



PARLIAMENT OF TASMANIA

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

REPORT OF DEBATES

Wednesday 1 September 2021

REVISED EDITION

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Wednesday 1 September 2021

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

QUESTIONS

JobKeeper - Exemption from Payroll Tax

Ms WHITE question to MINISTER for SMALL BUSINESS, Ms HOWLETT

[10.01 a.m.]

Three times yesterday you told Parliament that JobKeeper payments are exempt from payroll tax. You said, and I quote: 'JobKeeper payments are exempt from payroll tax.'

You also said: 'JobKeeper payments are exempt from payroll tax. There is no payroll tax at all on JobKeeper.' And, further, that this was 'to ensure that businesses receive the full benefit of JobKeeper'.

Do you stand by these statements, or did you mislead the Parliament?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I thank the Leader of the Opposition for her question. A key focus of the Tasmanian Liberal Government, as we emerge from the COVID-19 pandemic, has been getting Tasmanians back to work and growing our economy. As I indicated yesterday, businesses do not pay payroll tax on the proportion of their wages that are attributable to JobKeeper payments.

JobKeeper - Exemption from Payroll Tax

Ms WHITE question to MINISTER for SMALL BUSINESS, Ms HOWLETT

[10.03 a.m.]

The member for Bass, Ms Finlay, was sent this letter this morning by a Tasmanian accounting firm and it says:

Several of their clients received unexpected payroll tax bills because JobKeeper was not exempt from payroll tax. Instead, the businesses' payroll tax liability was proportionally reduced, based on the percentage of JobKeeper wages over total wages, overall only providing a small payroll tax concession.

Based on the prior media coverage and initial Government headlines of 'payroll tax waiver', it was expected that the total JobKeeper wage would be excluded from this calculation, thus providing a much greater concession.

Clearly, Tasmanian businesses are being charged payroll tax on JobKeeper wages. One business we heard from is \$7000 out of pocket as a result of being misled about the tax treatment of JobKeeper payments.

Minister, what are you going to do to fix this problem?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I thank the Leader of the Opposition for her question. If the Opposition genuinely wanted to help small businesses, and they have examples of businesses who need more support, please contact my office and we will work together and find a solution.

As I indicated yesterday, businesses do not pay payroll tax on the proportion of their wages attributable to JobKeeper payments.

Griffin Management Review - Police Handling of Child Sex Abuse Claims

Ms WOODRUFF question to MINISTER for POLICE, FIRE and EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT, Ms PETRUSMA

[10.05 a.m.]

Tasmania Police conducted an internal investigation into its handling of the James Griffin matter and reported on its findings in February. The review revealed a decade-long failure by Tasmania Police to properly investigate serious allegations of child sex abuse and appalling communication between Tasmania Police, Child Safety and the Department of Justice.

At the time, Commissioner Hine offered his sincere apologies to survivors who were harmed by these manifest failures. The ABC reported today that, as a result of the internal investigation, one police officer received counselling, one was reprimanded, and a third received continuing professional development.

Clearly there has been a culture in at least parts of Tasmania Police where victims or witnesses reporting sexual abuse have not been taken seriously. Survivors of sexual abuse need to be reassured that they will be listened to and believed when they come forward. Can you give an update to the House on actions being taken to make sure this history of abuse inaction will never occur again?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I thank the member for her question. I appreciate that sexual abuse is abhorrent and should in no way happen in Tasmania.

Regarding the Griffin Management Review, I am advised that the professional standards investigation is complete and a reprimand, counselling and professional development have been delivered, in accordance with the Police Service Act 2003. I am advised that one police officer received counselling, one was reprimanded, and another received continuing professional development. I am also advised that the management review and related work will be provided to the Commission of Inquiry into Tasmanian Government Responses to Child Sexual Abuse in institutional settings.

In regards to these police officers, I am advised that it is inappropriate to provide further comment. As an organisation, Tasmania Police is committed to reflective practice and is already implementing recommendations from the Griffin Management Review. These recommendations include developing protocols for the information exchange between the Police department and Department of Justice for Working with Vulnerable Children checks; developing Tasmania Police initial investigation and notification of child sexual abuse guidelines; reviewing the memorandum of understanding between Child and Family Services and Tasmania Police; and recommended amendments to ensure appropriate responses and action are undertaken when either party receives information relating to child sexual abuse.

The Tasmania Police initial investigation, notification and child sexual abuse guidelines have already been completed and are being used by police officers. The registration for working with vulnerable people protocol and revised memorandum of understanding between Tasmania Police and Child and Family Services has been finalised and is also now in operation. In addition, Tasmania Police initiated a professional standards Code of Conduct investigation in relation to certain aspects of the management and handling of information received about James Griffin in 2015.

In regards to the outcomes of the internal review, the outcomes report showed that, whether it is under this Government, but also over different governments, including under the previous Labour-Greens government, there were clear areas for improvement by Tasmania Police and other government agencies. I am assured that where these have not already been acted upon, they are being addressed as a priority.

While the full review of the Griffin matter has been provided to the Commission of Inquiry, as it contains highly sensitive and identifying information about victims, Tasmania Police and the other agencies are not waiting until the outcomes of the Commission of Inquiry to address the issues that can be addressed now. We are committed to improving our systems and processes, to be as transparent as legally possible, and to ensure we focus on continuous improvements to keep Tasmanians safe.

This is why the Commission of Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse has commenced. It is imperative that it is not prejudiced to ensure that any current or future pursuits of justice are not compromised. This process comes in addition to the other actions already being taken by this Government to address historic and current cases of child sexual abuse, including those elements the Government has put in place that I have already talked about.

Budget 2021-22 - Reaction

Mr TUCKER question to ACTING PREMIER, Mr ROCKLIFF

[10.10 a.m.]

Can you please provide any further updates on how the 2021-22 state Budget has been received? Are you aware of any alternative approaches?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I thank Mr Tucker, our member for Lyons, for his interest in this matter. I appreciate the question. The 2021-22 state Budget is securing Tasmania's future by delivering

our plan for all Tasmanians. It is based on the success of our financial economic management over the past seven years and our success in facing the challenges of the pandemic through COVID-19. I can say that on the whole it has been pretty well received; a positive response to this year's Budget.

I will share some more of those responses with you today. The Small Business Council CEO, Robert Mallett, said:

There is a lot to like about this year's Budget. The economic forecasts are fantastic, and if accurate, small businesses have a lot to look forward to.

Commissioner for Children and Young People, Leanne McLean, said:

Overall, the Budget includes a range of concrete commitment and it was very encouraging to see children and young people's wellbeing as a central Budget theme.

Mental Health Council of Tasmania CEO, Connie Digolis said:

These ambitious initiatives are set to be a game changer for everyone's mental health and wellbeing and today's Budget is a very promising start.

General Manager of External Affairs of CPA Australia, Dr Jane Rennie said:

We are pleased to see Tasmania incorporating environmental sustainability into its economy.

On this side of the House, we have delivered a strong, responsible Budget which was broadly welcomed. Most importantly, we are using a strong balance sheet to invest and support 28 000 jobs over the course of the next four years.

Yesterday, the Opposition Leader used her Budget reply to confirm Tasmania's worst keep secret: that Labor again has failed to provide a properly costed alternative budget. We provided many opportunities yesterday and I was urging the Opposition Leader, for once in eight years, to produce an alternative budget. Unfortunately, that is not the case. In fact, 2727 long days in opposition and not once has the Opposition done the hard work and given Tasmanians any idea of what they would do differently.

My understanding is that last year the Opposition supported 97 per cent of our Budget; it appears this year it is 100 per cent of our Budget. Last week on Budget day, the shadow treasurer - I promised I would not quote him, but I just have to - was asked on radio what he would cut in the way of spending or how he would increase revenue. Dr Broad's response was, 'It is a bit early to say that'. Four or five days later it must be still a bit early to say that because yesterday we had a lifeless budget reply from the Opposition: no numbers, no initiatives, no financial management leadership and absolutely no plan what so ever. It was a 30-minute long admission that the Opposition accepts and has endorsed our Budget 100 per cent.

In an attempt to deflect from the complete surrender on an alternative budget, Ms White went on to mislead the parliament claiming things like car rego, power and water costs had 'skyrocketed under this Government'. Ms White needs to correct the record at her earliest

opportunity. When you claim that car regos have skyrocketed under us, it is not true. In 2013 the rego for a 4-cylinder car, the most common car type, renewal cost \$566.16. Now, nearly 10 years later, it costs \$564.51. That is lower, in fact. There is no skyrocketing at all.

Ms White claimed power prices had skyrocketed under us. Not true. Since the 2014 election, in real terms, prices have decreased some 18.04 per cent for residential customers and decreased by 27.18 per cent for small business customers. Ms White claimed water prices have skyrocketed. Not true. They have been frozen for the last two years. Ms White also claimed there was no mention of mining in the budget speech - not true. Our commitments to the resource sector are on page 10. Ms White bizarrely claimed there was no mention of families in the Budget. Also not true. I can clearly read on page 15 about keeping families safe and secure in Tasmania, and clearly our \$100 million Child and Youth and Wellbeing Strategy, which we recently released, focused on families.

Members interjecting.

Mr SPEAKER - Order. If you could wind up, please, Acting Premier.

Mr ROCKLIFF - Mr Speaker, there is a pattern of behaviour from Ms White where she uses dodgy words and deliberately misleads the parliament. Even the spokesperson for women, Ms O'Byrne, did similar yesterday when she quoted some critical comments about the state Budget by respected economist, Dr Eslake, from an article in *The Examiner*, except Ms O'Byrne failed to mention the comments had nothing to do with this year's Budget because they were from a year ago. It is becoming clear that you cannot rely on Labor.

Members interjecting.

Mr SPEAKER - Order.

Mr ROCKLIFF - You cannot rely on Labor at all.

Ms O'BYRNE - Point of order, Mr Speaker. I seek leave to make a personal explanation -

Members interjecting.

Mr SPEAKER - Order. There is a point of order.

Ms O'BYRNE - I seek leave to make a personal explanation at the end of question time. I have been misrepresented.

Mr SPEAKER - If you could wind up, please, Deputy Premier.

Mr ROCKLIFF - I will, Mr Speaker. I am concerned about this pattern of behaviour. Those opposite cannot come in here and say whatever they like. In fact, for example, the Opposition Leader has previously misrepresented a discussion she had had with the CEO of the Integrity Commission, Mr Michael Easton by attributing comments to him that he never made. These reports were reported and formed the basis for a journalist's story. During question time on 23 June 2021 the Premier asked Ms White to clarify her reported comments and correct the record. Subsequently, Ms White misled the parliament in her personal

explanation at the end of question time that same day. She has still not corrected the record over two months later and she must do so. A pattern of behaviour has definitely emerged from those opposite. You simply cannot trust Labor.

In stark contrast, this side of the House is getting on with delivering our strong plan to secure Tasmania's future as opposed to Labor who yesterday had no plan whatsoever and no alternative for Tasmanians.

Ms O'CONNOR - Point of order - standing order 48. I note that you asked the minister to sit down about a minute ago. That was an eight-minute answer to a Dorothy Dix question. I encourage you, warmly, to please rein in bloviating ministers.

Mr SPEAKER - I thank you for that. I do take your point. I was attempting to ask the Acting Premier to sit down. Of course, every time we raise this issue we waste another 30 seconds of question time.

Tasmanian Residential Rental Property Owners Association - Government Funding

**Dr WOODRUFF question to MINISTER for WORKPLACE SAFETY and
CONSUMER AFFAIRS, Ms ARCHER**

[10.19 a.m.]

Yesterday we asked why you are giving out a \$100 000 handout to the Tasmanian Residential Rental Property Owners Association. The incorporation documents for this association show their only current office bearer is Ms Louise Elliot, the president and public officer. No one is listed in the roles of treasurer and secretary.

Ms Elliot has been waging a political campaign through her association's Facebook page. In the last fortnight of the state election campaign, the association unleashed a torrent of posts attacking candidate for Clark, Kristie Johnston, while others promoted Clark Liberal candidate Simon Behrakis and explicitly told people to vote Liberal. The pages also attacked independent MLC Meg Webb, spread misinformation about the Greens, and recently promoted the candidacy of Ms Elliot for election to Hobart City Council. The whole thing stinks.

Tasmanians would reasonably conclude the Liberals have stitched up a deal to help them win a second seat in Clark and in return they have promised to bankroll Louise Elliot's run for Hobart City Council. Did you, or your party, make any deals with the Tasmanian Residential Rental Property Owners' Association before or during the state election campaign?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I would like to address some very serious allegations in that. I really hope that the form of the last few days is not followed by the Greens and I am given an opportunity to respond to this. What they have alleged, quite frankly, is appalling. I place on the record that, equally, the Government has been highly criticised by that association, publicly and even throughout COVID-19 in relation to the rental protections we have had for tenants. You have deliberately ignored the criticism that association has rightly done across the board in relation to all parties where they see fit to criticise.

I wanted to draw the House's attention to that fact because I believe the Government has been criticised - and it is a Liberal Government of course as you highlighted there - just as much, if not more, than other members of this House or indeed throughout the campaign. I cannot be responsible for the content of what is put on Facebook; none of us can -

Dr Woodruff - No, but you are responsible for funding them.

Mr SPEAKER - Order. You have asked the question. Please allow the minister to answer it.

Ms ARCHER - Mr Speaker, the 2021-22 Budget includes funding for a range of property and tenancy stakeholder bodies to enable them to perform important functions to support their members and the Tasmanian community. This includes the Tasmanian Residential Rental Property Owners Association and the legal assistance sector, significant funding.

The association I refer to, in short, was formed in 2020 during COVID-19 and represents the interests of the owners of self-managed rental properties. Unlike real estate agents this group tends to have less experience in managing rental properties and less knowledge of their obligations under the Residential Tenancy Act 1997. Inadvertently this can lead to problems between tenants and landlords which, if not managed appropriately, can become disputes.

This set-up funding will be used by the association to develop resources and build the knowledge and understanding of property owners with regard to their obligations under the Residential Tenancy Act 1997. This will help to assist landlords, resulting in fewer disputes between tenants and landlords. I thought the Greens would welcome that. The Residential Tenancy Commissioner has recently met with the president of that association to discuss areas of focus for this work.

It is not uncommon for the Tasmanian Government to provide money to assist organisations that charge membership fees. A similar model applies to the Youth Network of Tasmania and the National Disability Services, each of which -

Greens members interjecting.

Mr SPEAKER - Order.

Ms ARCHER - I know, certainly YNOT was given funding when Ms O'Connor was minister of that relevant portfolio.

Ms O'Connor - Absolutely, because they represent young people and she is not running for council.

Mr SPEAKER - Order. Ms O'Connor, as you know, for constantly interjecting I have no other option but to ask you to leave. I ask you now, please, to be quiet and do not interject on the minister any further in this answer.

Ms ARCHER - Mr Speaker, I am going through what the funding was provided for. Ms O'Connor and Dr Woodruff are alleging that this money has been inappropriately provided to this association. It has not. It has been provided for a specific purpose. The Residency Tenancy Commissioner has met with the president to confirm the purpose of how these funds

are to be used. It is important that we minimise the disputes between tenants and landlords, particularly as a result of COVID-19 where we have seen them having to navigate some difficult issues around the Residential Tenancy Act.

Dr Woodruff - Did you make any deals during the election campaign? That is the question.

Mr SPEAKER - Order, Dr Woodruff.

Ms ARCHER - There are some difficult issues to deal with, there have been disputes to resolve and this association came to us, quite appropriately as many associations do, and made requests for government funding to assist them in educating their members.

Dr WOODRUFF - Point of order, Mr Speaker, standing order 45 on relevance. It was about whether any deals were done.

Mr SPEAKER - As you know, it is not a point of order. You are trying to repeat the question. The minister was addressing the question and the relevance of that, and the allegation.

Ms ARCHER - I can unequivocally say that there have been no deals done. This funding has been provided as set-up funding for this association to assist members to educate them to be advocates in relation to residential tenancy matters so that tenants and landlords can resolve disputes. That is exactly why this money has been established. As I said yesterday, our Government has provided significant support to tenants and landlords, more support to tenants through the Tenants' Union through our rent relief fund. Approximately \$4.4 million has been provided by way of rent relief to reduce the amount of rental arrears during this very difficult and challenging time.

I call on the Greens to stop muckraking about this. There is absolutely nothing untoward here.

JobKeeper Payments - Exemption from Payroll Tax

Ms WHITE question to ACTING PREMIER, Mr ROCKLIFF

[10.27 a.m.]

It is becoming increasingly clear that the Minister for Small Business misled the House yesterday, and today she has come into the House with a different answer.

Many Tasmanian businesses are doing it really tough right now. The last thing they need is a massive and unexpected payroll tax bill landing in their lap. A minister who clearly does not understand her portfolio continuing to pretend that there is not a problem is adding to the insult. Yesterday, your Small Business minister repeatedly said that JobKeeper was exempt from payroll tax, but there are likely hundreds of businesses with large unexpected payroll tax bills on JobKeeper payments, who will not discover this tax slug until they do their annual returns. How are you going to fix this mess?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I thank the member for her question and her advocacy. Our Government has worked alongside business ever since we were elected in 2014. In 2014 there were many small, micro, medium and large businesses that were shedding jobs hand-over-fist. We have replaced those jobs and more that were lost between 2010 and 2014, and projected 28 000 more jobs over the next four years.

As an example of a government that continues to keep its ear to the ground, we have worked alongside businesses and the community sector over the last 20 months throughout the pandemic and responded to their concerns and advocated to the Commonwealth.

