fishers of King Island. I am going to share some of the comments they have made, and without identifying anyone particularly:

We bought a farm. We started out on our own. We fished with four or five other blokes, we got our sea time, and then we bought a boat. We worked it all out for ourselves, and now we have a boat we have bought in some units. I went away to school, got some work experience, four years in Burnie got myself a trade, but then I decided that I missed the fishing. I missed the island. I got a job on a boat, I worked myself up and now we are able to establish ourselves in the industry.

So, it is this cycle of people contributing, growing up, and then recontributing into their communities. What this rule change is going to do is make it hard for the next generation:

I have been on the deck for a really long time. My grandfather used to fish this fishery. I am worried that we are all going to get squeezed out. People are losing sight of the fact the we have to start looking at the stocks, not just at people's back pockets. My dad used to say you can catch more fish with two 20-foot boats than one 40-foot boat. That is because you are mindful of how you set. You are mindful of the fish.

I did not bring the rules with me, but the rules are about as thick as the Budget. This one rule just snuck in. People are feeling really done over by this. Their fathers, uncles, grandfathers have fished this fishery, and now their sons are fishing this fishery. What is also interesting is that the families are supporting the life and supporting the community on the island. There are people, as I said, who in some circumstances said that dad is still fishing, they are fishing and their son is fishing. Their families are working on the island. We have families where someone works in the local IGA or the local bakery. That is fairly standard. They might work and deliver the local beauty services, work on a farm, work in the cheese factory. A lot of them work in the childcare centre, work at the school. They nurse at the local medical centre, and they run the local real estate agency. You lose the fishery, you collapse

this fishery on King Island, you will lose these vital services and these people, these families from generations, from this community.

In rising to contribute to the Budget this afternoon, I ask why the Government does not take a step back and have a think about it? If you actually want to govern for all Tasmanians, start being honest about what that is going to take. Start being honest about the announcements that you make. Start being honest about the documents you are reading, from all the charts and data you are looking at, and the commentary you run over the top of it.

I can remember the shadow treasurer said that there was feedback from himself and others at the Budget roadshow. I was at the Budget luncheon in Launceston. They put up a chart on the screen and you could see the downturn but they put a line across it to show an upward tick and said, 'Things are all right'. I can remember people at my table were saying, 'Can't they tell that we can actually see what the chart says?' You are just embarrassing yourselves.

Tasmanians want better and I know they deserve better. I want to push this Government to do the right thing. I know that deep down our Premier probably does have a heart for all Tasmanians. I know that deep down he wants to do the right thing. It is time that you guys stand up, step up and are brave and tell Tasmanians what the reality is, and when you make announcements you make real announcements with real intention to deliver.

I know that our community in Bass in northern Tasmania, and in fact the communities that I represent through being shadow minister for small business, shadow minister for startups and shadow minister for primary industries and water, that they all expect better.

Things have not been easy but things are softening off. This morning a minister called for tripartite support and agreement on things. If we trusted and believed you in what you want to deliver to Tasmanians, we probably would follow up and work with you but, right now, it is your job. Stand up, do the right thing. Stop making announcements that you have zero intention of delivering on and start delivering for all Tasmanians.

Time expired.

[3.21 p.m.]

Mrs PETRUSMA (Franklin - Minister for Police, Fire and Emergency Management) - Mr Speaker, it is my pleasure and honour to speak today in response to the Tasmanian Liberal Government's ninth Budget. I take this opportunity to congratulate the forty-seventh Premier, Jeremy Rockliff, for being elected to the role. It gives me great comfort to know that under Mr Rockliff's leadership Tasmanians will continue to be very well looked after.

The Premier has already shown great leadership and bravery in his new position and I congratulate him and appreciate working with him in a government that is courageous, accountable, listens to Tasmanians' needs and delivers on its commitments. I also want to congratulate our new Treasurer, Michael Ferguson MP, for handing down his first Budget, one that is focused on making Tasmania's priorities our priorities. I know this Budget has been a huge amount of work and I congratulate the Treasurer, Mr Ferguson, for his commitment to his new portfolio and to the people of Tasmania.

This Budget is a responsible budget that shows we can lead with our hearts and our minds to secure a future that delivers for all Tasmanians. This Budget is about using our strengths and building on the strong foundations we have established since 2014. For over two years now, the COVID-19 pandemic has caused significant challenges and uncertainties for Tasmania. This Government has shown strong leadership and taken swift action, leading the nation in protecting our community with business and social supports and bold initiatives to rapidly recover and rebuild.

As the Treasurer said, responsible budget management has been a hallmark of this Government and this year's Budget is building on this foundation. Through the strong leadership of this Tasmanian Liberal Government, we can now focus on what matters most to Tasmanians. The Rockliff Liberal Government's vision is for Tasmania to be a place where everyone is encouraged and supported to be the best they can be. The 2022-23 state Budget is about strengthening Tasmania's future and delivering for all Tasmanians.

I am proud to represent the great electorate of Franklin, and this Budget delivers for those living south and east of Hobart. I am pleased to note the significant investments in my electorate, particularly for education, health and infrastructure. Our children are precious, they are our future and we know that investing in education is money well spent. This Budget will deliver \$15.1 million for the Cambridge Primary School redevelopment; \$6.4 million towards the Lauderdale Primary School redevelopment; \$6.95 million towards the upgrading of the East Derwent Primary and Risdon Vale Primary schools; and \$23.8 million towards six new child and family learning centres, including one in Kingborough.

To assist Tasmanians to access the vocational training that they need, this Budget invests an additional \$5 million to complete the development of the water and energy trade centre of excellence at TasTAFE's Clarence campus.

I am also pleased to note the health investments across my electorate, including that the Budget provides Ambulance Tasmania with \$48.6 million for paramedics. In a boost for the Huon region, the Government will invest \$3.3 million for four additional paramedics for the Huonville ambulance station that will see fully qualified paramedic crews on duty 24 hours a day, seven days a week. This investment will accommodate the increase in demand and deliver more paramedics for the Huon Valley region, ensuring this wonderful community has the health services it needs for the future.

I also thank the hardworking volunteer ambulance officers at Huonville, who have done an outstanding job supporting their local community, and for the important ongoing role they will play in this community moving forward. This Budget includes \$300 000 to deliver the Dover helipad, which will provide aeromedical support for Dover and the far south; and \$20 million towards the \$30 million stage 2 of the Kingston Health Centre. It is so important to invest in the health of our community, and the health of every Tasmanian continues to be our highest priority, which is why we continue to allocate more funding for Health than any previous government.

I am pleased to also note the continued investment for our south-east and Greater Hobart traffic solution, with this Budget providing funding towards the delivery of the \$60 million new grade-separated interchange at the Algona Road roundabout and duplication of the Kingston bypass, as well as \$21.7 million for the Channel Highway bypass at Huonville and the \$55 million Rokeby stage 3 road infrastructure.

The Budget also provides \$4.7 million towards the Cygnet township safety upgrade, which will reduce congestion on the main street and improve pedestrian safety and amenity for the township. The Budget commits \$18.85 million to deliver a new Derwent ferry service, including all-weather passenger amenities, over the next four years. By adding these new services, we are providing even more choice for commuters coming into the city and making it more attractive to walk, cycle, or be dropped off at the pier, especially as there is easy access from existing Metro services.

The Budget provides investment in key areas within my Parks portfolio to improve the visitor experience within Franklin, including \$1.7 million to improve vehicle access and car park facilities at Cape Bruny; \$2.9 million to support stage 2 of the Cockle Creek gateway project which includes new camping areas; and \$3 million to revitalise the Hastings Caves thermal pool and create a contemporary visitor facility.

The Liberal Government's investment in our parks since 2014 has been unprecedented and this continues in the 2022-23 Budget with a commitment of \$144 million for our Parks infrastructure to ensure that our special natural places are protected and presented in ways so that the people of all abilities can enjoy the natural and cultural values they contain, while also helping to drive our regional economies and create jobs.

This Government has committed an additional \$22.2 million as part of a range of commitments across the Parks portfolio, including funding of \$8 million to continue the boost in national parks rangers and frontline staff initiative. Our Parks and Wildlife Service frontline workers are highly skilled and have the expertise to help sustainably manage, maintain and promote our parks and wilderness areas, including Tasmania's 19 spectacular national parks. In addition to caring for Tasmania's wild and special places, our rangers, field officers and other dedicated PWS staff deliver land management activities across our parks and reserves, including bushfire planning and suppression activities, working with local communities and volunteers, presenting and interpreting natural and cultural values, maintaining visitor services and facilities and undertaking compliance and enforcement.

I am proud of our Parks and Wildlife Service employees, both frontline and corporate staff, and I pay tribute and thank all the PWS team for their personal contributions, outstanding commitment, dedication, custodianship, knowledge and skills.

This Government recognises the rich, cultural and environmental understanding the Tasmanian Aboriginal people have, which is why we widely support joint land management between the Parks and Wildlife Service and the Tasmanian Aboriginal people. The Tasmanian Government is providing \$1.3 million to support Aboriginal cultural burning in Tasmania. This builds on our cultural burning pilot program that delivered cultural burning grants to Tasmanian Aboriginal organisations last year. This initiative will support Tasmanian Aboriginal organisations to undertake cultural burning on land, managed by the Parks and Wildlife Service.

Our Government recognises that Aboriginal cultural burning has taken place on the Tasmanian landscape for more than 40 000 years and that these practices have helped shape the Tasmanian landscape that we know today. Importantly, this Government recognises that Aboriginal cultural burning in Tasmania is only undertaken by Tasmanian Aboriginal people, therefore the Parks and Wildlife Service is now in the final stages of completing our cultural burning policy and procedures in consultation with Parks and Wildlife Service Aboriginal

employees and Tasmanian Aboriginal people and organisations to inform areas that are suitable for cultural burning.

The Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area covers almost a quarter of Tasmania and is recognised through the World Heritage Convention as having both cultural and natural heritage of outstanding universal value, the protection of which is of global importance for all generations.

As a key outcome of the TWWHA Management Plan 2016, the TWWHA Biosecurity Strategy 2021-31 has been developed to respond to the threat of invasive weeds, animals and diseases. I am pleased that the Budget provides \$3.27 million to implement the TWWHA Biosecurity Strategy. The strategy was developed following an extensive risk assessment which considered natural events and management and recreational activities that occur in and around the TWWHA which could spread or introduce invasive organisms and identifies seven goals to address biosecurity risks in the TWWHA, as well as provides a framework covering aspects such as leadership, planning, communication, documentation, training, education, research, compliance, coordination and emergency response.

Other initiatives in the 2022-23 Budget include \$6.48 million in funding for the Reserve Activity Assessment Reforms Project. This supports our commitment to develop amendments to the National Parks and Reserves Management Act 2002 to recognise the assessment process as a statutory process, and to further improve transparency and opportunities for public comment and appeals.

As part of our commitment as a signatory to the COAG Intergovernmental Agreement for an electronic conveyancing national law, the Budget also includes \$1 million for Lands Tasmania to enable Tasmania to actively participate in the regulation, development and implementation of a single national electronic conveyancing system. This will streamline the process of conveyancing online, reduce the risk associated with fraud and help drive business improvements.

As one of Tasmania's most popular visitor attractions, the Royal Tasmanian Botanical Gardens is an incredible asset to our state and plays an important part of both Tasmania's history and the visitor economy. I am therefore delighted that the botanic heart of Hobart will receive additional funding of \$1.05 million to support increasing annual operational expenditure, and to fund a review of its strategic masterplan and strategic conservation asset management plan, which will assist in setting the gardens' direction for the future.

The Budget includes an additional \$1.1 million to ensure that the Wellington Park Management Trust is sustainably resourced to perform its functions as the managing authority of Wellington Park. This Budget also provides funding towards projects including:

- \$14 million for the ongoing development of the Freycinet Visitor Gateway;
- \$7.7 million for the Freycinet Peninsula wastewater project;
- \$18.7 million to advance Tasmania's next \$40 million iconic multi-day hut-based walk in the Tyndall Range;
- \$1.75 million to revitalise the Edge of the World experience at Arthur River;
- \$1.9 million to deliver a contemporary management plan for Ben Lomond that has a focus on year-round activities;
- \$2.3 million for the Tamar islands wetlands boardwalk replacement;

- \$6.8 million to deliver stage 3 of the Maria Island Rediscover Project to improve amenities for visitors;
- \$9 million for the Arthur Pieman Conservation Area; and
- \$5 million for ongoing maintenance within our national parks.

Tasmania's natural areas hold a special place in our hearts. This is why this Budget is about strengthening Tasmania's future by protecting and maintaining our iconic assets. Through culturally sensitive and environmentally sustainable visitation to our national parks, reserves and Crown lands, we can not only ensure that our future generations can also explore and learn about our state's unique wild places but that our wild places will be passed onto our future generations in even better condition than they are today.

It is a core function of government to ensure that its citizens and communities are kept safe from harm, and this Budget delivers on that. Tasmania is one of the safest places to live and raise a family because of this Government's commitment to tackling crime and investing in our emergency services. This Budget continues our unprecedented investment in emergency services to ensure that Tasmanians continue to remain safe and enjoy our peaceful way of life.

This Budget includes capital funding of \$106.8 million, plus \$18 million in other funding initiatives, to provide the infrastructure systems that our emergency services rely on to complete their duties. I gratefully thank each and every one of our career and volunteer personnel across the TFS, the SES and Tasmania Police for what they do to assist each and every one of us 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

This Government has a strong track record for rebuilding our police service. In this Budget we are investing in a further 21 additional police officers, meaning we are recruiting a total of 329 new police officers - a 31 per cent increase in policing numbers since coming to government. This means that Tasmania Police will reach a historic establishment of 1449 officers by June 2026.

I am also pleased to note that the highly successful emergency mental health co-response model, also known as PACER, is being funded over the forward Estimates with \$9 million to continue this critical service. This program will fund six of the 21 additional police officers.

To ensure our emergency services workers are safe when on the job, this Budget invests \$6.2 million to replace automatic vehicle location systems. This will upgrade the tracking technology that keeps our emergency services workers safe while locating our vehicles wherever they are in our community.

The Budget also includes an additional \$460 000 to facilitate Tasmania Police's continued use of drone technology to help bring offenders to justice and crack down further on hooning. This is on top of the \$400 000 already invested, which has enabled Tasmania Police to establish 29 remote pilots across the state and carry out more than 935 aerial operations.

This Budget also invests \$760 000 to provide new Glock pistols for Tasmania Police, providing the essential tools for our police officers to help keep our community safe. Over the past six months, I have been delighted to open two new police stations, the \$5 million New Norfolk station and the \$5 million Longford police station, as well as the \$1 million northern Special Operations Group infrastructure. This Budget also invests \$7.5 million to build a new

police station at St Helens, \$12.5 million to upgrade the Bridgewater police station and \$1 million to upgrade the Rosebery police station.

We are also delivering on our other commitments of \$3.6 million for Special Operations Group infrastructure in the south of the state, as well as \$100 000 for additional Special Operations Group equipment in 2022-23. There is also a major \$7 million upgrade of the Launceston police station; \$500 000 for the emergency dispatching, messaging, and alerting project; and \$10.6 million for the country police station relief policy.

We are also implementing the \$567 million Tasmanian Government Radio Network, with construction commencing this year and migration to the new network on track for completion in 2023.

There is \$46 million for the upgrade of critical police ICT systems to ensure access to real-time intelligence, online crime reporting, and provision of online firearms licensing. This is in addition to the previous \$13.1 million upgrade of police ICT systems by implementing a new system, ATLAS, providing police with improved access to criminal intelligence and a new approach to their management of warrants, missing persons and searches.

We have also doubled funding for the health and wellbeing program for our emergency services workers and volunteers to \$3 million per annum. There are upgrades to 67 police houses happening across the state, with an investment of \$21.7 million. The president of the Police Association Tasmania has welcomed the Budget commitments, stating: 'These commitments will help protect the Tasmanian community, assist in the safety of our members and make the state of Tasmania safer.'

This Government understands that we face increasing climate-related threats and challenges, which is why we are responding and planning for these threats to ensure that our communities are ready and resilient. This is why this Budget provides over \$120 million across the forward Estimates for bushfire and flood prevention. Since 2014 we have invested \$64.5 million in the fuel reduction program to protect our communities from bushfire. Building on the success of this program, this Budget continues our commitment of \$2.5 million for mechanical clearing and we are now investing an annual commitment for fuel reduction of \$11.95 million. This Government continues to invest strongly in fuel reduction because it works, with fuel reduction burns helping to curtail the Dynnyrne bushfire in February this year and the Sisters Beach bushfire in December last year.

This Budget also provides \$1.75 million to continue the rollout of mission-critical equipment for our SES and TFS volunteers, including personal protective clothing, with new female uniforms soon being rolled out to our SES volunteers. We have also extended our highly successful volunteer grants program, providing \$2 million in this Budget on top of the \$2 million already invested. To increase the SES capability to respond to floods, we are providing \$210 000 for automated sandbag-filling machines. These machines will assist our hard-working SES volunteers and career personnel with preparation and mitigation of floods when they occur.

