



PARLIAMENT OF TASMANIA

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

REPORT OF DEBATES

Tuesday 21 May 2024

REVISED EDITION

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Tuesday 21 May 2024

The Speaker, **Ms O'Byrne**, took the Chair at 10 a.m., acknowledged the Traditional People, and read Prayers.

ABSENCE OF MINISTERS

Minister Street and Minister Duigan

[10.01 a.m.]

Mr ROCKLIFF (Braddon - Premier) - Madam Speaker, the acting arrangements announced last week remain in place for minister Street.

I can also advise the House that minister Duigan is unwell and will be absent from the Chamber today.

I will be taking questions relating to his portfolios of Energy and Renewables, Parks and Environment, along with questions relating to Sports and Events.

QUESTIONS

Tourism - Winter Visitor Numbers

Mr WINTER question to PREMIER, Mr ROCKLIFF

[10.02 a.m.]

Tourism and hospitality operators are really nervous about the upcoming winter. Accommodation bookings are down across the state. Bonza has collapsed, losing about 29,000 passengers. Direct flights from New Zealand have been cancelled. Dark Mofo is going. Airports are projecting significantly lower numbers than have been seen in recent years. One source of optimism though were the *Spirits*, which were set to bring an additional 200,000 passengers per year. However, you have made things even harder by delaying those too. Will you consider additional tourism incentives to support tourism operators, hospitality businesses and regional jobs during what will, by all accounts, be a very difficult winter?

ANSWER

Madam Speaker, I thank the member for his question. First, I want to say how important the tourism and hospitality sector is to the Tasmanian economy and the community. There are some 37,500 jobs in the tourism and hospitality sector, if I have that correct. It is also significant in terms of the bounce-back we have had from COVID and the pandemic as visitors spend some \$3.5 billion in the 12 months after that. That is an extraordinary effort by all our tourism operators. Winter has always been very challenging and difficult in Tasmania. I commend Tourism Tasmania for their very bold and clever marketing in terms of the Come Down for Air campaign; the winter campaign that has been invested in over the last few years.

As to Dark Mofo, I am not sure I would characterise it exactly as you have said it, given that there is a one-year hiatus for Dark Mofo. We expect it to be back bigger than ever in 2025,

although there are some Dark Mofo events, including the winter feast and the swim and all sorts of things, which is, at least, encouraging. I recognise the tourism sector always looks at winter as a time when we need to work collaboratively together with Tourism Tasmania and the industry itself to ensure we have visitors.

We will not be talking the industry down. There are a lot of opportunities for the tourism sector: 37,300 Tasmanian jobs, which equates to about 12 per cent of Tasmanian employment, which is significant, and I mentioned the \$3 billion.

We are an exciting travel destination, but there is no doubt we are operating in a very competitive market in that sense. The Off Season campaign is the Tasmanian Liberal government's largest investment in a winter marketing initiative aimed at boosting visitation to the regions and supporting jobs and businesses during the traditionally quieter period between May and August. That will continue. We will always work very closely and collaboratively with Tourism Tasmania and the Tourism Industry Council of Tasmania to listen to their ideas of how we can support their investment and add value to existing investments and marketing campaigns. There is no greater supporter of the tourism industry in Tasmania than the Tasmanian Liberal government.

Madam SPEAKER - The Premier's time has expired.

Devonport of Devonport- Upgrades Timeline

Mr WINTER question to PREMIER, Mr ROCKLIFF

[10.06 a.m.]

There is no doubt the tourism industry will receive a massive shot in the arm when the *Spirits* finally do arrive, just as it did when Jim Bacon's new *Spirits* arrived in the early 2000s. Last week, you told the House, 'It is my expectation that all best efforts will be made to ensure there is appropriate infrastructure in place at East Devonport to support the arrival of the new ships'.

On the subject of such importance, best efforts are clearly not enough. Community leaders, including the Mayor of Devonport and the President of the Chamber of Commerce there want answers. When will the long-promised upgrades at the Port of Devonport be completed?

ANSWER

Madam Speaker, I thank the member for his question and understand the importance behind it, not only the delivery of the vessels but also the required port infrastructure. All best efforts will be made to ensure that required infrastructure is in place. As I have advised the House, the TT-Line board made the decision during the caretaker period to rescind the preferred tenderer status in relation to Berth 3 due to a significant increase in the lump sum offer for the project. TT-Line has re-entered a modified tender process to resolve its concerns. This is in line with sound commercial practices and ensures value for money for the Tasmanian people.

The government was advised of the decision on 22 April 2024. I am advised that TT-Line is currently undertaking final contract negotiations. Once those negotiations are finalised and the contract is signed, TT-Line will be publicly disclosing - as you would expect - that investment cost. As with prudent contract negotiations, probity advice does not allow this to occur until then.

I have been very clear to TT-Line that the appropriate infrastructure must be in place at East Devonport to support the arrival of the new ships. That is what TT-Line has been instructed to deliver on behalf of the Tasmanian people. I am advised that TT-Line is undertaking final contract negotiations, again arising from the intensive procurement process it commenced during the caretaker period. I look forward to TT-Line providing an update on that soon. The right infrastructure needs to be in place for the modern ferries.

It is an exciting opportunity for Tasmania. I am well aware of the great interest in this from the Tasmanian tourism and hospitality sector. The two ships, *Spirit I* and *Spirit II*, have been a huge boon for our economy over the course of the last two decades. As a candidate, I remember speaking very positively in support of then premier Bacon's investment in the 2002 election. I am very proud of the fact that we are investing such significant sums into *Spirits III* and *IV*, which will be a huge boost, not only of a 40 per cent increase in freight capacity, but also in passengers as well.

Supplementary Question

[10.10 a.m.]

Mr WINTER - If the Berth 3 upgrades are not completed by the time the new ships enter service, how would that impact that new service?

Madam SPEAKER - I will allow it because I probably could have allowed the supplementary on the first question which was not really answered. I will allow it on the basis that it is to the establishment of the facilities.

Mr ROCKLIFF - We will not be going into hypotheticals. What we are doing is taking action to ensure the required infrastructure is in place, and every effort will be made to ensure that is the case. This includes the efforts of not only TT-Line but also TasPorts. We recognise the significance of the infrastructure, and indeed the infrastructure of the two ships themselves.

I look forward to updating the House with new information as it becomes available, as you would expect me to do.

Commission of Inquiry - Recommendations Delivery

Dr WOODRUFF question to PREMIER, Mr ROCKLIFF

[10.11 a.m.]

Late last year, when your government tabled its response to the commission of inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse, you made a strong commitment to prioritising the actions needed to keep children and young people safe. From the commission of inquiry's recommendations, 52 are an urgent priority and should be completed by 1 July 2024.

In the Keeping Children Safe and Rebuilding Trust report of your government, you committed to implementing 48 recommendations in this time frame by 1 July 2024. How many of these recommendations will be completed by that date? If any are running behind schedule, which recommendations are they?

ANSWER

Madam Speaker, I thank the member for her question. Fundamentally, there is no more important matter. I recognise the collective response we have all had to the commission of inquiry. Whoever is in government at the time has responsibility to ensure the implementation of the 191 recommendations and more. We do not want to only implement the recommendations of the commission of inquiry but lead the nation when it comes to our response to protecting children.

The commission of inquiry shone a light on past failures of governments, including ours, and on governments of all colours, for which we take responsibility. The commission of inquiry and the recommendations and more are there to ensure this never happens again. I once again thank the victim/survivors for their courage in coming forward and continue to do so with respect to shining a light on matters regarding the commission of inquiry findings and recommendations.

We have focused your question on the delivery of phase one recommendations, which the commission identified for response by the 1 July 2024. I ensured, and I made this public, that through the caretaker period, the work still continued. The possible work that could still continue to implement the recommendations continued, despite the fact that we were in a caretaker period.

Since the release of the government response, significant progress has been made against Phase 1 recommendations. We are on track to deliver the vast majority of these on time. Work is already complete on six recommendations in line with the commission's recommendations. We have already delivered: the new Safeguarding in Schools Unit within the Department of Education, Children and Young People - this focuses on safeguarding our children and young people in the education context, as well as educating and informing school staff and the broader school community; a new support person policy for the Department of Health; a new Children and Young Persons Advisory Group for Health Services; regulations to prescribe the Ombudsman as an entity in the Child and Youth Safe Organisations Act, to allow it to share information with the independent regulator and other entities for the purposes of the Act; new measures to implement accountability for child safety amongst staff in leadership positions, including amending all performance agreements for heads of agencies, including specific references to Child and Youth and Well-being and within the Department of Health, embedding child safety as a priority in leader' role descriptions and performance agreements and document in child safety as an accountability for all staff. We intend to table the Independent Monitor Bill on Thursday.

Madam SPEAKER - The Premier's time has expired.

Supplementary Question

[10.15 a.m.]

Dr WOODRUFF - Could the Premier please answer the question that we asked? There were 52 urgent recommendations; the government committed to implementing 48 by 1 July 2024, in six weeks' time. Can the government please table today how many of these recommendations will be completed by 1 July 2024?

Madam SPEAKER - It did go a little over the time for a supplementary. By the end of this week, we will not be going over time on supplementary questions. Dr Woodruff, I will allow it because it is both the first question and a question arising from the Premier's information, which said that the vast majority would be dealt with. Premier, I will call you for a one-minute answer please.

Mr ROCKLIFF - I will complete my answer about the Independent Monitor Bill that will be tabled on Thursday.

To your question, it is my intention to have a ministerial statement on Thursday to allow the parliament to discuss this important matter regarding where we are at with the recommendations and the like.

Dr Woodruff - So you are running behind time? You have done six.

Mr ROCKLIFF - With respect, we will get as many recommendations as possible done. A handful of recommendations will require a little extra time to ensure we are doing things in the best way to get the best outcomes. I will be advising the House of those. I am pleased, however, with the significant progress that we have made across what is one of the most comprehensive reform programs our state has ever undertaken.

We are well on the way to implement the vast majority of Phase 1 recommendations. I am happy to provide information to the House and briefings when you need it, at any time, which we have done. With Phase 1 of the government response almost complete, agencies are focusing on developing delivery arrangements for Phase 2 and Phase 3 which include many complex, interrelated activities that will take time, consideration and significant work to realise structural and systemic changes to make institutions safer for children and young people.

Madam SPEAKER - I did allow extra time given the significance of this matter to all members of the House.

Recognition of Visitors

Madam SPEAKER - Before I call the independent member, I welcome in the gallery today - I have seen them all file in - the year 11 and 12 legal students from The Friends' School. I hope you enjoy your visit today.

Members - Hear, hear.

Women's Shelter - St Vincent de Paul and Hobart City Mission Proposal

Ms JOHNSTON question to MINISTER for HOUSING and PLANNING, Mr ELLIS

[10.18 a.m.]

Every four days a woman dies from domestic violence in Australia. This is unacceptable and a national crisis. Our women's shelters are full and turning away women every night. We desperately need safe housing.

Since 12 April 2024 you have had a proposal from the St Vincent de Paul Society and Hobart City Mission to operate the former Bethlehem House, Warwick Street site, as a meanwhile youth centre to house 43 women. The project is in line with the Tasmanian housing strategy. The collaboration has secured \$1 million from a local philanthropist. It is seeking just \$1.2 million from the state government in 2024-25 to make it happen; a small price to pay for the safety of Tasmanian women. Sadly, funding measures by the government to date have not included these measures, despite the urgency of this matter.

Will you commit to ensuring there is funding for this project in the 2024-25 budget? It could save a life.

ANSWER

Madam Speaker, I thank the member for her question. I acknowledge all in this place who have a strong interest in ensuring women are protected, particularly in that most difficult moment when they are fleeing domestic or family violence. Nationally, there is such commitment and such heart in this area, whether it is law enforcement, housing providers and the community more broadly. We need to do more to stamp out violence against women in all of its forms and support those women who are fleeing those circumstances.

I am aware of the proposal that the member raises, and I thank St Vincent de Paul and Hobart City Mission for the incredible work they do in communities both in Hobart and around the state in protecting women in their most vulnerable moments. It is certainly a proposal that has attracted my attention and I know that departments are working through it, as well as Homes Tasmania, which has been in discussion with St Vincent de Paul and Hobart City Mission to understand the proposal and the budget submission better. Of course, that submission will be considered through the budget process.

Supplementary Question

Ms JOHNSTON - Will you at least commit to meeting with St Vincent de Paul and Hobart City Mission on site to establish how urgent this matter is and how quickly this project can be done in time for the 2024-25 budget?

Madam SPEAKER - I think the minister indicated they were already meeting, but does the Minister have anything he would like to add?

Mr ELLIS - I am happy to meet with them and I am happy to go with the member for Clark. I am more than happy to obtain a greater understanding of the matter.

Spirits of Tasmania - Contract Penalty Clauses

Mr WINTER question to PREMIER, Mr ROCKLIFF

[10.21 a.m.]

Last November in GBE hearings, committees were told that there were penalty clauses in the contract with Rauma Marine Constructions (RMC) that would be triggered if the new *Spirit of Tasmania* ships were not delivered on time. Have you waived those penalty clauses? If so, what is the cost to Tasmanian taxpayers? Is this yet another secret bailout to a Finnish shipbuilder?

ANSWER

Madam Speaker, I thank the member for the question. That is a matter for the company. I am happy to provide some further information to the member on those matters and inform the House at a later stage.

Madam SPEAKER - The Premier is taking that question on notice, for noting. I need people to seek the call loudly because I cannot just choose one of you.

Right to Information Act 2009 - Review

Mr JENNER question to MINISTER for JUSTICE, Mr BARNETT

[10.22 a.m.]

Under the *Right to Information Act 2009*, Tasmanians have a right to access information. In other states, under similar laws of right to information, residents can expect to wait around two to three months for information on their request. Unbelievably, if Tasmanians request information under the *Right to Information Act*, they can wait up to three years for that information. This is completely unacceptable. It is hardly transparent or accountable. Given that this has been going on for years, what are the government's immediate plans to rectify the issue?

ANSWER

Madam Speaker, I thank the honourable member for his question and his interest in this important matter. I note upfront that, with respect to the agreement between the government and JLN, the right to information, which is important to Tasmania, is subject to a review. That review will look at how it can be improved, enhanced and progressed even further. My understanding of the agreement is that the review will take place between now and April next year, or thereabouts. That review and its report will look into how the right to information can be improved even further.

As a government, we completely support openness and transparency, and those things are very important to our government. In terms of the reforms that are already underway, and those that have been undertaken, there have been many initiatives to ensure that there is even more openness and transparency going forward. Indeed, the recent commission of inquiry made a whole range of recommendations in this regard, and we have accepted those recommendations. There were 191 recommendations in total, and a number of those relate to

the right to information and how it can be enhanced and improved. We are committed to implementing, as the Premier indicated a few moments ago, those 191 recommendations.

We look forward to improving government transparency and accountability over future months and years. In recent years, we have already extended the information released under routine disclosure. We have launched a Government Information Gateway web page that is available on the DPAC website to make proactively disclosed government information easier to find. That is important. We are continuing to publicly report on gifts, benefits, and hospitality received and given by officers across all agencies, at least quarterly, on agency websites.

We are implementing the updated Ministerial Code of Conduct and support parliament's adoption of the new Members' Code of Conduct, which we all attested to last week. We have continued to publish information released under the *Right to Information Act* 2009 that is of general public interest, as well as the ongoing publication and public consultation submissions and a range of other initiatives. I appreciate the member's question and I look forward to continuing this reform. Thank you to the member for Franklin.

Madam SPEAKER - The minister's time has expired.

TasWater - Release of Untreated Waste and Sewage from Geeveston Treatment Plant

Mr O'BYRNE question to MINISTER for FINANCE, Mr FERGUSON

[10.26 a.m]

TasWater's ageing Geeveston sewerage treatment plant is posing an unacceptably high risk to the marine environment. Documents released under RTI show that over 2 million litres of untreated sewage spilled into the Kermandie River and Huon Estuary in a single 48-hour period in 2022. Rather than address the underlying issues with the plant, TasWater has decided to build a 4.3 kilometre pipeline to relocate the sewage out to Shipwrights Point in the Huon estuary, just a few hundred metres from a popular recreational area for swimmers, fishers and kayakers and upstream of important aquaculture leases. Members of the local community are rightly furious about this expensive and disruptive proposal.

Instead of upgrading the plant to prevent untreated sewage from spilling into our waterways in the first place, TasWater intends to spend vast amounts of time and money building a pipeline to simply move the problem somewhere else. Minister, how can your government possibly defend this decision and why are you refusing to intervene on this matter?

ANSWER

Madam Speaker, I thank the member for Franklin for his question. I rise as acting minister to respond to your question. I will need to take advice on the matter. Prior to the election, I was responding as Treasurer with responsibility for the TasWater act in relation to correspondence that we, as members of the government, were receiving from aggrieved members of the local community in the Huon region to whom you referred. I did so as the minister responsible for administering the act, not the minister responsible for running TasWater. We do not run TasWater, and we have a minimal shareholding in it - a beneficial interest of 10 per cent. We do not run it. We wanted to; we tried to take it over, but we were not able to do that.

As acting minister, I will continue to be able to take advice from TasWater and do our best to at least provide information, scrutiny and guidance to members of the community who are looking to scrutinise TasWater's actions. On taking the question on notice, Madam Speaker, I will make the point though, to disagree with you, Mr O'Bryne. We are not in a position to defend TasWater and I do not do that; nor am I the person that would be in a position to intervene and stop them from their infrastructure plans. They have to be responsible for those under the act. I take the question in good faith, on notice, and undertake to provide something further back to the House by the end of this day.

Spirits of Tasmania - Refuelling

Mr WINTER question to MINISTER for TRANSPORT, Mr ABETZ

[10.29 a.m]

Madam Speaker, accepting the Premier and Minister for Tourism and Hospitality does not seem to know much about the *Spirits*, I will ask this question of the Minister for Transport. Minister, 5000 jobs have been lost since the government first started governing in minority, and the mishandling of the *Spirits* replacements is set to make a bad situation even worse. It is not just the tourism industry that will suffer. At the 2021 election, there was a promise of \$60 million for refuelling that would be undertaken locally every year, and which the Treasurer said would support for local jobs here in Tasmania.

Can you confirm that no work has commenced on the infrastructure required to undertake LNG refuelling in Tasmania at Devonport, and that such works would likely require a lead time of at least 18 months?

ANSWER

That was a grab-bag of questions, Madam Speaker. First of all, the Premier is a very capable Premier and Minister for Tourism, and your disparaging comments to him are not accepted by this side of the House in any way, shape or form.

In relation to matters of employment, there is no doubt that since this government took over some 10 years ago, we have had an increase in employment. If I recall the figures correctly, some 50,000 new jobs have been created in the Tasmanian economy because of the management of the Liberal government. When those who took us into recession try to argue that they are now somehow reformed people and into job creation, the people of Tasmania are entitled to take that with a considerable grain of salt.

In relation to matters at Devonport, you ask whether work has commenced regarding the TT-Line. It depends on what you mean by commencement of work, but plans are underway, tenders have been sought and we are very close to being able to announce that. When it comes to progressing things, we as a government have a record. As a newly minted minister, I have the opportunity of standing on the shoulders of the giants behind me who have delivered the employment opportunities and the new ships.

Let us be in no doubt, the Leader of the Opposition crows about two second-hand ships delivered by a former Labor government. This government is delivering two brand-new ships,

and this is showing how we are going to the next level, above that which a former Labor government was able to deliver.

Members interjecting.

Madam SPEAKER - The minister will be heard in silence, thank you, although the standing on giants thing was asking for it, really.

Mr ABETZ - Madam Speaker, I thought you would have respected the truth, but there you go.

Madam SPEAKER - And as long as the minister is not reflecting on the Chair, we will continue the answer. Thank you.

Mr ABETZ - The Leader of the Opposition asks us when we might expect the vessels. There are a number of issues at stake here and we have not taken delivery of the vessels at this stage. When delivery does occur - and let us be fully understanding of this - delivery takes place in Finland, then they come here and given -

Madam SPEAKER - The minister's time has expired.

Ashley Youth Detention Centre - Staff Issues

Ms ROSOL question to MINISTER for CHILDREN and YOUTH, Mr JAENSCH

[10.34 a.m.]

The commission of inquiry detailed many shocking stories about Ashley Youth Detention Centre. One of these is the so-called December 2019 roof incident. The COI detailed how three young people were:

... subjected to isolation practices for at least 11 days that potentially did not comply with Tasmanian law or policy or international human rights standards.

The troubling conduct did not stop there. The commissioners highlighted how certain staff falsified documents to cover up what happened. They particularly point to the conduct of centre manager Patrick Ryan and two staff given the pseudonyms Maude and Chester. The COI report says:

We were advised the Department had either 'acted or is waiting to take action' against each of Mr Ryan, Maude and Chester regarding the roles they played in the December 2019 roof incident.

We know Mr Ryan was moved sideways from Ashley to a position elsewhere in the State Service. Are either Maude or Chester still working at the centre?

Madam SPEAKER - The question was out of time, but it is about whether or not they are still employed, minister, in case you did not hear.

ANSWER

Thank you, Madam Speaker, and I thank the member for her question. I understand it was cut short, but I will do my best to answer it.

Dr Woodruff - Are either Maude or Chester working at the centre?

Madam SPEAKER - Thank you; the minister was reminded of the question as it came through the Chair.

Mr JAENSCH - Madam Speaker, first and foremost, this government is absolutely committed to learning from understanding the content and the findings of the commission of inquiry's report and implementing its recommendations in full. We have committed to that already and nothing has changed, including in the area of youth justice, the reform of our youth justice system and the matters raised in relation to Ashley Youth Detention Centre.

I can confirm that when any allegation is raised against a member of staff in Ashley or other department settings relating to child abuse, the state servant is removed from the workplace and processes are put in place to ensure immediate notification of all relevant agencies and referrals while investigations are ongoing.

If there is a staff member who has had allegations of abuse raised against them, they have either been removed from the workplace while these investigations were ongoing, or those processes have already been undertaken and they have either left the service or it is deemed appropriate that they return to work. Employees are not in the workplace while any investigation is ongoing or before an investigation has been fully resolved.

The member referred to staff with pseudonyms that have been applied by the commission of inquiry. I do not have information on the identity of those people. The commission of inquiry was careful to conceal their identity for the purposes of procedural fairness in the conduct of investigations and potentially the integrity of police investigations that may be still underway. I will review the detail of your question in *Hansard* and provide any further follow up to my answer if I can.

***Spirits of Tasmania* - Refuelling Options and Potential Job Creation**

Mr WINTER question to **MINISTER for INFRASTRUCTURE, Mr FERGUSON**

[10.37 a.m.]

Madam Speaker, it is pretty clear the Premier did not know the answer and I think it was less clear after minister Abetz answered the last question, so I will ask this one of the Minister for Infrastructure and Deputy Premier.

Local refuelling of the *Spirits* has been estimated to create up to 70 additional jobs per year. Do you stand by the government's promise to ensure \$60 million worth of fuel is purchased locally for the *Spirits* each year, or is it yet another broken promise that will, in your own words, cost Tasmanian jobs?

ANSWER

Madam Speaker, from the outset the member has misled the House. He has just misquoted me. When I have spoken in the past about refuelling options and job potential, he said at the end of his question, 'and to use your own words, this will cost jobs.' They are two completely different things. Mr Winter needs to be very careful about the way he continues to flippantly ask these questions. That is a really dishonest way to behave, bringing that sort of business into this House.

Questions as to TT-Line and its procurement may be directed to the minister responsible, the Minister for Transport, but even if the question had been correctly addressed to Minister Abetz, he would only have been able to say that procurement matters of that nature are a property of the board of TT-Line. I am not going to speak over them, but I will say that we are very excited, unlike the opposition, about our two new ships we have coming to Tasmania. It is a game-changer for our state.

I ask the Labor Party to speak well of the very positive decision we have taken as a government to invest, not in second-hand ships that have been used elsewhere and painted red, but ships that are designed and built for our state, our conditions, our market and creating opportunities for local businesses to get in on the action and get some of those supply contracts.

That includes the inspired decision that was taken by TT-Line and supported by this Liberal government for ships that are capable of taking different kinds of fuels, giving us choices and giving us opportunities not only to decarbonise as much as we can in the transport space, but also to be innovative with procurement and to generate new job opportunities for Tasmania. That is what we stand for, and you are trying to wreck it.

Supplementary Question

Mr WINTER - Supplementary, Madam Speaker, in relation to that answer. I would like to know if any work has commenced on the establishment of LNG refuelling at Devonport in relation to the pumps?

Madam SPEAKER - I will allow it because it is within the time frame that was listed in the question, but it is sailing a little close to the wind.

Mr FERGUSON - Madam Speaker, I do not have more to add. I reminded the member that the question ought to have been directed to the Minister for Transport. I am sure he would be more than happy to take your question if you ask him.

Madam SPEAKER - Minister, you can refer questions if you choose, as you are aware.

Commission of Inquiry - Investigation of Criminal Referrals

Ms BADGER question to MINISTER for POLICE, FIRE and EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT, Mr ELLIS

[10.40 a.m.]

The commission of inquiry made 43 criminal referrals to Tasmanian police. How many of these remain under investigation and how many of them have resulted in charges or prosecutions?

ANSWER

Madam Speaker, police have a significant role to play in the implementation of the commission of inquiry. I thank the member for Lyons for her question. We have a range of recommendations which the government will be delivering. There are important police matters underway and others that have concluded in this space.

Broadly speaking, it is a matter for police when it comes to the separation of powers, but I am more than happy to follow up for the member in terms of any information that we might be able to provide about matters that are ongoing or completed.

Social Housing Construction 2023-24

Mrs PENTLAND question to MINISTER for HOUSING and PLANNING, Mr ELLIS

[10.41 a.m.]

In the 2021 Census, 2350 community members were recorded as homeless; 589 of those were under the age of 18 and 325 under the age of 12 years. This was a 44.8 per cent increase from the 2016 Census. Currently, there are over 4700 registered on the public housing register with an average wait time of 94.7 weeks.

Can you supply a concrete figure on how many social homes will be built this financial year under your promise of 10,000 homes by 2032?

ANSWER

Madam Speaker, I thank the member for Bass for her important question. I know her heart when it comes to ensuring that, particularly, our young people have a roof over their heads, and we are very much on a unity ticket when it comes to the investment that needs to be made in that space and more broadly.

In terms of your specific question about progress in delivering our 10,000 homes, we are committed to delivering that ambitious goal of 10,000 more social and affordable homes by 2032, and we are working hard to deliver on this target.

I pay tribute to my predecessors for the work that they have done in ensuring that we are marshalling some significant investment in this space. Of course, work continues to be ongoing to deliver our targets by the end of the year.

We continue to make progress more broadly towards the 10,000 new social and affordable homes goal, with a net increase of 3315 social and affordable homes as of 31 March 2024. Progress towards the 2000 new social homes will be determined upon the release of the Report on Government Services (ROGS) in January 2025. Regular assessments and reporting mechanisms - such as ROGS - are employed to track progress towards housing targets and they help us to ensure there is transparency and accountability in this space. I will have more to update the House as we continue to work towards those targets but, broadly speaking, we are on track and making some significant investments.

Supplementary Question

[10.44 a.m.]

Mrs PENTLAND - Does the government believe that 10,000 homes by 2032 is a realistic goal, given that there are already 4700 people registered on the public housing waiting list and that 2032 is eight years away?

Mr ELLIS - Our government has always said that it is an ambitious goal; but we are up to the task, and we have that ambition. There are significant things that we need to ensure that we are delivering - such as planning. We need to be taking the politics out of planning so that our planning system can help facilitate more homes. Skills: we need to make sure that we have the workforce that can deliver in this important area. Our investments in terms of TasTAFE are really transforming the landscape and bringing more apprentices into that system. So, we are committed to delivering on our target of 10,000 social and affordable homes by 2032.

Broadly speaking, we are on track. We are going to need to continue to work as a parliament to smooth the path for those who want to provide more social and affordable homes: community housing providers, Homes Tasmania and others - and we will be bringing significant legislation into that space and significant investment through our budget. We all want to ensure that all people in Tasmania have the opportunity to have a roof over their head, and we are up to that task.

Madam SPEAKER - The time has expired, minister.

Fish Farming - Culling of Native Wildlife

Mr BAYLEY question to PREMIER, Mr ROCKLIFF

[10.46.a.m]

My question is to the Minister for Parks and Environment, and in his absence, the Premier.

Right to Information documents released to the *Tasmanian Inquirer* have exposed yet another case of industrial fish farming operations resulting in terrible animal cruelty and the culling of native wildlife to protect the profits of big business. The documents show hundreds of cormorants entered fish cages with substandard netting at a lease near Cunningham late last year. Thirty-six of these beautiful birds died in shocking circumstances, caught up in the netting.

Worse still, your government then permitted another 56 cormorants to be shot and killed by Tassal. These events follow numerous examples of seals being harmed and killed by industrial fish farm operations. Premier, why is your government approving fish farm companies to inflict such harm on native wildlife with these culls? What action are you taking against Tassal for the failures on its part: the substandard netting that resulted in the tragic death of nearly 100 native birds?

ANSWER

Madam Speaker, I thank the member for his question and interest in this matter. The Property Protection Permits are an operational matter for NRW, as you will appreciate, Mr Bayley. Importantly, these types of permits were also in existence under the previous Labor-Greens government, just to give you a bit of a history perspective there. That is often good to put forward.

Due process was followed in assessing the application for the Shepherds marine lease. I am advised that the birds were culled humanely through an appropriately granted limited take permit process. All reasonable efforts were made by the company to manage the birds prior to the permit being issued. Farming is an important sector of our economy, and farmers often need to manage wildlife to support the ongoing viability of their properties, whether that be on land or within the aquatic environment.

We will always support our farmers, whether they be marine farmers or land farmers. Permits to take wildlife to protect primary production and environmental values are issued following an assessment of damage; alternative management measures; species abundance; and requirements to protect animal welfare. Long-term population monitoring indicates that species subject to property protection permits species harvested as game or for which permits to take, are important to implement. I recognise the importance of the question, but this is a matter for the Department of Natural Resources and Environment, and they take these matters very seriously.

Supplementary Question

Mr BAYLEY - We recognise this for NRE, but the minister is not here. That is why it is addressed to you, in line with your advice this morning.