Yesterday, our announcement of our support for the extension of the grants program to micro-businesses is an example of supporting our small businesses. We will always liaise, as the Small Business minister has done, and will continue to do so, with those businesses that are impacted as a result of the pandemic. There is no bigger supporter of business than this Gutwein Liberal Government, particularly throughout the pandemic. A key focus of our Government, as we emerge from the COVID-19 pandemic, has been getting Tasmanians back to work and growing the economy. Quite clearly there are businesses, as per our announcement yesterday, that are still feeling the impacts of interstate lockdowns. Businesses, very clearly, do not pay payroll tax on the proportion of their wages which are attributable to JobKeeper payments. I want to make that very clear.

Ms WHITE - Point of order, Mr Speaker. The question was whether the Small Business minister was right. Yesterday she said that they were exempt from payroll tax. The Acting Premier has just said differently. Is she right or are you right?

Mr SPEAKER - That is not a point of order.

Mr ROCKLIFF - I have answered that question. Very clearly, this is an example of the Opposition Leader deflecting attention away from themselves. Clearly the Opposition Leader has to correct the record herself. Clearly, yesterday, in her summing up or her so-called alternative budget response, she continued to mislead the House, particularly around cost of living measures, which I have outlined today in response to a question from Mr Tucker.

This is a Government that will continue to support businesses, small, medium or large in Tasmania. I absolutely 100 percent support the Small Business minister in the excellent way that she is engaging with her portfolios and her constituents right across Tasmania.

Budget 2021-22 - Education and Training Infrastructure

Ms OGILVIE question to MINISTER for EDUCATION, Ms COURTNEY

[10.31 a.m.]

Can you please update the House on how the majority Liberal Government is investing in services and infrastructure in the 2021-22 Budget including to support education and training as we deliver our plan to secure Tasmania's future?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I thank the member for her question. The Budget we delivered last week will secure Tasmania's future and is built on the back of a majority Liberal Government's success of managing our finances and economy over the last seven years.

This success is supporting investment across our community in roads and community infrastructure to give Tasmanians what they need. This is in stark contrast with those opposite who have steadfastly refused to do an alternative budget, and even this week are refusing to tell Tasmanians what they stand for.

Our Budget includes \$8 billion for education, skills and training, ensuring the resources are there so our children and young people can get the best possible start to life. We know that education is the key that unlocks other possibilities and opportunities in our state. I thank our teachers, school leaders, professional support staff and all those who work to support our young people at schools and CFLCs. It is their dedication, professionalism, passion and expertise that positively shapes the lives of generations of Tasmanians to come.

The 2021-22 Tasmanian Budget includes unprecedented investments to bolster our schools and provide more support to students, including recruiting more teachers, an additional 40 in-school quality literacy coaches to support our student's literacy learning, more psychologists, social workers and speech language pathologists, and recruiting more health nurses - they were the ones that we know were cut by Labor.

We are also making record investment in education infrastructure with new commitments of \$116.2 million over a wide range of projects, including new facilities at Ogilvie and New Town High School to support co-education provision; a support school package including a new north-west support school; upgrades to contemporary classrooms; and a renewable energy schools program. We are also investing more than \$135 million across a range of skills training and workforce growth initiatives including \$98.6 million to ensure we are building a future-focused TasTAFE, providing the skills and training our industries need; \$20.5 million for our Working Tasmania package to get more Tasmanians into work; and \$13.8 million to deliver local jobs for local people, including new jobs hubs around Tasmania.

We are providing new funding for disability services including establishing the first ever Disability Commissioner for Tasmania, and \$1.4 million for autism diagnostic service.

There is no greater supporter of children and young people than the Tasmanian Liberal Government. We have seen this with the \$100 million committed over the next four years to deliver Tasmania's first ever comprehensive long-term whole-of-government Child and Youth Wellbeing Strategy and Action Plan. This has been warmly welcomed with the Commissioner for Children and Young People saying that the 2021-22 Budget includes substantial additional investment to support children's wellbeing in the first 100 days of their life which is where we can make a huge and lifelong difference to wellbeing.

In hospitality and events, industries that have worn the brunt of the impact of COVID-19, we are continuing to invest with \$39 million secured in this Budget to help the industries grow, attract events which grow and attract visitors to our state for economic growth and creating jobs. This includes a wide range of initiatives across these sectors which have been welcomed by the THA, with CEO Steve Old stating that, 'the state Government's continued strong investments in the hospitality industry will provide fantastic support for the thousands of cafes,

restaurants, pubs, accommodation venues and clubs, and other hospitality businesses around the state and the many thousands of Tasmanians they employ'.

This side is getting on with the job of securing Tasmania's future. This is in stark contrast to what we see from the other side. It has been, this week, an embarrassing display of laziness, incompetence and even deceit. We have seen, as outlined by the Acting Premier, Ms White come into this place and talk about skyrocketing rego when they have gone down; skyrocketing power prices when they have gone down; skyrocketing water prices when they have been held for the last two years. They do not have anything but they come in here and peddle deceit.

It is not just the Leader of the Opposition that has form. Mr Winter in his contribution praised Treasury and then questioned the Budget papers. Ms O'Byrne has been out live, reflecting on contributions from last year's budget. To be frank, if I was an O'Byrne I would want to forget the last 10 months too. If we go to the contribution from Dr Broad, fist pumping Dr Broad, on the weekend Dr Broad put out a media release saying, 'No more can the state rely on GST revenue'. While we know that we are going to have a kooky contribution from Ms O'Connor today, at least they will deliver an alternative budget. I feel very confident that Ms O'Connor will not be coming out calling for even less GST for the state of Tasmania.

Dr Broad has to come in here, stand up and explain to the people of Tasmania what he intends on cutting, what services he intends on slashing, and who he intends on sacking.

Rail Corridor - Bridgewater Bridge

Ms JOHNSTON question to MINISTER for INFRASTRUCTURE and TRANSPORT, Mr FERGUSON

[10.37 a.m.]

You recall that in February you joined me at the Transport Museum in Glenorchy to celebrate 150 years of rail operations in Tasmania. Now, however, the future of tourism and heritage rail is in danger because of the pending dismantling of the rail line at Bridgewater. I admit to be puzzled by that.

Last week in this House in answering a question for the member for Lyons, Ms Butler, you ruled out providing a rail link over the new bridge. You also told Ms Butler that we are preserving the rail corridor for future potential. Great news for the Transport Museum? Perhaps not. I am seeing that the existing bridge and this span will be demolished leaving a gap between the causeway and the river bank. How will the rail corridor be preserved over air and water?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I thank the member for Clark for her question. Before answering, I welcome the students from the Launceston Christian School and their amazing teachers who are joining us in parliament today.

The Gutwein and Morrison governments are rock solid in our commitment for the design and construction of the new Bridgewater bridge - you know, that bridge which John Howard funded in the late 1990s which should have been built decades ago. The money was spent by the former Labor leader on other projects. Specifically, they took the money for the new bridge

and spent it to move rail on the other side of the bridge, away from Macquarie Point, away from Moonah, away from Glenorchy, away from Granton, away from the bridge to Brighton. There has been no rail utilising the Derwent River crossing since 2013 or maybe even 2012.

The money was here in the state from John Howard to build the bridge but it was not built. This Government has got the funding back again. Thank you to the Morrison Government for the 80 per cent funding for that. I want to be clear that we now have our steering committee in place and we have our project team in place.

I am delighted to inform the House that, in the last fortnight, we now have tenders in from the marketplace. They are now being assessed and we expect to award that tender by the end of this year and to see construction commence next year. This is delivery of something that is needed in our road network infrastructure, which is overdue, and we will deliver it.

It is important that those who want to catcall about lack of rail, as if it is some new revelation, are misleading Tasmanians. That is not a new fact. Rail was moved across the river in 2012 or 2013, and the member for Clark knows this. I am advised that the business case that was developed by the then Labor-Greens government as a result of moving rail across the river was clear about it. The Bridgewater Bridge replacement, bridge works, concept design, February 2012 - Ms Butler, have a chat to your former leader - by GHD for the then government was for a four-lane road bridge that did not contain provision for rail. Member for Clark, I hope to inform you of that as well.

I asked the department to provide me with any documentation that went to Infrastructure Australia at that time. I have in my hand the *Tasmanian Government 2012 Transport Submission to Infrastructure Australia: New Bridgewater Bridge*, August 2012. I should not have to tell the Labor Party their own history, but here we go. In the goal definition, the infrastructure project will be a high-standard alignment for the NLTN between the existing Brooker Highway dual carriageway and the Brighton Bypass, creating a continuous dual carriageway through the residential areas of Greater Hobart, between the Hobart CBD and the Midland Highway Brighton Bypass.

Under the positive contribution to Infrastructure Australia's Strategic Priority Section, the document went on to say that the opening of the Brighton Transport Hub will see the relocation of significant freight transport activity north of the Derwent River from its existing focus at Macquarie Point in central Hobart. That was the bridge that David O'Byrne, Lara Giddings and others were striving to get funding for, again, having spent the money on other things.

The questioner has a genuine wish to see light rail - even heavy rail, I am not sure about that, not only along the northern transit corridor, but also across the bridge. That is an interesting proposition but one which is currently not viable and the member knows that. If ever rail was to be viable again across the Derwent River, our Government has been careful to ensure that the existing rail alignment corridor is preserved forever.

We have no economic case for rail across the Bridgewater Bridge right now. It would be exceedingly expensive, possibly double the cost of the bridge, from its current \$576 million. Member for Clark, you were grizzling in the *Mercury* about the benefit-cost ratio on that project as it stands. You were grizzling when the BCR came in at under 1.0. Imagine if it came in at half of that. Think about the acquisitions, think about the extra ramps that would be required to get rail above a 16-metre-high draught. We are looking at a completely different project.

For the Labor Party to even be participating in this discussion is the height of hypocrisy -

Members interjecting.

Mr FERGUSON - Dr Moaner, you are back again, and the bloke sitting next to you had a grizzle about it as well.

On 17 September, at 7.09 p.m., presumably for the next day's special edition of the *Mercury* front-page splash, 'Greater Hobart mayors question whether Bridgewater Bridge project is value for money', said Mr Winter -

Mr SPEAKER - If you could wind up, please, minister. I am sure Mr Winter would like that.

Mr FERGUSON - He wanted to know if there was a less expensive solution for the Bridgewater bridge project to provide the opportunity for the Australian Government to invest in 'more critical infrastructure projects across Greater Hobart. We have heard enough from the Labor Party on this. The Labor Party moved rail across the river and took rail off the Bridgewater bridge replacement project. The Labor Party spent the money for the bridge on other things. We are getting on with the job. We are in the market and I look forward to advising the House of the finalisation of the tenders at the end of this year.

Forest Industry - Sawlog Supply

Dr BROAD question to MINISTER for RESOURCES, Mr BARNETT

[10.45 a.m.]

Are you committed to supplying the contracted 137 000 cubic metres of sawlogs to the Tasmanian timber industry every year until at least 2027?

Members interjecting.

Mr SPEAKER - Order, the minister has the call, order.

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I thank the member for his question. The member knows that there is no greater supporter of the timber industry than the majority Gutwein Liberal Government. The member knows that uphill and down dale, for the last seven years, this Government has been rebuilding the forest industry. Why is that? That is because the Labor-Greens government took the forest industry to its knees. Two out of three jobs were lost in the forest industry. Shame on you. Shame on Labor-Greens government, 2010-2014.

This is what happened: jobs were lost right across rural and regional Tasmania. The industry was brought to its knees. It was a coalition, of course, Labor and the Greens government also working with the Labor-Greens government at the federal level, and they decimated the industry. The gall of the shadow minister to come in here and ask a question about wood supply, the gall of the Leader of the Opposition -

Dr BROAD - Point of order, Mr Speaker. Standing order 45 on relevance. This is a very simple question. There was not any argument or debate or anything in the question.

Mr SPEAKER - The standing order does not allow you to re-ask the question.

Dr BROAD - I ask you to draw the minister's attention to the question and be relevant.

Mr SPEAKER - I will certainly do that. As everybody knows, I cannot put words in the minister's mouth. There is a certain amount of leniency given to the questions and also to the answer. I am sure the minister will get around to answering specifically what you asked.

Mr BARNETT - Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. It was a question about wood supply and about forestry. The industry was decimated under the Labor-Greens government. I take the interjection from Dr Broad that he says he was not here at the time. But guess what? The Labor-Greens government was in power and your leader, Rebecca White, was in that government together with other members of your Labor Opposition. For the record, the Leader of the Opposition was in that government and stands responsible for locking up more and more of Tasmania. That is the impact on wood supply -

Members interjecting.

Mr SPEAKER - Order, order. I will give everybody a second to quieten down.

Mr BARNETT - In conclusion, let us make it very clear that there is no greater supporter. We will do everything we can to support the industry. They know that because we have been doing it for more than the last seven years. Why would we not do it for the next seven years and way beyond?

There is no doubt that we will support this \$1.2 billion part of our economy for thousands of jobs in rural and regional Tasmania. We stand shoulder to shoulder with them. That is why we put \$11.7 million in our Budget to support value-adding downstream processing, a \$10 million program in our Budget. You should have read the Budget papers. That will support, for value-adding, more jobs in our timber industry, more money for marketing and promotion.

As for you, you say you were not here. You are part of the Labor Party -

Dr Broad - What about the supply?

Mr SPEAKER - Order, Dr Broad.

Mr BARNETT - There is no greater supporter of the industry and we will back them every step of the way.

Forest Industry - Sawlog Supply

Dr BROAD question to MINISTER for RESOURCES, Mr BARNETT

[10.49 a.m.]

In your 2017 ministerial statement on the timber industry you said:

We will not reduce the legislated requirement for the business to make available 137 000 cubic metres of high-quality sawlog to its customers.

Are you now breaking this commitment by seeking to renegotiate timber supply contracts with lower volumes than the current contracted volume of 137 000 cubic metres a year? It is a specific question.

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I thank the member for his question and having the gall to come in here to ask a question about forestry when he locked up so many trees. You locked up so much and put people out of work on the unemployment scrap heap, and your leader, Rebecca White, was part of that; not only part of it, she signed up to it. Her signature is on a piece of paper and it is called the Tasmanian Forestry Agreement, locking up more of Tasmania; locking up our wood supply.

As I have said, there is no doubt that we will back in this \$1.2 billion part of the Tasmanian economy: thousands of jobs. We have made it very clear, I have made it on the public record here and in other places: Sustainable Timber Tasmania has a legislative obligation to make available 137 000 cubic metres of high-quality eucalypt sawlog per year; high-quality eucalypt sawlogs made available by Sustainable Timber Tasmania as sold through sales contracts. It is an operational matter for STT. Let us make it very clear. SST have a job to do and they are doing it on the back of a Labor-Greens government that locked up thousands and thousands of hectares, put two out of three forestry jobs on the unemployment scrap heap and they come in here and ask a question about forestry and wood supply. It is a great shame that they would have the gall to do that.

Budget 2021-22 - Screen Production in Tasmania

Mr STREET question to the MINISTER for the ARTS, Ms ARCHER

[10.52 a.m.]

Can you update the House on how the majority Liberal Government is securing Tasmania's future by delivering on our plan in the 2021-22 state Budget for screen production in Tasmania?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I thank the member for his question and interest in this area, an interest all members of the Government have. Our Government is clearly a strong supporter of our state's vibrant cultural and creative industries which supports thousands of jobs across the state and adds millions to our economy.

We recognise that our burgeoning screen industry is an important part of the creative sector. Our Government continues to champion and support the growth and development of a broad range of exciting projects and initiatives that enable both establishing and emerging Tasmanian film and television practitioners to continue to find work right here at home. This is why we are continuing to provide significant investment in the screen industry to ensure that

there are economic and employment opportunities for Tasmanian screen and production professionals in Tasmania.

The 2020-21 state Budget injected \$4 million in new stimulus funding towards the cultural and creative industries, including \$500 000 over two years in additional funding to Screen Tasmania's Screen Innovation Fund which is a creation of our Government. This follows the additional \$3 million towards screen production we committed in March of this year to ensure a strong funding support pipeline for Tasmanian screen projects going forward.

It is great to be able to acknowledge today some of the good news stories resulting from this targeted investment. Following the most recent round of independent assessment and recommendations made by Screen Tasmania's expert advisory group, in accordance with the Cultural and Creative Industries Act, I am very pleased to announce that 13 new screen and games development projects will receive a combined total of over \$1.7 million in funding to support and development Tasmania's thriving film, television and games industries.

Seven new film and television projects will share in \$125 000 of project development funding, including a new natural history documentary from Nick Hayward, one of the creators of the highly popular *Quoll Farm*. Mr Hayward's new documentary titled, 'The Platypus Guardian', will tell the story of a man who encounters and finds solace in a paddle of platypus in a semi-urban habitat of the Hobart Rivulet during COVID-19 lockdown.

Members interjecting.

Mr SPEAKER - Order.

Ms ARCHER - Mr Speaker, this is really good news. Even the Greens cannot bring it to themselves to actually acknowledge good news today.

Dr Woodruff - We would simply ask for some consistency across government on these issues.

Mr SPEAKER - Dr Woodruff, that is not an invitation for you to interject on the minister.

Ms ARCHER - Mr Speaker, unlike the Greens, we wholly support our screen industry.

Ms O'CONNOR - Point of order. Mr Speaker, the minister has just told an untruth to the House. We support the arts sector. Do not say that. It is in our alternative budget. It is childish and puerile.

Mr SPEAKER - A point of order is not an opportunity to state your position.

Ms ARCHER - Mr Speaker, I am not saying that. I am entitled to say it, because every time I get up in the House and I mention good news, particularly about the arts, I get the Greens interjecting and sniping from the sidelines.

