



# **PARLIAMENT OF TASMANIA**

## **HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY**

### **REPORT OF DEBATES**

**Thursday 5 June 2025**

**Tuesday 10 June 2025**

**REVISED EDITION**



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**Thursday 5 June 2025**

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

## **STATEMENT BY SPEAKER**

### **Orders of the Day**

**The SPEAKER** - In accordance with practice, the Order of the Day for the adjourned want of confidence motion has precedence of the House and will proceed forthwith.

## **MOTION**

### **Want of Confidence in Premier, Jeremy Rockliff**

[10.01 a.m.]

**Mr JAENSCH** - Mr Winter, at the election only 14 months ago, Tasmanians voted for a Liberal government led by Jeremy Rockliff, governing in minority in a larger parliament for four years. That is the Tasmanian people's decision to make, Mr Winter, not yours.

**Members** interjecting.

**The SPEAKER** - Members on my left.

**Mr JAENSCH** - They did not vote for another dysfunctional Labor-Greens government, which is what they might get if this motion is supported today.

**Mr Winter** - They will not.

**Mr JAENSCH** - They did not vote for the uncertainty of a desperate, unplanned coalition that will start life at war with itself on issues like salmon, forestry and the stadium, which is what we might get today. How can this be good for Tasmania? I do not think that anyone has thought this through. I do not think that any Tasmanian has asked for this, Mr Winter, and no Tasmanian will benefit from it. Mr Winter, respect the will of the Tasmanian people.

**The SPEAKER** - Before giving a call to the next speaker, I appreciate how emotional today is for everyone in this place. I appreciate that everyone is a little bit heightened, but that will in no way mean that we will not treat the debate before the House today with the respect that it deserves.

[10.03 a.m.]

**Ms BADGER** (Lyons) - Honourable Speaker, it gives me no pleasure whatsoever to stand here today. This is exactly what I and many Tasmanians dislike in politics, and that is a move without a clear outcome. It is not clear what Labor's plan actually is here.

**Members** interjecting.

**Ms BADGER** - Yesterday, in Mr Winter's letter to the AFL, he said that this government had in the past 24 hours lost the confidence of majority of members. To be clear, what had changed in that 24 hours is Labor's position, because this crossbench and the Greens have been consistent throughout, so this should not come as a surprise.

Labor needs to be upfront with Tasmanians because it is them who change their mind. Be upfront with Tasmanians and tell them what you are going to do, before the end of this debate. You owe it to Tasmanians, you owe it to everybody on the crossbench and the Greens. Stand up and say what you were going to do. Are you going to negotiate with the crossbench? What are you going to do if the Governor or the Acting Governor comes to you and says, what are you going to do?

You can do it now. You do not have to send Tasmanians to a costly election that will probably just yield the same result.

Tasmanians have just elected this minority parliament, and to be very clear, minority parliaments can yield fantastic outcomes for this state. They have done in the past.

**Members** interjecting.

**Ms BADGER** - You can laugh.

**A member** - Why are you doing this?

**Ms BADGER** - We got the Douglas-Apsley National Park, extensions to Freycinet, gun law reform and gay law reform. Minority governments fall apart when people in power walk all over others, when there are threats from the Premier to the Legislative Council - that is when things start to fall apart. When you completely undermine and disrespect local government, like you did on the Development Assessment Panels (DAP) - that is when things start to fall apart. People lose confidence in governments when they override existing processes and protocols for special projects, such as the special and enabling legislation that you have been pushing through this whole term. What is worse, most of that special legislation was totally eliminating a genuine voice for Tasmanians to have a say on their future in this state.

Fiscal responsibility and investment and resource priorities have been totally warped on this Premier's watch, and that is something that the Greens have been consistent in calling out in this term of parliament. More than enough has been said already on the stadium, but another big budget item that has been noted in this place several times and has already been massively blown out on initial investments is Marinus. Tasmanians have heard crickets from both sides about whether they will be seeking a carve-out from the Australian Energy Market Operator's Integrated System Plan rebalancing. The estimates for transmission projects in Australia have been seriously underestimated, and in the past two years, those costs have increased by 55 per cent. What does that mean for Tasmania's budget future in the years to come?

A billion-dollar stadium - absolutely terrible. Let us not forget either that in my electorate of Lyons, we have the Cethana Pumped Hydro that has doubled in cost to \$2 billion and has to be reworked, and does not even need to be designed the current way it is. We can do it better.

I echo the comments from other members, and I thank the Premier for his exceptional work on the commission of inquiry. However, after the recommendations were supposed to be

adopted by this government, diversions for youth offenders have decreased from 54 per cent to 36 per cent as your tough on crime approach progresses, and this is happening on this Premier's watch.

The Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area (TWWHA) is this state's, indeed this country's, greatest intergenerational asset. It is our biodiversity safeguard in a climate and extinction crisis. One of the greatest risks to the TWWHA is climate change, and what is this Rockliff government doing? Mr Bayley spoke yesterday on the 2024 State of the Environment Report recommendations and the complete absence of any investment into them. It is a failure of this government and it is an utter failure of this Environment minister. This summer, over 100,000 hectares of wild places burnt, and this Premier stood in this place in Question Time at the start of the month and committed to a full independent public review of the response. Yesterday, a spokesperson contacted a constituent of mine and suggested otherwise, and indeed confirmed that the terms of reference on that review are not even properly decided. These reviews are absolutely critical to the TWWHA and our intergenerational assets, and the Premier should understand that. He committed in this place to having the full public input and transparency, so has he backflipped? What is actually happening? How can Tasmanians trust this inconsistency?

It is the Rockliff government who are leasing the TWWHA, a public land of outstanding universal values, to a company in a court-ordered liquidation, a company that is thousands of dollars in arrears for overdue invoices to Parks, a government organisation. That now being a fantasy is just the thin edge of the wedge of all the expression of interest projects set to privatise our public lands. You cannot bluff Tasmanians into thinking that the cost of the Tyndall Range project is still \$40 million. If it is not, be transparent and release your new business case.

In recent weeks, we have seen members nearly in tears on motions over the AFL. When that last happened, it was only days after there were cuts in the Family and Domestic Violence Unit. Let us take a moment in this place to check our priorities and our privileges. What message are we actually sending to Tasmanians? This Rockliff government has totally lost touch with everyday Tasmanians, and despite the Greens' prior no-confidence motions in this Premier and members of the Liberal government, I still underestimated the present anger of Tasmanians towards this government.

Yesterday, I woke up, as I know many other members of the Greens did, with an inbox brimming with messages from Tasmanians who feel completely rejected, who do not feel heard or seen any longer. They feel that this Rockliff government has strayed so far from its basic function, from the core work of government; looking after people over profits and private entities.

This government is sending future Tasmanians into economic debt and environmental debt. I warn all members that economic debt can eventually be serviced, but we are heading to irreversible environmental tipping points. We cannot continue on this present trajectory, which is why the Greens are supporting the motion.

[10.10 a.m.]

**Ms OGILVIE** (Clark - Minister for the Environment) - Honourable Speaker, this no-co is completely without merit. It is without base. It is without substantive argument.

**Mr Ellis** - Where is their gutless leader? Pathetic.

**Ms OGILVIE** - Every single person who has stood to speak on this motion so far has had some different reason for wanting to have a bit of a whinge about a budget -

**A member** - Your seats were empty all day yesterday.

**Mr Ellis** - What is he doing, powdering his nose?

**Ms OGILVIE** - Totally without merit.

**Mr Willie** - In an out all day yesterday, trying to get the numbers.

**Members** interjecting.

**Ms Burnet** - That is very disrespectful.

**Dr Woodruff** - Especially gendered ones.

**Ms OGILVIE** - The stunt that you are doing today.

**The SPEAKER** - Member for Clark. The minister will cease her contribution. The House will come to order.

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### **Recognition of Visitors**

**The SPEAKER** - I will take the opportunity to calm the room by welcoming the year 5-6 students from Dunalley Primary to what might be one of the most fascinating parliamentary days that you get to see. With that and the much happier behaviour of the House, I call the Minister for the Environment.

**Members** - Hear, hear.

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**Ms OGILVIE** - As I was saying, it is undemocratic what you are seeking to achieve today and this week. I do not believe for a moment that you thought it through. The people of Tasmania speak at elections.

**Mr Willie** - You must be worried about one.

**Ms OGILVIE** - That is where they tell us what they want. They have constituted this Chamber in the manner we see today for reasons of their choosing - not of our choosing. What we have seen over the last few days is a Chamber that is talking about itself, not about the people of Tasmania - the hardworking people of Tasmania, the families of Tasmania who are going about their business, in their jobs, getting up early. The tradies - I see them at the servo on the way to work, getting their coffees, building things, working hard, going to school, dropping the kids off, paying the mortgage. They are the people who chose this Chamber.



We said coming into this Chamber - and I do not know why the Labor members are all leaving, they are obviously getting a bit nervous. What strange bedfellows you are over that side. What strange bedfellows you are.

**Members** interjecting.

**A member** - Labor member, Independent member, Liberal member - what will you be this election?

**Dr Woodruff** - You are standing in the arid desert.

**Ms OGILVIE** - All in together, and yet you have no framework within which you can actually negotiate what the problem actually is. You have not been able to articulate it. We have had quite a lot of nonsense about environmental complaints.

**Ms Badger** - 'Environmental nonsense' from the Environment minister? How much funding did you get in the Budget, minister?

**The SPEAKER** - Member for Lyons.

**Ms OGILVIE** - This is from the party that asked a total of three environment questions since I have been the Environment minister. How ridiculous. You have been obsessed with third priority, third order issues, running around trying to resecure your base.

**Dr Woodruff** - That is because you cannot answer them. We ask someone else because they give an answer. If you cannot answer a question we ask, 'Why would we waste our time?'

**Mr Bayley** - We ask them of people who can answer them.

**Ms Badger** - I have never heard you talk about the environment.

**The SPEAKER** - Members of the Greens. This may be potentially one of our last days. I understand the idea to get everything on the *Hansard* but the minister does have the right to be heard.

**Members** interjecting.

**Ms Badger** - Sorry, it is World Environment Day.

**Ms OGILVIE** - I am enjoying the split that I see here between those who truly care about the environment and those who are politicking because you want an election. How ridiculous.

**Members** interjecting.

**Dr Woodruff** - On World Environment Day, talk about your responsibilities.

**The SPEAKER** - Leader of the Greens.

**Ms OGILVIE** - When you get together to discuss how you are going to go forward in this, I find it really difficult to comprehend how you are even speaking the same language about

the things you want. You are at odds on so many issues. How are you going to work together? I am very surprised about that.

Fundamentally, I believe you lot over there in the Labor Party have misread the Tasmanian people and the mood out there. People are horrified -

**Mr Jaensch** - That is right.

**A member** - Exactly.

**Mr Willie** - Lemmings, they called you yesterday - senior powerbrokers.

**Ms OGILVIE** - with what you have done. They are not happy about going to an election, if that is indeed what happens. I also want to say -

**Mr Willie** - Marcus Vermey would probably like an election, I reckon.

**Ms OGILVIE** - May I speak?

**The SPEAKER** - Member for Clark.

**Ms OGILVIE** - Another bloke talking over the top of me. Do you want to let me speak? Thank you.

Children, democracy is a precious thing. We have to protect it and look after it and we have to be fair like you are at school. We have to be fair, and we have to let people speak when they want to speak.

I wish the Leader of the Opposition was here because I was going to speak directly to him, but I am speaking to an empty chair, which shows us how little he cares for this change.

**Ms Finlay** - Like your benches were empty all day yesterday.

**Members** interjecting.

**The SPEAKER** - Member for Bass.

**Members** interjecting.

**Mr Ellis** - You moved the motion.

**Ms OGILVIE** - What you have done is insert sovereign risk into our commercial and legal dialogue in this state in a way we have never seen before.

**Mr Willie** - What did you do to UTAS?

**Ms OGILVIE** - The investors want to come here. He keeps wanting to speak over me. Do you talk over all the women in your party, too, Mr Willie? Or would you let me speak?

**Ms Finlay** - As a woman, you never talk over the men of this side?

**Dr Woodruff** - You are in the Chamber, Ms Ogilvie.

**Ms OGILVIE** - Yes, and I have the call, thank you.

**Members** interjecting.

**The SPEAKER** - The Leader of the Greens and the member for Clark, Mr Willie, will cease their interjections. There are warnings in place still from yesterday that I am going to continue with today. We will do this today with a level of decorum and dignity - please.

**Ms OGILVIE** - Sovereign risk is real. That is where you have taken us.

In political life - and I come from an old family, we have been around a while - we believe in service to the community, service to the people of Tasmania, service to the state. I have said many times in this Chamber - and I have walked this talk - that I will work with anybody in this Chamber who puts Tasmania first. That is not what we are seeing today.

Each member, as I have said on the other side, has said something different. Now, Democracy - let us get back to a bit of political philosophy. Rousseau had the theory of the social contract and that is where our democracy comes from; that the people decide. The people decide at an election how we form government, and then you come in here to represent your constituencies. We take that seriously. We all take that very seriously. Do not come in here and try to cause chaos and drama, particularly when it appears - and it is evident to me - that you have not thought it through. You are bullying our democracy in what you are doing today.

For those reading along and watching online, Tasmania's economy is actually going from strength to strength. Business confidence, business conditions - good. The government actually was working well. None of this happens by accident. This happens with hard work, not just by the people in this Chamber, not just those of us who want to lead and help Tasmanians, but by everybody in this state - man, woman, child. Everybody in this state working hard for the betterment of Tasmania in our beautiful island state.

I want to say as well that Jeremy Rockliff is one of the best people I have met. I cannot believe that you have done this. I know why you have done it: because he is popular, he is competent, he is good, he is a vote-winner, and he is the person that delivers time and time again.

**Government members** - Hear, hear.

**Ms OGILVIE** - All you want to do, in typical Labor style, because we have seen you do it to so many people, is knock him off because you think he is a bit too popular and you cannot beat him.

Again, I point to the empty chair where the Leader of the Opposition is not sitting here. He is a bit of a mirage, like Banquo's ghost out there wandering around somewhere.

I have made some notes here about many of the other things we could talk about. I want to say, particularly to the children in the Chamber, what a day to be here. Interesting. Please remember this as you go forward in life, remember that democracy is really important. Go and

vote, have your say and be assured that you will be represented in this Chamber properly, diplomatically, sensibly.

I want to mention my hard-working constituents in Clark who are beside themselves with this nonsense. We have worked very hard to deliver important things for them over time. I have been around for quite a long time and I was mentioning to somebody I care about, one of my staff members the other day, that as I walked down the corridors, down the concrete steps, I thought of the contribution that my grandfather and great uncle had made in this place and I feel their energy in the house and they would be horrified by this. A statue out on the forecourt saying, 'You are crazy, what are you doing?' and I see Mr Willie again trying to think that this is a humorous situation, which it is not.

In relation to the Environment portfolio, as I have mentioned, the Greens, of course, are trying to butter up their base. I get that, I understand that, but the fact of the matter is environmental protection spending has not been cut - \$8 million over four years for that Threatened Species Fund is guaranteed. Perhaps, when you put your videos out, you will also put my response, which is, 'You are not accurate or correct.'

**Mr Bayley** - What about all the other recommendations?

**Ms OGILVIE** - That is factually incorrect.

**Dr Woodruff** - You cut the guts out of the environment.

**Ms OGILVIE** - The hypocrisy is undeniable. This is an anti-democratic move. I believe Tasmanians do not want another election - they just had one. All the bleating that we have heard in this place over many years about how a minority government can work, how we can do it. We have heard our Premier working with the opposition. Everybody is getting a win. The negotiations are happening, We are working with you all to make things happen, so it is a little bit too little too late for Mr Winter to come in and, because he has had a rush of blood to the head, decide that he is going to pull on a stunt because he will not play fair, because he does not know how to win, and he does not know how to win because he does not know how to lead. We can see that in his caucus - because he is not here - which we know also is split.

The failure of the most basic obligations of you people to adhere to democratic principles, the Westminster system, and to seek and deliver better outcomes for the people of Tasmania will be remembered and it will be a blight on you for all time.

[10.21 a.m.]

**Ms ROSOL** (Bass) - Honourable Speaker, I rise to speak on this no confidence motion in support of it. I feel the weight of the debate today, but I also feel the weight of the difficulties being felt and lived by Tasmanians around our state. I have been listening to the government speakers and there have been some very fanciful things said across yesterday and this morning, selective things where they cherry-pick the figures that they want to talk about.

What is really happening is that too many Tasmanians are missing out because of mismanagement by this government and by a failure of priorities. People of Tasmania have been pushed down the list and despite everything the Premier says about this being a budget for the people, the Premier and the government have pandered to business and corporations

and they turn a deaf ear to what the people need. They have been captured, and all Tasmanians are poorer because of this. The evidence for this is pretty stark.

Take health, for example. Last week a report was tabled by the Auditor-General. It slipped under the radar in the midst of the budget and stadium debate but looking at the report, it provides a great case study that illustrates the many problems in management of this state budget. The Auditor-General's report into the Department of Health funding of Community Services was startling in the mismanagement it identified. The report found that the funding of organisations was not strategic, it did not necessarily advance government objectives, funding was not evidence-based or risk-assessed, and evaluation was often not conducted before more funding was granted.

What is worse is these issues were known about for years but almost nothing was done by the Department of Health. The Auditor-General found that health grants exposed the government to risk and there was significant potential and actual mismanagement of funds. The Auditor-General said there was evidence that these issues were also present in other grant programs in other agencies. I understand from speaking with people who work in the community sector organisations that this report has been used last week to justify the cutting of funding in forward Estimates for community service organisations, which is shameful.

Mismanagement is writ large in this report, and it is also reflective of broader mismanagement of the budget. Looking at health more broadly, this government like to talk about the highest funding ever for health, but the reality is one would expect health costs to increase every year and require more funding, but every year the Health spending runs over budget and requires a top-up. This year's Budget reflects some of that top-up in the baseline, but it still does not match what was spent last year and it will not be enough. That has very real impacts. The Budget's own performance targets are fanciful.

The target for patients being admitted, referred or discharged from emergency departments for this year is greater than 90 per cent, and for the 2025-26 Budget period it is also greater than or equal to 90 per cent. Those targets have been included despite the current figure listed on the Department of Health's dashboard yesterday showing that less than 50 per cent of patients are being admitted, referred or discharged from emergency departments, and that figure is lower than the figure that is in the 2023-24 Budget.

Yesterday, 17 patients at the LGH waited for more than 24 hours to be admitted. The government's targets are a stark reminder of their failings, and the glowing figures they like to share in here are a carefully selected snapshot of a very small frame. The Minister for Health yesterday listed a bunch of positive employment figures, but right now vacancies are what the ANMF describe as 'excessive.' There are 92.35 FTE vacancies at LGH, and 160.7 full-time equivalent vacancies at the Royal Hobart Hospital. There is simply not enough money in the Budget for any kind of pay rise that will help us to attract or retain nurses and midwives in this state.

This government under Jeremy Rockliff are not investing in health to the level that will meet the need. They are prioritising the stadium, and Tasmanians are waiting and waiting for the health care they need.

Community service organisations - on Friday I attended the Tasmanian Council of Social Service Budget Briefing. It is hard to capture the level of consternation and deep worry that

was in that room, but the worry amongst community service organisations is palpable and real. They are looking at a Budget that does not give them the funding they need to meet community need.

Community Connectors - there was an agreed expansion of this program. The funding that is in the Budget will allow a two-hour per week increase in service in each of the neighbourhood houses. The need is immense. Two hours a week of extra work time is not going to cover that need.

There are multiple peak bodies - I know of five or six - that do not have the funding allocated to them to fulfil their role properly, and they are going to have to cut back on what they do. Across the board, community organisations say needs are growing - the level of need is increasing; the acuity of the need is increasing - and yet their funding is not keeping pace. You only have to look at the grants line in the Budget to see that grants are dropping.

This government under the Premier are heartless and tone deaf to the calls for more and to the needs, and they have amplified this tone deafness when the minister called for community organisations to become more efficient and innovative. It is hard to find a sector that are more efficient and innovative already. They already run on the smell of an oily rag and here they are being asked to do better, with less, to meet greater need.

Disability Services - this is a changing space at the moment, with foundational supports to become the responsibility of the states. An agreement has not been reached on that yet, but we know that people with disabilities in Tasmania are being taken off the NDIS as their cases are being reassessed. The pace of reassessments is increasing, and many are exiting from the screens. Those needing assessment are having their applications slowed and having to wait for longer. People with disability are missing out, caught in the cracks of funding restrictions and reductions and changes, and there is nothing in the Tasmanian Budget for these people - nothing. They are caught up between upcoming funding changes and the tightening of the NDIS belt, and this is another example of Tasmanians missing out because of wrong priorities.

Speaking of priorities, there are some curious priorities in this Budget. The government have managed to find more money for what they want to, and an example of this is our prisons. The Tasmanian Prison Service is going to get an extra \$25 million on top of their regular Budget to, as they say, 'contribute to costs associated with increasing inmate numbers'.

This government love locking people up. They love shock and awe. They love the display of power over people with their tough on crime ideology.

This is all part of the government's lurch to the right that the Greens have been calling out for some time. The reality is that the Liberals are stacked with right-wing ideologues, and the Premier has allowed them to dictate the direction and initiatives of his government. This is detrimental to our state, including in areas such as Corrections, where the government love locking people up.

The prison numbers are growing as we lock up more Aboriginal people, the poor, the mentally ill and the disabled. That is despite knowing that it does not work. Locking up people does not make them any better. It makes them more likely to end up back in prison, caught in

a cycle of crime. If we are going to talk about money costing more in that way, it is another example of bad priorities and wasted money.

Tough on Crime is not just affecting adults, it is terrible for young people. It flies in the face of all the evidence of what works when working with troubled young people. It flies against the government's own Youth Justice Blueprint. Tough on crime is heartless, punitive, counterproductive, and ultimately harms children, and the Premier has not stood up to this. He has not pushed back and required better of his ministers, and this is a shame to our state.

Another shame to our state and a failure of this Premier in government is Ashley Youth Detention Centre. It is still open, despite a promise that it would be closed by the end of last year. While Ashley Youth Detention Centre remains open, young people remain at risk. This is not just a failure to close Ashley, it is also a failure to do the work needed to close it. We know what that work is. It is alternative bail facilities. It is wrap-around support. It is therapeutic services that meet the needs of young people that help address those factors that lead to them becoming engaged in criminal behaviour.

At the moment those things have not been put in place, they have not been prioritised, the work is too slow. The Premier is failing young people. These things, which I have talked about with young people, were part of the commission of inquiry recommendations - serious recommendations that were made to keep children safe. Looking at the funding of the services, the recommendations are not being fulfilled.

A lot of work might be happening on commission of inquiry recommendations, but on outcomes like closing Ashley and keeping children safe, we are seeing failings. The government are going through the motions of implementing commission of inquiry recommendations, but when you look at the evidence provided to committees in hearings, there are a lot of glib, superficial, high-level words that do not reflect the seriousness of what is needed.

Even in this Budget, the Premier and ministers have talked about the commission of inquiry as if it is in the past. They are talking about it and how it has contributed to the debt that we are in now, as if it is done and behind us. But the commission of inquiry recommendations are far from being implemented and much more work needs to be done, and we must ensure this is not forgotten and not hidden in figures in a Budget that are difficult to find.

Again, this government under this Premier has faulty priorities and young people are missing out. All these wrong priorities and the decisions that the government has been making about where they will place their money have been for a rolling collection of election promises that have broken the budget, for cherry-picked projects and for the Macquarie Point Stadium - a glory project that the Premier has staked his reputation on but which will send us into greater and greater levels of debt.

Servicing those debts pulls money away from Tasmanians. It pulls money away from the services and supports that they need. The stadium is sucking the air out of this state. It is sucking funding out of services, and it is sucking the life, sometimes quite literally, out of Tasmanians who are missing out.

This whole no-confidence situation is far from ideal. It seems grounded in brinkmanship and is leading to instability. Nothing is black and white. What we have now is also far from ideal and cannot continue. The Greens support this no-confidence motion because we have long had no confidence in the Premier for all the reasons we have outlined over yesterday and today. But I reiterate what my colleagues have said: we are committed to stability, and we are ready to work with other members here to do the best for Tasmanians.

We will always fight for Tasmanians and our precious environment. Today that means supporting this no confidence motion. Whatever shakes out of this such situation, may it bring positive change for the people of Tasmania. The Greens stand ready for whatever comes next, willing to do our part to ensure Tasmanians have all they need to live well.

[10.34 a.m.]