The question was also what action are you taking against Tassal? These birds were in this situation because of substandard netting. We do not accept that the permits to cull were acceptable. You could release these birds through the netting. What action is being taken against Tassal to improve its facilities, so this does not happen again?

Mr ROCKLIFF - I have detailed an answer to your question with respect to these matters. Their permits are issued under the Department of Natural Resources and Environment. They are permits to support, albeit in as humane a way as possible -

Mr Bayley - We understand that, but what about the netting? What about Tassal and action against them?

Madam SPEAKER - Thank you, you have asked your question twice, Mr Bayley.

Mr ROCKLIFF - Thank you, Madam Speaker. The question was really in relation to the permits and the culling, of which land-based farmers and marine based farmers -

Madam SPEAKER - Premier, the second part of the question was specifically about the netting.

Dr Woodruff - Are you going to have another cosy Liberal dinner party with Tassal this year?

Madam SPEAKER - Dr Woodruff, thank you. The second part of the question was specifically about the netting.

Mr ROCKLIFF - Thank you. I will respectfully ignore your question by interjection, Dr Woodruff; that is not called for. Of course, we support our farmers. We support our aquaculture industry pertaining to -

Madam SPEAKER - The Premier's time has expired, and the members for the Greens shall respect that.

Spirits of Tasmania - Rauma Marine Constructions Finances

Mr WINTER question to DEPUTY PREMIER, Mr FERGUSON

[10.51 a.m.]

At this point, it appears your government does not know when the new *Spirit of Tasmania* ferries will arrive. It does not know when Berth 3 will be available, and it does not know when LNG refuelling will take place. I wonder if you know the answer to this question.

When were you first informed that Rauma Marine Constructions (RMC) was facing significant financial challenges that could lead to the so-called fixed price for *Spirits IV* and *V* significantly blowing out? Did you, at any point, take any action in relation to the additional payments to RMC? Did you, for example, approve any component of the contract variation or any change to the TASCORP facility for TT-Line?

ANSWER

Madam Speaker, I thank the Leader of the Opposition for his question. Should I miss any part of his question, I will be happy to hear an interjection to remind me.

First of all, I was informed of challenges being faced by TT-Line's shipbuilder, RMC, during the caretaker period, as was the Labor party, who were briefed by Treasury. I was not in that briefing, but in the briefings that were provided to the government and to the opposition under caretaker provisions by the Treasury, I believe that commercial matters were raised with each of us.

Mr Winter - By interjection, because you invited it, was that the first time you became aware?

Mr FERGUSON - I understand, Mr Winter, you were not in that briefing. I respect that you were not in that particular role at the time, but your party was. I was also afforded the same information at that time. During the caretaker period, I found that briefing very confined and narrow in its focus. Nonetheless, we were advised. In full transparency for this House, I have no difficulty in giving that answer.

I have not actually approved the additional payment. I believe that is the correct way to express myself and I believe that we told you that last week, Mr Winter. You constantly surprise me with your twisting and turning on an important, positive story for our state. In your desperate attempt to muddy it up and make it negative, you twist and turn other people's words in the way that you have. I do not believe that I have provided that kind of endorsement, because it is not my role to do so. Last week you were told they were commercial matters, through you, Madam Speaker -

Madam SPEAKER - Your answer goes through the Chair, Minister. Otherwise, I am twisting and turning and that is a bit awkward in this seat.

Mr FERGUSON - Indeed. Madam Speaker, through you, the Leader of the Opposition was also told last week that these were decisions by the board, under its contract that had previously been agreed to by the government. For that reason, it did not come to me for signature. I believe I even gave you the date of the correspondence that I received from TT- Line containing some of these matters. I am surprised -

Mr WINTER - Point of order, Madam Speaker, Standing Order 45, relevance. He did invite interjection. I understand he was informed during the caretaker period, but when was the Deputy Premier first informed that RMC was facing significant financial pressure? I ask you to draw him back to the question.

Madam SPEAKER - First of all, he can invite interjections, but there still will not be any, if that is okay. Secondly, he has said that his first information was during the caretaker period, and unless the Deputy Premier is misleading the House, then I think we have to take that on face value. I ask him to come to the substance of the rest of the question please.

Mr FERGUSON - I will be very willing and able to consult with my team to ask the question when I was first informed, which is where the focus of the question is to that. I certainly recall being informed during caretaker period. It is possible I was informed prior to. I could not, with any confidence, rule that in or out today, standing on my feet. I would like to take that on notice for the clarity of the record. However, to be clear, it was not a decision for government.

Robbins Island Wind Farm - Environmental Impact

Mr GARLAND question to PREMIER, Mr ROCKLIFF

[10.56 a.m.]

In the absence of the Minister for Parks and Environment, my question is for the Premier.

The Minister for Parks and Environment and Energy and Renewables recently stated:

We need to be careful though, as we progress to new forms of energy, that we do it carefully, with great consideration, with great respect to our natural environment.

Can you explain how the building of a wind farm that will ultimately impact critically endangered and threatened bird life, fisheries, forest reserves, last disease-free wild Tasmanian Devil population, tourism visitors and farmers, is being respectful of the environment?

Madam SPEAKER - I call the Premier on behalf of the Minister for Parks and Environment.

ANSWER

Madam Speaker, I thank the honourable member for his question and his interest in this matter, particularly pertaining to Robbins Island. There is investment in wind farms, not only in Tasmania and in Australia, but across the globe. We are very fortunate in Tasmania to have had great success with our renewable energy development over the hydro industrialization years, over a century. Now we are ensuring that we are having that investment being brought to Tasmania further in terms of wind and solar. The Marinus Link is critically important for that.

Robbins Island wind farm development has been on the table and the community discussion for over two decades. I had the opportunity to visit the island with the honourable member, Nick Duigan, to whom the question was directed. As minister, Mr Duigan provided great assurances; he has said these are significant developments, important developments. They are important for increasing our renewable energy capacity, which we intend to double by 2040. Wind and solar are very important when it comes to our key target with this area. Tasmania is well and truly leading the nation when it comes to this renewable energy development.

Mr Garland, the planning process, and the approvals - both nationally and indeed state, through the Environmental Protection Authority, if I have that correct - provide enormous scrutiny when it comes to these types of developments and covering all those aspects that you correctly related to in terms of our First Nations heritage, in terms of the environment, in terms of wildlife. We are very supportive of Robbins Island and respectfully differ on these occasions, but I appreciate the question and the scrutiny that you are providing.

Liberal-JLN Coalition

Mr WINTER question to PREMIER, Mr ROCKLIFF

[10.58 a.m.]

Before the election you told Tasmanians they should not risk having the Jacqui Lambie Network in a coalition government. You said a coalition involving the Jacqui Lambie Network would, 'Crash our economy, crash jobs and crash our health system'. Just a month into your coalition with the Jacqui Lambie Network, new data has revealed that job ads have indeed crashed, as you foretold. They have fallen 7.5 per cent in April and 14.5 per cent for the year: one of the biggest falls in the nation. Why did you do a deal with the Jacqui Lambie Network when you knew this would be the result?

ANSWER

Madam Speaker, I thank the member for his question, recognising many public statements we all made prior to the election concerning policies and all those sorts of matters. Like Labor's budget -

Members interjecting.

Madam SPEAKER - Members on my right will also be quiet for this.

Mr ROCKLIFF - Labor's plan for budget repair is more like budget despair, I would have to say, because speaking of matters relating to this and your economic credentials, Mr Winter, and indeed your savings, which I have here underlined -

Mr WINTER - Point of order, Madam Speaker, on relevance.

Madam SPEAKER - An unexpected point of order from the Leader of the Opposition on relevance. I will draw the member to the question which was specifically around the deal.

Mr ROCKLIFF - Thank you, Madam Speaker. The member obviously likes to have history lessons in this place, and he has given me a history lesson. I am just saying that this document is actually more valuable now, and it is a shame I have written on it because I cannot find it anywhere now. I cannot find it on the website. All the policies are gone from Labor. There is not a single policy of Labor's that they took to the election. I am going to hold onto this because it has increased in value.

Madam SPEAKER - I draw you to the question, Premier. I am very happy to sit you down if I have to. Could I draw you to the question, please? We have had such a good Question Time. Let us not blow it.

Mr ROCKLIFF - Thank you, Madam Speaker. I say respectfully that I am going to hold onto this increasingly valuable document released by the Labor Party.

I acknowledge the cooperation of the JLN members and appreciate their scrutiny today in Question Time and elsewhere as well.

The worst thing for any economy in Tasmania or across Australia is people talking it down. Laced with all your questions today, Leader of the Opposition, was talking down the Tasmanian economy, talking down key investments and reducing confidence. Confidence is king, as we well know.

I was very pleased with the data released just last week, if my memory serves me correctly, around the unemployment figure of 4 per cent, a record low, of which we are very proud. What will keep the economy going and the important growth in employment - and we have a key target over the next five years of 20,000 jobs - is that continued investment in key infrastructure across Tasmania. It is enabling infrastructure such as the Bridgewater bridge, important infrastructure when it comes to classrooms and making sure we have 21st century learning environments for our kids in new schools and classrooms. There is the investment we are making in the Launceston General Hospital.

Madam SPEAKER - The Premier's time has expired and time for questions has expired. I will call on constituency questions. I had a rotation for this but no-one from the government has jumped yet, so I will take Ms Butler.

CONSTITUENCY QUESTIONS

Night Bus Services - Gagebrook and Herdsmans Cove

Ms BUTLER question to MINISTER for TRANSPORT, Mr ABETZ

[11.03 a.m.]

It has been a month since night services to Gagebrook and Herdsmans Cove were cut. Our community recognises bus drivers deserve to be safe at work, but the cancelled services have left 2500 people without a night service and a two-kilometre walk home from the last stop. Our community is made up of workers, volunteers, young people, older people, people with disabilities, single parents, and many people who do not drive. Minister, when are you getting our night-time buses running again?

Tobacco - Unregulated Products

Mr BEHRAKIS question to MINISTER for HEALTH, MENTAL HEALTH and WELLBEING, Mr BARNETT

Recently I have been contacted by a local business owner who is worried about tobacco shops selling unregulated or black-market tobacco products. The regulation of tobacco is a matter for the Department of Health, and this business owner is concerned that their oversight is not strong enough. The individual I spoke to has conveyed a genuine concern about the potential consequences of this issue growing. Is this an issue your department is aware of, and can you provide more information on the department's tobacco control arrangements already in place?

Southern Outlet Fifth Lane - Noise Mitigation

Ms HADDAD question to MINISTER for INFRASTRUCTURE, Mr FERGUSON

Mervyn from Tolmans Hill as well as other Tolmans Hill and Dynnyrne residents are concerned about noise mitigation on the Southern Outlet fifth lane project. Can you confirm you have authorised noise protection measures for the project in accordance with state noise policies and your stated commitments to the Public Works Committee and have these designs been completed? Can you confirm that low-noise asphalt will be used, and wall panels will form part of the design and advise the estimated costs?

Buy Local Policy

Mr WOOD question to TREASURER, Mr FERGUSON

Local businesses have been asking me how the government's Buy Local policy works, as they have seen recent tenders awarded to interstate competitors. What is the government doing to make sure it supports Tasmanian businesses to invest, grow and employ more Tasmanians?

No Meander Prison Group

Ms BADGER question to MINISTER for JUSTICE, Mr BARNETT

As a new MP, I have been contacted by numerous concerned constituents in the Meander Valley and newly formed community group No Meander Prison. They would like to know if your government is still pursuing the \$270 million northern prison.

Shekinah House Expansion

Mrs PENTLAND question to PREMIER, Mr ROCKLIFF

Shekinah House is looking to expand its accommodation available to the homeless. They have identified a property that sits on Crown land and have had ongoing issues obtaining the lease for the property. This has been going round in circles with the Launceston City Council and state government for four years. How do you plan to bring this to conclusion?

Cenotaph Preservation

Mrs BUTLER question to PREMIER, Mr ROCKLIFF

Constituents remain incredibly concerned about the preservation of the Cenotaph. One year ago, you stated in this House that you would continue to engage with the RSL about any potential impacts on the site. When was the last time you met with RSL Tasmania in relation to the Cenotaph?

Baulds Road to Tollymore Road - Bass Highway Safety Issues

Ms HADDAD question to MINISTER for INFRASTRUCTURE, Mr FERGUSON

How did competent road builders and a competent government allow the Baulds Road to Tollymore Road Bass Highway upgrade to be opened, given there are still significant safety issues with this segment of the road? This question is from Phil from Flowerdale.

Time expired.

PETITION

Glenorchy Pool

Ms HADDAD - Madam Speaker, I present a petition signed by approximately 1042 petitioners praying that the House calls on the government to fund the renovation and/or the construction requirements of the Glenorchy War Memorial Swimming Pool.

Petition received.

RACING REGULATION AND INTEGRITY BILL 2024 (No. 10)

RACING REGULATION AND INTEGRITY (CONSEQUENTIAL AMENDMENTS) BILL 2024 (No. 11)

First Reading

Bills presented by Ms Howlett and read the first time.

WORK HEALTH AND SAFETY AMENDMENT (INDUSTRIAL MANSLAUGHTER) BILL 2024 (No. 15)

First Reading

Bill presented by Mr O'Byrne and read the first time.

POLICE OFFENCES AMENDMENT (BEGGING REPEAL) BILL 2024 (No. 16)

First Reading

Bill presented by Ms Badger and read the first time.

SPEAKER'S WARRANT

Deputy Chairs of Committees

[11.12 a.m.]

Madam SPEAKER - Pursuant to Standing Order 14, I hereby nominate the honourable member for Clark, Mr Behrakis MP, the honourable member for Bass, Ms Finlay MP, and the honourable member for Braddon, Mrs Beswick MP, to act as Deputy Chairs of Committees in the absence of, or when requested to do so by, the Chair of Committees.

Given under my hand this 21 May 2024,
Michelle O'Byrne
SPEAKER

MATTER OF PUBLIC IMPORTANCE

Business Confidence

[11.12 a.m.]

Mr WILLIE (Clark) - Madam Speaker, I move -

That the House take note of the following matter: business confidence.

I am hearing feedback in the business community and the broader community about this place and the leadership of the Premier. If we go back in time, we know the Premier's leadership led to him not being able to manage his own team. We had an unstable Parliament. We fell into minority government at that time and, since that time, we have lost 5000 jobs in the Tasmanian economy.

We had to have an election about stability and certainty. It was an early election - nearly 18 months early - which is bad for business confidence. People in the business community just want this place to get on with it. In that election, we had the Premier saying all sorts of things: 'Do not risk a coalition with the JLN. It will crash our economy; it will crash jobs and it will crash our health system.' Now he leads that coalition of chaos.

It is not just me saying this. There are many people in the community talking about a tough winter. The tourism and hospitality industry is an important industry in our economy, as the Premier acknowledged earlier. Many people are concerned about a bleak winter ahead. We have accommodation bookings down, we have Bonza - which was a national issue, I acknowledge - which will mean 29,000 passengers not arriving in Launceston over the next year. We have direct flights to New Zealand that have been cancelled. Dark Mofo is not going ahead this year and airport projections are down.

We have all of those concerns in the community, and we have reports that are backing up this sentiment in the community. The Premier and the Deputy Premier have been quick to say that being held to account is being talked down. They do not like being held to account, and if things were going the other way, they would be crowing about it. I think people might remember the CommSec report, which was released recently with little comment from the government. I remember when Premier Gutwein was the Treasurer, and they could not wait to talk about this report. They have lost all discipline, and the reason that they do not talk about this report anymore is because the economy is flatlining. Tasmania's economy has flatlined under the Rockliff Liberal government and we are sitting dead last on annual growth rates across the eight economic indicators in that report. The state recorded a negative employment growth of -1.8 per cent at a time when all other states and territories have recorded an increase.

We know population growth is a huge problem for Tasmania. I talked about that in my speech last week. We need to keep more skilled Tasmanians here. We need to make sure that skilled Tasmanians want to come back, and that others want to come here and contribute. Population growth is an important driver of the broader community, but our population growth now is the weakest in eight years and Tasmania is dead last at 0.29 per cent. That is because there are hardworking Tasmanians that we need here contributing who are leaving for better opportunities and paying conditions on the mainland. That is a tragedy.

It is not just CommSec that is saying this. We had the Deloitte Access Economics report released recently as well, and that is a projection. The March 2024 business outlook shows that Tasmania has the lowest forecast economic growth in the nation, falling at 0.5 per cent this year and growing at just 0.3 per cent next year. Tasmania is also the only state with forecast job losses over the next two years, with thousands more jobs set to be lost across 2023-24 and 2024-25. The report cites that Tasmania's low population growth is again an issue, with more than 3000 people leaving Tasmania for opportunities elsewhere in the year to September 2023.

What does this mean in real terms? On Sunday, the Opposition Leader and I went to a great Tasmanian small business, the Doctor Syntax Hotel. We talked to Darren Brown, the owner, who is very concerned about a number of things, including the conditions heading into winter. He talked to us about rising costs - things like electricity bills - and how his bookings have basically fallen off a cliff. He had ten accommodation units at the pub and the bookings have been okay to a point, but he said they have completely stopped. That is an important revenue source for him, and I think there are -

Time expired.

[11.16 a.m.]

Mr FERGUSON (Bass - Deputy Premier) - Madam Speaker, that was a pretty gloomy performance from Mr Willie. Welcome to the House of Assembly, Mr Willie. The member is going to have to do better than that as shadow treasurer, because he needs to cast a vision and to encourage Tasmanians to have confidence in their own state.

He opened his address by attacking the three newly elected Jacqui Lambie Network members and the fact that the government has worked closely with them to provide confidence and supply for the Parliament so that this place will work. One of the things the Labor Party seems to overlook is that the agreement is being warmly received outside of the parliament. Out there in the community people are glad about it because they want to see this parliament work. They want to see confidence on the floor because that leads to confidence in their businesses. They know that the government can deliver its plan. Different members who have been elected who are not part of the Liberal Party are able to raise their issues, ask their questions and propose their various alternatives. Nonetheless, there is a baseline of confidence that the government can get on with the business of governing in the interest of our state. I am very disappointed that in the face of circumstances where the national economy has been softening, Dr Chalmers himself has written down economic growth for the country.

In the same week, Tasmania's unemployment rate went down by 0.1 per cent. That went against what was happening in other parts of the country. The member talks about CommSec, when Tasmania has variously taken the number-one position. I have stood in the place where I stand right now, and I have said it is not about being number one. I have said that when you were not here, Mr Willie. I have said what matters to us - because Dr Broad got very grumpy when we talked about the state of the state - I said, 'What matters is that people can get a job and plan for their future with confidence'. I said it every single time and I say it again today. As far as CommSec is concerned, we are rated fourth with Queensland, New South Wales and the ACT. Compared to the Labor-Greens years, that was a coalition of chaos. In those years, we were dead last on every measure - all eight of them. We have raised the stakes in six out of eight of those measures since 2014, when the Labour Party was sent into opposition by the people of Tasmania.

Why constantly talk down our state? Do you know what businesses are looking for, because confidence is tangible out there? What they are looking for is their politicians to speak well about our economy and our prospects, in the face of some of those challenges that are being felt nationally. This morning, I was very pleased to announce that we are going to extend, for a further 12 months, our payroll tax rebate for businesses to employ apprentices, trainees and young employees. This was not even an election commitment; it is further than that. It is something we felt we needed to do to provide further support, and greater confidence to our business community. This morning, Ronald Young Builders warmly received this good news because it gives businesses like them - smaller and larger ones, if they are paying payroll tax - one more reason to feel good about making employment decisions in the interests of our state.

We have seen more than 47 000 more jobs in our state since we were elected in 2014. That is a good thing. When I last looked at the figures, it is something like 6500 Tasmanians less unemployed than when we came to office. That is probably 6500 families. That speaks to a situation with a much greater population. That is something that we should all be very proud of. I congratulate those many businesses - micro, small, medium and large - who have made the decisions based on the confidence that we have been able to bring to our Tasmanian government and to our Tasmanian community.

As Treasurer, I will always be realistic about the challenges that we face. In my first budget I began to talk about the economic headwinds that we have to confront as a small state; how they will hit us harder. We have to be more nimble, more clever, more flexible, more focused on supporting our small state. We will keep doing that. What will not help is a Labor Party that is relentlessly negative, totally unconstructive and unwilling to talk up the business community and the good things that we have been able to achieve together.

Time expired.

[11.22 a.m.]

Ms BADGER (Lyons) - Madam Speaker, in the past, Tasmania has had a mantelpiece that we could proudly put our business brand on with great confidence. Clean and green, that is who we were for decades. We were the magnificent wild state, where people could come for fresh produce. They could come and have fish out of our fresh waterways. There is no point greenwashing it; this is no longer the case.

How can businesses in Tasmania have confidence when we see, over and over again, deals being done behind closed doors for the same old boys' club while everyone else is sidelined?

The salmonoid cartels are a perfect case in point. We have mum and dad fishery businesses, and oyster fishers who cannot have confidence in the fresh waterways because there are big toxic salmon companies that are polluting them. The nutrient levels in our waterways are going through the roof, building up sludgy muck on our rocks and our pristine bays. How can tourism operators have confidence to take people there - people who have come from elsewhere around the world - to see the beautiful place that Tasmania is, when it is being destroyed by big multinational companies?

It is not just those, it is the restaurateurs as well. This industry is damaging culinary tourism. We are seeing the salmon that has been farmed in Tasmania taken off the menus of restaurants right around the country at record pace.

Speaking of selling out our environment, let us talk about the tourism expressions of interest process, which has led to 10 hectares of the Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area listed island, Lake Malbena, leased out to a tourism developer for less than \$20 a week. He should have confidence in his business, except that it has been 10 years, and nothing has got off the ground. How can anyone else survive - the mum and dad businesses that are doing the right thing, upholding the integrity of our Wilderness World Heritage Area - with the developments outside of the protected areas? The EOI process has been an abject failure, and tourism businesses have been left in a vacuum, while the government has kept pushing the privatisation agenda for a few - an exclusive few.

On the subject of killing the planet, what about the native forest logging industry? We are letting those workers down. We are selling off truckloads of native forest logs, ironically on the *Spirit of Tasmania* to Victoria. They are not going to Tasmanian sawmills. That is not jobs for Tasmanians; they are going to Victorians who have already been paid out \$875 million from this archaic practice.

It is time we ban native forest logging here, gave that sector certainty and smartened up the process. We need to ban native forest logging to smarten up, and to smarten up the process of the plantation estate. We need to offer these workers an opportunity to transition to future industries like ecosystem restoration, which will be an ongoing global industry where they can get a fair and consistent income into the future. We have seen successive governments drag their heels on support for the industrial hemp industry. We are now decades behind the rest of the world in this space.

Likewise, single use plastic. There are small businesses across Tasmania that are trying to transition out of it on their own. They are doing so with uncertainty because the government has not put anything formal in place for everyone to consistently come across on the same action. There is so much we can do, but fundamentally, we have to make sure that we have an integral brand that every tourism business in this state can hang themselves upon so that everybody across the world knows what they are coming here to get.

It is no longer clean and green because it is not at the moment, but that does not mean that it cannot be again.

[11.27 a.m.]

Mr WINTER (Franklin - Leader of the Opposition) - Madam Speaker, I rise to support this motion. Business confidence is absolutely essential for Tasmania. This new parliament has given us challenges; a huge challenge for this parliament and for Tasmanians. People are watching what this parliament does very carefully and very closely. It is important this parliament is clear about what we do stand for. We do support our traditional industries. We have just heard a speaker who has attacked traditional industries which have been the lifeblood of regional communities. That is disappointing, but it is a point of view. We understand that is the point of view of the Greens.

I am looking forward, as this parliament progresses over time, to see what this parliament thinks. I know Tasmanian Labor supports traditional industries - forestry, aquaculture, mining - those traditional industries and many more including tourism, that we have been talking about so often today. The government must understand that if they want to take credit when the economy is on the way up - which is what they did - then they also have to be prepared

to take responsibility when it is on the way down. Saying that there are national headwinds as soon as the results start going the other way does not actually help resolve the problem.

The state of the state report, outlined by Mr Willie, is a comparison over time against other states and territories. When we look at the last 10 years - that is what that report actually is - what it is telling us is that Tasmania does not compare favourably on a range of measures against other states and territories over that time, particularly so regarding economic growth. The responsibility for that has to go to the Premier and the Treasurer of this state. If they want to take credit on the way up, then take responsibility on the way down.

This parliament is going to be challenging. The words of the Premier about the Jacqui Lambie Network before the election are on the record. He said that a coalition including the Jacqui Lambie Network would be bad for jobs. He even said it would crash the health system. They are not our words, they are the Premier's words, and they are now words about his own government. Having seen and made those predictions about the Jacqui Lambie Network and doing a deal with them, he is now living it. He made those warnings; I assume quite seriously. Then, having made the warnings, he went and did the deal. Now he has to live with that prediction.

If they want to take credit for 47,000 jobs - and I note not so long ago they were talking about more than 50,000 jobs, now it is revised down to 47,000 jobs over 10 years - then they have also got to take credit or take the feedback about the 5000 jobs that have been lost over the last 12 months since this Premier lost control of the last government and this parliament. When he lost control of this parliament on 12 December last year, when they asked the Governor to bring us back and then arrived without a motion or any legislation that they wanted to debate, they said to the business community that this government had lost the ability to govern, and it was a shambles because they did not have anything for us to do.

Having seen that chaos and dysfunction, he gave the warnings about what a coalition would look like, brought us back and we are exactly where the Premier said we would be with a coalition with the Jacqui Lambie Network, and we have job ads going down by 7.5 per cent last month. We should be very concerned about that.

I also want to talk briefly about the contribution from Ms Badger and the Greens on this. I was not surprised to hear those comments. They are not new to the Greens, but they are comments that need to be called out.

Dr Woodruff - Supporting regional communities.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER - Order.

Mr WINTER - The member for Lyons said that we cannot eat the fish out of our waterways. We can, proudly. I will be having salmon if it is on the menu today. Tasmanian salmon is delicious.

Members interjecting.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER - Order. I ask members to allow the Leader of the Opposition to speak in silence, please.

Mr WINTER - I proudly enjoy a flathead from our D'Entrecasteaux Channel, which I still enjoy and live by. It is a fantastic waterway that exists along with the aquaculture industry, which is proudly supporting Tasmanian jobs.

When Ms Badger said tourism operators did not have the confidence to operate with the salmon industry, I think she might want to go and see Rob Pennicott, because he has been operating successfully alongside salmon in Storm Bay for years now. He is a fantastic Tasmanian tourism operator, somebody we should all be proud of, including the Greens. They purport to support tourism, but the message was effectively, 'Do not go and see Rob Pennicott and his cruises because it is near salmon operations'. That could not be further from the truth. It is a magnificent tourism operation.

The member for Lyons, Ms Badger, said that you cannot eat our fresh food any more -

Time expired.

Dr Woodruff - It is unhealthy for you, so why would you want to?

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER - Order. Dr Woodruff, you can have an opportunity to speak later if you want.

[11.32 a.m.]

Mr BAYLEY (Clark) - Madam Deputy Speaker, I thank the member for Clark for bringing this matter of public importance forward. Business confidence is an important issue for us to discuss. I want to talk about the unintended consequences of overreach when it comes to both sides of the House aiding and abetting big business, trying to get their business or their proposition up, over and above the wishes of the community. This is a sorry Tasmanian tale that goes back many, many decades. It is a case where no matter how hard you bend the rules, no matter how much you change the situation and the bar that a company has to get over, no matter how much you lower it, you are going to stoke a conflict with the community and, ultimately, the power of that community prevails.

We do not have to go too far back in history to recognise that this is a very real issue. Let us start with the Gunns pulp mill in the Tamar Valley, destined and proposed to poison our waterways, poison the airshed of Launceston, consume vast amounts of native forests and, ultimately, be something that is propped up by the taxpayer. The company did not like the independent process being run by the Resource Planning and Development Commission, so it ran to the parliament and got a former Labor government, in that case, to write special legislation drafted by its own lawyers so that proposition could be passed. Shame.

There was a similar situation with the Walker Corporation and the canal development on the eastern shore of the river here, which failed. As to the cable car on kunanyi/Mount Wellington, something detested by so many people, the community stood up for many years and pointed to the fact that this cable car should not be built, it will impact on important values that are attracting people and tourists, and values that are adding to the business confidence of businesses visiting that facility or natural attraction. Where is the facilitation act, where is that proposal now? Absolutely gone, dead in the water.

Regarding the forests, anti-protest legislation does nothing to build confidence in the industry or deal with the fact that you have an industry that is fundamentally unsustainable.

Now we have the Robbins Island wind farm, found by advice from the government's own solicitor to contravene the coastal policy. What is this government's proposition? It is not to insist that the Robbins Island wind farm fits the law and meets the requirements of the planning scheme and the coastal policy. It is to change the coastal policy to fit with the development.

Ms Badger raised the issues around changing the Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area management plan to explicitly deal with the business of Wild Drake and building helicopter-accessed huts and huts on the South Coast Track and so forth. Ten years later, where is the confidence in that business? It has been mired in public controversy, legal challenges, and it has not got up and is unlikely to get up.

I am looking at blank looks from you, Mr Willie, asking what this has to do with business confidence. I am making the point that the actions you take in this House and the actions that you support in this House are not contributing to business confidence. The reality is that if you took steps to have an Environmental Protection Authority with teeth, for example, so that it stops gumming on the failures of the fish farm industry, the mining industry and others, you are going to build more confidence in the sector, you are going to build more confidence in our industries and we can have a sustainable industry going forward that does not attract conflict in the community or the disdain of the markets and ultimately has a more secure future.

I want to finish on the stadium because this is a massive project that is causing huge amounts of concern and confusion in the Tasmanian community, because no-one believes the Premier when he says that it can be built for \$715 million. I do not think the Labor Party even believes that even though they have now backed in the stadium since May. Released yesterday, we saw the agreement with the federal government that shows, as we knew, in black and white, written in a little table, that if the stadium costs \$715 million, as the Premier says, \$240 million of it is going to come from the federal government. We know that is going to be spent on wharves and on houses and that is not going to be GST exempt. That is a cautionary tale that bending the rules to assist business does not build confidence.

Time expired.

[11.39 a.m.]