Dr WOODRUFF - Mr Speaker, point of order, that is totally untrue.

Mr SPEAKER - That is not a point of order, Dr Woodruff.

Ms ARCHER - Other projects that received project development funding include 'The McLeods of Drovers Run', a feature drama that tells the original story of the McLeods of *McLeod's Daughters*, and 'True' a short film, indigenous-animated series for children from locally run Blue Rocket Productions. Through our Production Investment Program, the Government is contributing \$40 000 towards the production of 'Two Streets, Two Races', a second series of Launceston-made *Australia's Best Street Race*, which has gained over 1.7 million views of YouTube. If you have not seen it you must watch it. Another four projects will share in \$80 000 funding through Screen Tasmania's Proof of Concept Program, which provides support to make a short piece of a film in order to raise finance for full production.

Our Government's ongoing commitment to Tasmanian Screen Production has enabled the screen industry to build its capacity to develop new stories and to service production. Despite the challenges posed by COVID-19, it has been heart-warming to observe the Tasmanian Screen Industry continuing to find creative new ways to keep productions on track despite restrictions and disruptions caused by the pandemic.

Many people have found solace in digital content produced online and I thank all our arts practitioners for their extraordinary work during this difficult period. Our screen industry in Tasmania has gained a reputation across Australia and the world as one of the best places to film. Our Government will continue to support it and the many trainees and practitioners it employs.

In closing, support from our Government is helping to ensure that a healthy level of production activity continues in the State and that screen production can continue in a COVID-safe way. Just as importantly, we are delivering on our plan helping to ensure that Tasmanian stories are being told and that they continue to be seen around the world.

COVID-19 - Support for Tourism Businesses

Ms WHITE question to the ACTING PREMIER, Mr ROCKLIFF

[10.57 a.m.]

Yesterday you acknowledged that the level of support provided to Tasmanian businesses 'needs to be urgently addressed and looked at further'. You also said that on Monday you wrote to the Prime Minister to inform him you would welcome consideration to extend the COVID-19 disaster payment to assist Tasmanians whose income is affected by restrictions on movement, or lockdowns.

Given you have acknowledged just how urgent the situation is for many of our tourism-exposed businesses, is this really the strongest representation you can make on their behalf? What did you say in the letter? Will you table it today? Have you heard anything back from your Liberal colleagues in Canberra?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I thank the member for her question. Normally following the response to the Budget speech and an alternative budget from the Opposition, the Opposition tends to ask questions supporting their ideas in the alternative budget. However, in the absence of a so-called alternative budget, we had no questions related to it yesterday.

Ms White - We did talk about this in the alternative reply yesterday. We did. This is incredibly serious.

Mr SPEAKER - Order.

Mr ROCKLIFF - I know it is serious, Ms White. It is undeniable that lockdowns interstate have impacted on Tasmanian businesses. I have reflected that again this morning. We have just as much right, in our view, and as I expressed in a letter to the Prime Minister, to be able to access COVID-19 disaster payments. I mentioned disaster payments in the letter. We strongly believe that we will continue to prosecute Tasmania's case until there is equal access to these payments.

We have been very strong advocates as a government in supporting our economy and Tasmania when it comes to Tasmania -

Members interjecting.

Mr SPEAKER - Order.

Mr ROCKLIFF - Tasmania should not be penalised for being able to successfully manage COVID-19 to date. We have very strong border measures and safety measures, and, in our view, should not be penalised for the excellent work of Tasmanians. We will continue to advocate for Tasmania with Canberra and for additional support.

Mr Winter - Gently and kindly.

Mr ROCKLIFF - I have no qualms at all, Mr Winter, about tabling the letter I sent on 30 August to the Prime Minister, acknowledging the support from the Commonwealth to date, to assist Tasmanian businesses. I reiterated we would welcome consideration to extend the COVID-19 disaster payments to assist Tasmanians whose income is affected by restrictions on movements or lockdowns.

We would welcome an urgent reply from the Prime Minister. We have not yet had a reply.

Ms White - So you have nothing. I am not surprised. It was not a very urgent letter. Seriously.

Mr SPEAKER - Order.

Mr ROCKLIFF - If you were serious, Ms White, about supporting Tasmanians and Tasmanian businesses, you would have a decent alternative Budget reply; but you are not serious. Given your 100 per cent support for our Premier and Treasurer's Budget, you obviously believe in the measures we are employing when it comes to supporting Tasmanians and Tasmanian businesses. Thank you, and I table the letter.

Budget 2021-22 - Police Services

Mr ELLIS question to MINISTER FOR POLICE, FIRE AND EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT, Mrs PETRUSMA

[11.01 a.m.]

Can you update the House on the majority Liberal Government's plan to secure Tasmania's future which was outlined in the Budget, to invest in police services?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I thank the member for Braddon for his question and for his interest in this very important matter. Over the last three months I have seen and heard first-hand how our police officers undertake many challenging and confronting situations daily. To each and every one of them, I say a big thank you.

Their commitment to serve and protect is why we are investing more than \$348 million over the forward Estimates to Tasmania Police as a part of our plan to keep Tasmanians safe. To assist our police officers and state servants who are working hard to protect our state from COVID-19, a new state-of-the-art State Control Centre will be operational this year. This Budget provides an additional \$3 million towards the State Control Centre, taking the total government funding to \$6.5 million.

This Government has as strong track record for rebuilding our police service. On top of the 258 police officers that the government has previously committed, we are providing \$9.4 million in this budget to commence the recruitment of an additional 50 police officers over the next five years, bringing the total to 308 police officers under this Liberal Government.

We are also delivering more support roles for police officers, to ensure that our police officers remain on the front line and in our communities. This Budget includes funding of \$2.5 million over four years to employ eight additional state service employees who will support police in roles such as prosecution, cybercrime, and digital evidence analysis. On top of this, we are committed to providing \$20 million towards a new police station at St Helens and for upgrading the Bridgewater Police Station. This Budget provides \$9 million towards these works, with the stations to be completed in 2025-26.

The Government is also currently delivering a new \$1 million northern special operations group facility which will be completed by February 2022. I am pleased to note that the 2021-22 Budget also invests \$3.6 million in constructing a southern-based special operations group facility. This investment builds on the \$8.9 million we announced in last year's Budget, to employ an additional 20 special operations group officers over four years. In the short term, these additional officers will support Tasmania's COVID-19 response capacity in areas such as quarantine checking, compliance and assessment. These are all critical services in helping to keep our community safe.

We are also investing an additional \$2.4 million over two years to extend Tasmania's electronic monitoring of family violence perpetrators after the successful trial showed a 76 per cent decrease in high-risk family violence incidents and 100 per cent decrease in stalking.

Due to the success of the Health and Wellbeing Program, we are doubling our initial \$1.5 million investment to \$3 million per annum. This will provide support services to both our career and volunteer emergency services personnel. I was pleased to also recently launch the Country Police Station Relief Policy. This Budget fully funds this policy, ensuring that there is a consistent statewide approach to relieving our officers in regional and remote communities when they take leave.

This Budget also delivers \$9.6 million towards completing our \$21.7 million program of police house upgrades, delivering 49 new and renovated homes for police officers and their families stationed in remote and regional areas in Tasmania. There is \$5.1 million over two years for an emergency mental health co-response team, that will improve the way our services respond to critical mental cases; \$2.8 million to bolster our large vessel replacement program to deliver a world-class replacement for the PV Van Diemen; \$13.1 million to get police out of courts in the north-west of the state; \$100 000 over the next four years to Crime Stoppers, to assist in delivering its programs; and a \$4 million grants program to allow local communities to purchase and install CCTV cameras to make Tasmanians safer.

We took a fully costed plan to secure Tasmania's future by keeping Tasmanians safe and the 2021-22 Budget delivers on all of our commitments. As Colin Riley, the President of the Police Association of Tasmania stated:

The Budget provides funding for all the Government's 2020-21 election commitments to our members, and more. We are very grateful for the care shown for our members which will result in increased service delivery and the safety of the Tasmanian community.

Our commitment to supporting our brave police officers is in contrast to the Labor Party, the Opposition, which, in its entire policy did not have a single cent in here to employ a police officer. The total funding in this policy for new police officers was zero. In the Leader of the Opposition's speech yesterday, she had no plan for the Police Service, no plan for the Fire Service, no plan for the SES at all.

Launceston General Hospital - Stage 2 Redevelopment

Ms DOW question to MINISTER for HEALTH, Mr ROCKLIFF

[10.07 a.m.]

One of the Liberal Party's biggest commitments at the election was the \$580 million Stage 2 redevelopment of the Launceston General Hospital. When you became Minister for Health you said you personally would drive the project and release a glossy master plan. Yet in last week's Budget, not a single dollar was allocated to the project over the next four years. Nothing this year, nothing the next, nothing the one after and nothing the one after that.

Is achieving nothing over the next four years what you meant when you said you would personally drive this project, and was the Liberal Party's signature health policy a con-job?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I thank the member for her question and her interest in this matter. There has been some consultation around the Launceston General Hospital master plan, so I would

not dismiss it as a glossy brochure. I suggest you look at exactly what has been produced. An enormous amount of work has been undertaken, and consultation with clinicians including the community. Stage 1 of the Launceston General Hospital redevelopment commenced in 2018 and is scheduled for completion in 2024. Total funding allocated by the government for stage 1 is \$87.3 million. Work completed so far includes the ward 4K redevelopment, women's and children's tower shell and fire services upgrades.

The Budget includes the remaining \$66.5 million of the \$87 million for the stage 1 redevelopment, for completion of the new women's and children's outpatient clinics, upgrades to the central sterilising departments and acute medical unit for the pandemic preparedness and refurbishment of 39 Franklin Street for the new administration and training hub.

In answer to the member's question, the Budget has allocated funding for stage 2 of the LGH Redevelopment. Stage 2 will commence with the mental health precinct. The mental health precinct is part of stage 2, and \$12 million has been allocated to commence this work with a total of \$80 million to be allocated beyond the forward Estimates for the new Mental Health Precinct and works are due to be completed in 2027. All other works for stage 2 will commence at the completion of Stage 1 and the \$500 million to be allocated from the 2025-26 to deliver the remainder of Stage 2 which is due for completion in 2031. The member may be confused because the Mental Health Precinct is part of Stage 2, which we expect to be finished in 2027.

In the forward Estimates, that \$12 million is there for the Mental Health Precinct over the course of the next four years and part of Stage 2 redevelopments. I am particularly looking forward to the Mental Health Precinct redevelopment and to the enormous investment we are making in the north-west coast when it comes to replacing the ageing Spencer Clinic. We expect this will be completed in or about 2025, and as minister for Mental Health and Wellbeing, I am excited about.

Part of our other commitment there was, if my memory serves me correctly, some \$500 000 for the master plan on the North West Regional Hospital. There is a lot happening and a lot has happened since 2014 when famously, the Labor Party could not lay a single brick when it comes to the Royal Hobart Hospital redevelopment. Do not come criticising this side of the House when it comes to infrastructure in our hospital system.

We have a strong record and that strong record is evident by the Royal Hobart Hospital redevelopment down the road.

Time expired.

ALCOHOL AND DRUG DEPENDENCY REPEAL BILL 2021 (No. 40)

First Reading

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

**NATURE CONSERVATION AMENDMENT (BRUSHY CREEK
CONSERVATION AREA) BILL 2021 (No. 41)**

First Reading

Bill presented by **Dr Woodruff** and read the first time.

SITTING TIMES

[11.15 a.m.]

Mr FERGUSON (Bass - Leader of the House) - Mr Speaker, I will rise briefly to indicate that I do not propose that the House should sit past 6 o'clock this evening. Looking at how we went yesterday, we are looking really good and we will complete the discussion on the two bills tomorrow. I believe we are tracking very well.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Member for Bass - Ms O'Byrne

[11.16 a.m.]

Ms O'BYRNE (Bass) - Mr Speaker, I sought earlier to make a personal explanation, which I can now do in other formal business.

Today in question time the Acting Premier accused me of saying something on *Hansard* that was not true. The fact that they read everything I say is heart-warming. I do take the obligation of members in this House to only say things on *Hansard* that are true very, very seriously.

I checked the uncorrected proof which was distributed late last night. Yesterday in my Budget response in seeking to demonstrate a pattern of behaviour of dishonest budgets, I quoted articles by respected economists, Saul Eslake, from 2020 and John Lawrence from 2021. In checking the uncorrected proof, I gave the source of the articles but not the dates and I should have been clearer. I update that record now but point out that it in no way detracts from the fact that a respected economist believed this Government to deliver dishonest and tricky budgets.

MATTER OF PUBLIC IMPORTANCE

Small Business Support

[11.17 a.m.]

Ms FINLAY (Bass) - Mr Speaker, I move -

That the House take note of the following matter: small business support

I rise today to again speak to a matter of public importance about small business support in Tasmania. Over the past two weeks, Labor has been persistently prosecuting the case for a

greater understanding and the importance of clarity provided in relation to the environment of operating for small businesses, not only small businesses but microbusinesses, medium and large businesses in Tasmania.

We have had to do this because, despite the Government's insistence that they want to provide certainty and confidence to businesses across Tasmania, it is clear that their policies are misleading and confusing to those people seeking to operate, to earn an income and to contribute to the economy of Tasmania.

Last week we prosecuted the case for microbusinesses. Following our persistence in bringing to the attention of the Government these concerns from small businesses that are an essential part of our economy, there has now been an acknowledgment that this was an oversight and on Friday, grants will open for businesses earning above \$25 000. Further to that, we have recognised concern in the community that has been brought to our attention from, not only tax agents, but from businesses small and large from right across the state. Northern businesses and southern businesses are concerned by the misleading policy that was presented regarding the treatment of payroll tax during JobKeeper payments.

When I came to this House it was important to me that I stood to act on behalf of all Tasmanians and that I stood to act for small businesses. In the last eight weeks since I have been appointed as the shadow minister for small business I have taken an acute interest in this area. I have ensured that not only have I been able to connect with and hear from businesses across Tasmania but I have also come to understand all of the elements of my portfolio.

I also made a commitment to myself that I would always act with courage and ask the hard questions, that where there was something happening, where there was injustice or it was unfair, that I would raise that in order that corrections could be made and that I would always be in action.

Today we asked the Minister for Small Business to confirm statements made in this House yesterday in regard to the policy of treating JobKeeper payments with payroll tax. Yesterday the Small Business minister stated in this House that JobKeeper payments were exempt from payroll tax and in fact, stated that repeatedly in the House yesterday.

When asked to clarify today, there was no correction of the record. In fact, a different answer was provided by the Small Business minister and by the Acting Premier. Therefore, are businesses across Tasmania who are currently providing and submitting their end of year returns led to believe that the reply provided by the Small Business minister yesterday to be correct? In fact, there is no liability across JobKeeper payments for payroll tax.

It is not just businesses that are deep in hurt right now, that are deep in the concerns of keeping their businesses alive; deep in concern of being able to generate the income to pay their employees. Not only that, they are doing extra hours and some are taking extra jobs, not to pay themselves more but to pay their staff, and now have to go through understanding this misleading policy from the Government.

Today we seek a clarification from the Small Business minister. In fact, by the end of the day we need businesses across Tasmania to be clear in how they are going to treat these payments. Is it the case that where federal government funds have been provided to Tasmanian businesses to support workers, to secure jobs that were provided because there was an

awareness of how hard things are, that the money that has been provided to secure jobs has been taxed by the state government to generate revenue? It cannot be believed that the Government is so desperate for funds that it would tax the very money that has been given to these businesses to secure jobs and to support workers and in turn support their families.

We have heard in the last week when prosecuting the case of these COVID-19 support grants for people particularly in hospitality or tourism-affected businesses, that the grants that were first documented, maybe \$2000, maybe \$5000 or \$10 000, are now what people are going to have to dip in to pay their payroll tax liabilities.

On this side of the House, Tasmanian Labor stands for supporting small, micro, medium and large businesses. We stand for supporting the workers, the owners, and the people who right now are doing it tough to figure out how they are going to make ends meet at the end of the week, not only for themselves but for their employees and the families and the communities they support.

Today we need to have clarity on the way this payroll tax is being treated across the JobKeeper payment because if this House is serious and if the Government is serious about their support and their understanding, if the minister is clear in her portfolio, and she understands the impact this misleading policy has had on many businesses across Tasmania, then the record needs to be corrected.

People who month-on-month in recent months were required not to include JobKeeper in their returns are now at the end of year finding an unexpected and significant expense. We have an example of someone who has been given a \$7000 payroll tax liability unexpectedly when they thought they would have zero. In the current circumstances for Tasmanian businesses that is devastating.

We heard last week from a business that was eligible to apply for a grant, that was eligible in the category of having a \$2000 grant despite losing \$20 000 worth of confirmed bookings for their business. Now, for a business that may be liable for payroll tax liabilities across their JobKeeper payments, it is essential that we are all on the same page here, that we seek to understand and then to clarify how in fact we are seeking to support small businesses across Tasmania, how we are supporting the owners that right now are doubling down on second and third jobs to pay the employees that they support, the families and communities that they support, and they do not need this lack of confidence, this lack of certainty or clarity from the government. What they need now is answers and for the minister to correct the record.

[11.23 a.m.]

Mr JAENSCH (Braddon - Minister for State Growth) - Mr Speaker, I thank the member, Ms Finlay, for bringing this matter of public importance for the third time now and for her keen interest and diligence on the matter as well. As the Minister for Small Business, and the Acting Premier, I have clearly stated on the record again today, Tasmanian businesses do not pay payroll tax on the proportion of their wages which are attributable to JobKeeper payments.