**Ms HOWLETT** (Lyons - Minister for Primary Industries and Water) - Honourable Deputy Speaker, I rise to utterly reject the opposition leader's reckless motion. I reject this selfish, incredibly damaging motion. I reject this motion, which is dark, power-hungry to its core, and fundamentally anti-Tasmanian. I stand here proudly and reinstate my full support for our Premier, the honourable Jeremy Rockliff. The Premier is honourable and he has my full confidence.

You, Mr Winter, have allowed your heart of darkness to drive you to the most dishonourable course of action. It is an incredibly damaging course of action to satisfy your pursuit of power. The damage from your selfish action is going to hurt thousands of Tasmanian businesses, families and workers. You have put self-interest in front of the interest of all Tasmanians. As a representative of the people who put us all here, that is the ultimate failure in your role. You have put your job ahead of many thousands of Tasmanians jobs. Many more thousands of jobs will now never exist. He constantly talks about jobs, about stability and about what is good for Tasmania, but the move demonstrates that his words and his actions simply do not match up.

Jeremy Rockliff said he would govern with heart and he has done that every single day in government. I know and Tasmanians know where Jeremy Rockliff stands, what he believes in and what he will fight for. Sadly, the same cannot be said for his shallow, selfish opposition leader. Tasmanian simply cannot rely on a word that he says.

The opposition leader has said time and time again that Labor has changed, 'Oh, we have changed,' and that he would never, ever do a deal with the Greens. And yet here we are. Based on the Leader of the Greens' contribution, it is crystal clear that this is exactly what is going on. There is a brand new Labor-Greens power-sharing deal just waiting to be signed off. Once again, Labor equals Greens.

Why should Tasmanians believe Dean Winter when he keeps saying one thing and he does another? I know who I have confidence in, and that is our Premier, Jeremy Rockliff. This irresponsible no-confidence motion in the Premier will only deliver severe damage to wider confidence levels in our state and the future of young Tasmanians.

This has already had a massive chilling effect on many people that have spoken to me. It feels like a kick in the guts for them. They do not want to talk about their plans that they might have had any more. They do not know what is around the corner. They do not understand what this means for them, their jobs and of course many vital projects that are part of the



government's strong plan for our future. They feel uncertain. They feel betrayed by the selfish actions of those opposite. This will cause critical time delays in our massive infrastructure projects.

Your selfish no confidence motion on that side of the House will mean actual no confidence in our business community. The businesses who create the vast majority of jobs to employ Tasmanian people will just stop, close their books, and go into hibernation. They will not take any new risks or develop any new opportunities. They will not build that new section of the premises or put on that new part-timer or apprentice. This will cripple local business confidence. They will just stop, sit and wait for as long as they have to. It will take months and probably years until they recover.

The Opposition Leader loves to come in here quoting stories about businesses in the media. I wonder whether he can even name one that supports this reckless, damaging motion. This is the absolute polar opposite of what we need right now in our economy.

Mr Winter's selfish motion will mean no confidence for investors, and how long for? Who knows? This will beat down the confidence of the wider business Tasmanian community. It is going to have a huge disruption, negative impact on our brand - our good Tasmanian brand - and on the reliability and certainty of Tasmania as somewhere to invest and to do business. There is only one person in Tasmania who wants another election and that is a wrecker on that side of the House, Mr Winter.

Earlier we heard from former failed shadow treasurer, member for Braddon, Dr Broad in reference to this selfish, incredibly damaging motion, weakly defending it, saying, 'This has been a long time coming.' What? It was only last month that the same member said:

I do not believe that Tasmanians are ready for another state election. It would reflect poorly on all of us. The state needs stability for a period. The election was only a bit of a year ago. We do not need another election right now.

**Dr Broad** - You did not listen to my contribution then, just be wilfully ignorant.

**Members** interjecting.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER** - Order, members on my left.

**Ms HOWLETT** - Dr Broad, Mr Winter, this is exactly what you are doing here in this place. You are forcing Tasmanians to another election -

**Dr Broad** - No, it is Rockliff that is doing that.

**A member** - Talk to your Premier.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER** - Order.

**Ms HOWLETT** - without even finishing the debate on the budget, arrogantly cutting off the process. You are recklessly blocking supply for your own power-hungry political games. This is not good for those Tasmanians who are out there. They want stability and certainty that

you preach to us about. This is exactly what all the texts, emails and messages that I am receiving are saying. This is really bad.

Does that side of the House and the wrecker realise what you are actually doing? Do you? Do you actually get the far-reaching effects of this, because I can tell you right now most Tasmanians I am hearing, cannot believe what you are doing. Premier Jeremy Rockliff was right earlier. Mr Winter, you are nothing but a wrecker and that is what you will be remembered for.

We have heard commentary about cost escalations with the stadium from some members opposite. Well, it was actually former Labor Leader Ms White's weak leadership that cost us a two-year delay and tens of millions of dollars in cost escalations while Labor played politics with the team and with the stadium. We must never forget that the member for Bass, Ms Finlay's flip-flop with her 'Stop the Stadium' petition and I am pretty sure the 'Yes AFL team, Yes stadium' page participants will never let you forget that, Ms Finlay.

Finally, Mr Winter, he did the backflip for Labor and then he said he supported the stadium. Finally, supporters of the project were encouraged by the bipartisanship, but his selfish actions right now, demonstrate the complete opposite, even with a hasty penned letter to the AFL after commentators earlier raised whether or not he had discussed this with the AFL.

What is important here is that today, Labor has backflipped again. Mr Winter has pulled a massive shifty on all of us in this place. This selfish motion today proves that he really does not support our AFL teams or the stadium or the dreams, the dreams of many young thousands of Tasmanians despite his letter to the AFL because everyone involved in this project has told you that if you went ahead with this thing that you are actually doing, it would cause critical time delays in the process and it will be the end of it.

He actually only supports himself and his own power-hungry desires. Mr Winter, you are the dream killer of thousands and thousands of Tasmanians.

As David Lithgow, local sports broadcaster and real estate agent, posted today about Mr Winter:

If he doesn't have a plan here in terms of the Tasmanian Football Club, then this somehow goes belly up. These politicians let it happen.

It will be the greatest disgrace in Tasmania's social life history.

I also reject the Greens' member earlier sneering about putting down the stadium project.

Independent modelling by AEC Group shows the Macquarie Point Stadium would deliver significant economic benefits. The AEC Group analysis estimates the project would generate \$143.3 million annually during construction and \$178.9 million each year once operational.

**Mr Bayley** - The costs outweigh benefits.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER** - Order.

**Ms HOWLETT** - The construction phase alone is expected to support 385 full-time equivalent jobs and contribute \$65.4 million to the gross economy in Hobart. That is the Hobart City Council's own report.

Without a stadium we do not have a team. This has always been part of the deal. It is not a threat; it is a reality of the AFL. Tasmanian's entry into the national competition depends on meeting the same high performance commercial standard as every other club. I reject the utterly fraudulent comments about the AFL deals from the member for Clark, Mr Bayley, earlier on his amendment debate.

If any deal had been up to the Greens, there would have been no deal, no teams. You are not fooling anyone. The Dark Mofo hand sculpture should be turned upside down into the global sign for stop, stop any development, stop everything.

**Mr Bayley** - Planning Commission concerns.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER** - Order, Deputy Leader of the Greens.

**Ms HOWLETT** - I am sick to death at the cheap taunts of people calling out this beautiful capital city; 'Nobart', 'Slowbart.' It is because of you and your anti-everything approach for not getting things done.

**Mr Bayley** - Your own Planning Commission says it should not -

**DEPUTY SPEAKER** - Order, Mr Bayley.

**Ms HOWLETT** - The construction of a new roofed stadium is a central capital city location. It is a core recommendation of the AFL Taskforce in 2019, and it remains the foundation of our licence today.

What Dean Winter is doing here is unnecessarily delaying the timelines and inflicting damage on the dreams of our young Tasmanians. The Dodgers Ferry Footy Club told me last week they have over 300 kids enrolled in Auskick. That is 300 dreams just there, ruined by the wrecker on that side of the place. It is not just the future of players, it is about managers, suppliers, hospitality operators. Your selfish motion, Mr Winter, will wreck many dreams and kill off so many business opportunities.

As Stuart posted on the Yes AFL Team, Yes Stadium regarding supporting the stadium:

The children of today and generations that follow will live with your decision. They can't vote but they deserve a voice in this moment. This decision should not reflect the interest of those nearing retirement but the future aspirations of younger Tasmanians.

In contrast to Labor on this side, we make no apology for our strong support of small business, for our tourism industry and for our hundreds of hospitality venues across the state which is why one particular comment from the member for Bass, Ms Finlay's Budget reply speech last night has really stuck with me. To be honest, it has made me really angry on behalf of the many businesses that I have met with lately. It clearly demonstrates that Labor has no idea about budget management and the long-term impact of what our businesses have had to deal with

post-COVID. Just like Long COVID, the impact on our businesses is still being felt in a real way.

Ms Finlay's comments, I could not quite work out what she was actually saying, Deputy Speaker, about responsible debts and what is not, but she implied that COVID is long behind our business community. Seriously, there is nothing further from the truth. This shows Labor's complete lack of understanding of what our hospitality and our small business sectors are actually facing, just like Labor's complete lack of understanding about how this selfish motion will inflict real long-term damage on our businesses. Businesses right across our nation are still feeling the impacts of the pandemic. To suggest that we are just over it now is downright disrespectful, especially to our small business sector who, with our support, have slowly started to claw their way back from one of the world's worst periods of uncertainty that we have experienced. Also, just when business confidence for our state is improving, unemployment is low, and businesses tell me that they are feeling supported and heard and having confidence to grow and invest in their businesses, Mr Winter comes in here and wants to torch it all. They have just started to turn a corner and that side of the house, you are pushing them right back into it.

As I said earlier, please name me one business or business organisation that supports your actions and motion in this place. Tell me one. Just when our young people are once again considering careers in hospitality, event management and a real career choice again, these dreams will die. They will go to the mainland and work with big venues.

We have recently caught a glimpse of just how anti-business that side of the House are when they called our support for our Small Business Growth Strategy 2026 and the Enabling Business Grants program reckless. The member for Clark, Mr Willie, targeted specific businesses who use grants to purchase technology - for example, AirPods - saying that they were a waste of money. Mr Willie, how else does a small business with no shopfront that works anytime, anywhere, get that work done without being able to hear their customers on calls or meetings? Mr Willie has no idea about actually running a business. Perhaps instead of mudslinging and talking businesses down, you should spend some time actually getting to know these small businesses and their families. Talk to them. They are hardworking, they work day in, day out, and greatly appreciate the support from the government.

I reject the assertion that this stunt motion has been brought on by the Budget that was tabled last week. That is absolutely farcical and untrue. Giddy with delusions of grandeur and lust for power, Mr Winter and his shadow cabinet have been telling stakeholders for weeks that they would vote down this Budget. I have heard it. Well, we have not even got there yet. As the independent member for Franklin, Mr O'Byrne, said, you are happy to block supply. This extraordinary lack of discipline and belief that they will become the government without even facing the people is weak and gutless. You do not get to tell people you are the government; they tell you. I am telling you this is not legitimate and you have no right to try.

You went off before acceptances and the only people you forgot to get a mandate from are the people of Tasmania.

**Mr Jaensch** - That is right.

**Ms HOWLETT** - It is one thing to be okay being the person who killed off Tasmania's dream to be part of the AFL and AFLW, but it is quite another thing to be so excited by the

prospect that you start telling stakeholders in advance of your plan to ruin our state's seat at the national table.

**Members** interjecting.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER** - Order.

**Ms HOWLETT** - Only weeks ago, the crossbench and the Greens labelled Mr Winter not fit to be the Leader of the Opposition, but now they think he is a viable alternative premier? That is ludicrous. Mr Winter, the recent EMRS poll tells us that a lot of Tasmanians do not know who you are. Rest assured, after this, the wrecker, that is what they know. You will be known as a wrecker. You are a business-wrecker, a future-wrecker whose thirst for power is far greater than his consideration of the ambition of the future of Tasmanians. This selfish motion is all about Dean and nothing about the people and businesses of Tasmania. This is a parliament the Tasmanians gave us. Dean Winter and Labor want to blow it up and force wasted money on an unnecessary election and, by doing so, confirm to the community that they are reckless. The people of Tasmania put us here to do a job just over a year ago, but you guys know better than them. Mr Winter, you are going to blow it all up.

I urge the parliament to rethink. Do you want to follow a wrecker? The CEO of the Small Business Council of Tasmania has echoed the concerns of businesses when he said yesterday -

One thing the Tasmanian community, in particular the business population and their employees, the people who rely on the businesses to succeed, do not need right now is total chaos and disruption within the ranks of our leaders which are all here.

Tasmanians have just come from a most unsightly slanging between our two major parties called a Federal Election and the last thing we need is another local one.

As Mr Mallett went on to say -

It is winter -

**Time expired.**

[10.55 a.m.]

**Mr STREET** (Franklin) - Honourable Deputy Speaker, It will come as no surprise that I am going to stand here and talk about my support for Jeremy Rockliff, both as Premier and Leader of the Liberal Party of Tasmania. Multiple members opposite yesterday got up and said that this is not personal, that this is not about Jeremy Rockliff, the man. Well, they have made it personal by making this a no confidence motion in the Premier and not the government. I want to talk about Jeremy Rockliff and the person I know for a minute.

Back in 2016, when I was elected to this place, not long after I got here, a private members bill for Dying with Dignity legislation was introduced into this place. On the Wednesday that it was to be debated, we had our party room meeting. It was made clear by the Premier at the time, Will Hodgman, that there was going to be a conscience vote, and everybody in the party room knew what my position was on this particular issue. As we were

walking back along the corridor from the party room meeting, I felt an arm grabbed me and dragged me into his office; it was the deputy premier at the time, Jeremy Rockliff. He looked me square in the eye and he said:

I have gone round and round on this issue, Nic, and I cannot support this legislation today. But I know what your position is and the only way you can disappoint me this afternoon is if you do not vote the way you think you should.

That told me something really important about the man, Jeremy Rockliff. Not only does he have the courage of his convictions, but he believes in the rights of every single person in this place to vote with the courage of their convictions as well, regardless of whether he agreed with me on that particular issue.

It was a really important lesson that stuck with me from that time till now, nearly some 10 years later. Jeremy Rockliff has been premier of this state through an extraordinary time. There has been very little talk from those opposite when they are talking about the debt that is now within the budget about COVID-19 - a once in a lifetime, we hope, global pandemic. Very little talk about the commission of inquiry and the billions of dollars that have been required to rectify past mistakes over more than 40 years by governments of all persuasions. We are the government that has actually put the money behind the recommendations from the commission of inquiry to make it happen and to improve our systems and compensate people who were treated so poorly.

The debt that is in the Budget has not just come out of nowhere. Everybody knows where it has come from. Quite frankly, it should come as no surprise to anybody in this place because every state in the Commonwealth besides Western Australia is dealing with a debt problem like Tasmania is, and we are not immune to that.

I do not like deficit budgets, but the irony, of course, in all this debate about the Budget, is that if we brought down a budget last week that was in surplus or balanced, a slash-and-burn budget, it would have been vociferously opposed, probably more than the Budget that we brought down, if that was what we had chosen to do.

Instead, we have laid down the budget that we have with a credible pathway to surplus, which those opposite scoff at. We are trying to balance support and the needs of the community and the services that government provides with our ability to get back to a balanced budget position, to a surplus position and start paying down the debt.

That is not an easy process. Nobody said it would be. But for those opposite to try and claim that this no confidence motion in the Premier has been brought about by the Budget is fanciful.

Why has this no confidence motion come on? I thought it was a stunt gone wrong to start with, that it was a threat made in a budget reply speech that the Leader of the Opposition would never act upon and never thought that he would have to act upon, or that he would leave hanging over the government's head for six months. Then the crossbench made their position clear and basically called him out on it and he had to stand up and do it. To be honest, I wonder how many of the Labor members, having watched the debate that has gone on for the last day and a bit, are now sitting there wondering -

**Ms OGILVIE** - What they have done?

**Mr STREET** - 'What has our leader done to us?', to be quite honest. Make no mistake, this no-confidence motion is all about the Leader of the Opposition. It is not about the Labor party, it is not about the parliament, it is not about Tasmanians. It is about Mr Winter. What he sees in Jeremy Rockliff is a Premier that he cannot narrow the gap on in the preferred premier stakes, and knows that he never will.

Ms Dow and Dr Broad both belled the cat for me in their contributions when they said, 'Look, this could all be stopped. The Premier could just step aside. The Premier could just resign and somebody else could come into the Premier's seat and the government could continue on'. So it is not really about the Budget, because they would then pass the Budget that they are so vociferously against if we installed a new Premier.

Let me make it very clear: that is not how this place works. It is certainly not how the Liberal party works. The Liberal party room decides who the leader of the Liberal party, and in this case the Premier of Tasmania, will be. It is not the parliament of Tasmania and it is certainly not the Labor party. I know that this is a difficult concept for members of the Labor party to understand, as a party that is still in administration and cannot make decisions of their own.

We know that this is Mr Winter's one at-bat. He got the leadership after the election uncontested. What we also know about the Labor party is that if there is a contested ballot in the Labor party, the unions and the rank-and-file membership get a say in the leadership of the Labor party. You do not need to have studied political science to know that in that case, in a contested leadership between Mr Winter and any other contender within that Labor party room, if the rank-and-file members of the party and the unions get a say, in a horse race Mr Winter would finish behind the ambulances that follow the horses around. It is as simple as that.

This is his one chance, but I think he is even going to squib that. I think he is going - I think he wants to try and force us to an election, an unnecessary election that others have said Tasmanians do not want.

I have to say that to say that this being about the Budget is a furphy. There is no Budget that this government could have delivered that the Labor party would have agreed with. If we had slashed spending to get us back to a balanced budget or to surplus, they would have criticised that. If we had raised taxes to raise more revenue to get us back there, they would have criticised us in a cost-of-living crisis for putting more pressure on Tasmanians. There is no budget position that we could have delivered last week that the Labor party would have been happy with.

It has record Health and Education spending, It has \$500 million worth of concessions for those Tasmanians doing it hardest. It is doing the things they are talking about. As other speakers from our side have pointed out as well, in his Budget reply speech, there was no alternative to the current position from Mr Winter. There was no acknowledgement of COVID or the commission of inquiry and the circumstances that have led to the position that we have. There was no acknowledgement of the fact that every state besides Western Australia is dealing with the same debt position. It is just this head in the clouds, disingenuous hand-wringing from

Mr Winter that somehow Tasmania is different from what is going on everywhere else in the country in terms of the budget position that we are dealing with.

I want to make it absolutely clear that a no-confidence motion in the Premier is a no-confidence motion in this government, because we choose who leads our party. It is the man that sits in that seat right there, Jeremy Rockliff. He has the full support of the Liberal party room to remain as Premier and leader of the Liberal party. Ms Dow in her contribution yesterday said, 'The Premier turned up today', like that was somehow a surprise. If you expected that you were going to be able to threaten a no-confidence motion and have the crossbenchers indicate their public support, and somehow the Premier was just going to resign and not turn up for work yesterday, you have misjudged the man completely. You have misjudged his strength of character, you have misjudged his integrity and you have misjudged his determination to do what is right for the people of Tasmania.

I must say that the position of the Greens on this no-confidence motion is confusing to me because, in her contribution when she got up, Dr Woodruff talked about a number of different policy positions. She talked about salmon, she talked about the stadium, forestry, mining, climate change. These are all policy positions that, yes, the Liberal party holds a positive view of, but these are also policy positions that the Labor party holds a positive view of.

So, either the Greens think that they can turn the Leader of the Labor party into Green Dean, or they are going to join forces with a party who is fundamentally opposed to all of the things that they say are most important to them as well. I simply do not understand the Greens' position on this no-confidence motion.

One of the other things I wanted to get to with Labor is the furphy around the position that the budget was left in in 2014. Multiple speakers on multiple occasions have got up in this place and talked about the \$200 million of net cash that was left in 2014 when Labor left office. Every person who has an ounce of truth in them knows that that is a - I was going to say 'lie', but that is unparliamentary, Deputy Speaker; I will not put you in that position - is a fundamental mistruth and a misleading of people.

If Labor had not raided the \$1.5 billion in the Superannuation Guarantee Fund to cover their deficit budgets between 2010 and 2014, if they had not sold the TOTE, which nobody has talked about - we are talking about privatisation of assets and how dead against it the Labor party are. They were not dead against it when they sold the TOTE. When we sold the Trust Bank, we got the Tas Community Fund. What did we get when the government of the day sold the TOTE? Nothing. It just got swallowed up in one deficit budget.

To come in here and say that you somehow left the state's finances in good condition is an absolute furphy. Ms Dow said, 'Well, none of us were even here - you keep going back to the previous Labor-Greens government.' Absolutely. I completely acknowledge that you were not. Stop using the budget management of that government as somehow some indicator of terrific Labor economic management performance -

**Ms Dow** - It is a fact, Mr Street. You do not like it, but it is a fact.

**Mr STREET** - Because we all know that it is an absolute mistruth. It is not a fact. I just put the facts on the table: you pulled \$1.5 billion out of the superannuation guarantee fund to



cover your deficits. Yes, there was \$200 million cash left at the end of it, but that \$200 million cash would not have been there if you had not raided the superfund. We would have been in deficit and we would have had debt. That is the simple fact of the matter.

I want to touch very quickly on the stadium again, because it has been raised by multiple speakers. I have made the point in this place before and I will make it again today: the AFL did not blackmail us into this position. We have a stadium at York Park - UTAS Stadium - that is going to have \$130 million spent on it that will bring it up to not just AFL standard, but will make it one of the best grounds of its size in the country. There is no way to do the same sort of work at Ninja Stadium, Bellerive Oval. Anybody who understands where that stadium sits, what is around it and its geographic position knows that it cannot be refitted to hold the additional people that we need to sustain an AFL team.

It is as simple as that. I will tell a very quick story about Ninja Stadium. The last time it was packed was in the first week of February, I believe, for the BBL final, which, thankfully, was a great night for Tasmanian sport, with the Hurricanes winning the BBL. I know somebody who attended that night who left before the trophy presentation. Why did they leave before the trophy presentation? Because they knew if they stayed until everybody else was leaving that they would be at that ground for another two hours that night, trying to get out of gridlocked traffic. That was with a crowd of 14,000 at Ninja Stadium.

**Mr Bayley** - It is going to be the same.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER** - Order.

**Mr STREET** - Sorry?

**Mr Bayley** - It is going to be the same. You are going to have to close Davey Street.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER** - Order, Deputy Leader of the Greens.

**Mr STREET** - Can you imagine -

**DEPUTY SPEAKER** - Mr Street, if you can resume your seat, please stop the clock for a moment. This is obviously a passionate debate. Members will be heard in silence. The Speaker has advised me to be very generous in giving warnings out if people are being disorderly, and I am assuming people will all want to be in this room when they need to be. The member will be heard in silence and then everybody will have the opportunity to have their say.

**Mr STREET** - Imagine putting another 9000. Imagine if we decided to bulldoze the entire side of Ninja Stadium, where the hill is, buy all of the houses that are outside of it and convert that whole street into public open space; then build a grandstand on that side which took capacity to 23,000 people. Imagine 23,000 people trying to get out of that residential location and gridlock. That is why Ninja Stadium is not being proposed for upgrade; it is why the AFL have said you need a new stadium in Hobart.

We fervently believe that Mac Point is the right place for that stadium. I absolutely believe in it as a project. I have been fortunate enough to visit the Adelaide Oval and the new stadium in Perth to see what those venues have done in terms of the revitalisation of those

cities. That is exactly what would happen to Hobart and the whole of Tasmania, not only that stadium but that entire precinct being redeveloped, a precinct that has been empty for way too long.

Members of the Greens get up here and talk about a toxic site. This is a toxic site that their vision, the proposed vision that they supported, had a tidal pool and housing on it. The toxic issues were obviously going to be dealt with to build the housing and the tidal pool. It was a tidal pool, I might add, that was going to sit in the shadows of the sewage tanks that they were proposing to leave in place. There were no plans improve the Hobart sewerage system so we can cope with the residential development that we need in Hobart. But we cannot have such development at the minute because we do not have a functioning water and sewerage system that can cope with increased residential development.

We will put that aside. The word toxic keeps getting thrown around as though it cannot be dealt with, but that is what the rehabilitation of that site has been all about, getting it ready for a development like this stadium.

I absolutely support the stadium. I absolutely support the Premier's belief in it and his strength of character to have taken the position that he did, because quite frankly, we are the only ones that have had a consistent position on this stadium. Jeremy Rockliff is the person who has nailed his political colours to the mast on that project because he knows that it is the right thing to do for Tasmania, despite the political pressure that he has received over it. That is a sign again of the character of the man that we are talking about.