We are also continuing to develop, sustain and grow remote-area team capacity, providing \$640 000 for volunteers to gain firefighting skills in this specialised field. This is on top of the \$2.3 million already invested for our TFS volunteers and the \$2.1 million in the Parks

and Wildlife Service to establish remote-area firefighting capability, which allows for the deployment of specialist firefighters to an exact location for a quick response.

This Government is also investing \$12 million in a new state-of-the-art emergency services hub to collocate police, firefighters and the SES. The new hub will be complete in early 2023. To assist, this Budget also invests \$420 000 for our SES to purchase new rescue vehicles and a storm trailer for the hub. This will provide our SES with the equipment they need to respond to emergencies for Sorell and surrounding communities.

This is on top of other continuing investments in this Budget, which include \$1.88 million for the hugely successful Red Hot Tips program to assist private landholders to manage and reduce bushfire risk; \$900 000 to expand the team of skilled staff within the State Operations Centre to provide a head start for planning responses to all types of hazards that impact our state; \$2 million for community protection planning for flood and storm hazards; \$406 000 for regional emergency planning and development; and \$3.46 million towards the Railton and Latrobe flood mitigation projects.

Mr Speaker, the Rockliff Liberal Government is the strongest supporter of Tasmania's fantastic emergency responders. This Budget is about making Tasmania's priorities our priorities. Keeping Tasmania safe is a priority we all share. Every Tasmanian has the right to live free from violence, which is why eliminating family and sexual violence is a top priority for our Government and indeed this parliament. First of all, I acknowledge and pay tribute to the courage of all victims/survivors of family and sexual violence. I thank all those in the government and non-government sectors who assist victims/survivors of family and sexual violence in their most vulnerable time of need, and for their continued dedication and efforts toward our goal of a Tasmania that is free from all forms of violence.

This Government takes our role very seriously. This is why since the launch of our first nation-leading action plan in 2015, and our second action plan launched in 2019, the Tasmanian Government has taken a whole-of-government, multiagency approach. It has invested more than \$300 million in responding to family and sexual violence, including \$63 million for specific measures under our first and second action plans, and the \$19 million in direct funding and \$59 million in indirect funding we spend to address family and sexual violence every year.

While strong progress has been made under both of our action plans, we know that there is still much more work to be done, which is why our third action plan to build on what we know works, and will also include new actions to refine our efforts toward preventing and responding to family and sexual violence, by putting the voices of victims/survivors at the centre of our approach.

The consultation for next action plan includes the hearing lived experience survey, establishing a victim-survivor advisory council, targeted workshops with a focus on diverse lived experience, including children and young people, people with disability, people from CALD communities, rural and regional communities, LGBTIQ+ Tasmanians, and older Tasmanians. It also includes partnering with Tasmanian Aboriginal community organisations as well as public written submissions. Our aim is to provide as many opportunities as possible to hear the experiences and perspectives of the Tasmanian community and in particular, the voices of victims/survivors.

I am delighted that we have now received 641 responses to our online hearing lived experience survey, with our social media advertising campaign generating 1 225 180 impressions across Facebook, TikTok, and Snapchat, and has reached 199 559 unique users.

I am also pleased that in this Budget, \$12.5 million has been allocated for the first year of our new five-year action plan, which we launched in July, a 40 per cent increase in the annual investment under our second action plan. One of the key priority actions in our new action plan will be commitment of increased recurrent core funding for Tasmania's nine specialist family and sexual violence services, with five year contracts, so as to provide greater certainty and increased operational capacity to respond to demand over the longer term.

We want to strengthen service delivery to ensure that Tasmanians who experience family and sexual violence have access to specialist support services that meet their needs and circumstances. This is why services including Engender Equality, Huon Domestic Violence Service, the Relationship Abuse of an Intimate Nature Program (RAIN), Safe Choices, Yemaya, the Sexual Assault Support Service, Laurel House, the Australian Childhood Foundation and the Family Violence Counselling Support Service will receive this additional core funding, with a total of nearly \$75 million to be provided for these services over the next five years. This new funding also means the community budget submission request in full for gender equality, the Sexual Assault Support Service, Laurel House and Yemaya.

Yemaya Women's Support Service has stated:

The family violence sector in Tasmania will welcome this with open arms. It validates the work that we have been doing and it validates women's experiences. It is really important for women to know that when they lift up the phone, that there is going to be a timely and appropriate response. We are really pleased that the Government has listened and responded.

Engender Equality has stated:

We have been allocated \$1.45 million per year for five years, representing a meaningful increase to our frontline counselling capacity in all regions of the state. Not only will this bring urgently-needed relief to clients on our waiting list, but it means we have five years of funding certainty for the first time ever. Engender is grateful to the Tasmanian Government for responding to the critical need for increased resources to support victims/survivors of family violence in Tasmanian communities.

Recently, I was honoured to announce that this Government will also provide \$15.1 million over two years to establish multidisciplinary centres in the north and south of Tasmania. These new centres will provide a best practice sexual and family violence multiagency response that puts victims/survivors at the centre, through providing immediate wraparound support and safety services to victims/survivors, including counselling and specialist police investigators. Importantly, these centres will recognise the intersection between family and sexual violence, and this will be embedded into our Government's response by expanding the capabilities and resourcing of the Safe Families Coordination Unit to include sexual violence more broadly, including child sexual violence.

Multidisciplinary centres are a proven model in other jurisdictions, both nationally and internationally, as they provide a trauma-informed response. These centres are not like reporting to a police station as these new facilities will provide a warm and welcoming environment where victims/survivors, especially in crisis, can immediately access appropriate family and sexual violence counselling services and other related supports. Then, when they are ready, victims/survivors can also formally report to a specialist police investigator on site. Our multidisciplinary centres are a landmark outcome for victims/survivors and will be one of the most significant changes to how we respond to family sexual violence since we came to government in 2014.

We are investing \$3.7 million in the budget to provide newer generations of technology and instruments for our forensic scientists, meaning higher quality evidence for court proceedings, therefore assisting prosecutions as well as increasing the capacity for storage of evidence, including sexual evidence kits. This means that victims/survivors can have their forensic samples taken, knowing that their evidence will be kept indefinitely until they feel ready to report to police.

This is important, as a victim/survivor may not be ready to report to police at the time of the incident. However, being able to retain these important evidence kits allows the victim/survivor to know that evidentiary material will be kept safe so that they can report to police at a time when they are ready and of their choosing.

Across government, under Ms Archer, this Government is investing \$4.9 million into Safe at Home Family Violence service system, which is nationally-recognised for its integrated justice response to family violence. We are also continuing to focus on holding offenders to account through continuing funding for electronic monitoring following outcomes of the trial which showed a 76 per cent decrease in high-risk incidents, a 75 per cent reduction of assaults, an 81 per cent reduction in threats, a 74 per cent decrease in property damage, a 100 per cent decrease in reports of stalking. Further, 80 per cent of offenders did not reoffend in six months following the removal of the electronic monitoring device.

With the Government's overall response to the independent inquiry into the Tasmanian Department of Education's Responses to Child Sexual Abuse Inquiry, I note that his Government under Mr Jaensch will also provide \$36.4 million over four years to support children and young people in Tasmanian government schools, including \$2.6 million over four years for mandatory professional development for all departmental staff in understanding, preventing and responding to child sexual abuse in schools. A further \$1.27 million over two years has been allocated to provide more support for children and young people affected by harmful sexual behaviours, including four full-time equivalent senior support staff with specialist expertise and \$24.6 million over four years to support children and young people impacted by trauma.

These and other measures in the Tasmanian Liberal Government's 2022-23 Budget will help ensure that we provide a best practice sexual and family violence response in Tasmania which holds offenders to account and puts victims/survivors at the heart.

Housing is a key priority for Tasmanians and through the 2022-23 Budget, the Government is investing \$538 million into social and affordable housing and homelessness initiatives, with \$204 million this year alone as part of our overall commitment of \$1.5 billion over 10 years for 10 000 homes. We know that many Tasmanians are doing it tough and we

have more work to do and that is why we are investing more than \$36 million per year in specialist homelessness services including shelters, which are often the first step towards stable accommodation for many Tasmanians on the pathway to living independently.

Women forced to leave their homes due to family violence can have great trouble securing long-term accommodation, and women leaving a violent relationship can also experience housing stress, even if they stay in their own homes. The significant investment in social housing by this Government will help ensure that more women experiencing family violence in Tasmania can access much needed assistance in either rehousing or staying safe in their own homes.

Having a strong economy has allowed the Government to invest in the priorities that are important to Tasmanians. I congratulate the Treasurer for delivering the 2022-23 Budget, a comprehensive budget that demonstrates we can lead with our hearts and with our minds and that we can secure a future for all Tasmanians.

[3.49 p.m.]

Ms BUTLER (Lyons) - Mr Speaker, I rise to provide the House with a response to this year's Budget and will start off by stating that in one year, this Government has spent \$43 million on political advertising. Let us put that into context and let us have a look at what that actually means for a population of 550 000 where 120 000 people are living in poverty, one in five children in Tasmania are experiencing food insecurity - how that is measured is when you go without food for a day, on average once a week. That is what we are looking at.

For the sake of this speech I am going to refer to this Government as a public relations firm because to me that is about the amount of substance they have. Actually I know public relations firms with probably more substance than this Government. That is what I was thinking this morning when I was looking at the people who had come into the gallery. The last thing those people would ever want to do is have to come into Parliament House to face a government, or a public relations firm, because they have been trying for over 18 months to make sure that D-Day was not going to happen for those people. They had tried countless times and this Government, or this public relations firm, did absolutely nothing.

That was not only embarrassing but it made me livid, because you all have the gall to come in here, sit on that side of the Chamber and pretend with this constant public relations spin that everything is fine, and there is not a problem. One of those people was outside the Chamber in tears just because of the sheer pressure, because they had no choice other than to do this, after 18 months of trying desperately to make sure that D-Day did not happen and they could keep a roof over their heads. It was disgusting to hear the word 'eligible' thrown around as well this morning when these people are in their late seventies and early eighties. They do not have any options, are about to be evicted and will not have a roof over their heads. Today is the first day of winter and I cannot believe that that had to happen this morning. I tell you what, I have been cross for the terms that I have been in this role, but that really made me very angry.

I do not think of you as a government at the moment. I think of you as a public relations firm; you remind me of the set of *Mad Men*. We know that you are tired and you are a public relations firm masquerading as a government. When you lose in 2025, which you will, we are going to be left with a massive mess to clean up, because that is what happened last time. We are up to the job and are more than happy to take on your mess. We will clean it up and bring

some integrity back into this place. We will not be a public relations firm because we understand governance, responsibility and ethics. We understand that our job is to represent our communities. How on Earth is what happened this morning representing Tasmanians?

When the Liberals came to government in 2014, Labor had left them \$200 million in the bank. Now Tasmania's debt will reach a record \$5.2 billion by 2026, with the accumulation of debt showing little sign of slowing after that point either. We are a state of 550 000 people, tops. It is a lot of debt for the amount of population we have, and the days of the public relations firm, sorry the government, across the other side of the Chamber calling themselves good economic managers are gone. We all know that is just a fallacy, something they have been rolling out since Menzies or someone, wasn't it? But seriously, it has gone. They are poor money managers. They are a public relations firm and they have no substance. This Budget has made that very clear.

Mr Tucker - We're listening to an expert at the moment, aren't we?

Ms BUTLER - What are your qualifications, Mr Tucker?

Mr Tucker - If you want me to put them down, I will.

Ms BUTLER - I have a master's degree but I would like to know what your qualifications are.

Mr Tucker - If you want me to I will, Ms Butler.

Mr SPEAKER - Order.

Ms BUTLER - There are huge amounts of debt due to waste, inflation and pending recession caused by continuous over spending, lack of delivery on infrastructure, not prioritising the wellbeing of the state and wasting millions of dollars in the process: a broken health system and a broken social and affordable housing system.

What I noticed during the federal election was a lot of very real talk around the cost of living and the stress and anxiety that is causing in the general population in Tasmania. Those cost-of-living pressures have really now started to eat into the middle class in our communities, but when you work in areas with high disadvantage and generally speaking, working class areas, can you imagine what those cost-of-living pressures are now on those populations in our community?

I do not know whether anyone from the public relations firm across the other side of the Chamber has actually had much interaction with those people because if you did, I do not think you could honestly stand there and read whatever spin your public relations advisers are giving you, because it is really difficult for people out there. I encourage any of you to come and spend a day with me in Bridgewater, Gagebrook or Herdsmans Cove and have a talk.

I invited the minister, Mr Jaensch, to do that with me a few years back when we were talking about the quality of the social housing. I do not think he took me up on the offer, but the offer will always stand. Maybe get the people who write your spin, your public relations advisers, to come and spend the day with me. That might be even more beneficial because they are the ones you seem to listen to.

A growing number of Tasmanians are now doing without food and shelter, basic essential items. This is a scraping-of-the-barrel government, or public relations firm, a group of members who are tired, overly comfortable and deeply out of touch with the needs of their community.

Business confidence is down. The PR firm - that is you guys - roll out the CommSec report, but you refuse to acknowledge the growing Deloitte, Roy Morgan and NAB reports, just to mention a few, that say Tasmania has a problem and our business confidence is low. Your PR advisors probably do not tell you that, but that is the truth.

This Budget has let down the Tasmanian State Service as well. It largely ignores the cracks and its ability to operate and deliver on its purposes. There is no pathway to alternative avenues to generate income for our state.

The nature of drip-feeding funding into significant problems has to stop. It is a waste of money. You are drip-feeding tiny amounts of money just to placate because that is a good public relations exercise, I am sure, but you never actually fix the problem. You never invest in these things properly. It is not enough to fix the issues, and you know that, and that is wasting money and frankly is irresponsible.

Mr SPEAKER - Through the Chair, please, member for Lyons.

Ms BUTLER - Since 2020, two key findings act as the driver that has led to the need to develop a way of mapping citizen value, through agency activities and ultimately back to financial return on investment. You do understand what those things are about, Mr Tucker? I do not think you do. I was going to explain it to you but I thought, 'No, they won't get it'. Call the public relations advisers. They will fill in the other side of the Chamber.

The 2021 digital government readiness indicator report assessment rated Tasmania second lowest of all Australian jurisdictions and observed that digital service delivery relatively remains comparatively basic, with some still not fully aligned. Not good, really not good.

Mr Tucker - Who wrote this for you? They've set you up, haven't they? Again.

Mr SPEAKER - Order.

Ms BUTLER - Mr Tucker obviously thinks we do not have a problem with our digital infrastructure here in Tasmania. You should chat to your public relations adviser about that.

In late 2020 the Tasmanian Auditor-General published a report on information and communications technology strategy, critical systems and investment. The report concluded there was insufficient guidance to support whole-of-government ICT planning and prioritisation. Off the back of these findings, the Tasmanian government announced an independent review of the Tasmanian State Service - that was in June 2019 - to consider whether the governing framework of the State Service is fit for purpose for Tasmania today and into the future. It is not; we know it is not fit for purpose. We know that you have not funded the digital transformation in Tasmania properly, and that is what this Budget tells us.

The review identified structural, legislative and administrative improvements that will transform current structures - transform - so, you guys, because you love your PR, transform is

a bit of a buzzword, so I do not know why you would not be investing in this - services and practices to deliver a more efficient and effective public service. You have done none of that in this Budget. This Budget has done nothing to address the systemic issues our public service faces. Our digital funding is insufficient and lacking any understanding of investment, especially in areas such as cybersecurity where we are extremely vulnerable. It is a huge waste of an opportunity.

My colleague, Dr Broad, I believe runs circles around your new Treasurer, and the main difference -

Mr Tucker - You are getting worse.

Ms BUTLER - Dr Broad is not pretending. Your Treasurer puts on a bit of a performance, because he is the treasurer of a PR firm, so we do understand that. Dr Broad's summary of the strategy that your PR firm utilises apparently to govern the people of Tasmania is first, as Dr Broad said, you ignore the problem, and then second, you pretend you are doing something about it, and third, you blame Labor. That is the strategy.

I have seen that strategy played out on numerous occasions. We even saw it played out today with those poor, unfortunate people in the Chamber. There you go, that is the strategy. It was just disgusting.

The Westbury prison is another really good example of where you used that strategy. Yes, there have been three cracks at it in three years. You had the first prison site, which you did not consult on. The second prison site, which was a bit of a shocker. Now you are on to your third, less, let us hope. I know it is all public relations, and I know that is what it is all about, but gosh, that PR firm across on the other side of the Chamber wastes a lot of money.

Basically, you announced without consultation, that would place a quiet, historical tourist village into a spin, that a maximum-security prison would be built within eyesight of the town centre. Fail. Then you ignore unrest from the community, labelling some of the people in the community as 'nimbys' and ignored the growing discontent. Second, you pretended that you were doing something about it. That is when you started saying, 'Oh, we will undertake some community consultation'. In comes the spin doctors, in comes this amazing community consultation team - which failed, by the way - and then third, you tried to blame it on Labor. 'Well, where would you put it', was the bright response from the Government. 'Tell us where you would put it. We are not going to give you any of the information from our expressions of interest, we are not going to give you any of the information about what it could look like, how much it might cost, what the time lines are, what any of the feedback is from the community consultation'. That is a really good example of this public relations government using that three-step strategy that Dr Broad pointed out, and he is absolutely spot-on.