This means that payroll tax is waived on JobKeeper payments. Therefore there is an exemption from the need to pay payroll tax on that proportion of their wage bill. This information has been clearly published on the State Revenue Office website for over a year since 30 April 2020. There is a guideline that I have seen members of the Opposition holding, and my urging would be, if those opposite know of businesses that have questions about how

the payroll tax policy in this case applies, you are making sure that they have access to this guideline on the website and also that you follow the invitation to contact the State Revenue Office. Their phone, email, website and post contact details are provided there. We want to ensure that businesses are clear and their accountants are clear about these rules. The State Revenue Office has issued a guideline and the State Revenue Office has issued an invitation to contact them for clarity. We need to ensure that those businesses have clarity on the guideline.

On 29 April 2020, the Minister for Finance made the Payroll Tax Pandemic Order No. 2 2020 which had the effect of waiving payroll tax in respect of the amount of taxable wages paid or payable to an employee that is equal to the amount of the JobKeeper payment that the employer is entitled to receive for that employee or those wages. The order was subject to parliamentary scrutiny through the Subordinate Legislation committee including members of the Labor Party on that committee. This order has existed for some time and it was developed with full scrutiny and involvement of the Labor Party as part of the subordinate legislation arrangements. Further information and advice and the offer of a contact in the State Revenue Office for the accountants for the businesses that may still have outstanding concerns is there. I implore you, please, ensure that those businesses have the full advantage of the advice available from the State Revenue Office on this matter.

This order and this treatment of payroll tax and the JobKeeper measures are just one part of a broad raft of supports and assistance for businesses large and small across many sectors that this Government has supported since the pandemic hit Tasmania, and its effects.

In March 2020 we launched a \$50 million business support loan scheme providing interest-free loans to eligible businesses that were operating in the hospitality, tourism and seafood export sectors and related supply chain businesses as well as businesses in other sectors of the economy that demonstrated that they have been materially impacted by the coronavirus outbreak. In mid-2020 we launched a \$1 million temporary-visa-holder skilled employees assistance program providing grants of up to \$2000 to help skilled temporary-visa-holders maintain a connection with their employers during COVID-19. That supported 349 applicants and a total of \$698 000 was expended on that program.

In September 2020 we launched a \$60 million business growth loan scheme providing loans at concessional interest rates to help Tasmanian businesses recover, adapt or grow as well as support new projects that contribute to employment and growth of our economy. The scheme remains open and will be open until 14 September. We have provided a further \$10 million during 2021-22 on top of the existing \$10 million to boost the Building Projects Support program to help even more commercial building projects get off the ground in a COVID-19 environment, knowing that each one of those projects also represents a business that is expanding, investing more, and employing more Tasmanians in our economy. We have a \$30 million building construction support loan program to assist eligible Tasmanian projects to engage commercial construction companies to create new or improved existing buildings and associated infrastructure and that can commence quickly and contribute to our economy.

We have provided a \$100 million interest-free loan to assist Incat with the construction of a large new high-speed vessel to be ready for the market when businesses around the world resume their operations in moving people around on sea and we will have a best-in-class vessel ready for that market when it turns back on. This will secure both the existing skilled workforce as well as grow it by around 120, including around 60 apprentices. There is a \$600 000

interest-free loan to PFG Group to construct a new 11-metre prototype vessel to showcase their capabilities and secure defence contracts. Included among these examples are programs that are assisting small and medium-size businesses, building and construction projects, and large businesses and large single projects, such as building the Incat vessel.

Each one of them supports a network of suppliers, contractors, skilled people in Tasmania, small businesses and large, who will benefit from this support as we go through this difficult period.

[11.30 a.m.]

Dr WOODRUFF (Franklin) - Mr Deputy Speaker, we agree that the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on all small businesses in Australia have been profound. There cannot be any industry area that has been exempt from the changes in supply and markets occurring globally and also within Australia when we have the necessity of protecting borders from people movement to try and protect different state-based populations from the waves of the COVID-19 pandemic, which are still continuing.

We are in the Delta wave at the moment and we are hearing daily of people in Tasmania who are suffering from the business losses and the economic hardship that it is having on them and their staff, if they are an employer.

I think of all those young people who have, for so long, been able to rely on having a hospitality sector or a small business retail job to look forward to, to enable them to move out of home and support themselves in their early life, either as a student or in the paid workforce, caring for people or finding their place in the world, and trying to work out how they want to live their life as a young person.

I feel for those people where those businesses are no longer afloat and, if they are, they are certainly not taking on new staff at the moment. It is an insecure workforce for everybody, especially for people who are looking at leaving Year 12 this year.

As a state, we need to understand that for far too long, Australia and Tasmania have accepted outrageously high youth unemployment without taking any corrective actions. They have stood back and let the market rip. The outcome of that for young Tasmanians has been truly horrendous. We have the highest youth unemployment rate in the nation. At the moment it is 9.2 per cent. That is terrible by any measure.

There is a response that has been demonstrated to work and it provides not only a humane life for people who are without employment, it also creates a buffer stock of skilled employees, ready to be able to work in a range of different industries, depending on the supply demands of those industries. What I am talking about is a job guarantee.

A job guarantee fills the shortfalls in the labour market and provides secure and guaranteed work with full entitlements to unemployed people. It provides people with full legal employment entitlements. It does not form any part of a mandatory eligibility program. It is a fully voluntary option of employment. It is nothing like the Tony Abbott approach to dealing with unemployment of work for welfare. It does not punish people who are unemployed. It recognises that we live in a capitalist society and, despite our best efforts, the capitalist labour market without corrective actions creates a class of people who are unable to get work.

That is unacceptable and the Greens reject that economic paradigm. We recognise that we can have our cake and eat it. We can be stimulating businesses in the innovation of new business markets and providing skills for people who at the moment do not have jobs, so that people are able to step into the business community when supply exists. The job guarantee is something the Leader of the Tasmanian Greens will be talking about, how we will fund that, in our alternative Budget shortly.

It is an important election policy that we took to the last state election. It is ground-breaking in Australia. Our policy in Tasmania has been recognised by market analysts around the country. A range of interesting people have stepped in and commented from the national level. I think Noel Pearson made some supportive comments about it.

There is no doubt that we cannot any longer accept a group of people who, despite their best efforts, are unable to seek employment simply because the capitalist labour market at the moment relies on maintaining wages at a historically untenable low level and providing no support for the people who are unable to get jobs in the system we have.

We fully support help for people who are looking for work and business owners who are unable to afford to employ them.

Time expired.

[11.37 a.m.]

Ms OGILVIE (Clark) - Mr Speaker, I am very pleased to rise to speak on small business. I was doing my own little calculations: this term in Government will take me now into a decade in this place speaking on small business. We have a few years yet to run. I am very pleased to see that Labor has come to the party on small business. This is good news, Mr Winter, Ms Finlay; very pleased to have you as part of this discussion because it was very lonely for a long time there.

I want to talk about the day, and I have mentioned this before, in this place when we had to put full restrictions down, we had to put the bell jar over Tasmania and close the borders. What a dreadful, distressing and horrible moment that was for everybody, particularly for our small businesses. I still get emotional now because when we did that and when we closed parliament and we put those borders down - I remember the debates distinctly - we said our businesses will need to go into hibernation, we will need to protect and save and look after our people. Everybody is going to have to go under the doona and stay home and we need to do all that we can to hibernate and bring them out.

At that point in time we did not know what the future would hold as a state or as a nation, as a planet, as a globe. We did not know that there would be waves of this virus. We did not know how long we would be able to stay safe in Tasmania. We did not know how long these impacts would go.

Then we had a rolling series of events that we had to respond to in very agile form. I was an independent during those times. There were a lot of sleepless nights thinking about how we look after Tasmanians, how we look after small businesses. Particularly for me, it really hits home because, prior to coming into this place, I ran my microbusiness as a barrister and solicitor. Sometimes people forget that working mums, like me, as I was then, and I am still a

working mum - who are running those small businesses, that amount of money really matters to the family budget.

Whether it is \$20 000, \$30 000, \$50 000, \$80 000 whatever it is that you are able to bring in, whether it is professional services, bookkeeping, she is able to fit that in with her responsibilities to family. For single parents on both sides who might be in the same situation who are living separately, it is compounded by what they need to do to provide in two different houses.

I am really tuned into this issue and I was very pleased with the Minister for Small Business with whom I have been advocating for quite some time to look after what I call the working mums - those people who might be working, men or women, part-time and bringing in that sort of money. Those roles really matter and when we talk about small business even in this place I see that we have different definitions in our minds about what that might be. Some people think small business might be anything under a \$5 million turnover. You might take the Australian tax definition on it but, for me, true small business particularly in Clark where we do this kind of work, includes those micro-businesses and I have been quite concerned about them.

On the day that we closed our borders and we made that determination which is a moment I will go through the rest of my life remembering as a point in time in this House, I remember the look on everybody's faces and I remember Labor being at the table, the Greens were at the table and the Liberals were at the table. We spoke with one voice to protect and look after everybody, to look after security and safety, but also the businesses that would be impacted. I left this place and I walked to Salamanca and I am sure others did the same. In my electorate I went to North Hobart and Moonah and I tapped on the doors of all the businesses. Some of these businesses people I had been to school with and had known for 50 years. I said, 'how are you going, are you all right?' and I had grown men standing in their restaurants who had put their lives into building up these restaurants, in tears and me out there assuring them that I would work and do everything I could do to help them and protect their businesses.

Good Tasmanian people were deeply worried about their staff and at that time there were no JobKeeper payments. We had this horrible problem where people were let go and there was not a huge safety net. There were processes that you would have to go through to get Centrelink. We have a strong community - particularly in Clark, but I am sure it is the same in other electorates - of migrants, people on visas, working visas, who just could not afford to run their lives without some sort of revenue stream. I am really aware of businesses who were not responsible for it but stepped up and continued to pay salaries, who stepped up and did grocery deliveries. I took groceries to people. Then we had the JobKeeper payments coming which were great. They were imperfect but again the agility was required for government to step up.

The Gutwein Government cared and listened and did the right thing and when we were calling for more help, more help came. Now the criticism which I think is fair, is that it is an imperfect world. Absolutely. Things had to be done quickly and on the fly. I know the Subordinate Legislation committee did its absolute best and I know that is a balanced committee. I am looking at you guys because Labor had representatives on it. It is a balanced committee and everybody did their best, but new processes had to be established very quickly in this place. I do not think the minister, Mr Jaensch, agreed with me then but maybe we have changed our minds now - I would have liked to have seen parliament continue in a digital

format. I was pushing for that but in hindsight it was probably going to be too hard. I do not know. We all survived, so that is a good thing.

Agility and developing processes very quickly means you always have to be open to circling back around and looking at things. There is no greater supporter of the business sector than me, small business in particular but I do not mind a big business either. I was trained in Telstra-land as a general manager. That is where I learnt my skills.

Time expired.

[11.40 a.m.]

Dr BROAD (Braddon) - Mr Speaker, Labor supports small business and that is why we have brought up this issue. It is because we are hearing from businesses who are now receiving unexpected payroll tax bills. Uncertainty for these types of businesses means that they can budget and then all of a sudden, they think they are not going to have to pay payroll tax and then suddenly they are hit with a bill and that impacts people's cashflows and puts stress on already stressed businesses.

There is definitely confusion in this arena. We know there are accountants who are confused by it. We know there are businesses confused by it. Obviously, we have a Small Business minister who is confused by it. The Small Business minister, Jane Howlett, came into this place yesterday and said, 'JobKeeper payments are exempt from payroll tax, full stop. That stands on the *Hansard* uncorrected. If small businesses see that on the *Hansard*, how can they have assurances that their Small Business minister actually knows what is going on? She did not come into this place today and correct the record. She gave a different answer. She has let that stand on the *Hansard* uncorrected. The confusion remains.

In the guidelines for the payroll tax waiver for JobKeeper payment that is accessed through the government website, there is confusion in this as well, and the minister has not corrected the record. There are still people -

Members interjecting.

Dr BROAD - Sorry, what are you talking about? That is just insane. It sits on the parliamentary record, uncorrected, that JobKeeper payments are exempt from payroll tax. The biggest issue around this is around the thresholds. The JobKeeper payments, in some businesses, have tipped them over the threshold, whereas they thought they were under the threshold and did not have to pay payroll tax. That is the big issue for businesses and also the other threshold at the higher end when the rate changes from 4 per cent to 6.1 per cent.

If the JobKeeper payments tip them over the threshold then they are up for more money that they may not have budgeted for, because there is no clarity in this and obviously the minister, Ms Howlett, is failing to clear that up, failing to correct the record and failing to admit that she either has absolutely no idea, or she has misled parliament. It cannot be one or the other.

Ms O'Connor - Yes, it can be. It can't be both.

Dr BROAD - It cannot be both, thank you.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER - Appreciate the assistance, Ms O'Connor. Continue, Dr Broad.

Dr BROAD - She has either misled parliament or she does not know what she is doing.

Ms O'Connor - Or both.

Dr BROAD - Or both. The issue is about the thresholds here. Small businesses have budgeted, potentially on the JobKeeper payments being exempt and now they are finding out at the last minute - the JobKeeper Payment Program ended on the 28 March 2021 - they have thought that this whole thing was behind them and now they are rolling forward, doing their tax and getting hit with unexpected payroll tax demands. That is the issue that has been raised with us and that is why we are pursuing it. It is a shame that the Small Business minister comes in and fails to clear it up and in fact misleads parliament by saying, 'JobKeeper payments are exempt from payroll tax' full stop.

Now, we know that exemptions operate in other spheres because there is an exemption for interstate businesses. There is a payroll tax exemption for interstate businesses relocating to Tasmania. There is a precedent for this. What we did not hear today is how the Government is going to fix it up. How is the Government going to fix it up? Obviously, they are not going to have a Small Business minister who comes in with a good explanation on why she said, 'exempt' one day and then talked about something completely different the next.

We are not going to get that from the Small Business minister but what we did not hear from the Deputy Premier is if this is going to be fixed. Are people who are unexpectedly receiving payroll tax payments going to have this issue fixed or are they just going to be hit with this unexpected payment with no recourse, or recall? This is something the Government is definitely failing to clear up and the minister's answer failed to clear that up too.

Right at the bottom, calculating payroll tax on JobKeeper payments in the guidelines, it says: 'It is important to note that payroll tax on JobKeeper wages paid in Tasmania has been waived, rather than made exempt'. That is right at the bottom, page 2, of 2 of the Government's guideline. Yet we have the minister coming into this place saying, 'it is exempt.'

Today, we had two questions directed to the Small Business minister. I do not think in my time in parliament I have heard two questions and the answers being so short. The minister stood up and gave a very, very short answer and then retreated to her seat. Twice. I think that is a record. I have never seen a minister in this place try to defend what was an obvious mistake from the day before by standing for 30 seconds or a minute then sitting down. Today there was not even any Labor this, Labor that, like she tried to pad out yesterday. It was a simple small statement of a prepared piece of briefing from her pack and, then she retreated. Yet her comments still stand because she has not corrected the record.

Also, there is a lot of talk from this Government about supporting small businesses. I did not hear any support today from the Minister for Resources when it comes to small businesses in the forest industry and the uncertainty they are facing. I have been around and I have talked to a lot of the small sawmillers, especially, who only have contracts now for a couple of years. The Government, basically, got them through the election campaign with promises and now they have given them contracts for two years and that is it. That is all they have guarantees for.

Some of those contractors are actually on an 'if available' basis. How can a small business, a small country sawmiller, who thought the Liberal Party was their friend, giving them just a two-year contract with a supply based on 'if available', run a business like that?

The minister failed to clarify whether he is committed to the 137 000 cubic metres of contractor sawlogs. He went nowhere near that in his response. That is a bit embarrassing for them and he needs to clear that up too.

Time expired.

Matter noted.

APPROPRIATION BILL (No. 1) 2021 (No. 36)

Second Reading

Continued from 31 August 2021 (page 118).

Mr JAENSCH (Braddon - Minister for State Growth) - Mr Deputy Speaker, at a time when Tasmanians need all their elected representatives to be putting them first, putting Tasmania first and for this to be the place where we bring and debate all possible ideas and solutions that can help Tasmania stay ahead, stay safe, stay confident, broken Labor has nothing to offer but whining, misleading, complaining and talking our state down: no alternative Budget, no policy platform, no solution, no leadership, no vision and no unity.

Our Government knows these are the things that Tasmanians want and need right now more than ever before, and they can count on us to deliver them.

[11.53 a.m.]

Ms O'CONNOR (Clark - Leader of the Greens) - Mr Deputy Speaker, I seek the leave of the House to table the Tasmanian Greens' alternative Budget 2021-22.

Leave granted.

Ms O'CONNOR - Mr Deputy Speaker, I am proud to stand and deliver our Alternative Budget on behalf of the Tasmanian Greens. In this budget we set out a future for Tasmania that enables sustained recovery from the global health emergency that is COVID-19, while taking meaningful action to tackle the climate and biodiversity emergency, and create a fairer, healthier and more inclusive community.

Our budget accepts the positives in the Gutwein Government's Budget, defunds the negatives and reallocates funding towards more inclusive, sustainable programs and initiatives. This is a Green New Deal for Tasmania, for this wildly beautiful and fragile place that has sustained people for tens of thousands of years, that sustains us all today, although its natural environment and the ancient culture embedded deep in its landscape are under intensifying assault.

In the shadow of still wild kunanyi, before the First Nations Aboriginal Australian and Tasmanian flags behind you, I acknowledge and grieve the long-gone muwinina people, on

whose homelands we meet every day this parliament sits. We meet on the banks of their mighty life-giving river, timtumili minanya, the River Derwent, 218 years after the arrival of the English at piyura kitina, Risdon Cove. We now know that was the day Tasmanian Aboriginal people lost their country, this island they had nurtured and shaped over millennia.