I make it clear: a no confidence motion in this Premier is a no confidence motion in the government because we, as members of the Liberal party room, choose our leader. Not the Parliament of Tasmania, certainly not the Labor party and Jeremy Rockliff has the full support of our party room to remain both as leader and as Premier of Tasmania. What we are seeing, is selfishness writ large from the Leader of the Opposition.

As I said at the start, I do wonder how many Labor members that are in the Chamber right now or are sitting in their offices downstairs, wonder what the hell he has led them into. Quite frankly, I think he either set off a bomb that he did not mean to, or he set off a bomb designed purely for his own selfish individual interests and to protect his leadership.

Make no mistake, we know that there are people coming for Mr Winter in the Labor Party

**Members** interjecting.

**Dr Broad** - Garbage.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER** - Order. Members on my left.

**Mr STREET** - You say it is garbage, Dr Broad. I will pose this question to the parliament. On multiple occasions, Mr Winter has got up and made great virtue of the fact that 'Under my leadership, Labor has changed.' How do you think the now federal member for Lyons, Ms White, feels about Mr Winter getting up and saying 'Labor has changed under my leadership'?

**Members** interjecting.

**Ms Butler** - I think she is pretty happy at the moment, she just absolutely smashed an election and is an outstanding federal minister.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER** - Order. Ms Butler, you will have your chance to speak.

**Mr STREET** - The question has to be asked, and you know every time when you have got a nibble from that side.

**Members** interjecting.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER** - Please do not invite interjections, Mr Street.

**Members** interjecting.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER** - Order.

**Mr STREET** - As a Deputy Speaker myself, I acknowledge that ruling and the sensible direction you have given me.

You have to ask yourself: What have they changed from? What was Ms White and Labor doing before Mr Winter became leader that he felt he needed to change? I pose the question: are the Labor members opposite happy with the leadership of Mr Winter and this course of action that he has chosen to take? I get the feeling that they either did not know that this was going to happen, or did not realise the implications of what he was doing. They misjudged the Premier completely in thinking that he was just going to resign and step aside and that somehow everything would continue on. They then claim it is about the Budget, but a budget that they then claimed if we installed a different premier that we would get back to and pass. So, it is not really about the budget, either. It is about Mr Winter's leadership aspirations and the fact that he knows that the clock is ticking on his own leadership because of the structure of the Labor party and how they decide their leader. Like I said before, he knows that if it gets to a contested leadership within that party room, that the rank-and-file members of the Labor Party, and the unions, will get a say. Quite frankly, it is why he has been so keen and so eager and so belligerent in making sure that Mr O'Byrne does not come back into the Labor Party because he knows that the unions and the rank-and-file membership of the Labor Party would install Mr O'Byrne as leader of the parliamentary Labor party in a heartbeat.

We have complete confidence on this side in the Premier, Jeremy Rockliff. I have complete confidence in the Cabinet that he now leads as well to take us forward. What we have from the Leader of the Opposition is a wrecker and a selfish person who has put his own interests ahead of the Tasmanian people.

[11.15 a.m.]

**Mr GARLAND** (Braddon) - Honourable Deputy Speaker, I am relatively new to this parliament so maybe that is why I am a little confused. This was meant to be budget week. That is the job the parliament is here to do. That is the main game. If Labor have a problem with the Premier's budget mismanagement, they should vote against the Budget like I will be. Instead, they have said yesterday that they will support the Budget. They will give the government confidence and supply if they change the premier. I do not understand why they will support

a budget that is so bad that it has forced them to move a motion of no confidence in the Premier. I am not sure what to make of that. Hopefully, Mr Winter can explain this in his summing up.

I want to start by saying that I was elected to this parliament as an independent. I did not provide the government with a formal supply and confidence agreement, and I have never seen my role in this parliament as propping up the Liberal government. I am happy to work with the government, but I was also elected on a promise to hold the government to account. I have and will continue to consider each issue on its merits, based on the evidence and based on what my constituents are telling me. My constituents are telling me, loud and clear, they have lost confidence in this Premier.

This motion contains three basic propositions, which I support. I agree that the budget mismanagement is doing long-term damage to Tasmania. I do not support the Premier's plan to privatise assets. I have no faith in the Premier's ability to deliver major projects following the *Spirit of Tasmania* fiasco, which has cost the state at least \$400 million, and nor do the people of Tasmania. Others have spoken on those points, but I want to talk about the other failures of this Premier that do not appear on this motion but have led me to have no confidence in him.

While I absolutely credit Premier Rockliff for putting his hand up to govern in minority, I do not believe his government have been genuine in considering the views of the crossbench. They have voted against all of my motions. They have not budged on any of the issues I was elected to parliament to progress. This is a minority parliament and they need to genuinely work with the crossbench. That includes finding ways to accommodate our views into your policy positions into your budget, not just throwing out a few lollies at budget time.

I understand your government has your own agenda, but so do I, so do we the crossbench. I do not feel like my views have been genuinely considered, let alone acted on, and it sounds like Mr Jenner feels the same.

I have been extremely concerned by this government's constant attack on the planning system, special treatment for individual developers, including ACEN, the Robbins Island proponent. It is disgraceful and completely undermines the public's trust in this government.

**Mr Bayley** - Hear, hear.

**Mr GARLAND** - I also acknowledge that the Premier and his government have been enabled in this by the Labor party.

I and the people of Tasmania have been left completely disillusioned by the absolute unwillingness of the government to rein in the salmon industry, which again, has been enabled by Labor. To see the salmon industry expand into the waters of the northwest coast crossed the red line for me. I have also been left angered over the mismanagement of our wild fisheries and the way this Premier and his government have totally ignored my concerns.

I have been disillusioned by the absence of a reform agenda. There is so much legislation waiting to be modernised by this government. I agree with the opposition leader: this premier, this government does not have the stomach for reform. Where is the reform to the Integrity Commission? Where is the reform to the *Living Marine Resources Act*, the *Marine Farm Planning Act*, the *Environmental Management and Pollution Control Act*, and, importantly, the

*Aboriginal Heritage Act*, and the *Land Use Planning Approvals Act* as well? This legislation has been crying out for reform for years, but where is the progress? Instead, it prefers to declare war on red tape.

These problems have been percolating away for the past 12 months. What has tipped me over the edge are two things: the budget, which is an absolute bin fire. I am not going to support a budget that continues to return billion-dollar cash deficits for the next four years after the government has been put on notice by Saul Eslake after he had the credit rating downgraded by one of the ratings agencies. Labor has called this the worst budget in history. Even conservative media commentators and former Liberal advisers are calling this the worst budget in the state's history.

My position on this should not come as a surprise. I put the government on notice in my reply to the budget last year, where I called it an irresponsible budget which saddles the next generation with impossible levels of debt. I also sent the Treasurer and the Premier an open letter warning them of where I stood. I said I will not support the 2025-26 State Budget unless there is clear evidence of decisions designed to put Tasmania's finances on a more stable trajectory. I highlighted in that letter that net debt was approaching \$10 billion. I said I was not prepared to condemn future generations of Tasmanians to carrying this level of debt, particularly when some of it comes from infrastructure projects we do not desperately need and cannot afford, and where we are experiencing cost blowouts owing to poor management.

The budget papers clearly show net debt will reach \$10.8 billion by 2029. The government has done nothing to address the devastating debt spiral in this budget. It has not made any decisions to put the finances on a more sustainable trajectory. I urge people listening to the budget papers to look at page 57 of the budget paper No.1, Chart 3.1. It shows the gross debt level on a per capita basis over time. The Premier continually points to COVID as the reason for this debt, but look at that graph, page 57. It tells a different story. By 2023, after the pandemic was finished, the gross debt per person in Tasmania had grown from around 5000 per person to 10,000 per person. Between 2023 and 2039, the level of debt per person triples. It goes from 10,000 per person to \$30,000 - like a worm on Viagra. Where is the justification for that? The pandemic is over, yet the government refuses to stop spending. It is completely reckless.

However, the main reason I am supporting this motion is the way the Premier has handled the stadium, the way he was trying to ram the biggest infrastructure project in the state's history through this parliament. He is corrupting the planning process against the will of the people when the government do not even know if it can be built, when they do not even know what it will look like. Will it have a roof? Can a roof even be built? They do not even know if cricket can be played there. They do not even know how much the thing will cost. It is totally reckless. All we do know is that it will be the most expensive infrastructure project in our state's history at a time when we have record levels of debt. It is a complete fiasco and it has brought us to this point.

I tried to give the government the option of putting this stadium to the people, to give the people a vote, a referendum, and the Premier refused that opportunity. Just like how he and his government refused to support my motion for a feasibility study on moving salmon out of our ocean and onto land, on the stadium and on the budget and on other matters the Premier and his government have stopped listening to the people. You cannot do that in a minority government.

What do I want to make clear for any future premier? The people of Tasmania do not want this stadium. With the exception of Mr O'Byrne, the crossbench do not want this stadium. You need to walk away from it or at the very least withdraw the enabling legislation that was tabled yesterday and let the POSS run its course. I will be voting for this motion and I do not do so lightly. This has been a very concerning thing for me. I have had to take a lot of advice to find out what it meant. It should not be taken lightly, and I have not taken this lightly.

What I do hope to achieve by supporting this motion is that I want the majority of Tasmanians, this government, to change its direction. I want them to ditch the enabling legislation which was put out for public comment for two weeks but tabled one week into the two-week period. They do not care what the public think. Again, arrogance and ignorance.

I want the government to press pause on the new stadium to recognise we cannot afford a new stadium right now. Go back to the AFL and tell them this because when you are in a \$7 billion black hole, you stop digging. This debt trajectory must change, and fast.

As I said in my public letter to the Treasurer and the government, I am not prepared to saddle Tasmanians with this level of debt. It is completely unsustainable, it is unethical, and it is immoral. If the Liberal Party will still want to govern in this parliament and decide to change leaders, I say this - I will work with you, but you need to abandon your stadium enabling legislation and let the TPC panel do its work and hand down its final report on the stadium before introducing any stadium related bills. It is now up to you. That is how you start to restore my confidence and the public's confidence in this government.

Finally, I want to put this on the record. I am here to make this parliament work. I am not here to make up the numbers or to take wage and go home, I am here to make it work and I take my role very seriously. Even if the Liberal Party are unable or unwilling to get supply and confidence from this parliament, that does not mean we have to go to an election now.

The Labor Leader called this motion on, so if the Liberal Party cannot get confidence in supply, I believe Mr Winter has a responsibility to test the confidence of the House before we go to an election. I think the people of Tasmania expect that. I want to put on the record I am very open to working with the Labor Party. As I said earlier, I am here to try and make this parliament work as I think all the crossbenchers are.

I urge the leader, Mr Winter, to test the floor for confidence before forcing the public back to an election. If you refuse to do so, then going to a very early election is on you, not the crossbench. Thank you, Honourable Speaker.

[11.26 a.m.]

**Mrs PENTLAND** (Bass) - Honourable Speaker, I felt a bit sick when I woke up this morning; sick for the people whose lives be turned upside down by the political chaos that is playing out here today; sick for the businesses who need certainty and stability from their political idiots, not gains.

Last night, I was honoured. I was downstairs with a lot of other members of this House and attended a function for tourism. I spoke to some key stakeholders at that event, people who make serious decisions about where they are going to spend serious dollars in Tasmania and

this political dysfunction creates uncertainty for people and it definitely does not create stability and it does take away a lot of opportunity for Tasmania.

This is the fourth no confidence motion in the last seven sitting weeks. We are becoming the laughing stock of the country. It is a circus, and the opposition leader has become the ringleader. I am sick of those who trusted Labor to follow through on their promises.

I remain sceptical about the Macquarie Point Stadium, but I have been consistent before and after the election. You only have to have a quick look at social media over the last few days and see the reaction of those who desperately want to see the stadium and the team go ahead. They feel betrayed by the opposition who, after changing its position after the election, is now prepared to create great uncertainty by creating a political crisis.

The opposition leader says he supports the stadium, but he could have done more to hurt our AFL team today than all the critics combined. I am also feeling angry; angry that the opposition leader thinks he is entitled to blow the place up just 15 months after an election; angry that he has gone back on his word to promote stability; angry that he is putting his desire to become premier ahead of business confidence and the state's reputation.

The rest of the country is looking at us today and thinking what the hell is going on? I am well aware this is a no confidence motion about the Premier, but the Labor leader has made this last 24 hours all about him. He is today relying on the support of the party he promised he would never do a deal with to try and bring down our Premier. Mr Winter has had an effective moment as opposition. His pursuit on the *Spirits* issue is a credit to him, but his behaviour over the last 24 hours has seen him lose respect in my eyes.

Tabling a no confidence motion and putting pressure on the crossbench is like loading a gun and asking someone else to pull the trigger. It says to me the opposition leader is more interested in becoming the premier than he is in making the parliament work for the benefit of our state. It is no wonder business leaders are questioning his judgement today - questioning whether he really thought about where this would all lead. I fear the opposition leader may have overstated his ability. You can claim you were born on planet Krypton but it does not make you Superman.

I have plenty of criticisms of the Premier. I have aired a lot of these. His handling of the stadium process has not respected the Tasmanian people. Dumping the POSS and questioning the work of Dr Gruen and the planning commission panel was a low point for me, but is it worth blowing up the parliament? No. Is it worth plunging Tasmania into a sea of uncertainty? No.

I also have concerns over the state's budget. That is why our first act after being elected was to secure Saul Eslake's independent report into the state's finances. I am disappointed that the government has not listened to much of Saul Eslake's report, but is the answer removing the Premier 15 months after an election? No. Does it warrant putting a cloud over the whole Budget process and what it means for the public service? No.

How would all the community groups who secured precious funding in the Budget be feeling today? Their anxiety would be through the roof. They would be utterly paralysed, not knowing what this political chaos means for the future of their organisations and their staff.

Workers across the state would be keeping one eye on this debate, wondering what it would all mean for them. I honestly do not think the opposition leader has thought this through.

I think they have misinterpreted a dissatisfaction with the current government as an invitation to assume power. That will be decided at an election, not on the floor of this parliament. There will be a lot of voters wondering if an MP who is willing to create so much chaos for his own political purposes is really the right person to lead this state.

The opposition might accuse me of voting in my own self-interest. I know getting re-elected will be a big challenge, but I will sleep easy tonight knowing I have stuck to my word. When I signed a supply and confidence agreement with the Premier, I was also making a commitment to the Tasmanian people - a commitment to clarity and stability. Being predictable is not a bad thing, but I am also proud of the outcomes I have achieved in my community - tangible outcomes for charities and other organisations that will make life better for the people I represent.

Tasmanians are going to keep electing power-sharing parliaments, and we need to work out ways to make them work. I understand other Independents are frustrated with the government, but there are less drastic ways to get good outcomes. I know you are not going to get the government to budge on some of the big issues, but some of the issues I heard raised on the radio over the last few days could have been resolved by staying in the tent. To get good compromises, both sides have to be willing to engage, and I say that to the government as well: if a minority government situation is to work, you have to manage relationships.

I do not know how today is going to end or what the next steps are for both major parties, but they need to think about how to engage with the independents and the minor parties. While I have enjoyed a respectful and constructive relationship with the Premier, it is obvious other Independents do not feel the same.

Labor's efforts to engage with me and the member for Braddon have been extremely underwhelming. I would have thought the opposition leader would have put more effort into forging a relationship with independents on the crossbench. It tells me that he will struggle to make minority government work if he is ever faced with that responsibility.

The events of this week have put a big question mark over the opposition leader's political maturity. I promise I am not the only person who holds that view. If reckless attitudes continue, then power-sharing parliaments are going to keep ending up in the position we find ourselves in today, because opportunistic politicians like the Leader of the Opposition will seize chances to grab power. It is not healthy and it is not what the people of our beautiful state voted for.

The majority of people I have spoken to outside of the House today do not believe the Premier should lose his job today. Over the last 15 months I have come to know Jeremy Rockliff and what he stands for. He is fundamentally a good person, with compassion and the ability to connect with people. I firmly believe he is the right person for this place and the only one who can steer us through the mess we find ourselves in. Most people want him to roll up his sleeves and, with the rest of us, get on with the job. I cannot support this motion and I would urge every single member to think very clearly before casting their votes.

[11.36 a.m.]

**Mr FERGUSON** (Bass) - Honourable Speaker, I note that Labor have given up on prosecuting their own no confidence motion, which I find extraordinary - to think that the Labor



party have moved a motion in the belief that they have the numbers and they have actually given up on the debate. We have had about four or five consecutive speakers not from the opposition. It is amazing. Quite a number of Labor MPs have not yet spoken in in pursuit of their motion.

**Members** interjecting.

**Mr Willie** - Who is the Premier? Where is your Premier?

**Ms Brown** - It has been six hours with no Liberal members speaking. Where is your Premier?

**Mr FERGUSON** - I will say this from the outset: what I saw yesterday when I saw the motion being moved by the Leader of the Opposition was a small man. Then I saw the response from the Premier and I saw a statesman. It was a stark contrast between those two individuals. The contrast could not have been clearer.

It was a pathetic performance from the outset. The Leader of the Opposition struggled once he had run out of prepared notes at about the halfway point. The rest of it was gibberish. It was nervous; it was lacking in confidence. I think it was minister Abetz who made the point that it was like the dog had been chasing the car and then was so surprised to find that he had the bumper in his jaws. He did not know what to do next. That is what we are seeing being played out.

It is a disappointing debate. I know the Premier as well as anyone here and I respect and admire what he has contributed to Tasmanian life. To think that members of this House - any of us - would imagine that they have the right to terminate that man's career on the basis of this motion I find appalling and un-Tasmanian. If I was on the other side, shoehorned into voting for this motion because I am a member of the Labor party, I would be personally ashamed.

I know the Jeremy Rockliff that has been spoken about here today, and like everyone, he has his faults. I do. You do. He has admitted to them; he has responded and made remedy. He has taken responsibility for things that were not his responsibility. I will not go into those; I can think of a number of examples.

I sat next to the man when he gave an apology on behalf of the state to people who have grown up in our state not having been kept safe. It was one of the most wonderful - as a dad in this state, it was one of the most amazing moments for me. I felt so proud to be watching him deliver that apology - a state apology to people who had lost their innocence by cruel criminals in the life of this state. That was Jeremy's initiative. No one asked him to do it.

I can think of other times where he has taken responsibility. When Peter Gutwein stood down in April 2022, I was interested in the leadership, and I had a discussion with the then deputy premier. Gosh, I was amazed. I am going to breach a confidence in telling this

I was so amazed. I learned so much in that moment, actually, because we were together in my office in St John Street and he said, 'Michael, I understand you might be canvassing and taking soundings', and I was. He said, 'Well, I won't be doing that today, because I have made a commitment to meet with the families of the children who passed away at Hillcrest and I will not be changing those appointments.' I learned so much in that moment about the heart of that

man. Jeremy Rockliff launched my first campaign to enter state parliament because we were friends. As a politician, that really blew me away. I was witnessing grace on display and a generosity of spirit that you just see so rarely. I have never told anybody about that until today. You people need to hear it. That is the person that you are tearing down. You should be ashamed. That is the character of the person that you are trying to tear down, and you may yet tear down. Yes, that is right, heads down. You should be ashamed.

You have exploited members of the crossbench who have different reasons to be opposed to Jeremy Rockliff as premier; you have exploited it.

Dean Winter too weak to even be in here to listen to the debate that he has initiated to tear down what is good in this state, because he is a weak, small man.

Mark Twain in *Huckleberry Finn* wrote in a way that few people can write:

There were empty dry goods boxes under the awnings and loafers roosting on them all day long, whittling them with their Barlow knives and chewing tobacco, and gaping and yawning and stretching, a mighty ornery lot.

That is what I see when I look across the Chamber: a 'mighty ornery lot.' For those who do not read Mark Twain - ordinary. You are ordinary. You are an ordinary opposition. Your vote is in the doldrums. Tasmanians do not respect the opposition. Even the government's fiercest critics say that the best thing going for this government that they do not agree with is how pathetic the opposition truly is. Really, what has changed in the opposition? They say they have changed, but have they? They are still hating on each other. The factions are still at each other's throats, evidenced by the fact that they are still in administration. When was the last state conference of the Australian Labor Party Tasmania branch? Years ago, since Bastian Seidel called them out for having a toxic culture.

Then there was the White versus O'Byrne matters. The incredible things that were said on the floor of this House. What emerged afterwards? It turned out the process had been abused, but certain people benefited from that. Apparently, I hear yesterday, Mr Winter never even speaks to Mr O'Byrne, and yet has appealed to him and others, somehow expecting them, threatening them to 'Get on and support the motion that I have just dropped on the table. It is your duty to tell me when I can move it.' Ridiculous. Never seen such a stunt. A motion of no confidence in a minister and especially a premier, a head of government, must be dealt with immediately but you were not prepared to do so. You did not have the courage of your convictions, or you had not even done your homework, your basic discussion with the crossbench to gather your numbers. You somehow said, 'I will table it and then walk away from the firecracker and let us see who wants me to light it.' Ridiculous. Weak.

It does not look or sound like a premier to me, or behave that way. I am being scathing of Mr Winter in this, but I will not leave the rest of the hook. The rest of that ornery mob who are following Mr Winter will equally share in the blame for what they are doing this week. As a policymaker in this House, I am appalled. The Labor party since Whitlam has always said, 'We'll guarantee supply' - not confidence, supply. Yet they have interfered with the budget process this week such that there are now discussions, that members know about, regarding ways that we can ensure that teachers, doctors, nurses and school cleaners will all get paid on 1 July.

What ought we be speaking about here today? Mr Garland was spot on, we should be speaking about the budget and getting it dealt with. We are not. For anyone listening on the webcast - I hear it is working today - or in the gallery, what they ought to be seeing us doing is getting on with scrutiny, arguments, disagreements, agreements on the Budget. But we are not.

The people who are responsible for this, I am not calling it a stunt because it is much worse than a stunt - people usually survive stunts - you are actually destroying by what you are doing. You are being corrosive, destructive for the fabric of this state only 14 months after an election. An election in which you were roundly rejected by the voters, but somehow you believe that you have the right to enter government by telling the Premier he should not have turned up yesterday. Was it not said, 'What are you doing here? Haven't you resigned?'

Ornery - O-R-N-E-R-Y. 'We lose elections, but we'll just seize the Treasury benches by tricky games' and undermining of that person that I have described this morning; the Premier, who I engaged with in April 2022, who taught me so much about leadership that day. I have benefited from it. I hope that it changed me in small ways to live like that as well. Others can learn from it. We all could. He did not tell me that statement to impress me either, let me tell you. It was only Jeremy Rockliff speaking to me about what was important to him that day and that he would not be changing course from focusing on the families of those precious six children.

This motion, I understand, will pass. I confidently predict that business confidence in this state will nosedive. It is the intangible. It is so hard to build; it is mighty easy to destroy. It takes time to build it up and sadly, as history has proven, it is quickly lost. The loss of business confidence that will occasion because of Labor's selfish decisions will be real; it will be measurable. Future business confidence surveys will show that business confidence has taken a dive during this time. I will do everything in my power as a member of this House to see it restored over time. I know it will take time, and the government will probably be criticised by members opposite for loss of business confidence. Yet what we need here is a mirror for that future critic from the Labor party.

While I have said it is an intangible, and it is, it will be a tangible experience for the people of our state. Losing business confidence means a business will make a negative decision on a lease, an apprentice, or an expansion opportunity, or giving someone a chance, giving someone a start when maybe it is marginal, 'Not a strong case here, but look I'm going to give you a go.' They will be the outcomes, and I suppose we will never really get to know about those. We might, but it will be happening even as we are here not focused on budget, but dealing with this motion. This will affect jobs, it will affect lives, and it will affect the families in my electorate of Bass. This will affect Northern Tasmania. This will affect every part of our state. Those of us who have the great privilege of being able to represent those fine Tasmanians - we most likely will find instances of people who have lost everything because something was marginal in their business, and this was just too much when they were not able to land that particular contract, because business confidence is the fuel in the tank of business decisions. It absolutely is. Prove me wrong.

The centrepiece of the words and emotion, of course, are all about the Budget and there are plenty of fans and critics of the Budget; it is true, but the Budget is the means by which the government can deliver the services and the infrastructure that the community relies upon.

I cannot help but notice in the motion, part (1) talks about the Premier's budget mismanagement. Well, of course, the Premier is not the Treasurer and even I would not be saying that they should have changed the words to say 'Treasurer'. The Budget is a product of the Cabinet and yet you are making it personal here about the Premier.