When you realised at the end of that first failed attempt with your prison, you then calculated that you needed to do something with it because it was causing you great electoral damage, I believe. Someone - some great spark, in DPIPWE, I believe - decided that they were going to place it in the middle of a nature conservation area called the Brushy Rivulet. It is the home of a wedge-tailed eagle, and it is the home of a masked owl. Absolutely no infrastructure there, whatsoever: no gas, no power, no digital capacity, no water and sewerage. Absolutely nothing. So, you parked it. It is covered in trees and built on this amazingly difficult to blast

ground, a rock called dolerite, which I do not know. I am pretty sure that the PR firm across the Chamber knew exactly what they were doing with that.

Also, next door to that nature conservation site, is a couple called Aaron and Olivia Reader. You would know Aaron because Aaron has come up against the public relations firm across the Chamber quite a number of times. They were just about to start building their dream home. They were also just about to start building guest accommodation on that land. The guest accommodation would be looking at a beautiful nature conservation site on top of a hill. Then they were told - how many hours? Oh sorry, they were given I think two hours' notice that on 18 June there was going to be a maximum-security prison placed on that site. Instead of their guests looking at a nature conservation area, they would be looking at a maximum security site. Suddenly the dreams of the Readers and their neighbours were shattered. Reason did not matter, because the public relations firm, the Government across the Chamber, was wedging them, and had absolutely no consideration for the effect that that would cause on those people and their lives.

I have a copy of the letter which Mr Reader sent to the then-premier. He has asked that I read his letter, which according to Mr Reader, was never responded to, and it should have been. He has given me permission to read this into the *Hansard* today because he wants to make sure that when you as a government are acting like a public relations firm, and you forget about the cost to people's lives, as you forgot about the cost on people's lives today when people had to come into the Chamber, you will understand what the human aspect of being evicted looks like, for people in their late seventies.

He has asked that I read this letter into the *Hansard* today. He really hopes that you all can learn a lesson before you plonk things in the middle of nowhere without any reason, just for political purposes, and that you think twice about the human cost. It reads:

Mr Gutwein,

I am writing an open letter to you and your party members. I am one of many concerned residents opposed to the new allocated site for the maximum-security prison as one of the neighbouring property owners. After meeting with Colin Shepherd, project director for the northern regional prison project, and CROPS members on Thursday 1 July 2021, unfortunately my anxiety level over this project has not been reduced.

After this meeting, it has, in fact, become exacerbated and potentially life-threatening. I understand Colin has a job to do, and he is carrying out the Government's inept, stubborn, pig-headed, fiscally stupid policies of your Liberal party. It is quite obvious to me why the Government has chosen Colin, given his experiences in dealing with environmentally sensitive areas and projects. This only reaffirms my position, knowing you too are aware that your prison should not be built on this site.

Unfortunately, neither you nor the Government's own processes regarding this project are protecting myself as a law-abiding citizen, nor the environment, nor my fellow Tasmanians or all the people in the justice system, and given that, it appears that the only benefit is to give government

representatives something to stand in front of with their hard hat and fluro vest.

Your short-sightedness is appalling. I cannot believe that the Government is able, or would consider, the trading-off of our unique Tasmanian clean, green environment, endangered flora and fauna habitat, on an environmental hotspot such as Brushy Rivulet Crown Reserve, just because there is some natural bush left somewhere else.

Given our current climate issues and given we live in one of the most environmentally diverse places on the planet, why would you ever consider covering this area with concrete and bitumen?

Over the last seven years my wife and I have poured blood, sweat and tears into our property, and are spending hundreds of thousands of dollars to build our business up to run it as a return to a regenerative way and are trying to incorporate many natural flora and fauna into our breeding beef operation. This also includes having our entire farming operation and home running off-grid on renewable energy. I am now considering whether I am just wasting my time. With the last 30-odd years of my life building to this point, has this just been pointless?

I do not think that I am prepared, able nor do I want to have to start again. I also do not believe I am able to live with the stress of knowing my wife or myself could be at risk in our own home at any time for the rest of our lives if you pursue building your northern prison on Brushy Rivulet Crown Reserve.

The response from your Government department so far gives me no confidence in your so-called transparent process, especially when you have comments from Government spokespersons to the media saying, 'we are going to build a prison but it won't affect the environment'. That is like saying, 'I am going to jump into a swimming pool but I am not going to get wet'.

I am bitterly disappointed with the basis of this project, your poor Cabinet decisions and your general short-sightedness, lack of transparency, lack of respect to meet with either myself or CROWPS members and your lack of willingness to actually fix the problem for Tasmanians. One would hope that common sense would be found by our elected representatives.

Regards,
Aaron Reader

These are the impacts of your political decisions. This is the impact of you choosing to be a public relations firm instead of a government. They are my words, not Aaron's.

I hope you understand that it is appalling what you did to the people of Westbury the first time and the people of Brushy Rivulet the second time. I hope you do not make the same mistake with Deloraine in the future.

This Budget does nothing to address the cost-of-living crisis. In fact, it makes the problem worse by cutting cost-of-living support for pensioners and imposing real wage cuts on nurses, teachers and other public sector workers. Whether it is the soaring cost of living, the housing crisis or Tasmanians leaving the state in record numbers, it is starting to resemble what it was last time the Liberals lost government. That was when a heap of Tasmanians were leaving as well so that they could have the possibility of creating a decent future.

It is clear the Rockliff-Ferguson Government is not getting the basics right for the state economy. You are out of touch with the reality of what people are doing. They are doing it tough out there.

Once, in Tasmania, it was possible to rationalise the lower wages. We do not have as high wages in Tasmania but we have this beautiful state to live in. We have amazing community connections and it is relatively safe here compared to other places. We also had really cheap housing and rental prices. We do not have that any more as a drawcard for Tasmanians to stay because our rents are expensive and our housing prices are expensive but our wages are not matching that. You must know, not as a public relations firm, but as people and as the Government, that you really need to do something about that because we are losing our talent.

I have always believed that education is the great equaliser and I do not understand why we have allowed our education system in Tasmania to become the laughing stock of the rest of Australia. Not when we had the best education system in Australia. According to the AEU, with costs rising above 5 per cent, public school funding gets a cut in real terms at a time when every Tasmanian public school is underfunded 9 per cent below the minimum standard required. That is your education budget. That is the reality of what you guys are investing in education in this Budget.

Mr Wightman said experienced teachers were being lost due to excessive workload, we are losing our talent amid a chronic statewide teacher shortage, and student learning conditions would worsen unless solutions were supported. If you are interested in trying to fix the skills and trying to retain Tasmanians, why on earth are you not investing in education?

We also know that the average salary for a teacher in Tasmania is \$52 728. In Queensland, the base salary for a permanent or temporary beginning teacher with a four-year degree at a state school is approximately \$73 000 per year at the moment. That is a huge difference. Your public relations team would even find it difficult to spin that difference.

The new Brighton High School is a good example of the lack of investment, or rush to invest in Tasmania's education system. It is already a year behind schedule and it is already \$20 million over budget. The DOE website is now stating it will start in 2023. Your original commitment to it was \$30 million. Now it is at \$50 million.

There is a quote here made around 2017. The commitment was, and these are your words, to start building in the term after the 2018 election. It states:

We have committed up to \$30 million to build this new school, acknowledging significant planning and community consultation needs to be undertaken before the build begins. Our commitment is that the build will commence within the next term of a Hodgman Liberal government.

Wow, we have not even had the first sod turned. That shows you how committed this public relations firm across the other side of the Chamber is to improving education outcomes here in Tasmania, especially when we know it is the greatest equaliser.

We know 120 000 Tasmanians are living in poverty. We also know that we have a huge problem with our wage situation in Tasmania, with the cost of living far exceeding wage growth. We know that we have a very big problem with mental health outcomes for people here in Tasmania. We have people moving interstate so they can access appropriate mental health services.

There are lots of 'we are going to fund' but the public relations firm across the Chamber has now been in government for eight years. During those eight years you have also had a federal Liberal government. I am really sorry but if you could achieve anything positive, you would think you could have done it in the last eight years but you have not. You have just created a big hole for Tasmanians. We are more than happy to help you get out of it, to help the state get out of it, and we are more than happy to step in and fix it in 2025 because, clearly, you guys are incompetent unless you employ a whole heap more public relations advisers, because it is looking extremely sloppy.

You need to reform the building and construction sector. We can help you with that, we have solutions for that. We know where all the gaps are. If you have a parliamentary inquiry, we can also assist with that. Why would you not want to improve something that employs 20 000 Tasmanians, but that is okay, you can keep your head in the sand. Wait until the public relations firm gives you the tick-off.

You are not doing a good job. This is a shocking Budget. I was so embarrassed to be in here this morning. I would appreciate it, when we come to Estimates, if you might be able to answer some questions properly. Please do not just go to the advisers, minister. Please answer them yourself. It is an absolute fail.

Time expired.

[4.19 p.m.]

Mr JAENSCH (Braddon - Minister for Education, Children and Youth) - Mr Speaker, the last contribution was disappointing. It was very heavy on character assessment and very light on substance.

I would like to start by acknowledging today the Tasmanian Aboriginal people in Reconciliation Week, the original owners and continuing custodians of the land we are meeting on today, and pay my respects to elders past, present, and emerging. I also note that the theme for this Reconciliation Week is 'Be brave, make change', which challenges everyone to be brave and tackle the unfinished business of reconciliation so we can make changes that will benefit all Tasmanians. I encourage everyone in this place and all Tasmanians to make time this week to listen and learn more about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories and achievements, as well as recognising that we all have a role to play in continuing our work to achieve true reconciliation.

It gives me great pleasure to rise today to speak on the 2022-23 Tasmanian state Budget. It is a budget that demonstrates how this Government is investing in our community and continuing to take action to secure Tasmania's future. I congratulate my colleague and friend,

the Treasurer, Michael Ferguson, on his first budget. In these difficult times, this is a comprehensive, considered and responsible budget containing real, deliverable commitments and initiatives which will provide genuine positive outcomes for the benefit of all Tasmanians. This Budget will allow us to deliver on commitments across all our portfolios, growing the economy and creating jobs while supporting our essential services and ensuring that not one Tasmanian is left behind.

The 2022-23 Budget reiterates the Tasmanian Liberal Government's firm commitment to delivering better outcomes for Tasmanian Aboriginal people and their families, protecting Tasmanian Aboriginal cultural heritage and establishing a process for truth-telling and a pathway to treaty in Tasmania. Included in the Budget is \$2 million for Closing the Gap as part of our overall commitment of \$5.3 million for the Closing the Gap capacity building funding program. This fund will build the capacity of Aboriginal organisations so they can deliver services in their local communities that specifically address Closing the Gap targets in key areas such as health and wellbeing, education and housing. Successful proposals will be prioritised based on demonstrated need in the local community and national and state targets. The Closing the Gap capacity building funding program is open until 30 June 2023 and proposals can be submitted at any time over that period.

The Tasmanian Government is also committed to having a health system in which Aboriginal people feel welcome, respected and safe, which is why we are also including \$1.46 million over the forward Estimates for the implementation of the action plans for improving Aboriginal cultural respect across the Tasmanian health system.

In recognition of the importance of Tasmanian Aboriginal cultural heritage, the Government has allocated an additional \$200 000 over two years towards the development of a new purpose-built statutory Tasmanian Aboriginal heritage register. The register is a critical aspect of improving protection for Aboriginal cultural heritage and an integral part of the new stronger Aboriginal cultural heritage legislation under development to better protect Aboriginal cultural heritage in our state.

In a significant step towards joint land management between the Government and Tasmanian Aboriginal people, a total of \$1.3 million will be available over the next four years to support Aboriginal cultural burning in Tasmania. This builds on our cultural burning pilot program that delivered cultural burning grants to Tasmanian Aboriginal organisations. Of the \$1.3 million, \$330 000 will be provided each year and will enable the employment of Aboriginal engagement officers in the Parks and Wildlife Service to engage with Tasmanian Aboriginal people, including local Aboriginal organisations, to identify areas that are suitable for cultural burning, to facilitate approval for relevant Aboriginal organisations to undertake cultural burning and to identify and facilitate Aboriginal people to be involved in the Parks and Wildlife Service planned burning program.

The Budget also includes \$500 000 to offset the costs to the Tasmanian Aboriginal people who are participating in the next steps on our pathway to truth-telling and treaty. I have invited all Tasmanian Aboriginal community organisations to send delegates to a gathering in July to discuss the establishment of an Aboriginal advisory body to guide our next steps on truth-telling and treaty. The pathway to truth-telling and treaty is a historic journey and I am optimistic about what we can achieve together through co-design with Aboriginal people for current and future generations. Our Government will continue to work with all Tasmanian Aboriginal people in partnership as we progress towards true reconciliation.

The Tasmanian Government has taken important steps to progress the structural and organisational separation of the environment protection authority or EPA from the Department of Natural Resources and Environment, creating a new independent state authority. This change has reaffirmed the existing independence of the EPA. The Government believes that independent and robust environmental assessment and regulation is an essential part of Tasmania's planning and approvals system through the resource management and planning system. The new model will ensure public confidence in environmental regulation in Tasmania, and promotes certainty for proponents.

The 2022-23 state Budget is about strengthening Tasmania's future, and that is why our Government is providing the additional funding for a strong, transparent, independent EPA. This commitment includes an increase of \$2 million per year ongoing for additional resources to increase the rigour and integrity of environmental assessments. The additional funding will also allow for an increase in the number of environmental regulatory and compliance staff for the broader regulatory requirements and environmental management of our finfish industry.

Importantly, this includes an additional senior compliance officer, director of finfish compliance, and director of environmental regulation. The Budget also includes \$500 000 per year to support new independent accommodation for staff after the separation from NRE Tasmania. Our Government has prepared legislative amendments to confirm the separation of the EPA and to provide for increased transparency and the Environmental Management and Pollution Control Amendment Bill 2022 remains open for public consultation, closing this Friday.

We also continue to progress a number of important initiatives aimed at growing our circular economy. We want to build confidence in our waste and resource recovery sectors while reducing greenhouse gas emissions and pollution in our environment. We are investing \$5.5 million to develop plastic reprocessing in Tasmania through the recycling modernisation fund. Together with Australian Government funding and industry contributions, this will provide a \$20 million boost to Tasmania's plastic recycling industry, resulting in over 50 ongoing jobs.

In the north-west, a total of \$9 million combined commonwealth and Tasmanian Government grant funding will be provided to Dulverton waste management authority to transform the existing open-air windrow compost system into a fully enclosed controlled environment composting system capable of processing up to 55 000 tonnes per annum of a variety of organic waste from industrial and municipal sources into compost for use in agriculture and landscaping.

I was also pleased to recently announce that Barwicks has been chosen as the successful applicant for a \$3 million seed funding package to establish a similar regional organics processing facility for southern Tasmania after an extensive expressions of interest process, and we will shortly be going to market for an industry partner to co-invest in an end-of-life tyre crumbing plant in Tasmania producing materials for use in our road resurfacing program and other purposes.

Our landfill levy will commence on 1 July 2022 and we are actively working with local government and other stakeholders to help prepare them for that commencement. The levy will encourage the diversion of materials from landfill and drive investment in alternatives to landfill so more materials will be recovered from waste streams and turned into new and

valuable products. This is a win for the environment and for jobs, with the levy expected to support the creation of up to 130 new full-time positions in the waste and resource recovery sector once the maximum levy rate is reached.

Just today, I spent time with representatives of a company that recycles demolition waste for use in road base and other civil construction applications. They are telling me that their business is already growing because other construction businesses and local government councils are approaching them to process their demolition and construction waste rather than sending it to landfill. They are doing this in advance of our landfill levy coming into effect. We are growing a business and jobs out of it, and reducing not only the waste going to landfill, but the costs and the emissions associated with generating those materials again from virgin sources. Our landfill levy is already starting to do its job.

We have recently sought applications for the landfill levy readiness grants scheme, which will assist operators of landfills and large resource recovery facilities to make a smooth transition to the new regulatory environment. It is interesting to note that after months of fearmongering and misrepresenting our landfill levy - and whilst not voting against it in the upper House as well - yesterday, the Leader of the Opposition announced that a Labor Government would in fact not repeal the levy, but somehow run it backwards.

Inexplicably, Labor's idea appears to be that they will pay local councils a bonus for every ton of landfill they produce. The more they produce, the more they will get paid. There is no way that this is in any way an incentive to reduce landfill. It is an incentive to produce more landfill, and we assume that somebody else who is contributing to the levy will be paid: if it is not councils, it is going to be businesses. Businesses are going to be paying a levy for Labor to redistribute to councils. That is a tax. It makes a mockery of anything that Labor has to say or has said so far regarding our waste bill and the landfill levy that it establishes. Thank God they are not running our economy.