The arrival of the English in their ships was day one of the subjugation and dispossession of the palawa/pakana people. Today justice is not yet served. It was also the beginning of an age of taking from this island, working to extract its every drop of goodness. That continues apace today.

Lutruwita, this place, needs its First People to be truly respected, re-empowered to be part of healing of country, the restoration of nature, which the scientists, young people and the Greens all know is necessary in a time of climate and biodiversity crisis.

Our Alternative Budget recognises the Gutwein Government's positive, albeit slow-paced and not yet properly funded, moves towards Treaty and justice in this year's State Budget. But we argue more and sooner can be done. We allocate \$8 million over four years to empower Aboriginal community organisations to address disadvantage, with a focus on child and maternal health, restorative, culturally aligned youth justice, mental health and housing. There is \$1.6 million over four years in grants to develop a respectful, effective model for Truth Telling, along with a memorial to warriors and victims of the Frontier Wars led by the Aboriginal people.

We also invest in building on the Gutwein Government's progress to date on Treaty. Along with our ongoing call on government to return culturally significant lands, we fund incentives for private land returns, such as that initiated by the remarkable Tom and Jane Tenniswood, who returned more than 100 hectares of land near Little Swanport to the Aboriginal Land Council on an amazing day I was privileged to be part of in February 2019.

We demonstrate the Greens' commitment to dedicated Aboriginal seats in parliament, as was unanimously recommended by the parliamentary committee we established in the last term to examine the Greens' House of Assembly Restoration Bill. Our Alternative Budget funds and maps out the first steps towards delivering First Nations seats in the Tasmanian parliament.

We fund the restoration of seats in this House to 35 members, which was also unanimously recommended by members of all three political parties sitting on that committee. We do this to ensure Tasmania's parliament is fit for purpose in a growing, increasingly complex-to-govern state, as we recover from the pandemic and stare down the barrel of a climate crisis.

To remove the stain of self-serving corporate influence on our democracy, the Greens fund genuine electoral and donations reform.

We fund the establishment of a Tasmanian Charter of Human Rights to ensure governments do not readily trample the rights of their citizens.

We see the minister, Mr Barnett, and Dr Broad try to outdo each other on authoritarian attacks on peaceful protests that just will not work, and we raise them with a workplace protection from protesters repeal bill which we will slap on this table in the near future.

As we have said before, no government can arrest its way out of a climate and biodiversity crisis. Young people, people of all ages, will resist and resist and resist, and they will win. The Greens stand with them always. Real climate action that gives true hope to young people underpins our 2021-22 Alternative Budget.

Our Alternative Budget invests more than \$100 million directly over four years into actions and programs that will drive real emissions reduction and adaptation planning while generating strong, sustainable economic activity.

It funds free TasTAFE courses, with a \$44 million investment, literally, in our future, over four years. It ensures TasTAFE has the educators and resources to deliver 21st century skills in energy efficiency, renewables and climate resilience sectors.

We know there is plenty of work to be done to stay safe, connected and resilient in this century of rapid, accelerating climatic and geopolitical disruption. The Greens are certain young Tasmanians know exactly what the problem is with the climate and they know governments, state and federal, are failing them. They are not frightened by the science and the truth nearly as much as they are by the abject lack of leadership on genuine emissions reduction to cool their planet, their only home, their future. The Greens will not stand idly by while young people are robbed of a safe climate. We will fight for them to have a healthy, socially and economically inclusive future. We will always fight for their future, and we know that future depends entirely on looking after this place with more respect.

The Greens' alternative vision for Tasmania unashamedly focuses on ensuring a safe, prosperous future for young Tasmanians. We invest in a safe climate for this island's children and grandchildren with rapid emissions reduction, sustained adaptation planning, protection of our precious water supplies and electrification of the state's transport system.

Young people are already showing leadership through the climate strike and activist movement. It is growing by the hour and the righteous rage of young people is an increasingly urgent force to be reckoned with. Young people want to be part of the solutions.

Our budget establishes a Youth Job Guarantee with a \$326 million investment over four years in skilling up and harnessing the energy of young Tasmanians in community and restoration projects. This will be delivered by a newly established Tasmanian employment office in partnership with businesses, not-for-profit and community organisations and local government.

Our Alternative Budget funds a life-sustaining, climate-safe, job-generating future for this island and its people. It ends the climate crime of native forest logging and burning, saving \$140 million over the forward Estimates. It accelerates the transition to a wholly plantation-based forest industry while funding a just transition for workers into new areas of skills need through a dedicated just transition unit based on the New Zealand model.

This century, as a small island community, we will need to do things differently. Our Alternative Budget repurposes 'Forestry Tasmania' to become Forests Tasmania and invests heavily in forest protection and restoration and into carbon sequestration for a safe climate. The Greens want to see the skills of ex-native forestry workers redeployed to the plantation sector, into landscape and habitat repair, carbon farming and emergency preparedness for a changing climate.

Our Alternative Budget holds true to the strong sentiment expressed in the Premier's Social and Economic Recovery Advisory Council Report that we look after the environment much better and strengthen Tasmania's clean, green and lucrative brand. The Greens Alternative Budget sets out to protect this beautiful island's natural wonders and riches in an approach grounded in the empathetic, responsible principle of intergenerational equity.

We also recognise the pressing need to do things differently and to harness the deep cultural knowledge of Aboriginal Tasmanians in protecting life, wilderness and property from an extended bushfire season. We invest in providing more support for emergency services personnel who are there to protect this island and its people from extreme weather events.

In a climate emergency, Tasmania's gift to the world is the carbon stored in our forests. The state's net-zero emissions profile is largely due to the forests protected through the hard work of conservationists over decades, but urgency demands we cannot stop there. Scientists and young people are clear that there has to be an end to native forest logging.

Our Alternative Budget ends these high-emissions, habitat-destroying practices. It provides funding and a path for transition out of native forest logging, into making the most of our plantation estate and it funds the large-scale restoration and reforestation this rare but physically damaged island urgently needs.

To support this landscape-scale restoration and carbon farming endeavour, the Greens Alternative Budget establishes a Youth Job Guarantee that will provide jobs, twenty-first century skills and a living wage to Tasmanians under 19. We also invest in the delivery of new skills through a well-funded TasTAFE and fund free TasTAFE courses.

As the global economy moves towards a low carbon future, industries are having to adapt. It is vital we ensure a just transition for workers displaced by this seismic shift towards sustainability. Our Just Transition Unit will establish new areas of opportunity to better protect nature and build on the clean, green brand that underpins our economic strengths.

Most Tasmanians know the economic sunshine is not reaching the tens of thousands of Tasmanians living in poverty and experiencing health and housing stress. Our Alternative Budget invests heavily across the forward Estimates in the extra staffing and infrastructure so desperately needed in our overstretched health system. We fund 600 new graduate nurses, 120 permanent pool staff nurses and midwives, 10 psychiatric emergency nurses, along with 224 full-time Ambulance Tasmania new staff and 27 new ambulances to make sure Tasmanians get the best and most timely help they need when they need it.

Whether they are looking to rent or buy, Tasmanians are being priced out of their own paradise. They are paying the price for seven years of a Liberal government that chose to under-invest in increasing the supply of housing. The Greens are not afraid to regulate short stay accommodation like the Liberals, nor are we, like Labor, scared of borrowing when money is as cheap as it is now to fund a massive investment in building 4000 new, energy efficient and affordable Housing Tasmania homes and 2000 new rent-to-buy homes, bringing home ownership back in reach for some of the many thousands of Tasmanians shut out of the housing market.

Our Alternative Budget also establishes the Department of Public Works so government can help to deliver the skilled construction work force to build homes for all Tasmanians. We

also deliver on the poverty relief measures we outlined in the election campaign, including a \$20 million over two years top up to the concession system, school fee and costs relief and food relief funding that will provide security and therefore opportunity to Tasmanians living on the breadline.

Unlike both the Labor and Liberal parties, we recognise gambling addiction is a major contributor to poverty, mental illness, unemployment, homelessness, family breakdown and child neglect. One of the most important steps we can take to ensure generations of Tasmanians are not harmed and utterly impoverished is to get pokies out of pubs and clubs. We made a promise to Tasmanians that we would move to get these predatory machines out of communities and unlike Labor, we keep our promises.

Twenty-first century cities and towns need twenty-first century infrastructure. For nearly eight years we have had roads, roads and more roads and little more than words from the Liberals on modern transport solutions. Our Alternative Budget invests in mobility and modernisation. We establish a Public Transport Authority to run the buses, ferries and Hobart light rail, all of which we fund in our alternative budget, along with free bus transport to get people out of cars, saving money and easing congestion. We also ramp up the rollout of cycling and pedestrian infrastructure and fund statewide network planning to inform current and future transport network needs and the necessary policy responses.

The Greens will always be passionate advocates for quality public education. We recognise it is the foundation of a good life as well as incalculable social and economic benefit to the whole community. We show it is possible to prioritise investment in more teachers, school psychologists, social workers and speech pathologists to give our young learners the best possible start and support them in achieving their life's goals. We commit to an ongoing and transparent review of funding for students with disability along with an \$82 million investment over four years.

We demonstrate fiscal responsibility through targeting big corporations such as big mining, logging, fish farming and gambling that for decades have been paying the lowest royalty and licence fees in the country. The people of Tasmania are being ripped off by corporate rent seekers and their political enablers. It is a heist on a grand scale and we are all the poorer for it. It is well past time the free ride was ended and a better return delivered to the Tasmanian people to fund hospitals, schools and community services. It is time to make the big corporations pay their fair share. Our Alternative Budget raises \$1.4 billion over four years simply by lifting the state's royalty and licence fees to somewhere in the vicinity of the national average.

Coastal communities from the Channel to Port Arthur know the fish farming industry is out of control. Coastal communities all over the island are horrified by the Liberal's industry expansion plans. They also know neither the Liberal or Labor parties stand with them. The Greens do. We do not, and will never, support the industry doubling in size. We will always be the voice in this place for marine protection and for fisheries for the future.

It is well past time for an independent Environment Protection Authority, an authority that has the mandate and the resources to properly regulate industry for environmental protection, rather than for corporate profits. We fund a standalone Environment Department, chief scientist and an independent EPA, boosting its enforcement and monitoring capacity and we restore funding to the Threatened Species Unit to better protect Tasmania's rare, threatened

and endangered flora and fauna. Unlike the Liberals, we will not be waiting until the Swift parrot is extinct to rescue this island's extraordinary wildlife from habitat loss and crop protection permits that are handed out like confetti.

Our lives, our society and our economy are entirely dependent on fresh water. When most of us turn on the tap to get a drink we do not think about how lucky we are to have this essential need available right there at our fingertips or how we quite literally could not live without it. Mr Barnett says that water is liquid gold. We say water is life. It is an important distinction. Water underpins our economy, yes, whether that is through energy generation, agriculture, manufacturing, mining, tourism or a whole suite of other industries. Our island's wild, pure rivers have played a crucial role in building our hard won, clean and green brand from which so many businesses across so many sectors now benefit. In Tasmania, for so many people, water is a fundamental part of our way of life.

In Tasmania, there has generally been a perception that we would have access to a limitless abundance of clean, fresh water but, regrettably, the science is clear that is just not the case anymore. I want to talk about that a bit more today. It is important to understand what exactly we are talking about when we say 'fresh water'. Freshwater resources are made up of surface waters, rivers, streams, creeks and lakes and, groundwater, is water stored in underground, called aquifers.

In Tasmania, we have some pretty solid modelling for normal surface water flows but we do not know anywhere near as much about groundwater, nor about how the two are connected. That means we do not fully understand the extent of our overall freshwater resource, nor the impact our past activities have had on freshwater reserves and, of course, another major key consideration is the impact of climate change on our water supplies.

Climate change will affect how much rain is falling in Tasmania, when it falls and where it falls. We have had some outstanding Tasmanian-driven climate modelling done just over a decade in Climate Futures report. It is work every member of this place should be very proud of. It looked a range of scenarios for Tasmania in terms of changing rainfall patterns over the next century. Given the revisions the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change has done to their climate modelling in that time, which has painted a bleaker picture than previously, there is a clear need for Tasmania to update our projections and to understand what these projections mean for freshwater resources.

Not only do we not fully understand how much freshwater is available or have up-to-date models about how that would be impacted by climate change but we actually do not know how much water is being used in Tasmania. Many Tasmanians would be shocked to learn the vast majority of rural water users do not have a water meter. Instead, we rely on what is basically an honesty system. That is a bit of a worry. Undoubtedly, most water users are honest. They understand the need for sustainable use but there are also those who either inadvertently or deliberately are exploiting the system.

When the Department of Primary Industries, Parks, Water and the Environment has done case studies of expected, versus actual water usage in a particular catchment, the actual usage is significantly higher than it should be based on the licence allocations. We are also in a situation now where DPIPW has stated that many rivers in Tasmania have reached, or are nearing full allocation, where no more water is available from a river. They flagged increased competition for water resources and the need to start to ramp up the use of ground water.

So, we are in a situation where we do not know exactly how large the freshwater resource is. We do not have a current modelling about how that will change due to climate change and we do not know how much water is being used but we are already seeing competition for water and it is intensifying under this Government's policy. On that backdrop, the Government is planning to massively expand water usage in the years ahead in pursuit of their goal to reach \$10 million of farmgate value by 2050.

The reason all this matters so much is because if we extract too much water from our river systems the health of those rivers will decline. They will not have the flow they need to sustain themselves and therefore us. If we do not get this right, the flow-on environmental, social and economic costs will be huge. We cannot leave that loss and that debt to our kids. Expanding our water usage beyond a sustainable level will not only impact on these environmental flows but also drive significant changes to land use, which in turn can lead to issues with sediment, nitrates, effluent and chemicals entering rivers. The link between water extraction, land use change and declining river health has been well documented around the world.

DPIPWE's report Temporal and Spatial Patterns in River Health across Tasmania and the Influence of Environmental Factors is a highly in depth and impressive scientific work that takes a detailed look at this issue in the Tasmanian context. We had to get this important report, through right to information in the election caretaker period - not very transparent, but a matter of huge public interest. The report shows that an increasing number of Tasmania's rivers are declining in health and that the majority of this decline has occurred since around 2014.

The report highlighted how our current approach to water management is failing to account for the cumulative impact of water extraction and use. That lack of cumulative assessment is also missing when it comes to issues such as the proliferation of dams across the island, the use of waterways to convey water from one place to the other and the artificial pulsing of water flows due to pump usage. River health should be of great concern to all of us. Our lives, our economy and our society all depend on our rivers and their health.

We only have to look at New Zealand for the terrible consequences - environmental, social and economic - of failing to take river health and water quality seriously. Regrettably, the flagship water policy the Government has developed, the Rural Water Use Strategy, has not taken on board the reality of what is happening in our rivers. They have continued to press ahead with massive capital investment into increased irrigation and water use and their Rural Water Use Strategy is designed to facilitate this process. This is despite scientists, farmers, anglers, tourism operators, oyster growers and people from all over the state raising serious concerns about the Government's approach and TasWater sounding the alarm bell on the potential impact on the quality of our drinking water.

Thankfully, it is not too late to change course and ensure the health of Tasmania's beautiful rivers and the people and the industries that depend on them well into the future. This is not about holding back economic growth. It is about ensuring we can sustain our economic growth into the future rather than creating a bubble followed by a rapid decline.

PESRAC has recommended that the Government develop '[a] broader water resource policy approach' as 'an immediate priority'. This should be a priority for every member. The Greens are pushing for an inquiry into fresh water management in Tasmania and we hope that this inquiry will be established by the parliament and its recommendations will be used to

develop a broader freshwater policy like PESRAC has recommended. This is one of the most crucial issues we face in Tasmania today and we hope members across this parliament are open to working together to make sure we get the settings right and guarantee future generations of Tasmanians healthy rivers and abundant well-managed fresh water supplies.

Our Alternative Budget will no doubt again be described as 'kooky' by the Premier and the Treasurer. We note that some of the policies he has wrapped up in the kooky bundle in the past have made it into this year's Government Budget. The electrification of our transport system? Tick, Greens policy. The rollout of free energy efficiency upgrades to low income households? Tick, also Greens policy. Extra school trauma specialists? Tick. Carbon farming grants? Tick again. A circular economy? Tick. A medicinal cannabis regime that is not driven by ideological fundamentalism and that really helps people? Tick. I guess our vision for the future is not so kooky after all.

I am really proud of the work Dr Woodruff, our team and I have put into this genuine, triple bottom line, fully costed alternative vision for an island community facing down twin crises of COVID-19 and climate change. We have the courage of our convictions. They are here in this document. We lay out in clear costed language just what you can do when you put this place and our people first, for lutruwita, Tasmania and its people always.

I commend our Alternative Budget to the House.

Dr Woodruff - Hear, hear.

[12.18 p.m.]

Mrs PETRUSMA (Franklin - Minister for Police, Fire and Emergency Management) - Mr Speaker, it is a pleasure and an honour to rise today in response to the Tasmanian Liberal Government's eighth Budget. I take this opportunity to congratulate our Premier and Treasurer, Peter Gutwein, for handing down a budget that will deliver on the Tasmanian Liberal Government's plan to secure Tasmania's future.

The COVID-19 pandemic continues to be the largest shock in generations to our way of life, our society, our economy and our budget, which is why this Government continues to respond swiftly to put in place measures at our borders and in the community to save lives. These measures, difficult as they are, enable us to control the spread of this insidious disease.

Throughout this year Tasmanians have shown and demonstrated great compassion, courage and resilience. I want to commend Tasmanians for all that they have done throughout these many months. I sincerely thank them all because, going forward, the challenge we face will require all Tasmanians to continue to band together as we continue to traverse a health and an economic crisis.