The second point, 'Does not support the Premier's plan to privatise public assets.' Cheap shot. Okay, you get a bit of that in politics. Cheap shots are worth exactly what they are called. They are very cheap, but you get the shots. Again, that plan has been misrepresented. Again, that is a Cabinet process that led to an announcement made here in this House about options. I do not walk away from the fact that the Premier is the head of the Cabinet and the government but why does the motion not honestly say that there are no current proposals to sell a single thing? There is nothing on the table right now for this House to even consider selling. What has been announced is a process, an evaluation by somebody who is respected by everyone in this House. Cheap shot.

Number (3), 'Has no faith in the Premier's ability to deliver major projects following the *Spirit of Tasmania* fiasco.' Well, hang on a minute. I thought that was my responsibility to take, and I did, and I do. It is interesting that when the minister who was the portfolio shareholder minister for TT-Line admitted to me that it was a terrible thing that had happened in an environment where there were blame games, blame shifting and fingers pointed and no one was taking responsibility, I did. I actually stand by that decision. I have obviously reflected on it a lot. Then, what is just about saying that it is the Premier's stuff up, which you have been saying all week? It is just pathetic. It is ornery. It is truly ornery. If that is what politics has become in this state, then politics is broken.

I just find that appalling. I really, truly do, and as for infrastructure, in one year, we deliver four times more infrastructure than the government we replaced. We have delivered the Bridgewater Bridge. Is it not magnificent? It is a great feeling driving across it to believe that we can do it in Tasmania; we can build it. It has been talked about for a long time, I used to say, since before I was shaving - that is how long we have been talking about the Bridgewater Bridge, I had to lighten the mood for a moment.

The Royal Hobart Hospital is saving lives. It has a helipad. It is saving my community's lives. It is their express ambulance from the Launceston General Hospital to the Royal for the trauma service, for the heart service, saving lives. We thought when we put the helipad at the Royal, we were told it would probably save nine lives a year. It is used nearly every week a couple of times. It is on the go. We are delivering infrastructure. That is point (3) of your ornery motion.

Point (4) does not deserve mentioning, only that it is the no confidence element.

We saw a small man attacking in his speech against our Premier, who was endorsed at the election just 14 months ago. He then presented his response, barely with a scrap of notes, and it was the words for statesman. He deserves your support, colleagues. He deserves it. If he does not get it, he nonetheless deserves it. He is a servant of our state. Actually, we all are. If we do not have that understanding in our hearts that we are here to be servant leaders, we really do not have a right to be here at all, honourable members.

I feel very disillusioned today, because I always thought that leaders of political parties were determined by their party. I always believed that people who should govern are the ones

who are sent there by the voters at elections, not as a result of no confidence motions. As a member of the House of Assembly, I am ashamed of what will happen here later today, based on what members have stated.

I oppose the motion. I genuinely urge others to also change their mind and oppose the motion. Even if it does not, I thank the Premier for his service to our state and will continue to serve and support him.

**Time expired.**

[11.56 a.m.]

**Ms BUTLER** (Lyons) - Honourable Speaker, I rise in support of our leader Dean Winter's. I can certainly say that the decision to support the motion has not come lightly. I have known the Premier for many years, for about 20 years, I believe, when I used to work here as a staffer. I know that the Premier that we see today is certainly not the same person - look, we all age and we all grow in wisdom and experience and so forth.

I must admit that in the heyday when the minority government came into government, when we lost government a long time ago now, I remember the Will Hodgman, Peter Gutwein, Jeremy Rockliff trio. I am not taking anything away from any other members, but that was really when you were all at your height. You had Will there, doing the stately promises - four-lane highway and I believe there were a few others at that time too - but you were actually a good trio. You were strong. You had the feeling that Will Hodgman had control of his caucus, that he knew what his ministers were doing, that he had a finger on the pulse.

Then when Peter Gutwein came in as the Premier, we also had that same impression as well. Yes, he was missing Will Hodgman there as part of that team. Peter Gutwein had that Treasury experience. I think Peter also did a very good job during COVID and that is something that everyone here appreciates. I think the Premier also did a good job, as did all members of the House. It was a difficult time for all. I can say it was a time when all members of this place did pull together, and we were all working together because we recognised that looking after Tasmanians during that COVID period was the most important thing that we could do.

After we lost Peter Gutwein - or after you lost Peter Gutwein as your premier, I just do not think it has ever quite been the same for you. You have lost a lot of talent from your benches. You lost Sarah Courtney, John Tucker, Lara Alexander, and Elise Archer, who did the bulk of your work in so far as your legislative agenda. She really did. Yes, I know there are histrionics with Ms Archer and insofar as I did hold her very accountable for the Northern Prison debacle and that lack of consultation for the people of Westbury, I also held her very accountable for the mess of the Consumer Affairs portfolio when it came to not giving people home building warranty insurance. That is something that this government still has not fixed. My point is there has never really been that feeling coming out of this minority government, especially this Premier, of having his finger on the pulse, of actually having an understanding of what is going on in all those different ministries.

I have a few examples of that, but I think by far the biggest example is what happened with the *Spirits* debacle. That is very much what this motion is about. That stuff-up, that absolute cluster, was by far the biggest infrastructure disaster ever in Tasmania's history, and that has been the real catalyst for why this motion is necessary.

The reason why I feel like the Premier did not have his finger on the pulse and did not have control of his caucus was that he let minister Ferguson take the whole blame for that mess.

I think I remember a photo - and the Premier has stepped into the room now - of the Premier cutting a ribbon in Geelong. I think it was with Dan Andrews. That was the actual official opening of the *Spirits* terminal in Geelong - complete, all ready to go. This is a member for Braddon. The Premier must have been out to see what we could all see, what we were hearing back from the community, that there was nothing going on with the building of those *Spirit* berths. There was nothing there, yet he had been over to Geelong, and he had been part of those celebrations about the opening of the terminal over there.

You would think that he might have picked up the phone at some stage and said to his colleague; 'Oh, hi Michael, it's Jeremy here. Look, I've just gone past where the *Spirit* terminals are meant to be. There's nothing going on here. I know Geelong's finished. Where are we at with that?' To me, that would be a very logical discussion that a premier would have with a minister, especially a minister for infrastructure, especially the minister that had both those boards reporting to him.

A premier that is on the ball, a premier that understands what is going on in these different ministries, would have known that nothing was going on there and that work was not being done. He would know that we invested a billion dollars in beautiful boats owned by the people of Tasmania, yet the infrastructure, the berths for those boats - there was no progress. There was nothing going on in those areas. You would think that when you were driving past in your limousine, you would have picked up the phone and rang.

**Mr Behrakis** - That is all you are interested in, is it not? You are interested in the limousines. You are interested in the trappings. That is all you want.

**Ms BUTLER** - It is a very logical thing for a premier that has any idea what is going on.

The other day, I was quite concerned with the direction that a minister of this House was taking. It was about legislation, and a standard of legislation which I felt did not meet the mark. What I have seen over the last 12 months in this House is a real lowering of the standard and the expectations of members about our very important jobs as lawmakers. I approached different members of the crossbench, and I can say that we wrote a letter to that particular minister offering him an olive branch, because we were very concerned that the standard of that piece of work and legislation was not ready for debate in this House. When that minister received that letter, which represented 19 members of this House of parliament - it was not political, it was quite vanilla actually, and we quietly requested that he withdraw that legislation because we thought that it needed redrafting. We also noted the commission of inquiry recommendations and the need to consult properly on those, and we did not feel like the legislation was cutting the mustard insofar as the standard.

Two hours later, after receiving that letter, which represented 19 members of this House of Assembly, that minister decided to double down and put out a media release, and the media release brought in a very vulnerable family. That was with 19 members of parliament requesting him two hours earlier to withdraw that piece of legislation with an olive branch, not for public consumption. We did not want to put vulnerable people in the media, because of the sensitivity of that legislation. As soon as I saw that media release, I printed it off and I came upstairs and I knocked on the Premier's door because I thought, 'This is ridiculous.' My first go

to was, 'This premier has no idea what his minister is up to. He is not in control of his caucus.' That was my first thought.

To me that was evidence that you do not have control, that you have reckless young ministers who are prepared to table very poor pieces of legislation. The legislation was not ready, and then when it did come to the parliament, there were so many amendments that were provided, I had that minister's office wanting to meet with me, asking me, 'How do we fix this?' Is that the standard that is acceptable for the people of Tasmania when it comes to such sensitive legislation? No, it is not.

I have been a member for seven years, but I have been involved in this House of Assembly for coming on 20 years. I have worked for some really good people and worked alongside some really good people. I can tell you that the standard and the tone that you have brought to this House is unacceptable. I am very disappointed, and I am really disappointed that we have to even have this debate. It is a really sad day for Tasmania.

When it comes to your Budget, you can stand up here and tell everyone and put out your media releases, but you are not governing anymore, you are just marketing. You have not been governing at all. You are a minority government and you have been spending so much time covering your backsides, making sure that you can keep your media releases going out, but that is all you are doing. You are not governing, you are marketing, and the Premier has very much lost control of his caucus.

The standard, the bar that you have set is so low compared to what it can be. You let minister Ferguson take the whole blame for the ferries, did you not? You let him take the whole blame, when in actual fact, you are his boss, and you are a member for Braddon, and you would have been driving past where the *Spirits* terminal was meant to be and you would have seen nothing was going on, and you knew in that last election campaign as well, that nothing was happening. Instead, you put out media releases saying, 'Oh, Labor is pulling down Tasmania' or 'Labor with mistruths', and all this absolute garbage, when you knew damn well that nothing had been done with those terminals and it was all about marketing, not governing. That is this government.

Brad Stansfield was one of your staffers for a very long time, and I know a number of you take advice from Mr Stansfield. He called your Budget a shocker, 'an absolute Barry Crocker'. I do not think that it gets any clearer than that.

When the Liberals came to office in 2014, Tasmania had \$208 million in the bank. Now, after 11 years of Liberal budget mismanagement, Tasmania is staring down the barrel of almost \$11 billion worth of net debt. We have just over 560,000 people in Tasmania. That is an extraordinary amount of debt for that amount of people. You cannot sit here and tell us that there is a yellow brick road path to surplus, because after you finish selling off your assets, which belong to the people of Tasmania - and that is what you intend to do - what revenue streams are going to be coming in to our Treasury to repay those interest payments? How on earth is that meant to happen? I was extremely concerned when you did not rule out selling Tasmania's ports. I probably do not need to give members of the Liberal party a histrionic explanation around the Darwin ports. The Darwin port was a contract for \$506 million for a 99-year lease. That was organised by a Liberal territory government. At the time, it was a Turnbull-Abbott Liberal federal government, so it had real form there.

They privatised the Darwin port, and Peter Dutton, I can say his name, I do not hear too many of you people saying his name anymore, but Peter Dutton actually said that was a huge mistake. Do you know the efforts being put into place at the moment to try to buy that port back? Not only for defence, not only for strategic reasons because of its geography, but the fact that it is the Darwin port. How on Earth could you seriously be considering - yes, you would get a very big price; if Darwin port was leased off for 99 years for \$506 million, imagine what you would be able to sell a 99-year lease on the Devonport port for. Or imagine what you would be able to do potentially with Bell Bay.

It is just disgraceful that you are considering selling our ports. We are an island state. We are so reliant upon our freight. It is what keeps our economy ticking. The fact that you have not ruled that out is just disgraceful. I do support the motion. I do have a lot of time for Mr Rockliff, and I have known him for a very long time. I do not feel that you have got control of your caucus. I do not feel that that Hodgman, Gutwein, Rockliff - I do not think you have the support of a deputy, I do not think you have got support of a treasurer -

**Mr Barnett** - That is rubbish.

**Members** interjecting.

**Ms BUTLER** - In so far as that expertise you all brought to the table is not there now. It is a cyclic thing. Political parties come and go in this place and you have been marketing, not governing, for nearly - coming up since the last election, so yes. That is what you have been doing: marketing, not governing, holding on for dear life. If that had been us with the *Spirit* debacle, we would have been gone by now.

You got some good grace because you managed to hold it off until after the election. You tricked the Tasmanian people, though not too much because you only got in on a minority. Nevertheless, you tricked them into thinking there is nothing to see here. You have set our economy back decades, with that complete absolute cluster. It is so embarrassing and not good enough.

When it comes to the budget, when one of your own is calling it a shocker, 'An absolute Barry Crocker.' You know you are in trouble. There is no pathway to surplus. It is just nuts. Standing up here and tearing personal strips of our leader, Dean Winter, because you are scared, because you have been in charge, you have had power for all this time, but you are nowhere near what you were. You are nowhere near that. You have lost control of your caucus, and I am sorry, I will be supporting the motion.

[12.13 p.m.]

**Mr WOOD** (Bass) - Honourable Speaker, finally, Labor has made a contribution today on their own motion. They came in here yesterday with all that puff and banter and bravado, trying to blow up the House, trying to damage and ruin everyday Tasmanians, everyday Tasmanian business confidence; all that bravado yesterday and there has been virtually crickets from you guys all morning on this.

**Members** interjecting

**A member** - Where were you lot yesterday? Out there trying to get leadership, that is where.



**A member** - You guys just waited for all your speech writers to write out your documents for today.

**Mr WOOD** - Absolutely ridiculous. Do you think maybe they have realised, or they are starting to realise, the damage that they are causing to everyday Tasmanians by these ridiculous stunts? I think perhaps they are slowly crab-walking one-by-one away from this ridiculous situation that they have found themselves in. That is exactly what we have here today. We confront not a genuine debate on governance or performance, but a politically motivated stunt. This no confidence motion is not born of principle, it is not grounded in policy, and it certainly is not what Tasmanians are asking for. It is quite simply the desperate tactic of an opposition leader who cannot win in the court of public opinion, so he seeks victory in the shadows of parliamentary manoeuvring.

Premier Jeremy Rockliff is not just Tasmania's premier, he is Tasmania's most trusted public servant. This was spelled out recently with the opinion poll; his personal approval rate is huge. This attempt to tear him down says far more about his opponents than it does about his leadership.

Jeremy Rockliff is the embodiment of Tasmanian values: humility, service, resilience, and above all else, just good common decency. Over the years, even before my time representing my electorate of Bass, I have seen Jeremy in action; how he engages, how he interacts with everybody from all walks of life. In crisis and in calm, he is a leader who listens more than he talks, delivers more than he promises, and leads from the front without ego or theatrics.

In Bass, we know the Premier. We know the respect he holds all around the regions from Launceston to George Town to Bridport, Scottsdale and beautiful, beloved Flinders Island. He does not turn up for a photo op; he turns up to listen, to act, and to understand. He is steady in uncertain times. He does not offer slogans; he offers results.

That is why, across the political divide, people say of Jeremy Rockliff, 'He is one of the good ones' because even his critics know he is genuine. He is ridgy didgy. Let us be honest, this no confidence motion is not about competence; it is about popularity. Mr Winter cannot compete with Premier Rockliff on ideas, on results, or in the polls so he is trying to take a shortcut. Mr Winter, Tasmanians see through it.

Nowhere in the Premier's leadership is it clearer than in our health system. Under his stewardship, Tasmania has committed over \$14.5 billion to health - a record-breaking investment that is not just numbers on paper. That is nearly \$10 million every single day to support our hospitals, community care and our incredible workforce. That is doctors hired, facilities upgraded, waitlists cut, and lives saved. Just in Bass alone, we are seeing that investment firsthand. The Launceston General Hospital continues to receive significant upgrades, part of over \$580 million in capital investments to expand capacity and modernise service.

The new Northern Mental Health Precinct in Franklin Street delivering modern inpatient and outpatient services including acute care and community and mental health support for those in need across northern Tasmania. We are seeing new mental health supports being delivered in schools and community settings, including partnerships with Ravenswood School and Mowbray School. Also, the new Northern Heart Centre, a state-of-the-art facility that will provide specialist cardiac care close to home and ease the pressure on the LGH. A \$4.7 million

surgical robot, improving precision care and reducing recovery times. Expansion of the LGH emergency department to improve patient flow, reduce ramping and provide better working conditions for our valued staff; a dedicated hospice and respite centre care facility for end-of-life support; expanded Kings Meadows Community Health Centre; a new Legana ambulance station; 12 paramedics for the West Tamar; a new eating disorder clinic at Prospect Vale; and investment in rural dental outreach via the Royal Flying Doctor Service (RFDS) bringing care to where it is needed. Outreach services to Flinders Island and the Furneaux Group have also been strengthened, because Jeremy Rockliff and the government believe that Tasmania, no matter where or how remote, we all deserve access to quality care.

This is a Premier who does not treat health as a political football; he treats it as a public right. Unlike the opposition, we are not just promising health investment. We are delivering it.

Premier Rockliff is not only a leader, but he is also former Education minister. He has left a mark there. His vision for education is not just about buildings, it is about belief - belief that no child should be left behind, belief that every Tasmanian deserves the opportunity to thrive. In Bass that means Scottsdale High, Brooks High and South George Town Primary are receiving major upgrades. We have delivered the new Legana Primary School, a modern marvel built from the ground up, and funding for before and after school care, school playground and sports courts upgrades, and community access to school facilities outside school hours.

Our local child and family learning centres included in the northern suburbs are giving families the support they need from the very beginning. Over 8600 students with disability are receiving tailored support. Vocational training academies are opening new career paths in trades, renewables and importantly, healthcare sectors vital to our region's growth. The Lifting Literacy initiative is transforming early education outcomes in some of our most challenged communities.

We are not just investing more; we are investing smarter. We are making sure education works for our rural students, our First Nations children, our students with disability, and those at risk of falling through the cracks. This is education with heart. This is education with direction. It is only possible because of Jeremy Rockliff and his leadership.

Across Tasmania, the Premier is delivering the most ambitious infrastructure pipeline in our state's history, over \$30 billion over the decade. In Bass, we are seeing the completion of the Charles Street Bridge revamp and upgrades around the Tamar Estuary enhancing both transport and environmental protection. There is \$250 million for road safety upgrades, including vital works on the East Tamar Highway and key arterial routes across the north-east; safer intersections and pedestrian crossings in Riverside, Exeter and Frankford Highway; planning for a second Tamar River bridge, Bridport Road to Illawarra Road improvements; new park-and-ride facilities; a regional transit hub in Launceston; and expansion of irrigation networks into the north-east to support our farmers through a changing climate and global food pressures.

We are also investing in community infrastructure: accessibility upgrades to the Launceston RSL; funding for Shekinah House to support the vulnerable; and upgrades at Elphin Sports Centre and the Northern Suburbs Recreation Hub. On Flinders Island, we are delivering support for the Islander Way project; infrastructure for Cape Barren Island; improved RV access at Flinders Island campsite; and continued commitment to delivering

better facilities on Flinders Island, where community infrastructure has sadly often been overlooked by governments in the past.

These are not vanity projects. They are productivity projects. They are jobs. They are about securing the future of our regions our economy and our way of life. This is infrastructure with purpose and Bass is benefiting every step of the way.

The Premier is leading Tasmania to a renewable energy superpower. We are already 100 per cent renewable, but under his leadership we are going further. We are backing Marinus Link with \$300 million in equity, a project with transformative implications for the north of the state; investing in clean hydrogen, wind and solar, with a specific focus on regional jobs and energy security; supporting farmers and regional landowners with irrigation and climate smart agriculture policies that help, not hinder. This is environmental stewardship without the ideological baggage. It is practical. It is jobs focused. It is intergenerational thinking in action.

This Budget invests nearly \$500 million in housing, part of our commitment to deliver 10,000 new social affordable homes. In Bass, we are upgrading social housing, expanding crisis accommodation and improving maintenance. We are helping first home buyers save up to \$29,000 in stamp duty through our expanded MyHome Shared Equity scheme, so more Tasmanians can buy a home with a small deposit.

Let us be clear, this no confidence motion is not about Tasmanians; it is about the Labor Party. Mr Winter has presented no alternative vision, no budget of his own, no economic strategy, no road map for surplus, no guarantee he will not cut services or raise taxes. He wants to oust a premier with a mandate without seeking one for himself. He wants to govern without being elected to govern. Let us be frank, Tasmanians do not want more instability. They do not want another political reset. They want delivery certainty and progress. Labor is offering chaos, and we are offering competence.

Under Premier Rockliff, Tasmania has the lowest unemployment in history of 3.8 per cent. We have rising wages. We have one of the strongest business confidence ratings in the nation, probably up until yesterday, a clear path to surplus by 2029-2030 without raising taxes or cutting any frontline services.

Bass is part of that story. We are seeing job growth in Launceston's health trades, tech and tourism sectors. Small businesses are thriving thanks to stable conditions and government support. Households are being helped with half price bus fares, energy bill credits and other targeted relief.

The opposition has no plan for any of this; no costings, no clarity, no credibility. So let us call out this motion for what it is. It is a stunt.

**Members** interjecting.

**Mr Winter** - You think is a stunt?

**Mr WOOD** - A stunt by a man who has not earned the trust of the public trying to take down a man who has.

**Ms Butler** - Did you write this speech yourself, or did a staffer hand it to you?

**Mr WOOD** - Premier Jeremy Rockliff is an honest man. He is capable, he is steady and yes, he is popular because he delivers.

**Ms Butler** - Can you not say that without reading it?

**The SPEAKER** - Member for Lyons.

**Mr WOOD** - To the people of Bass and all Tasmanians, I say this - I will not support chaos. I will not support instability. I will not support political gamesmanship. I support leadership that listens. Leadership that acts. Leadership that respects the people. I support Jeremy Rockliff, because Tasmania deserves strength, Tasmania deserves certainty, Tasmania deserves a premier who puts people first and that is exactly the opposite of what Labor is trying to achieve here at the moment.

Tasmanians do not want an election. They do not want it at all. Small business does not want it. I used to be in small business, in a family small business for 20 years and whenever a scheduled election was set, two weeks leading out from that election the sales went through the floor, business went through the floor. We are coming into winter. We do not want an election. Tasmanians do not deserve it. Let us reject this motion, let us back the Premier and let us keep delivering for Tasmanians.

[12.29 p.m.]

**Mr FAIRS** (Bass) - Honourable Speaker, I am extremely surprised that I have to deliver a speech like this just 14 months into being in this place, but here we are. I rise to defend this Premier, the honourable Jeremy Rockliff MP, as leader of not only this Liberal party but the state of Tasmania, and I do so unreservedly. He is a good man, a decent and caring man, and most importantly, a capable man - a real leader. He has been a great mentor to me, supportive when I have needed it most and always happy to take my calls no matter the issue or time of day.

Does Mr Winter really think he is more honest and has more personal integrity than Jeremy Rockliff? Does Mr Winter really believe he has got the goods, the experience, to do a better job than this Premier? Let us have a look. Mr Winter, as mayor of the Kingborough Council, was not able to turn around its debt. Why should anyone think that whatever the plan he has for the state but has not outlined to the people would be any different?

He could not even be bothered to produce a coherent Budget reply speech. He chose this wasteful, selfish stunt instead, and let us not forget, after his own party refused to endorse him as a candidate worthy enough to sit in this place, he kept plugging away, lobbying the Labor party to change their minds about him. I suspect the Labor party got bored with his constant lobbying and finally endorsed him.

**Members** interjecting.

**Mr Winter** - This is not you, Rob. Who wrote this for you?

**Mr Willie** - Who wrote this? This is not your brand.

**The SPEAKER** - Members on my left.

**Mr FAIRS** - After the last election, where it should be remembered that Labor only won 10 of the 35 seats, Labor looked around for a new leader and there he was, Mr Winter, the meerkat of the Labor party, became the default leader, think about that.

**Mr Winter** - This is not you; you are a decent bloke.

**Mr WOOD** - Mr Winter was seen as the only viable choice to lead a party that suffered its lowest primary vote in Tasmania's history, and Mr Winter, to his own enormous surprise, was tasked with fixing the broken Labor party, a party so broken it was taken over and run from Labor headquarters in Sydney.

**Mr Winter** - Leave this for others, it is not you.

**Mr WOOD** - His own federal Labor colleagues do not trust him, so why should Tasmanians?

**Mr Winter** - Give this to Mr Behrakis. This is Simon's sort of gear. You are a really good bloke, mate.

**Mr Willie** - Yeah, this is Behrakis.

**The SPEAKER** - Members on my left.

**Mr FAIRS** - So thrust into leadership, Mr Winter remained true to form. Having said one thing over and over, he did another. This was no ordinary thing. At the last election, Mr Winter was happily out campaigning against the stadium and Macquarie Point. We now know he was not being honest. He personally supported it but publicly argued against it. As soon as he became Labor leader, guess what, he changed Labor's position on the stadium.