Mr BEHRAKIS (Clark) - Madam Deputy Speaker, I was a bit confused listening to that last contribution using the cable car as an example of the major parties doing deals for big business, when the project was refused under the existing process - unfortunately, I might add, but -

Dr Woodruff - Facilitation act, special legislation.

Mr BEHRAKIS - The fact remains it got refused. On the motion, Labor might want to kid themselves about having a new approach, but it is still the same old negativity and the same old turmoil. I remember - what was that?

Mr Winter - The same old speech from the backbencher.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER - Order. I ask that interjections cease.

Mr BEHRAKIS - I will take the interjection because I remember it was not that long ago that I was a staff member writing some of these speeches, and I recognise some of these

lines. I do remember noting that Dr Broad and others on the other side really did whatever they could to rubbish the CommSec report and talk about how it does not mean anything and is not important. Whenever it was telling a good story about the Tasmanian economy, it did not matter and did not bear talking about. Now that it is telling them a story they would rather talk about, suddenly it is the most important thing to which we should be paying attention.

Mr Willie wants to talk about going back in time. I know it has been a long time since Labor was on this side of the Chamber and they might need to consult with a historian, but the records stand for themselves. Our unemployment rate at the moment is an equal record low to last year and 3.9 per cent lower than when Labor was last in government.

We, on the other hand, have a plan for the economy and the statistics clearly show our plan is working. Our unemployment rate of 4 per cent is a record low. We recorded 1.6 per cent growth in wage growth in March 2024 and 4.9 per cent annual wage growth up to March 2024. This represents the largest annual growth in wages in Tasmania over a decade. Our strong wage growth means that not only is our unemployment rate lower than ever before, but Tasmanians are earning more than ever before. That means more food on the table for the Tasmanian families.

Our economy is as large as it has ever been and continues to grow, as shown by gross state product and final demand data. Recent trade of \$723 million in March was a record. It is 2.9 per cent up on the same month last year and 57 per cent higher than when we came into government in March 2014. The value of merchandise exports in March 2024 was \$473 million, the highest single month on record. These are clear signs that consumers continue to have the confidence to spend, and that uniquely Tasmanian products are still being sought. These outcomes are giving Tasmanian businesses the confidence to invest and employ Tasmanians.

An important part of our 2030 Strong Plan for Tasmania's Future is to continue to build on Tasmania's reputation as a world-leading tourism destination, rather than rubbing it, by highlighting Tasmania's unique experiences, and to ensure the visitor economy continues to have a positive impact on the Tasmanian environment, economy and way of life.

Labor's continuous talking down of Tasmania's economy does not line up with what Tasmanians are experiencing. Contrary to the negativity and gloom of Labor, there are more Tasmanians in jobs than ever before - something they seem to be trying their hardest not to admit. It is understandable that Labor wants to forget about the bad old days when they were in government with the Greens, but Tasmanians remember a Labor-Greens government that oversaw an economy that contracted quarter after quarter, year after year. In 2012-13, the state was plunged into a recession. Final demand contracted for six out of seven quarters between 2011 and 2013. Gross state product went backwards in 2012-13.

A member - There was a global financial crisis.

Mr BEHRAKIS - We can cherry-pick. Like I said, we can measure your side on past behaviour, but I understand it was so long ago we might need to consult a historian. Since then, we have seen almost 50,000 more jobs. The unemployment rate is almost half what it was. State final demand is 32 per cent higher. Gross state product is 24 per cent higher. Retail trade is 57 per cent higher. Those are records. Those are facts that stand for themselves no matter

what cherry-picking doom and gloom Labor tries to inject into the conversation, talking down our state's economy. They are the facts.

Time expired.

[11.44 a.m.]

Dr BROAD (Braddon) - Madam Deputy Speaker, I reflect on this whole idea of business confidence. Mr Behrakis, who has just resumed his seat, does not quite understand the difference between the economic reports that we were talking about. When the government was throwing around the CommSec reports, for example, we were pointing out that the CommSec reports were typically backward-looking, whereas the Deloitte reports, which were showing that the Tasmanian economy was set to shrink, were forward-looking.

What has obviously happened now is the CommSec reports have caught up with the predictions of the Deloitte report, which we were pointing out to the government. They need to do something about this. Deloitte was showing that economic growth was going to contract and that jobs were going to be lost, but the government were hard-set looking at the CommSec report. The CommSec report does have its challenges, which even the Treasurer acknowledged today in Question Time, seeming to crab-walk sideways from the high praise of the CommSec report of the past. The main point is that we were sounding the alarm that reputable organisations like Deloitte were predicting exactly what is happening now in the Tasmanian economy and the government completely ignored it. That is what we were talking about.

When it comes to business confidence, businesses need the confidence that the government is going to act. What we have seen, as I have just highlighted, is that the government would instead put their head in the sand and not act. Now we also have the added complication of a premier who went to the election promising to deliver stability, and he has delivered exactly the opposite. He will need to be held to account. We have a premier who is relying on the Jacqui Lambie Network and on Independents. If he cannot get the support of the Jacqui Lambie Network and the Independents, he will be relying on the Greens potentially to support his legislative agenda.

We are saying clearly that we support Tasmania's traditional industries and job creation. What we have heard today from the Greens is that they do not support job creation. In fact, if the government wants to accuse someone of talking the state down, then I think they should first of all train their words at the Greens. Today I heard from Ms Badger, who is about to give her inaugural speech, so I probably will not go too hard. She said, 'Tasmania is no longer clean and green. You cannot consider Tasmania clean and green.' The question that I have for the Greens, and Ms Badger in particular, is: Where is clean and green? What jurisdiction in the world can be identified as clean and green?

If Tasmania cannot be clean and green, where can be? Half our state is in reserves. We are a net zero carbon emitting jurisdiction, and we are powered most of the time by renewable energy. Therefore, I would ask: If Tasmania cannot be viewed as clean and green, where in the world can?

Dr Woodruff - Clean and green patches.

Madam SPEAKER - Dr Woodruff, order.

Dr BROAD - I think that it is up to the Greens to come up with a list of countries, or even other jurisdictions, that are cleaner and greener than Tasmania. We have the world's cleanest air. We have a renewable and sustainable forest industry. We are not logging orangutan habitat and putting in oil palm plantations. We are not cutting down rainforests in West Papua where the land tenure is in conflict. They cannot even identify the threatened species, yet it appears that the Greens think that maybe that is clean and green.

If they are going to bag out Tasmania's clean and green status, what is their alternative? Where in the world is cleaner and greener than Tasmania? I think that Tasmania is clean and green. I think that what the Greens should actually be saying, instead of talking down Tasmania's clean and green image, as I have said many times in the past, is: 'If the world was like Tasmania, and if the rest of Australia had the same record as Tasmania, including being a net zero jurisdiction, then we would be sitting a lot better than where we are in terms of climate change.'

If Europe was net zero, had half its land mass in reserves and was powered by renewable energy, then we would have a lot less issues with climate change. Instead, what we heard today is that Tasmania is not clean and green. Where is that clean and green marketing advantage? If Tasmanian cannot use it, then I would argue nowhere in the world can use it. You cannot have it both ways. What is the alternative? It is just like another issue: if the Greens do not support the native forest industry, where are people going to get their timber from?

Time expired.

Matter noted.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY

Continued from 16 May 2024 (page 79).

Madam SPEAKER - Before I call Ms Badger to give her first speech as the new member for Lyons, I remind all members that this is the member's inaugural speech and ask that the House extend the usual courtesies to the member.

[11.48 a.m.]

Ms BADGER (Lyons) (Inaugural) - Madam Speaker, after that last performance there is no real need to hold back.

Ya pulingina. I begin by acknowledging that we are on Aboriginal land, the stolen land of the Muwinina people. I pay my deepest respects to the Tasmanian Aboriginal people, and their elders past and present.

Lutruwita/Tasmania's traditional owners, the palawa, have over 60,000 years of immeasurable connection with land, sea and sky country. The heritage is living, and I express my sorrow for the ongoing harm caused by European invasion. May this government, in the spirit of restoration, prioritise reconciliation and empowerment for the Tasmanian Aboriginal community. It is time for healing, and time for meaningful action, justice, truth-telling, treaty and land returns.

Tasmania is facing a myriad of crises. Our health system is failing, housing is increasingly unattainable, the cost of living is pushing people to breaking point and our environment is precariously close to ecological collapse. Each of these crises was created by poor political decision-making, so they can each be overcome by good political decisions. To each of you elected, entrusted to make those good decisions, congratulations and no pressure, but future generations will be judging you.

It is an extraordinary privilege to be elected to this House. Thank you to my community in the vast electorate of Lyons for entrusting me with this position, particularly during this pivotal time for Tasmania. I am looking forward to our forthcoming hearty debates, our inevitable but civil disagreements, and collaboratively shaping a better future for our state. Whether we are willing to admit it or not, there is more that binds us than divides us. Beyond any political division or discourse we face, together we share an endearing passion for Tasmania as one of the finest places on this planet.

Coming into this unexpected chapter of my life as a member of parliament, the most important role I believe we can all play is ensuring Tasmania remains extraordinary for future generations, a view best articulated by the words of Tasmanian visionary and wilderness photographer Olegas Truchanas:

Is there any reason why Tasmania should not be more beautiful on the day we leave it than on the day we came? ... If we can revise our attitudes towards the land under our feet; if we can accept the role of steward and depart from the role of conqueror, if we can accept that man and nature are inseparable parts of the unified whole, then Tasmania can be a shining beacon in a dull, uniform and largely artificial world.

I stand here today as the youngest member of this 51st Parliament. I am part of the generation inheriting the climate and inequality crisis. For decades governments have been warned that these two interlinked crises are the greatest threats to modern society, yet there has been overwhelming inaction. Denial of the fact that these crises exist has transcended into delaying finding solutions and is causing widespread disillusion with younger people, who are anxious about their future, and is there any wonder?

In my lifetime alone, I have seen accelerated shoreline erosion of the north-west coast beaches where I grew up. As children, my sister and I would spend countless hours after school each day at Boat Harbour beach. Its once painfully freezing water is now at least tolerable to swim in as water temperatures are rising at record levels. Prior to the global pandemic, I lived in Freycinet, working in land management and then running a tourism business. Along the east coast, fish migrations are changing with the warming waters. New species are travelling further south, but the cold-water species do not have that much further south to go. Giant kelp forests that once entangled your arms and legs while snorkelling have thinned to such extremes that most are now non-existent.

As a bushwalker, I trek off track routes that were once laden with waist-high mud but have now become so dry that I might just take up wearing white shoes. What once seemed like perpetually snow-capped mountains are now a rare mid-winter treat. I have had the exceptional privilege to climb peaks right around the world, and sometimes I even made it to the top. In remote Himalayan villages I have been accepted into homes and shared evening meals with people whose language I could not speak, but we could communicate through the shared

wonder of the world around us. I have come to learn that the world's kindest people are those who have the least. These isolated places and people are disproportionately suffering due to climate change. Well-trodden routes are now safety hazards for melting glaciers. Increasing avalanches are frequently cutting off food supply, power and tourism income.

In the short time since being elected, I have been approached by farmers who state they are not green, but their water sources are frequently running dry. Their crop rotation is changing, as is their productivity, with the changing, increasingly unpredictable seasons. They know that the time for climate action is yesterday, and the Greens are here fighting for it.

The people in the southern beaches are struggling to keep up with the landcare work required to stabilise their coastal landbanks, which are succumbing to erosion which will only exacerbate with sea level rise. They are one of an increasing number of communities on the ground trying to find nature-based defences for what is to come.

Nowhere else on Earth except this island does the Tasmanian devil live, nor the Mienacider gum, the Tasmanian masked owl, Huon pine or the Maugean skate, yet we are continually witnessing a stream of informed and therefore conscious decisions to destroy the habitat of these amazing creatures, sending them to the brink of extinction.

We do not have to continue on this trajectory of destruction. With our remaining intact, functioning environments, Tasmania can and should be leading the world in protecting biodiversity, preventing invasive species and reducing emissions. We can lead the charge in Australia's commitment to the 2022 Global Biodiversity Pact to end extinctions and expand our protected areas to not only conserve nature but restore it, but we are running out of time to turn the ship around. The year 2030 has long been bookmarked as the deadline for decarbonisation and halting environmental destruction, meaning the decisions made in this term of government are absolutely crucial.

Wildlife champion Greg Irons reminded me a few weeks ago that the people in this House like to state that a fair percentage of this state is locked up in the Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area (TWWHA), and our national parks. Indeed, much of Tasmania is protected and that is because so much of this island is irreplaceably special. Our wild places are of outstanding universal value. Amid the climate and biodiversity crisis, we here today have a duty to ensure the proper protection of all important landscapes, places like the mystical Spero-Wanderer wilderness, which is presently underprotected as a south-west conservation area. It should be part of the TWWHA. I have walked in this country and rafted the rivers. There is nothing else like it in Tasmania. The rivers have giant Huon pines bigger than anywhere else, and the wild west coast shoreline houses geological features that are absolutely on steroids.

Protecting the cool temperate rainforest of takayna is longstanding unfinished business for the Greens. These forests are constantly under threat and right now there is a road being forged to facilitate logging of ancient native trees by the Frankland River. When will we stop robbing our children's carbon bank and understand that these forests are invaluable if left standing and protected?

Beyond traditional land tenures, our dark skies, sky country also needs protection. Around 80 per cent of people on Earth cannot see the stars for the light pollution, but here, in south west Tasmania we have some of the darkest skies left on the planet. It is a place of cultural

significance. How many cultures can still sit under the stars and tell the ways of their old people? Here, in Tasmania's south west, the palawa still can.

The statement I began with by Olegas Truchanas was made in 1971 during the plight of the Save Lake Pedder campaign, and it is thanks to the enduring work and infectious hope from the original Pedder people that today a new generation has been inspired to take action to restore this extraordinary place, despite being too young to have known it personally. I want to acknowledge two of the Pedder women who have recently been lost to us, Melva Truchanas and Hilary Bennell. Respectively, Melva and Hilary were two of the state's leading adventurers. They paved the way for Tasmanian women in environmental conservation. Melva and Hilary would have taken great heart in being here today and the present composition of this parliament.

Madam Speaker, Lake Pedder's day is coming; its restoration is inevitable. The question is merely will we be the ones to right this past environmental mistake, or will nature take her course and do it for us? The flooding of Pedder initiated a global conservation movement. Its restoration amid a climate and biodiversity crisis will have even more profound effects, including making Tasmania a global leader in restoration, creating a new industry and well-paid, meaningful work, a fact that was recognised in Australia's otherwise damning 2021 State of the Environment report.

Protecting and restoring nature are just two of the many spaces requiring action from Tasmania. Pedder leads to the nuanced, necessary debate on the future of renewable energy. In this state, we are in both a climate and biodiversity crisis. Renewables are one part of the solution, but if they cannot coexist with Tasmania's endemic biodiversity, they are counterproductive to the cause. Let us strive for island-appropriate scale projects like an uptake in rooftop solar on energy-efficient homes, suburb by suburb, with community batteries and EV trading tech available.

Yackandandah, a Victorian town in the foothills of the Australian Alps, is leading the charge on localised electrification, so the blueprint exists. Tasmanian towns can follow suit and as renewable technology comes down the cost curve, let us be ready for more wave power and floating solar on our present empowerments to create a variety of renewable sources for greater resilience in the future Tasmanian grid.

In order to electrify, we require skilled Tasmanian workers, which is why I am proud to be the Greens opposition spokesperson for Skills and Training. During the election campaign I was proud to launch the Greens' Future Jobs Plan to ensure Tasmanians are readily positioned to take up well-paid careers in the industries of the future.

Inequality is the other crisis of our time, and it is well versed in this House. Be it low education, literacy and retention rates, poor access to healthcare services or unaffordable housing with decreasing availability, we are not seeing the improvements at the pace required to lift the quality of life in Tasmania to align with the rest of the country.

During the first week of parliament, many members raised the number of young people leaving our state, the equivalent to a planeload every four days, departing in pursuit of further education, a greater diversity of employment opportunities and well-paid jobs. Generally speaking, we absolutely should be encouraging Tasmania's young people to leave, but to go and see the world, to experience new cultures, to garner new skills and expertise. We must create an island home for people to return to, as so many inevitably will.

A future Tasmania where young people can share their newly created tapestries of abilities and perspectives; where they can return home to be with their family or raise a family of their own, without compromising on a liveable income or stable job. In a comparatively privileged, peaceful state like Tasmania, there is no reason we cannot have equitable opportunities right here.

The online era has arrived. Computer and internet literacy is as crucial for employment and education as reading and writing. Steps must be made to bridge the digital divide; we cannot see Tasmania slip behind on the digital front as we have with literacy. Ensuring Tasmania has greater digital connectivity is a necessity to secure our state's future prosperity in the digital world. It will ensure regional school students can connect and that tourism centres like Cradle Mountain and Port Arthur Historic Site can offer state-of-the-art virtual reality experiences. It opens the doors to innovate and transform our agricultural sector. The health sector will benefit from telehealth services being rolled out in rural towns. Is now the time to make Tasmania again clean, green and connected?

We must also further equality and not exclusivity in our democracy. I commend the decision by the Premier, Jeremy Rockliff, to strengthen Tasmania's democracy by finally restoring the numbers in the House of Assembly, a resolution the Greens have championed since the 1998 reduction to remove the Greens. Well, what a failure. Overworked staff and ministers suffered, carrying the extra workload of ten members and the Greens are still here, now with a record six members: five in the House of Assembly and one in the upper House.

I thank the Greens staff and all of the parliamentary staff for your tremendous, thoughtful work accommodating for the additional and new members coming into this Parliament, as well as finding the physical seating, offices and all of sundry that was associated with this increase. You have handled the change with utmost professionalism and made our journey so much smoother. Thank you.

Off the back of the restored numbers in the House, in the spirit of bolstering our democracy, I am proud the first bill tabled by the Greens is for stronger donation disclosure legislation; yet another space in which Tasmania should be leading the country. Tasmanians deserve to know who is funding the politicians elected to make the decisions on their behalf. We have minor parties and independents in this House who are capable of publicly naming their political donors. The highly resourced major parties should be doing the same.

Fundamental to a healthy democracy is peaceful protest. Tasmania's draconian anti protest laws must be repealed. A healthy government would be embracing and consulting with passionate protesters participating in the state's democracy, not locking them up in the present disproportionate legislation which is not working and will never work. Tasmanians have proven time and time again that bad legislation or hefty legal action will not deter them from taking a stand to protect our precious wild places. We saw this with the Franklin River, stopping the pulp mill, and we will see it again to save our native forests.

What a time to be a Green. We are here for climate action, equality, for a strong democracy. The Greens are here in force for Tasmanians; proudly standing by our party's pillars of social justice, ecological sustainability, grassroots democracy, peace and nonviolence. We are here representing a groundswell community movement of people rising up for a fairer, more peaceful society on a habitable, healthy planet. Thanks to the Greens, in the past we have seen the TWWHA declared and subsequent boundary extensions; the

Douglas-Apsley National Park protected; freedom of information legislation, and gun law reform. Will it not be wonderful on the day when we add to that list of green achievements, legislation on ecocide, rewilding and restoration and a human rights act.

It has been a decade too long since the Greens have had a representative in Lyons. I am proud to stand here as the third Green to represent this stunning electorate. Tim Morris was our last representative. He was proudly the first Green to be in the Deputy Speaker's role and he was a linchpin during our election campaign. Our other member for Lyons left a political legacy of a generation: Christine Milne is one of the most intelligent, relentless and selfless individuals to ever walk the halls in this parliament. She was the first female leader of a Tasmanian political party and went on to be elected in the Australian Senate and become leader of the Australian Greens. Somehow, between her ongoing innumerable campaigns, Christine made an enormous amount of time free to help during our election campaign. Without both Christine and Tim, we would not have a Green here today.

As any member of Lyons, past and present, can appreciate, the logistics of covering this grand electorate are an equally exciting and daunting challenge. Thanks to the groundswell of volunteers and caring people right across this state, we managed, almost seamlessly. Kudos to our core Lyons members who have been the stalwarts of our green community over the past few years when we did not have a member of parliament. It was their work behind the scenes that ensured we were ready for an election, long before this one was even called. Gary, Glenn, Helen, Neil, Heather, Elizabeth, Paul, Hannah, Tobias, Jill, Craig and our honorary Lyons members and friends, Paul Thomas and Bob Brown, thank you.

It is to my family I owe the greatest debt. They have been a source of unwavering love, support and, too often, unsolicited advice. From childhood, they showed me the enrichment that comes from community engagement and the fulfilment of volunteering. Perhaps most importantly though, they shaped my lens of appreciation for the natural world through photography and bush walking.

It is a long way from growing up in a humble, hardworking family around Table Cape to the Tasmanian parliament, although I acknowledge more and more of us are doing it now. Fay and Dennis and the entire Hulme clan, thank you for supporting me in following my beliefs, even when they challenged your own. To my mom, Lorraine, who is here today and is the hardest working person I have ever known, please take a holiday. Thank you for your enduring support in whatever journey I have embarked upon, especially the sketchy adventures I did not tell you about until I got home.

My friends, who are also family, are here today. They are wondering where it all went wrong. How did we go from teenagers undertaking automotive at TAFE to become mechanics, spending every weekend kart and car racing with aspirations of career in motorsport, to becoming a Green MP in Lyons? It was not for the novelty of clean fingernails. As much as I have been enjoying it, I can contest, it is far less embarrassing doing media without grease all over your face. Indeed, I never aspired to become a Green politician, or a Green at all. After all, I have always had a job and I wear shoes.

I have always been curious about how things work. A view that started with cars and engines, and it soon spread to the creation of the geomorphological features of the mountains that I climbed and the ecological composition of the wilderness that I photographed. I soon went on to study environmental science and land management, which then became a career

working in conservation. I found the complex and extraordinary relationships in the natural world astounding. For its simplicity, it is best summarized by John Muir, who said, 'When one tugs at a single thing in nature, he finds it attached to the rest of the world'. With an increase in guilt over carbon emissions, and a now growing informed awareness of our impacts on the natural world, I was increasingly motivated to join community campaigns, to protect Tasmania's greatest intergenerational assets, and to ensure our public parks and lands remained equitably accessible and free from exclusive development.

In 2019, after I had spoken at a town hall campaign event, Senator Peter Whish-Wilson put to me that the cause and solution of all the issues we are fighting was politics: that, perhaps, after a few years of advocating on committees and in campaigns, it was time to put my hand up and to be accountable; to uphold a voice for wild places and people within the parliament. I want to thank Peter for seeing in me a confidence and contribution that I took some time to see myself.

In the coming 12 months, COVID closed my tourism dependent business, as it did so many others. I returned to university to complete a Masters in tourism while setting up a new business in the sadly growing industry of restoration and land management. It had been a year since bush fires had ravaged parts of the south-west. Ecosystems that should simply not have burnt as they did that summer were incinerated. They were not rehabilitating as they should. That year I saw a glimpse of the planet collapsing around me, and so I joined the Greens.

I joined the Greens because we cannot continue with an infinite growth agenda on this precious, finite planet; and because if trees could vote, the world would be a far wealthier place. I joined the Greens because, if we are to leave Tasmania more beautiful on the day that we leave it than on the day we came, we need bold political decisions that genuinely consider the wellbeing of future generations, not the short-term profits of the elite few. That is what the Greens are here to do.

Madam Speaker, the climate and inequality crisis that I have spoken about today, the greatest threats to modern society cannot exclusively be solved by myself or the Greens, or indeed this Tasmanian parliament. They require action from all levels of government, industry and organisations. We, as elected representatives, have a generational obligation to do all in our power to mitigate both of these crises. I can personally commit to doing so with passion, humility and hope.

Members - Hear, hear.

[12.10 p.m.]

Ms FINLAY (Bass) - Madam Speaker, there is nothing quite like being in this parliament and hearing the inaugural speeches of new members to this place. I remember not that long ago standing in this place for the first time a little overwhelmed but seriously determined about what it could mean to be a member of the Tasmanian parliament. For me now, I stand here proudly, elected for the second time as a member for Bass and look forward to the term ahead, reflecting on what I have learnt in the previous term and the things I have learned about being a member of parliament.

There is a lot of comment made in this place about the need for us to work together and be positive. There is curious comment about how when someone from this side of the Chamber may call account to someone on the other side of the Chamber, that is about being negative. In

my reply this afternoon, I want to highlight how being positive, being determined, seeking to make an impact and holding this government to account are all things we should do collectively in this place.

I want to focus a little around the portfolio responsibilities I have and make comment about what I seek to focus on in this term, but also how I hope that we can work together in these areas and focus on the great electorate of Bass, highlighting some of the areas I am hoping we can bring to fruition throughout the 12 months, two years, three years or four years ahead.

I want to start by reflecting on some of the contributions, both this morning and in the first week of parliament, from some of the new members. I have made a personal decision that it is going to be important to hold to account and seek to clarify things that are brought into this House that are either incorrect or in fact misrepresent people and situations in Tasmania to the point that could have an unintended consequence on people and communities across Tasmania.

I reflect, as shadow minister for primary industries, on some comments that have been made last week and this morning around some of the most incredible people in Tasmania, our fishers and farmers. I believe it is really important for us as members of this place to remember when we make comment about the passions, the skills and the contributions that people make, whether they be in our cities or in our regions, that they do that to the best of their abilities with forethought about the future of Tasmania.

This morning there was a comment made that it is no longer safe to eat the fish or the produce from Tasmania. I get that when speaking with passion, sometimes things run out of our mouth and we do not quite have time to catch them before we say them, but I suspect, having just heard a well-presented inaugural speech, that the member for Lyons who made those comments did so with intention.

I know that right now there is a young lady riding horseback across the north of Tasmania to St Helens to raise money for Rural Alive and Well. Why on Earth would you do that? You do that because you believe in and want to care for the mental health and wellbeing of our fishers and our farmers and the people in Tasmania who make a contribution to the great brand and reputation that we have, not just here in our own state and the country, but across the world.

When a statement is made that it is no longer safe to eat the fish or the produce in Tasmania, that has a real impact on the people on the land or on the water who are fishing and farming, and it also has an impact on their families. The children of those people hear those comments and wonder why that would be said. The extended families, the workers, the communities they live in hear those comments and I am sure are impacted.

We know that the mental health of our farmers and fishers at the moment is under strain and it is time now that we pull together to work positively and in collaboration to support them. I cite just recently, over the weekend, the incredible thing that happened to the farmers of King Island with the Need for Feed Australia, a project of Lions Australia supported by Lions in Victoria and Tasmania. People from all across the country made donations to ensure that there is feed and fodder for the farmers struggling on King Island. These are magnificent images of our community coming together and being positive.

To then hear someone say you cannot eat the produce and you cannot eat the fish to me is astounding. I will not, as shadow minister for primary industries, allow comments to continue

to be made in this place without being called to account and corrected so that those things do not get repeated overtime. It is not just about politics and scoring points, it is about people. The reason I am here in this place is to support, care for and provide great opportunities to both stand with and support - but also to get out of the way when I need to - people in Tasmania.

This is all about supporting people and whether that is about making sure they have a great job, making sure they are in a community that is supported and surviving to ensure that those industries continue, it is also about mums and dads and kids. It is about extended family, it is about friends, and it is about the way we stand up and support each other. In my primary industries space with farming, I want to work together across this parliament. I know that the minister and I have already talked about that and that is what the people of Tasmania expect.

In the fishing space, it is great to have a new member in the Chamber. We have not met and I do not really know you particularly well, but I have received a letter in my office already that had been previously sent to a former minister that you responded to in a very caring and thoughtful way, and that said to me we are going to work on things together. Our fishers in Tasmania need us to be positive for them. When they are faced with the challenges in this place and across the community from a small number of people, we need to be cooperative.

I know there is some imbalance in the fishing sectors in Tasmania, whether it be with our abalone divers or our rock lobster fishers, where local people fishing in local communities in local ports are under pressure. I talked about mental health before. There are lots of concerns for Tasmanians fishing for Tasmanian fish here that need to be supported.

Someone said this morning that Liberal and Labor are all about big business. You need investment. You need large organisations, you need that wealth in a system for them to be supported, but we need to remember the individuals and their families and communities. We need to remember that they are the people who support the footy clubs and bake in the bakeries. Their extended communities, whether it be on the east coast with our rock lobster fishers, or on the west coast with our salmon farmers, they are critical to the future success of our Tasmanian communities.

Having just mentioned the west coast and salmon, I want to make comment on concerns that have been expressed in this place. I cannot remember exactly what was said but from memory, a member for Braddon got to his feet and said that the salmon fishing in Macquarie Harbour happened off the back of 10 months of science from a Malaysian company. You cannot continue to say things like that in this place when they are not true. I think it is incumbent upon all of us to ensure that when things are said in this place that we correct them because there were multiple assessments done over a period of time by some globally significant nationally and local scientists to ensure that decisions were made. I am not sure quite what was intended by reflecting on the company being Malaysian, but I can assure you that right now, salmon farmers across Tasmania, whether they are at Storm Bay in the Huon, on the west coast, on our inland waters, or in our processing places, they are some of the most passionate, caring and thoughtful people who are doing what they do to support their families and communities, and they need our support. They do not need people to stand up and seek to undermine them.

One of the things I would like to bring to the attention of the minister is that there is one particular thing that connects all fisheries, whether it be our salmon farmers, our wild fisheries, our rock lobster or our recreational fishers, and that is funding for science. One of the things I am determined to do in my time here in the parliament is to ensure that decisions that are

made are made soundly based on fact and science. It was brought to my attention in the lead-up to the last election that there has been a lessening of the funding of the investment made towards science in Tasmania, which is having a real impact on information available, as well as on the people who are fishing and the fish themselves. The government provides Sustainable Marine Research Collaboration Agreement (SMRCA) funding to the Institute for Marine and Antarctic Studies (IMAS) to do the research. In a lot of jurisdictions around Australia, the governments themselves do their research and conduct the science. In Tasmania that is done at arm's length through IMAS, but it is done under contract.

Nowhere in the real world would you or I or anyone else in the community expect to engage someone for a certain amount of work but only give them two thirds of the funds to deliver it. That would not fly in the real world, and I am concerned that the reduction in the percentage of SMRCA funding that has been provided to IMAS has dwindled over time, which is putting more pressure on the institute to cut essential programs and services. That is having a real impact in Tasmania.