This Budget is the blueprint for our plan to secure Tasmania's future with a plan back to surplus clearly mapped out. Our economic recovery is leading the nation with our unemployment rate at the lowest level in more than 10 years. As the Premier has stated, instead of people looking for work, we have work looking for people.

The 2021-22 Budget provides funding towards all of our election commitments as well as providing a record \$10.7 billion in health; \$8 billion in education, skills and TasTAFE;

\$405 million in housing investments over the next four years; and a total infrastructure spend of \$5.7 billion to support 28 000 jobs over the next four years.

I am proud to represent the electorate of Franklin, and the Budget certainly delivers for Franklin residents. While there are far too many commitments for me to detail today, I am pleased to note that the Budget provides for a number of important new projects committed to in the election, including funding to commence the \$60 million upgrade to deliver a new grade-separated interchange at the Algona Rd roundabout and duplication of the Kingston Bypass.

The Budget also funds the commencement of the \$55 million stage 3 upgrade of the South Arm Highway through Rokeby, providing full duplication between Pass Rd and Oakdowns, getting commuter traffic out of the Rokeby commercial district.

I am especially pleased to note that the Budget provides \$8 million towards a new multi-sports facility at Bayview Secondary College; \$8.5 million for a major redevelopment of Lauderdale Primary School and \$15.1 million for the major redevelopment at Cambridge Primary School.

South of the city, the Budget provides \$10 million towards the \$30 million upgrade of the Kingston Health Centre; \$1 million to upgrade the Dover Medical Centre; and \$300 000 for a new helipad at Dover.

It is a core function of government to ensure that its citizens and communities are kept safe from harm. This Budget certainly delivers on that. Under our emergency management arrangements, Commissioner Hine, as the state controller, has responsibility for coordinating the whole-of-government response to the pandemic. Today I offer my sincere and deep appreciation for the strong leadership of Commissioner Hine, as well as for all of our hard-working emergency services and health personnel, who continue to be on the front lines and keeping us protected and safe from the threat of COVID-19.

To assist our police officers and state servants who are working hard to protect our state from COVID-19, a new state-of-the-art state control centre will be operational this year, providing our emergency services personnel with the equipment and space they need to plan and respond to emergencies. This Budget provides an additional \$3 million towards the state control centre, taking the total Government funding to \$6.5 million.

On top of this, we are providing \$900 000 to establish a permanent multi-hazard intelligence team that will work from the state control centre to plan and provide rapid advice to incident response for all types of hazards.

I want to acknowledge and thank our Tasmania Police, Tasmania Fire Service and State Emergency Service career and volunteer personnel for the incredible work they all undertake each and every day to keeping Tasmanians safe.

This Government also understands that we face increasing climate-related threats and challenges. This is why we are responding and planning for these threats to ensure our communities are ready and resilient. This is why this Budget provides \$125.6 million across the forward estimates for safety and prevention for bushfires and floods.

Since 2014 we have invested \$55 million through the fuel reduction program to protect our communities from bushfire. Building on the success of this program, this Budget provides an additional \$2.5 million to support mechanical clearing. This funding will provide an alternative to burnoffs, where machinery will be used to remove trees and undergrowth. This investment will take our total annual commitment for fuel reduction to \$11.5 million. On top of this, the Government has delivered 12 new fuel reduction team staff to undertake burns across the state, with funding of \$6.98 million provided for these teams in the Budget.

Our Red Hot Tips program has been hugely successful, with 144 farmers and private landholders registering. These participants manage over 327 500 hectares of land and have now completed 197 planned burns. Due to its success, we have now committed a further \$2.5 million for this program to continue to manage and reduce bushfire risk.

Fire danger ratings are important because they provide information so that people can take action to protect themselves and others from the potentially dangerous impacts of bushfires. I am pleased that the 2021-22 Budget provides \$1.379 million for the Australian Fire Danger Rating System, which relates to recommendation 13.1 of the Royal Commission into National Natural Disaster Arrangements.

We are also investing a total of \$2 million to roll out enhanced mission-critical equipment for volunteer brigades, with the first \$1.5 million of this funding provided in this Budget, as well as \$250 000 to provide new-generation defibrillators for volunteer fire trucks, therefore, increasing safety for volunteers as well as their response in rural and remote areas.

It is important that our highly trained volunteers are supported, which is why we are investing \$2.4 million to establish a dedicated team to recruit and support our volunteers across the state. These roles were recently advertised as part of our 100-day plan. We are also continuing to fund our successful volunteer grants program with \$500 000 per annum.

The Budget provides \$3.4 million toward the Railton Flood Mitigation Project and \$4.66 million towards the Latrobe project. We understand the importance of having a levee system that protects residents and properties during significant flood events. These projects will ensure that these regions can be better prepared for future flooding events.

Over the forward estimates, we have also committed more than \$348 million to Tasmania Police as part of our plan to keep Tasmania safe. This Government has a strong track record for rebuilding our police service. On top of the 258 police officers the Government has previously committed, we are providing \$9.4 million in this Budget to commence recruiting an additional 50 police officers over the next five years, bringing the total to 308 additional police officers under this Liberal Government.

This will take Tasmania Police to the highest establishment it has ever had - 1428 police officers, which is a 30 per cent increase since 2014 and will assist Tasmania being one of the safest places in which to live and raise a family.

We are also delivering more support roles to assist our police officers. This Budget includes \$2.5 million over four years to employ eight additional State Service employees who will support police in roles such as prosecution, cybercrime and digital evidence analysis.

Since 2014, the Government has provided significant investment to modernise our police stations around Tasmania. We are already delivering a \$5 million new police station in Longford, a new police station in New Norfolk with an investment of \$5 million; and a new \$12 million emergency services hub at Sorell.

On top of this, we have committed \$20 million towards providing a new police station at St Helens and to upgrading the Bridgewater police station. This Budget provides \$9 million of this funding, with the stations to be completed in 2025-26.

This Government is completing the delivery of a \$1 million northern Special Operations Group facility. I am pleased to note that the 2021-22 Budget also invests \$3.6 million to construct a southern-based Special Operations Group facility. This investment builds on the \$8.9 million announced in last year's budget to employ an additional 20 SOG officers over four years. These additional officers, in the short term, will support Tasmania's COVID-19 response capacity in areas such as quarantine checking, compliance and assessment, which are all critical services in helping to keep our community safe.

The Government has delivered our nation-leading health and wellbeing program for our emergency services personnel in recognition of the challenging and confronting roles they perform. Due to the success and uptake of the health and wellbeing program, we are doubling our initial \$1.5 million investment to \$3 million per annum. This will provide even more support services to both our career and volunteer emergency services personnel. This program is already delivering real results in the form of physical and mental health support through services such as psychologists, physical exercise programs, critical incident stress management and wellbeing support.

I was delighted to launch the country police station relief policy a few weeks ago. The 2021-22 Budget provides funding of \$10.6 million over four years, which will ensure there is a consistent statewide approach to relieving our officers in regional and remote communities when they take leave.

The Budget provides \$9.5 million towards completing our \$21.7 million program of police housing upgrades right across Tasmania. This is delivering 49 new and renovated homes for police officers and their families situated in our remote and regional areas, as well as an economic boost for the construction industry in the communities these police officers serve.

State Growth will deliver a \$4 million grants program to assist local communities to purchase and instal CCTV cameras, to make regional towns in Tasmania safer. CCTV cameras deter criminal activity and provide an additional tool for our police officers that builds on our very successful drone program, which is already delivering results and prosecuting offenders.

For more than 25 years, Crime Stoppers has operated in Tasmania, providing an important avenue for people to report crime and assist police to identify offenders. This Government recognises the important role Crime Stoppers plays in our community. That is why the Budget provides Crime Stoppers with \$100 000 over four years to assist in delivering its education programs and adopting innovative programs such as Bikelinc, which will assist Tasmania Police to return stolen bikes to their owners.

This Government will also deliver a \$5.1 million emergency mental health co-response team that will improve the way that our services respond to critical mental health incidents and

will comprise mental health workers, police, and ambulance officers, in order to ensure better outcomes for patients.

Our marine police officers undertake important roles in policing commercial and recreational marine activities statewide. The 2021-22 budget provides additional funding of \$2.8 million towards the large vessel replacement program to assist with the delivery of a new offshore patrol police vessel to replace the PV *Van Diemen* with tenders currently undergoing evaluation. This takes the total Tasmanian Government investment to \$24.6 million for the large vessel replacement program since 2014.

Eliminating family and sexual violence is a top priority for the Tasmanian Liberal Government. We have a vision for a Tasmania free from all forms of violence and abuse. Violence against anyone in any form is unacceptable, but the harm caused by family and sexual violence is particularly devastating and abhorrent. Since the development of our first family violence action plan, Safe Homes Safe Families, in 2015, we have demonstrated our commitment and our belief that every Tasmanian has the right to live free from abuse, from all forms of violence, and it is everyone's responsibility to help make this happen.

Today I thank all our emergency services and support personnel as well as all those across government and in our non-government organisations right across Tasmania who each and every day assist victim survivors of family and sexual violence and help them in their most vulnerable time of need. Over the past six years the Tasmanian Liberal Government has invested over \$300 million in direct and indirect services in responding to family and sexual violence including \$61.3 million for specific measures under the action plans.

Over the same period, we have also successfully secured \$7.1 million in investment by the Australian government which has enabled the very successful electronic monitoring trial, the Keeping Women Safe in their Homes program, and has also funded a range of family and sexual violence supports under the national COVID-19 partnership agreement. In responding to family and sexual violence the Tasmanian Liberal Government takes a whole-of-government multi-agency approach and we are providing significant investment to deliver the 40 actions under our second action plan, Safe Homes, Families, Communities.

The budget provides \$15.123 million in 2021-22 to complete the delivery of Safe Homes, Families, Communities for family violence prevention, as part of our COVID-19 response and recovery, so as to continue services at the increased post-COVID-19 levels as we work towards delivering our third family and sexual violence action plan. Mr Speaker, this government is also taking action to address emerging needs. We were the first state in Australia to implement a COVID-19 response support package in anticipation of increased family violence.

Whilst statistics have shown only a small increase in reported incidents of family violence, counselling and support services across the state have reported increased demand and complexity of client cases. This is why an extra \$7.45 million has been provided to the family and sexual violence sector as additional funding for increased demand during COVID-19.

In other measures across government that will assist the preventing and responding to family violence, the budget also delivers on our commitment of \$50 000 to undertake a feasibility study for a Northern Midlands safe emergency accommodation facility which will be undertaken in 2021-22.

As well, in Communities Tasmania there is \$2.3 million for the expansion of Magnolia House; \$1 million for Karinya Young Mums; \$2.02 million for intensive family engagement services; \$10.1 million for the Lighthouse Project; \$1.18 million for the Southern Men's Supported Accommodation; and \$5 million for stable, permanent placement and support.

In minister Archer's portfolio the 2021-22 budget delivers on the commitments in our Keeping Women and Girls Safe election policy by providing \$8.8 million to support the funding of legal assistance services which are critical for those experiencing family and sexual violence. The budget also delivers on the government's commitment of \$2.4 million to continue the electronic monitoring of family violence offenders which has been shown to be highly effective at changing the behaviour of offenders.

The initial trial of electronic monitoring showed an 82 per cent decrease in high-risk family violence incidents, a 75 per cent decrease in assaults, and an 81 per cent decrease in threats. There was also an 87 per cent decrease in allegations of emotional abuse, a 74 per cent reduction in property damage and a 100 per cent decrease in reports of stalking. Of those in the trial, 80 per cent also did not reoffend in the six months following the removal of the electronic monitoring device.

Also in minister Archer's portfolio the budget invests \$2.5 million to reduce reoffending and to increase rehabilitation through new partnerships to deliver increased therapeutic support and programs in prison which will have clear benefits for our aim to eliminate family and sexual violence. As well, there is additional funding of \$1.42 million for the Safe at Home family violence service system which includes additional funding for the Family Violence Counselling and Support Service and specialist police family violence prosecutors.

In minister Rockliff's portfolio the Budget also delivers on our commitments to provide an additional \$500 000 in funding to Laurel House to address increased demand for their counselling services and \$100 000 for Yemaya Women's Support Service to support its operations. In minister Howlett's portfolio, to assist with addressing gender barriers for disadvantaged women, the Budget provides \$1.05 million for women's workforce participation; \$25 000 for Girls in Property Pilot program; \$80 000 for International Women's Day small grants program; \$600 000 for promoting women in industry and leadership; \$75 000 for Women in Building and Construction Strategy; \$300 000 for Women in Leadership Scholarships programs; and \$1.5 million for the Women's Strategy, plus the development of a Modern Workplaces Framework.

I am pleased to also note that in minister Barnett's portfolio \$125 000 is being provided in this Budget to establish, in partnership with the Tasmanian Manufacturing Mineral and Energy Council, a diversity action plan to increase the gender and cultural diversity at the mining sector.

In addition in the Health portfolio, there is funding of \$75 000 per year over four years to establish and deliver new women's health services within Family Planning Tasmania clinics to reduce waiting lists and to better manage referrals. Also in Health, \$150 000 is provided to support the Salvation Army in its New Town site master plan to redevelop the site to increase services for vulnerable Tasmanians including support for housing and family violence services.

The Budget also provides \$600 000 to the Holyoake Gottowanna Program to provide counselling and support for persons with alcohol or drug addictions, which will have benefits where addiction is a factor in causing violence in the family home.

In minister Courtney's portfolio there is a strong focus on improving learning outcomes for children and young people by focusing on their wellbeing, providing targeted support to children and young people affected by trauma and family violence as well as those identified as at risk by Child Safety Services. I am also pleased to note that this Budget also allocates \$6 million over four years for supporting students impacted by trauma and a further \$2 million over two years for trauma informed professional development for school leaders, teachers and teacher assistants.

The Budget also provides support for girls who do not have access to sanitary products at home by providing \$320 000 over four years to provide free sanitary products in all government schools. I am also delighted to note that Brave Foundation has secured \$1.4 million to expand their Supporting Expecting and Parenting Teens, or SEPT program, across Tasmania under our \$100 million It Takes a Tasmanian Village, Tasmania's first Child and Youth Wellbeing Strategy for zero to 25-year-olds.

I am pleased to announce that consultation has already commenced on the development of Tasmania's third action plan which will be developed alongside the new national plan to reduce violence against women and children. The third action plan will continue our strong track record. Through a comprehensive consultation process with people who have lived a diverse experience, the community and key stakeholders will develop a range of fully-funded evidence-informed initiatives in order to continue our efforts to eliminate the incidence of family and sexual violence in our communities and to respond to the devastating impact it has on victims and their families.

Mr Speaker, a National Summit on Women's Safety is bringing together all levels of government, together with persons with lived-experience, family violence advocates, service providers and other stakeholders. For some it will continue the important discussions that Australians are now having, building on the existing national plan informing the development of the next national plan that will also commence in July 2022.

We are also working with the Australian Government in regards to funding for Tasmania under the \$261.4 million announced in the 2020-21 federal budget for the new national partnership on family, domestic and sexual violence and we anticipate receiving \$5.65 million over the two-year life of the partnership, 2021-22 to 2022-23, with the first tranche of funding expected to be made available in September 2021.

In my portfolio as Minister for Parks, the 2021-22 Budget has also demonstrated this government's ongoing commitment to invest in our natural places. Our investment since 2014 has been unparalleled with around \$127 million committed in the last two elections. This investment will ensure that our special natural places are protected and presented in ways that allow all people to enjoy the natural and cultural values they contain irrespective of their level of ability.

Through this Budget we will deliver on our 2021 election commitments: commitments totalling \$42 million to future proof our world-renowned national parks and reserves. This investment will power our regional economies in terms of economic activity and jobs creation.

These commitments also build on the Government's record investment in our parks in our previous term, where \$85 million in funding was committed.

In addition to our election commitments, the Government recognises the importance of recreational, off-road vehicle access to the Tasmanian community and is committed to working to develop further opportunities on the west coast. Accordingly, the Budget includes \$10 million over three years for a program that will deliver new and improved recreational driving opportunities across the west coast, such as improvements for tracks at Sandy Cape, the Balfour Track as well as other key recreational activities, vehicle routes and facilities.

Also, as a part of the program, the Government will fund an increase to resourcing for the Parks and Wildlife staff at Arthur River to enable them to better manage as well to protect the natural and cultural values of the area.

As many in the House would be aware, the east coast, and in particular the Freycinet National Park, has been one of the fastest-growing and most popular tourism destinations in Tasmania. This Government continues to take the responsible approach of improving infrastructure to meet existing demands but also taking steps to ensure that the benefits of tourism do not compromise the natural, cultural and social values of the Freycinet Peninsula.

This is why the 2021-22 budget provides \$4 million towards the commencement of construction of a \$14 million visitor gateway at the park. The gateway will include a transport hub with a shuttle bus to the Wineglass Bay car park; the re-alignment of the road to alleviate congestion on Freycinet Drive, and improved amenity for Coles Bay residents.

This project follows on from our joint investment with the Australian Government of \$15.6 million to deliver improved waste-water treatment in the national park, as well as other projects such as the already completed shared-use track from the Freycinet National Park Visitor Centre through to the Wineglass Bay car park and a second lookout at Wineglass Bay.