At any of the pubs or cafes that go around a wonderful state, there is a word for a person like that and we know what it is. Mr Winter treated the people of Tasmania, especially those who voted for him, with complete contempt, and he is doing exactly the same thing here in this place right now, treating Tasmanians with contempt by launching this motion of no confidence in Premier Rockliff. The thing that rips my heart out most is that Mr Winter can also kill the Tassie Devils in the process, and that tears me apart. I would like to see Mr Winter explain to a bunch of Tassie kids exactly how he let his own political ambitions kill their dream. Since Mr Winter launched this charade, I have been haunted by the vision of thousands of kids with shattered looks and tears all over their faces, realising that their dream of their own AFL and AFLW teams -

**Mr Willie** - The biggest risk to the team is his handling of it. It has been a mess.

**Ms Butler** - Ask the Premier not to call an election.

**Mr WOOD** - and their dream of representing their state and playing in a first-class stadium in front of a home crowd at Macquarie Point, has been terminated -

**Mr Winter** - Do not call an election then, mate, who is about to go and call an election?

**The SPEAKER** - Members on my left.

**Mr FAIRS** - put to death, because Mr Winter thought he was more capable than Premier Rockliff. It is a delusion.

It was a Liberal government that delivered the much-loved Tassie Devils, not Mr Winter, but he can kill it and looks determined to do so, for his own selfish reasons. Let me refer to a statement for the Tasmania Football Club, the Devils, released yesterday:

The club, along with the rest of the community, is deeply concerned by this political uncertainty generated because the state leader wants to become premier.

...

What we know is that uncertainty presents a serious risk for jobs, investment and growth, and for the future of the Tasmania Football Club.

**Mr Willie** - Did you see Brendon Gale on the news last night?

**Mr FAIRS** - Mr Winter is suffering from hubris, not because he achieved anything for Tasmanians, but because head office won the federal election. Mr Winter is politically surfing on the achievements of others. He genuinely believes he can do what Albo did, should we find ourselves contesting yet another state election -

**The SPEAKER** - You have to refer to the Prime Minister by his name or title.

**Mr FAIRS** - I am sorry, Prime Minister Albanese. Apologies for that - should we find ourselves contesting yet another state election, an election that no Tasmanians want except for this wannabe premier, Labor leader, Mr Winter. As a new member in this place, just over a year ago, I believed those opposite when they claimed they were here for all Tasmanians, but I have to say, what I have witnessed from Labor - and the Greens, for that matter - is relentless negativity, and, frankly, delivering motions designed to waste time and taxpayers' money, which they bang on about as so important, and it is - but all this stuff achieves nothing more than adding more and extra CO2 to the atmosphere.

Motions like this one - I did not run for parliament for this nonsense, this power-hungry game playing. I ran to make a difference, to deliver real outcomes for all Tasmanians. What I have seen instead is behaviour from those opposite and the Greens that would see people in the business community sacked for wasting time and money - taxpayers' money in this case. Honestly, and we all know this, many Tasmanians view politicians with disdain, which is exactly what Mr Winter is copping on social media right now, but Tasmanians now know that Mr Winter is a wrecker, displaying all the characteristics of a spoiled child having a tantrum.

To my parliamentary colleagues, please think carefully about what is happening today in this place, because the consequences of your votes are very serious. Do you genuinely believe that the best person to run this state is a bloke with this Labor leader's lack of good judgement? To those in this place with the power to represent your constituents, which is all of you, do you really think the party that only won 10 seats out of the 35 at the last state election deserves to govern?

Do you really believe this Labor leader has the skills and experience to run our state? Do you trust Dean Winter to put Tasmanians ahead of his own selfish political ambitions after this mindless circus? Do you really think your constituents - not just those who voted for you, but all of your constituents - want a change of government just 15 months after a very clear majority of Tasmanians voted for the Rockliff Liberal government?

**Mr Winter** - What? Hang on.

**Mr FAIRS** - Be honest, please show some integrity. Do you really believe that the party that won just 10 seats in our democracy should be in power?

Just this morning, Mr Winter released a statement saying:

I reaffirmed Labor's commitment that we will not do a deal with, or form government with, the Greens.

If that is true, Mr Winter, what is this all about? It is very clear that Mr Winter also has a problem with mathematics. Who else is he going to form a minority government with but the Greens? You know very well that a Winter Labor government would be the dog wagged by its green tail. He would need to beg the Greens for their support, and they will horse trade to get their narrow agenda up.

The Greens agenda, which only found enough support to deliver them five seats in this place, would win. The question is, for all the reasons I have mentioned, why should the Greens trust Mr Winter? Why should the crossbench trust Mr Winter? Why should Tasmanians trust Mr Winter, the Labor leader who asked them to trust him, while speaking to them with forked tongue during the last election? Why?

I am well old enough to remember the last time Labor was in power. Even former Labor prime minister and hero, Paul Keating, described the previous Tasmania Labor government as mendicant, always with a hand out asking for more, while refusing the then Health minister's request for an injection of millions of federal money to bail them out. How many doctors, nurses, paramedics, teachers and police were subsequently sacked because of Labor's appalling economic management? They sacked hundreds - a nurse a day for nine months, and hundreds of police. Hospital beds were put in storage.

Then there is the forestry sector which was decimated and almost went under. So many of my friends and colleagues with businesses in that sector - gone. That all happened under Labor and the Greens watch. Was that responsible government?

Contrast that with this Rockliff government's record investments in health, education and law enforcement, which have seen real improvements in service delivery - more doctors, more nurses and more police. Speaking of investment, what does this farce of a motion do for confidence in our state? I know what it does. It kills it, destroys it. This Labor leader's rank hubris in bringing on this motion merely confirms to potential and current investors what they have observed in the past 15 months of Mr Winter's leadership. He is only interested in destabilising this parliament for his own desperate political gain.

While attempting to score some political traction on the economy by criticising what is a balanced, responsible Budget, Mr Winter is in reality a wannabe emperor with no clothes. He

has no track record of good economic management - none at all - but he does have a first-class honours degree in political backflips and whining, as we are observing right now.

I also cannot escape the feeling that Mr Winter is not as popular as he would like to believe he is. I am reminded of a fairly recent EMRS poll where fully a quarter of Tasmanians in the north-west of the state alone have never even heard of the Labor leader, Dean Winter. Zero name recognition.

If Mr Winter votes for chaos, then chaos becomes his legacy. Today will define Dean Winter's leadership. Will he put Tasmania first or will he plunge the state into chaos for political gain? Leadership is about choices. Today, Mr Winter has to choose. Back stability and services for Tasmanians, or run with the stunt that risks an early election and risks our AFL and AFLW teams, destroying the dreams of thousands of young Tasmanians who dream and have a passion to, hopefully, one day play for us. Will he be a responsible leader and stop playing these games?

If Mr Winter wanted to show he is not ready to govern, the past two days would be a masterclass. This is not leadership; it is sabotage. Mr Winter has shown every Tasmanian exactly who he is - a power-hungry opportunist willing to wreck the state just to prop himself up. Mr Winter has orchestrated this chaos, and chaos will be his legacy. This will define Mr Winter's leadership and he has failed the test. He has done the wrong thing by Tasmanians, plunging the state into chaos for nothing more than political gain, and, as I said, if Mr Winter wanted to prove that he is not ready to govern, well, today he gets the gold medal.

This is a day that Mr Winter has shown Tasmanians exactly who he is - self-serving, reckless and unfit to lead. He has dragged the state into crisis for one reason: to grasp power with the Greens, no matter what he says. If this is his idea of leadership, then he has given us all the proof we need to know that he is nowhere near ready to govern. He is not fit to lead and he is a danger to Tasmania's future.

Mr Winter has demonstrated how little regard he has for the fundamental guiding principle of any democracy - majority rules. How can his Labor colleagues back in this assault on democracy?

**Mr Willie** - You do not have one. That is the problem.

**Mr FAIRS** - At the last election, I believe we got more seats than you, Mr Willie. Is that correct?

**Mr Willie** - You do not have a working majority.

**Mr Winter** - You are in a minority.

**The SPEAKER** - Members on my left.

**Mr FAIRS** - You had the lowest primary vote in history, Mr Willie. Please remember that. That is you - the lowest primary vote in history.

**Mr Willie** - It is chaos and dysfunction that you are delivering.



**The SPEAKER** - Mr Willie, member for Clark, thank you.

**Mr Behrakis** - You are delivering.

**Mr Willie** - How many early elections do you want to call?

**The SPEAKER** - The House will come to order and allow Mr Fairs -

**Mr FAIRS** - It is all on you.

**The SPEAKER** - to finish his contribution. Through the Chair, thank you, Mr Fairs.

**Mr FAIRS** - It is all on you. Mr Winter has demonstrated how little regard he has for the fundamental guiding principle of democracy, as I said. How his Labor colleagues back in this assault is anyone's guess.

Summing up I would like to remind everyone in this House that it is not only the dreams of our AFL team, our youngsters, our future generations being involved with the fabulous Devils - it is going to be such an exciting moment. This uncertainty hangs it all on such a thin thread.

I do not want to be the person responsible for taking that away from any Tasmanian. I do not want to be responsible for taking that away from any youngster who has a dream of playing AFL or AFLW football. The amount of growth that we are going to see in the greatest game in the world by what this team, the Devils, is going to bring in. I have to say, to see Kath McCann from the Tasmania Football Club yesterday in tears talking exactly about how the kids and their dreams hang on Mr Winter, basically.

Mr Winter, I just want to stress to you that - I am sure you get it - it hangs on your shoulders. We need to make sure that our pathway, our Devils, our team, our club, and the stadium come forthright. We need it. Tasmania needs it. The AFL is worth squillions. Tasmania has fought for so long on so many levels to get their chance at the highest level. Our input, our years of developing such amazing players in the great game. We can have that where they are not playing for interstate clubs, they are playing for our club, they are playing for the Devils. What a moment that is going to be. I personally cannot wait for our first game in 2028, when the Devils run out. In my opinion it is going to be the greatest sporting moment in our history, because we have fought so long and so hard for it.

We need to ensure that it happens. Mr Winter, what you are doing puts that at serious risk. Please, I implore everyone in this House to please think about that, because it is not just about us. Our behaviour in this place. It is so important - we are role models in the community. That is what we were elected to do.

The way we act in this place sometimes does my head in, because the school tours and the visitors we have up there behave better than we do. I know you all feel that. We need to do better.

The only way I can see that is with us in command, in power, and doing what we are doing. We have the pathway, we know what we are doing; we have the plans. We just need to

work together. We have to end this rubbish. I am sick of it, people I talk to are sick of it, and I am sure you are getting it too. We need to pull it together.

As I said at the start, when it comes to Jeremy Rockliff, our party leader and Premier, I support him 110 per cent. We need him at the helm right now. Thank you.

[12.49 p.m.]

**Mr FARRELL** (Lyons) - Honourable Speaker, I rise to speak to this motion. After politely staying in my chair for the morning to allow members of the government to have a chance to work out whether they actually did support this Premier or not, because so few of them put on the *Hansard* yesterday that they supported this Premier.

**Members** interjecting.

**A member** - What are you talking about?

**Mr FARRELL** - This is a very sad motion. I understand the emotional response to it. It is sad because we all come to this place with the very best of intentions: to serve, to improve and to uplift. I know that every person here, no matter their party, no matter their views, truly cares about Tasmania. I know you each make sacrifices, miss birthdays, skip family dinners, and carry the weight of your communities on your shoulders, and I commend every one of you for that. You have shown me generosity and kindness since I arrived here three months ago. You have welcomed me, and I want to acknowledge that. You are good people.

This motion today is not about whether people are good. It is not about intention. It is not about civility or friendship. It is not about who has the nicest smile or who is kind in the hallway, because the truth is, it is not enough to mean well. Good intentions do not pay down debt. They do not build homes. They do not fix hospitals or improve schools. They certainly do not deliver a functioning budget. Our lack of confidence is about performance, it is about accountability, and most of all it is about what is best for Tasmania. Tasmanians expected a lot from this Premier. They gave him time. They gave him chances, and he has not delivered. That is sad.

What is truly heartbreaking is that his leadership has brought us the worst budget Tasmania has ever seen. Even the most loyal Liberal supporters are struggling to find anything positive to say about it. When the applause dies down, when the standing ovation sits back down, the silence says it all. \$10 billion of debt. Debt that will take decades, generations to pay off. No plan in the Budget to repay a single dollar. Just more borrowing, more band aids. No vision, no reform, no turning point. Just more borrowing to keep the state running. A privatisation agenda that will mean higher bus fares, bigger power bills, more expensive car registration, higher fees on exports, higher costs on imports. A plan that pushes the cost of living for every Tasmanian higher and higher, not just this year, but for years and years to come.

Premier Rockliff's inability to run a budget does not mean public services should be sold off; it means he should not be in charge of them. His failure to manage the state's finances is not evidence that government-owned businesses are broken; it is evidence that his leadership is. When a business fails, you do not sell off the customers, you change the management. You bring in leadership with capability, with discipline, with the courage to make the right calls. Instead, the Premier wants Tasmanians to foot the bill for his failures. Higher bus fares, higher

power prices, more expensive car registration. All because he and his government can't control their spending or deliver on their promises. He is treating public-ownership like the problem when the problem has been sitting at the head of the cabinet table all along. Our services do not need to be sold, they need to be run better, and Tasmanians deserve someone capable of doing just that.

In 11 years of Liberal government, Tasmania's financial position has gone from a \$200 million cash balance to a \$5,000 million dollar debt. Averaged out, every year of a Liberal government has left Tasmania half a billion dollars worse off every single year. In the next 4 years, if we let this Premier continue, the debt will double. It will leave Tasmanians \$1 billion dollars worse off each year for the forward Estimates. By 2030, state debt will be \$10,000 million.

Is this really a strong plan? What does it mean for our future? The interest repayments alone will choke our finances, not just for next year, for a generation. We are mortgaging the future of children who have not even been born yet. What are the outcomes? A worse situation for people in need of shelter. Worse results for our education system. A health system that is even more strained.

This Premier has given up. He cannot lead his rabble of a government, and he has to go. If you are in this Chamber and you are not supporting this motion, then be honest, you are endorsing ballooning, unsustainable debt. You are accepting the continued degradation of public services. You are allowing the sale of the public assets Tasmanians have spent generations building. Own that.

The Premier called this motion weak. I can assure you that absolutely nobody in favour of this has made the decision lightly. This is an extremely serious matter and one that has been considered very deeply. We are each answerable to our electorates and the people of Tasmania. I doubt any of us personally actually wants to spend parliament's time like this, but we are doing this because we need to do whatever we can to save Tasmania's future because the stakes are too high, because someone has to say - enough.

Yes, we know this brings a real chance of an election. We know that will affect us all. We know that asking Tasmanians to vote again after just over a year will be a tall order, but let us be honest, so is asking Tasmanians to carry another four years of this, so is letting this Premier plow on, to let him keep kicking the can down the road, the price of better government is worth paying.

Supporting this motion is courageous, it is principled, and it is the right thing to do. What is selfish, is condemning this state to decades of debt because you are afraid to take responsibility for your own government. What is selfish is standing by while your Treasurer delivers the worst budget in our history and applauding him for it. What is selfish is continuing to call yourself a leader when you have no credible solutions to the problems Tasmanians are facing every single day.

What of the rest of his team? If the Premier is unwilling or unable to turn things around, then surely someone else in his ranks would step up. Someone would show the leadership their government so clearly lacks, but instead we see timidity, silence, a cabinet too frightened to challenge a failing leader and a backbench too uncertain to act. Are they really so risk-averse

that they would rather drift into opposition than make a difficult decision today? Do they think loyalty to failure is more honourable than responsibility to the people of Tasmania?

Even your own mates have said it, a pack of lemmings walking off the cliff behind him. This government has no fight left, no plan, only a sad procession of press conferences and finger pointing. No one prepared to lead, no one prepared to stand up and if nobody on that side of the House is willing to take responsibility, not one of you prepared to stop the decline, then why should Tasmanians trust you to keep governing?

This Premier leads a government that has perfected the art of appearing busy while achieving nothing. Time and again, when Tasmanians demand answers, demand action, demand leadership, what do we get? 'I have had a discussion', 'I have had a meeting', 'I have written a letter' as if those things are achievements in themselves, as if correspondence replaces competence, as if sitting down to talk about a problem is the same as solving it.

Whether it is health, housing, education or cost of living, this government's pattern is always the same. They express concern, they send a memo, they pay a consultant to talk to stakeholders and give them a report and then they wash their hands of it, they move on, they pretend the job is done, but Tasmanians are still stuck on waiting lists, still sleeping in cars, still falling through the cracks. A government that mistakes process for progress is not a government delivering for our people, it is a government out of ideas, out of energy and out of time.

As I said earlier this week, I am here to help create a future where all Tasmanians, regardless of post code or bank balance, have access to good education, quality healthcare and opportunities to succeed and prosper. I am true to Labor values, as are all of my Labor Party colleagues. We value equality, opportunity, fairness and reform. We know Tasmania is better off with a Labor government. History shows that Labor builds. We build strong economies so people can build their lives with confidence. We build the infrastructure that growth needs and we build progress, real progress, so Tasmania becomes fairer, more equal, more livable.

We build with a rising tide, to bring every Tasmanian with us. This budget does not do that, it makes things worse, and the damage will be felt for a very long time.

This government makes things worse for Tasmanians. This premier makes things worse for Tasmania, worse in terms of equality, worse in terms of opportunity, worse in terms of fairness. Anyone who is true to Labor values will be driven to do whatever they can to give Tasmanians the change they deserve. This is not about personal beef or ego-driven politics, this is about Tasmania. The Premier said he would understand this motion coming to the House if Tasmania -

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

## MOTION

### Want of Confidence in Premier, Jeremy Rockliff

**Resumed from above.**

[2.30 p.m.]

**Mr FARRELL** - Honourable Deputy Speaker, this government makes things worse for Tasmania, this premier makes things worse for Tasmania, worse in terms of equality, worse in terms of opportunity, worse in terms of fairness.

Anyone who is true to Labor values will be driven to do whatever they can to give Tasmanians the change they deserve. This is not about personal beef or ego-driven politics; this is about Tasmania. The Premier said he would understand this motion coming to the House if Tasmania had an unemployment rate of 11 per cent, proudly proclaiming that his government is in good shape because unemployment figures are so low.

Does he think that people are feeling secure and satisfied in their jobs? How out of touch to single out this one measure as the mark of good workforce management. We all know that the reality is not rosy. What of the participation rate? Lower now than 10 years ago, seven points below the national average. More Tasmanians have given up on looking for work. Youth unemployment is the highest in the nation. Regional unemployment, Break 'O Day, going up. West coast, going up. George Town going up. Burnie going up. Devonport going up. Underemployment, people who need more work, higher in Tasmania than anywhere else in Australia.

These are not only statistics; they are lived experience. Tasmanians are struggling. We all know it. You do not need a report to see it; talk to people. Walk into a doctor's surgery, visit a school, ask a young job seeker in the regions. The Premier said he would understand this if unemployment was 11 per cent. Well, honourable Deputy Speaker, the percentage of Tasmanians with no work or not enough work, 11.2 per cent. This is not a 'gotcha'. I understand the differences in the figures. It is a reflection of the reality out there outside this room. More than one in 10 Tasmanians want to work more than they are; need to work more than they are.

For the Premier to wave a single number around as if it tells the full story is misleading and it is out of touch. It is offensive to every Tasmanian trying to scrape by. One in 10 Tasmanians needs more work because they are deeply struggling with the cost of living.

This Premier wants to sell Metro, sell Momentum, sell TasNetworks, sell the MAIB. He wants to sell the ports and then claim he is not raising taxes. If it walks like a tax and it hits like a tax, Tasmanians will feel it like a tax. It will cost more to get to work, to heat your home and to feed your family.

Let us be clear, Tasmanians cannot afford this, Premier. It is time for change.

[2.33 p.m.]

**Mr BEHRAKIS** (Clark) - Honourable Deputy Speaker, what a shameful, sordid display we have seen this week. It has been utterly shameful. The opposition leader has come in here, he has spoken about responsibility and he has spoken about leadership, but it is clear after the

goings on of this week he has none. He has no interest in the good of Tasmania, and he has not seen a crisis that has not made him think, 'Everything is looking up for Dean'.

Leadership is about making the hard decisions for the good of the state. Hard decisions like we have heard from the Premier in his emotional contribution. Hard decisions during times like COVID-19, the commission of inquiry and others.

The hardest decision Mr Winter has had to make is, 'Where do I tell people I was born today?'

Leadership means thinking about the consequences of actions because the actions and the decisions that we make in this place have far-reaching consequences and far-reaching impacts for the people of Tasmania. What we saw yesterday and today was an opposition leader throwing out the gauntlet at the very crossbench that he has been so eager to disrespect to get a cheap headline. He was expecting to throw it out there, get a good headline, it was going to be of little consequence and now he has found himself the proverbial dog, having caught the postman with the crossbench saying that they were willing to consider it. Now he is as nervous as anybody else as to what comes next. That is what I think is the case.

The other alternative is that he is well aware of what he is doing, and he is just willing to throw a bomb into this place and a bomb into the futures of our state to steal power. I do not know which is worse. The people of Tasmania do not want an election, that much is clear. The opposition knows that. They just do not care. That is not a party we can ever trust to run this state or to lead this state. That is a party who plays cheap political games, the consequences to Tasmanians be damned. They say the motivation, the justification for this motion is the Budget, but it is clearly a farce and it is clearly a nonsense.

If the Budget, which Labor has been signalling to stakeholders for weeks that they would oppose it before they even saw it. If that was the motivation this motion would be taking aim at the Treasurer, not the Premier. No, they have seen an opportunity, they have seen a chance there to take a wrecking ball reprehensibly to this state. Consequences be damned, because they can see a grab of power. Damn the consequences to business confidence that they come in here and speak about so often. Damn the consequences to the stadium, which the Labor party supposedly supports. What they are doing here will do nothing but guarantee that that never goes ahead.

This week was the opportunity for Mr Winter and Labor to show that they had the responsibility to lead this state; to show they had a plan, an alternative, to be honest and upfront with Tasmanians about what a Dean Winter Labor government would look like for them and how much it would cost them. Unlike the empty platitudes and the empty politics of the so called opposition up until now, this was their chance to finally do what the parliament has been calling on them to do twice and table an alternative budget. For all their criticisms, for all their negativity, what would they do better, to be upfront with the people of Tasmania rather than continue with their relentless, dogging negativity and actually lay down an alternative: How would they save money? What would be cut? How would they raise revenue? What initiatives would they or would they not support and how much would it cost the taxpayer?

Once again, 11 years, two ignored motions by this very place, ignored. They have once again come in this place, talked our state down and offered nothing in the way of alternatives.

Instead, they have come into this place, eager to throw a grenade into this parliament, into the stability of our state, to dash any hope of our stadium, to destroy business confidence and put into question the future of Tasmania. Today exposes Mr Winter as nothing more than a self-interested, selfish wrecker.

We continue to hear from the so called alternative government coming to this place about how they left the state with no net debt, except when they were last in government, they achieved that by raiding the \$1.5 billion superannuation account. They sold assets like the TOTE and the Hobart Airport to prop up their own budget failures and then they come in here talking about privatisation.

Then we have members of the opposition coming here with a new tagline that we heard just the other day, Labor has changed. What have they changed from? What does the Labor party think was so wrong before that they are so proud to say how much they have changed? I can think of a few things, of course, but Labor's self reflections are much more interesting. The people of Tasmania would love to know what they were getting so wrong before that they have suddenly figured out.

The reality is that this is the same Labor that stands for nothing other than their own self-interest; the same Labor who would get into bed with whoever and change their policies based on whatever they think would help them get a cheap win. From that benchmark, they have not changed one single bit. They will come in here, telling this place 'Labor has changed' like a spurned lover trying to win back an ex, 'Please baby, I have changed. I will do better next time, I promise', hoping that they will be able to pull the wool over the eyes of the people of Tasmania, but anyone who has heard that spiel before knows it means that they can expect more of the same.

To expect more misinformation, to expect the same gaslighting that we have seen from those opposite for so many years. I am not sure if they are trying to convince themselves, the people of Tasmania or the crossbench - the very same crossbench - that they have spent the last 12 months antagonising and disrespecting. The reality is that this is the same Labor that will do and say anything to serve their own interests.

We even heard from the member for Lyons, Ms Butler, who belled the cat in her contributions, complaining about ministers driving around their limos and that it bells the cat because it shows what they are really interested about. They are not interested in any of this conversation or in any of this debate. They could not care less about what any of this means for the people of Tasmania. They care about getting their hands on government, getting their hands on power, getting into those limousines because that is what they are more interested in than anything else.