I am hopeful that the new minister in this area will look to correct that to ensure that, whether it be in relation to our sand flathead or our Maugean skate, where people are doing long-term work and seeking to correct something over time, the funding provided is for more than a year and is actually sufficient to do the work. We must ensure that the things that are important to Tasmanians and that protect the Tasmanian way of life are invested in fully, and we must ensure that the great scientists we have here, many of whom have come from around the country or around the world to give their expertise to projects here in Tasmania, continue to be invested in for the protection of our people, whether it be the fish or the farmers or the fishers who do that. That is really important.

One of the new areas that I have responsibility for is energy and renewables. In relation to science, data, certainty and information, it is really important that when decisions, announcements and commitments are made, we can trust that action will follow. It was just yesterday, I am fairly sure, or the day before, that the Minister for Energy announced consultation for the renewable energy zones. There is nothing more important than energy generation in Tasmania. We know that there are businesses that want to decarbonise but that do not have access to enough electric energy in Tasmania to do that.

Generation is a priority, but when we have people saying, 'In the first 100 days we are going to declare a renewable energy zone', and then coming into this parliament saying, 'We are going to consult' - in fact, we first talked about this in 2018, and we started preparing the consultation in 2022. You cannot just keep kicking the can down the road on critical issues and expect that no-one is going to notice or that people are not watching.

It is possible, with all of the information that we know and with all of the work that should have been done already, that these areas should be declared. We have significant wind-generation projects that are relying on the action of this government. Tasmanian Labor believes that this should be the easiest place to do business in Australia. We want it to be the best place to do business and the best place to generate wind and renewable energy, but at the moment this government makes it the hardest and also the slowest.

We are losing investment opportunities in Tasmania, not just to other places in the country but also in the world, because we are not acting with the appropriate amount of urgency required to secure the investment that is waiting, hoping to have certainty created by the

government. We have Whaleback Ridge and Robbins Island, which Tasmanian Labor fully support, that are waiting, ready to come online and to start their processes. Delays are holding back critical projects in Tasmania like Abel Energy in my own electorate, or the HIF project.

There are lots of things that the government has said it has been working on, preparing for, inviting in and looking forward to ensuring happen in Tasmania, but what I have heard in the first few weeks of working in my portfolio area is that there is a lack of urgency and a lack of action. Unless things actually start to turn around in the next 30 or 60 days, we are going to lose more opportunities, because those investments are being competed for with companies in other parts of the world.

Whether it be in primary industries or energy, the information and feedback seems to be the same - that this government has lacked the capacity to deliver on its ideas. The government is great at making announcements and talking about things that might happen, but it is not as confident or competent at delivering the outcomes that the community needs. I can step that back into examples in the local community. This week is National Palliative Care Week. In my local community in Bass, for years - almost a decade - people have been waiting for a hospice to be delivered in Northern Tasmania. The government has made announcements about that; it has made commitments to that. It has even announced the location where it can be put, but in order for the hospice to be delivered in Bass, there needs to be a relocation of existing services in the Allambi building.

My question to the minister is: has any work commenced on the relocation and on the decanting of that building so that the hospice project can commence. We know that there have been many families and many individuals who have been waiting on the promise of that project and who are being sadly let down because of the time that it takes to move through such projects.

There was a big fanfare yesterday around another local community project: the Community Hub in the Northern suburbs. This is a great project. There has been talk about progress and a tender has been let for this sports project. However, the vision for the project was about it being a community hub - a place that could support the community that is located within and bring in services from around the area. It was about bringing in wrap-around services to support the local community to have engagement and activities, and to see things in a different way; it was not just about pure sports. There are local organisations that were promised spaces and ways to be able to participate and engage in that facility that seem to have been lost. They are feeling forgotten.

The other thing for the government to remember through this term is yes, make announcements; yes, follow up; yes, say that it is progressing things, but it must not forget the initial reason why these things were put on the agenda, whether it be sports organisations or community organisations. The initial vision from the former mayor of the Launceston City Council, Albert Van Zetten, for the community hub in Bass was about a place to support and grow the local community and allow it to thrive, and it feels like that essence has been lost.

During the election period, it became very apparent on Flinders Island, which is in Bass, that some of the blockages to productivity on the island are simple things like child care, as well as more complex things like the provision of housing. One of the things that astounded me as the shadow minister for primary industries learning about the island is that Flinders Island has a school farm.

At that school, they do not have an agriculture program. It was only as a result of a very impassioned new teacher coming to the school last year that they opened up their woodwork studio after a decade of it being closed. They do not have a welder on site, so they do not have a metal program. It is an agricultural community and they do not have an agriculture program and an operational school farm. That is something that I would like to focus on in this term of Parliament.

In Scottsdale there are urgent calls for the report into Dorset Council to be released. When is that going to happen? Over 14 days ago, we were told it was meant to be released in the following seven days. The community are waiting. They deserve information around their future.

We know that the best way to support people to engage in their community is through employment. In George Town, there is a great project going on with the Future Impact Group and their launchpad. The Speaker and I visited there, and we recognise the importance of that program to continue to support that local community. It needs continued support and investment for that to happen. That is how you support communities and that is how you get them to engage with confidence and to support a thriving economy.

In Launceston, there have been suggestions that the recreational hub will provide solutions to concerns with local sporting infrastructure. The reality is there are so many layers of need for support in our local community that not one single thing will support that. In the election we made a commitment to basketball courts, and that was backed up by this Liberal government, and there is a hope that that work will happen as a matter of urgency.

If other sports from Elphin could be decanted to other places, it could become a home of basketball and that would actually help with court shortages. It would help young people with their future in basketball. We know at the netball courts down at Hoppers Bridge Road that a lack of supportive infrastructure and a lack of access is making it unsafe for many when it is dark at night. There are a lot of challenges within Bass and across Tasmania, and those challenges need us to work cooperatively together. They need government to not just make, but to follow up with action, to be serious about the action, the activity and the needs of our community and to ensure that good things happen, that investments are made, and that we do not lose opportunity to other places, that our communities are understood and that they are cared for, that they remain having a feeling of being connected to our community, and that they believe things are possible because they trust the process.

When I asked about one of my other portfolio areas in science and technology, someone said that in Tasmania we need to continue to be curious to feel positive about the future.

Time expired.

Madam SPEAKER - Before calling the member for Bass for his first speech, I remind members this is the member's inaugural speech and that the House extend the usual courtesies to the member. I call the member for Bass, Mr Fairs.

[12.33 p.m.]

Mr FAIRS (Bass) (Inaugural) - Madam Speaker, this is my first opportunity to congratulate you on your appointment as Speaker of the House. Congratulations.

I acknowledge and pay my respects to the Tasmanian Aboriginal people as the traditional and original owners and continuing custodians of this land on which we gather today. I acknowledge elders past and present.

I would also like to thank my parliamentary colleagues from all sides of politics for being here for my first formal contribution to this parliament. I was hoping you might have had something else to do, like lunch. Obviously not. Thank you, sincerely.

To the members of the parliamentary Liberal Party, thank you for welcoming me so warmly to your team. To the Premier, Jeremy Rockliff, thank you for your support and for having confidence in me to be part of your team and your government.

I feel truly humbled to be in this place, doing something I can honestly say I never thought I would. There are so many people I would like to thank for their help and support throughout my election campaign to get me right here.

First, to my wonderful electorate of Bass, thank you for putting your faith in me to represent you in this 51st term of parliament. You have backed me to do a job and I will give you my all.

I would like to say something to all the unsuccessful candidates at the recent election as well. Please, hold your heads up high. To put yourselves out there in the public eye takes incredible, enormous courage and intestinal fortitude. As we know, you only get to step into this chamber after successfully being elected. I was one of the fortunate ones, but I would not be standing here today if it was not for the amazing support I received before, during and after my election campaign.

To name them all, we would be here for a long, long time. However, there are some I would like to single out. To everyone who pounded the pavement doing letterbox drops like my wife Jo, Tim Robertson, Laura Moore, Andrew and Ben Lloyd-Sheekey, Belinda Becker, Kitty and Jason Street, and the young Liberals as well, thank you so much.

To everyone as well, who are so kind to give me some space, considerable space, on their properties for my signs, I sincerely thank you as well.

To my election campaign team, my campaign manager Brian Carlton, who is here today, thank you mate, for everything you did. Hayley Beaumont, David and Leanne Morrison, Derek Taylor and Andrew Palmer, who was like a man possessed when it came to erecting my signs all over the Bass electorate, words cannot describe his efforts, but thank you so much.

I also thank Jo Palmer and Nick Duigan for their support, despite their very heavy schedules of their own. They called me almost daily to see what help I required and if I was okay.

Thank you also to the Deputy Premier, Michael Ferguson, for checking in almost daily as well, especially when my dad took ill.

Then there is of course, my wife, Jo. She wished she could be here today, but I have it on good authority that she is already celebrating the fact that I will not be home all the time driving her crazy with my apparent snoring, loud eating and breathing. Jokes aside, Jo is my

rock and soul mate. Like most of us in life, we have been through highs and lows but her unrivalled love and support and a knack of keeping me grounded is mind-blowing and I love her dearly.

Like many in my electorate, I was, until getting elected, operating a small business. They are the backbone of the economy and keep it pumping. Without generous business people, so many critical services that are not delivered by government suffer greatly. I have always worked hard and love helping people because they need it and just because I can. Mum said many times over the years that I would give away my last dollar if I could. My passion for my community pours through my veins and it makes me happy knowing I am doing my best to make a difference.

I would like to praise the hundreds and hundreds of unselfish volunteers who work tirelessly on behalf of all our local communities, but especially in Bass and especially in the disability, disadvantaged and not-for-profit sector.

For more than three decades, I have heard from ordinary Tasmanians - on and off air - about how politics, and often government, fails; how they feel disconnected and disempowered. Most of us can manage our lives most of the time. However, there are those who cannot and, rightfully, deserve our help in areas like housing, health, employment, security, youth, homeless, victims of crime, elderly, the chronically ill, and the growing number suffering mental illnesses.

I have spent some 18 years in and around the disadvantaged youth sector. Just over two years ago, I set up my own not-for-profit volunteer charity, the Rob Fairs Foundation, which aims to bring the community together to help our disadvantaged youth. My foundation's aim is to give our youth not only work skills, but life skills and experiences in the hope of sparking something in them and helping them turn their lives around and realise their dreams. I do not care what side of the tracks you are from. In my view, all kids deserve a fair go and the chance to become the best versions of themselves, but we cannot do it alone. That is why we urge and bring the community on the journey with us.

My foundation is not government funded. We rely on the private sector and generous donations from individuals, businesses and other organisations to operate and make a difference, and we are. Connections and partnerships are how Tasmania operates. I have built up many, many over the years. I am so thankful to them all. Many are in this Chamber, Madam Speaker. I could not have set up the foundation anywhere else but here. You might ask, why? Well, good old community spirit. Tasmania has it in spades, and they rally behind their fellow Tasmanians like no other, but we still need to do more to protect and promote our youth. Bureaucratic and red tape delays are frustratingly long and in a lot of cases, unnecessary.

Why at this stage of my life would I want to get into politics? Great question. I have been talking about it for years, but it never felt right for whatever reason. I have to say, over the last six months, it was really getting to me. I decided to step up and have a go and now thanks to my wonderful electorate of Bass, I will be doing what I have been doing behind the scenes for decades, but on a much larger scale. A big difference, now, is having the opportunity and ability to change what does not work into something that does and delivers for Tasmanians.

Now a bit about me, you lucky devils. I was born on the Yorke Peninsula in South Australia at a place called Minlaton. I was a premature baby; arrived on the scenes more than

two months early. My mum always said I was in a hurry then and I have been in a hurry ever since and, you know, she is right. As always. I was so small I could fit on dad's forearm. Later in life, I grew 5 inches in three months. I do not think mum has ever recovered from that, especially with my overnight voice change, going from a high-pitched voice like Mickey Mouse to what you hear today.

My parents, Pauline and Ian, I owe them everything. My father Ian was a bank manager and mum a housewife, and I could never have asked for better parents. They sacrificed so much for us kids. Dad worked his backside off for me and my two younger sisters, Michelle and Adele, not only at the bank but at the local drive-in on weekends as well.

While dad worked, mum looked after us, not an easy thing to do, and when on the rare occasion I got into trouble - all right, maybe quite a bit - she was the one who sent me to my room. She would say, 'Wait until your father gets home, you'll get in trouble'. Dad would come home, open my bedroom door and say something like, 'Let's go kick the footy', much to mum's disgust. Dad was often in more trouble than I was, which I very much appreciated.

Mum's parents lived at Wool Bay, a place well known for its fishing back then - snapper, King George whiting and especially squid. Every school holiday I would be climbing up and down the limestone cliffs to go fishing or spearfishing. My grandfather Len was an amazing fisherman. He had this uncanny knack, seriously, of when no-one else was catching anything, he always would. One thing he did teach me was how to catch squid using a potato. Yep, you heard right, a potato. It never failed. I will show you one day.

Dad also took me fishing and taught me how to use a rod. I remember my first-ever cast did not quite go to plan. It went straight up in the air and came down and cracked dad on the top of his head. The sinker was quite large too, so you can understand how impressed he was with that.

Mum prepared me for the outside world - how to cook, wash, iron, et cetera - to ensure I had the basic skill set for when I went out to the big world on my own, although I reckon my wife Jo might be wondering where those skills have disappeared today.

I went to Para Hills Primary School before going to Eudunda Area School after dad got a transfer to a town in the Barossa Valley. Looking back, this handed me many opportunities to develop life skills and experiences. I spent most weekends at my mate's farm learning that way of life. His parents Ross and Myra Schultz taught me many things, like how important farmers and the agricultural sector is to us all. I also learned to drive on the farm. I remember when I accidentally put my foot on the gas instead of the brake, wiping out a sizeable fence post, which Leon and I then spent the rest of the weekend digging out and replacing and rewiring the fence. We also used to fang around on the good old trusty 8175 motorbikes, jumping dams and ripping up the freshly ploughed paddocks, so we were always in trouble for that.

I attended school, but I was not a great student academically, to be honest. I always preferred and enjoyed working after school and on weekends at the local slaughterhouse as a stock boy and delivering papers for the local newsagency in a clapped-out Datsun 180B. I was an extremely active youngster, riding my Malvern Star bike everywhere, playing footy and later umpiring our great game. I also play cricket, basketball, tennis, golf, got into swimming and also athletics.

After five years in the Barossa, dad got a transfer to Woomera in the remote mid-north of South Australia. There was an American Air Force base there and the township had about 5000 mainly American military personnel and their families.

I did some labouring work for a while for one of dad's mates, but he said to dad once, 'You have a great kid in Rob but he's no labourer', and he was right. I was not then, and I am certainly not now.

As always, mum and dad took little time to settle in. They were famous for their parties, with barbecues going full bore and of course cocktails, strawberry daiquiris and Long Island teas flowing freely and, Madam Speaker, they were potent. It was at one of these that an amazing lady called Ruth McDermott came up to me and said, 'Have you ever thought about doing radio? You have an amazing voice.'

Growing up, I wanted to be an apprentice butcher and a fighter pilot. In fact, dad used to take me to the Edinburgh Air Force base near Adelaide to see the amazing fire-breathing F-111s. I can tell you that apart from being colour blind, afraid of heights, suffering from vertigo and being built like a brick you-know-what, I reckon I could be a damn good fighter.

I also remember very early on - I was probably seven or eight at the time - when I was playing on the beach in Wool Bay and I heard this voice come out of a small portable device known as a transistor radio, and I thought, 'Wow, how cool would that be for my voice to come out of those one day?'. For those younger members here, who do not know what a transistor radio is, it is a portable device about half the size of an iPhone 14. I am happy to show you afterwards. I think I still have some, actually.

Anyway, Ruth took me to the community radio station 5TripleRFM, Rocket Range Radio, it was called, and I started doing some training and very soon, my own show. After a couple of years Ruth returned to the USA and I decided that while this radio stuff was great, I wanted to earn money and I wanted to work and with nothing really on offer, I decided to join the army. I went in there for a little bit but that did not work out, so then I decided to do everything I could to get into commercial radio.

I attended the Vaughan Harvey Radio School in Adelaide. Vaughan is a South Australian radio legend. His voice was amazing, but his training methods were somewhat out there, like using a cork to train your mouth muscles. I could demonstrate that, but not this time; maybe later after a few bevvies - quite a few.

After graduating, I returned to Woomera, doing numerous community radio shifts. I also took a job as a security guard at the base. Most nights while doing the overnight shift there, I used to ring 5KA radio announcers who later became my radio brothers Paul Barry and the late Mark Pedler, who changed my life forever. They called me one night and said that their boss, another legendary South Australian radio figure, Neil Humphreys, wanted me to start work with the station, so I leapt into my car the very next day, drove all the way to Adelaide and began my commercial radio career at 5KA in 1985.

I stayed there until 1989, when 5KA became KAFM, and I loved it, but we were then taken over and the new owners were cutting staff and I did not want to be one of those, but as it happened, the boss of 7LA, as it was known back then, was over there for meetings and offered me the night's gig in Launnie. I took it. I left Adelaide as a skinny, long-haired 21-year

old with a permed mullet and headed to Launnie. I said at the time I would only stay for two years and would never get married, never mind to a Tasmanian, but how do you think that has worked out for me?

Radio in the 1980s and early 90s was awesome. We were rock jocks and we partied hard. As mentioned, I had a long, permed mullet and was as skinny as a rake, which I put down to my diet back then, basically being ample amounts of Scotch and two packets of cigarettes a day. I do not do that now.

On 1 May 1989 I did my first-ever shift on 7LA and the first caller to welcome me was famous northern Tasmanian identity Rodney from Mayfield and I can tell you, he called me every single night I was on air without fail.

Looking back, this is also where my passion for and dedication to my local community came to fruition. It was not long after I arrived in Launnie that legendary Aussie singer John Farnham announced his Chain Reaction tour that had left Launceston off the dates. That angered me greatly. I will not say what I said at the time, but I called his then manager Glenn Wheatley and said to him, 'What do I need to do to get John to come to Launceston?', and Glenn said, 'If you get me 5000 signatures, he'll come', so I set up a petition, and amassed a stunning 12,000 signatures.

I then flew to Melbourne and headed to the warehouse where John and his band were rehearsing for the tour. I presented him with a huge number of signed papers, got a few photos, we compared mullets - I reckon mine is better than his and he copied me, but anyway - and he said, 'Thanks, Fairysy, I will be there', and true to his word, he came and performed. It was one of the proudest moments of my life being there at that concert in 1991 and seeing, in my opinion, our greatest live performer at the Silverdome.

I stayed at 7LA till 1995 when news editor Paul Murphy, another one of my great mentors, offered me a job at Southern Cross TV, as it was known back then. It did not take too long before I became sports editor and presenter. I remember my job interview with Paul. There were no questions except, 'What do you and Jo want to have to drink?' He had already decided to hire me. I remember, though, being shocked when he asked me to cut my flowing permed mane which I did, reluctantly.

Being sports editor and presenter for the nightly news was an honour and an amazing experience. I got to work with truly amazing people like my now parliamentary colleagues Jo Palmer and Nick Duigan, two of the most genuine and caring people you could ask for. Working with them is up there amongst the greatest moments of my career. They are like family.

One story I would like to share with Jo, seeing she is here, is that she always knew when there was trouble at home, because when I walked into the station, because of my colour blindness, Jo, my wife, would send me into work with a shirt and a tie that did not match - true story - and Jo would say, 'What have you done now?'. She would say, 'That will not do', and she would go to my top filing cabinet drawer where I had a bunch of ties and find one that suited the occasion. Thank you, Jo.

Here is another little story. We used to get KFC every Sunday when we worked on weekends together. She was a bad influence on me. All right, it might have been the other way around.

I left full-time work there in 2006 but remained a sports reader till 2012. The reason I left was to set up my own company, Media, Events, Marketing and Sports Management. I worked full-time for Formula One legend Mark Webber and his multi-sport charity challenges. We travelled with some of the biggest-named celebrities and visited amazing parts of our great state.

One memory I would like to share is that I remember being in a small light plane flying into Melaleuca and the South Coast Track. I was in the front seat next to the pilot. I hardly ate anything for breakfast because I am not a great lover of flying - I do not know if you have figured that out - but in the plane we had the legendary Steve Waugh, Cathy Freeman and her boyfriend at the time, Joel Edgerton. Anyway, if you have ever done that flight, it was not the smoothest. I held out as long as I could, but eventually filled a sick bag. When we landed, the first people to open the door of the plane were paramedics - actually not for me, just they happened to be there opening the door - and Steve Waugh said, 'Well, that's an encouraging sign', but it was a fun time, although not so much for me; it was rather embarrassing, but I have no regrets about being here in Tasmania. Why would I?

My radio and TV work has brought me in regular contact with Tasmanians from all walks of life, from every day hard working families and small businesses to corporate and civic leaders and our much-loved public sector, from our most disadvantaged and, of course, our decision-makers. I have gained invaluable experience and I think that it will serve me well in understanding and doing my utmost to meet the needs and expectations of all Tasmanians, but especially in my Bass electorate.

Tasmania is an amazing place to live, work and raise a family. It boasts a plethora of world-class and iconic tourism destinations almost at our doorstep. When it comes to our produce, as we all know, it is a world-beater.

Madam Speaker, I would like to finish with a plea to the all-new parliament. This is a unique opportunity to do our very best for all Tasmanians. So many futures hang off the decisions made by us in this place. Yes, we will probably disagree a lot, and that is good in a free democracy, but we will have to rise above our sometimes petty differences and work together, compromise if required, to deliver what all Tasmanians deserve, a fair go. Thank you.

Members - Hear, hear.

Madam SPEAKER - In order to facilitate the appropriate timing of people's guests, the House stands adjourned until 2.30 p.m.

The House suspended from 12.53 p.m. to 2.30 p.m.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY

Resumed from above.

Madam SPEAKER - Before I call the next speaker, I believe he is doing his first speech. I will remind members that whilst it may be his second first speech, it is his first speech in this House and ask the House to extend the usual courtesies to the member. I call the Leader of the House and member for Franklin, Mr Abetz.

[2.30 p.m.]

Mr ABETZ (Franklin - Leader of the House) (Inaugural) - Madam Speaker, whatever time I might be afforded in this place will be dedicated to service to the best of my ability: service to God, King, the people of Franklin, and the people of Tasmania. For those who voted for me, pray that I might live up to your expectations. For those who did not vote for me, pray that I do not.

Talking of praying, we all have religion whether we admit it or not. We all have a world view or religion which helps us to make sense of the world. As legislators, I trust we are all agreed that we seek to encourage good behaviour and discourage bad behaviour through the legislation that we champion. Sure, some legislation has no moral dimension, such as the side of the road on which we drive, and that will be the only occasion on which I will not assert the moral superiority of the right.

In seeking to pursue the encouragement of good behaviour and discouragement of bad behaviour, we need to have a moral framework from which we glean our sense of good and bad, which in turn beckons the question, from where do we get our moral framework? It is, of course, from our world view or our religion. We all have a religion or a world view, whether we admit it or not.

For me, it is the Judeo-Christian world view. For those who would urge that people of faith should leave their religion at the door of Parliament House, I pose the question, 'What would happen if we required that of everyone who entered this place? From where would any of us obtain our moral compass to determine our approach to legislating?'

Christianity provides a robust, consistent world view beside providing two essential elements for human well-being: hope and purpose. Christianity has been a civilising force for the world, delivering healthcare, education, welfare, artistic endeavours, research, societal structures, and informing personal behaviour, which makes the countries with a Christian heritage the envy of the world. When well-known atheist Richard Dawkins admits he likes the cultural Christianity of his society, he is genuinely onto something.

Similarly, the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, when it sought to discover the reason for the West's success. It first thought it was the military superiority, then its economic superiority. Finally, it concluded, and it had no doubt, the success of the West was built on its religious foundations. We discard those foundations at our peril. It seems some want the house, but not the foundations on which it is built.

As TS Eliot warned, on the eve of World War II:

If Christianity goes, the whole of our culture goes. Then you must start painfully again, and you cannot put on a new culture ready made. ... You must pass through many centuries of barbarism.

Regrettably, we are in the very throes of doing so, and the current societal indicators expose the folly and consequences of such developments.

Recent attacks on our archbishop in this place are part of that malaise. While allegedly celebrating diversity and inclusivity, there is an element which seeks to cancel and exclude anyone who has a view differing from their own. These attacks defy any rational explanation. Are we to really believe that a Catholic school is not to teach Catholic beliefs? We even had a member, self admittedly of no faith, seeking to determine what our archbishop should believe and what Catholic teaching ought to be. It would be like a person of faith joining an atheist society and demanding it be opened with a hymn. Yet the obvious silliness of such a proposition appears to escape consideration. Tolerance and inclusiveness, if honestly understood and genuinely appreciated, are in fact two-way streets.

While my Christian faith will inform my decision-making, honourable members and the public can be assured that I will not allow my policy positioning to be swayed too often by the Vicars and Deans in this Chamber.

As a constitutional monarchist - indeed, the former NO Republic campaign chair of the Australian Monarchist League under the excellent leadership of Philip Benwell - I will dedicate myself to the protection and advancement of our system of governments, which has served our community so exceedingly well. In founding the Liberal Party, Sir Robert Menzies established, as the first principle of the party under whose banner I sought election to this place, belief in the Crown as the enduring embodiment of our national unity.

Those who seek to denigrate our rich history of constitutional monarchy do our country and her people a great disservice. Our constitutional monarchy provides continuity and stability. It provides a much needed and cherished unifying, nonpartisan representative of the state. For example, our men and women in the armed forces serve under the Unifying Crown rather than a politician. Constitutional monarchies provide an independent umpire who owes no allegiance other than to the constitution. On the Democracy Index, constitutional monarchies rank right up there, while the worst 50 are all republics. Our forebears, in establishing our constitutional structures, did so with a constitutional monarchy at its centre, over 100 years ago. Australians overwhelmingly backed it in again in 1999. 'If it ain't broke, don't fix it' is a worthy injunction for many aspects of life, especially for constitutional arrangements.

In seeking to serve the people of Franklin, I first recognise the service of Dean Young. He worked hard and lifted his vote considerably from when he first sought election, bearing testament to his hard work. It was a privilege to be part of the Franklin Liberal team.

To those who missed out - Dean Young, Aldo Antolli, Jock McGregor and Josh Garvin - thanks for helping Mrs Petrusma, minister Nic Street and myself, over the line. We gave it our all. Next time, we will go for four seats, if not five.

It is an honour to be the plus-one of the parliamentary Liberal Party, Franklin being the only electorate which added to the Liberal numbers. The dynamic leadership of the party in Franklin was telling and, thankfully, allowed Antony Green, the ABC election analyst, to call me elected early on election night. It was a long night on the ABC election panel. It would have been painfully and unbearably so much longer had the result been different. The discomfort of uncertainty, let alone the prospect of defeat, was thankfully short lived.

What also made it a special night was the thoughtfulness of Australia's second longest serving Prime Minister, John Howard, leaving a message of congratulations a few minutes after Antony Green called me elected. I think he may have been secretly watching the ABC. Who could blame him when the Greens had such a 'polite' and 'congenial' panellist contributing? For Hansard, can you please put polite and congenial in inverted commas, lest I be misunderstood?

Franklin's geography is as diverse as its population and its job opportunities. From the picturesque and productive Huon to the more suburban based Kingborough and Clarence municipalities, it is a privilege to represent the electorate in which I have lived my life since grade one; growing up and commencing a business and raising a family, or, more correctly, where my darling Michelle raised our family, given my many absences. As a family, we will be forever blessed for having such a loving, forgiving, understanding and wonderful mother, wife and homemaker. The role of motherhood and devotion to family is to be cherished, honoured and celebrated. The role of motherhood and family in public policy decision making needs to be placed front and centre.

An election success is built by many, and there are many to whom I am deeply indebted: the membership of the Liberal Party, who kindly endorsed me with a singularly strong vote, and all the volunteers, too numerous to mention. I was greatly honoured that Heath Michael agreed to be my campaign manager and lent his experience and expertise to that task. Thank you.

To Senator Jacinta Price, a wonderfully brave Indigenous leader with great political instincts and values; to the distinguished Honourable Peter Hodgman, a former member for Franklin in this place; to the highly popular, dynamic and exceedingly capable mayor of the City of Clarence, Brendan Blomeley; to Dr Adler Adoyen of the Jewish community and medical leader; to Dr Virk, the chair of the India Australia Strategic Alliance, of which I am the Australian patron; to Dr Bruce Englefield OAM, a former Tasmanian of the Year for his work in protecting the Tasmanian devil. Thank you all for endorsing me so strongly in my election brochure, allowing me to be the beneficiary of your reflected credibility, status and the high regard in which you are held.

To Jeremiah Ambrose and the Young Conservatives for Christ team: thank you for your encouragement and energy, wobble boarding even as the mornings became cooler. To the coffee provider on those mornings: thanks for the sustenance and everything else.

To Gail Forder, who organised the letterboxing: thank you.

A further thank you to the dozens of volunteers who wobble boarded on the Friday afternoon before the election on the side of the Southern Outlet. To see the blue Abetz banners was a sight to behold.

Thank you to those commuters who spontaneously and so generously indicated their intention to vote number one for me with their upright middle finger. I am still puzzled as to why I received so much support from vehicles with green stickers on them.

It would also be remiss of me to not thank Labor operatives, including the Prime Minister, who gave me special regular mentions, including at the Labor launch. They provided me with free and much-needed media exposure that money simply could not buy. There were many others, many of whom I have and still need to thank.

To the election result generally, let me acknowledge and accept that the people of Tasmania sent the Liberal Party a message. Under the leadership of the Premier, we have regrouped, doubling our efforts on delivering for our fellow Tasmanians as a fresh new government, albeit in minority.

My life growing up was not privileged in financial terms, but it was in values of self-reliance, reward for effort, service to others and Christian values. As immigrants, the whole family had to learn a new language and adapt to a new culture. For those opposite, a state Labor government and the Hydro-Electric Commission provided us with an assisted passage for dad to work on the hydro schemes and therefore for me to be in this place. I say thank you to Labor.

State-school-educated and gaining employment whenever and wherever I could, I learnt many lessons of life. While studying I drove taxis and worked as a farmhand. The annual blistering of hands followed by the shedding of calluses on return to university was character building.