Further down the coast, on beautiful Maria Island, I am pleased to note that the Budget provides \$2.8 million towards the \$6.8 million stage 3 of the Maria Island Rediscovered Project. The Maria Island National Park is a key attraction on the east coast, which supports, in particular, the Triabunna-Orford area. The Tasmanian Government recognises this, which is why we will be investing in crucial, basic visitor infrastructure, such as new waste-water treatment facilities, improved electricity generation infrastructure, including power connections to all buildings in the Darlington precinct, as well as improving rainwater storage infrastructure and crucial heritage maintenance. Mr Speaker, this investment will ensure that Maria Island remains a unique and sought-after destination on the east coast of Tasmania.

Further south again, we have committed \$1.5 million towards a \$3 million project to redevelop visitor facilities at the Tasman Arch and Devils Kitchen site. This exciting project will include an iconic suspension bridge across the Devils Kitchen chasm, which will be another sure drawcard for the Tasman Peninsula, following on from our recent investment in the Three Capes Track, Remarkable Caves, Shipstern Bluff and Pirates Bay. The Budget will also provide \$1.2 million towards our \$2.8 million commitment to unlock the potential of the Ben Lomond National Park. For many years, Ben Lomond has drawn crowds as a ski destination. Its proximity to Launceston makes it perfect for redevelopment as a year-round destination. Through the life of the investment we will undertake the crucial planning needed

to guide future development of the site, as well as identifying the priority infrastructure required in the development of the site as a year-round destination.

The Budget also provides \$600 000 of a \$900 000 commitment to support Flinders Island's important and growing tourism economy. The investment will improve access to some of the island's outstanding natural assets, such as Trousers Point Beach, as well as investing in camp facilities at park sites right across the island. The Budget has also provided funding for a small but really important project near Smithton, improving access to the Black River day use area, by upgrading Spion Kop Road.

The Government is committed to entering into contracts for the works to be completed within 100 days. I am pleased to note that the Parks and Wildlife Service has already gotten on with the job and with the help of our friends at the Circular Head Council, we are delivering this important roadworks already.

Another 100-day commitment that has been completed relates to my own electorate of Franklin and the Cockle Creek campground upgrades. We committed to the release of a redevelopment plan for the Cockle Creek site within 100 days. On 14 August, we released the plan for public feedback. This plan includes: managing the campground and day-use areas more sustainably so as to protect the natural and cultural values; relocating the road behind the camping areas to increase the overall amenity as well as to reduce the safety risk issues of crossing roads to reach the foreshore; minimising vehicle entry points; internal vehicle access tracks and parking so as to improve safety and to maximise camping space; as well as providing for a better mix of camping style opportunities to cater for different needs. Cockle Creek is the southern gateway for the Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area and the Budget delivers \$1.75 million towards this exciting \$3 million project, allowing it to follow on from the recent completion of a new day-use shelter and toilet facility at the site.

Also in Franklin, a \$3 million redevelopment of the Hastings Thermal Pool site is fully funded in the Budget. The Hastings Caves State Reserve is already a regional tourism drawcard and renovation of the popular thermal pool and surrounds will ensure that the facilities are suitable for all, including the less able members of our community.

At Mount Field National Park, initial public funding of \$200 000 has been provided for the \$1.8 million project to upgrade the master planning works and also to create a new arrival concourse at the entrance to the park and will progress one of the priority actions from the Tourism Master Plan for the Tasmania Wilderness World Heritage Area.

On Tasmania's west coast, the Budget provides \$600 000 to undertake a project to complete stage 2 of the Halls Tower Falls Trail at Queenstown. Stage 2 will provide an attraction in its own right, taking visitors right to the top of the falls, providing a complementary experience to the extensive work already being undertaken by the West Coast Council in building a mountain biking destination at Mount Owen.

The development of a grant deed with the West Coast Council was promised as one of the Government's 100-day commitments and I am delighted that this has also already been achieved.

Further to the north west, the redevelopment of the Edge of the World experience at Arthur River will commence with the first \$750 000 of this \$2.75 million commitment funded. This will provide an important visitor experience in the far north west of Tasmania.

Attractions such as this are crucial for the far north-west region to enable tourism operators to draw visitors to the area for multiple nights. The area receives around 150 000 visitors, yet only about 30 000 of those visitors head into the area west of Stanley and we want all areas of Tasmania to benefit from our strong visitor economy.

The Edge of the World project will provide another opportunity to deliver high-quality interpretive materials to highlight the outstanding values of the western Tasmanian Aboriginal cultural landscape. This, along with our \$10 million investment in the outcome demonstrates the Liberal Government's commitment to tourism and recreation in the area.

The Budget also provides an initial \$200 000 to commence our \$1.7 million investment in the picturesque Cape Bruny site in the South Bruny National Park. This project will allow the commencement of upgrades to day-use facilities, improving road access and car parking facilities and undertaking site planning work to guide future development. These works will ensure that the site remains able to cope with increasing number of visitors.

In Launceston, we have provided \$500 000 of our \$2.8 million investment in the Tamar Islands Wetlands Centre to commence the replacement of the boardwalk, which has almost 50 000 steps of feet on it each and every year. The site is a superb wetland ecosystem of mudflats, lagoons and islands with abundant wildlife and plant species, operated 364 days a year by a fantastic team of dedicated volunteers who provide visitors with valuable educational and recreational experiences.

The 21-22 Budget funds the commitments we have already made to the Tasmanian people and charts a steady and clear path to our economic recovery following the impact of COVID-19. There is always more work to do and I look forward to working as part of the Tasmania Liberal Government team to deliver on our strong plan to secure Tasmania's future.

[12.48 p.m.]

Ms HADDAD (Clark) - Mr Speaker, I rise to make my contribution in response to the Budget handed down by the state Liberal Government last week. We have heard a lot said so far from both sides of the Chamber about the priorities we are all facing as Tasmanians, and a lot of conjecture about what Tasmanians need to see from their Government and the challenges that we all face.

People in my electorate of Clark have weathered the events of the global pandemic, I believe, with a significant amount of fortitude and grace. It has not been easy for anyone in the state. It has not been easy on working families or on business owners or on the dedicated staff across the State Service, including health staff working across the hospital and community health settings, staff in biosecurity, in transport and across the whole public sector. Their work has been tireless and it has been second to none. Those people who have been working tirelessly to keep Tasmania safe need to be commended on the work they have done throughout the pandemic.

There have been increasing uncertainties, needing to operate in increasingly rapid ways which have not previously worked in the State Service. Sometimes the State Service can be a

bit slow and clunky, so to suddenly have to move to a rapid way of working has been grasped with both hands by many public service agencies which have had to operate in these unprecedented times in a really different way.

The people of Clark are optimistic, hopeful and prepared to do what is necessary to keep our community safe in the pandemic. Clark is a special place and our community look after one another. I have spoken previously in this place about a lot of the smaller community initiatives that have sprung up during the pandemic, things like Neighbourhood Houses reaching out and providing support to people who had never before needed to seek the support of community services.

Things like Show Hope, which was established by the Wellspring Anglican Church in Sandy Bay who were providing support initially to international students who were let down by the federal and state governments in the support they needed during the pandemic and who were unable to return to their home countries. That community initiative grew to a point where they were providing training and employment opportunities for those young people. Even small community initiatives like Facebook groups sprang up around the state to provide immediate and rapid support to people in individual communities. The people of Tasmania and the people of Clark are pretty special and resilient and I am proud to serve our community.

However, the communities in Clark have not been rewarded in this budget. They have been left behind in a deluge of rising costs of living, stagnant wage growth, increased power prices, increased cost of living across other utilities and other household pressures, as well as job insecurity, unemployment and under-employment. We have seen in national unemployment figures, an artificial decrease in unemployment figures which is reflective of the number of people who have had to drop out entirely from the employment market, which is putting huge pressure on those people's families, households and their ability to lead a dignified life.

Under-employment is a huge and growing issue and has been amplified and exacerbated by the pandemic, with people having to cobble together multiple short-term casual contracts or short-term jobs in the 'gig economy' which are inherently unstable and insecure regarding having a predictable salary to be able to pay your bills and feed your family. That is growing and has been compounded by the challenges the pandemic has brought upon us all.

All of us are proud to call Tasmania home and feel lucky to live here. Increasingly more people want to call Tasmania home but what about Tasmanians who proudly call this Island home but are displaced, who do not have a safe home, have no roof over their head, and no place to stay. They live in the constant stress of looming or potential homelessness and of juggling those insecure work contracts, sometimes across multiple casual jobs. They are trying to stay afloat in a precarious housing market with high private rent prices and private property prices which are simply becoming unapproachable for anyone on a medium income, let alone anybody on a low income.

Add to this the growing wait times for public and social housing which even in the Budget papers handed down this week, are set to continue to grow. Together this paints a stressful and worrying picture for many of our fellow Tasmanians. As Labor Leader Rebecca White detailed in her speech yesterday, the cost of living is rising for Tasmanians every day. For parents of Tasmanian children, the reality of rising costs of living could not be starker. During the recent election campaign, I spoke to a parent while door-knocking in Glenorchy who broke down in

tears when I told her about Labor's free school lunch policy. She told me that there are days when she does not send her daughter to school at all because she cannot afford to send her with food in her lunchbox. How devastating for that young mum and for that young student who not only misses out on food, Mr Speaker, but she misses out on education as well.

Labor's policy for free school lunches would have seen all children in Tasmanian government schools provided with a free healthy, nutritious lunch every day, non-means-tested. The program would have been rolled out across the state with support for schools to embed it in the curriculum support for families and for teachers. To me, the policy was as much a health policy as it was an education one. Just imagine: Labor had been elected and we were able to implement that policy, what our state would look like in one or two or three generations.

It would be one or two or three generations of people learning about healthy eating from a young age, learning about how to grow and prepare healthy food, having that embedded in their learning from the early years. Support for families who are suffering food insecurity - something that we know is growing in Tasmania every day. Most people in this chamber are parents themselves and I ask you to imagine the stress and the heartbreak of that young mum just trying to keep food on her table and ensure that her child receives the education that she has every right to receive.

No parent should be forced to choose between feeding their child and sending them to school but this parent had no choice because when your pay packet only goes so far, you do not have choices. No parent should face that level of food security alone. No person should feel like there is no safety net and no person deserves to feel like they have to live without hope of change but, sadly, that story is all too common because poverty in Tasmania is far too common.

We know that on many of the lists of social indicators where any state would hope to be listed high, we are listed low. Conversely, where you want to be low on the list, we are often right up at the top with high rates of chronic and preventable disease, high rates of smoking, high rates of social disadvantage, low rates of school retention and low rates of engagement with training and education opportunities.

These are massive problems that need to be addressed in a holistic way, in a way that implements policy across government, that moves away from the siloed approach that government agencies have been stuck in for such a long time, so that we can really properly and truly start to tackle some of those social indicators that lead to entrenched poverty because we all know that there is entrenched poverty in our state and there is generational poverty and generational unemployment.

I do not believe that anyone in here does not want to see those things improve, Mr Speaker, but the policy example that I just gave that we took to the election was just one of a suite of policies that we took to the Tasmanian people, one of which would have had a significant impact on starting to tackle food insecurity, starting to tackle some of those chronic health problems that we see in our state.

There are about 120 000 people living in severe poverty in Tasmania. The Australian Council of Social Services (ACOSS) reports that the poverty line is \$426 a week or \$852 a fortnight and we know that anybody living on federal government pensions and subsidies are

often forced to live below that poverty line. That does remove choices when you are living on such a tight and stretched income. It can lead to people feeling like there is no hope for the future.

We cannot talk about increased costs of living without talking about things like stagnant wage growth, without talking about poverty and homelessness, and without talking about the housing market that is squeezing Tasmanians and, particularly, the residents of Clark to breaking point. Labor leader Rebecca White yesterday described in her budget speech that median rents for a three-bedroom property in the March quarter were \$450 a week in the greater Hobart area. Power bills, car registration, medical bills, school fees and uniforms all add up.

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

APPROPRIATION BILL (No. 1) 2021 (No. 36)

Second Reading

Resumed from above.

Ms HADDAD (Clark) - Mr Speaker, prior to the break, I was speaking about what an honour it has been to take on the responsibility to be Labor's shadow housing spokesperson. I was speaking about some of the changes I see as necessary across our housing and homelessness sector. I thought it would be useful to speak about some of the issues that have come across my desk as a local member. The number one constituent issue raised by people who come to my office seeking support, and having previously worked as an electorate officer many years ago, even back then housing was the number one issue people would seek support for when they came to visit my boss. I have no doubt it would be similar across the state, regardless of people's party.

Some of those experiences that have been shared with me about people who are waiting, and families waiting, for years on housing waitlists, often couch-surfing or sleeping in cars, sometimes with young families.

There was a single father who I door-knocked in Claremont recently. He has full-time custody of his three daughters - two teenagers and a younger one - and they are living at his father's house. They are lucky that they do, at least, have some family support but, for various reasons, it is not really secure, stable or appropriate accommodation for that dad and his three daughters. He has some health conditions. Because of the accommodation they are living in, the girls have beds but he sleeps on the floor. That is exacerbating his health conditions. He has been on the waiting list for more than three years. He has had multiple letters written by various politicians. To be honest, he seemed pretty fed up with the system and that is often the case with people who have come through our office. People access support from their local politician when they are already feeling pretty fed up with the system.

He did not want me to write another letter because he said he had a number of them written by other politicians and nothing has changed. He said some friends have suggested that he should leave his father's house and declare himself homeless. Then he might have a better chance of being housed, even though he is already on the priority one wait list. He will not do that because if he does, he runs the risk of losing custody of his children, which is a completely

untenable and unfathomable reality for him. So, he stays in his current situation which is not really safe or secure accommodation for him and his daughters. It is an awful situation to be forced into. You cannot describe it as a choice because that is no choice.

Another person who engaged with my office quite early on after I was elected in 2018 had been homeless most of his adult life and he had become really distrustful of the services across the sector. He refused to engage. That is often what happens as well when people have had a history and a childhood of trauma and they feel let down by the system. He was quite committed to his life and he felt there was no other option. He described himself as homeless by choice. He is a fierce advocate for other homeless people and I believe he has a deep understanding of what works and what does not work. He has been living it for years.

He too has been let down by the system. He told us that a lot of times. He kept coming back to my office anyway. He would come in for a chat, for a cup of tea or coffee, some warmth and to tell us about other people, friends of his, who he believed needed support and advocacy from our office, like letters to the housing minister and other support services. He had really become a friend of the office and I hope that we are an office where he feels comfortable, welcome and can trust us.

One day it became clear that this trust had been built because he handed me a piece of paper with a phone number written on it - a stranger - and he asked if I would call that person on his behalf. I did not know who the person was and neither did he. It had been given to him by a friend. I called the number and it turned out it was the direct number for a caseworker at a local housing provider. Three years coming into our office, not once had he previously accepted or wanted our offers of advocacy or expressed an interest in being housed, even when we talked to him about those things. This felt like quite a breakthrough when he asked me to make that call. I was really impressed with the service that was provided by that housing provider. He is now housed for the first time in a very long time and it was an emotional day for all of us when that happened.

I was impressed with the service he was provided. He is now receiving not just a roof over his head but other supports he needs as well. He had slipped through the cracks for years and that had been compounded through a range of negative experiences he had had with government services in his life. He is just one example of someone who slipped through the cracks for a long time.

Another person came to my office and reported that he had been on the housing waiting list for three or four years. He had been living in his car outside his father's house. His father was elderly and unwell, and he had become his dad's primary carer. Living in the house was not safe or suitable for this man for a number of reasons. While he was his dad's primary carer, and he was happy to step into that role, he had to sleep in his car out the front of his dad's house. He had been on the housing register, as I said, but when he became his dad's carer, an error was made and he was incorrectly taken off the register as he was now deemed as housed, which was not the case. It was a massive blow for him. After advocacy from my office, as well as from the Hobart Community Legal Centre and the Tenants' Union, he was eventually housed. He is yet another example of the kind of complex needs sometimes not being met. In too many cases they are not being met and people are slipping through the cracks.

There is no one solution to the housing crisis. It has to encompass a whole person's experience and all of the different complex needs that people bring to their lives.

Another example was a single mum who was couch surfing with her two young daughters under the age of 10 for four-and-a-half years. She was on the priority wait list for social housing and that was for most of her daughters' lives. They had been waiting and waiting for a safe place to call home. We had a pretty standard letter back about her that we receive a lot of times when we advocate on behalf of people waiting for secure housing. That was that she should expand the number of suburbs in her housing application - suburbs away from where her children attended school or from where their connections were to friends and family. In her case, she had actually already listed nearly every suburb in the greater Hobart region on her application.

It is increasingly frustrating for people to be pushed through this continuing cycle of being told to expand their suburb selection when sometimes they have put every suburb south of Oatlands. They would be happy to live anywhere if they could just get a secure house. It is untenable that that single mum of two should be left waiting for four years for a house to turn up.

We know that houses do not just turn up. They have to be built; they have to be maintained and that is what we hear every day and what all of us know and recognise. The Government has made some big promises in this Budget to build thousands of houses. That is despite their relatively poor record in delivering on the promises they had already made in previous years. I am looking forward to holding the minister for Housing accountable on his commitments to building more social and affordable housing.

This is something that adversely affects young people, in particular. We know that young people will be bearing the burden of the global pandemic long into their adult lives and after many of us are long gone: young people who often, as I was saying before, work multiple jobs, often in casualised work settings, just to afford rent and basics. They are young people whose wages are not growing and will not grow as long as we continue to run with federal and state government policies that encourage casualisation of the workforce and increased outsourcing, particularly of government jobs, to labour hire companies.

The young people I speak to every month in my electorate office know that the burden of the pandemic is theirs to bear into the future. We should be doing everything we can as community leaders to lessen that burden. Youth homelessness is on the rise, as is the cost of living. There is massive pressure on Tasmanian families and they cannot keep up, so how can we possibly expect young people not to feel that same pinch or worse.