Once again, all they are doing this week is showing that they are interested only in themselves; consequences to the stability of this state and the people of Tasmania be damned. This is the same Labor who will change their policies on a whim, who stand for nothing other than themselves; the same Labor, still being puppeteered by the faceless men who are more than happy to say one thing and do another.

Today will not just define this parliament, it will define the legacy of Mr Winter. If they vote Mr Winter, votes for chaos and self-interest, that will be his legacy and that will be who

he is. Will he act in the interests of Tasmanians, or they carry on, determined to pledge this state into chaos and uncertainty for his own selfish interests?

The opposition says that they are supportive of and are now committed to the stadium and committed to making sure that the team becomes a reality. They were against it before the election. Mr Winter has clearly seen a political gain and is now backflipping on that and being supportive, but these actions today plunge that into completely sabotaging any chance of this occurring.

They are clearly talking out the sides of their mouth or they are just blissfully unaware of the consequences of what their actions this week mean. The reality is, despite what the opposition says, their actions have directly jeopardised the stadium. It is fine if you are over there in the Greens, they know where they stand on that. But for Labor to come in here saying that they remain committed to the stadium, remain committed to all the benefits that come from that. It is one thing that in the last year we have been able to agree on. Whilst directly contributing to its demise is not only reprehensible and irresponsible, but it is inapt and clear sign to the people of Tasmania what to expect from a potential demon to government.

On the Greens, I am sure whilst their eyes are lighting up at the possibility of turning back the clock to 2010 and forming an arrangement to govern with Labor, I do have to question their own credibility on this motion.

The years the Greens have espoused the values and benefits of minority parliaments, the good work they can do, how minority parliament's equalling chaos is a myth. But them supporting this motion at the slightest taste of potential power serves only to prove the opposite of what they say.

Back to the AFL. We have heard just yesterday Kathryn McCann break down in tears, because of the uncertainty and the damage that Mr Winter's actions have caused. She said:

The optics of this nationally and internationally is really negative for Tasmania. What this looks like is uncertainty. What it looks like is a risk to invest. What it looks like is a state that is not united, and this is Plan A and there is no Plan B.

This state does not have a Plan B when it comes to an alternative like the Labor Party. But that emotional moment from Kathryn McCann just shows what the consequences are for Labor's actions here this week.

These despicable antics prove positive that Mr Winter is not ready to govern in the interest of Tasmania and he does not care about doing so. He has no alternatives, has no ability to govern and knows that he and the Labor Party could not win government the proper, honest way. Instead, they will try and seize the Treasury benches by bait and switch. Labor comes into this place often talking on business confidence, railing against whatever the latest press release that serves their agenda and ignoring the ones that do not. But their actions this week will do more to destroy business confidence in this state and people's willingness to invest in this state than anything that's occurred in generations.



They talk about their support and commitment to the stadium and the team but their actions this week will mean, and we know this from what the AFL has said, the end of that dream and the dream of so many young Tasmanians.

They say they are against privatisation. When they were last in government, they privatised the TOTE, they privatised the Hobart Airport, and the very Opposition Leaders on the record having advocated for privatisation in the past.

They say that they will never sidle up to the Greens ever again like they did during those terrible years between 2010 and 2014, except here we are, ready to take a wrecking ball to government and a wrecking ball to this parliament with the support of the Greens.

One thing is true. Labor says that they have changed, but they are the same Labor standing for nothing, the same Labor that cares for nothing other than themselves, and the same Labor that will say anything and backflip on anything that gets them closer to seizing power, consequences be damned.

We, on this side have confidence in this state and we have confidence in our Premier. We are committed to continue the plan that we have been delivering on, a plan that has seen our economy grow to a record \$40.6 billion, an economy that has grown employment to 47,000 since we were elected to government and has seen the unemployment rate the lowest in our state's history at 3.8 per cent, which was half what it was when this so-called alternative government was last on this side of the House.

It is easy to get up in this place and talk about numbers and percentages and statistics. What we do have to remember in this place is that these numbers represent real people. We, on this side, never lose sight of the fact that these numbers - all those numbers, the employment numbers, the numbers in the budget - represent the livelihoods of real Tasmanians. Each person employed is another person contributing to our economy, and more importantly, putting food on the table for their families.

Mr Winter has proven this week that there is only one number that he cares about, and that is number one. If he ever became premier of Tasmania, this state would face a cold winter ahead indeed. We, on this side, have continued to build our economy while supporting Tasmanians during difficult times.

Over the past years, we have responded to unprecedented challenges, the economic impacts of COVID, to cost of living pressures, and we have done so while maintaining Tasmania's economic growth and protecting essential services.

While those opposite are committed to their own game, we on this side are committed to every single Tasmanian - every Tasmanian employed in our state and every vulnerable Tasmanian that needs our support. We are committed to providing stability, certainty and support for them, and I know that our Premier, Jeremy Rockliff, is as well.

The character assassination of our Premier this week has been so blatant, so transparent, so reprehensible, that those opposite even know it as they say it. They have all come in here in their contributions talking about what a wonderful guy he is - 'Oh, you know, we know that Jeremy, Mr Rockliff, is a good guy, a good person', and they talk about how wonderful he was in previous portfolios, but they were not saying those wonderful things when he was in those

portfolios at the time. It uses some bait-and-switch, because they know, and they know that Tasmanians know, that Mr Rockliff is a good man. They know he is a man who cares about and loves our state, and they are desperate to pull the wool over the eyes of Tasmanians to suggest that anything else is true. Tasmanians know that Mr Rockliff is someone who will make hard decisions, decisions for the good of our state, even if they are not necessarily beneficial to him.

Tasmanians know, especially after the sordid display this week, that Mr Winter is none of those things, and that he would sell our state down the river if it benefited him in any way. Shame on the opposition for this reprehensible, selfish motion.

This government is based on responsible fiscal management and responsible decision-making. Over the past years we have responded to unprecedented challenges - cost-of-living pressures, COVID and so on. We have done so while maintaining Tasmania's economic growth and we have done so while protecting essential services.

Tasmanians remember what it was like to live under the tax first, ask later Labor-Greens government. Tasmania remembers the state being plunged into a recession in 2012-2013. They remember unemployment rates of 7.9 per cent, double what they are now. They remember over 19,000 unemployed Tasmanians.

Those opposite are hoping that enough time has gone past that people have forgotten, but Tasmanians remember. They remember how hard it was during those times. We will never lose sight of the fact that the numbers we talk about in this place represent real Tasmanians. We are committed to improving the livelihoods of all of those Tasmanians. We are committed to continuing to invest in our people, our infrastructure and our future, delivering on the key issues of housing, economic growth and community support, and ensuring our region remains a great place to live, work and raise a family. That is what we on this side are committed to.

Those on the other side have made it very clear that they could not give a damn. They are more than happy to take a wrecking ball to stability, they are more than happy to plunge our state into chaos, to create the same uncertainty, to create the same hit to business confidence that they come into this place and crow about. They come into this place talking about how it is all the government's fault, that business confidence has gone down even when the NAB report - which they pick and choose when to talk about - is saying business confidence is high. They will come in here and talk the rubbish that they talk, all the while preparing a stunt like this that will once again destroy the business confidence of this state, reducing people like Kath McCann to tears.

I was at a function, where the opposition leader also was, listening to Kath McCann talking about the future of the AFL team and the future of the stadium and clapping. His actions this week have not only not only risked the future of that project, not only risked the future of the stadium and the AFL team and the dreams of all those Tasmanians and young Tasmanians, but has reduced Kath McCann to tears and others like her who are beside themselves at what the opposition is doing.

I not only condemn, but advise everyone in this place to not support, this motion. It is a reprehensible wrecking ball of a motion and all it does is cast light on the opposition leader - who he is and the legacy that he will be known for if he carries through with this today.

[2.52 p.m.]

**Ms BROWN** (Franklin) - Honourable Deputy Speaker, from the outset I will place on the record that I think the Premier is a decent person. I believe that he entered into office with good intention and that he believed that he would lead a government with heart. However, it takes more than just good intention.

It gives me absolutely no pleasure to be standing here to speak on this motion brought forward by our leader, Dean Winter, yet this is a necessary debate and one this parliament must have. This motion is not taken lightly. We will not stand by while Tasmania is dragged deeper into economic chaos and political dishonesty by a premier who has lost the trust of this parliament and the people that it represents.

In my inaugural speech I shared a question I was asked whilst out doorknocking, and it was: What type of politician was I going to be? My answer was simple: One that makes a difference, and one that stands up for the people of Tasmania. That answer still guides me to this day. I believe in the people of Franklin and I believe in Tasmanians. I believe that no matter the circumstances of your birth, you should have equal opportunity to live free from fear, to work in safe, secure jobs, to have access to quality education and health care, and to have a safe place to call home. This is not a budget for those people.

This is a premier who promised stability and delivered dysfunction; a premier who promised transparency and delivered secrecy; a premier who promised responsible economic management and has now led to Tasmania to the brink of \$11 billion of debt. This motion of no confidence is not only justified; it is necessary. The Premier no longer commands the confidence of this House. He no longer commands the confidence of some of the crossbench - the ones that he relies on to govern. He no longer commands the confidence of Tasmanians, who are and will be paying the price for these broken promises, his financial mismanagement, and his privatisation agenda.

This is a government that has collapsed under the weight of its own failures. The deals the Premier struck to cling to power in minority have now publicly fallen apart. A sufficient number of crossbench members of parliament have made it clear that they no longer support this minority government and Jeremy Rockliff. Under our system of government, if a premier cannot command the confidence of this House, they cannot continue.

Let me be clear: Labor stands ready to support a temporary supply bill under a new premier, because the business of government must continue. Let me also be crystal clear: this is not about the AFL or the stadium. This is about trust, this is about leadership and this is about the future for Tasmania. This motion is required because the Premier has broken the faith of the Tasmanian people time and time again.

He has catastrophically mismanaged the *Spirits of Tasmania* and wasted hundreds of millions of dollars, leaving the tourism and freight industries in the dark. Shame. He has presided over the worst financial management in the state's history, delivering the three largest deficits on record and planning three more just like it. He is now planning to privatise Tasmania's most precious public assets - our power companies, our ports and our public transport - all to fill the black hole of his own making.

This Premier is not changing course, he is doubling down on this failure, and the consequences will be felt for generations. Under the Premier's reckless plan, Tasmania is on

track for \$11 billion of debt. We will be spending more on interest repayments than our entire ambulance service and emergency departments combined. That is money that could be spent on building hospitals, creating jobs or cutting cost of living pressures. Instead, it will be wasted every single cent just paying interest on debt we cannot afford.

If the Premier gets his way and privatises our energy assets, every Tasmanian will pay the price. Power bills will rise. Car registration and public transport costs will rise. Essential services will be gutted and the revenue they once provided will disappear forever. This comes down to one person. The buck stops with him, the Premier, Jeremy Rockliff. He has given up on governing. He has given up on managing this budget, and worst of all, he has given up on Tasmania's future. Tasmania needs change now, not more than just the same.

This Budget proves without a shadow of a doubt that Jeremy Rockliff's Liberal government cannot be trusted with Tasmania's finances. In 2014, Tasmania had no net debt. Today, under this Premier, we are staring down the barrel of \$11 billion of debt. This is the worst deficit in our history. That is the legacy of this premier: a state that is broken, borrowing money just to pay the interest down on its own credit card. A state whose future is being mortgaged for short-term political convenience.

This budget should be a blueprint to progress, but instead it is a road map to ruin. Let us not forget the \$80 million secret bailout of the foreign shipbuilder. Let us not forget the \$400 million cost-blowout of the berth that was not built. Let us not forget the Premier's plan to lease our new ships out as a refugee camp. But it turns out they were tricked. Now, those ships are hiding out in Scotland, defective and costing us millions. The tourism industry has been misled. The public has been deceived. This is not leadership. This is chaos. Perhaps the most dangerous part of the Premier's plan is what he wants to sell next. TasNetworks, Aurora, Momentum Energy, all gone. Metro gone. The MAIB gone. Our ports. Tasmanian Irrigation, Sustainable Timbers Tasmania all on the chopping block.

That means higher power prices, fewer buses, more expensive insurance and the decimated regional economics. It also means \$620 million less for every school, hospital and service Tasmanians rely on forever. It is economic vandalism at the highest order. It is an ideology, it is unnecessary, and it must be stopped.

The Premier has lost the trust of this parliament. He has led Tasmania into the worst fiscal position in living memory. He has broken promise after promise. Now he plans to sell off the very assets that make life affordable and fund our essential services.

Tasmania needs leadership. It needs accountability. It needs change. Thank you.

[3.01 p.m.]

**Mr SHELTON** (Lyons)- Honourable Speaker, I rise this afternoon to make my contribution to this disgusting motion that has been put by the opposition. There is no doubt that it's all about political game-playing. All about the Leader of the Opposition wondering what moves he can make, wondering what he can do. As far as I can see, what he did not calculate on was that the Greens actually see this as a way of stopping the stadium.

We know that the Greens will use any opportunity to stop the stadium, and they piggybacked on to you to make that a real reality into the future.

**Mr Winter** - Maybe you should actually read the speech that they give you.

**Mr SHELTON** - I stand here today in this place to confirm my support for the Premier, Jeremy Rockliff, and the Budget that our government has put forward to support the people of Tasmania. I support him 110 per cent. There is nobody with better credibility or experience to lead our state than the Premier, Jeremy Rockliff. He understands hard work; he understands the needs of people in his community. He gets out amongst the people and listens to what they have to say.

Jeremy - Jez, as I call him, not wanting to be disrespectful to the Premier, but I will call him by his first name because that is the relationship that everybody on this side of the Chamber has with the Premier. He is approachable. He works hard for his community. Jeremy's vision for Tasmania is simple: a place where everybody feels valued, included, encouraged and supported to be the very best they can be. What more can you ask for out of a premier?

**Dr Broad** - Competence.

**Mr SHELTON** - Having been in parliament for 23 years, he has a great record of achievement. He was elected as the member for Braddon in 2002, and then Deputy Leader of the Opposition in 2006. Upon winning government, Jeremy was elected Deputy Premier in 2014, a role that he has held until he became Premier in 2022, where he is today.

During those 23 years in parliament, he has held many portfolios and has proven results in every single one of them. Education and training: he worked hard. We have talked about his education and training - people have commented. Before I get into that: how hypocritical of the opposition to stand up here and say, 'Jeremy Rockliff is a great bloke' and then stab him in the back. How dare you.

**Mr Winter** - Do you understand - oh, honestly, there is no point, is there?

**Mr SHELTON** - He has had education and training roles. He has had infrastructure ministries, primary industries and water for a number of years; health and mental health and wellbeing and I will talk more - community services and development, advanced manufacturing and defence, sport and recreation, racing, tourism, trade and major developments.

Today, under the legacy and the leadership of Jeremy Rockliff, there is a \$40.6 billion economy in Tasmania. With a clear pathway to surplus by 2029-30, since we have come to government in 2014, we have one of the strongest growing economies in Australia. Proudly we sit within the top two in Australia, and you bring on a motion against the Premier. This has been the result of strong leadership over that period of time and more recently, of course, by the Premier, Jeremy Rockliff.

This terrible motion that has been introduced into the parliament to upset the budget process, to drag the conversation in the community away from where we should be about being positive and growing our economy, to drag the economy down in this state - this is not leadership. It is sabotage, as far as this motion goes.

Mr Dean Winter has shown every Tasmanian exactly who he is: a power-hungry opportunist willing to wreck the state just to prop himself up. Mr Dean Winter has orchestrated

this chaos, and chaos will be his legacy. This will define Dean Winter's leadership, and he has failed the test. He is doing the wrong thing by Tasmanians, plunging the state into chaos for nothing more than political gain. If Dean Winter wanted to prove he is not ready to govern, this is an absolute masterclass. This is the day Dean Winter showed Tasmania exactly who is self-serving, reckless and unfit to lead. He has dragged this state into crisis for one reason: to grasp power with the Greens.

If this is his idea of leadership, then he has given us all the proof we need that he is nowhere near ready to govern. Dean Winter has proven one thing beyond all doubt: he is not ready to govern, he is not fit to lead, and he is a danger to Tasmania's future. He has thrown the parliament into turmoil, jeopardising stability, and sided with the Greens to force this crisis. Tasmania deserves better.

We need to work together to keep building a better Tasmania. This motion is not about the Budget or the *Spirits* or anything else in this motion. This no confidence motion is solely about Dean Winter's naked political ambition. This is about Dean Winter wanting to remove his political rival. This is about Dean Winter wanting to fast-track a ticket to the premiership, and he is asking people in this parliament - people who were democratically elected by Tasmanians just a little over a year ago - to be part of his game. This is Dean Winter's game.

It is a shocking thing to do. I thought that post the 2024 election, when the people of Tasmania voted all of us in here in a minority government, that we all had an obligation to make this work, yet here we are seeing the opposition leader trying to destroy all that.

In response to the Budget, which is of course one of the motion's movements, the Leader of the Opposition has said - 'I don't want to be distracted by supply' - well, it is named up in the motion, therefore we have to talk about the Budget. In response to the Budget, the TCCI members have said that businesses are very upbeat, and that business confidence in Tasmania is strong, although if you believe Mr Winter and his comments in the Budget reply speech on Tuesday, he would have convinced you that it would be difficult for the TCCI to ever trust the government again.

**Mr Winter** - That is word for word what they said.

**Mr Willie** - They said that last year.

**Mr SHELTON** - Last year. Yes. Not talking about the Budget.

**The SPEAKER** - Members on my left.

**Mr SHELTON** - The Tasmanian Small Business Council was quoted as saying:

The Budget provides bright spots for the future of new businesses. That small business startup assistance is great news and helps entrepreneurs realise their small business ownership dreams in the coming year.

The Tourism Industry Council said:

The Budget reaffirms the government's commitment to the sector, especially in key areas such as workforce development, regional support, and community programs.

Rural Business of Tasmania appreciated the support program to boost small business and primary industries. Tasmania Irrigation welcomed the funding commitment for three major irrigation projects within Tasmania. These statements certainly prove support for the Budget and support for the Premier from industry partners.

Tasmania has record low unemployment of 3.8 per cent, and while members of the opposition go searching for other figures to try to talk the economy down, unemployment has never been 3.8 per cent before.

Since the Liberals came to government in March 2024, there has been an increase of over 50,000 people employed. Wages have grown 4 per cent to date in the March 2024-25 quarter, surpassing the national average of 3.5 per cent. We talk here about it being tough out there, but when Tasmania's wages growth under this government is growing faster than any other state's economy in Australia, then that has to be assisting those people that are finding it tough. It has to be.

Under the Premier's watch, the \$786-million Bridgewater Bridge has been completed. Funding was secured under a Scott Morrison federal liberal government, and it was delivered on time and on budget. This intergenerational infrastructure, which will benefit Tasmania for many years, has been in the pipeline for many years. The opposition talks about the inability to progress major infrastructure. This is the most significant infrastructure to date, and it is on budget and on time.

**Mr Winter** - Have you heard of the *Spirits*?

**Ms Howlett** - He did not even attend.

**Ms Ogilvie** - They did not even go.

**The SPEAKER** - Leader of the Opposition and Minister for the Environment, interjections will cease. This is the second last speech of a significant debate. It will be conducted with respect.

**Mr SHELTON** - What they also ignore and jump over and leap over are all the issues that this parliament and this government has faced in more recent times. They had a fleeting comment about COVID, which was needed to keep people safe and alive, and the millions and billions of dollars that had to be spent are still having an ongoing effect on the budget.

We talk about the commission of inquiry and the commitment in this Budget of \$425 million. This Premier progressed those discussions, progressed the commission of inquiry, sat through much of it, listened to all the issues that were out there in the community, and this government is taking that legacy issue that has existed over decades and is fixing it, yet all you can do is blame the Premier for that. What logic do you use?

As a result, the economy is still playing catch up from these issues of COVID and the commission of inquiry. The 2030 Strong Plan for Tasmania's Future we put up at the last

election was a result of hard work by the Premier and by this team to set Tasmania up. This plan was created to benefit Tasmanians, and has led to a pathway to surplus and a plan to bring us back to a positive situation by 2029 in a sensible and achievable way.

I have the luxury of having been in opposition and in government for 15 years, and in the time I was in opposition - between 2010 and 2014 and under a previous Labor government; none of you people over there were involved in that - a previous Labor government had some problems with the budget. What did they do? They said, 'Help! We have to stop it quickly, this is growing out of hand and is going to reach a third of the budget', so they closed wards and sacked nurses. The Treasurer has said this is a Budget for the times and for the future, and he also said there is more work to be done. Nobody on this side of the House will say, 'Oh no, it's all done; it's all good'. The Treasurer and the Premier have said there is more work to be done, and of course we will be working on that.

The Budget puts almost \$10 million a day into health; an extraordinary amount. It is now at about 34 per cent of the Budget. Why can it be 34 per cent -

**Mr Winter** - Because you are running a \$1.7 billion deficit.

**Mr SHELTON** - ...when a previous Labor said, 'We cannot allow it to reach 33 per cent' because we are growing the economy. That is the way that you have to work. Yes, we have a debt, but so do most households. They have a debt, and they manage their processes to pay that debt down over a period of time.

If any of you can come up with reasons why we should not have built or upgraded the Sorell school, why we should not have built a Legana school, why we should not have built a Brighton school - tell us now and say, 'I would not have done that.'

**Mr Winter** - Should have built a berth, probably, not wasted half a billion dollars.

**Mr SHELTON** - The Budget is there. If you want to go through the Budget, just go through and cross out the infrastructure investments in the schools that you will not do.

**Mr Winter** - I suspect we have read it, and you have not.

**Mr SHELTON** - Just go through and cross them out and tell everybody what you are not going to support. When you talk about 'the budget out of control', you have to be able to back that up.

The couple of minutes - and the shadow treasurer is here - that I have left, I will leave to him. The Leader of the Opposition has taken us down this track, absolutely. A no confidence motion does not deserve this amount of time being spoken about it in this Chamber. When the shadow treasurer says, 'Oh, I am not going to do an alternative budget,' when he talks about an alternative budget, we have questioned him on that, and the question has always been 'Willie or Won't-he?' And he will not.

**Mr Winter** - Goodness me.

**Members** interjecting.



**Dr Broad** - I see what you did there.

**Mr Willie** - I used to be a primary school teacher. I feel like I am back there.

**Mr SHELTON** - He will not. Why will he not? He said because it is too hard - 'You have Treasury, you have this, you have that.'

**Members** interjecting.

**Dr Broad** - I do not think you want to be mixing those metaphors up, Shelts.

**Mr SHELTON** - There is Greens' alternative budget. It is a load of bunkum, but it is there. There is one of the books out of this year's budget.

**Mr Farrell** - Did you write that? Is that your work or did you get Treasury to do it for you?

**Mr SHELTON** - What you do, you see, when it comes up, if you looked at last year's, you could have seen the predictions for this year. You could have gone through those predictions and said, 'We are not going to do that. We are not going to do this. We are going to cut it here. We are going to cut it there.' What areas within the public sector are you going to cut?

**Dr Broad** - What sectors are you going to cut?

**Mr SHELTON - R** - All that the Leader of the Opposition said in his contribution is that 'We are going to spend \$20 million up north for a conference centre.'

**Mr Winter** - We saved half a billion dollars.

**Mr SHELTON** - 'We are going to spend more.' You are hypocritical. You are coming here, and you talk about debt and deficit, but all you can do is talk about the things that are not being funded. All you can do is spend more money. How would you ever think that you can get on top of this when the shadow treasurer said, 'It is too hard, it is too hard.'

**Members** interjecting.

**Mr SHELTON** - The Treasurer is a member for Lyons. It is half of the area of Tasmania. It takes us two hours to travel to New Norfolk, three hours to travel to Nubeena. The member for Clark is the shadow treasurer. You could - well, if you had a good arm - almost throw a rock from one side of it to the other - yet he does not have enough time. He does not have enough time to develop an alternative budget.

**Members** interjecting.

**A member** - They should get him up to speak more often.

**A member** - I will give you that on Lyons, but not on Josh.

**Mr SHELTON** - Years of opportunity.

**Time expired.**

**The SPEAKER** - I will wait for the House to come to order.

[3.22 p.m.]

**Mr WINTER** (Franklin - Leader of the Opposition) - Honourable Speaker. I will change the tone from whatever that was this evening, because this could not be more serious.

**A member** - You are a wrecker.

**Mr WINTER** - The debate that we have had for two days, I am not going to spend 30 minutes: I think all the issues have been dealt with. In fact, many issues have probably been dealt with that perhaps did not need to be.

It was about this time a week ago when the government brought down its budget.