Establishing a legal practice with the help of a benefactor willing to guarantee the business loan was a break in life for which I will be forever grateful. The willingness to take a punt on me and my mate Roger Curtis was extremely generous. I still fondly recall the first two years of Abetz Curtis, working like a Trojan and living like a pauper, doing the toilets and cleaning of a weekend while living modestly to pay down the debt to release the guarantor during a time when the overdraft interest rate was 21.7 per cent. Amongst other things, I learnt economic management is vital.

Being a lawyer was a part of my working life I genuinely enjoyed. It was challenging and rewarding both financially and in providing the ability to serve all manner of organisations in an honorary capacity, varying from Riding for the Disabled, the RSPCA, and being on the foundation committees of a women's shelter and a youth shelter. The spirit of volunteerism through which I could engage with so many other civically minded people was truly inspirational.

There then followed a brief stint in the Senate during which I learned firsthand from the master, John Howard. Sound and responsible economic management is fundamental. Leaving the country in better shape, without debt, with historic low unemployment while enjoying real wages growth is a worthy legacy. My various roles, including chairing the Native Title Committee and holding positions in Defence, Finance, Primary Industries and Employment, provided opportunities for which I will always be immeasurably thankful.

The most cherished position, albeit in opposition, however, was when my Senate colleagues elected me as deputy leader and then leader, unopposed. Having the confidence of the prime minister or premier is one thing, but having confidence bestowed by colleagues is

next level. To be appointed as Leader of the Government in the Senate by Tony Abbott, a great prime minister disgracefully cut down by his own, was a singular honour.

In my absence from parliamentary service, I was delighted to be involved in Christian Homes Tasmania, Supporting Affordable Accommodation for the disability sector, seeking to promote a more community, environmentally friendly approach to planning and seeking to establish a national resilience institute with the former head of the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet and the inspirational Peter Fritz. To date, the latter two projects have not completely hatched, but I wish both projects well.

During this time, I read many a book manuscript, providing advice to authors. The most captivating was a 486-page tome on Australian history by Christopher Reynolds - not to be confused with Henry - who imaginatively captures our history from original sources. There is a thought: history from original sources. He tells of equality before the law, where convict couple Henry and Susannah Kable on the First Fleet sued their ship's captain for theft and won in the very first judicial case in Australia.

He tells how Aboriginal women in South Australia gained the vote before their sisters in Europe: wonderful uplifting stories that make one so thankful to be living in Australia. It begs the question: why are our children denied this rich and inspiring history and instead fed a diet of irresponsible climate alarmism and the suggestion they live on stolen land, burdening them with needless guilt?

We do well to remember we owe our forebears an immense debt. The current trend to belittle our own elders and forebears is shameful and ignores their times. Overwhelmingly, they sought to do their best, as do we. Give us a few decades and the next generation will, if they follow suit, be condemning us. The time taken seeking to virtue signal at the expense of previous leaders' legacies would be so much better spent in acting positively. Cutting down our forebears - metaphorically at the knees, or ankles, physically, in the case of William Crowther - makes nobody any taller.

I was also a paid commentator and ran a consultancy business that was kindly promoted by the then Greens member for Clark. I also wrote unpaid opinion pieces for the local paper, including pieces strongly promoting the transformational stadium project, which will serve as an iconic gateway to our capital city, and strongly opposing the move by the university to the city. Future generations will not be thanking today's university leadership for taking the campus from an environment of expansive lawns and trees to the sterility of concrete and asphalt. Education and research should be the core business of the university, not property transactions that provide no value-add to educational pursuits.

The privilege of serving in this place means that those pursuits must of necessity be left behind or limited, especially keeping in mind that I am once again bound by cabinet solidarity. The reason I am so bound is because the Premier saw fit to appoint me to his ministry, for which I sincerely thank him. The need for common sense and decisive decision-making will be my aim, as will red-tape reduction.

Respect for all has to be at the forefront of public policy, and that also means, just from time to time, respect for the majority. Freedom of speech and association need to be upheld, a subset of which, of course, is freedom of religion. The rule of law protects us all equally. The teaching of critical thinking, encouraging analysis and alternative views, is what allows

a society to grow and achieve greater heights. To label questioning minds as 'deniers' or 'bigots' are ham fisted, anti-intellectual tactics to shut down opponents.

Identity politics has captured the mind of some who believe that certain characteristics somehow defines them and others, which justifies all sorts of discrimination and demand-making. Let us be clear: as of necessity, one person's positive discrimination must mean someone else's negative discrimination. This breeds unnecessary and avoidable resentment.

As a Liberal, I believe in equality of opportunity, not of outcome. If there are structural issues which lead to discrimination, then that discrimination is only truly remedied by the removal of the obstacles, not by forcing an artificial evening up of the ledger by discriminating against others. We would do well to heed Martin Luther King's injunction when he told the American people that he had a dream where one day his darling children would not be judged by the colour of their skin but the content of their character. Let the pursuit of character be our defining identity.

It is a privilege to be chosen to serve by your fellow citizens, and with privilege comes responsibility to say and do the right thing, not to hold out false hopes, to acknowledge there are some things which governments simply cannot fix or overcome. Government cannot remedy all that life throws at us from time to time.

The virtues of self-help, resilience and philanthropy need to be promoted and instilled. This idea that somehow calling on government to do something can salve one's conscience and absolves personal responsibility needs to be called out and dispelled. Calling on government is in fact calling on government to raid the pockets of your fellow citizens while you do nothing to make the difference you expect others to make.

We have a responsibility to ensure we do not leave debt legacies for future generations because we are too selfish to tighten our belts. Maintaining our lifestyle today at the expense of the next generation is intergenerational theft and selfishness writ large. The current debt levels all over the country are distressing and need to be addressed. This will require tough decisions for the genuine welfare of the next generations.

Debt to pay for our regular expenditure is both unsustainable and ultimately immoral. Given tight budgets will be a thing of the future, all government priorities will need to be set based on genuine necessity. As part of the task, we also need to encourage hard work and provide reward for effort, while backing in the productive job-creating sectors of our economy.

As Tasmania's Minister for Business, Industry and Resources, I will devote myself to that task, knowing each successful enterprise will be providing employment, which in turn provides succour and sustenance to the homes of Tasmanian families, and with a successful economy we can provide the services our fellow Tasmanians need.

This idea that we can increase expenditure on hospitals, schools and public transport at the same time as closing down mines and sawmills while opposing every new development, needs to be called out for the dishonesty it is. It is as disingenuous as calling on government to fix the housing issues while opposing subdivisions and unit developments.

Madam Speaker, no matter what our challenges may be, today or tomorrow, we can all take heart and dedicate ourselves with the words of the last of the 17 statements of principle enunciated by Sir Robert Menzies in establishing the Liberal Party, when he said:

We believe that under the blessing of divine providence and given the good-will, mutual tolerance and understanding, energy and an individual sense of purpose, there is no task which Australia cannot perform and no difficulty which she cannot overcome.

For today's purposes, allow me to substitute 'Tasmania' for 'Australia'.

We believe that under the blessing of divine providence and given the good-will, mutual tolerance and understanding, energy and an individual sense of purpose, there is no task which Tasmania cannot perform and no difficulty we cannot overcome.

Of that, I am absolutely convinced. Our future is bright and will continue to be so if we adhere to those timeless virtues and values to which I will dedicate my time in this place. I thank the House.

Members - Hear, hear.

[2.57 p.m.]

Mrs BESWICK (Braddon) (Inaugural) - Madam Speaker, as I stand here and look about this amazing historical Chamber, I am humbled and awed at the opportunity and the responsibility with which I have been entrusted. What a journey my life has been to come to this chapter and to stand before you. May I say congratulations on your election as Speaker and note that I have appreciated your encouragement over the past few weeks.

Over the past few months, and in particular since the finalisation of the count which confirmed my election, I have been asked many times, 'Why are you here? What has motivated you to politics?'. I have a strong conviction I am meant to be here, but providing a straightforward answer to this question is not simple. I am not aware of anyone in my family that has served in public life. However, I am sure if I look back an extra few generations, there would be. As some branches of my family have been in Tasmania for generations and there has been some fresh Dutch blood mixed in, there has been a clear legacy of caring for others.

Politics has been a man's business for a long time, and despite being raised by a single dad, I grew up in a kind of matriarchal environment. I am the third of four daughters. My mother is also the third of four daughters, and her mother is the second of six daughters, and each generation is incredibly close-knit.

On my father's side, my Opa died before I was born and my Oma, with her croquettes and her soup, is the glue which bonds us together. Having migrated to Tasmania from Europe after the Second World War, my Oma is the eldest Tasmanian in her family.

Suffice it to say that nursing and administration are the dominant careers modelled by those I looked up to, however at the age of 17, on completing a career test, the idea of a pursuit of a political career was planted. I had other dreams and God had other plans, but as the timing

is right, the opportunity becomes available and with what may appear as doing a Bradbury over the last few months, here I am.

As I wrote this speech, I realised the effort put in was not just recent effort, but the effort of a lifetime. As I reflect on my journey, I realise that while my early aspirations diverged from political office, life's unfolding led me here. It was not a deliberate path toward being elected to parliament, but looking back I see a trajectory that brought me to this moment at the right time.

The Jacqui Lambie Network has a vision, which inspired me to put up my hand, of a parliament filled with people from all walks of life who serve their community and only their community, who ask people what they think rather than telling them how they think, who demand the highest standards of honesty, accountability and decency, who cannot be defamed or demoted, corrupted or controlled, bought or sold: who are there to make big things happen for the little guy. This is a democratic ideal I can truly get behind.

I stand before you not because of a mere submission of an expression of interest on a website or a chance encounter with Jacqui Lambie. I stand here today because of years marked with honesty, integrity and hard work: years spent caring for those around me and serving them to the best of my ability in each moment.

I grew up in East Devonport and attended public schools. I was married at 18 and two babies later, we moved to the mainland, as many of my generation did, in pursuit of employment opportunities. After a time, I started a cleaning business in partnership with my sister and was astonished to be refused membership to the union due to my status as a business owner. I experienced the void of sole traders and small business owners, who are both employer and employee, who are unable to enter the debate for safety standards and minimum employment requirements simply because they fit both parts; despite being a huge part of the economy, in particular in the trades and service fields.

This spurred me to tertiary education, which developed my knowledge of politics and my skills in business management and strategic decision making. Through this, I have worked in not-for-profit and community environments, for government, in financial services, for utility companies, and supporting councils in regional services. Most significantly, as a business owner once again, in the family entertainment industry. This environment spans education, tourism and hospitality and is often overlooked for its contribution to Tasmania. Each opportunity I have had has broadened my outlook and grown me into the person I am today.

What is it we look for in our leaders and those who represent us? We look for people who have integrity, who care for their communities, who notice things around them: the big thinkers, the ones who dream and pursue their dreams, and those who consider the long-term effects of decisions and the unintended effects of decisions. Sometimes our leaders do not meet their expectations and those who voted for them. We have seen the results of this with a variety of people elected here today.

Friends and acquaintances have said to me, '...you would make a good politician. I could not do that, but you can'. Why do they say that? I cannot be sure, but I think this is because I notice the things and they frustrate me. When people are hurting, I want to help and when things are not working, I want to make them work. When government departments work in silos and make changes which affect other industries, I have been known to get very expressive.

Over the past few weeks, as my colleagues and I have been settling into our new lives, there have been several frustrations which remind me why I am here. So many stories of immature and embarrassing behaviour from those who were elected as the leaders of our state over the last 12 months. There are unanswered questions about how things work, which has stumped our colleagues who have never had to induct a whole new political party before. At one point, I nearly wrote this speech as a pithy soliloquy on the inefficiencies of government departments and correlating this to the frustrations of the Tasmanian people who want to see strategic planning, decisive action and effective service delivery. I shall leave it to your imagination as to how that would have turned out.

In truth, our parliamentary staff and Department of Premier and Cabinet (DPAC) and everyone who has been here these last few weeks have done an amazing job in welcoming us and making us feel accepted and part of this community.

However, there are things I am here for. I am an enhancer, a true team player; I love to hear ideas and grow them. When someone sparks an idea, I want to see it and make it work. I can recognise when things are about to derail, am quick to pivot and make necessary decisions in order to correct the projection. I have a creative outlook and I am willing to work within the system whilst questioning if the system is working at its most effective. I am willing to think outside the box, not just for the sake of it, but in order to affect the change that is needed.

I am a truth deliver. I can spend hours researching a question to find out why. Finding out why took me to university as a mature age student. Finding out why helps me burrow into the mud to find the real problem in order to develop the solution. Without the why, we do not move forward: we add band-aids, we waste money, we make poor decisions and we do not get the outcomes we need.

Do we need to spend more or do we need to investigate and make sure what is being spent is used really well? Can we create efficiencies? Can we make nurses', doctors' and teachers' jobs easier and free them to do what they love? If we are going to build it, are we choosing the cheapest option or the best option?

Are we delivering value for money? Are we duplicating past success? Are we looking to innovative solutions? Just because we did it that way before, are we sure we need to continue doing it that way, or is there a better way? Do we have the money to do that, or do we need to prioritise and plan for it later. When we have considered, when we have the information, let us do the right thing and implement it well.

These are the reasons the people of Braddon have chosen me. They have recognised the lady who kept rearranging her business to fit more in, to create a funds basis for their families to enjoy: the wife of the Santa photos in their pictures, the mother of their children's friend, the woman who cried or cheered when they told their stories, the one who worked 80- hour weeks and a second job to keep her family fed and the doors to her business open. The one who walked the road of disability and tragedy and is continuing to do so: the one who can empathise with them and what they are going through, who has ears to hear and has pushed through the anxiety and the fear to stand here today.

What do I promise Braddon in return? I will take the time to scrutinise bills and legislation and consider the effect on the people of Tasmania and its environments, whether physical, economical or social; its future in the short and the long term; base my decision on

the merit and the outcomes expected with an open mindset to benefit constituents from all walks of life. I will be accessible; keen to discover the views of others through discussions with organisations, groups and individuals. I have really enjoyed this; learning so much from people around our island and our region through discussions I have had through the campaign and the last few weeks. I look forward to this being an ongoing process, enabling my decision making to be a true reflection of the electorate I represent. Hopefully this will continue to be with a smile on my face.

Madam Speaker, as I read through others, mostly very long, maiden speeches, with their lofty language and their pompous ideals, I struggled with where to start on this one. Yet, here I am, presenting you with a speech that is likely just as pompous and idealistic as theirs, hopefully just not quite as long. I have heard some lovely inaugural speeches over the last week and I encourage my new colleagues and thank them for their commitment to this House. I have a lot to learn to ensure I serve my community in the best way possible. I dream of a type of democracy which enables ease of access between the electorate and their representatives. I dream of politics that is not a game but a collaboration.

As I close, I turn to the act of appreciation. So many people have a part to play in me standing here today: my family, my friends, my church community, the people who have encouraged and mentored me throughout my life; the people of Braddon who voted for me; Jacqui Lambie, who dared to dream she could enable ordinary Australians to be a part of a new political landscape - that we can breakdown the walls of habit and allow fresh air in. Thank you to the JLN team, volunteers, and supporters. I would not be here without you.

I must say wobble boarding was a joy and I look forward to it in the future. I do. I enjoyed it. It was great. My husband has been calling himself a kept man for some years as he has had to put down the tools due to degenerative vision issues. I have never had anyone as proud of me as he has been in the last few weeks. My incredible children know what they are in for with their workaholic mother. They are content to share me with the people of Braddon. Luckily, they love me enough to tell me when I am failing and they need some time with me. Sadly, neither my father or father-in-law are around to see this, but other father figures have stepped in and I am so honoured to have them in my life. I have two of the most amazing mothers who I could not live without, so they better stick around a little longer.

The campaign trail has brought me new friends and new colleagues. To Beck, Andrew and Craig - the next few years are going to be amazing and I know our team is going to thrive. We will stand for integrity, honesty, openness and true democracy. Tasmania is going to be better for it, Madam Speaker. Thank you for putting your hand up to keep the order in such a diverse House and I look forward to seeing what we can all achieve together over the next few years.

Members - Hear, hear.

[3.11 p.m.]

Mrs PETRUSMA (Franklin) - Madam Speaker, it is with great delight that I rise to reply to the Governor's Address.

I first congratulate you on your election to the Speaker's Chair. I have no doubt that your wisdom and many years of experience will provide for and ensure a very orderly and fair House.

I am also very much looking forward to working alongside you and also the wonderful staff in this parliament as the new Chair of Committees. I am also very grateful and humbly acknowledge the great honour the House has been pleased to confer on me by choosing me to be its Deputy Speaker, an office that I too will endeavour, like yourself, Madam Speaker, to fill with dignity and impartiality.

I would also like to congratulate all new and returning members to the House for their successful election on 23 March, as we collectively form the 51st Parliament of Tasmania, and also extend my congratulations to the recently elected new members of the Legislative Council. It is indeed a great honour and privilege to be a member of this parliament, and I know we are all here because we want to make Tasmania an even better place in which to live, work and raise a family.

I especially want to thank the electors of Franklin for their support and for returning me as one of their seven representatives. To be elected for a fifth time and to be the first Liberal elected in Franklin is truly humbling, and I look forward to once again being able to represent the people of Franklin in this parliament and in this government, in my role as Parliamentary Secretary to the Premier.

I also want to acknowledge my fellow Franklin Liberal candidates, minister Nic Street, minister Eric Abetz, Dean Young, Aldo Antolli, Josh Garvin and Jock McGregor. To Aldo, Joshua and Jock, I say big thank you and well done for all of your outstanding efforts and support during the campaign. You are all wonderful campaigners and true Liberals. You can certainly all hold your heads up high, and I look forward to campaigning with you all again in the future. I also congratulate minister Eric Abetz on his successful election to the Tasmanian parliament and appointment to Cabinet, and to minister Nic Street for his successful re-election.

I also extend to minister Street my very best wishes, thoughts and prayers and thank him for his courage and leadership in talking openly about his lived experience with mental health, which will not only help to reduce stigma but also greatly encourage others to share their feelings and, importantly, seek support and guidance. Everyone experiences mental health issues at some times in their lives and it is vital not to underestimate the importance of just being there for someone and to normalise these conversations with family, friends and co-workers. To Nic we say take care and know that you have all of us in this Chamber's support.

I thank the outgoing member for Franklin, Dean Young, for the amazing work he did as a member of parliament and for the Liberal government. Dean is a community man. His heart, home and passion lie within the Franklin electorate where he lives and raises his beautiful family with his wife, Allison. Dean is such a warm, honest and approachable person. People feel accepted and comfortable when they are with Dean, which is why he is highly regarded by the community and all those who have contact with him. Dean also worked tirelessly as Parliamentary Secretary for Small Business because as a small business owner himself, he understood first-hand the challenges that come with owning your own business, along with the sacrifice, hard work and dedication it takes to ensure growth and success.

I now have the privilege to place on *Hansard* a few words from Dean, who writes:

I want to take a moment to express my deepest thanks and gratitude to the people of Franklin for their support and for the opportunity to represent them in parliament. While it is bittersweet to say goodbye to this role, I am filled

with appreciation for the opportunity to have served such a remarkable community.

I also want to extend my heartfelt thanks to my colleagues in parliament as well as the hardworking staff who help keep things running smoothly behind the scenes. Your dedication and commitment does not go unnoticed and it has been an honour to work alongside you.

To the members of the Liberal team, I am immensely grateful for your trust, friendship and tireless efforts. Your support has meant everything to me and I am proud of the work we accomplished together.

To the new members of parliament, congratulations on your appointment. It is a significant responsibility but also an incredible opportunity to make a positive impact. Cherish every moment and know that the people of Tasmania have placed their trust in you.

Thank you again for the privilege of serving. It has been an unforgettable journey and I am forever grateful for the experience.

Thank you, Dean, and on behalf the Liberal Party and the members of this House, we wish you all the best.

It is also a delight to welcome the member for Bass, Rob Fairs, to the Liberal family, a very passionate and well-known advocate for his community, and the Liberal member for Lyons, minister Howlett, another passionate and well-known advocate for her community, to the House of Assembly.

Madam Speaker, to do our job well, our staff and supporters are essential. I thank all my new staff for everything they have done for me over the last few weeks since my election. Their advice and support are deeply valued. Likewise, to everyone who worked in the Liberal secretariat during the campaign and to all the Liberal Party members and my supporters who supported me through having signs, letterboxing and spreading the word, a big thank you. You are the lifeblood of our party, and I am very grateful for all of your support.

Most importantly, I especially pay tribute and acknowledge the love, help and support of my family and friends. Without my husband Tim, my children, grandchildren, family and friends, I definitely would not have been elected. It was through all of their love, help and support that my election signs were put up, a huge amount of letterboxing was undertaken, the house was kept tidy and clean and food was on the table, and I just want to say how much I value their love and support of me, especially in regard to me once again standing and returning to this parliament.

Madam Speaker, it is truly a delight to be back because, yes, I did miss you all dearly. While at times we might be a bit of a dysfunctional family, each and every one of us is here because we are all passionate about making Tasmania a better place to live, work, play and raise a family.

Since July 2022 to March this year, I have had the opportunity to spend a lot more time with my children and grandchildren and to see my youngest finish year 12, spend time with

family and friends, but also to become a Pilates instructor, having gained my certificate IV and well on the way to getting my diploma, and to become a graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors and to work for the Shepherd Centre, a world-leading child-safe NDIS service provider and specialist in helping children with hearing loss learn to listen and speak.

The Shepherd Centre has helped thousands of children to reach their full potential for over 50 years. As a cochlear implant recipient myself who lives with sensorineural hearing loss, this is a cause deeply close to my heart as I want to see services for both children and adults in Tasmania be world leading. I am so very grateful to the Tasmanian and federal governments for all their support for the Shepherd Centre, especially in setting up new services in Hobart and Launceston as well as statewide outreach by the Shepherd Centre's outstanding, dedicated, highly skilled and very committed staff.

The election on 23 March was historic for several reasons and not because it was mine, Dean Young's, the Deputy Premier's and the Premier's mum's birthday. Firstly, the Rockliff government had taken the courageous decision to restore Tasmania's House of Assembly to 35 seats. This is a decision I strongly supported in this parliament as a member of the select committee on the House of Assembly restoration bill, as well as in my media release when I stepped down in July 2022.

This was a decision of integrity, for this decision was made by this government, even though we knew it would make it very difficult for us to be re-elected in majority. Our decision to restore the House to its pre-1998 numbers means that this parliament now more accurately represents the will of the Tasmanian people, with the greatest number of independents elected to the House of Assembly since the 1900 colonial election. However, the Tasmanian people have also made it very clear to all of us that they want this minority parliament to work and last the full term. Tasmanians want us all to work collaboratively, which is what I too want.

The highlight of my previous time in this parliament was to work collaboratively across parliament, whether on committees such as the House of Assembly restoration bill, or in the prevention of family and sexual violence, which is one of the major reasons why I ran again for this election. I stand with the nation in continuing our fight against family and sexual violence, and in finding ways to prevent violence against all Tasmanians, especially our women and children. As a victim/survivor of family and sexual violence, I am committed to ending violence against women and children, especially at this time when we are seeing a sharp rise in the number of women killed by violent attacks.

We need to continue to stand together, to remember and honour those who have tragically lost their lives to family violence, to provide support to victim survivors of family violence, and also to shine a light on the devastating impact that family violence has on individuals, families and the wider community. I know that members of this House are equally as passionate as I am, and this is why I believe the 51st Parliament has the potential to be one of the best and most productive in our state's history.

I am very positive about our ability to all work together to make this a parliament that delivers for Tasmania and its people. I especially thank the goodwill of the members of this House who have in good faith provided the certainty and stability for us to have a workable Parliament in this term. A stable government is the best thing for Tasmania as it provides confidence to Tasmanian businesses, certainty for our economy and certainty for our community.

Madam Speaker, this election was also historic because it delivered a Tasmanian Liberal government for a fourth term, the first time in our state's history. Tasmania has come a long way since 2014 under the Liberal governments led by premiers Will Hodgman, Peter Gutwein and Jeremy Rockliff, each of whom it was my deep honour and pleasure to have served in their respective cabinets. Tasmania is now growing in diversity, industry, innovation, attraction and creativity. We have created around 50,000 jobs and we have a plan for 20,000 more over the next five years while keeping unemployment, which has fallen to a record four per cent, low.

Tasmania's tourism sector has been breaking records in employment and visitor spending, and our exports are at record highs. This success has allowed our government to invest in the priorities that Tasmanians care about, like health, housing and cost of living. These were the key issues and concerns raised with me and the government during the election, and we do not deny that, like the rest of Australia, Tasmanians are facing some serious challenges right now. This is why we have a plan to tackle these challenges. Our 2030 Strong Plan for Tasmania's Future is to keep Tasmania's economy strong, create more jobs and make Tasmania the best place in which to live, work and raise a family.

Our plan will build on the successes of the past 10 years and deliver the certainty and stability that Tasmanians deserve, while acting on the issues affecting Tasmanians now. It will ensure that young Tasmanians like my children and grandchildren have a future right here in Tasmania and do not need to move away to learn a trade or get a job; instead, they can flourish in their local community here in Tasmania.

In regard to helping to bring down the cost of living, we are supercharging this year's Hydro Renewable Energy Dividend to deliver a \$250 credit to Tasmanian households and a \$300 credit to Tasmanian businesses on their energy bills. We will invest \$15 million over four years to expand bus services across Tasmania, and we will halve the cost of bus fares and Derwent ferry fares. A typical Metro fare will decrease from \$3.50 to \$1.75 and a concession fair from \$2.40 to \$1.20, with even bigger savings for regional Tasmanians, especially in the Huon Valley in my electorate of Franklin.

To help provide financial relief to families, we are expanding our free school lunch program. The Healthy School Lunches pilot program was introduced by this government, with schools already seeing an increase in student attendance, students being more engaged with their learning in the classroom and students having healthier eating habits, while providing cost-of-living relief for Tasmanian families up to \$950 per year per child.

Every dollar counts when raising children, and I know that one of the biggest expenses parents face when raising children is the cost of child care. This is why we will provide \$10 million to support primary and district schools to establish new on-site out-of-school care services in partnership with local early childhood education care providers. We will also provide \$32 million to build four new super-sized child and family centres, including one in Huonville that will offer a range of early childhood services and supports for families and children from zero to five years, and \$5 billion to establish an early years workforce fund to grow and upskill the early childhood education and care workforce.

Under our school building blitz, we have massive investment in new and upgraded infrastructure including Clarence High School - \$29 million; Lindisfarne North Primary School - \$7.35 million, Risdon Vale Primary School - \$5.45 million; and \$10 million for schools to upgrade their playgrounds and sports courts for the benefit of the whole community.

This government recognises that for many Tasmanians their first home lies beyond their reach and rental prices are still too high. This is why we aim to build 10,000 new social and affordable homes by 2032, and we are already on our way to accomplishing this goal, with more than 3000 social and affordable homes delivered since October 2020.

To help create more homes in the private market, we will introduce the Homes Faster! Partnership Incentive Fund, with a new density incentive grant for developers of \$10,000 per unit to build brand new infill, medium or high-density developments, and short-term interest-free loans up to \$1 million for medium-density unit or apartment development projects to assist with early headworks charges.

We will also enhance the very successful MyHome shared equity program by increasing the maximum shared equity from \$200,000 to \$300,000 or 40 per cent, whichever is the lesser amount of the purchase price for purchases of new homes or house and land packages, and lift the income limits by 25 per cent for co-owners to qualify for new constructions.

We will also abolish the stamp duty costs for first home buyers of properties up to \$750,000, and to help homeowners and shackies, we are providing land tax relief by raising the minimum threshold for land tax to \$125,000. This will abolish land tax entirely for 4400 landowners, including shackies, with remaining property owners seeing an average saving of \$113 per year.

We recognise that there are problems in our health system, which is why our 2030 Strong Plan makes massive investments across the board to improve every aspect of the Tasmanian health system. We are delivering a huge staff and cash injection of \$88 million to boost the Royal Hobart Hospital's emergency department; providing a relocation allowance of up to \$15,000 for nurses and midwives to relocate to Tasmania and remain employed full-time with the Tasmanian Health Service for three years or more; and \$10,000 scholarships for new Tasmanian graduate nurses who start with the Tasmanian Health Service and remain employed full-time for a period of three years or more.

To improve our ambulance service, we have commenced a paramedic recruitment blitz for 78 additional full-time paramedics across the state, including 12 in Cygnet and Snug, along with four new ambulance stations, including one each at Snug and Cygnet. We will also deliver our nation-leading GP guarantee that will help ensure that when Tasmanians need a GP, they can see a GP.

We will establish a new GP Now Rapid Response Unit, ready to be deployed into local communities where and when needed. The members of this unit will support GP services in areas where the private market has failed, where it is difficult for GPs to maintain a practice, or in areas where they are needed, including following sudden GP closures. To help attract new GPs to work in regional Tasmania, we will cover up to \$100,000 of the HECS fees for 40 new GPs who commit to working in rural and regional areas of our state for five years and deliver multi-year grant funding for existing GP practices of up to \$250,000 per annum.

Community sport and recreation clubs help build stronger, healthier and safer communities, which is why they need upgrades to change rooms, toilets and club facilities to ensure comfortable and accessible ongoing participation for all. They are the backbone of our communities through the role they play in increasing friendship, leadership, health, wellness and player development pathways, and are often the central point of their local community.

Clubs also play a very important role in engaging our young people in sport and recreation, which helps their physical and mental health, gives them a sense of belonging, and helps them to make new friends and build social circles outside of school. I was delighted to see this government supporting a number of initiatives during this election campaign that will have immediate and long-term benefits for our youth, their families and the whole community.

As part of the Tasmanian Liberal Government, I look forward to playing my part in delivering our 2030 Strong Plan for Tasmania's Future. I am delighted to support our Premier in my role as parliamentary secretary, and I look forward to serving and delivering for the wonderful people of the Franklin electorate. Once again, I congratulate everyone in this House for being elected to the 51st Parliament of Tasmania.

Recognition of Visitors

Madam SPEAKER - Before I call the next member, I let members know that in the gallery today we have the UTAS International Pathway students. I thank them all very much for joining us.

Just a reminder about phones. We are allowed to have them, but they really cannot interrupt the proceedings of the day, so this is just a cautious reminder. With that, I call the Deputy Leader of the Greens.