The Tasmanian Government is also progressing the next steps to deliver a container refund scheme for Tasmania, set to commence in the first half of next year. We are working on regulations to support the act and a competitive procurement process is underway right now to appoint the scheme coordinator and network operator roles. When the scheme starts, people will be able to receive a 10-cent refund for returning eligible drink containers to designated refund points around the state, with opportunities to donate their refund to a charity or community group of their choice. It is an exciting time for resource recovery and recycling in this state, and this Government is committed to driving the establishment of a circular economy in Tasmania, with these initiatives being a key part of our plan that will benefit our state for decades and generations to come.

Tasmania's emissions profile is the envy of the nation and the world. We have achieved our target of net zero emissions in six of the last seven years. We have achieved our target for Tasmania to be 100 per cent self-sufficient in renewable electricity generation. In 2019, our net emissions were minus 1.68 megatonnes of carbon dioxide equivalents, 108.6 per cent lower than in 1990 while our economy has doubled and over 60 000 jobs have been created in the same time. Tasmania's enviable emissions status and our ambitious targets are delivering brand benefits, investment and jobs while strengthening everything we offer and produce here, including in advanced manufacturing, hospitality and tourism, science, irrigation and agriculture, aquaculture and resource sectors.

The 2022-23 Tasmanian Budget continues to allocate significant funding towards action on climate change, actions to reduce emissions, increase our resilience and adapt to the changing climate. Claims from the Greens that funding to maintain our nation-leading climate profile is being drastically cut are simply not true. The Tasmanian Government is investing almost \$10 million over four years towards our next Climate Action Plan, which will include actions to reduce emissions and adapt and boost resilience to the changing climate. It will build on the success of Climate Action 21 which concluded last year. The Government is already supporting initiatives across our economy to reduce emissions, including in our energy, transport, agriculture, industrial and waste sectors. Critically, the action plan will continue this work by supporting further investment in a low emissions economy in partnership with key sectors and industries over the next four years. The variation in output group 5.1 Climate Change, reflects the timing of this funding.

The 2022-23 Budget also continues to progress initiatives to support the uptake of electric vehicles. This will reduce our dependence on imported fuels, increase demand for our renewable energy and reduce emissions.

To support the transition of the government fleet to EVs by 2030, the Budget includes an additional \$2.3 million over three years, bringing our total investment to \$4.6 million over five years. Increasing the number of electric vehicles in the government fleet will also deliver more affordable electric vehicles into the Tasmanian market sooner.

We already have in place a comprehensive and statewide charging network, and a second round of our ChargeSmart grants was undertaken last year. This will support the installation of 20 fast-charging stations and 23 destination chargers across regional areas and tourism hotspots.

To support more Tasmanians to purchase their own electric vehicle, the 2022-23 Budget, continues to provide a two-year stamp duty waiver which will save buyers around \$2000 on a mid-range electric vehicle. The Budget also provides a two-year registration waiver for car-hire companies that purchase EVs. Tasmanians are responding. As at 30 April 2022, since the start of the waiver on 1 July 2021, the duty has been waived on the purchase of 515 new and second-hand vehicles in 2021-22.

The 2022-23 Budget also provides \$5.5 million in equity funding to Metro Tasmania to trial zero-emissions electric buses, in addition to over \$10 million in funding provided to Metro Tasmania to trial zero-emissions hydrogen buses.

The Budget also provides significant funding towards renewable energy to support our target to double renewable energy generation by 2040 and become a significant producer of renewable hydrogen by 2030. This work will not only assist us to achieve our emissions goals but also help others to achieve theirs.

In a new initiative, in line with our commitment to reduce the emissions of our own government operations, the Budget provides \$10 million over four years to replace our ageing fleet of fossil fuel boilers in schools, hospitals and correctional facilities with renewable energy-powered alternatives, including bioenergy technology. This is an important and practical step to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in government buildings and to demonstrate leadership in what can be achieved. The Budget also includes \$4 million over four years towards our renewable energy schools fund to reduce energy bills in schools.

Contrary to the Leader of the Opposition's assertion in her Budget reply speech, our bill to amend our climate legislation has not been delayed by six years. Rather, the bill has been developed following an independent review, careful economic and emissions analysis and extensive and thorough consultation last year. The bill has been tabled and I look forward to it being debated in this place soon.

As part of the bill, the Government will legislate a target of net zero emissions or lower from 2030, the most ambitious target in the country and one of the most ambitious in the world. It will also put in place a nation-leading framework on climate change. I will not go into the details here but let me allay the Leader of the Opposition's concerns.

The bill establishes a consultative partnership approach with industry, business groups and the community to ensure we take advantage of the economic opportunities of the transition to a low-emissions economy while we manage the risks and increase our resilience to the changing climate. It will increase the transparency and accountability of the Government's approach through increased reporting to parliament and it ensures that we take advantage of the opportunities that action on climate change can bring.

Most importantly, it will target emissions at their source. We will work directly with the owners and producers of those emissions to reduce them and to make the transition to low-emissions technology and practices a smooth one. I look forward to debate in this parliament on this bill as soon as possible.

Mr Deputy Speaker, there is nothing more important than the safety and wellbeing of children and young people. Since 2014, the Tasmanian Liberal Government has taken strong action to improve safety and wellbeing outcomes for children, young people and their families. Our headline commitment to children and young people is the development of our state's very first comprehensive, long-term, whole-of-government Child and Youth Wellbeing Strategy. The Tasmanian Government is investing \$100 million over four years on an action plan to deliver Tasmania's new strategy, announced by the former premier in August 2021.

The Government continues our long-term reform of the child safety system, Strong Families Safe Kids. Through these reforms, we are now seeing more support for families at risk than ever before, fewer cases referred for statutory child safety intervention and a decrease in the rate of children and young people entering out-of-home care. These are significant achievements and they are changing lives.

The 2022-23 Budget continues our investment in support for at-risk children, young people and their families. Through this Budget, we are providing additional frontline workers for the advice and referral line and child safety services as part of our continued investment, with an extra \$5.4 million for additional staff. This is very challenging work, dealing with confronting and complex matters every day. We want to ensure that these teams are properly resourced. I would like to recognise all of our workers in child safety and support roles for the incredibly important work they do and the role they play in changing the lives of children for the better. These new investments are on top of the approximately 40 per cent increase in staffing in the child safety system we have made since we came to government in 2014.

We are also delivering on the recommendations of the Royal Commission to enhance safety for children and young people in out-of-home care. In the 2022-23 Tasmanian Budget, we are providing investment of \$2.1 million over three years to develop an out-of-home care

accreditation scheme and a carers' register. These initiatives will ensure there are clear standards in place and stronger oversight of our system and those providing care for children.

In addition to the \$500 000 in last year's budget, we are contributing an additional \$2 million to develop new programs for children and young people in out-of-home care who have particularly complex care needs. This is in direct response to the recommendations of the expert panel following the review of the Many Colours One Direction program. This Government is committed to developing the programs required to meet the needs of children and young people in out-of-home care here in Tasmania.

This Budget continues our investment in critical programs delivering better outcomes, including the Intensive Family Engagement Service and the transition to independence program, which are important components of our redesigned child safety system.

Included in the Budget is a \$40 million allocation for new therapeutic custodial youth justice facilities to be delivered to coincide with the closure of the Ashley Youth Detention Centre. This is not just about custodial youth justice; this is about resetting our whole approach to the youth justice system and young people at risk in Tasmania. Our Government is committed to developing a youth justice system, including new custodial settings, that achieves better outcomes for young people and their families, and keeps our communities safe.

Mr Speaker, we know that education is the single most powerful driver for improving economic and social outcomes in Tasmania, including health and life expectancy, happiness and productivity. The Government is strengthening Tasmania's future with a record investment in education, skills and training of \$8.5 billion over 2022-23 and the Forward Estimates.

In the Budget, the department will continue its focus on building a high-quality, equitable education system that supports the engagement of all learners. Every child has the right to have an education, to be heard and to be kept safe from harm. There is more to be done to keep our children safe in our schools. The Tasmanian Liberal Government will invest \$36.4 million over four years, with \$12 million ongoing, to help keep our children safe. This includes \$26.1 million over four years to appoint a safeguarding officer in every government school. Safeguarding officers in every government school were a key recommendation by Professors Smallbone and McCormack in their report on the Independent Inquiry into the Tasmanian Department of Education's Responses to Child Sexual Abuse. The budget also allocates \$758 000 over two years for the Teachers Registration Board to engage additional staff to support the investigation of complaints and disciplinary processes, commencing as soon as possible.

The COVID-19 pandemic continues to pose risks to the continuity of learning for our students, and we know that more investment is required to maintain student learning in all circumstances. The Government is committed to reducing the digital divide for our learners through the \$5 million announced in the state of the state address, to increase the pool of tablets, laptops and internet dongles available for learning from home.

In 2023, there will also be an additional \$10 million to develop outdoor learning areas in our schools, and an additional \$7 million for improvements to ventilation, including air purifiers, air conditioners and window repairs.

The 2022-23 state Budget also includes \$8 million over four years to upgrade ageing electrical switchboard infrastructure in our schools as part of a broader \$250 million investment in education infrastructure across the forward Estimates. Earlier today, Mr Winter criticised that investment in upgrading our switchboard infrastructure -

Mr Winter - No I did not.

Mr JAENSCH - Mr Winter, we regard safety as really important -

Mr Winter - That was your highlight. That is how you highlighted your investment.

Mr JAENSCH - especially in our older buildings. We make no apologies for investing in the safety of our staff and students. I hope Mr Winter agrees with that.

Our Government is focused on supporting our education leaders, teachers and the broader school community as they work to continuously improve education outcomes for young Tasmanians.

The 2022-23 state Budget is investing in our education leaders with \$2.85 million over two years and \$1 million per year ongoing toward a principal capability and performance initiative. Phase two of the student systems renewal project has been allocated \$12.2 million over the next four years on top of the \$3.2 million allocated in the 2021 budget for case management platforms and \$571 000 per year has also been allocated to establish the office of the chief executive officer of the registered training organisation, which will drive improvement in the delivery of vocational learning in government schools.

Learning is a lifelong journey, and our budget for 2022-23 also commits \$750 000 per year ongoing for the continuation of contemporary library resources to improve the quality and diversity of our library collections across the state.

As I mentioned earlier today, the 2022-23 budget also delivers for skills and training because we want to make sure Tasmanians have more opportunities to access the training they need to get a job. Our investments across the skills and training portfolio with a strong focus on TasTAFE build on our structural reforms, are complemented by investment into job-supporting organisations and Jobs Tasmania and the Regional Jobs Hubs networks.

This Budget delivers \$19 million to provide more job-focused training for Tasmanians. With the Commonwealth Government, we are extending the Job Trainer Fund by \$18 million. The fund is creating opportunities and already has boosted the skills of hundreds of Tasmanians, with more than 7000 Tasmanians having taken up places since it commenced in October 2020.

The Budget also provides an additional \$1 million to support our \$9 million investment in the High-Vis Army initiative, driving training outcomes in the building and construction industry, and building a bigger building and construction workforce to keep up with demand. I thank our partners in the High-Vis Army initiative for their continuing investment and support.

According to the latest statistics, there were 11 075 apprentices and trainees in training in Tasmania as of 30 September 2021. This was 24.7 per cent higher than the same time in

2020, and a massive 42.4 per cent higher than in 2017. The Tasmanian Liberal Government is investing an additional \$15.5 million -

Time expired.

[4.50 p.m.]

Ms HADDAD (Clark) - Mr Speaker, I am going to commence my contribution today by reflecting on the reconciliation breakfast that I know many MPs and over 500 Tasmanians attended this morning. As people would know, Reconciliation Week runs from 27 May to 3 June. Those two dates mark two very pivotal dates: the 1967 referendum and the High Court decision in the Mabo case. This year's theme is Be Brave. Make Change. We heard from powerful speakers, Uncle Rodney Dillon, Kaytlyn Johnson and Thomas Mayor.

Thomas Mayor spoke powerfully about his history of activism, the power and the importance of voice, treaty and truth telling and the need for a constitutionally-enshrined First Nation's voice to parliament. I am glad that in one of his very first announcements, as Prime Minister, in fact on election night, now Prime Minister, Anthony Albanese, announced that he will be holding a referendum this year for a constitutionally-enshrined voice to parliament and he will implement the Uluru Statement from the Heart in full.

We then heard from Kaytlyn, who members would know as Tasmania's Young Australian of the Year. She spoke of her very personal journey with her identity as a proud palawa woman and the discrimination she has faced in her life, including from within the Aboriginal community. She wrote and performed a really beautiful song called *My Hands* which is all about her experience growing up on Tasmania's north-west coast near Wynyard as a young palawa woman. Kaytlyn's message was one of education. She spoke about the need for children in our education system to learn about Tasmania and Australia's true history as one of invasion, genocide, dispossession and that to work constructively together towards reconciliation and treaty we must all confront that truth with honesty and heart.

Uncle Rodney Dillon, a respected Elder of the Tasmania Aboriginal community spoke from the heart about the fact that Aboriginal people are over-represented in the criminal justice systems all around Australia, including right here in Tasmania, in both our youth justice system and our adult justice system. This is something that Thomas Mayor also spoke about, explaining that statistically Australian Aboriginal people are the most incarcerated people on the planet, which is shameful.

Both explained that First Nation's people are not inherently more inclined to criminal behaviour than any other Australian yet they are massively over-represented in our police stations, in our courts, in our detention centres and in our prisons because of the structural inequity in our society, which began over 200 years ago and has continued since. It is about that entrenched discrimination that leads to disadvantage that makes our society one that is not fair or equitable for First Nation's people.

To combat this system, there simply has to be a specific focus within our youth and adult justice systems: one that addresses structural and entrenched disadvantage and inequity; and one that works with Elders and with young people, with Aboriginal representative organisations in Tasmania on programs that work, on programs that are community-led and community delivered.

The re-design of the youth justice system and the closure of Ashley Youth Detention Centre provides an enormous opportunity to progress this work, which must begin by raising the minimum age of criminal responsibility. Right now, the criminal age of responsibility is just 10. That is far too low and youth justice advocates, including Tasmania's own children's commissioner, Leanne McLean, and Amnesty International and many others around the globe have been campaigning for many years for it to be raised to 14.

Fourteen is still very young, but evidence shows that a criminal justice response at age 10 is not an appropriate response to offending behaviour. It does not reduce offending. It can lead to continued and ongoing involvement in the justice system and evidence shows that a community-led response leads to better outcomes for young people in the community. That is not to say that everyone, including young people, should not be responsible for their criminal behaviour. However, the evidence is clear that the later that a first brush with the criminal justice system occurs in the life of a young person, the better it is in terms of avoiding future offending behaviour, reducing crime, keeping that young person safe, keeping people connected to their communities and families and keeping the community safe.

As I said, the fact that the Government is now actively moving on redesigning Tasmania's youth justice system provides an enormous opportunity to do this work to benefit all young Tasmanians and the community more broadly. Sadly, we know that far too many young people who spend time at Ashley end up later in life spending time in the corrections system and locked up at Risdon too. If you were trying to design a youth justice system to fail I daresay that one that sees most young people in it ending up later in the adult justice system instead of being diverted away from crime that would be it.

That is not to say that people working in both those justice systems are not doing the right thing. Many are and they work incredibly hard and have the best interests of young people, adult offenders and the community in mind. They are working, doing very hard jobs in a system that is fundamentally broken, and that is why the system needs to change.

Similarly, in the adult justice system, we need fundamental change. We know from now countless reports from the Custodial Inspector and others working in the system that we have a revolving door at Risdon, with recidivism rates far too high and a lack of support and rehabilitation options that allow people the chance to truly rebuild their lives and leave prison in a way that does not lead them back to offending.

While there are some limited programs within the prison, there are often really long wait lists to get into them. I have had inmates write to me saying that they want to do all they can to improve themselves before they get released. One man wrote to me and said he knows that the community would expect that of him, at the very least, that he would spend his time at Risdon improving himself so that he does not reoffend when he is eventually released.

In some instances, he has been waiting years to do some of these courses and programs that would help him to rebuild his life when he is released. Similarly, once people are in programs they are often far too frequently cancelled due to lockdowns, and those lockdowns are predominantly caused by staff shortages due to the failure of this Government to recruit and retain corrections staff and the high level of staff turnover and of staff away on workers compensation and sick leave because of the conditions of work.

Nobody pretends that the work of a custodial officer is easy. It is inherently a dangerous job, but the conditions of work and the conditions for inmates have rapidly deteriorated under this Government and this minister. This makes for an unsafe workplace and it is far from a justice system that serves our community well in any way.

For example, alcohol and drug treatment is so hard to get into in the prison, and there are only two AOD counsellors working across the whole prison. There is a pretty good opioid replacement program on offer in the prison, but only for male inmates and the numbers are capped far too low. Similarly, the court mandated drug diversion program which has had great results in diverting offenders from a prison sentence into a mandated rehabilitation program instead is capped at far too low a number.

If we are serious about reducing crime and improving the lives of Tasmanians, there needs to be more, not less, problem solving courts and alternative sentencing options for magistrates and judges like the CMD and other programs.