**Mr Ellis** - You are in big trouble.

**Mr WINTER** - This followed on from three years of budgets where we had seen and raised significant concerns. Concerns about Tasmania's financial viability going forward. Nothing could be more important than that. And I say nothing could be more important than that because these budgets are not just about the healthcare that Tasmanians are getting now or the education that Tasmanians are getting now, it is about what happens in the next decade, next 20 years, next 30 years. Responsible budgets mean that responsible governments do not just provide for now, but they also provide for the future. The trajectory of this budget took Tasmania and takes Tasmania down a pathway that will lead every future government to find it harder to provide the services that Tasmanians need.

Offering Tasmanians a \$1.7 billion cash deficit this year, offering Tasmanians 10 consecutive record cash deficits in a row, three consecutive record fiscal deficits in a row is not responsible and so in reading the budget papers I was staggered. It was absolutely extraordinary what has happened to our budget in only a few short years. Two moments that really caught me, one was when the government said there was a sensible pathway to surplus and the following day I heard the Premier say it as well. It was just the same rhetoric as I heard the year before, which was not true either. It made me wonder whether the government knew what they were doing or whether they were just in complete denial.

The other moment that stuck with me and still sticks with me is the moment that the Treasurer finished; when he was applauded for the speech and that budget. I wondered what had gone wrong with this government and with this Premier that you could have that reaction to a budget like that. I wondered about my responsibility to this place as a member for Franklin -

**A member** - You do not wonder about responsibility at all.

**A member** - He is a wrecker,

**Mr WINTER** - as an opposition leader and I wondered about Labor's legacy to this place and about our legacy and what we stand for. Labor has a proud history of budget management in this state.

**Members** interjecting.

**Mr WINTER** - It was Jim Bacon and David Crean who paid down the Liberal debt, who restored our fiscal balance in this state, who paid down the debt in 2005 I think it was.

**Mr Behrakis**- What about the recession?

**Mr Shelton** - John Howard's GST.

**Members** interjecting.

**The SPEAKER** - Members on my right.

**Mr WINTER** - They did that through hard work and through discipline. What that has done is allowed Tasmania to be in the best position of any state in that we did not have net debt. It meant that Tasmania could go forward and not spend hundreds of millions of dollars just servicing debt and it is a great position to be in.

We all accepted during that COVID that the government was going to have to spend money, and everyone here did. When the Premier became Premier, there was about a billion dollars' worth of net debt. What has happened since then is staggering. It is extraordinary. The cash deficits going forward are not sustainable and what they are saying about it is not true. We had to make a decision about whether we were going to wave this through or if we are going to stand for something. Tasmanian Labor needs to stand up for people that rely on us, people that need us to hold this government accountable. People who are sick and tired of the sort of behaviour that we saw this week, people who are sick of -

**Members** interjecting.

**The SPEAKER** - Order, order.

**Mr WINTER** - People who will send our state broke because that is what will happen if everything in this budget actually happens. We have to stand up for what we believe in. We have to stand up against the debt, the deficit and the debacle, and I have heard contributions during this debate about what people have said about this budget.

I take very seriously what Saul Eslake said about this budget and he was very concerned. I take very seriously the credit warnings from S&P and Moody's, actual experts in the field, independent experts who are raising serious concerns about the direction and I take very seriously my responsibilities not just to Tasmania today but into the future.

The confidence and supply agreements that the Premier signed after the last election when he won minority government, have disintegrated and that is down to one person, the Premier of Tasmania. When he signed those agreements he said it would provide stability and confidence to Tasmania and those agreements did not last. Ultimately, it is up to the premier of any parliament to convince the majority of members on the floor to have confidence in him, and he could not achieve it. At this point in time it does not appear as though he has achieved that.

Tasmanian Labor, we need to stand up for what we believe in. We do not want to wreck the budget, we want to stop the asset sales, and we want to bring our *Spirits* home. Tasmanian Labor absolutely and wholeheartedly needs to stand for sensible budget management. We need to stand for that first and foremost. In order to do that, we need to stop asset sales.

**A member** - Which one?

**Mr BEHRAKIS** - Like the Hobart Airport?

**Mr WINTER** - That is the government's plan - to sell the assets that Tasmanians have built together for 100 years. The reason they are doing that is because they have broken the Budget and the only way they can see to pay down the debt is to sell down those assets that Tasmanians paid for.

We will not allow that to happen under any circumstances. We will not allow them to use the excuse of the *Spirits* debacle to sell assets, saying that the *Spirits* of Tasmania debacle had caused the Premier to reflect on our government business entities and their government structures? The response was not to fix them like Labor wants. The response has been to sell them - we cannot allow that to happen.

We do not have confidence in this Premier. How could we, after all of this? How could we?

**Ms Howlett** - You cannot do this, can you? This is not going well at all.

**Members** interjecting.

**The SPEAKER** - The House will come to order, please.

**Mr WINTER** - Honourable Speaker, I want to also acknowledge my team in their contributions today and yesterday. All of them have not participated in personal attacks and, in fact, some of them were criticised for being too nice. This is not personal, this is about Tasmania's future. It is about making sure we have a government and a Premier who are prepared to put Tasmania's interests first, Tasmania's interests now and into the future, not the short-term political interests of someone who is prepared to put Tasmania's Budget in so much debt, in so much deficit.

Honourable Speaker, I commend the motion to the House.

**Members** interjecting.

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

That the motion be agreed to.

## **The House divided.**

### **AYES 17**

Ms Badger  
Mr Bayley  
Dr Broad  
Ms Brown  
Ms Burnet  
Ms Butler  
Ms Dow  
Mr Farrell  
Ms Finlay  
Mr Garland  
Ms Haddad  
Mr Jenner (Teller)  
Ms Johnston  
Ms Rosol  
Mr Willie  
Mr Winter  
Dr Woodruff

### **NOES 17**

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

**The SPEAKER** - The result of the division is ayes, 17, noes, 17, which requires a casting vote. May I ask members to resume their seats?

Given the significance of the vote before us and the media commentary on the role of the Speaker in this deciding vote, I will take the opportunity to provide reasons for the practice of the exercise of the Speaker's casting vote. Standing Order 167 obliges the Speaker, or any other presiding officer as the case may be, to vote upon a question put to the House to resolve the matter after a division has resulted in an equality of votes.

The Standing Order is also prescribed in section 25 of the *Constitution Act 1934*. The Westminster practice, and that of some other jurisdictions, is that in order to avoid any imputation upon their impartiality, it is usual for the Speaker, when practical, to vote in such a manner as to not make the decision of the House final, and to explain their reasons, which are entered into the journal. The Westminster principles are for the Speaker to vote in such a way that the Speaker remains impartial and independent of their political affiliation; to vote in such a manner as to not make the decision of the House final; and, where no discussion is possible, decisions should not be taken except by majority on the floor of the House.

Notwithstanding the principles outlined above, Erskine May also provides that the Speaker is at liberty to vote like any other member according to their conscience, without assigning a reason. As noted in the companion to the Standing Orders, second edition, page 181, given the proportional representation of parties and the relatively small membership of the House, and therefore the greater likelihood of the Speaker being in a position of casting a vote, consideration of the pure application of the Westminster tradition has, in practice in this place, been heavily weighted by the political practicalities in the consideration of the direction of the casting vote.

For this reason, the political culture of the House and its practices differ significantly from most other jurisdictions, and particularly the Commons, where the occasions on which a Speaker is required to give a casting vote are rare. The House of Assembly of the 41st Parliament, from 1989 to 1992, provided an equality of votes on the floor. During that parliament, the Speaker, a member of the Labor Party, cast his vote with that party on every occasion, including a want of confidence vote which brought about a change of government.

Similarly, in the 50th Parliament, from 2021 to 2023, the Speaker, a member of the Liberal Party, cast his vote with that party on every occasion, including on votes to protect the government and individual members from censure and from want of confidence motions.

I have voted with my party since assuming the Chair in 2024. I am a member of the Labor Party. When I was elected to this position, it was made clear to this House and the public that, despite no longer attending the caucus and strategy meetings at the Labor Party, I would always vote with them. No one in this Chamber could realistically expect me to provide confidence to a Liberal government. No one would expect me to turn my back on the rules of a party that I have believed in my entire life and been a member of for longer than some members of this Chamber have actually been alive. Unlike some members of this Chamber, I have always believed in the values of my party, the party of which I am a member. My membership of the Labor Party is not purely expedient or opportunistic, it is governed by lifelong-held values. That will not change.

As I provide my casting vote today, I do so in the knowledge that regardless of the outcome of today's vote, the stability of this parliament is fundamentally under question. If I was not in the Chair and the government had held this position, the vote would have been won on the floor.

Notwithstanding the considerations of the Premier and Lieutenant-Governor in this process, the die is cast and the state is on the inexorable path to another early election. The Budget before this House faces almost insurmountable challenges in both its form and its timing. As a result, I have sought advice on the issue of supply in the event this Budget is not passed. I have been advised that in the absence of the approval of the appropriation bills currently before this House, alternate arrangements need to be established to fund government services beyond 1 July 2025. I am sure no one in this House would like to see a situation where payments are not made to government employees or there is a failure to fund service delivery or the organisations that provide them.

While there are automatic supply provisions in the *Financial Management Act 2016*, they are limited to approximately two months of service delivery. Given the current uncertainty, it is considered that two months' supply will not be sufficient. As such, it is imperative that parliament resumes so it can consider and approve appropriate supply bills to fund government services before 1 July 2025. These bills would not countenance unforeseen circumstances on matters not encompassed already in the 2024-25 Budget; they act only as a continuation of the status quo. They will also have limitations on the flow of funds under contractual obligations. Passing of a supply bill, however, must be a priority.

I am also very mindful that the future of the AFL teams will be tested by the decisions and actions of the next few weeks. I support the team. I took one of the first business cases to the AFL as minister. To say the pathway to the team has been poorly handled is an

understatement, but members of this House should not underestimate the passion that Tasmanians have for their team.

I am further aware of the impact to the people of Tasmania at potentially being thrust back into an election cycle so quickly. For some, it may very well be the third election in a matter of months.

Members, the events and contributions on this debate and the matters leading up to it have also caused me to reflect on my own tenure and the challenge of being an opposition Speaker. I have been a member of parliament since 1998 with the federal and state parliaments. I have served in this House for almost 20 years. I have been witness to many situations which highlight the need for a functioning democratic process in this place. For our society to work, our parliament has to be able to function.

The obligation to remain true to lifelong values, to honour the trust placed in me by the people who voted for me as a Labor member, to give my loyalty to my party whilst also ensuring that the independence of the role of the Speaker in the House is maintained and the powers conferred upon me whilst in the role are fairly dispensed, comes with an inherent conflict. I have tried to do this and to do it well. I have taken the respectful conduct and efficient operation of this place as my greatest obligation as Speaker. I hope the next Speaker continues to do so.

However, votes like the one before us now have highlighted the moral and practical challenges presented by the conflict between the intent of the Standing Orders, the independence of the Speaker's role, and the political practicalities of parliament. I have reflected not only on my appointment as Speaker, but my continuing future in this House, and I will have more to say about that in the coming days.

I apologise for this rather lengthy contribution and hope that members understand that an explanation of my thinking was necessary. I remind members again of their obligation and imperative to ensure that the state's financial obligations are met, given the circumstances we now find ourselves in, and that we need to meet again to pass either a budget or a supply budget with some urgency.

With the vote before us today, under the provisions of Standing Order 167 and with reference to the commitment given when I was elected to the Chair, I cast my vote with the ayes. The ayes have it.

**Motion agreed to.**

[3.42 p.m.]

**Mr ROCKLIFF** (Braddon - Premier) - Thank you, honourable Speaker. I acknowledge and respect the vote of the House today as I have respected every single vote that has taken place in this House in my 23 years. I thank you, Speaker, for your very eloquent reasoning and our friendship that goes back to the early 1990s, in actual fact.

**The SPEAKER** - You might not want to point out what pub that was in, Premier.

**Mr ROCKLIFF** - A well-known establishment in Launceston we used to frequent. You were Labor and I was Liberal and I always respected your Labor values and that of your family,

which will always be Labor values, and you respected mine. We have been foes in this place, but always friends outside of it.

In my personal opinion, this is a very sad day for Tasmania. I want to thank the honourable members for their contributions and within those contributions, even those that have voted for this motion, I thank you for at least acknowledging some of my contributions in this place.

It is a sad day as well because I put a lot on the line for this parliament. It was not easy to get the 35-seat parliament through my team, but I knew it was the right thing to do. I still believe it was the right thing to do, because what we have in this parliament, as I have said over the last 14 months, is an eclectic mix of people from all backgrounds, which is how a parliament should be in actual fact. I wanted it to work. I believed in it, and I still do. I still do because of the results that we have had over the last 14 months where everyone in the parliament has got something through that they feel passionate about and believed in.

This has not been a 100 per cent Liberal minority government success. We have got most of our agenda through simply because of our negotiations between each other. That is why I am so disappointed, if not broken hearted, frankly, because the Tasmanian people elected us in March 2024 to work together. Yes, not everything has gone to plan. Name me a parliament in the state of Australia where everything goes to plan.

It has been difficult. The economy has been difficult. Name me a parliament or a government, of all colours across the nation, that is not coming out of one of the toughest times of the last century, where we have had to reach in and support Tasmanians, and it has cost us emotionally and it has cost us financially. But we had to do it, and we are paying for that now - I accept. But there is not a budget in the country, maybe with the exception of Western Australia, which is not under challenge as this one is. No one has denied that.

What I find most disappointing is the personalisation of the vote, if you like. I will be damned if the Labor Party is going to choose the leader of the Liberal Party that I love. The recklessness of the Leader of the Opposition. At the end of the day, this was just a grievance debate which we could have had on any other day. The Budget we are debating. It is not through yet. The *Spirits*: yes, a failure, for which I have apologised and under the Westminster system, a minister was held accountable for. Privatisation. We have not promised to sell a single government business. What we have done is do the work to see if a government business is best in public hands or, indeed, can deliver better service in private hands. We have not made a decision to sell a single business. If we had, you all would get a vote, which is what democracy is all about.

Honourable Speaker, there are not too many speeches like that where you mention an AFL team, I must say. The large majority of this discussion, particularly from the Greens side of the parliament, talked about the stadium and the AFL and AFLW team. I have been advised by all the hard heads in my party not to go down that track. Why? Because it is bad for votes. Well, I have always said 'Stuff votes.' I said it when I moved to the 35-seat House of parliament. I will say it for the stadium for as long as I damn-well live, because I believe in it. I have a right to believe in it. Just like those opposite have a right not to. They have a right to believe in no native forest harvesting or whatever the Greens passionately believe in. At the very least, we know what you stand for, and I respect that.



I believe in this team so passionately because it is working now. Young kids right now believe and are aspiring. It has created an energy. To see Kath McCann breakdown the other day in that media interview, I broke down with her when I saw it. It said that this was more than a team. This is about the future of our state and the crossroads of our state.

If I cannot or we cannot work together, when we have been fighting for so long, when we have been pushed out the door disrespectfully, if we cannot invest in a team, in the infrastructure required, in an industrial wasteland next to a sewage works, then what the hell are we doing? That is why I believe so passionately, which ultimately, I believe, is probably why I stand here right now. I will always believe in it. You know, because you have said so, even the people who have voted against me today, know where I stand, particularly when it comes to supporting and giving hope to people of disadvantage in our community.

It is not just about that and the recklessness that we have seen this week, in the middle of a budget week, where the Budget contains investment for Marinus, which unlocks our future energy generating capacity, where we can secure our own future of energy, encourage businesses to Tasmania, but also invest in wind and solar and all of the things that Tasmania is known for. That is why I am so disappointed. The Leader of the Opposition has not only diminished this parliament, himself, and his party - and you might get rid of me, mate, but I tell you what: they are coming for you as well, because you will always be known as a wrecker.

It is a sad day. I mean what I say. I will advise the Governor of the vote in the House and the context of it. I will also advise that if Mr Winter cannot command a majority in this place, most reluctantly, we would need to go to an election.

I saw the honourable member's statement today where he would not do a deal with the Greens. Well, what is this all this about? You refused to do a deal and take the Treasury benches when you probably could have in March 2024. We had the courage, with just 14 members of the 35 seats of the House of Assembly, to give it a crack - and a crack we have given. The very best, I believe. We have tried.

I will continue to act in the best interest of Tasmania and because of Mr Winter's recklessness, our team will be back in here in the coming days to provide our nurses, teachers, paramedics, child protection officers and policemen and women with the certainty that the Leader of the Opposition has robbed of them with his selfish actions this week. We will pay and have a mechanism to pay our hardworking public servants.

Make no mistake, this will be an election that Tasmanians do not want, and Tasmania cannot afford, but be that on Mr Winter's and the Labor Party's heads. This has been a selfish grab for power which we will fight and we will do our darndest to win.

I acknowledge the members of the crossbench with whom we have worked collaboratively together over the past 14 months. We have delivered some real outcomes for the benefit of Tasmania - all members of the crossbench. I particularly thank the people who have supported me today: Mrs Pentland and Mrs Beswick, thank you. It is not easy making these calls on these momentous occasions, which this is. Thank you for being responsible and thank you for representing your electorates in the best interest of Tasmania. Stability is what we promised and is what you promised. You promised me and you promised the Tasmanian people, and I respect it.

Mr O'Byrne, thank you. You are a statesman. You will never resile from your Labor values and I respect that. You have worked with a Liberal premier and delivered some real outcomes for your constituency and the people that have always respected and voted for you. Thank you very much for that and also your passion for aspiration in our state.

I thank our team for your loyalty, it has not been easy by any stretch of the imagination, and you have stuck by me through thick and thin and I really appreciate it, and that has not been easy. Thank you, I really appreciate that, and your loyalty and your respect. I respect you because we have had some challenges to work through, and some of you I have walked alongside for almost two decades.

I am passionate about this state. We have invested to build a better Tasmania. We have invested to keep our kids safe. We have invested in our schools and our hospitals, and most importantly, for the people that work within them. For jobs - we have done our darndest, in collaboration with the federal government of all colours to keep our economy strong, and I am not going to let the Leader of the Opposition, Mr Winter, destroy all that for what is an ultimate power grab. I would have preferred a battle of ideas, strong, robust discussion, alternative ideas and if I can call it in the nicest possible way, a bear pit brawl on policy and ideas for the future of Tasmania over the next few years. Mate, you might have worn me down. The polls might have gone down south when it comes to preferred leader, but it would have been a fair fight. This is not a fair fight, this is a cowardice action.

The only job you are interested in, of course, is not the jobs of Tasmanians, but it is getting mine. I am not going to let the Labor Party choose the Leader of the Liberal Party and I am going to fight this all the way.

**Members** - Hear, hear.

**The SPEAKER** - Members, in accordance with practise, the House having agreed to a want of confidence motion in the Premier, I will now leave the Chair, and the sitting of this House is suspended until the ringing of the Division Bells.

**Sitting suspended from 4.00 p.m. until the ringing of the bells.**

**Tuesday 10 June 2025**

**STATEMENT BY SPEAKER**

**Parliamentary Proceedings - 10 June 2025**

**The SPEAKER** - For those watching, I will advise everyone of a couple of quick things. We are, in fact, still on Thursday, so the blue is progressing from Thursday. If it has felt like a very long weekend, that would explain why.

The second issue is that there was a lot of commentary about the quality of the broadcast last week. I give my absolute respect to the staff who worked very hard. The IT infrastructure in this building is shocking. I worked hard to get some digital transformation money, which was actually in the Budget we are now not passing. Please, when you go to pass whatever budget you do in the future, a little bit of reference to the people who copped a caning in the media for the poor infrastructure for that broadcast. They worked very hard to do what they could, and we should all be thankful to them.

**MOTION**

**Leave to Move Motion Without Notice**

[10.01 a.m.]

**Mr ABETZ** (Franklin - Leader of the House) - Honourable Speaker, I seek leave to move a motion without notice for the suspension of Standing Orders to enable the order of business for the remainder of this day's sitting.

**The SPEAKER** - I am going to talk people through each step because it is an unusual day. This is now a 35-minute debate on the seeking of leave or, if I am comfortable that the decision of the House is clear, we can call it straight away. Does anyone wish to speak to the seeking of leave?

**Leave granted.**

**SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS**

**Introduction of Bills and Government Business**

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

That so much of Standing Orders be suspended as would prevent the order of business for this day sitting from being as follows:

- (a) Introduction of bills.
- (b) Government business.

**The SPEAKER** - This is another 35-minute debate. Does anyone wish to make a contribution?

**Motion agreed to.**

## **MESSAGES FROM THE GOVERNOR**

### **Supply Bill (No. 1) 2025 (No. 32)**

**The SPEAKER** - I am in receipt of messages from Her Excellency the Governor, who is home:

In accordance with provisions of section 38 of the *Constitution Act 1934* (25 Geo. V No. 94), the Governor recommends to the House of Assembly the payment out of the Public Account of the sum of \$4,583,430,000 for the purposes set forth in Schedule 1 to the Supply Bill (No. 1) 2025.

### **Supply Bill (No. 2) 2025 (No. 33)**

**The SPEAKER** - I am in receipt of a further message from the Governor:

In accordance with the provisions of section 38 of the *Constitution Act 1934* (25 Geo. V No. 94), the Governor recommends to the House of Assembly the payment out of the Public Account of the sum of \$29,598,000 for the purposes set forth in Schedule 1 to the Supply Bill (No. 2) 2025.

## **SUPPLY BILL (No. 1) 2025 (No. 32)**

### **First Reading**

**Bill presented by Mr Barnett and read the first time.**

## **SUPPLY BILL (No. 2) 2025 (No. 33)**

### **First Reading**

**Bill presented by Mr Barnett and read the first time.**

## SUPPLY BILL No. 1 2025

### Second Reading

[10.04 a.m.]

**Mr BARNETT** (Lyons - Treasurer) - Honourable Speaker, as is standard practice when appropriation acts for the forthcoming budget year will not be in place at the commencement of the budget year, a supply bill is required to make interim provision for the appropriation of funding from the Public Account for the continuation of normal government services until the budget appropriation bills are enacted. Supply bills are a contingency measure consistent with longstanding constitutional and fiscal conventions. The supply bills support the continued delivery of existing services on a same-policy basis as the 2024-25 appropriation acts, 2024-25 Budget, and supplementary appropriations. As such, no new initiatives, capital projects or equity contributions - 2025-26 policy decisions - are provided for by the supply bill.

The draft 2025 supply bills seek parliament's approval for interim appropriations to ensure the continued operation of government services from 1 July 2025 until the enactment of the annual appropriation bills. Treasury estimates that an appropriation totalling \$4613 million is required to enable the continuation of the normal services of government, including services in respect of parliamentary and statutory offices, for a period of up to six months, from 1 July 2025 to 31 December 2025. This amount has been determined with reference to actual agency expenditure for the first six months of 2024-25 and the 2025-26 Budget Estimates.

In accordance with current appropriation conventions, two supply bills have been prepared. The bills reflect the allocation of agency outputs to ministerial portfolios detailed in the 2025-26 budget papers and, as such, are consistent with the 2025 appropriation bills.

Supply Bill (No. 1) 2025 makes an interim provision for the appropriation of \$4583.4 million for the services of the government. This includes \$4273.7 million for expenditure on operating services. A further \$309.7 million is provided for expenditure on capital services to allow the government's infrastructure program to continue to be delivered in the new budget year.

Supply Bill (No. 2) 2025 makes an interim provision for the appropriation of \$27.7 million for the services of the government in respect of parliamentary and statutory offices for operating services expenditure. A further \$1.9 million is provided for capital services for infrastructure expenditure.

These supply bills are administrative in nature as they provide for the continued provision of existing government services and capital expenditure pending parliament's consideration of the budget for the 2025-26 year.

Honourable Speaker, I commend the bill to the House.

[10.07 a.m.]

**Mr WILLIE** (Clark) - Honourable Speaker, I rise to speak on these supply bills. We have been here before; this is exactly what we did last year when the last parliament collapsed on the Premier and he had to call an early election. We have experience in passing supply bills in this House in recent times.

I have to say, the conduct of some of those members on that side over the weekend has been appalling. All through the parliamentary debate last week, we said that we will support supply. We will support our teachers, nurses, police and firefighters to get paid and for the services of government to continue. What did they do over the weekend? They ran off into the community and said that they were not going to get paid. I saw a post from minister Ellis. I saw a post from Mr Ferguson.

**Mr Abetz** - Very wise, looking at that.

**Mr WILLIE** - I have to tell you, I mix with public servants in my private life. I spoke to a teacher on the weekend, I spoke to a nurse -

**Members** interjecting.

**The SPEAKER** - Members on my right.

**Mr WILLIE** - and I spoke to a police officer.

**Members** interjecting.

**The SPEAKER** - Members on my right.

**Members** interjecting.

**Mr Ellis** - Did you apologise to them? You should have.

**Ms Brown** - You should.

**The SPEAKER** - Mr Ellis. And on my left.

**Mr WILLIE** - Most of them had not heard about this, but the ones that had thought that the government members were playing politics and that it was not true. That is what they said to me. That is how they are being reflected in the community over this, because there was a guarantee for supply all through the parliamentary debate, but they went into the community and misrepresented it. Shame on them.