Members - Hear, hear.

[3.31 p.m.]

Mr BAYLEY (Clark) - Madam Speaker, I start by acknowledging the traditional owners of the land upon which we meet and the Tasmanian Aboriginal community and pay my respects to Aboriginal elders past and present. We do indeed meet on stolen Aboriginal land. This is land that was never ceded. This is land that was taken at the point of a gun, and a treaty that was undertaken with the original peoples on their exile to Wybalenna at Flinders Island and was never honoured by the state, the Crown, and still remains unfinished business when it comes to our relationship with Aboriginal people here in this parliament as we swear allegiance to the King and act on his behalf.

I think we would all do well to reflect on the words of Dewayne Everettsmith in the Chamber on the opening day of this parliament, as he unpacked for us the innate connection between Aboriginal people and the land, sea and sky country. In fact, in front of a portrait of Queen Victoria, I think we have to accept exactly how generous Dewayne was, not only with his time but also with his stories and sharing everything up to the creation story of palawa with the people in that Chamber.

For a community that does not universally accept or necessarily participate in our system of governance, for Dewayne to come into that place and offer that wisdom and knowledge, I think was a true gift that we should cherish and accept. We should also accept that there is so much more that needs to be done in terms of reconciliation, recompense and repair when it comes to Aboriginal people. After 10 years of lofty words from the government, starting with former premier, Will Hodgman, wanting to reset the relationship, we are still woefully lagging behind when it comes to meeting the needs of Aboriginal people.

Dewayne talked us through the challenges and issues to do with identity and the responsibility of the Aboriginal community to identify and acknowledge their own people. He was probably more circumspect about some of the other actions that this House has consistently failed when it comes to Aboriginal people, and by that, I mean enacting some legislation that can truly give effect to protecting Aboriginal heritage in this state.

Shamefully, for this parliament and this government, it is now three years since the relevant minister came into this House and tabled a report into a review of the Aboriginal Heritage Act. Three years ago, he said it is clear that the act does not provide effective mechanisms for protection, nor does it adequately consider the significance of Aboriginal heritage in the Aboriginal context. That means that the Aboriginal Heritage Act does not work, and it is incumbent upon us as parliamentarians and lawmakers to ensure that it does.

I find it appalling and I think Aboriginal people will find it galling that this parliament and this government promises to act to retrospectively amend a coastal policy to accommodate a massive, industrial, foreign-owned development at the drop of a hat, while we have been waiting three years for anything that looks like draft legislation to amend the Aboriginal Heritage Act. It is shameful and needs to be remedied in this term of parliament.

So too does the return of land. There has been no land returned to Aboriginal people for 20 years or thereabouts. Over the last couple of years this parliament has snubbed an opportunity to return land as a new Aboriginal-owned national park tenure in kooparoona niara. We must do better.

Then there is the Pathway to Truth Telling and Treaty report, at the moment sitting dusty somewhere on the Premier's shelf after being written by two eminent Tasmanian professors, an ex-Governor and a professor of law, with very little action taken as yet to enact it. I implore you all, as members of this House, to step up in our responsibilities to take our roles seriously and make life better for Aboriginal people and to deliver equity, justice, dignity and the return of land.

Madam Deputy Speaker, I have not had the opportunity to congratulate you on your election to your role and I congratulate any other members who have been elected to official positions in this House. I congratulate all members, and particularly new members, for their election to this Chamber.

I thank the Tasmanian Electoral Commission for their diligence and professionalism when it comes to conducting the election. It was a difficult election, with extra houses, extra seats, a different ballot and more numbers needed, and clearly it was carried out comprehensively, diligently and professionally.

In advance of the 51st Parliament, I also want to acknowledge and thank the clerks and all the parliamentary staff in this place who make our life so much easier when it comes to the passage of the work of this place. Thank you in advance and we look forward to working with you and ensuring that funding to the House is adequate to meet the needs that we, with an additional 10 members, are placing on the services of the House and the services we demand, such as the library services, Hansard, the cleaning services and so forth. We will continue to watch that carefully and make sure this House is adequately funded to do the work it needs to do to support us to do the work.

To Rosalie, thank you for leading us into the election and congratulations on your re-election, and to Cecily and Tabatha, congratulations. It is absolutely fantastic that you have joined us in this Chamber, and we are so proud to be five in here. We are five because Helen as well has been elected. Helen, I wanted to leave you last because two seats in Clark has been an aspiration of the Greens for many decades, and in 2024 we finally achieved it. Thank you, congratulations, and similarly, I am looking forward to sharing this electorate and sharing the workload with you. Well done to all.

As with every other member in this place, I need to thank the campaign staff, the volunteers, for doing the hard yards on getting us elected. We also went not only from this election to the House of Assembly, but many of us, particularly here in Clark, went on to campaign for the Legislative Council elections as well in terms of Hobart and Elwick. I congratulate our candidate, Janet Shelley, for the campaign she ran in Elwick, albeit unsuccessfully, and thank all of her volunteers as well.

I also want to make mention of Cassy O'Connor on her first day on the job today in the other place, who was much loved and so effective in this Chamber for many years and has now been elected to represent the Greens in the upper House. We are a completely focused team of six that will be taking our agenda forward with positions that are consistent with our party values and the policies we took to the election, and we are so looking forward to that.

I also want to leave an acknowledgement and a thanks to our families because, as has been mentioned in many inaugural speeches already, we cannot do the work we do without the support, the love and the endorsement of our families, acknowledging that they make a sacrifice alongside us as well.

I was elected in August 2023 and am now humbled to be elected in my own right. I have to say it does feel different to be elected in your own right as opposed to a recount. I want to reflect on the last six months of the last parliament because, for me, perhaps it looked a little bit normal. I was sitting here watching and I knew no different, but I am told and can see now how completely and utterly chaotic it was, all the way down to the very last day when the House was adjourned with business still on the paper. I think we even still had a condolence motion for Fran Bladel to be dealt with that was just cut off at the knees and left behind.

We went to an election to try to restore some certainty and some dignity to this House. The rest is history. The numbers speak for themselves and despite the fact that they carried on like pork chops that they had won the election, the Liberals have only ended up with 14 seats and have to look to the crossbench in order to deliver the level of confidence and supply that this parliament needs for it to do its work. I find it both surprising, interesting and a little bit galling that the so-called 2030 Strong Plan for Tasmania's Future appears to be a fait accompli. It appears that this government thinks it can deliver that so-called strong plan as if no negotiation is needed, as if everything should be delivered because it is an inherent right of this government, because it has 14 seats. Clearly, that is not the case. Clearly, there is going to be a strong role - not only for the Labor opposition and the Greens opposition, but the crossbench - to scrutinise the agenda going forward; to pull out the most odious bits and to add value where it is possible. There were odious bits in that 2030 so-called strong plan that were aimed entirely at winning votes that did not materialise.

Things like the 40,000 hectares of high conservation value forests. Opening up these reserve forests to give back to an industry that itself, at the time of that policy announcement,

said they did not want it; that they rejected this policy. Things like the youth crimes strike force, something the government's own Commissioner for Children and Young People has utterly rejected and is inconsistent with anything the commission of inquiry rejected. These are the odious bits of the 2030 Strong Plan that we, as the Greens, and I am sure with the support of others in this House, will work very hard to make sure they are struck out of the agenda going forward.

Then there were the unbelievable bits of the 2030 Strong Plan. Things like capping the stadium spend. What a crock to think that a project no one believes can be delivered for \$715 million. We learn now, confirmed again, that the Federal government's contribution is for things other than the stadium, like wharf upgrades, like housing. Tasmanians are on the hook for every single dollar of cost overrun when it comes to the development and construction costs of the stadium. Yet we are led to believe that somehow the government can cap expenditure at a certain amount and let the private sector take over from there. They are the unbelievable bits.

We Greens will be scrutinising the stadium very strongly. We will be making sure the numbers are on the table, that there is transparency and accountability when it comes to the costs associated with this stadium and the process related issues, making sure that stakeholders, important stakeholders, long cherished stakeholders like the RSL, are heard and their interests are protected as part of the process going forward.

When it came to the 2030 Strong Plan, there was also the absent bits; completely absent bits. Things like a cable car up kunanyi/Mount Wellington. When it was knocked off by the planning tribunal several years ago, the first thing the Premier did was write a letter to the cable car proponent offering support; 'How can we help you build your cable car?' In his state of the state speech, opening parliament in 2023, the Premier made it very clear he was willing to act to further facilitate a cable car up kunanyi, but, missing in action, no mention of anything like that in election campaign context. We are yet to see whether that is to materialise. I am not encouraging it, but I am raising and highlighting the fact that if and when it does come, it will be completely outside of any electoral context, utterly undeclared in the electoral context.

I will give you a little bit of credit on the government side of the benches because there are some positive bits of the 2030 Strong Plan. It is great to see the Liberal Party, and the Labor Party, finally coming some way to accepting the relevance of arguments long preferred by the Greens and going some way to adopting policies. Things like Airbnb: finally accepting there is a critical problem when it comes to the stripping of whole home rentals out of the rental market into Airbnbs and trying to do something about it. We are yet to be convinced the policy approach that has been put forward is going to do anything. However, it is welcome that you have accepted that there is a problem.

Things like half price public transport. The Greens have a policy of free public transport going forward, full stop. That would cost as little as \$12 million to the budget every single year. It is very welcome to see the Liberal Party, matched by the Labor Party, halve the price of public transport for a year. It is only a year; it is only going to do so much but, at least, it is something. It is great to see the Liberal Party come some way toward the Greens agenda regarding renters' rights and pets; having a pet in the home is very welcome. Reforming the *Residential Tenancy Act* to allow that is going to be a positive change. However, it is not enough. It clearly is not enough and more needs to be done.

We Greens will stick to our agenda. We will anchor everything that we do back to our party values: ecological sustainability, grassroots democracy, social justice, peace, and nonviolence. To speak to that, the two bills we have already tabled: bills like donation reform, making sure the long talked about, the long promised - including endorsed by the Labor Party - reforms to donation disclosure and thresholds are finally enacted so that we do not go through another election, just like the last one, where we do not know who pays the piper. If the Greens and independents can have the capacity in real time to post donations on the website then, surely, the major parties can as well.

It is fantastic to see today the member for Lyons, Ms Badger, table the Police Offences Amendment (Begging Repeal) Bill 2024. Repealing begging as a crime is utterly consistent with our social justice values. We will be looking forward to that debate going forward.

During the election campaign we promised to introduce legislation so that we have an EPA; an Environmental Protection Authority that actually has teeth. We continually see the situation where we have an EPA that just gums away on the problems the fish farming industry has. It has no capacity to actually deal with areas of environmental non-compliance and environmental degradation.

In in my portfolio areas, I am very much looking forward to taking forward on behalf of the Greens, initiatives and arguing initiatives, when it comes to properly protecting renters. Rents are going through the roof across the country and around the world; Tasmania is no exception. We need to make sure that we end no-cause evictions. We need to increase minimum energy efficiencies and we need to make sure that renters have genuine rights so that they cannot be evicted with no cause.

We need to make sure that our development is indeed sustainable, whether it is the EPA or whether it is fighting off changes to things like the coastal policy. We need to be making sure that economic development is sustainable development. Just because something is so-called renewable energy, it needs to be in the right place, it needs to be assessed through the right process and it needs to have the endorsement of the local community.

We want to see free public education. We want to make sure that our public schools are properly funded and schoolchildren who go to those public schools actually can do so for free, relieving cost-of-living pressures for their parents and making sure they can have a decent education that is not going to cost them an arm and a leg.

We need to respect and support our veterans. The cenotaph issue, as evidenced in the stadium debate, is a case in point as to how we are failing in that regard. The minister, to his credit, does a lot of work lifting up veterans and supporting their cause but here is a case where the rubber hits the road. Here is a case where the Cenotaph and the impact and the values of the Cenotaph are genuinely impacted by a big major development. Where is the government? Missing in action on that.

I am passionate about the arts. I want to see the arts supported. I want to see artists have a living wage. I want to see facilities in the arts like the lift in the Salamanca Arts Centre - how simple is it to have functioning infrastructure in this place?

To finish, we need to make this parliament work. We intend to collaborate and cooperate. There will be challenges; we will not always agree. The Liberal and the Labor parties are

increasingly hard to tell apart. Luckily, we have a crossbench that is bigger than the Labor opposition and can organise and can achieve good outcomes for the Tasmanian people in its own right. That is where our commitment lies, and we will be going forward on that basis. Thank you very much.

Madam SPEAKER - Before I call the Minister for Primary Industries and Water and Minister for Racing for her first speech, I remind members that this is her inaugural speech in this House, although her second first speech, and ask that the House extend the usual courtesies to the member.

[3.51 p.m.]

Ms HOWLETT (Lyons - Minister for Primary Industries and Water) (Inaugural) - Madam Speaker, it is a great honour for me to rise today and deliver my inaugural speech to this House, not only as a newly elected member for Lyons, but also as Minister for Primary Industries and Water, and Minister for Racing.

I acknowledge the Tasmanian Aboriginal people as the traditional owners of the land on which we meet and as the continuing custodians of this land, seas and skies. I value and pay my respects to the history, culture, strength and enduring nature of the Tasmanian Aboriginal community and its elders past and present.

First, I congratulate Premier Jeremy Rockliff on a historic fourth term of government and I am so proud to be part of his team and a member of this 51st Parliament. Congratulations to all elected members in this House, in particular my new Liberal colleagues Rob Fairs, Eric Abetz and returning colleague Jacqui Petrusma, and the new member for Prosser in the other place, Kerry Vincent.

This election focused on the issues affecting us right now, such as cost of living, health and housing. That is why we developed our 2030 Strong Plan for Tasmania's Future and that is what we are delivering.

I am so thrilled and grateful for the support I received in the state election from the people of Lyons. I will work hard every day to represent them and the people of Tasmania.

Madam Speaker, this is my second inaugural speech, and it would be remiss of me not to thank the people of Prosser, who trusted me to be their member in the Legislative Council for the past six years. Happily, the seat of Prosser is contained within the boundaries of my new electorate of Lyons, so I will be able to continue to serve this community. Just as importantly, I can absolutely vouch for the new member for Prosser, Kerry Vincent, a man I have worked closely with during my time as a local member and someone I am proud to call a trusted friend.

In my time as a member for Prosser, I met many people from different walks of life in differing circumstances. I worked hard to help every one of them. I pay tribute to them as the good-natured, hardworking Tasmanians that they are and who have continued to make this wonderful state what it is today.

There are also those who have touched a special place in my heart. One of those is Montana Marshall, one of the bravest individuals I have ever met. Montana had two lung replacements. I had the privilege of getting to know her while we sat together in hospital many, many times. I watched as she made scrunchies on a sewing machine, which we raised money

for, and I experienced the joy as she sold them to many of the members of the Triabunna community. I wear mine with pride. Unfortunately, she lost her battle in 2020 when she was in her early teens. You will never be forgotten, Montana. Knowing you has made me such a better person.

For me now, my responsibility is to the seat of Lyons, its residents and the broader people of Tasmania. For those people of Lyons who I am yet to meet, I am looking forward to meeting you and just as importantly, representing you.

I have been part of the Lyons community for the majority of my life, being educated at Campania District High School. I spent most of my youth working on our family farm at Campania with my father. If I was not on the farm, I was travelling around our state competing in equestrian events, accompanied by an extremely dedicated and supportive mother. My parents have and continue to play an important role in my life. They have provided me with a solid grounding of what it truly is to give back to one's community.

My father Colin served as the long-term and dedicated mayor of the Southern Midlands Council. Most evenings discussions around the dinner table would be centred on what was going on in the local community. My dad was always there for everyone and tried to find solutions to every problem. He held strong Liberal Party values, which is where the foundation for my own Liberal Party values came from. Importantly, he taught me that we should always try to find solutions to help those in need. My dad's passion for his community was the primary inspiration for my own political ambitions, but I did take an interesting pathway to get to this place.

Leaving school after completing year 10, I commenced and completed a trade certificate in hairdressing. At the age of 20, I built my first house in Brighton and lived there for many years. My first foray into business was a start-up out of my garage in Brighton when I was 20. I took a risk and started up a distribution company. I was a salesperson during the day and packed the stock orders at night out of my garage. Thankfully, the baby monitor from the garage reached the house, as I would work day and night. It was extremely cold during the winter, and I would often be found in a balaclava, as some of my friends in the Chamber have witnessed.

The reason for my persistence in making this business succeed was a necessity. I simply had to work hard to make ends meet. My then husband left, and I was faced with the many challenges that come with being a single mother. However, I did not let that stop me. During this time, I also went to university as a mature-age student, but with the competing demands of motherhood and running a business I could not find the time to complete my commerce degree.

After 10 challenging yet successful years, I sold my business and was invited to join the multinational company Procter and Gamble, where I spent five enjoyable, very rewarding years. Fortunately for me, this multinational company had a strong belief in investing in its people and I was able to undertake executive development courses and travel internationally, which allowed me to extend my skill set.

At the age of 30 and during the 2006 Lyons state election campaign, I met Sergei, who would later become my husband, my best friend and father to our daughter Penelope and son Dimitri.

I was fortunate to grow up in a household that understood not only the value of hard work, but also the value of giving back to one's community. With dad serving on the council from an early age, I learned to appreciate that very old saying, 'All politics is local, as well as the need to put in the hard yards if you really, truly want to make a positive difference'.

In my first election campaign in the 2006 state election, my only previous political experience was helping my dad during his council campaigns. I campaigned the way dad had showed me in a true grassroots fashion. I went from door to door, not to talk to people but rather to listen to them. Eighteen years later in the 2024 state election campaign, that is exactly how I did it again.

I stood for the Liberal Party then and now because it is a party that reflects my values. Those values are hard work and reward for that hard effort and individual achievement, the freedom for each individual to better themselves and to help make our society a much better place.

I learned a great deal in the six years I was a member of the Legislative Council, and I am grateful for the friendships and the networks I have built during this time. During that time, I had the privilege of being a minister. It was a time when, as minister and as a local member, I was able to help navigate businesses and families through that huge time of uncertainty: the COVID pandemic.

There have been some pretty tough times since I made my first inaugural speech in the Legislative Council. My father has battled cancer and is still battling that fight, showing the strength and resilience that everyone who knows my dad would recognise. He is incredible. In 2020, we lost my dear godson, Dante, due to mental health issues. He was such a beautiful, incredible soul who lost his struggle with something that is so often hidden, and something that affects so many of our young people in Tasmania. I think of him every day. His mother, Melina, and his sisters, Francesca and Lavinia, are here with us today. Melina has been my friend of 33 years, and I am proud to support her in her movement, Dante Rocks, a walk in memory of Dante and to promote awareness for mental health to be held in October this year.

My own family went through its darkest times two years ago, when my brother Craig passed away a day before his 58th birthday after a very brave battle at the Whittle Ward in Hobart. This week is palliative care week. I pay tribute to the nurses and palliative care workers who bring so much more than just clinical skill: they bring compassion, comfort, support and empathy when Tasmanians and their loved ones really need it the most.

I lost my only brother; my parents lost their only son, and you are not supposed to bury your children. Not a day goes by when we do not think of him. I thank those people who wrap their arms around my parents and our family: Tracy and Gordon Chessell, and David and Alison Pearce, who are here in the Chamber today. Thank you so much for your ongoing support.

Sandra Henderson, Michael Long, John Tucker, Asimina Rigas, Kirsha Kaechele, Michelle Mamarcus, Helen Quinn, Melina, Laura, Janneke, Rachel, Mary and Pris: we are forever grateful for your support and ongoing support.

On a happy note, in the last six years, Sergei and I have become grandparents. I am affectionately called GG by Theodore, who I know is watching at home right now. He has just

turned three, and he has brought immense joy into our lives. I am so proud of what wonderful parents Britney and Dimitri have become and the successful small business that they have created and grown in Queensland. We love you so very much and we just wish that you would move home.

The decision for me to change houses and run for the seat of Lyons in the House of Assembly was one that my husband and I discussed with my parents and in-laws, Penny and Bruce. However, it was our then 15-year-old daughter who, one Sunday afternoon, presented me and a great friend with a very long list of all the reasons why I should do it. The key reason she gave was that I will continue to have the ability to make a difference, to be a role model for girls and for women, and to make sure that a Rockliff Liberal government was returned. From you, Pea, I continue to take my cues, and I love you. Penelope, you have grown to become a resilient, empathetic, intelligent, caring and considerate young woman, and I know that whatever path you choose, you will take it on with passion.

I also take this opportunity to thank my extremely dedicated and hardworking campaign team. I could not have done it without your help and the assistance of so many people. To the Liberal Party campaign director, Pete Coulson, thank you for all of your help and guidance.

To Sergei, Dad, Mum, Brad Stansfield, Sandy Witterson, Becher Townshend, Jonathan Heather, Matt Hockman, Gemma Milling, Trent Hasson, Sheree Minnikin-Smith, Ed Boutchard, Tony Smith, Neil Edwards, my very dear friend Ron Riley, Kerry Vincent, and Jan Elsey: thank you for your advice, your hard work and your loyal support.

To my Sorell girls, led by Gemma - and there are far too many to name - thank you for keeping me grounded, and thank you for your continued friendship and all that you did for me during my campaign.

To those businesses and individuals who had containers - plenty of those - trailers and posters on their properties and businesses: thank you from the bottom of my heart.

To the many Liberal Party members from Lyons and Prosser who doorknocked, letterboxed and made phone call after phone call for me: thank you for being such supportive people.

I thank my sisters, Michelle and Robyn and their families, and my wonderful in-laws, Penny and Bruce. To the rest of our family and friends: Thank you. To my husband, Sergei, son, Dimitri, and daughter, Penelope: thank you for believing in me and supporting me to run again. Finally, to my parents: thank you.

Thank you to my new team: Vince, Daisy, Caroline, Chris, Luke, James, Heather, Sharee, Trudy, Nicki and Anna, who is starting very soon. You have been such a wonderful support and guide to me and have set me up to succeed in my new role. Thank you for all of your help so far.

To Ned, Lee, Brett, Jess, Carol, and the Premier's Office team: thank you also for your valued support.

To Jason and the team at NRE Tasmania; Gene, Andrew, Dave, and the team at Tasracing, and Kate and Andrew, the team from Tasmanian Irrigation: thank you for your

incoming briefings and for the subsequent information provided, and for your ongoing patience, support and advice.

Madam Speaker, as part of Jeremy Rockliff's Liberal government, I am getting on with the job and delivering our 2030 Strong Plan for Tasmania's Future in Primary Industries, Water and Racing. I want to keep working hard to make Tasmania the best place in Australia to do business.

I know firsthand how important agriculture is to so many regions across Tasmania. We have proud farming families that have lived and worked on the land in Tasmania for many generations, and I will always back our farmers. We will keep working hard together to reach our target of a farmgate value of \$10 billion by 2050.

I grew up around racing; it has always been part of my family life. I know how important racing is to the families, communities, local jobs and businesses that it supports, but I also know that its reputation has taken a hit. As Racing minister, I want to fix that. I want to rebuild trust and restore faith in the racing industry across all three codes and see them thrive. That is why, today, I tabled the Racing Regulation Integrity Bill 2024 and Racing Regulation and Integrity (Consequential Amendments) Bill 2024. This is the first step in delivering our 100-day-plan commitment to provide the Tasmanian racing industry with a modern, effective and fit-for-purpose model for regulation and for integrity. This is very important legislation and will represent the most significant reform in decades for the industry.

Finally, Madam Speaker, I put on the record my sincere congratulations to you on your election as Speaker and thank you for your continued service in this role.

To the people of Lyons: you have put your faith in me, and I will repay you by working hard every single day for you across all parts of the electorate and here in this place. I will not let you down.

[4.12 p.m.]

Ms JOHNSTON (Clark) - Madam Speaker, I also take this opportunity to formally congratulate you on your election as Speaker and recognise just how different this place has felt for the last week-and-a-half. I warmly welcome that and hope that continues. I am sure, under your guidance, it will.

It is a great privilege to be re-elected as the independent member for Clark. It is not lost on me that this is the first time this has happened, for an independent to be re-elected in this place, since 1947. That is a long time. I am certainly humbled and privileged to be re-elected as an independent.

I warmly welcome all new members to this place, particularly those of the crossbench. It is pleasing to see that the crossbench has grown since my election in 2021. It is not such a lonely place any more. We are now a prouder crossbench and a very strong crossbench. I am thrilled and delighted with the prospect of that. I hope I have played some small role in that by showing that the crossbench can be powerful, can achieve results and is to be respected and honoured.

I will take some time now to reflect on the lessons we should have learnt from the election campaign and election result - why we are here today. I want to reflect on what the community

has told us. I believe they have spoken quite clearly. They want a diversity of views to represent them. They want elected representatives who represent them, not big corporations or big donors. They want people to put community needs first, not party politics. That is why we see a very diverse parliament. That is why we see the growth of the crossbench and the power of the old party politics diminishing. They want people to stand up for the issues that matter to them, not to big corporations or big donors, but to the community, to those individual members. They also want people to mean what they say. Quite rightly, members of the Tasmanian community can be very cynical when it comes to how they think of their politicians. Hopefully, this new parliament can demonstrate that we are changing.

Minority government brings many challenges, but, most importantly, it brings great opportunity. It forces the parliament to work more collaboratively and there is much that we need to tackle as a matter of urgency. This House will no longer be a rubber stamp. Everything will be debated and considered on its merits. There will be discussions, collaboration, and a sharing of ideas. That is exactly what the Tasmanian people wanted, and I hope that is what we can achieve on their behalf.

During the election campaign I was asked what the most important issue for Tasmanians was. Despite the fact that most people, when asked, would say we talk about health and housing the most, I said I thought it was integrity. Without integrity in our government institutions, in our democratic processes, in our parliament and personal integrity, we will not be able to properly tackle the massive challenges Tasmanians face.

We need integrity when it comes to tackling the issue of our rental crisis and to recognise that housing is a human right first and foremost, not a money-making business. We desperately need to review the *Residential Tenancy Act*. It is long overdue. We need to recognise that what we are doing now is failing Tasmanians and not providing security of tenancy.

We need to act with integrity, not for quick, short-term political gain, and recognise that it will take significant investment in community and primary health to make a long-term impact on Tasmania's health and wellbeing and save us money on our hospitals in the long run. This is a return on investment that goes over many election cycles, and it takes a brave parliament to recognise that.

We need to act with integrity in responding to the commission of inquiry and victim/survivors. We need to hear their pain and seek the justice and accountability they so greatly deserve.

It takes integrity to realise that the Ashley Youth Detention Centre must close immediately.

We need to act with integrity and recognise that we cannot expect improved outcomes in our educational systems unless we adequately fund them, and recognise that, at the moment, we are not even funding the bare minimum. That is unacceptable. We need to act.

We need to act with integrity when it comes to protecting our natural environment and not pander to multinational companies who willingly plunder our natural resources and leave a mess for generations to come to clean up, if we can.

We need to act with integrity, recognise the sentience of animals, and stop treating them so cruelly for profit. Greyhound racing must end. It takes integrity to recognise this.

We need integrity in our planning laws so that they ensure that the voice of community is heard and represented, not just that of the developer.

We need to act with integrity when it comes to truth-telling and treaty with our First Nations peoples. I wholeheartedly agree with the comments from the Greens member for Clark before about how powerful Dewayne Everettsmith's presentation was at the commencement of this parliament. It was perhaps the most moving thing I have seen in a very long time. I think he did it in a very respectful way, recognising how difficult it must have been to do that in this place. It was certainly very impactful.

We need to act with integrity when it comes to protecting those who face discrimination. I stand here today as a proud ally of the LGBTQIA+ community. I recognise their hurt, particularly over the last few weeks with the acts of the archbishop. I recognise that so many Tasmanians are speaking out and speaking very loudly to say, 'This is not acceptable in Tasmania'. I recognise those of the Catholic community who are speaking out, too, who are speaking out for inclusion, who are recognising that their god is an all-loving god and loves everybody.

We need to act with integrity when it comes to disclosing donations and who is pulling the strings. We need it desperately. In fact, we needed it long ago, but we need it even more now. We need strong electoral disclosure laws and truth in political advertising.

It will take integrity for this government to admit that our regulatory bodies are failing community expectations, that the Environment Protection Authority (EPA) is not delivering; that the Integrity Commission is not delivering; that the Office of Racing Integrity is not delivering on community expectations.

We need to act with integrity when it comes to recognising that the AFL stadium deal is a dud deal. This government has signed us up to a bad deal. We need to put the need of Tasmanians first and foremost, over and above the AFL and a stadium that we simply cannot afford. Sadly, we are leaving many vulnerable Tasmanians behind in pursuit of a stadium. When you put it as simply as that, it just sounds obscene.

If we act with integrity, putting Tasmanians first in all of these issues, then we will be able to achieve so much. This is by no means an exhaustive list, but it is a list at the front of people's minds in the streets when they talk about things that matter to them, about what they hope this parliament will do differently this time. I stand here with high hopes for what we can achieve, and I believe we can achieve. I hear from right around this Chamber a willingness to collaborate, a willingness to listen and to work together, so I have high hopes.

It would be remiss of me to conclude without acknowledging those who have supported me to come back to this place. Firstly, I want to thank the people of Clark for putting their trust in me once again. I recognise that the independent brand is a difficult brand for many to accept, particularly when we are so wedded to our party politics system. However, the people of Clark have yet again shown a willingness to hear a diversity of views, to accept that sometimes one person can make a big difference. It does not take a party to do so. Thank you very much to the people of Clark.

Thanks to Duncan and Pete in my office for their tireless work that is the work of an independent office. We are a very small team, but we achieve a lot. We take time to listen to our constituents, and I think the work that they do and the work I do with them is really reflected in my return to parliament. We take the time to have an open-door policy for people to come into our office to share their stories, to cry with them, to laugh with them, to support them, to be there to celebrate their achievements and to advocate for them.

I want to finally thank my family. Harry and Lucy, my children, have been with me through many elections now, so they are pretty used to it. They are pretty used to mum being busy and out there campaigning, wearing the same T-shirt day in, day out with a name over it, to the embarrassment in the supermarkets and things like that. Thank you to Harry and Lucy.