Tasmanians were forced to an early election last year, almost a year early by then premier, Peter Gutwein. He saw what had happened on the mainland, with incumbent governments being returned often in landslides off the back of their management of COVID-19, and he wanted some of the same. He wanted that before the borders reopened and he knew very well what would happen, that the wheels would start to fall off the COVID-19 response, and indeed, that is what happened: the wheels did fall off.

We went from extremely low COVID-19 rates, short sharp lockdowns even for the slightest community risk posed by just one COVID-positive person to a free-for-all, with numbers climbing every day. Indeed, probably about half the parliament now has had COVID-19, 165 000 Tasmanians have contracted the virus and that is about 30 per cent of our population.

He promised a strong majority stable government. He was returned, not in a landslide but the status quo just with a few faces changing here and there. He then told us in March that he was leading an 'aspirational' government but that word seems to have dropped away pretty fast.

Now the new Premier and the new government says that they are a government that will be led by heart, strong and stable, aspirational, one with heart, but in reality, we are seeing anything but those things. We are seeing chaos and instability, with half the Cabinet and a fair chunk of the Liberal benches resigning just this year, with four Cabinet reshuffles, an inexperienced team scrambling to catch up scandal after scandal. We are not seeing a government with heart, and nowhere is that being felt more acutely than in the housing and cost-of-living crisis that we are seeing unfold and grow every day in Tasmania. Today, we were joined in the Chamber by just a few of the thousands of faces of Tasmania's homelessness crisis, a group of aged pensioners in their 70s and 80s who are facing the very real prospect of homelessness in just a few weeks.

That is because their properties, which had been supported by the state and federal partnership program, called the National Rental Affordability Scheme, are going to leave that scheme, meaning that the rents will switch to market rent. For these residents, that would mean a doubling, from around \$450 a fortnight to a whopping \$900 a fortnight. That would be their whole pension, with nothing left for food, electricity, transport or medication let alone any

luxuries in life, things like buying gifts or spending time with grandchildren. These Kingston residents who joined us today are amongst the over 1000 Tasmanians who will face the same thing before the NRAS program ends in a few years' time. They face the very real prospect of what has happened to Launceston NRAS tenants who only last week were evicted from their NRAS homes. Some of them are now sleeping in their cars in Launceston. There are residents all around the state being affected by this.

These people are elderly, some of them frail, and they cannot afford market rents. They cannot afford them in their existing homes if their rent doubles and they cannot afford to move elsewhere in the private rental market. Rents are simply too high in the private market for anyone on any kind of pension. The Anglicare Report recently released showed that in Tasmania in March, there was only one rental property available anywhere in the whole of Tasmania that was affordable for someone on benefits. I do not know what the Government is expecting people to do when they face that harsh reality.

These Kingston residents might have no option but to join that social housing wait list and the Government's own figures released last week showed us that there are still over 4400 household families waiting on the priority end of that list. The average wait time for those in the highest category of priority needs has blown out to a massive 90 weeks, nearly two years.

What are residents to do? What are the residents who joined us in parliament today to do with figures like that? Where will they go in the meantime while they wait 90 weeks or more? Will they go to homelessness shelters that are already full and turning people away, 18 000 times a year, last year alone? Will they go to the Safe Night Spaces to sleep on stretchers on the floor with limited space, who also have to turn people away each night? Or as one of them said to me today, will we be amongst those people sleeping in tents on the side of the Southern Outlet? They are not joking. They are genuinely terrified that might be what they face. They were in tears today after hearing those responses. They have nowhere else to go.

There is something the Government can do right now and that is what we called for in question time today, which is they can include all NRAS tenants, including those who have recently been evicted in Launceston, into the state-based Private Rental Affordability Scheme. That would mean they could stay in their homes and stay in their community. Those residents of Redwood Village are a community. I met with them there. They have lived side by side for 10 years and help each other every day. They do each other's shopping when someone is sick, they drive each other to medical appointments: they are family.

The Government today in question time said that they will consider those residents for that state-based scheme but that it would take a few weeks and some probably will not qualify. That is too little, too late for these residents who the Government has known about for their whole time in power. They now want to blame federal Labor, a government that has been in power for a little over a week, a new federal minister sworn in only this morning. This Government has been in power for more than eight years and there have been multiple Liberal governments in Canberra that whole time. In fact, it was they who cut that program in the first place. It was the Liberals in Canberra who cut the NRAS and it was the Liberals in Canberra and in Tasmania who have failed to plan for what would happen for the people who are renting through that program.

After eight years of ignoring this problem and hoping it would go away - and 18 months of constant letters from Labor about it - the minister finally agreed to meet with residents on Monday night this week, just a few days ago, after he saw them interviewed on the nightly news. Today after question time, the Premier's advisers were in the hallway talking to the residents and saying that the Premier wants to meet with them, and can they set up a time? I welcome that and they welcome that, but it should not take desperate tenants appearing on the news or having to come into parliament to get action from this Government.

What did Mr Barnett do when he first became Housing minister and was made aware of this problem? What did all the former Housing ministers do? Did they write to their federal Liberal counterparts? They are now quick to blame federal Labor who have had less than a couple of weeks in power. Did Mr Ferguson write to the federal Liberals when he was Housing minister and he knew that this was going to happen? Did Mr Jaensch write to the federal Liberals? Did Mrs Petrusma write?

They put their heads in the sand and hoped the problem would disappear. That is such poor planning, because these people do have somewhere to call home right now but in a few weeks they will not and for those Launceston residents, some of them are already sleeping in their cars. They face the very grim reality of joining over 4400 other Tasmanians on the public and social housing wait list.

The reality is that under this Government, the housing crisis is going from bad to worse. When they came to government, there were 2400 families waiting on the list. Now it hovers around 4500 each month. It is set to increase even on the Government's own projection. Average wait time when they came to government was 21 weeks; now it is a whopping 90 weeks. That is just an average. There are people waiting longer. That is also just the highest priority applicants, with others waiting to the point that they will just lose hope. There is a crisis in social and public housing.

Even for those who can afford to rent in the private market, rents are fast becoming unaffordable even for families with incomes. The Rental Affordability Index shows that 43 per cent of low-income households are in housing stress. The average family on average earnings pays 34 per cent of their income on rent. That is the very definition of housing stress. There are 150 000 Tasmanians living in housing stress and more of them are being pushed each day out of the private rental system and onto the social housing waitlist.

Families like Sharni's. I have spoken about Sharni in this place before. She has always rented privately but the houses keep getting sold. She is trying to find another private rental but she cannot find anything she can afford. She has four young kids who live with her and she is a great mum. She is doing all the right things, she is ticking all the right boxes with Housing Connect, and they are providing her with some support, but she is still homeless after more than a year. She has been moved from motel to motel, making do sometimes without any cooking facilities, which makes feeding a family of five pretty expensive, and she is continually having to uproot her family. Her eight-year-old has finally settled into her fourth school in three years. This has led to significant anxiety and mental ill health.

It never used to be common for people to be in that kind of temporary brokeraged accommodation, supported by government, for a whole year, but there is nowhere for Sharni and her kids to go. She has even been forced to sleep in her car with two toddlers, an eight-year-old, and a baby, which is unsafe and unsuitable in every way.

There are many others, and I am going to share a few stories. I will change names for the sake of privacy. People like Kay, who is living permanently in her car. She and her partner moved from the north to Hobart on the promise of a private rental they thought they could afford. It ended up being a scam and they have lived in their car ever since. Or Scott, who has lived in his car for two years and is now heading into his third winter in his car. Or Sandra and her three kids, forced to live with her violent and abusive stepfather. Police have said she should take out a family violence order but that is risky because she has been told she would then have to leave the property, which is impractical and would leave her and her kids on the street. Gary has primary care of his three kids and is living in overcrowded housing with his elderly father. He is not being considered for a house because he is not considered homeless. If he leaves to sleep rough to be eligible and on the list, he runs the risk of losing care of his kids. That is an impossible situation that no parent should have to face.

Or Kim, who is living in a shelter and has been approved by Housing for private rental assistance, but the minister's own letter back to me said in black and white: 'There are currently no affordable private rental listings in Tasmania'. This proposed private rental support offer is hollow at best and cruel at worst. Or Vera, who is working with Child Safety to regain custody of her children. Everyone involved in her case, including Child Safety, have stated that they believe the kids returning to their mother's care is the best outcome for those kids. She is able to regain custody but not until she finds a house. She is living in a shelter and waiting on that long and languishing social housing waitlist.

All these people are doing the right thing, everything that is expected of them. They are selecting as many suburbs as possible on their housing application. They are keeping their applications up to date and engaging with support workers. The reality is that there is not enough housing to go around. There are more people waiting than ever before and the Government is not delivering fast enough because they have neglected housing as a policy from the day they took office in 2014.

People working in the sector are feeling dejected and helpless as they struggle to help their clients, knowing how hard they are doing it and how long their likely wait is. Hobart is now the least affordable capital city to rent in the nation. Private rents are becoming unapproachable. In fact, they have risen by about \$9000 per year statewide since the Liberals came to power. As I said, even for those who can afford rent, they are likely in housing stress and unable to save for a house deposit. The most recent data shows it now takes an average family in Hobart more than 13 years to save for a housing deposit. That does not account for rising private sale prices, with any deposit people are saving being worth less and less month on month as housing prices increase. Thirteen years - people will just give up hope.

The Government has made some big bold promises when it comes to housing. The former promise was that they would build a house a day. That was under Mr Ferguson. In March, then-premier Peter Gutwein extended that promise, saying that they would deliver 10 000 homes in 10 years. That is 1000 a year, roughly 83 a month, or about three houses per day. The problem is that they were not delivering on their promise of one a day. There is no real hope that they will fulfil their promise to deliver three a day. If they were, they would already have delivered hundreds since that announcement in the state of the state address in March but they are not delivering. It is giving people false hope and is a cruel hoax.

Labor would do a number of things to improve the housing situation, starting with a pause on any new short-stay accommodation permits for whole homes, with immediate effect. That

would have an immediate impact on the rental supply. For example, in Hobart alone around 12 per cent of long-term rental properties have been lost to the short-stay market in just a few years. There are between 300 and 400 whole-home short-stay properties in the Hobart municipality alone. That equates roughly to the number of private rentals that have been lost. The numbers are clear and we would act on this very important initiative straight away. It would not stop people renting out part of their home, like a granny flat on their property, but it would mean a return to some private rental stability and availability in Hobart and around the state.

Part of the reason people cannot find a home and cannot afford private rent is the soaring cost of living. The Government continually tells us that the economy is going well, AAA rating, best in the nation, but who is the economy going well for? The costs of all life's basics are on the rise and people are having to make impossible choices like will they pay for rent that month or will they pay for power? Will they pay for power or will they pay for food? Will they pay for food or will they pay for medicine? Will they pay for their medicines or will they pay for transport? These are the basics of life which people should be able to afford on a decent living wage but they simply cannot.

Prices are going up at record rates. Fuel is around \$2 a litre; food 4.4 per cent more expensive, including vegetables 9.2 per cent and meat 13 per cent higher. Gas is up 8 per cent; education costs are up 4.6 per cent; transport is up a massive 19.5 per cent and these price rises are all far higher than the rate at which wages are rising.

Inflation is up 5.8 per cent in Tasmania. That is above the national average. However, wages are only going up about 3 per cent. What that means in real terms is a wage cut for Tasmanian workers of around 3 per cent. The maths is simple: if the price of things we need go up faster than our wages, we can afford less with that same amount of money. It means not being able to afford the basics. It means making those impossible choices between rent or food, or food or fuel, or fuel or medicine, and it is not fair. It is not a fair and equitable Tasmania. It is certainly not a government that is showing heart.

Low wages are a very real problem for people battling the cost-of-living crisis in Tasmania. So is under-employment. While our unemployment rate is around 3.8 per cent, our under-employment rate is around 6.9 per cent. That is people who are working but need more hours to pay for their basic cost of living. To be counted as employed in national statistics you have to have worked just one hour in a week. That is not enough for anyone to get by. That unemployment rate is, therefore, masking a much bigger problem of under-employment and low workforce participation. What it means is that people are stringing together multiple casual jobs to get by, maybe two or three casual jobs with poor conditions, poor pay, poor hours. Or a gig economy job with poor pay and conditions.

Insecure work means people live in a constant state of limbo, unable to plan for the day-to-day, let alone the future. The policies of this Liberal Government and years of federal Liberal governments have only made this worse, entrenching insecure and casual work through their policies and pushing people into uncertainty and poverty.

We know that the cost of living is biting in Tasmania. The Government is not doing enough to combat it. They tell us all the time that the economy is doing well, but they do not stop to think who it is doing well for. It is not doing well for those who are stringing together multiple jobs just to get by. It is not going well for people who are struggling to afford their

rent, basic needs, basic costs of life. It is not going well for Sharni moving from motel to motel with her small, young family. It is not going well for Sandra living with her abusive stepfather and her kids. It is not going well for Scott, going into his third winter in a row in his car. It is not going well for those NRAS tenants who joined us in parliament today.

Those people are not seeing the benefits of a strong economy. Those people are struggling every day under successive Liberal governments that have failed them and failed to prioritise the policies that would make life easier for people who need their governments to represent them, and need their governments to work for them.

One of the things that was announced by the Opposition Leader in her response to the Budget is that that is one of the reasons that Labor would abandon the irresponsible and frankly quite implausible Government plan to spend \$750 million on a floating stadium in Hobart. Instead, we would divert that money into providing services to Tasmanians who need it most, because it just shows the absolutely warped priorities of this Government that they would prioritise spending \$750 million on a floating stadium in Hobart instead of providing housing or providing social services to Tasmanians in need. By all accounts, that \$750 million price tag, which is exorbitant and incredibly high, does not actually represent the likely true costs of a build of a stadium of that size. The Tasmanian taxpayer, if that work ever does commence, along with the underground bus mall and some of the other phantom promises that this Government has made over the years, would probably be up for a much higher price tag than that \$750 million.

On this side of the House, we would much rather see that government spending going into programs and support for Tasmanians who need it most, Tasmanians like those who joined us in the Chamber today. Tasmanians like those who are sleeping rough every night, or being turned away from shelter accommodation, or waiting now for an average time of 90 weeks for social and public housing. People who have never needed to seek the support of social community services organisations, who are now seeking food relief, working Tasmanians, who are now having to access food relief through neighbourhood houses and other community support organisations. People who are working on low incomes, who have been able to get by in the past, but with inflation rates as high as they are, are now finding that they cannot afford the basics of life.

That is not the sign of an economy going well and it is certainly not the sign of a government with heart.

[5.18 p.m.]

Ms OGILVIE (Clark - Minister for Small Business) - Mr Speaker, what a great joy it is to be minister for Small Business, Science and Technology, Defence Industries, Heritage and Racing. There has never been a better time to hold these portfolios. There is a lot of exciting things happening.

I was just reflecting on some of the commentary I have been listening to in the Chamber, quite a few of the speeches and reflecting on the great capacity our team has across a range of areas. Whilst I will not go across other people's portfolios, it is worth noting that we are fortunate to have this depth of capacity and experience and, frankly, intellect. When we listen to these speeches and we understand what is happening in each of the portfolio areas, we see a government that is able to operate right across so many sectors in such a healthy and productive way. I hope to add my contribution across my portfolios as well, but I wanted to underscore

that I concur with what other ministers and members have said today and have laid on the record.

This is my contribution to the 2022-23 state Budget. On behalf of the people of Clark, who I love, I have provided many budget replies over the years in this place. This is a very special one for me because it is my first budget reply as a minister. I am very grateful and humbled by the fact that I am a relatively new minister, but nonetheless hold these portfolios. There are a variety of really fantastic initiatives in my electorate and also my portfolio areas that are very welcome, and I am pleased to reflect on those items and some others during my contribution today.

I would like to rebut some things that a couple of the Labor speakers have said. I am finding it a bit confusing that there seems to be a parallel argument that a strong economy is not a good thing, whilst also a blank spot in relation to who is now in power in the federal government and who is actually able to provide funding to address some of the issues that we have heard about today. I think there will be a measure - the people of Clark in particular will be looking to our federal government and the new minister, Ms Collins to deliver results for Tasmania, to deliver results in funding, particularly about those issues that we have heard about today including homelessness and housing. I know that Mr Barnett, as he said in the House this morning, has already reached out to Ms Collins. We are watching that, and I think people are very happy to work collaboratively across that area, but let us see that funding flow.

The other thing that I thought was a little odd was a mantra that was coming through from one of the earlier Labor speakers about experience. I want to say - because I am going to talk quite a bit about defence industries and the science and technology sector - that my experience in this sector comprises 28 years' experience as a barrister, solicitor, general manager, communications, telecommunications across France, Indonesia, the USA, and Silicon Valley. As a commercial lawyer, I have worked for Ernst and Young, Allens, and Telstra at a senior executive level. It is a little bit of a stretch to say there is a lack of experience.

I will talk about secure work and excellent jobs, what we are doing to create those and to create opportunities for our kids here in Tasmania who, unlike those of us who came through in the 1980s, will be able to stay here on the island and have amazing global technology careers right from here. I am very excited about that.