We are in this mess, because this Premier could not maintain a majority in this parliament. He could not maintain the confidence of the crossbench. The warning signs were there, and he has failed to accept the verdict of this parliament. He has failed to accept the parliament's will. It was his job to maintain a majority. He walked into parliament on many occasions without written agreements - you need written agreements to hold other members accountable. It is not up to the opposition to supply confidence and supply. We would be a one-party state. That is not how our system works. It is this Premier who has allowed this mess to be created.

This parliament has held him accountable. He has failed to accept the will of the parliament. This parliament has held him accountable for the budget mess, for delivering a budget that was not honest in its forecast, for delivering a budget that had mistruths attached to it - a pathway to surplus that does not exist - saying that debt is manageable, when it is not. It is spiralling out of control. Debt repayments in the forward Estimates are so large that we will be spending more on interest repayments than we will be on emergency services and

ambulance services across Tasmania. It is out of control. The projections for debt repayments are huge: \$650 million in the last year of the forward Estimates and it is only set to increase from there. It is out of control. They are not being honest with Tasmanians. They need a cash surplus to stabilise the debt, and they do not have one.

We had the Premier come into this place earlier this year and say that he needed to pay down debt and that there was a fire sale of Tasmania's public assets: assets that Tasmanians have built up for hundreds of years, in some cases. A fire sale. He said everything was for sale except for ydro.

**Members** interjecting.

**The SPEAKER** - Order.

**Mr WILLIE** - Everything was for sale except for Hydro. He could not manage the budget and he needed to pay down debt. That is what he said.

**Members** interjecting.

**The SPEAKER** - The House will come to order. I remind the member who is speaking about Standing Order 142 and everyone else's obligation to not interject. I appreciate how difficult today is.

**Mr WILLIE** - It was a proposal that did not go to the Tasmanian people, because that side knows that Tasmanians do not support privatisation. Tasmanians know that privatisation ends in higher user costs and poorer services. Tasmanians will not believe that this Premier has had a change of heart in recent days because he did not take the privatisation agenda to the last election. He can say whatever he likes; it is in their DNA. He said he believes in it in this place not long ago.

**Members** interjecting.

**The SPEAKER** - I will remind members of Standing Order 142; we are debating a supply bill. I will draw the member to the bill in front of him.

**Mr WILLIE** - All it does is hurt future generations. It will limit future generations' capacity to fund schools and hospitals through the loss of dividends and company tax offset payments. There is \$620 million in the forward Estimates that helps fund schools, and this Premier wants to sell our future. We are not going to let him do it.

**Members** interjecting.

**Mr Abetz** - False.

**Mr Behrakis**- You would sell Tasmania's future for a chance of government, would you not?

**Mr WILLIE** - Of course, the biggest embarrassment in this state's recent history is -

**Mr Abetz** - Dean Winter.

**Members** interjecting.

**Mr WILLIE** - the ferry fiasco. This state has a proud history of shipping, we are the only state that is completely surrounded by water, but we have a government that is not very good at procuring ships or building the necessary infrastructure for our survival and economy for the Tasmanian people. We have spent a billion dollars on two new ships, and where are they? They are on the other side of the world. It is an international embarrassment. How do you spend a billion dollars on two new ships and forget to build the port after so many years of this being in the making? We know that Tasmanians cannot wait for these ships to be in service. It is going to give our economy a huge boost, but this government has completely stuffed it up and they can no longer be trusted.

**Members** interjecting.

Tasmania needs change.

**Mr Abetz** - Yes, in the Leader of the Opposition.

**Mr Willie** - We cannot continue on the trajectory this government is taking us on: record debts, record deficits, poorer services, and some of the worst outcomes in health and education. Too many Tasmanians -

**Mr Behrakis** - Well, we will go back to 8 per cent unemployment.

**Members** interjecting.

**The SPEAKER** - Members on my right. I appreciate we are digressing from the supply bill. I will draw the member to the bill before the House, but I will also ask for interjections to cease. I do not think anybody wishes to be removed on this day.

**Mr WILLIE** - There are too many Tasmanians who cannot put a roof over their head. We need a government that is serious about making the decisions that Tasmanians need. We need a government that will fix the budget and be honest about it. We need a government that will not sell Tasmania's future. We need a government that will bring the *Spirits* home and bring them back to where they need to be so that Tasmanians can look forward to a future under a different government - a Dean Winter-led Labor government.

**Members** interjecting.

**Mr WILLIE** - It is exactly what Tasmania needs right now because their parliament has lost confidence -

**The SPEAKER** - The House will come to order. Thank you. To the bill before us, Mr Willie.

**Members** interjecting.

**A member** - What is your next gag?

**Mr WILLIE** - A bunch of lemmings over there: look at you.



**Members** interjecting.

**The SPEAKER** - Mr Willie, I have called the other side to order. It is appropriate for you to insult them in that process. The bill before us is a supply bill. We will address that in this contribution now.

**Members** interjecting.

**The SPEAKER** - Members on my right.

**Mr WILLIE** - They are pretty chirpy over there, honourable Speaker. We all know that some of them were doing the numbers to try and overthrow the Premier, but they have not been able to do it.

**Mr Winter** - Who was that? Eric. Who has been counting?

**Mr Ellis** - You are trying to overthrow the opposition leader.

**Members** interjecting.

**The SPEAKER** - Leader of the Opposition.

**Mr WILLIE** - We have the fast Premier losing support from senior Liberal figures. We know that the business community is now speaking out against the Premier and -

**Mr Ellis** - I think you were better when you were reading.

**Ms Howlett** - Yes, keep reading.

**The SPEAKER** - Members on my right will cease interjecting. Standing Order 142 requires you to be relevant to the bill before the House.

**Mr WILLIE** - We support these interim provisions -

**Members** interjecting.

**The SPEAKER** - Members on my right.

**Mr WILLIE** - We always did. For these government members to go into the community and misrepresent that just reflects poorly on them. We are ready for change because we cannot continue under this Premier and this government. We are ready for an election. If it is called, bring it on.

**Members** interjecting.

**Ms Brown** - Woo-hoo.

**The SPEAKER** - Sorry, what was that?

**Ms Brown** - Sorry, honourable Speaker.

**The SPEAKER** - I remind people that we are in a House of Parliament for the State of Tasmania. Can we actually act like that on potentially the last day? A little bit of decorum might mean that the public will view us in a better way than they have over the weekend.

[10.16 a.m.]

**Mr BAYLEY** (Clark) - Honourable Speaker, I rise to give the Greens' contribution to this Supply Bill (No. 1). I want to say up front that we Greens recognise the gravity and significance of today and take it incredibly seriously. We will say up front that we will, of course, support these supply bills. We understand the contingency nature of them and we understand the significance of them in terms of keeping the services of government running, and keeping community service organisations running, which is a point I want to make really clearly.

Before I go to the bill specifically, I acknowledge and thank the parliamentary staff for having us all back here today, because this is not an unprecedented but certainly an unusual situation. I acknowledge parliamentary staff.

I also acknowledge the Treasury staff who did a power of work to get us to last Thursday with the Budget that is obviously now on ice, and they have done additional work to pull together this supplementary budget or supply bill, and the briefing we had this morning. I appreciate the briefing we had and understand the mechanics of this budget. We understand that things like operational expenditure have been calculated by percentage and applied to the services of government going forward, and we understand similar approaches happened when it comes to capital funding. This highlights the work that the Treasury staff has done and the importance of the public service, full stop. This is an urgent supply bill and they have delivered it in time for today's session. I am not sure whether Treasury staff are frontline or backline staff, but it does reinforce the absolute significance of our public service and the need to keep them operating.

We also acknowledge that there are no new initiatives funded in this supply bill. There will be disappointed people not only disappointed when it comes to some of the applications in this bill, but we do acknowledge that existing commitments remain funded going forwards. No new initiatives are to be funded until a new budget is developed and ultimately passed.

One question - and an invitation - for the Treasurer is to understand how the efficiency dividends - Treasurer, if you are listening - are treated in this bill. We did not get to ask that question this morning in the briefing, but I assume they carry on forward because they were in the 2024-25 budget. It would be really useful if the Treasurer could understand how government departments in this interim period are planning on addressing some of the instructions and the directions that have been sent to them from ministers in terms of efficiency dividends.

The previous budget was a shock. It was a shock to we Greens and it was a shock to many people in the community. Over \$10 billion by 2028, \$562 million more than previous forecasts. We know the Revised Estimate Report updated the last budget, and so we Greens did not necessarily have confidence in the figures of the Budget that the Treasurer put forward last Thursday. The figures in it were alarming enough, and if the trends are correct and previous updates to budgets are correct, we could have expected a revised set of figures further down the line and the situation to get worse.

We find ourselves in this situation because the Premier and the government have failed to listen. There have been plenty of opportunities over the last few months of parliament, going back to March, for the government to listen to not only the opinions of the crossbench but listen to the opinions of the community, and it has chosen not to listen. It has chosen not to listen and to bulldoze on. Many things contribute to that, but the end result is the Premier losing the confidence of the House last Thursday, which is a situation that does not happen very often and it has to be said that the government's response to it is somewhat unprecedented as well.

We Greens are always going to stand for making sure that public services are properly funded, that people are supported in health, housing and education and that we adequately fund environmental protection so that we can rise to the challenges that are facing us, whether it is in our marine environment, whether it is on land, whether it is with threatened species, fire and climate change. These are the kind of things that we are always going to want to see in a budget. To do that, it is clear we need to take some advice from the experts. We need to make sure that big corporations pay their fair share. We need to make sure we set infrastructure budgets that are affordable and then prioritise the projects that sit under them, that we do not pick winners and then build a budget around those winners. We need to make sure that debt is manageable and we need to make sure that Tasmanian people are looked after. All eyes are on this parliament today and what happens after it. We Greens will support this supply bill. We absolutely accept the contingency nature of it. We absolutely accept that this is a least-best situation but it is what has to be done to keep government running. It is what has to be done to keep the services that so many Tasmanians rely on being delivered. On that basis, we will certainly support these supply bills.

[10.22 a.m.]

**Mr BARNETT** (Lyons - Treasurer) - Honourable Speaker, first of all, I thank the Treasury officials for their work.

**Members** - Hear, hear.

**Mr BARNETT** - I thank those who have recognised that; it has been a huge effort, and I pay tremendous compliment for their support and service, particularly Eleanor Patterson and Courtney Brown here today, Gary Swain, and so many others in Treasury, for the hard work to support our parliament get through this emergency provision. This is all about supporting our public service: our nurses, teachers, police, those on the front line and on the back line providing that public service. That is what this is about today.

I will not engage in the political shenanigans of the shadow treasurer just now. We have seen the wrecking approach of the last few days -

**Members** interjecting.

**The SPEAKER** - Members on my left.

**Mr BARNETT** - I will not continue to engage - there will be plenty of time for that.

In summing up, I just indicate we have second bill that I will speak to very shortly. I will have more to say about these very important bills, and I commend them to the House.

**Bill read the second time.**

## **SUPPLY BILL (No. 1) 2025 (No. 33)**

### **Third Reading**

**Bill read the third time.**

## **SUPPLY BILL (No. 2) 2025 (No. 33)**

### **Second Reading**

[10.25 a.m.]

**Mr BARNETT** (Lyons - Treasurer) - Honourable Speaker, I move -

That the bill be now read a second time.

In accordance with current appropriation convention, two supply bills have been prepared: one to provide funding for the services of the government, and the other to provide funding for the services of the government in respect of parliamentary and statutory offices.

I recently outlined the need for the supply bills to be introduced to parliament this financial year in my second reading speech on Supply Bill (No. 1) 2025. The information provided in that speech applies equally to this bill.

Supply Bill (No. 2) 2025 seeks parliament's approval to provide for the appropriation of \$29.6 million out of the Public Account for expenditure on operating services in 2025-26 until the budget appropriation bills are enacted.

I commend the bill to the house.

**Mr WILLIE** (Clark) - Honourable Speaker, we also support the secondary supply bill. As I said, the parliament has experience doing this in recent times. We had to do it last year, when this Premier could not manage the last parliament. He has not been able to manage this parliament, yet he thinks he can go to an election and come back into this place and manage the next one. I think many Tasmanians would question that.

**Mr BAYLEY** (Clark) - Honourable Speaker, speaking to Supply Bill (No. 2), Treasurer, I know my question related to Supply Bill (No. 1), but perhaps you could take the opportunity in your summing up of this bill just to tell us how efficiency dividends are to be treated in these supply bills?

I have nothing more to say than I said in my contribution to the first supply bill. I will save my electioneering for the election campaign, should we get to that space. I acknowledge the work that has gone into this bill, and the importance of its contents and keeping people paid and services functioning.

**Mr BARNETT** (Lyons - Treasurer) - Honourable Speaker, I am pleased to sum up and highlight the importance of both of these bills.

I thank the member for Clark for the Greens for his question. In terms of the efficiency dividends: just to make it very clear, they are not incorporated in the supply bills. They are built into the 2023-24 budget efficiency dividend at \$50 million for the 2024-25 year and has been allocated accordingly. The supply bills reflect the base agency allocation from 2024-25. The \$100 million budget efficiency dividend for 2025-26 has been built. It was already approved as part of the 2024-25 Budget and was already allocated to agencies. That is a quick summary there.

As I say, we will not put up with the relentless negativity and the wrecking behaviour of state Labor. This is all about delivering for our police, nurses, doctors, teachers and public servants who are hard-working and doing the job and we thank them immensely for that. As soon as the shadow treasurer and state Labor can deliver an alternative budget and share with the rest of Tasmania their views and what their approach would be, that would be excellent.

**Members** interjecting.

**Mr BARNETT** - I commend both bills to the House.

**Bill read the second time.**

### **SUPPLY BILL (No. 2) 2025 (No. 33)**

#### **Third Reading**

**Bill read the third time.**

### **STATEMENT BY SPEAKER**

#### **Valedictory**

**The SPEAKER** - There being no further orders of the day, I wish to make a statement and seek the indulgence of the House to do so, as it may be my last opportunity. I wish to advise that, after 28 years of being a candidate for the Labor Party, six years as a federal member, and 19 years as a state member, that I will not be seeking preselection for the next election, whether it be in weeks or months to come. I do hope the House will now grant me some latitude to say a few words given the length of my service. It is rare for a politician to get to do two first speeches, let alone to then add on a third one as a valedictory, but I will not take too long. Recent valedictories do take a while: that makes them a little bit humorous normally, but you all have other places you wish to be and other matters to contemplate today.

I am a product of Labor's affirmative action reforms, a recognition of the significant cultural change which was required to ensure that the barriers to women being preselected were broken down. In 1996, Tasmania was the first jurisdiction to adopt the 50 per cent rule and therefore the first state to achieve 50 per cent representation of women in 2016. Aggressive reform in rules has resulted in a change of culture, which means that the talented women who are often ignored or passed over can now have a genuine expectation that their paths will not be blocked. It disproved the myth that people will not vote for women. Nationally, the rule

change to 50 per cent took another 10 years, and therefore, in federal parliament, another 10 years later, has finally proven that the policy works with 50 per cent plus representation.

As a member of the excellent organisation that is EMILY's List, I campaigned for that reform and, as an EMILY's List candidate, I received the amazing mentorship of Joan Kirner, and I could not have asked for a better mentor. That first election saw the election of, at that time, the first tranche of young women into the federal parliament in large numbers, including Kirsten Livermore, Anna Burke, Nicola Roxon, Tanya Plibersek and Julia Gillard, women who have remained my dear friends and valued counsellors ever since. I have been an EMILY's List mentor ever since and I am proud of the women I have supported into parliament.

I won my second election and was elevated to being a parliamentary secretary for communications. My third election saw the arrival of Mark Latham as leader. I will not dwell on the impact of that other than to say that it led me to my time in this place. I was often asked the difference between state and federal parliaments and my greatest reflection is the immediacy of state decisions. Federal parliament can take months, maybe a year or so, to get the enactment of a policy shift. In Tasmanian politics, you can have change within days. People should reflect on that. Our capacity to effect change in people's lives in Tasmania is enormous and too often we squander it.

I became a minister very quickly - a huge learning curve - but I was surrounded by amazing people in my office. My advice to any other minister is always employ people who are smarter than yourself and be prepared to not only hear their advice but, on occasion, act on it.

The work I am most proud of in my ministerial days is my work with mental health reform - nation-leading reform which gave greater agency to those with lived experience of mental health challenges - same-sex adoption reforms, the decriminalisation of abortion and the introduction of Australia's first safe access zones; only the second place in the world to have them, and now rolled out in every state and territory in our country.

If I reflect on my greatest disappointment it is actually in myself. When I inherited the health portfolio, it was significantly over budget - if only the opposition had known by how much. We worked collaboratively with the unions to get savings without impacting on services. We were asked, with the Global Financial Crisis, to find more savings. We did that, working with unions and staff on the ideas and initiatives that they had. When it came to the last few million to be found - you do, as a minister, find yourself often captured by the budget imperative.

When my request to not be made to slow down elective surgery was denied by the treasurer of the day, I had a choice. I should have walked. I did not. The lesson that I learned from that is to never forget that, at the end of the day, as a minister, the buck stops with you, but also, you have choices and your choices have real implications on people's lives. I have spent way too many years in opposition since then, unable to give effect to the great lesson that I learned.

However, I have been given the opportunity to be Speaker of this House, and I am thankful to all of you for granting me that opportunity. I have absolutely loved it, despite the last few days and how challenging they have been.

I am proud that I have been able to successfully lobby for the additional resources that were needed and not originally granted, but were needed to support a 35-member House. I have loved working with the parliamentary staff here; they are an amazing team. You have no idea how much work they do to make your lives work.

**Members** - Hear, hear.

**The SPEAKER** - The previous term of this parliament leading up to 2024 was the most dysfunctional and toxic parliament I have ever been a member of. I have been committed in this term to ensure the standard of behaviour is more respectful. I believe the larger make up of parliament assisted in that, but it was also helped by your willingness to be better and model better behaviour. The parliament has to be the model of best behaviour and not the worst. I think we have lifted in this term, and I am proud to have worked with all of you on that.

I have made many friends in parliament, even across the parliamentary divide, and I thank those who supported me for your friendship and for some really good, fierce and sometimes very heated debates over the years. I have been supported by amazing staff over 28 years. I do not have time to mention them all because, as I said, you all have other things to do but I have to mention a couple, particularly Glenn and Anne, who were with me in both state and federal times, Rex and Shane, who spent more time with me as a member of parliament than most people would have, and my current staff and volunteers, Adam, Melissa, Lena, Brahmanid, Rhi, and Janine and Michelle, who have been so supportive when I made this decision.

I could not have served in parliament without the unconditional love and support of my parents, my working-class parents who believed in our education and potential. They were my role models and my rocks and I miss them dearly. Sorry, this will happen a couple of times and I apologise in advance. Do not look at David. It is not lost on me that the great-great granddaughter of a convict - four brothers in Ireland who stole a sheep - ended up as not only a minister of the Crown but the Speaker of the Parliament of Tasmania. That says something about our democracy.

I thank my husband who knows every poster site by memory now and really will not know what to do with himself every election from here on. He is going to be quite bored. Our working lives have both of us working away, which has placed a lot of pressure on us, and it has not always been the easiest of roads to travel. The fact that we are still friends is a tribute more to his good nature rather than my capacity for tolerance.

My brothers, who have remained as they ever were, and I quote from my very first speech many years ago, 'not bound by the conventions of diplomacy', are my harshest critics and my dearest of friends.

My friends, both political and social: Liz - who is about to have way much more time with me as we do some travelling - Susan, Ruth, Warren, Ben, Deb, Paul, Dina, the amazing Hurd family who have taken care of me in my time in Hobart; Matt, Luke, and my walking buddy and my other Ange, who has sent me a new version of the Lord's Prayer every week to read as Speaker and remains disappointed in my adherence to the one in the Standing Orders and on the day after the FightMND Big Freeze Day, my dear friend Katherine who I truly miss.

My amazing daughters, Eleanor, Sophia and Stace: fierce, smart and decent. I do not deserve the love and care you give, and I am in awe of the wonderful humans you are.

Nic, you do alright too.

I mentioned friends and family for a reason. Throughout my time, and particularly over the last bit of time, these weekends, I am reminded that whilst politicians are fair game, our families are not and yet they absorb the criticism that we receive and it hurts them. The events of 2021 and the actions of my party after that were also deeply hurtful. My health declined and the impact on my mother was devastating to watch. I reflect on that because there is an accepted myth in our society that politicians have thick skin. We do not. Our skin is no thicker than anyone else's, and the increasing viciousness in the social media world takes its toll, takes its toll on us, and it takes its toll on those who love us.

If we want to encourage people to stand for public office - and you have all been doing that over the last few days - and if want to ask them to take on the role of decision-making, we have to learn to disagree in a more respectful way. Saying someone has thick skin is not a licence for abuse. It has to stop. As leaders, we need to model that respect, to debate ideas, to disagree on pathways, but to do so with respect for the differing values that drive us.

Today, it ends for me quite strangely. I do not leave this House dis-endorsed or defeated, but because it is the right time for me to go. I believe passionately in the need for government and parliament to work. I take this opportunity to remind you all that it is not enough to say that you want minority government, or indeed majority government, to work. You must be mature enough to make it work. If minority government is the way of the future, then it requires us all to behave differently. Traditional Westminster behaviours in this House of inherent conflict are clearly no longer sustainable. If a majority government is formed, then the obligation for greater consensus still remains. The parliament must be able to function to meet the needs of Tasmanians, whatever parliament they choose to elect. We have to find consensus where we can. We have to have the maturity to not do things just because we can. The events the last week have proven that.

I wish you all well. I am not going to fade utterly into the background. I will still be driven by the things I believe in, and I will continue to campaign for the things that I am passionate about. As the best woman I have ever known said, 'I dare.' Whilst I will try to refrain from that absolutely dreadful habit of former MPs of offering unsolicited advice in some desperate attempt for relevance, I will use my voice as a citizen to continue to advocate for change.

I go now to spend some time with the people I love best, and I wish you the safest of times in the coming weeks and months ahead. I remind you all that we, the general voting public, expect much of you. We will be watching. Do not let us down.

**Members - Hear, hear.**

**The House suspended until the ringing of the bells.**

## **SUPPLY BILL (No. 2) 2025 (No. 33)**

**Bill returned from the Legislative Council without amendment.**



## **SUPPLY BILL (No. 1) 2025 (No. 33)**

**Bill returned from the Legislative Council with request.**

[4.21 p.m.]

**Mr BARNETT** (Lyons - Treasurer) - Honourable Speaker, I move -

That the message now be considered forthwith.

## **SUPPLY BILL (No. 1) 2025 (No. 33)**

### **In Committee**

**Mr BARNETT** - Chair, I move -

That the amendment requested by the Council be made.

**Mr WILLIE** - Chair, I just point out that this is an embarrassing oversight for a premier who has lost the confidence of this House for budget management. He has had to keep his car warm all afternoon. This does not reflect well on this government.

**Mr BAYLEY** - Chair, I just take a moment to thank the Legislative Council for their work in identifying this error. I acknowledge that human error is made. It was explained as a transfer error in the mechanical work that the Treasury staff had to do. I accept that fully, and accept the need for this amendment.

**Mr ABETZ** - Given that the Treasurer, quite properly, did not speak to this, I indicate to the House that the commentary by the Deputy Leader of the Greens was so much more statesmanlike than that which occurred from the shadow treasurer.

**Mr Winter** - Get a mirror.

**Mr Willie** - We are back in this House.

**Members** interjecting

**CHAIR** - Members on my left.

**Dr Woodruff** - The Treasury staff are under so much pressure.

**Mr ABETZ** - We all from time to time make errors, and you might like to spare a thought for those in the Treasury who accidentally made this error, noting that you passed this without picking up the problem.

You remind me a bit of Jack Falstaff, if I have my plays correct, who pretended to be dead on the field of battle and then after it was won, got up, picked up his sword, ran it through somebody to show that he had blood on his sword and that he could be part of the victory. Behaving in such a manner, Mr Willie, does you, your leader and your party no credit.

**Mr Winter** - Honestly, never heard anything like it.

**Members** interjecting.

**Legislative Council amendment agreed to.**

**Bill reported.**

**Resolution agreed to.**

**The House adjourned at 4.25 p.m.**