I particularly want to thank my partner Greg and his children Maddie, Sophie and Sam. This is the first election for them, and for people who took no interest in politics, they certainly dived deep into the pool when it came to this campaign. I think I finally taught my partner Greg that I am a member of the House of Assembly, not the upper House. It took him a while to learn the difference between the two. They grounded me. They kept me sane; they kept me fed and watered, and they kept me keep going, even when I was tired. I could not have done it without them.

Madam Speaker, this new parliament cannot work in the same way that we used to. The old two-party politics has not served Tasmanians well and they are demanding something different and something better. Tasmanians cannot afford for this parliament to fail. We must work together, and I stand ready and willing to do my bit. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

[4.22 p.m.]

Mr O'BYRNE (Franklin) - Madam Speaker, I rise to provide my Address-in-Reply to the Governor's speech. In doing so, may I congratulate you on your election to the very important role of Speaker of the House of Assembly in Tasmania, and, if I may be self-indulgent, tell you how proud I am of you. For many years you have been an absolute fighter for not only social justice in your local community of Launceston and the people of Bass, but in your role as a federal member of parliament and as a state member of parliament. You have put the needs of the people above that of yours and your family many times. Your elevation to the role of Speaker and the respect in which you are clearly held by this Chamber demonstrates that hard work matters, intellect matters and values matter, and I wish you well in your role as Speaker. I will not reflect on the call you gave to another member during Question Time today - I refuse to reflect on that decision you made - but wish you well and tell you how proud we all are of you in your role.

I also congratulate all members who have been elected to this House, either returning or new. Elections can be very awful times for people, particularly candidates. No-one knows what it is like to be a candidate unless you have been one and go through the roller-coaster ride, for example driving past that house who you have told to get a sign up weeks ago and it is still not up. The sort of things that really do not matter become very important during an election campaign and the stress that is placed on you, your family and your close friendship group is immense.

To all the people who stood, I acknowledge your commitment to your community to stand up to try to make a difference. To those of us who have the honour of being elected to this House, we are given the enormous responsibility for previous decisions of governments

and how we fix them or how we celebrate them. It is an enormous responsibility to make a Tasmania a better place, not just for people who live here and love this place now, but for generations to come.

Sometimes people lose the context of decisions that we make in this House. We make very important decisions. Some of them may not seem important to the majority of people, but even the smallest decision makes an enormous difference to many people's lives in Tasmania. I congratulate everyone who has been elected, particularly the new members. It has been wonderful to hear your stories and your journey. I was first elected to this House in 2010. I lost in 2014 - when the music stopped, I was still dancing and there were no seats left for me. I was re-elected in 2018 and re-elected in the last two elections.

For someone who has only experienced a 25-seat House, to have 34 members and a Speaker, the difference has been noticeable, not purely because of the numbers. Hearing some of the inaugural speeches of people who are new to this place, their personal experience, their stories, their journey, their motivation and their passions, I think has given this place a noticeable change. It was pretty fractious towards the end of last year. It was pretty nasty. To be honest, having been out of the bubble of being in a party environment and being an independent member, I have been listening to people about their critique of the conduct of politics and politicians and the issues that we choose to prosecute are, in many cases, so detached from their real-life struggles.

We have had this positive start, but we will have disagreements, we will have arguments and there will be moments where we will be tense with each other, which is the nature of politics, the nature of debates. The tone that has been set this last week-and-a-half where we are trying to stick to the issues and not the personalities or the people reflects well on the start of this 51st Parliament.

It will be the responsibility of all of us to maintain and continue that. I congratulate everyone and it has been an absolute privilege to listen to some wonderful inaugural speeches and people's journeys, regardless of perspective. Some have been funnier than others, some more pointed than others, but they were all bringing something to this. It shows that people are thinking deeply about their responsibility and their work.

We know this 51st Parliament is an unusual parliament. It is the first time that I am aware that we have a minority government not with reliance on the Greens for numbers, but there is a very large crossbench, which I think is unique in Tasmanian politics.

For many years and many cycles people talked about minority governments not being the end of the world. I have never thought they would be the end of the world, although when I was in a party, I would really have liked to be able to control all the pieces on the table, I suppose. Having such a large crossbench, this could be a genuine test of minority parliaments in Tasmania where you do not have the government of the day proposing legislations and running their lines, the opposition disagreeing and, with the greatest respect, the Greens yelling at them. I mean that respectfully because that has been the to and fro of politics in Australia. I think this extended crossbench may act as a real opportunity for us to agree where we need to agree and disagree where we need to disagree, but I think already with some private members' bills already being placed on the Table to be debated, this could very well be one of the best parliaments Tasmania has ever seen.

This could be a parliament that produces legislation that genuinely reflects the majority view of Tasmanians, by either individuals or parties raising legitimate issues and proposing legislation to resolve those issues where we can find a way through and improve Tasmania. The begging bill is something that I am very much looking forward to debating, and I congratulate the member for Lyons for proposing it. That is a very important debate to be had. I know there will be disagreements, but I think we have already started to see what could be a very productive parliament, that by virtue of our numbers is forced to focus on the things that matter, not personal attacks.

Obviously, for me, this was a different election campaign. It was my fifth election campaign and first as an independent. I only declared in February of this year that I would run as an independent, but the amount of people who went out of their way to support me in my election campaign was humbling. When the election was called, I thought we would lose a couple of poster sites. We did lose a couple, but we had 100 new poster sites within a couple of weeks; people contacting me and saying, 'We really want to support you'. There was one person who had my poster site proudly displayed next to minister Abetz's site. There was also a site that held my poster, as well as the Leader of the Greens, Dr Rosalie Woodruff's. Hopefully that means that I cannot be dogmatic, but I can reflect the range of views in this house that will hopefully respond to both of those voting cohorts as best I can without being caught on the barbed wire fence.

I thank my campaign team and those people who supported me. My staff, George and Chloe, and the campaign team for all their support: we sort of knew the election was coming, everyone predicted it, but it was early, and it was my first time as an independent member. I thank those people who volunteered and supported me during the campaign. I thank the people of Franklin.

It would be no surprise to people that obviously this was a difficult decision for me to run as an independent. People know my background. I was a loyal Labor Party member for 30 years. There are several people who wanted to help in my campaign but could not because I was not a member of the Labor Party. I thank those people for at least saying they wanted to support me but could not because of their party membership.

It has always been my honour to represent the Labor movement here in the parliament for 10 years. I believe in the traditional Labor values of looking after people and making decisions that provide people a better future with greater opportunities for a better life: home life, working life and in the community. I believe in that Labor movement. I believe in the positive powers of collectivism and progressive politics. I believe Labor, at its best, would always be a better alternative for Tasmanians than the alternative; that should be no surprise to people.

Whilst I am proud to be an independent in this House, it was not my first choice. I was given no choice, because the party chose not to pre-select me. People are aware of the public debate about that. In the last parliament, whilst I was on the crossbench, I was still a member of the Labor Party. I did not pretend I was elected as an independent; I was elected as a Labor Party member. In the last parliament, I voted with the Labor Party on virtually all occasions, apart from two where I could not. I abstained on those two votes because I thought it was the right thing to do. When I stood as an independent, what that meant is that I will genuinely be an independent. We have already seen some of the work that I have done in the last couple of weeks. I was hoping to be preselected by the party. I thought I would have the support.

I nominated for a national conference position and topped the poll in the Labor Party rank and file. I did have a lot of support, but at the end of the day that position was not open to me by the decision of the Leader at the time. That is a matter for the leader. That was very difficult for me.

Having said that, the reason I joined the Labor Party was to make a difference. The values that I have, I share with many people, and I have many friends inside the Labor Party and those values have not changed. My mother, who is a life member of the Labor Party, always said, 'It is not enough to feel sorry about something, I want you to do something about it'. Whilst I viewed my theory of change through the Labor Party, that was not open to me. Therefore, I sought to run as an independent. I want to thank the people of Franklin for their overwhelming endorsement, the highest vote for an independent and the 12th highest primary vote in the state. That is an endorsement, hopefully, of the work that I have done over many years to make people's lives better.

Over the last couple of years, as a member of the crossbench, I raised many issues: about housing, about public transport. I also focused on spending time in my community, in neighbourhood houses, in community groups in desperate need of help, and talking to constituents; really grounding myself in the electorate. I feel the work I have done, the values I have displayed and the gift the people of Franklin have given me regarding what they feel strongly about and are asking me to prosecute in this place, is something I will cherish. It is something I will not betray. To the people of Franklin, again, I thank you for your support.

Obviously, it has been a very difficult period of time for our family over the last three years. We lost our dad on Anzac Day 2021, we had my thing, my wife had a cancer diagnosis, and last year we lost our mother. She was a person with great values, who loved the community and was a real river to many people. It has been difficult, but the thing about politics is, if you are here just for a lark, if you are here just to have a crack, then it is not going to work out for you. If you really believe in what you do, and you want to make a difference, all of the trials and tribulations that are thrown at you, this job can give you the most joy. It really is an honour to be able to be in a position to make someone's life better. You cherish it for the time that you were here.

Time flies quickly. With no party getting the majority votes in the House, it came to a number of people to work it out. We had to respect the view of the Tasmanian people. They have delivered us the numbers in this parliament and in the absence of the Labor Party putting their hand up to govern, it was left to me to sit down with the Premier to work out how best we make this work. This is not an ideal set of circumstances. There are going to be moments where we disagree but, essentially, I believe we have a responsibility to try and make this parliament work. We have a responsibility to make the best decisions that we can. We cannot have constant elections. We cannot have a parliament in chaos as we saw, particularly, on the last sitting day of the last parliament.

We have a responsibility to rise to the challenge the Tasmanian people have put forward to us. That is why I provided the Premier, Jeremy Rockliff, a limited form of confidence. In my political career, I have never really had confidence in the Liberals but, in this case, I will provide the Premier with a level of confidence and supply to enable him to form government; to enable him to try and make this arrangement work.

I know my correspondence has been in the public domain. I will be very clear about what I am trying to achieve here. My values have not changed. It does not mean that I agree with the government 100 per cent of the time, or even 50 per cent of the time. I will vote on my conscience on bills, I will vote on my conscience on motions, I will vote on my conscience on amendments, and I will do the best I can to get the best outcome for the people of Tasmania.

Regarding my commitment about confidence and supply, the Premier will have my support on any motions of no confidence before the House, except where the issues raised involve corruption, gross incompetence or serious misbehaviour by him or his ministers or any reprehensible failures of policy and governance. That is deliberate language: reprehensible failures of policy and governance. Where I have concerns that would cause me to lose confidence in the government, I will raise them with the Premier in the first instance and give him the opportunity to resolve them before pursuing or supporting any no confidence motion.

I will carefully consider the merit of any arguments put in favour of any censure motion, but will not support frivolous or opportunistic proposals. I support money bills necessary to ensure supply for the government. I will consider any government legislation on its merits and vote according to my values and commitments given to the people of Franklin and Tasmania. That support and that commitment is given to the Premier, Jeremy Rockliff.

I have said on many occasions, if the government seeks to return to the politics of old and the way they managed the House before, if it is a crash or a crash-through kind of approach, they will crash and it will not be the crossbench that will be held responsible for taking the people to another election. We believe, and the goodwill on the table is there to make this Parliament work. I am hopeful, as I said at the outset. The tone of the House in the last week and a bit - the three days we have been here; it has been a good start - has given me hope that there will be a level of collaboration. That does not mean we always have to agree, but I think that when we disagree, we should stick to the issues we disagree on, because I heard at virtually every door that people are sick of the sniping. They are sick of the personal attacks and the personality politics that pervade the political world at the moment. They are over it. They just want us to get on with it and do our job and get out of their lives, and if we are in their lives, they want us to make their lives better.

Having said that, there are significant challenges facing Tasmania. The government is struggling in a number of portfolio areas: health, education and public transport. The fact that the public transport system has virtually collapsed in many suburbs and many communities is unacceptable. My commitment to the government and to this House is to work as hard as I can to make those things better. We need to see action. We need to see a response on those matters. The people of Tasmania demand it. That does not mean these fixes are easy. It does not mean we can snap our fingers and go, 'Okay, well, we will change things overnight. We will just fix the bus services', or, 'We will fix ramping'.

It will take work. It will take a level of compassion for the argument. It will take a level of integrity in terms of us not using parliamentary privilege to just slag people off, but rather using the time we have in this place to come up with constructive ideas to critique the government fairly and to critique them when that critique is deserved. Hopefully this Parliament can last the full term and we can do our best.

[4.44 p.m.]

Mr ROCKLIFF (Braddon - Premier) - Madam Speaker, in summing up the Address-in-Reply, I am mindful that we all look forward to the first speeches of Mr Garland, Mr Jenner and Mrs Pentland. I look forward to those contributions in some time.

I thank everyone and congratulate all members for their deserved election to this House. It reflects their hard work and the strong endorsement that people of their electorates have made, and the faith people have shown in their ability to come to the Parliament and represent the Tasmanian people.

I extend my official congratulations to you, Madam Speaker, on your appointment. I will enjoy working with you, as I have since 2006 when you arrived in this place.

I thank my team as well. It is a new ministry: a strong, capable, experienced, and very committed team. I look to my deputy, and indeed all members of the Parliamentary Liberal Party. Thank you for being a great and solid team and representing the broad church of values that have existed since Robert Menzies formed our party in 1944, and that we are all very proud of. All of our team bring that energy and drive and will work hard for their electorate and indeed our state.

I welcome new members to our team. I welcome Rob Fairs, and I will come to you in just a moment. Mr Abetz - I keep wanting to call you Senator Abetz for some reason - you had 28 years in the Senate, my good friend, did you not? I welcome Jane Howlett to the Lower House. It is also wonderful to have my friend, Jac Petrusma, back as the member for Franklin. She is a great person and a great contributor, and I thank her for the great entrance. Well done to that. Perfect timing as always. Well done to you.

As Mrs Petrusma reflected as well, we pay tribute to the former member for Franklin, Dean Young, for his contribution in this House, his contribution leading up to his election and undoubtedly his commitment to his local community and the small business sector. It was a joy to work with Dean, and one day - I am sure he will, he still has that fire in the belly - he will be back representing the people of Franklin.

I also thank and commend Mark Shelton for his role as the former Speaker in somewhat trying circumstances. Let us face it, Sheltz, it was not an easy time in the Chair, but you did it with great dignity and grace. You and your family should be very proud of your achievements. You should be very proud of your achievement for again being elected as the member for Lyons, which reflects your hard work, your community ethic and the contribution that you have made in not only the Speaker role, but as a local member as well.

Together we have a strong team with a strong plan - as many as reflected on in our side of the Chamber - for Tasmania's future. We are very excited and enthused about getting on with the job.

I would also like to reflect briefly on the campaign. It was an intense campaign. Being a leader of a party in a campaign is an experience like no other. On that note, I acknowledge the efforts of Leader of the Greens and the Leader of the Opposition at the time, Rebecca White. Largely, I thought it was a very good, constructive campaign, but it did energise me. I love campaigning. It was my seventh campaign. I like getting out there and getting some vitamin D, meeting with the people across every corner of Tasmania. I was enthusiastic about it. To pick

up on some comments of the previous speaker, Mr O'Byrne - I cannot think exactly what you said - you have to really believe in what you are doing, and the fly-by-nighters do not last long. You must really believe in what you do and be committed to this role.

It has been a pleasure to represent the electorate of Braddon since 2002. I want to thank the electorate of Braddon, from that rugged West Coast, King Island, the productive country of Circular Head right through the Waratah Wynyard, the Central Coast, Latrobe, and the Devonport region as well: such an eclectic and diverse community and economy of which I am enormously proud.

In the campaign, I was proud to work alongside my good friends, Felix Ellis and Roger Jaensch, a good team. We also had a great time in collaboration with our fellow Liberal candidates Giovanna, Vonette, Patrick and Sarina - a King Islander herself. They did a fantastic job.

It is great to be back here. I thank the Liberal Party for what they do for all of us. No-one who gets elected with a party banner should ever be so arrogant to think that you are elected in name only, and not without the strong Liberal brand. I have always greatly appreciated that in my 40 years or thereabouts of membership. Not quite that long. Indeed, for the Liberal Party, for any party, to win a historic fourth term in Tasmania, to win the most votes, to win the most seats of any party in four consecutive elections, that is not easy to do. That is a tremendous outcome and no easy feat.

I pay tribute to our state director of the Liberal Party, Peter Coulson, and our president, Michael McKenna, for their leadership throughout the campaign, and every single candidate. I truly thought we had the team of the decade, and that has been reflected many times. I was proud to say as to the campaign, alongside each and every one of them, I also believe the strength of our vote also reflects our government's strong record over the past 10 years in delivering for Tasmanians. We do not have everything right, and I will come to that in a moment. There are many challenges, as has been previously pointed out, but we will always have Tasmanians front of mind. We will always do what we believe is best for Tasmania as a whole.

Reflecting on the contributions, Mrs Petrusma reflected on the 35-seat House of Assembly, as others did. It is a proud day and time for me to sit here, having worked with all sides of the Chamber in the 25-seat House of Assembly to be here with 35 seats. We restored those numbers. It is a true reflection of the election and the votes of the Tasmanian people. It is great to listen to all the contributions made so far. We did need to restore the numbers of the House of Assembly to see a more workable parliament, one able to undertake the committee work and to work collaboratively and better on behalf of Tasmanians in every electorate, in every corner of the state. We now have more members to share that workload.

Tasmanians have voted to ensure their voice is heard in this place. While it is true that every party will strive for a majority government, Tasmanians have voted, and their views have been heard. We must work together. We have a crossbench made-up of people who want to deliver stability and contribute, a crossbench of very capable people. All of us have different opinions, but there is no reason why we cannot work through those issues with respect and in the best interests of the Tasmanian people. It is certainly our government's intention for this parliament to be as collaborative and constructive as possible, avoiding unnecessary division and dissent. People should come to this place and argue their views, beliefs, causes and ideas

passionately, vigorously and robustly. However, at the end of the day, we need to knuckle down and get the job done as collaboratively as possible.

Much has been focused on our government's commitment to the Tasmanian people. I spoke about the 2030 Strong Plan for Tasmania's Future - some would say ad nauseam - throughout the election. Nonetheless, it is full of very good ideas, great policy initiatives that do cover those matters that Ms Howlett talked about in terms of cost of living, health, housing and those pressing issues many have reflected on. Our government does have a strong track record of delivering for Tasmanians. We have gone from the worst performing state to one of the best economic success stories across the nation, to pick up on Mr Abetz's inaugural contribution around the importance of the economy. I will come to that in a moment. Those strong economic credentials, that activity ensures that we have the funds to invest in those essential services Tasmanians care about.

Our unemployment rate today is 4 per cent, the lowest level since the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) started collecting data in 1978. It is 3.9 per cent lower than when we came to government. In April, there were 281,000 Tasmanians in work, including a near-record 137,000 women. Some 50,000 jobs have been created since the Liberal government was elected.

Tasmania also has the strongest wage growth in the nation, recording 4.9 per cent annual growth to March 2024. This represents the largest annual growth in wages in Tasmania in over a decade. It means that Tasmanians are increasingly being rewarded for their hard work and endeavours, notwithstanding the challenges around cost of living, of which we are very mindful. None of these results is a coincidence. They have taken hard, dedicated, unwavering commitment to building a strong economy for Tasmania to deliver jobs growth and our plan for Tasmania's future is geared to keeping that momentum going.

Over 10 years, our government has built new schools and hospitals, and we have hired thousands more health staff, teachers and police. We have given young people a chance to stay here, work and raise their families. We have done all this while navigating the challenges of the pandemic. It is vital now that we take Tasmania forward and keep it moving forward. We know that Tasmania and, indeed, the rest of the nation is facing significant economic headwinds. This is why we developed our plan for Tasmania's future. Making sure that Tasmania is well positioned for the future has always been our top priority. We must continue to position our state strongly to ensure prosperity for our young people and the generations who will follow.

This is also why we have worked to secure strong, workable arrangements with the crossbench, as others have spoken about, in terms of delivering certainty and stability. I welcome the conversations we have had. Mrs Pentland, Mrs Beswick and Mr Jenner from the Jacqui Lambie Network (JLN), Mr O'Byrne and Ms Johnston, thank you for the confidence and supply. We do not take that lightly at all, reflecting on your comments before, Mr O'Byrne. Conversations across the Chamber are important.

As I was meeting many Tasmanians, I also received a clear impression that Tasmanians are sick of the politics and the personal attacks. They just want us to get on with the job, particularly when many thousands of Tasmanians feel vulnerable when it comes to access to housing and health services, and the cost of living. They hate the petty arguments and personal attacks; they like us getting on, getting on with the job and doing good things. They do not

expect us to agree every five seconds. However, they do expect us to knuckle down on the big, important issues and develop sound policy, invest in the right areas and get the job done. I thank the members I have spoken to for their good will and good faith in those negotiations. Every member of our team will strive to not let you down.

I will also reflect on some of my portfolio areas, Madam Speaker, with your indulgence. As we look to the future, we must focus on key areas that will drive our economic growth and ensure our competitive edge on the global stage. That is why I have taken on the portfolio of Trade and Major Investment, which includes advanced manufacturing, Antarctic and defence industries. Advanced manufacturing, as members would know if they have visited many small, medium, and large businesses across the state, not only creates high-value jobs but fosters innovation and sustainability that spreads across all Tasmanian industries and communities. We recognise the role small and medium enterprises play in driving that innovation. That is why, through our plan, we have committed to funding the advanced manufacturing growth program. This program offers support to businesses to scale and integrate into global supply chains, implement cutting-edge technologies and transform processes to increase productivity.

The Tasmanian defence sector was on no one's horizon a decade ago. Ten years ago, nobody was talking about defence industries and our place in the national investment. We have now paved a way for a Tasmanian defence industry. I pay tribute to our Tasmanian Defence Advocate, Steve Gilmore, in doing so, and the support of State Growth to become a cornerstone of our economic stability, as well as play our part in national security.

Our Antarctic gateway differentiates us from every other state. It offers unique opportunities for scientific research and international collaboration. As part of our plan, we will deliver a global campaign to promote and grow the gateway and all it has to offer.

We create approximately \$6 billion of trade in Tasmania. It is the lifeblood of our economy. We will always be an exporting state. Our plan is to create an environment that encourages further growth and innovation. To achieve this, we will focus on diversifying export markets, and providing resources and support to local businesses looking to expand their operations internationally, including in markets with highly skilled trade advocates. We are committed to \$1.6 million to grow our trade through supporting businesses to access those markets, information, funding and the training they need to grow or become exporters. We will take our goods and services to the world; we will open the doors and expose the world to our dynamic brand which we have invested in significantly. We will also bring the world to us. Through a trade mission plan, a new inbound visitation program and a trade action plan, businesses can see the suite of programmes and services available to them. Together, we will strengthen and grow our trade, create jobs and deliver that strong economy we talk about.

Our vision for investment is also centred around creating a dynamic and inclusive economy that can adapt to the challenges of the 21st century. To attract major investment, we will focus on creating a favourable environment for our businesses, ensuring our regulatory framework is transparent, predictable and conducive to business growth. This includes streamlining those processes, cutting the red tape which we all talk about, providing clarity to those investors and seeking partnerships within the private sector to leverage their expertise and their resources. These partnerships are crucial to delivering those very large-scale infrastructure projects and driving that innovation.

Two of the biggest job-generating industries in our state, Madam Speaker, as you would well appreciate as a former tourism industry minister, is tourism and hospitality. We are going to build on Tasmania's reputation as a world-leading tourism and hospitality destination. We do so by highlighting those unique experiences and ensuring that the visitor economy continues to have a positive impact on Tasmania's economy, environment and way of life.

For starters, we will take clear actions to protect our visitor economy workforce. That means legislation to provide for presumptive sentencing for assault on frontline retail and hospitality workers. No frontline workers - as many would appreciate in this House, whether it be in the public or private sector - should face abuse or assault in their workplaces. We are going to deliver a \$12 million investment over three years to our 2030 Visitor Economy Strategy and create a \$50 million Regional Tourism Attraction Loan Scheme that stimulates that regional tourism. Tasmania will continue to be a tourist destination for both the rest of Australia and internationally. We deliver \$4 million-worth of increased destination marketing activities, and our Aviation Fund - an investment of \$5 million - is about leveraging all year-round opportunities to increase capacity and to support those entering the Tasmanian market.

We are very committed to continue to support the delivery of a Cradle Mountain Master Plan, which was a notable absence in the recent Commonwealth budget. We will continue that advocacy. I have written to the Australian Government on several occasions, and again to the Prime Minister earlier this month, requesting the Prime Minister confirm his government's commitment to the Cradle Mountain Visitor Experience Master Plan.

We will also continue to invest in those key partnerships that we value with the tourism hospitality industries such as the Tourism Industry Council Tasmania, supporting the delivery of programs such as the Great Customer Experience Program, women in leadership initiatives and mental health and hospitality health programs as well. There is a lot to be passionate about in terms of my areas of responsibility, along with others in this place.

Listening to the inaugural speeches, I commend each and every person for their first speech in this place. Many years ago, I had a first speech which I reflect on occasionally; I have a copy here which I might come to in the moment. I felt sorry for the poor person who was delivering the speech back in 2002. What was I getting myself into? Here we are, 22 years later, still here. I was fresh as a daisy, can I say? In many respects, I still feel relatively fresh.

I made my inaugural speech 22 years ago. Taking time to look back, the passion I felt for the things that mattered to me then has not changed much, in actual fact. What has changed is that Sandra and I have three beautiful girls. Sadly, the gap in my campaign this year was the loss of my father. My condolences to members who have expressed similar thoughts about their family members. It is a tough gig. I congratulate every single person who is prepared to have the courage to stand up for their convictions. Irrespective of one's views, family are so important.

While my sign putter-upperers this year did a fantastic job, my father is the son of an engineer of Hydro and those signs, if they were put up in 2002, I am sure many of them would still be there. A lot of use of timber and many other things. I do miss my father's advice and mentorship, as well as his great skills in the carpentry trade. I pay tribute to him.

It was great to hear everyone's first speeches. It was delight for me to listen to people's personal motivations and their journey and influences that they have brought to this place.

Ms Rosol, the Greens member for Bass: it is fantastic that you have joined a long tradition in your family of becoming a politician, albeit perhaps a little different from that of your ancestors. As you have clearly explained, we do have a kaleidoscope in this Chamber. I was particularly interested in you talking about trauma, which is something I did not know too much about until I became education minister: the need to have trauma informed practice and to break down those barriers for young people who cannot learn when they are traumatised. Thank you for that.

The Greens member for Clark, Ms Burnet: after 19 years in local government, we still love these elections. Well done. It shows your determination as well, which is great.

Mr Willie: I know his passion for education. It takes some courage, as Jane would know, to give up a seat in the other House and be down here. I welcome his passion for education.

Ms Brown, with a very proud Labor pedigree, was, in some way, destined to be here. Meg, I will add that if you are anything like your mother or aunt, you will be a formidable force in this parliament, so please, take it easy on me. What can I say?

I also look forward to the contributions from Craig Garland, Andrew Jenner and Rebekah Pentland.

I was very proud of the members on our team who spoke. Mr Abetz, a great contribution: your deep faith, your commitment to God, king and country. We have known each other for over 30 years. We are long stalwarts of the Liberal Party, which we are both proud of. On some occasions, we differ slightly on certain policy matters, as you say. We are a broad church, but we welcome you to this Chamber. Your depth of experience is fantastic, I very much appreciate that.

Rob Fairs, great to have you here. We have come a long way since the rock and roll show or whatever you were doing back in Adelaide. Your commitment to children, to youth, you wear your heart on your sleeve, which is fantastic, and you should be very proud of that. I am very proud of you and that you are a colleague in this House.

Well done to Jane Howlett. You have been a friend for a long time. Congratulations, Jane, on being elected to this place, for being a great member for Prosser, and for mentoring our good friend, Kerry Vincent, who we welcome here as well. I have worked very solidly with Kerry on a number of things in his role as mayor, and it is fantastic to have him here with us.

Madam SPEAKER - Premier by interjection, Mrs Beswick as well.

Mr ROCKLIFF - Yes. I have been looking at Miriam as well. Thank you, fellow member for Braddon: a fantastic inaugural speech reflecting on your family and what motivates you. From memory, you called yourself an enhancer, which is fantastic. We will see how much you enhance things in this place, but I am sure you will. Clearly, we need that support. Thank you very much.

I thank Ms Badger for her contribution on the history of Lake Pedder, her commitment to digital connectivity and her journey to this place. I found that very interesting as well.

We are an eclectic bunch of people who are very committed to Tasmania. If it was not for the 35-seat arrangements, 10 of us would not be here - I am not going to say which 10. I look forward to the course of the next four years.

It has been said before by several people that minority governments are not good for Tasmania. We will always work on our side as hard as we can to achieve majority, but we are going to make this work. Tasmanians expect us to dig in, work hard and get this job done.

I recognise and reflect on our vote at the last election. It was not as strong as 2021 and that is a lesson that we learnt: to get in, listen to the Tasmanian people and be humble when we look at that result. We are very thankful that we are still in government, working with everyone in this Chamber to ensure we do the very best we can for our community. I am still very committed and keen. I have been blessed to be in politics for over 20 years.

I pay tribute to my family: to Sandra, Ruby, Lucy, Holly, and my mum Gerry.

It is incumbent upon us to all work together. I wish everyone the very best and I thank everyone for their contributions in this place. Let us get on with the job.

Motion agreed to.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr FERGUSON (Bass - Deputy Premier) - Madam Speaker, I move -

That the House does now adjourn.

Answer to Question - *Spirits of Tasmania* - Rauma Marine Constructions - Finances

Answer to Question - TasWater - Release of Untreated Waste and Sewage from Geeveston Treatment Plant

[5.15 p.m.]

Mr FERGUSON (Bass - Deputy Premier) - Madam Speaker, this morning, in Question Time, I undertook to return to the House and take two questions on notice separately.

First, I undertook to review with my team exactly when I became aware of concerns as to Rauma Marine Constructions' (RMC) issues. I have the following for the House: in discussion with my staff and following a review of my diary, the earliest indication to me of potential issues was in a verbal conversation with the TT-Line chairman and CEO on 21 December 2023, in which they indicated TT-Line held early concerns about the financial circumstances of RMC.