This Budget is about making Tasmania's priorities our priorities, about making sure that we are working on the same track with those, and these are the things that we have been talking about in Clark: business, education, family lives, looking forward after the pandemic, and we are looking forward to that. We know that a strong economy is essential. It has allowed our government to invest more into the things that Tasmanians truly care about, and it is strengthening our future; it is delivering for all Tasmanians.

You may recall, over the years I have had the mantra of 'jobs, jobs, jobs'. Looking at things that we have done in Clark, like the Glenorchy Jobs Hub, there is not a better exemplar of what we can do when we get local communities and local businesses to work together.

Quorum formed.

Ms OGILVIE - Thank you, jobs, jobs, jobs, Glenorchy Jobs Hub, fantastic.

A rebuttal to Ms Butler, very quickly: Our Digital Future, Tasmania's first digital transformation strategy, has provided a timely opportunity to highlight the importance of digital transformation. The strategy is underway. The Tasmanian Government has increased its commitment to transforming government services through digitisation.

Initiatives from recent state budgets include \$150 million to commence the 10-year digital health transformation strategy; \$4.3 million over four years to begin development of a digital Service Tasmania portal; \$21.6 million for the modernisation of health human resource systems. That one is important if you have ever transferred between hospitals. I would be very pleased to see digital records happening there. There is \$46.1 million for Project Unify, replacing a number of disconnected and ageing ICT systems that support policing operations.

I want to give a call-out to the department. We have more IT specialists on staff than any other business in Tasmania and they are fantastic. They are doing groundbreaking work. They are working across all the fronts we need to secure, including cyber, digital identity and data sharing. They are implementing our data agenda and they are collaborating with governments in other states and territories also doing amazing things, including New South Wales.

As Minister for Small Business, I could not be prouder of the results we have achieved, particularly over the last couple of years. We have been delighted to provide assistance. Two years ago, when we made the hard decision to go into hibernation, I left this building, walked to my electorate and I spoke to every single business owner who was standing in their business and said, 'We will look after you and make sure that things are looked after'. We have been able to do that. Small business is telling me now that they are getting back on track and they want to get back to business. They are prudent, sensible and resilient, and that is what we are working on with them now. I was pleased to see our sensible, measured and prudent Budget was so well received by small business and thank them for that.

We have \$50 000, which is a little project but it is worth mentioning, for a future-facing customer service project, which will make it easier for small businesses to do what they do best. This project aims to reduce the burden of unnecessary government regulation which can cost businesses time, money, opportunities and jobs. It depresses productivity. I want to do something about that.

We have our Small Business Advice and Financial Guidance Program, which assists business recovery, transition and growth as we transition to a new post-pandemic operating environment. We are continuing our support of the creation of new businesses and the success of early-stage businesses through our \$12 million business incubator and accelerator pilot program.

The cool kids down at Secret Lab are fantastic. I have seen them emerge with their business and grow that business over a decade. The Secret Lab is a games and creative technology studio. Dr Paris Butfield-Addison and Dr Jon Manning are the founders. They build games for technology and develop narrative experiences that look at culture, history, arts and storytelling. It is so Tasmanian and so bespoke to what we do. It brings in our storytelling narrative and it uses technology to do that. They are BAFTA-winning and they are Independent Games Festival-winning as well.

We have ongoing support through the Business Tasmania Centre and Enterprise Centres Tasmania program. This comes on the back of nation-leading support we provided through the pandemic. Tasmanian businesses received more than \$165 million in support. They showed grit, resilience, determination and strength. They looked after their staff and they managed through the uncertain time. The hard work of our small businesses keeping their doors open - I am thinking of my local cafe when these moments hit, when they had to flex again and change their business structure. They moved to selling coffee from the front door so they made a way to make it work. They were agile, flexible and innovative. Very impressive.

Our unemployment rate has hit its lowest level on record at 3.8 per cent. Incredible, I never thought that would happen. That is lower than the national unemployment rate of 3.9 per cent and third lowest of all Australian states.

We are also developing a new 2022-26 business growth strategy this year. We will be partnering with the Tasmanian Small Business Council and the Tasmanian Chamber of Commerce and Industry in its development. I love doing collaborative work. It is really good when a government is able to reach out to our friends and partners in the private sector and build strategies together. We will be holding a series of round tables and I will be getting out and about across the state in our metro and regional areas. I look forward to launching that strategy.

We are perhaps one of the strongest supporters of the small business sector ever. We have done a task and we have worked closely with small businesses over a very difficult period of time. We will continue to do that. We are going to capture and retain some of the innovations and customer-facing service we have been able to develop and make that part of the way we do business as a government.

Another passion area for me is science and technology. I have been banging on about it in this place for many years now but I am in a position where we can actually deliver some new engagements, ideas, innovation and results. I do not need to tell anybody here the crucial role that applied science and research, and digital technology plays in our increasingly globalised and interconnected world. Medicine, science, health, technology, IT, programming, STEM: those are the areas we excel in. Those are the areas where the jobs of the future are. We want great teachers so we need to have great science courses and great programs. Everything is interconnected.

Our local science and technology sectors continue to grow remarkably and they enable small businesses and the broader community to be more responsive to technological change and disruption, as we have seen over the last couple of years. Supporting the development and application of science and technology in Tasmania is a complex challenge. We have our fantastic university and it would not be a speech by me if I did not mention the amazing work being done from the astrophysics department at the University of Tasmania, with our strategic advantage of the ownership of an array of radio telescopes and the work happening on astronomy, feeding our own science and technology, and pure maths into the GPS system, and the connectedness that we have internationally through SpaceX and NASA. These things are happening right here in Tasmania. Why does that matter? It matters because people get excited, the kids get excited, they want to study maths and science, do well at school and go to uni, or go to TAFE or just start on the job in the tech sector. It is all interconnected. It is an eco-system. That is why there is complexity but also why there is great opportunity.

We are keeping our eye on the horizon for opportunities to grow that science and tech sector. This is why we have invested \$500 000 into the Tasmanian Space Technology Seed Fund. The university, the Government and Hensoldt have a wonderful collaboration in the area of space situational awareness, which is really about communications. It is about tracking, something we do well in navigation on ships. It is a similar philosophy doing that from an astrophysics perspective.

We want everyone to study. Study engineering. Get tech degrees. Do cyber. There are more jobs for cyber-security experts than anything else at the moment. I hear nationally that we cannot get enough cyber experts, engineers and technology-focused graduates, so that is a key focus for us going forward.

I am also Minister for Advanced Manufacturing and Defence Industries, another area in which Tasmania has done an incredible job, with a statewide approach. Each of our key areas across the state is doing incredibly well in this area.

One of the new and opening industries is the defence industry and we are working hard on a strategy to make sure we connect businesses and experts into the defence procurement sector, which is huge. The top 40 largest companies in defence industries have a total revenue of \$9.2 billion. It is something that Tasmania does well. We do shipbuilding well. We are delivering for this industry with the successful launch of PFG Group's Sentinel 1100, which is a direct result of our Government's investment into this important company through our \$600 000 no interest loan. A huge success, it shows what can happen if you put the right bit of seed funding and support into place at the right time.

I had the pleasure of attending the recent Indo-Pacific International Maritime Exposition in May. Tasmania had a strong delegation: nine companies and the Australian Maritime College. This exposition was an opportunity to showcase Tasmanian excellence and grow the reputation and profile of Tasmanian businesses. We were able to strongly stand out from the other states and territory stands with the presence of our very own PFG Group Sentinel at the stand that the Tasmanian Government supported to be built. We showed what we could do and created a lot of interest.

No matter which stand you engaged with across that exposition, everyone was aware of and excited for the opportunity to see and climb aboard the Sentinel. It was great to see the strong interest that the vessel was drawing from delegates to the Indo-Pacific, so it is unsurprising, that it is expected to be a front-runner in the Australian Defence Force's upcoming tactical watercraft tender. We have our fingers crossed that we have done the work to make that happen.

We were lucky to have representatives from the Royal Australian Navy and also international navies that sought out the Tasmanian stand. I was pleased our businesses were able to showcase their technologies and systems to the Commander of the US Pacific Fleet, Admiral Paparo; the Chief of the Royal New Zealand Navy, Rear Admiral David Proctor; senior representatives of the Indonesian Navy and senior representatives of the Bangladesh Navy. It was particularly pleasing to have Royal Australian Navy Commodore Huxtable visit the stand and announce the Pivot Maritime International container simulation system will be deployed across Australia. They are being fitted to three of the navy's largest vessels: HMAS *Adelaide*, HMAS *Choules* and HMAS *Stalwart*. The sailors will be trained with Tasmanian technology.

CBG Systems, also in collaboration with the CSIRO, has developed a new fire resistant, non-combustible lightweight insulation wall panel for ships, the first of its kind in the marine industry. The innovation, the intellectual property development and the commercialisation is happening. It is quite remarkable and continuing success is wished to all of them.

We have seen a further round of the Advanced Manufacturing Accelerating Growth grant program with another round opening this year. This recently-completed round will deliver more than \$2.2 million in investment into the Tasmanian economy and create some 40 jobs in the advanced manufacturing sector. It is positive growth for our fifth largest industry and we would like to see this continue. If you have not experienced the quality and performance of our defence capability, componentry and services, now is the time to get on board.

We are also well positioned to deliver the solutions and build the capacity for Australian and international defence forces. Our trusted maritime industry and research organisations have supplied world-class products, systems and services to navies worldwide for decades. If only everyone knew. We are going to help communicate that success.

Most recently, our innovations in land, air space and cyber domains, are increasingly being recognised in Australia and by militaries around the world. They are really exciting times.

To be Minister for Heritage right now is a fabulous thing. The 2022-23 State Budget includes an additional \$300 000 package of assistance to the National Trust. The additional funding will enable the Trust to continue to be an important community organisation which contributes to our state's rich and diverse historic heritage, helping to set us apart from other tourist destinations. The National Trust has been operating since 1960 and is community-based. Through the support of its members and volunteers, the National Trust has played a critical role in advocating for Tasmania's heritage places, and we are a supporter of the National Trust.

While I am speaking about the Heritage portfolio and given my love of digital technology and transparency of information, I cannot not mention the exciting release of the online Tasmanian Heritage Register. It is a breakthrough thing. Online access to information held in the register is now available, and will no doubt increase appreciation for Tasmania's iconic heritage places, which will play a key role in Tasmania's lifestyle and brand. We will work hand in glove with other sectors to make sure that we really look after and elevate our heritage places, elevate our sense of history, our sense of place. I am very excited about this.

One of the most frequently asked questions that the Tasmanian Heritage Council receives is whether a property is heritage listed and why? We are interested in history, we are interested to know the story of our places and built heritage. Increasingly, understanding the significance of these places is a key to encouraging owners, prospective owners, developers and just the community at large to learn more about how best to manage our historic heritage. I am really pleased at this stage of my life - I am some 30 years into my working career - to circle back to this area of cultural heritage, intangible heritage, our history, our places and the people who have gone before us.

I started very early on in my legal career with an internship at UNESCO working in cultural heritage, particularly in lost and stolen art. One of the projects we were working on was the return of the temple heads from the Angkor Wat Temple. They had been taken by the

Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York - because that is the sort of thing you did back in the day. We were actually able to get them returned to the site and placed back on the bodies of the temple statues and have them returned. That was a wonderful thing. That applies to things in Tasmania as well. Some of our history we know sits elsewhere. Looking at what we can do to return and re-engage with our historic items is a good thing.

I know that the chair of the Tasmanian Heritage Council, Ms Brett Torossi, is thrilled with the result of the digitisation project. We spent some time together recently researching the history of Kelly's Steps, standing on Kelly's steps as well. I know that more than 5000 individual places which are entered into the Tasmanian Heritage Register are distinctive, and they each have an often largely unknown story to tell. This is just the first step for our register. We are working towards more search options, for example searching against an architect's name or searching by architectural style.

I have a little bit left to go. Hopefully I will make it because we had that quorum call in the middle.

The Government is a strong supporter of the Tasmanian racing industry, which makes a vital contribution to our economy and employment, particularly in regional Tasmania. The 2022-23 Tasmanian Budget will invest \$964 000 in additional funding to ensure that three cadet steward positions can continue. It is very important. Tasmania's racing history is a vital part of Tasmania's social and economic vibrance, and it is important to provide career pathways for young people wanting to work in the industry. We know that this program has been well received since its inception in 2018, and two cadet stewards have recently been appointed to full-time roles within the Office of Racing Integrity (ORI). This is very good news.

It is an excellent outcome which demonstrates the program is having the desired effect, and I look forward to hearing of the successes of the three additional stewards in years to come. Stewards are responsible for the conduct of race meetings throughout the state across all three codes of racing. Probity and integrity are critically important in the racing industry, and they underpin confidence in racing across all three codes in our state. That is why the Tasmanian Government commenced a review of the Racing Regulation Act in 2004 and I will have more to say on that very soon. I am really looking forward to that.

I am really pleased now to turn to the electorate of Clark, which has been my home for my entire life. I was born in New Town, grew up here, had a few years working all over the world, and was very pleased to come back here, open my small business and raise my children here at home in Clark.

There is \$1 million in the budget for the Tasmanian Botanical Gardens. I was at the gardens with the board members looking at the beautiful gardens, the investment that is going in there. It was cold that morning and the ducks were out but I had the pleasure of making that wonderful announcement.

In this Budget we have also invested in the Greater Hobart Traffic Solution, Tasman Bridge upgrades for pedestrians and cycling areas. This inter-connectedness across the electorate of Clark and into neighbouring electorates is important. I am excited about the Derwent ferry service. I remember when the bridge went down and the fun of the ferries once we got over the shock of the bridge collapsing. We knew how popular that was and how much

we loved it. Makes us feel a like we are out on Sydney Harbour but a bit more chill in the air perhaps.

I am pleased there is funding to complete the new \$10.2 million Glenorchy Ambulance Station and funding towards the upgrade of two campuses at Hobart City High School, the Ogilvie campus and the New Town campus, and investments towards the revitalisation of Cosgrove High School.

The 2022-23 State Budget balances providing support to help Tasmanians who need it most, maintaining our strong pace of delivery and investing to strengthen Tasmania's future.

I will finish off by talking more specifically about some of the great small businesses we have in Clark. We have the most incredible cohort of small businesses and business owners. I have seen people go above and beyond to run their business under the most exceptionally difficult circumstances and one of the areas and sectors sometimes we forget about, is professional services: the lawyers, the accountants, the people who provide business services, who are the lifeblood of ensuring our small businesses are healthy, resilient and looked after. Sometimes we forget that can be hard as well.

When I think about what Business Tasmania has been able to do and the support the Tasmanian Government has provided, I am thinking about those specialist programs that bring in that professional expertise at a time when a small business needs it and when they might be facing challenges. They might be facing challenges about how to grow a customer base when they have been a bricks and mortar retailer. How do they go digital? Is that going to work for them? We need that change and that agility with those businesses. The food sector, the online ordering service, how that has fundamentally shifted everything and even the loss of cash. I do not know the last time I had a \$20 note in my pocket, everything now is tap. It has fundamentally shifted the way we do things.

There have been many positive things about it and I am excited about Business Tasmania in particular, our Government's capacity to draw on those amazing things we have done well in the pandemic to encapsulate those and take those forward in a shared future with our small businesses.

Time expired.

[5.48 p.m.]

Mr ELLIS (Braddon) - Mr Speaker, I am delighted to have the opportunity to make a contribution on the 2022-23 state Budget. I congratulate our new leadership team of Premier, Jeremy Rockliff, and Treasurer, Michael Ferguson, on the work they have done, not just continuing on the great work of this Government since 2014, but expanding it, providing future direction and helping to grow and build our state.

I will cover a few key areas in my contribution today. The first about the strategy for the future and future generations. I will cover some of the areas under my responsibilities as parliamentary secretary to the Premier, and I will speak in some detail about the projects which are going to be particularly beneficial for the people I represent on the north-west, the west coast and King Island.

Budgets are inevitably an exercise in building the future. Regardless of our political colour and stripe, we all come in here because we believe that every generation should live better than the last. The way that the government spends its money establishes a strategy and projects into the future is critical to achieving those goals.

The current state of the Tasmanian economy has to be seen to be believed. We have the lowest unemployment rate in our history at 3.8 per cent, meaning more jobs for young people, more opportunities for those looking to get ahead and a stable income for so many families who rely on it. To say that Tasmania has an unemployment rate of 3.8 per cent after two of the worst years of global economic downturn is simply staggering. I do not even think that this Government, as confident as we were, could have foreseen we could work through the challenges of the pandemic. It is an outstanding problem to have when in Tasmania there is work looking for people. That cannot be said often in our recent decades and to be able to have delivered that at a time of particular difficulty globally is outstanding.

That has enabled the Government to invest in the essential services that Tasmanians rely on now, and into the future, to build the infrastructure that our kids will be using when they are our age, to be able to set up our state for the future shocks. We know there is always going to be future risks, external shocks, which Tasmania has to manage and the strategy set out by this Government when it came to power in 2014, of restoring a healthy balance sheet, of running budget surpluses, of making sure that the Tasmanian fiscal position was resilient meant that we entered the global pandemic and the global downturn in perhaps the best shape that Tasmania has been in a long time. It has enabled us to rebound strongly and to retain the mantle of Australia's best performing state for the last nine quarters in a row.