I stress for the House that in this conversation TT-Line did not provide formal advice or any specific details and appeared to base those concerns on marine industry intelligence. There was no financial or other request at this time, or even any suggestion of the need for TT-Line

to take any action. The chairman and the CEO assured me that Tasmania's investment at that stage was fully protected by a bank guarantee. While I remained in contact with the chairman on this issue, the first I was formally advised of significant and real financial issues regarding RMC's commercial viability as a business and the need for a negotiating position was during the caretaker period, as I stated this morning.

The Secretary of Treasury provided caretaker briefings on 29 February 2024 to the Government and the Opposition, represented by the former leader of the Labor Party, Ms White, and the former shadow treasurer, Dr Broad. The Secretary of Treasury advised that he had taken the decision to provide confidential briefings rather than include these matters publicly in the pre-election fiscal outlook to avoid the risk of precipitating the financial collapse of RMC. Again, I remained in contact with the chair during this time as management of this commercial matter progressed.

The decision to agree to a contract variation to pay the additional €50 million, with the further condition that the Finnish Government underwrite RMC's future viability, was made by TT-Line's board, not shareholder ministers. The Board's decision was made on 21 March 2024 and was advised to the government in writing on 5 April 2024 following the agreement of the Finnish Government. The Finnish Government has committed to match the €50 million provided by TT-Line and has also committed to underwrite the future financial viability of RMC over and above the additional TT-Line contribution of €50 million. Tasmania's investment continues to be protected by full refund guarantees.

I turn to Mr O'Byrne's question, noting my comments this morning on the record. I have consulted with TasWater in relation to the matters in the Huon Valley. TasWater has a significant role to play in the protection of Tasmania's waterways, and projects such as the Geeveston Sewage Treatment Plant outfall relocation are an important step towards improving environmental outcomes. TasWater's plans to move the location of the outfall is the first stage of improving the discharge from the Geeveston treatment plant.

In response to community concerns raised about the proposal to relocate the outfall to the Huon River off Shipwrights Point, TasWater, I am advised, undertook investigations to determine if an alternate location could provide better environmental outcomes and address community concerns. Following community consultation and the consideration of feedback provided by the community on an alternate location, the outfall location has been moved into deeper waters, 260 metres offshore.

I apologise to Mr O'Byrne that I have two different numbers before me on the advice from TasWater. I am advised 260 metres offshore, and I will just continue to read it. I hope it is accurate. The new location will see the outfall located a further 160 metres offshore from the original proposed location, assuming of course that the original distance was 100 metres.

The TasWater board determined the new location is the best option for the environment, ensuring the impacts on the Kermadie River are reduced while also ensuring recreational use at Shipwrights Point will not be impacted. The decision does not stop TasWater from doing future works to the Geeveston Sewage Treatment Plant. Master planning for the area is currently in development and TasWater has advised that this will be available to share with the community in the new year, 2025. Investigations into optimisation of the plant and possible re-use schemes will be included in the master plan for the region.

As I said this morning, the Tasmanian government is a very small shareholder in TasWater. We hold a 10 per cent interest, with the remaining 90 per cent owned by Tasmania's councils. As such, while the government has administration of the Act that creates TasWater, it is not responsible as a government for TasWater's operation or strategic decision-making. We cannot intervene to direct TasWater on this issue.

That does not change the fact, however - I say to Mr O'Byrne and others with interests in TasWater activities in their electorates - that the government continues to stand ready to take those queries to TasWater, and to use our officers to access advice and provide scrutiny, criticism or alternative ways of doing things.

Those are my extra answers, Madam Deputy Speaker. I thank the House.

Historic Heritage Summit

[5.19 p.m.]

Ms OGILVIE (Clark - Minister for the Arts) - Madam Deputy Speaker, I make a short contribution to highlight the huge success and vast importance of our second Historic Heritage Summit, which was held last Friday at the beautiful Tramsheds on the heritage-listed Inveresk railway site in Launceston. The summit is very close to my heart. I have said many times in this Chamber that I love heritage, having studied classics, history and archaeology in my first degree many moons ago. It is lovely to be back with people who find it as enthralling as I do.

This important event, organised by Heritage Tasmania and the Tasmanian Heritage Council, brought together over 120 stakeholders from across our state's built heritage sector. It was a remarkable opportunity for collaboration, idea sharing and priority setting for the future. The strong interest in this year's second summit followed the success of last year's inaugural event, underscoring the growing recognition of our state's significant built heritage. I was really delighted to open the summit again this year. There were lots of archaeology jokes, so that was fun.

I am proud to have played my part in bringing this idea of an annual heritage summit for this sector into reality. It is well beyond time we recognised the value of our heritage sector to Tasmania. We saw some great statistics that have come out of the Stenning report, which are now being reported on. These show that the heritage sector in Tasmania contributes over \$900 million to our gross state product. I will run through a few more of the figures in a moment.

We had the who's who of the heritage sector there. It was also great to see some of my colleagues from the Chamber in attendance, including Madam Speaker, not the Deputy Madam Speaker, but the Madam Speaker, and my Liberal colleague, Rob Fairs, member for Bass. I do not know if he is in the Chamber, but he was marvellous. Of course, it was an open invitation so anybody could have submitted a request to join us.

At the summit, I had the pleasure of meeting a diverse group of trade specialists, property owners, tourism operators, local government representatives, everybody was there, Port Arthur, you know, from the big to the small; the Tasmanian Historical Garden Society - love their work. There was a great passion in the room for improving the perception of heritage across the community and our enthusiasm for activating heritage sites. It is truly inspiring. A highlight

of the event was a presentation by the keynote speaker, Dr Jody Steele, who is an interesting storyteller. She shared invaluable insights and talked about how important built heritage is to Tasmania, and how we engage with that through storytelling.

Our sector supports over 5000 direct and indirect jobs and attracts more than 400,000 heritage-related visitors annually. It is a large market segment.

Mr Barnett - It is a lot.

Ms OGILVIE - It is a lot. Thank you, I agree. I know you love it too. It contributes over \$900 million to our gross state product and injects over \$93 million of capital into the construction and building sector. This has been a sleeping giant until we did a bit of work on working out how we could convey the value of the sector.

Our built heritage is also a substantial part of our state's identity, with five UNESCO sites and 4965 listings on the Tasmanian Heritage Register. These are historical treasures, but also attractions that drive tourism. Our heritage sector represents a total capital value of \$6 billion in Tasmania. We cannot underestimate this.

Thanks to the chair of the Tasmanian Heritage Council, Heritage Tasmania and everybody involved in organising this amazing event for the heritage sector. I particularly thank my adviser, Nick Becker, who did such a marvellous job pulling this together and is proving to be a strong performer when it comes to the Heritage portfolio.

It is more than just an event; it is a catalyst for uniting our sector, for challenging views and enhancing our understanding of the importance of Tasmania's rich heritage. It is through such collaboration and commitment that we can ensure Tasmania's past has a vibrant future.

Celebrating Diversity - Combating Racism

[5.24 p.m.]

Ms BURNET (Clark) - Madam Deputy Speaker, I rise to speak about the importance of our government and our society continuing to do better when it comes to celebrating diversity and combating racism. There have been some very distressing recent events where racism has reared its ugly head. Late last year, we heard about Zahra Anvari and her mother, who came to Tasmania as Hazara refugees fleeing racial persecution in Afghanistan. Shockingly, these two women were ambushed in a violent, racially motivated attack while they were on their way to a local community garden.

In April this year, we saw the situation where taxi drivers and their vehicles were attacked in race-related incidents. I went to support a strike held by drivers on 29 April and applaud everyone who attended, including Ms Ogilvie.

Ms Ogilvie - Yes, it was good to be there. Thank you.

Ms BURNET - However, this event should never have been needed in the first place, as these drivers should never have been in the first place, as these drivers should never have been subjected to such attacks.

Last week, the ABC reported the devastating case of Devarshi Deka, a student from India who has been left paraplegic after being violently attacked. As if this situation was not hard enough for Dev's family, his parents, out from India to look after their son, were then subjected to intolerable and unacceptable racial abuse; not once, but frequently.

These terrible events are not happening in isolation. It is crucial that the government recognises that it needs to be proactive in dealing with this issue and act, driven by evidence about what has worked in other jurisdictions around Australia and the world.

For a start, the government could and should be working closely with the multicultural community and experts to develop an anti-racism strategy. Reducing racism in the community requires a strong and concerted effort. It will not just go away on its own.

We also need to see much more invested in prevention, education and rehabilitation support services. This is what will keep our community safe and provide a better chance at a good life for young people.

There is some fantastic work already happening in the community when it comes to tackling racism. For example, the Migrant Resource Centre Tasmania (MRC Tas) will soon hold The Walk: Step Up Together event. The MRC Tas plays such a critical role in our community, as do other community groups. They do amazing work that has changed the lives of many people and made Tasmania a more welcoming place. The Walk is a fantastic initiative that celebrates the diversity of our community while recognising the many challenges still being experienced by migrants and refugees in our state.

The event will see former premier Peter Gutwein, current chair of MRC Tas, undertake a 350 km walk over seven days in June, walking from the MRC Tas's Burnie office to their Glenorchy office, raising awareness and funds for a more inclusive and compassionate lutruwita/Tasmania. Good on you, Peter. It was good to speak to Peter this morning in relation to this.

It has been wonderful to see organisations and businesses from a range of backgrounds get behind this event. We hope to see momentum continue to build over the course of the coming weeks and encourage Tasmanians who can afford to do so, to consider donating. You can do so at givenow.com.au/thewalk. It is important that we continue to make sure our state is safe and inclusive for everyone. We need to keep doing more to ensure that all Tasmanians have the same rights and are afforded the same opportunities and respect. The Greens are throwing our support behind the walk and its goals of celebrating diversity and combating racism. We encourage all Tasmanians to do the same. We will also continue to do what we can to drive real improvements for the lives of Tasmania's wonderful migrant and refugee community, and to ensure that acting on racism is a government priority.

Glenorchy War Memorial Swimming Pool

[5.29 p.m.]

Ms HADDAD (Clark) - Madam Deputy Speaker, earlier today I tabled a petition signed by over 1000 residents of my electorate of Clark about the recent closure of the Glenorchy War Memorial Swimming Pool. The petition ran in parallel to another one I tabled late last year, which was signed by a further 619 petitioners. I commend the many community members

involved with both these petitions and others as well. Many of those residents have been deeply involved in raising this issue, including attending council and community meetings, and lobbying all three levels of government. The petitions are about much more than simply saving the infrastructure of a swimming pool; they are about a community asset that is beloved by so many - not just people living in the Glenorchy municipality, but the broader Hobart and southern Tasmanian community as well.

Members might not be aware that, although the council were the custodians and managers of the pool, it was, in fact, built directly by the community. It was built using funds directly raised by returned servicemen and women, who built the pool themselves after World War II. They did it to honour their fallen comrades and provide a permanent, beloved community asset to honour their memory, as a permanent reminder of their sacrifice in a way the community could enjoy for generations to come.

Over decades, it has been very much enjoyed by thousands. Generations have used the pool, not just for recreation, but also for swimming lessons, training sessions, rehabilitation, health and sporting events, and just for a great fun day out. There have been successful athletes who have won medals at Commonwealth and Olympic Games levels, as well as a myriad of other competitions, who all began their journey at the Glenorchy War Memorial Pool.

I recall having my high school swimming lessons there but, I should add, I never achieved any kind of sporting or athletic prowess to that level. Nonetheless, I have memories of jumping into that icy cold pool on winter mornings, where the steam was rising from the pool's cool water. That is a memory I know is not just mine, but the same for thousands of southern Tasmanians who had their school swimming lessons there over the years.

It came as a massive blow to the community when the Glenorchy City Council made the heartbreaking decision to close the pool last year. That decision came after the council commissioned a condition and safety report on the pool, which uncovered that it had sadly been neglected for decades and was not safe to operate anymore. Councils in the past had failed to complete the required annual maintenance that led to the pool having to be closed, potentially with no solution in sight. I know it is not a decision that the council wanted to make, and in many ways, the root causes lie with previous councils that failed to invest in that ongoing maintenance.

The decision was made nonetheless, and it was met with heartbreak by the community. It was a total shock and a bolt from the blue; nobody expected it to happen. In my recent door knocking at the state election, it was amongst the top two or three issues people in Glenorchy raised with me.

I was pleased to support these community petitions; I have now tabled both of them here in this place. Along with my colleague, Josh Willie, I have been proud to support our community on this important issue. We have both hosted the petition in our offices and at our mobile street stalls. We both attended community meetings and public meetings held by the consultants who the council has employed to do a community consultation.

Further, during the election, Josh and I secured a Labor Party commitment of \$5 million in emergency funding. We know that is not everything that is going to be needed to get the pool up and running again. Much more funding is needed for that, but it is an initial injection of funds that should allow for the emergency repairs to take place to allow the pool to open as

soon as possible. I am glad the Liberal Party matched that commitment during the election and that they have confirmed this week that the funding will be provided to the council for that work to commence.

I know the message is being heard loud and clear, that what the community wants and needs is for the pool to be repaired and reopened on that existing site. I know that there is good will on all sides, including the council, to get that work done. We will keep holding the government to account for that commitment.

I want to thank and commend the many community members who have lobbied hard on this issue. There have been several community groups established: the Safety Glenorchy Pool Action Group and the Friends of Glenorchy Pool Inc., just to name two, as well as dozens of individuals who have worked so hard to keep raising the important issue of the pool and hundreds who have attended community meetings. We stand with you on this important community campaign to reopen the pool so that it can be enjoyed by generations to come, just as it has been enjoyed by many generations in the past.

I will conclude with a short piece that was written on one of those community group pages. This correspondent said:

Ask any local to describe the Glenorchy War Memorial Pool and they may begin by telling you about the pool's iconic location between two spectacular mountain views. Glenorchy Pool, situated in Anfield Street, Glenorchy, observes unhindered views of Mount Wellington to the west and Mount Direction to the east. Many a pool patron can attest to enjoying the sparkling waters of Glenorchy Pool while beholding snowcapped Mount Wellington. For 60 years, the thrill of enjoying Glenorchy's fresh open-air pool amongst the serenity and greenery of the KGV sport precinct has been an experience like no other.

That community member expressed the love that the community has for the Glenorchy Pool, and we stand with the Glenorchy community and the wider southern Tasmanian community in making sure the pool remains on that site and is opened as soon as possible.

National Palliative Care Week 2024

[5.34 p.m]

Mr BARNETT (Lyons - Minister for Health, Mental Health and Wellbeing) - Madam Deputy Speaker, I am very pleased to speak tonight to acknowledge National Palliative Care Week, from last Sunday, 19 May through to this Saturday, 25 May 2024. It is a year where the theme is, 'People at the heart of quality palliative care'. It highlights the holistic nature of palliative care, shining a light on the doctors, the nurses, the allied health professionals, community service carers, volunteers and Tasmanians living a life with a limiting illness, their families and chosen loved ones, and those who are grieving a loved one.

Today, I want to say thank you to all the members in this place who have worn the orange heart pin, to say thank you to those involved in palliative care and for the people whom they care for and/or love. Many in this place and around our great state of Tasmania have a personal connection with palliative care.

For me, my father had Motor Neurone Disease. Some three years since his diagnosis, he died at the age of 58. I am very grateful for the care and compassion shared and given to my dad, particularly and primarily by my late mother, who did such a great job in providing that care, and for my three brothers at the time. It certainly was a very difficult time, but the love demonstrated in the care given certainly provided a bonding and a deep love and friendship amidst a time of great difficulty. I thank God for sustaining my mother during that time and our family.

I want to recognise that two people in Australia die every day from Motor Neurone Disease, two people are diagnosed with Motor Neurone Disease every day, and 2300 people are living in Australia with Motor Neurone Disease. I acknowledge Motor Neurone Disease Australia. I have been president here in Tasmania; I have been an ambassador for many years, not now, but in past years. It is a real privilege to be an advocate for people with diabetes. I acknowledge Neale Daniher and FightMND. They have raised millions of dollars for research; an incredible job indeed.

I want to pay tribute to Palliative Care Tasmania. They are the peak body for providing that care in Tasmania and do an absolutely fantastic job. Véney Hiller is the CEO. I want to pay tribute to Véney and thank her and her team for the wonderful work that they do. They work collaboratively with their members in the sector to empower communities to be death and grief literate. They support the workforce to provide for and help volunteers and carers and the like. They advocate very effectively for Tasmanians in palliative care, with that life limiting illness, to have access to the compassionate, quality care that Tasmanians deserve.

I say thank you to the Premier, Jeremy Rockliff, who helped launch National Palliative Care Week 2024 with a recorded speech, highlighting the importance of the palliative care workforce providing quality of life at the end of life. I want to add to the Premier's message in thanking and recognising the skill and dedication of the people at the heart of quality palliative care for the work that they do. It is really great to be acknowledging Palliative Care Tasmania for what they do, driving awareness and providing that support about the benefits of good-end-of-life planning. They have 15 free online and community events to be held across Tasmania this week.

Other events include Matters of Life and Death Mini Expo. Local landmarks, including at Wrest Point Casino, Launceston Town Hall, and Burnie City Council office, are being lit up in orange and blue to recognise the significant role palliative care plays in the community. Palliative Care Week is about providing that care and acknowledging those families and people involved.

Last year when I was down at Nubeena at the neighbourhood house there to see the education and awareness around death that was being put on, it just showed the local community coming together on some very challenging issues. Thank you to the neighbourhood house at Nubeena for what they are doing there.

I say thank you to my department who have again partnered with Flinders University in offering scholarships to staff to study either a Certificate in Palliative Care or Specialist Certificate in Palliative Care. These scholarships certainly show how serious we are as a government, and it is consistent with our 2030 Strong Plan for Tasmania's Future. In the first round, 82 Tasmanian health service staff - including doctors, nurses, pharmacists, and allied

health professionals - have been awarded those scholarships, certainly providing that support for upskilling and building the capacity across Tasmania.

Palliative Care Tasmania Statewide Learning through Loss Program has received funding as well for an additional 12 months. I was standing with again Véney Hiller and others at the Calvin Christian School in Launceston just last year when this was part of the program. So far they have trained 388 school staff members across 39 diverse schools, and 195 professionals and volunteers from 33 youth-facing organisations, equipping them with the knowledge and tools to support young individuals through grief and loss. What a wonderful contribution to the people of Tasmania and their communities. I want to acknowledge that.

I say thank you to the Governor and patron of Palliative Care Tasmania, Her Excellency the Honourable Barbara Baker AC, who launched National Palliative Care Week at Government House yesterday. I was able to share a few remarks and time with Her Excellency to say thank you. I know it was a wonderful event.

I pay tribute to Peter Rasmussen, who shared his story in today's *Mercury*. He has been diagnosed with an inoperable stage 2 brain tumour. Mr Rasmussen is husband to Kirsten and a father of three. Peter shared how his perspective changed when he was diagnosed with terminal cancer. I want to pay tribute to him and thank him for sharing his story.

I say a big thank you to those at the Whittle Ward in Hobart. On their 30-year anniversary last year on 26 November, the Premier and I went there to say thank you. The care and wonderful compassion that is demonstrated in a professional way is outstanding. My grandfather was there many years ago, but that care is ongoing.

To wrap up, I acknowledge the wonderful support provided during Palliative Care Week.

Charles Hand Park and Rosny Parklands

[5.42 p.m.]

Dr WOODRUFF (Franklin - Leader of the Greens) - Madam Deputy Speaker, I pay tribute tonight to the many passionate people of the City of Clarence, residents who have come together with great support and vigour to say no to Charles Hand Park and the Rosny Parklands being the place for a high-performance centre on the eastern shore in the City of Clarence.

As I understand it from the large public meeting held last week, which some 400 residents attended, there was an overwhelming level of support to have a high-performance centre on the eastern shore. The motivation for the public meeting was that more than 1000 people had signed a petition to say they want to protect their precious parklands and that they absolutely reject the manner in which the council made a decision to gift public land - precious public open space - to the AFL on its terms, without any consultation about alternatives that the community would support.

Charles Hand Park is a special place. I believe it was named after a person who was responsible for a board of inquiry in Clarence, I think in the 1950s. He was obviously such a loved person that the residents named a park after him. It is a place that is cherished by dog walkers; there are so few places on the eastern shore where people can walk their dogs. Charles

Hand Park has incredible large trees and beautiful open space, and that is where people gather to meet each other and to do recreation.

It is also the home of the likely best skate park in Tasmania, only very recently completed. It is an amazing source of competition - in the best possible way - for young people coming together and having fun. It only just got started. All of this, if the council bows down to the AFL and State Growth's demands, will be completely obliterated. Along with the loss of all the trees, the public open space and the amazing skate park, there would also be the loss of all the outdoor space for Rosny College - all of the grounds that are used by Rosny College students. Such an important place would be gone. It would be lost, and it would be concrete and spaces that students cannot go to, instead of students sitting outside under trees while they are in years 11 and 12.

In addition to that, the other half that the AFL demands to have, bullying their way into the Clarence community, is the Rosny Parklands. The Rosny Parklands, for three years, has been the subject of intense community consultation about the future for a city heart. The city heart of Clarence - the heart of Clarence City - is the Rosny Parklands area. It is an incredible place that is being looked at as a source of rewilding and restoration, and that has the big public open space that is needed for the urban infill that is also planned as part of the city heart. This is the incredible irony. In rushing to do the bidding of the AFL in granting its personal pick of where it wants a high-performance centre in Tasmania, the Clarence City Council is prepared to junk a good-hearted community engagement process and all the trust that has been built up about what the future of their city could look like, and instead take away all the public open space and all the potential for urban infill.

The residents of Warrane, Bellerive, Rosny and Rosny Park, have all been engaging in this process for three years, expecting to come along to a master plan that they have signed up to. What does the Clarence council do? It has done what it has done time and time again - it has given the hand to residents and gone off and made a decision. Worse, it has not even informed councillors - who were falsely told when they were pushed to make a decision on the rush about a heads of agreement with the AFL on the position of this centre - that the community had a proper consultation process.

What garbage! No-one knew about it. None of the dog walkers knew about it. None of the people who are residents opposite Charles Hand Memorial Park knew about it. No-one knew about it. There was effectively no consultation on this most enormous decision, and what we have now is a draft heads of agreement between State Growth and the Clarence City Council to put a high-performance centre in that spot.

We know that there is a large number of people in the community who would much prefer it goes to Clarence Plains. Clarence Plains is the space you should have a high-performance centre. It is exactly where it should be. It should be in a community that embraces it, in an area that has no trees, no parkland, no master plan - nothing. It is an open space ready to be developed in this way, with a community that would embrace it. Instead, they are ripping the heart out of existing fantastic facilities that are designed to give people exercise spaces.

There is an irony to removing all of that to provide an exercise space for the AFL over local skaters when you can have your cake and eat it. I thank all of those people who on 3 March got together over the shock of hearing that their park was going to be taken away without knowing anything about it and organised 350 people to come to a snap community meeting.

On 15 March another 150 people came, and then 1000 people signed a petition. Some 400 people went to a public meeting. This is a widespread group of people who want a win-win for their community, and I implore the council to listen to them instead of the AFL, which is bullying them into doing their bidding.

Racing Industry - Work Health and Safety

[5.49 p.m.]

Mr WINTER (Franklin - Leader of the Opposition) - Madam Deputy Speaker, I rise tonight to talk about safety at work and, in particular, safety in the racing industry. I raise issues that were ongoing over the course of the five months that parliament was not sitting, during which time we were not able to speak about them.

These issues came out during scrutiny hearings last year, when we heard from Tasracing that when five young people associated with Tasmania's largest harness racing trainer, Ben Yole Racing, were injured at a crash near Rowella in January last year, the stable did not hold a valid workers' compensation insurance policy. This led to legal proceedings and significant financial uncertainty for those people involved in the crash. I again reiterate my support for Lily Blundstone at this time, who is the subject of ongoing court proceedings. Her former employer is currently not being held to account for this incident, in which she was asked to work for 20 hours in a row and to drive a vehicle which was not up to standard and that had a trailer without working brakes. I send my support to Lily Blundstone and her whole family.

We also heard that Ben Yole was continuing at that time - this is in December - to operate without valid workers compensation insurance, despite it being a breach of the licence conditions and, potentially, the law. Neither Tasracing nor the Office of Racing Integrity had any plans to take action to prevent him from continuing to operate, nor to take any responsibility for ensuring compliance with the licensing rules.

I then wrote to Ruth Forrest, who is the chair of Committee A in the other place. The committee decided to hold an inquiry into workplace safety, into racing safety effectively.

What happened out of all of this was that Tasracing, having disagreed with the Office of Racing Integrity before our very eyes during the scrutiny hearing, decided to go to Ben Yole Racing and finally insist that he have workers compensation insurance; that he actually abided by the law and the licensing requirements. When they did that, in preparation for a race meet at Elwick on a Friday night, the response from Ben Yole Racing was to engage labour hire. Instead of getting the correct insurance, Mr Yole and his business decided to engage a labour hire firm.

That was rightly admonished by the Tasmanian Trotting Club, in particular by CEO Steve Devereaux. Mr Devereaux pointed out that this should not be normal, we should not be allowing this to happen and be normalised in the industry. We did not want labour hire getting involved. I note that it was not long after the engagement of the labour hire company that the company, Complete Workplace Solutions, decided to cease its relationship with Mr Yole and Ben Yole Racing. This was for a very good reason, which I will go into.

I should say, 'perhaps the reason'. This involved the workplace incident of Jaron Urquhart. Jaron Urquhart was working for Ben Yole Racing in the north of the state. He

was working there for six months before he was involved in a horrific workplace incident. Mr Urquhart advised me of the following:

The accident occurred during work at the old property where he fell off the back of a moving car he was sitting on and was subsequently run over by a horse float. His injuries included severe gravel rash requiring a skin graft, and a broken tibia, fibula, pelvis and ribs. He had been paid in cash for six months before the accident, with no contract of employment, payslips or superannuation provided. He believed he was not on the books for any of that period. Subsequently, there were no leave entitlements or workers compensation to rely on, despite being unable to work due to this massive workplace injury. This was his claim to me. If substantiated, it would constitute multiple breaches of employment law, as I understand.

He was in possession of an extraordinary audio recording in which a licensed trainer, Ben Yole, can be heard saying, 'I don't have any insurance, mate', immediately following the incident. This is a man who was trapped underneath a horse float, who was complaining, who was in absolute agony and his employer says to him, 'I don't have insurance, mate'. That was the response from Ben Yole.

After the accident, before the ambulance arrived, Mr Urquhart was moved, under instruction of Mr Yole, and placed into the back of his own car. According to Mr Urquhart, Ben Yole's mother gave him forms to sign as he lay in the back of his own car in agonising pain, waiting for the ambulance. The forms were employment forms for a labour hire company. He subsequently signed them whilst in the back of the car, whilst he had a broken leg in two places, a broken pelvis and requiring a skin graft. As of 4 January, when I spoke to him, he had received two payments totalling approximately \$290. He had no other income or support. He had not heard from Tasracing, the Office of Racing Integrity or WorkSafe Tasmania.

I raise all these issues because, at the heart of the matter, Ben Yole Racing was still allowed to race, despite all these things, all these allegations, all this evidence - firsthand evidence. When I wrote to the Director of Racing about this, he wrote back to me some weeks later and he still had not contacted Mr Urquhart. He did an investigation in which he found that Mr Urquhart actually did have workers compensation through the labour hire company. I dispute that. I do not believe he did. I believe the story Mr Urquhart told me.

I cannot get over how poorly this was handled. From a workplace point of view, I cannot think of a worse situation to be in - to be in agonising pain and being asked to sign those forms. It was disgusting. He is still not at work. As I said, the labour hire company has ceased its engagement with Mr Yole. The Minister for Racing is in the Chamber. I do not quite understand what arrangements Mr Yole or his father currently hold -

Time expired.

Meander Valley SES - 40th Anniversary

[5.56 p.m.]

Mr ELLIS (Braddon - Minister for Police, Fire and Emergency Management) - Madam Deputy Speaker, I rise tonight to celebrate the 40th anniversary of the Meander Valley SES unit and the incredible people who have served their local community in that part of the world and passers-by over many decades. In this National Volunteer Week, it is important that we

celebrate the contributions of ordinary, everyday people who do extraordinary things, particularly in our emergency services.

The Meander Valley SES unit held its 40th anniversary on the night of the great aurora. It seemed that even the heavens were celebrating the contribution of these incredible volunteers. The jobs they have been on over the decades have been extraordinary and the scale of their contribution to the local community is immense.

I got to know some of them, particularly, through the October floods of 2022, a very trying time for that community in what was the largest flooding in terms of riverine rise they have ever recorded in the Meander Valley. Through the incredible work of many people, they were able to save lives and property, and make such a wonderful contribution.

They are also involved in road crash rescue, obviously in a very busy part of our state, coming along the Bass Highway there and search and rescue going up the mountain and finding people lost in the beautiful Tasmanian wilderness and the bush.

Awards for excellence were handed out to a number of amazing volunteers that night. I should mention there were awards for dedication as well because that is one of the things about the service of our volunteers: many do it excellently, but many just do it with consistent dedication year after year. They make a contribution where they can, fitting it in among the other priorities in life - family, work and other volunteering. We know that many of those people also volunteer in a whole range of other places. Thank you to everybody from the Meander Valley SES for your dedication and your excellence.

In particular, we recognise Frank Walker and Max Hayward, who were awarded the State SES life membership. Karin Kettelaar, Wayne Donovan and Dan 'The Man' Watson received their 20-year long service clasp. Congratulations to all of you. Shane Spencer received his 15-year clasp, while Cory Youd and Patrick Sheehan both received their 10-year long service medal. Well done to all those amazing people.

Over the 40 years of the Meander Valley SES unit, which started from humble beginnings with a meeting held among concerned community members and local police, they have been able to do wonderful things. It is probably not even the jobs that people have been on or the awards they have received that will stick with most of them: it is the people they have served with over many years. It was wonderful to see some of those long-time volunteers being re-embraced by the unit. A few historical poems were shared from that time, which helped build camaraderie when they were getting established. It was an amazing memento of that time. In many ways, volunteering is as much about the people you meet along the journey as the service you render. Many of our volunteers will say they get more out of volunteering than they put in, and these people put in a heck of a lot.

To the Meander Valley SES on this National Volunteer Week, thank you for your service. Thank you for the last 40 years, and here is to another 40 years of outstanding, excellent and dedicated service to come.

The House adjourned at 6 p.m.