Where does that come from? It comes from the budget strategy that looks to grow for the future. We are in interesting times where we currently have an absurdly low price of money. Recently, there was an interest rate rise and it must be said, that in my adult life - and I am 32 - it was one of the only interest rates that I have actually ever seen. For people who grew up and were paying off houses in the early 1990s and looking at 17 per cent interest rate rises and I know, Mr Speaker, that you were one of them, to think that someone would have gone 14 years into their adult life and not seen an interest rate rise is truly staggering. To be able to use that low price, the cheap price of money, to then borrow and build for the future is the opportunity that we have now.

For those out there running a small business, the strategy that we have essentially operated is quite a simple one. It is one that says that, you borrow to build. You borrow where you can increase the capacity of your business. You can buy assets. You can increase our future earnings and then you make sure that you are running cash surpluses. That is effectively what we have done. We have looked far into the future and seen where there are the growth pressures and where there is the future demand. How can we make sure Tasmanians are more productive? Then we said, 'Let us borrow to achieve those goals. Let us borrow to achieve a 100-year irrigation scheme, which can fundamentally transform the landscape, the job prospects and the productivity of rural and regional areas right across our state. Do we need to pay for a 100-year agricultural scheme out of today's cash earnings? No, of course not. That is simply stymieing the future by refusing to look up, look out and look beyond.

We know that in the frontier days of our state and our nation that borrowing to invest in such nation and state-building projects was the norm and we want to see more of that. We want to see a safe Midland Highway where people can get to work on time and get back to

their families in one piece. We want to see the investments in Burnie and Devonport ports that will enable the goods, resources and products that are made, mined and manufactured here in Tasmania to reach customers around the world, which previously they would not have been able to do. We are going to do that by taking a bold plan to borrow to invest.

We have seen the alternative and many small business people would know what the bad alternative to that is, and that is putting your groceries on the credit card or borrowing to keep the lights on and the doors open. That is what happened under the failed Labor-Greens government where they had no net debt but had enormous budget deficits. That is what happens when you fundamentally cannot manage money. There is good debt and there is bad debt. This Government is investing with an eye to the future while across the forward Estimates, maintaining budget surpluses in the next three years, as we did with budget surpluses right up to the COVID-19 year of 2019-20.

That future vision, that future strategy is enabling our young people to see the future potential of Tasmania and to say that they can be part of it and it is part of the reason why young people are taking a punt on being here in Tasmania, starting a family, getting a job and building a life. They can see those future growth projects that so many young people rely on to take part in a meaningful way in the future of this state.

I turn to my role as parliamentary secretary to the Premier. Under his responsibilities, one of the areas of interest that I am particularly focused on is Service Tasmania and improving the way that this Government does customer service. In 1998, when Service Tasmania was established under the Rundle government, it was an innovative forward-looking approach to effectively setting up a one-stop shop for the customers of government services and government businesses to be able to go in, get the services they need, pay their bills and engage with government, with people who were friendly and customer service-oriented.

As technology has improved, we have seen the way that people want to access customer service from their government is becoming increasingly digital. I often speak in this place about being the first member to come in here after the fall of the Berlin Wall but in this context perhaps, even more pertinent, I am the first member to come in here after the invention of the worldwide web. The way that young people are engaging with our services is increasingly online.

Part of this process - and I know the minister for Science and Technology who spoke before is a big part of this - is about transforming the information and communication technology of Service Tasmania. There is \$2.6 million over the next four years to make sure that the digital infrastructure that backs up Service Tasmania is contemporary, powerful, is usable and is customer friendly.

There is funding in this Budget to provide an immediate uplift in the information technology support levels for Service Tasmania, both on the front end of the way customers of government businesses will be able to interact with the services that we provide but it is also on the back end as well. This will make sure that the people who work in Service Tasmania are able to meet the needs of their customers by knowing more about what is required to help those customers get on with their daily lives. People do not want to be spending a lot of time bailed up in a government office. They want to get in, transact their business in the way that works for them and move on.

There is a range of funding for management and ongoing development of Service Tasmania when it comes to new customer services and facilitating their delivery in the community through Service Tasmania Customer Service Centres as well as the Tasmanian Government Contact Centre. As we saw during COVID-19, the Public Health hotline became a real central point for information for people right across our community. Perhaps for people in rural and remote areas, they may not have been necessarily tech-savvy enough to go online but they could reach one of our fantastic people over the phone. That is another key way that people want to interact with government customer services.

For those who want to go in in person, the Service Tasmania shop capital investment is \$1 million over the next four years. I was in Huonville at the Service Tasmania shop a couple of weeks ago with Mrs Petrusma and the renovations that have happened there are fantastic. They are a real model for the way that -

Debate adjourned.

ADJOURNMENT

Melva Truchanas - Tribute

[6.00 p.m.]

Ms O'CONNOR (Clark - Leader of the Greens) - Mr Speaker, I rise to mark the passing of the closest thing the Tasmanian Greens have to royalty: our queen, the courageous, inspiring, intrepid and loving Melva Truchanas, champion of the wild places and widow of our greatest landscape photographer, Olegas Truchanas.

Melva died in the Whittle Ward on 11 May after a brief illness, surrounded by her children Anita, Rima and Nicholas. She was 92 years old and active to the very end; a day before she fell ill she attended a Tasmanian Plant Society meeting.

Mr Speaker, one of the proudest moments of my life was when I was minister for women and in 2013 had the great honour of inducting Melva Truchanas onto the Tasmanian Honour Roll of Women. These are the notes on the honour roll website:

Melva Truchanas was born on 15 January 1930 and moved to Launceston in 1940. As a teenager, Melva channelled her energies into the Girl Guides' Movement, 'the war effort' and outdoors experiences. Following a year 'tramping' in New Zealand, Melva married Olegas Truchanas in 1956 who had escaped from the carnage of World War II in Eastern Europe.

When the Hydro Electric Commission planned to flood Lake Pedder, Olegas created a photographic presentation, *Tasmania's Wild South-West*, adding to his educational lectures' series. Melva joined the South-West Committee and Lake Pedder Action Committee, and cared for their family.

The 1967 bushfires destroyed Truchanas' home and Olegas' slide collections documenting 17 years of journeys into Tasmania's then little-known South-West.

I know it was one of Melva's great regrets that when the fire was racing up the back of Forest Road, where they lived in West Hobart, she was heavily pregnant and all she could think about was fleeing the fire. Olegas got back after the fire had been through and said, 'Where are my slides?'. Melva had not saved the slides because she had to save her life and that of her unborn child.

Melva and Olegas' son, Nicholas, was born as the *Save Lake Pedder* outcry intensified. With the bid to save Lake Pedder dominating their lives, Olegas set about re-establishing his photographic collections.

In 1972, Olegas drowned in a canoeing accident on the Gordon River. The original Lake Pedder was flooded that year.

Melva raised her young family, worked in university administration, kept her 'green ideals': volunteering, mentoring, and becoming a passionate member of the Lake Pedder Restoration committee ...

In March this year, we marked the fiftieth anniversary of the flooding of Lake Pedder. We went out to Teds Beach at Lake Pedder and Melva arrived, because she always turned up; she had a walking frame. There is a little sandy ledge that you have to walk down to get onto Teds Beach and she is standing at the top of the little sandy outcrop wondering how she is going to get down. My partner, Senator Nick McKim, said, 'I'll catch you, Melva, you'll be right,' and she says, 'Oh Nick, the temptation is overwhelming.'

I thought I might also read into *Hansard* some of former Greens leader Christine Milne's words about Melva - another great friend of Melva's:

Melva was a much-admired, feisty woman who loved Tasmania's wild places and campaigned to protect them throughout her long life. She encouraged and supported young people to get involved and to get out and enjoy nature, especially the south-west wilderness.

Over the March long weekend this year it was particularly special to have Melva join us out at the Pedder impoundment to commemorate 50 years of campaigning to protect and restore Lake Pedder.

Melva was full of optimism and made a special toast at the lunch:

'To all the Pedder campaigners who have perpetuated the legacy of the lake and inspired a new generation of activists to fight for Tasmania's wild.'

It was also 50 years since her husband, wilderness legend and photographer, Olegas Truchanas, drowned whilst on a trip to photograph the Lower Gordon River, also under threat from Hydro industrialisation. Melva was a member of the Launceston Bushwalking Club, where she met Lithuanian immigrant, Olegas. The pair married in 1954 and explored the wilderness together on many bushwalking and ski trips, including at Cradle Mountain, which she loved.

When Lake Pedder was threatened, they threw themselves into the campaign to save the jewel of the south-west.

Before I came in here tonight, I went through my emails to have a look for some of the many emails that Melva always made time to send. Many people who loved Melva will have received these messages that would come out of nowhere, often at the time when you needed to hear some affirmation. One such time was after the vote on the Tasmanian Forest Agreement, where Melva made it very clear to the Greens in parliament who had voted for that agreement that she understood why we did it, and that we did it for all the right reasons. She supported us completely.

We sent out a parliamentary report in the sitting weeks and a couple of years ago, and Melva wrote:

Dear Cassy and Rosalie,

Thank you for your reports of the actions of parliament and of course for your contributions. The general public would never know the quantity of work you maintain, nor of your successes without these. Certainly, we can't rely on the media to present them.

After last year's state election when there was a swing to the Greens, there was this message:

Hurrah! That this precious Island and its people are still in your caring and guiding hands and looking forward to an increasingly successful future. Thanks to you both and your splendid teams.

Hello Rosalie,

I so very much enjoyed meeting Adam Bandt again last night. Your speech was marvellous and Cassy's television ad is absolutely first class. I am inspired to donate again. I want more! You have a wonderful organisation of volunteers. May we prosper.

Then she went on to talk about a marine protection plan. She also went through the budget papers last year to point out a fact about the operational funding for the Office of the Coordinator-General - right up to the very end. The beautiful Melva Truchanas stayed Green to her core, was a champion for this beautiful island's wild places, stood with those of us trying to defend it and always was there for a hug. I cannot quite believe she is gone. I know she was old but I thought we might have her for a little longer. In my office there is a picture of Melva to inspire me every day in my work.

**Bill Dermody - Tribute
Bicheno Ambulance Station - Site Proposal**

[6.07 p.m.]

Ms WHITE (Lyons - Leader of the Opposition) - Mr Speaker, I rise tonight to recognise the passing of a lovely man who has had a big impact on me and his entire community, and

that is Bill Dermody. Bill Dermody was a passionate defender of health workers. He was a long-time member for the ANMF, he was a nurse himself and was very passionate about ensuring that people, no matter where they lived, had access to health care close to them in their community. In particular, he was a strong advocate for a greater role for nurse practitioners.

I first came to know Bill well when he was petitioning in the New Norfolk community to see nurse practitioners placed in the New Norfolk Hospital. At that time, he collected 1200 signatures on a petition within only eight days, which I had the privilege to table in this parliament on his behalf. He went on to collect further signatures. There were 2200 signatures collected in a petition that I presented to the parliament in 2020 on his behalf.

The work that he did on the role nurse practitioners can play in the community informed policy that the Labor Party took to the last election. I acknowledge and recognise his hard work and his dedication to improving access to health care for people in his community. He stood, week after week, in New Norfolk's High Street collecting signatures at the market on a Saturday, no matter what the weather. Everybody in New Norfolk would know Bill and I am sure most people who came into contact with him know how kind and decent, and what a gentleman, he was and would be sad to know that he passed away.

Bill passed away after palliating in the New Norfolk Hospital on 23 May this year. I was in touch with his wife Debbie in the days before he passed away and asked her to pass a message on to Bill for me, but sadly, he was unresponsive at that stage. I hope he knew that I was thinking of him. I would like to convey our deepest condolences to his family - to his wife, Debbie, to his children, Duane, Kyle and Adam, and his grandchild, Owen, and to express our gratitude to him for the impact he has had. He was an incredibly humble man, he did so much for other people and he never asked for anything in return. I know his community will miss him greatly.

Mr Speaker, there is another matter that I wish to speak about tonight. There was a letter published today in *Bicheno Forward* by its president, Tony McLeod, on behalf of the Bicheno Community Development Association. That letter was from Bicheno Investments in regard to the proposal to build a new ambulance station in Bicheno. I will make it very clear at the outset that neither *Bicheno Forward* nor the Bicheno Community Development Association nor Bicheno Investments Pty Ltd oppose the new ambulance station in Bicheno; they understand how vital that is. Their concern is twofold: one is about process, and the other is about the detrimental impact on town planning.

The proposed site for the new ambulance station is on the main road in Bicheno, opposite the retail precinct. There has been no community consultation; the community will only be finding out about this today as they read the *Bicheno Forward* and the letter contained within it by the CEO of Bicheno Investments Pty Ltd, Christine Proctor.

I spoke today with Christine Proctor, and I have spoken to some members of the Bicheno community to ask them what they think about this proposal and what engagements the government has had with the community about this proposal. Sadly, very little information has been provided to the community. Bicheno Investments Pty Ltd have tried very hard to work with the government about finding an alternative site. The government seems to be pressing ahead with the compulsory acquisition of their land.

I just put on the record that on 17 May Bicheno Investments wrote to the Premier, Jeremy Rockliff. They received an acknowledgement from his office on 18 May and they followed that up on 25 May. There was no reply to that email so they followed up again on 30 May with an email, but again, no reply. They have taken a quite unprecedented step of publishing a full letter - the letter that was written to the Premier - in the *Bicheno Forward* that has been published today, outlining their concerns. I share those concerns and the call from Bicheno Investments and members of the community with whom I have spoken for a review of this site. I ask the Premier and Minister for Health to intervene.

We need to make sure that the site for the new ambulance station best suits the town. The current proposed site would be quite detrimental for any urban growth; particularly for retail and commercial precincts on the main road, it would really hamper any of those economic opportunities that have been proposed for development on that site, including retail and housing. I encourage the Minister for Health and the Premier to review this decision and intervene before the compulsory acquisition by the Department of Health proceeds any further. Alternative sites have been identified that are still on the main road. There is one block out of town that has been brought to my attention where there is a willing vendor. I encourage the Government to take another look at this.

It is also concerning to note the process the Department of Health has undertaken in progressing its notice to treat on the landowner in that the department has missed some of the steps in its own process of compulsory acquisition, though it has subsequently acknowledged this. Not only has there been a lack of proper process, but there has been a lack of community consultation. There is concern that this is detrimental to the town planning strategy. I understand the general manager and the town planner for the local council were not aware of the proposal to build the ambulance station at this site in Bicheno either. I will be writing to the Premier on behalf of the community to ask for the decision to be reviewed - at the very least halted - until some further consultation can occur. With an investment like this, we have to get it right. It will be a significant investment that will last for a very long time and needs to be done well.

Time expired.

Rural Youth of Tasmania - Young Farmer of the Year

[6.14 p.m.]

Ms FINLAY (Bass) - Mr Speaker, this evening I rise to speak on the Rural Youth of Tasmania Young Farmer of the Year competition that we both attended. It was concluded and the winner announced at a dinner at Quercus Park on Saturday night. For those people who are not aware of the Young Farmer of the Year competition, it is a fantastic competition that young people across Tasmania, whether a member of Rural Youth or not, can enter and participate in. I have attended this event for each of the years I have been in the parliament. One of the things I have loved is that it is an opportunity for young people in Tasmania and farmers on the land to demonstrate their skills and also learn skills.

One of the things that I have learnt by attending this event is that it occurs in three stages. The first starts at Hagley farm school, where they have the runoffs, and anyone can enter as long as they fit the age criteria. Then they progress onto the state finals which, on this occasion, was on the day of the dinner, where the top 12 participants go through to the state finals and

then the top-ranking young Tasmanians go through to the final stage on the evening, which includes public speaking. It was a fantastic demonstration of the quality of young Tasmanians coming through as future leaders in our rural communities, and also a quiz.

At the runoffs, it is a great opportunity to demonstrate skills, but on the finals on the day that was held at Quercus Park, they go through a whole range of modules, both practical and theoretical, and I love the extent of it. Each year it is quite different. In listening and talking to the young people at the dinner, you hear that some of them have never tried this activity before; for instance, it might be agriculture-related modules, and it might be skills.

This year they had sheep handling; questions about soil health; they had to figure out how to calibrate a sprayer; they also had to put out a fire. For some of these people, it was the first time that they had been in this process, but others were able to share with or mentor fellow competitors because it is something they do all day, every day.

The young people who participated in the public speaking - who remembers those high school debating years? - pulled a topic out of a hat only a few minutes prior to delivering a two-minute speech on a whole range of topics. The young people were amazing and confident. I am going to name some of them. Before I do that, I acknowledge that what I have loved and what I heard last year, and again this year, is that many of the competitors come back and repeat year on year because they develop their networks, learn from each other and from the process, and they can also put themselves in the competition for some extraordinary prizes.

The room is well sponsored; Rural Youth Tasmania has an exceptional reputation and so this year the naming rights sponsor was Woolworths, but there are all sorts of other agriculture-related suppliers that provide tens of thousands of dollars to the top four participants of the evening. It is interesting to note that last year, the winner was Andrea O'Halloran. In second place last year was Caitlin Radford, third was Dylan Bellchambers, then fourth Stuart Cresswell, fifth Owen Woolley, and sixth Josh Mison.

It is interesting that by developing these skills they have the confidence to come back and back and back so this year the winner was Caitlin Radford. Caitlin has competed for a number of years and recognises the value of doing that. She gave an exceptional public speaking presentation and was also strong in the quiz, all of the modules and in the runoffs as well.

I will go through the different modules that were considered and the winners of those in this year. The first module was Literacy and Numeracy; the winner was Owen Woolley; the second module was Future Farming, won by Brodie Hill; the third, Biosecurity, won by Amber Bramich; the fourth, Sustainable Land Management, won by Brodie Hill; the fifth, Farm Machinery, won by Stuart Cresswell; the sixth, Irrigation, won by Caitlin Radford; the seventh, Agronomy, won by Brodie Hill; the eighth, Fire Safety, won by Caitlin Radford; the ninth, Finance, won by Caitlin Radford; and last, the Farmer Challenge, was won by Brady Robins.

This shows the breadth of skills that are being developed in those young people who are coming through in the sector or have an interest in supporting the sector. This year, Caitlin Radford was successful. I sat at the table with Caitlin on the night and heard that she has also been successful in securing a grant for international travel to go to an international forum for young farmers. She is going to travel through Norway, through parts of Europe and into Ireland over the future weeks ahead, having just invested with her partner into property just down the

road from mum and dad. I love that it was a very supportive evening with extended family in attendance supporting these young people coming through.

This year, Caitlin Radford was first. Brodie Hill, you might remember that name, came second. Owen Woolley was in third place for the Tasmanian Young Farmer of the Year, who is the partner of Caitlin Radford, and they have just invested in property together - a bit of a dynamic duo there - and in fourth place this year was Dylan Bellchambers.

Mr Speaker, you also have been a supporter for many years, much more than I, of both Rural Youth and Agfest. It was an exceptional evening and it is a great organisation. It was great to see young people coming through to deliver a fantastic future for Tasmanian rural communities.

Kennerley Children's Home Tasmania - Moving On Program

[6.21 p.m.]

Mr O'BYRNE (Franklin) - Mr Speaker, I rise tonight on the adjournment to talk about the Kennerley Children's Home Tasmania, which is a fantastic organisation in Hobart's northern suburbs providing a critical service for Tasmanian children and young people who unfortunately cannot live at home. Recently, I had the pleasure of catching up with Andrea Sturges from Kennerley to chat about the various foster care programs that the organisation runs in Tasmania, specifically the Moving On Program. For those who are not aware of it, the Moving On Program is a residential program for young people between the ages of 15 and 21. It is designed to transition young Tasmanians from foster care to independent living by providing these young people with important life skills, support and mentorship.

Unfortunately, young people leaving foster care are considered to be one of the most disadvantaged and vulnerable groups in our society. The outcomes of many young people leaving foster care can be tragic, with significantly higher rates of homelessness, substance abuse and domestic violence. This is both a local and international phenomenon, with several international studies comparing the outcomes of those leaving foster care with those fortunate enough to grow up in a supportive home environment. The difference in life outcomes between these two groups of people is stark.

The Moving On Program is designed to address this issue by assisting these young people transition from out-of-home care and into independent living in a safe and supportive environment. Up to seven participants take part in the program at a time, alongside two role model tenants and dedicated support staff who provide mentorship, friendship and support. It is a highly successful early intervention strategy that has proven to lift outcomes for these young Tasmanians.

In 2019, some research was done by the University of Tasmania in conjunction with Kennerley about the outcomes of young people who have gone through the program since its inception in 2003. It found that 90 per cent of participants who have gone through the Moving On Program had never experienced homelessness, compared to one study that found 35 per cent of youths leaving out-of-home care had been homeless within the first year alone. It also found 81 per cent of young people in the Moving On Program had completed further study. This is one of the foundations of the program, that people must be engaged in either work or learning.

No Moving On Program participant had been in contact with child protection services, or undergone drug and alcohol, or domestic violence support after going through the program. This is an extraordinary achievement from the hardworking team at Kennerley Children's Home and demonstrates the clear success of the program.

Statistics aside, it was great to hear some of Andrea's experiences from running the program. Some of the stories of young Tasmanians exiting foster care and struggling to find a roof over their head and the care and support they need were truly heartbreaking. We all know how tough the rental market is at the moment, especially if you are only 17 or 18, and without a steady income. Some of the other stories Andrea shared about how much difference the Moving On Program made for these young Tasmanians was heartwarming. Hearing these young Tasmanians who have had a difficult start to life, through no fault of their own, go through the out-of-home care system and then through the Moving On Program and emerge as young adults with the knowledge, skills and ability to take on the world, was sensational to hear.

The Moving On Program is a perfect example of the power that the right kinds of social policies and actions have to improve the lives of vulnerable people in our community and society as a whole. The team at Kennerley are able to transform the lives of a group of young people who are among the most vulnerable and disadvantaged groups in our community and in just a few years provide them with what they need to begin their adult lives on the right foot. The program very clearly demonstrates the power and importance of early intervention. The right kinds of policies and supports provided at the right time can have immensely positive benefits that last for the rest of a person's life. There is also a significant flow-on benefit to our economy and society as well.

I thank Andrea for taking the time to teach me and talk to me about the Moving On Program and its success, and also for telling me all about the other out-of-home care programs that Kennerley Children's Home runs. Finally, I also want to extend my gratitude to the rest of the team at Kennerley for the vitally important work it does in our community.

Cradle Coast Theatre - *Ring of Fire - The Music of Johnny Cash*

[6.25 p.m.]

Dr BROAD (Braddon) - Mr Speaker, I rise on adjournment tonight to talk about a fabulous production that I went to see in Devonport on Saturday night. It was by the Cradle Coast Theatre and it was *Ring of Fire - The Music of Johnny Cash*. I am a bit of a fan of Johnny Cash. This was an absolutely fantastic production; the quality was unbelievable. It was directed by my friend and mentor, Sid Sidebottom, Bronwyn Darvell and David Turner. I can honestly say, if you paid big money to see this show in Melbourne or Sydney, you would not have been disappointed - that is how good this show was. The singing was amazing, the storytelling, the humour, and just the way it was put together, but especially the harmonies and the band.

It was the story of Johnny Cash from birth to death and everywhere in between. It was actually played out by three couples, throughout various songs by Johnny Cash, and some songs that were not by Johnny Cash. The singing was simply amazing. The cast was: Laura Auton, Zach Weeks, Sherry Rand, Andrew Grey, Annette Dawes and Sid Sidebottom. The harmonies were spine-tingling and there was a lot of audience participation.

It was held at the Devonport Town Hall Theatre at the Paranple Arts Centre, which has a very intimate setting. It was a fantastic experience and I had a great time. The band as well was just amazing. It consisted of a Wayne Rand, Paul Overton, Pete Jermy on drums, Michele Taylor, Josie Riches, Bronwyn Darvell and David Turner. The humour in the story was really good; it was basically a series of Johnny Cash songs with a voiceover in between and a projection of various pictures. There were many costume changes. The thing that really impressed me was the quality of the music and it is a testament to everybody involved.

The Cradle Coast Theatre is a new organisation so I will read into *Hansard* who the people in Cradle Coast Theatre are. Cradle Coast Theatre was formed to complement the more traditional music theatre productions presented by our more established local music companies. Cradle Coast Theatre is keen to present smaller-scale, outside-the-square musicals such as *Ring of Fire*. The Cradle Coast Theatre chose *Ring of Fire* as its first show for a variety of reasons: it features the music of a genuine legend, is a tribute to country music, is structurally different from traditional musicals, is relatively small scale in set demands, accommodates a small cast and band, is non-stop singing and is a Tasmanian premiere. By its nature, *Ring of Fire* is also agile and flexible in nature, which are useful qualities in this COVID-challenged era.

The other thing that this cast and crew had to deal with was COVID. I am so glad that I got to see it on Saturday night because, unfortunately, as the cast did suffer COVID-19 infections, the shows had to be delayed twice; I had to rebook twice, which was a bit of a challenge in getting babysitters, but this was a fantastic presentation. I really look forward to seeing what the Cradle Coast Theatre will do next because the quality was so outstanding.

If I had been somebody who had paid big money to go and see this in Melbourne or Sydney, I would not have been disappointed. This sits right up there with the best-quality productions I think you could see anywhere, and it happened right on the north-west coast, by north-west coasters. We should be very proud that we have such quality of singing and music in our region.

Redwood Village in Kingston

[6.29 p.m.]

Mr WINTER (Franklin) - Mr Speaker, I rise to contribute on Redwood Village and the residents there today. We had seven residents with us this morning who stood not just for themselves but stood for residents like them right across Tasmania who are facing a very similar situation. They are facing a situation that has been caused by a lack of planning and anticipation of the end of the National Rental Affordability Scheme - NRAS - for not only these residents of Redwood Village, but of residents right across the state.

This story does not start with them doing television on the weekend or media interviews a few months before that. It actually starts, in terms of the Tasmanian Labor Party's engagement with them, back in February 2021 when my predecessor, Alison Standen, met with the residents and wrote a letter to then-minister for housing Roger Jaensch, to urge him to support affordable or subsidised leasing arrangements for these tenants. That is nearly 18 months ago. In March, there was a letter to Ms Standen, the former member for Franklin, saying that the Government would urge CHL to engage with the owners of the properties to ensure they were aware of the Private Rental Incentive Program. Then there was continuing engagement until the election and I took over in trying to advocate for these residents.

I tried to count the number of engagements that I have had on behalf of these residents and I could not, but it is numerous. If you were to count the number of times that Adrienne Stephens or any of these residents had tried to engage with the Government or Housing Connect, any of the agencies that you should be talking to, it would probably be in the hundreds of times. They have been working on this for so long, because the certainty for them is so important. They are in their 70s and 80s. They are coming to the end of a 10-year lease in only a few weeks and they have been desperate. The longer this has gone on, the more desperate they have become. We heard today that some of the residents have not been eating or sleeping. One of them told me that their doctor had raised concerns with them about their health, because of the stress this is putting them under.

Why on Earth do we have to bring them into question time, into the parliament, to get certainty about their rental accommodation? Why do we have to do this?

I have to say, some of the correspondence that came through the office this afternoon looks very promising, but we have sought further clarification. Nothing would make me happier than these residents getting the outcome they deserve. The problem is that they are just 12 tenants - of whom seven were here today - out of hundreds of Tasmanians in the same situation coming off NRAS, or in a similar situation when it comes to the uncertainty of their housing. It is not affordable for them to live in their own suburb and their own home that they have lived in for a period of time, and this is all happening in Tasmania, in 2022.

It is not new that there is a housing crisis. We have been talking about it in here for years. We had a housing crisis forum, was that 2018? We are still in the same situation. On the first day of winter, we all talk about the fact that people are living in tents, sleeping in cars, sleeping in accommodation they cannot afford, sleeping on couches, sleeping rough. That is Tasmania in 2022. This housing crisis has not got any better; it is getting worse. All they do is shuffle the deck chairs. Another minister for housing. You just change the minister for housing and hope for a different outcome.

There are some short-term things and some long-term things we can do. The government should ensure that these residents coming off NRAS go on to the state-based scheme. It is the government's responsibility. It is not the responsibility of a new minister who was sworn in today in Canberra. The responsibility is one for this Tasmanian Government. It has known since 2013 that NRAS was going to come to an end. That is entire life of this Government, which started in 2014. It has known the entire time this was going to happen, and here we are, a number of weeks from them being thrown out onto the street, and maybe there is something for them.

I hope this situation is fixed for these residents but it is just as important that it is fixed for everyone in the same situation. In the longer term, we have to build more housing. You cannot continue to come to this place with more plans, more numbers in the budget; we actually need more housing. Yes, there is public housing that needs to be built, but there is also the new state-wide planning scheme that is so far behind schedule when it comes to its implementation. It is so hard to build a home in this state thanks to the planning reforms of this Government that people are giving up; it is too hard to build. We saw it reported only today that there are now issues with the urban growth boundary around the proposed development of housing at Droughty Point in the Clarence municipality because the city of Hobart is being asked for its opinion.

Any changes to land use planning in this state have to go through an enormous amount of red tape - or blue tape - that this Government puts in place just to build a home in this state. It is too hard to build a home. That is the long-term impact of this Government and its failures in planning reform and its short-term cold-heartedness when it comes to Tasmanians who are sleeping rough.

RSL - 107th Annual State Congress

[6.36 p.m.]

Ms BUTLER (Lyons) - Mr Speaker, on this adjournment I take the opportunity to thank my colleague, the member for Franklin, Mr Winter, for his representation of the people who were here today. He has worked tirelessly, as has the former member of parliament Alison Standen. Many people have tried for such a long time to try to give these people some certainty and it should never have come to that today - having Tasmanians sitting outside in tears, too emotionally broken to even be able to come into our Chamber. That is disgusting. It is a terrible day for Tasmanian politics and I think the members of the Liberal Party should be ashamed of themselves, and so should their spin doctors. It is just disgusting.

I would like to finish a presentation that I began last night in relation to the one-hundred-seventh Annual State Congress of the RSL, which I attended on Sunday 22 May. Meritorious service medals were awarded to Trevor Duniam, Robert Ramsey, Hans Gramberg, Ray Simpson and Charles Thorpe. Each of these recipients have given amazing service, which should be on our *Hansard*.

I would like to read about Trevor Duniam.

Trevor committed 34 years to the role of president at the Wynyard RSL sub-branch, and during this time he was a stalwart of the community and the RSL. His contribution to welfare, commemoration and history cannot be oversold. One of his most important contributions as president was the transition to a business model that younger, contemporary veterans would want to be part of, and always making them feel welcome and supported. After 34 years as president, Trevor would have been well in his right to step back completely, but he took on the role of secretary to continue supporting and mentoring the young veterans as we took over the running of the sub-branch.

Trevor has also been a long-term member of the Legacy, the VVA and volunteer fire brigade. In recognition of all Trevor has done for veterans and our local community, he has also recently been awarded an OAM.

Another person who received a meritorious award at the 107th Congress is Charles Bertram Roy Thorpe. Charles Thorpe enlisted in the army on 15 November 1944 and served with 66 Battalion 2nd AIF in the BCOF in Japan. He discharged from the army on 3 September 1947 and returned to Cygnet. He joined the Cygnet sub-branch of the RSL in June 1962.

Charlie has been an active member of the sub-branch for over 59 years and has held committee positions in the past and has been very active in the running of the sub-branch. In particular, he was involved in the building program and redevelopment of the club and in the

social activities of the club and sub-branch for over 12 years. The sub-branch was in the social hub for members and the Cygnet community during the 1960s and 1970s. Charlie has attended, and still attends, all sub-branch meetings and activities, and he is always the first to offer his assistance. Charlie has given long service to the RSL and he is a most worthy recipient of life membership of the Returned and Services League of Australia.

Finally, Hans Gramberg. Hans Gramberg joined the Navy in 1956 after serving with the RAN on various ships and serving in peacekeeping duties in Borneo. Hans discharged in 1976, having served for 20 years and he later joined the RSL in 2004. After discharging from the Navy, Hans joined the Merchant Navy doing navigation and mapping on ships such as the MV *Cape Don* and the MV *Cape Pillar*.

After the Merchant Navy, Hans became a lighthouse keeper at numerous lighthouses including Wilsons Promontory, Gabo Island and Cliffy Island in Victoria. Hans has been an active member of the Latrobe RSL sub-branch for 11 years and has, in total, been with the RSL for around 17 years. During that time, he has held several positions on the committee, most notably as president for six years, as secretary for three years and as treasurer for the past three years, a position he still holds today. Hans has also been involved in fundraising activities, be it a raffle or selling poppies and badges. His contributions have been wide and varied. He is a very conscientious member of the sub-branch, always ready with a smile and a joke.

Hans has also been a long-standing member of the TS Mersey Unit Support Committee, Australian Navy Cadets, where he assists with giving advice to the committee. He has also donated and willingly chopped onions for the various sausage-sizzle fundraisers of the committee. Once again, he will always volunteer to help where he can.

Hans is also a long-serving member of the Ulverstone-Devonport Naval Association of Australia sub-branch. Having joined in 2010, he has served in various roles assisting with commemorative days and services. Hans is also an active member of the Latrobe Rotary, where he has been for many years. He also formed and was president of the Neighbourhood Watch group in Ambleside, where he lives. With so much on, it is a wonder he finds time to see his lovely wife, Susan, who has supported him for many years and must often wonder where he is off to next but with Hans's dedication, there is no doubt he finds ample time for Susan and the family.

With all of this taken into consideration, Hans has provided great service to the RSL, as he does with any organisation he is involved in and is therefore a most worthy recipient of life membership of the Returned and Services League of Australia.

The House adjourned at 6.43 p.m.