Recently I met with two young women who came to visit me in my office. They both had had a bit of a rough start to life and wanted to meet with me to discuss their experiences of homelessness as a young person under 18, and their experiences of the Health and Community Services system as well. Their passion and enthusiasm were evident and so warm. They wanted to make Tasmania a better place for young people and that was their motivation in visiting me. They had not visited a politician before and did not know what we were all about but they heard it was worth coming and expressing their views to me. I felt grateful and lucky to be able to sit in a room with those young people for an hour to hear about their experiences and views. To me, they have the best understanding of anyone of the service system.

Like the housing constituent I mentioned earlier, they had lived that system from a young age. They cared about other young people just like them. They came prepared with questions for me but they also came prepared with solutions. This generation of young people cannot

wait and will not wait for us to do it for them. They are tired and fed up with inaction. They said that there is a massive need for specialist emergency shelters for young people as well for step-down accommodation. They said that services like Mara House and Colville House from Colony 47 do an amazing job and they do, but it feels that they are sometimes forced to operate as crisis shelter accommodation provider because of the lack of other supports in the system, or supports that do exist but are drastically underfunded and unable to meet demand.

They mentioned they felt unsafe at the Hobart Night Space. This is a service that is important and necessary, but it is an emergency service. It should not be relied upon to form a permanent part of our housing solution and it is certainly not designed for children, teenagers and young people. Despite that, we hear stories of young people staying there. These young women had both spent time and had worrying experiences. We have heard of single parents staying in the Hobart Night Space with young children in tow.

Young people deserve to be assured that they will be supported and believed in the face of the crisis that is facing our housing system. We have to do more, we need more sheltered accommodation for young people but also for adults, with providers having to turn people away from shelters across Tasmania every day at alarming rates.

We need more step-down for emergency shelter accommodation so that people can safely transition from that crisis support into long-term safe and secure housing. We need more long-term safe and secure housing, affordable for all Tasmanians.

That is a brief contribution from me on my new portfolio of Housing, which I feel privileged to hold.

I have not left myself as much time as I intended to speak about my other portfolios but I will touch on my portfolio as shadow minister for corrections and shadow attorney-general and if time allows, a little on the portfolio of multi-cultural affairs and equality.

Risdon Prison has been at boiling point for years now and the situation is only getting worse. The minister has shown an alarming lack of action in resolving the issues in the prison that have been raised with her now for years. She has plans to build a brand-new maximum-security prison but there is no evidence that this will be run in any way different from the current system at Risdon which is at crisis point. Risdon almost has a revolving door with more than 50 per cent of people released from Risdon back within two years. That means that our communities are less safe because people returning to prison within two years means they are returning to crime. Something is wrong with our justice system if our rates of prison return are so high. It means our communities are being failed because they are less safe and it means inmates are being failed because they are not getting the support they need on the inside to prepare for life on the outside.

If people exit prison with no money, no home to stay in and busted up family relationships, is it any wonder that some people become so desperate that they return to offending to survive? Then they end up back inside and the revolving door continues. It is not good enough and we must do better.

The Custodial Inspector's most recent annual report was tabled today. It confirms what he has been telling this minister now, since that office was established: rolling lockdowns, sometimes for 24 hours a day, days on end, breaching international law; lack of access to basics

like programs, phone calls, family visits, attendance by lawyers and other professionals while lockdowns are in place; the majority of lockdowns being caused by staff shortages. Sometimes the prison is 15 to 20 staff short to open a shift safely so rolling lockdowns are the only option. It is recognised that they are not safe for staff or for inmates and they should be used as a last resort but, instead, they are being used far too often.

There are burgeoning workers compensation claims and staff off on workers compensation and other forms of leave including stress leave from the conditions of working there. New recruits are having to be retrained because training could not be delivered correctly. New recruits are not keeping up with the rate of people leaving the service altogether. There are alarming reports of bullying amongst staff being at an all-time high.

Another thing covered in the Custodial Inspector's most recent annual report is the drastic lack of resourcing experienced in his office, which means that while this Government claims the credit of having established that office, he cannot actually perform his functions to the best of his ability because of a lack of resourcing. For that reason the whole system suffers. I acknowledge that people working in the prison are doing a job that is a necessary job. It is one that has its own inherent dangers but every worker has the right to be safe at work and this Government is not doing what they need to do to keep those workers safe.

I will touch now on multicultural affairs, and I am proud to also hold this shadow portfolio for the Labor Party. I believe Australia is the best example of multiculturalism in the world. So much of our rich history is built on the legacy of migrant families from all different backgrounds, living and working in harmony side by side. In Tasmania alone, there are now 177 migrant communities represented and migrant communities are growing each year.

Like thousands of others, I, too, am from a migrant background and I am proud of my family's migrant history. Like many Tasmanians in our community, we have all been alarmed by the unfolding events in Afghanistan. Labor condemns in the strongest terms the attacks at Kabul airport and across the country of Afghanistan and the unfolding crisis is gut-wrenching. We all have to do what we can to bring people to safety.

I am grateful that the Government has taken decisive action to support the Tasmanian Afghan community and their loved ones through providing emergency funding to the Tasmanian Refugee Legal Service, the Migrant Resource Centre and the Migrant Resource Centre North and the Multicultural Council of Tasmania after my question in parliament last week. I know how hard these organisations work every day but I also acknowledge the enormous added pressure they have been put under to support the local Afghan community as this unexpected crisis evolves and unfolds.

In particular, I know that the Tasmanian Refugee Legal Service is working around the clock to assist with visa applications. This added crisis funding that we welcome after raising it in parliament last week will also be welcomed by the TRLS, by the MRC and the MRC North and MCOT. I want to put on the record today my appreciation and respect for the work that they do.

I fear that I have not left myself enough time. I seem to do that every year on the Budget response. I always have more to say but I run out of time to do so, but thank you for the opportunity to put on the record my thoughts on this year's Budget.

[2.48 p.m.]

Ms OGILVIE (Clark) - Mr Speaker, at this stage of the Budget reply much has already been traversed. It has been a very unusual experience for me in particular, with the election and now being part of a government when it is bringing down its Budget. I want to reflect on some of those experiences and how it relates to the issues that I have continued to focus on and some successes for constituents and constituent groups that we have been able to bring forward. I also felt that it was a real moment in time during a pandemic, the likes of which we have not seen since the Spanish flu.

I will start by opening with some thoughts. I was searching for some writing and some thinking around the place we find ourselves in and how we all need such deep resilience at the moment and particularly thinking about children, teenagers, my kids; the next generation coming through.

I found a poem which I want to read and it was Nelson Mandela's favourite poem. We know he went through some hard times himself. It seems to me in today's very uncertain and tumultuous pandemic world that there is a place for thinking about sentiment and thinking about people, and thinking about why it is we make the choices that we make, and thinking about the lines that thread through the budgetary process and the focus that we give to particular things more so than others.

It is a poem called *Invictus* written by William Ernest Henley in 1875. It is a very famous poem:

Out of the night that covers me,
Black as the pit from pole to pole,
I thank whatever gods may be
For my unconquerable soul.

In the fell clutch of circumstance
I have not winced nor cried aloud.
Under the bludgeonings of chance
My head is bloody, but unbowed.

Beyond this place of wrath and tears
Looms but the Horror of the shade,
And yet the menace of the years
Finds and shall find me unafraid.

It matters not how strait the gate,
How charged with punishments the scroll,
I am the master of my fate,
I am the captain of my soul.

This is a poem that has particular resonance, I think, at the moment. It is in the spirit of that sense of resilience and personal autonomy and spirit and passion for doing the right thing, the ethical thing, that I want to make this contribution today.

It is such a privilege to be a member of parliament. Somebody said that to me the other day, 'what a privilege it is,' and they were right. The people in this place are leaders of their

community. We have our ears to the ground and we are able to bring forward discussions and thoughts that would otherwise not be ventilated.

The recording of the last two years in particular on *Hansard* is a really important diary of experience, where we hear from every corner and every place in our state about the issues that are affecting our people, Tasmanians, our constituents. I have been interested to hear other members talk about the particular stories of individual cases that have been brought forward to them. We know that at the end of the day it is all about working as a team, and Team Tasmania, and the Government from my experience is a really good team. To have a good team you need a good leader and the leadership matters. Teamwork matters. The culture of your team, your government and your party really does matter.

That is the difference, in my experience, between where I have been before and where I am now. I thank members of the Government and the Liberal Party, and Elise in particular, for making me feel so welcome and for listening when I have brought forward issues, particularly the constituent issues.

Mr SPEAKER - Hear hear.

Ms OGILVIE - Thank you, Mr Speaker. I know we are a confident state, we are a confident people. To have that confidence, to generate real confidence, takes a certain quality. It is part art. It is part good budgetary management. It is business confidence but it is also in people's spirits to know that Tasmania in our current state will go forward with strength and go forward as a good, tight-knit community that we have always been.

I have many constituent issues that pitch-up my office and I am going to talk about some of the more unusual ones, but ones that really also matter. I have worked, as the House would be aware, on international separations - the issues around people stuck overseas for many years. That work came from my work originally as a pro bono refugee lawyer. In fact, I helped set up the Refugee Legal Service which was an outcome of work that my team and my pro bono friends, at the time, were doing. It is good that more funding is being received. I will also say there were many voices calling for more funding and I certainly got a good hearing on that internally.

Women, climate change, refugees, multicultural affairs - these really matter in the electorate of Clark but they matter right across Tasmania. Who would have thought we would have a fabulous Liberal premier who gets those issues, who understands what we need to do to not only show that we are listening but to be listening and to respond to these issues.

I have long been a champion on action on climate change despite some may suggest that it is not the case. I have drafted a bill previously to promote climate change action. It was with great delight that I saw in this Budget the landing of some strong elements and funding to bring forward the capacity to create the change that we need.

We are going to need to be innovators. We are going to need engineers. We are going to need good work by our farmers. I was with a group that is particularly focused on soil and land care, farmers, people on the land; they must be brought to the table because they have so much to tell us. We can only do this together. I am pleased to see the funding go into that.

I raised an eyebrow when I was listening to one of the contributions last night which seemed to be focused very much on an international perspective of women's issues. It did not seem to be a contemporary take on what women's lives are currently in Tasmania, and what women need. I am strong supporter of women. I am strong supporter of working mums because I have been a working mum my entire journey through motherhood and family life.

Of course, fathers matter too, and very much so. On the women's side of things, I have been very fortunate to have a role and to be able to participate in public life as a politician and I hope to show a little bit of leadership that you can balance or manage - juggle - children with public life. Now entering my third term here, I have had three children during this job. What I try to do is say to those coming through after me, you can do it, bring the family in. That is how we have always done it. It is Tasmania and we can all work together. It is really good for the kids to see that happening.

My mantra as an independent has been jobs, jobs, jobs. Now as a Liberal, my mantra is jobs, jobs, jobs. That is a good thing as well. We want jobs for everyone. We have seen a lift in employment rates. When we were having debates around the pandemic impacts on large employers - and I know we have had discussions this morning about small businesses and micro-businesses - but debates around large employers, particularly Incat, 500 families in my electorate are employed there. I lobbied incredibly hard, as those in the Chamber would remember, in support of making sure that Incat had sustainability funding to get work under way.

Jobs are not just about making the money. There is a sense of purpose, reason and dignity that go into keeping them there. The Premier was superb in listening to those issues and his door was always open to me. I was very grateful for that. To see Incat underway building their 'spec boat' is fantastic. There is also \$100 million we are able to secure for Tasmanian advanced manufacturing as part of the offshore building of the *Spirit of Tasmania* vessels and that \$100 million is going to allow to kickstart some new ventures, some innovative businesses but also to help existing smaller organisations achieve a slice of a much bigger project even though it had to be constructed offshore.

I am very proud of that. I am very proud of the Glenorchy Jobs Hub. That was a very exciting day when that was launched. People will remember; my very first question coming back in as an independent was what are going to do about the unemployment rate in Glenorchy? Please could we have a jobs hub? I would like to thank the minister very much. She is grinning away there. Great job, minister, well done. The Independent member for Clark was very supportive and was at the launch as well in her former role. We are probably all on a unity ticket on that.

It is not all just about work though, is it? We have to play as well and have fun because it has not been an easy couple of years. I am ecstatic to see money going into the Queenborough Oval redevelopment. It is important. A huge number of clubs, groups and players use that oval. It has not been touched probably since the 1950s, maybe even the 1930s. Wearing my president of the SFL hat when I did the audit across playing grounds in the south, it would have to have been at the bottom of the barrel for facilities. That is bad because it means women are effectively excluded from participating in women's football and the competition that we started when I was president. The reason is, of course, as a traditionally male sport there is one set of change rooms and one set of bathrooms. They had needed an upgrade for a long time. Working very closely with the Queenborough clubs, which included South Hobart Cricket as well, we

were able to land a fantastic vision in a collaborative exercise to put much needed money into that: again, finding these gems in your electorate where you can help people with the things that really matter on a Saturday morning for the sporting mums and dads and the kids.

Getting women engaged in football is a massive thing. Women's football has taken off. I am very proud of the work that all our clubs have done and it is good to see a more level playing field of money going in. I know the Sports minister is all over it and doing a great job making sure that we have what we need.

When you travel around the length and breadth of Clark, or perhaps even further, you will see girls streaming into the football grounds wearing their football boots. They are good. The game is a little different from how men play it. It has, I think, more aerial elements. Being a netballer myself, I know a lot of the girls have come over from netball. I note that the grand final of the women's SFL is coming up and that Hutchins Women's goes in as a favourite but let us see what happens.

If we can get our community football leagues organised, and properly funded, the clubs pumping, with the women's competition coming on board, it will double the number of players, double the number of memberships. It has brought more volunteers to the game, it brings more turnstile clicks and more money to the game. It is a really smart way to bolster what is a traditional sport for Tasmania. It will support our bid for a Tasmanian AFL club, which will have two teams at least, a men's and a women's team. I always gently rib the Premier to not forget the women's team; it will be a massive achievement and will give a pathway for our girls to go right through and play in the big league.

There is some other really practical stuff that I am pleased about. I think it was the *Mercury* that coined it 'wavy Davey Street'. It is a real practical problem of having one of our main arterial roads as I described it at the time like a soggy birthday cake. The waviness of the road caused a trip hazard. I became aware because our truck driving industry body contacted me to say that they had had an experience of a young girl crossing the road with her baby who had fallen over because of the waviness of the tarmac. It was a traffic hazard. It was dangerous. It was upsetting. She had to go to hospital.

On the human side, it is very important that our city is liveable and workable, and safe for pedestrians. It is also important that people can get in their car or truck, get to work on time, have a sensible journey that does not leave them feeling stressed and overwrought because of traffic issues and sitting in the traffic. Doing that work on the roads, both on Davey and Macquarie streets to fix the substrata upon which the asphalt has subsided in places is long overdue. I am delighted we are able to do that. Our motorbike riders who head up to the mountain will be pleased as it was dangerous for them.

The Sandy Bay Rowing Club pontoon is much needed and overdue as well. We have champion rowers in the House, and we all understand that Tasmanians have such a deep affinity with water sports. Many Olympians have come from Tasmania both in sailing and rowing. The Sandy Bay Rowing Club is an old and historic club. One of their honour boards, which I always read when I go there, lists all the boys who were rowing at that club and then went off to World War I. These deep connections from community provide a sense of place for people in these clubs - perhaps their grandfather and great-grandfather may have rowed or participated in them - and are important. The floating pontoon will allow another generation of kids to have a contemporary experience, beginning their rowing careers.

The bowls clubs are always fun and we are always well received with those. Elise and I had a great day at the Sandy Bay Bowls Club. We were able to make some commitments there. The Attorney-General is much better at bowls than I am but I may have taken out the netball prize, so the competition is still alive.

The community garden at Bucaan Community House in Chigwell is in a fabulous spot. It felt like a place where the bees would come to play but it was the local people who come to that garden, to participate and do work in that community garden. I am pleased and happy to see some much-needed funding going in there.

At the other end of the spectrum and the electorate are Tassie Mums. They are great women. They decided that there was not enough help for new mums and mums who were not particularly well heeled. What I love about them is that they have some real standards. They ask for donations but they have to be donations of what you would want, not something that is broken or chipped. I feel it is a gift to give people quality items that make a new mum, whatever age, feel special and loved. Child seats need to be of a certain standard and so it is much better if they are new. They have had a good relationship with the RACT in the past to fit those. Those local community collaborations are incredibly important and I have a passion for mothers and babies' issues, so a big call out for Tassie Mums. What a great group.

Heading up the hill to Mt Nelson where I lived for many years, is a great spot. Mount Nelson Primary School needed some help with their oval. What I love about Mount Nelson primary is that it is such a little school on the mountain. One of my kids went there for a short time and he won the swimming races. I asked, 'Who else was swimming?' He said, 'Mum, mountain kids don't swim, it's how come I won it'. He was teasing of course. It is a small and beautiful school. They needed some help with the oval, particularly its facilities so I was pleased to campaign and lobby hard for money to go into it. I am looking forward to that coming to fruition as well.

One of the stranger requests I have had but one that I like because I love my music was to help buy bagpipes for the Derwent Bagpipers. They needed additional bagpipes because the next generation coming through needed bagpipes to be able to practise on. Drawing on my Ogilvie Scottish history, we went in hard and lobbied for that. I understand those bagpipes have been procured and the kids are currently learning on them. We must remember that when we go to things and something amazing happens like there is a pipe band or some dancing or good music, that none of this happens without the foundational support of making sure we get the right elements in place at the right time. Musical instruments are important. Somewhere to practise is important. Keeping our eisteddfods going is very important. All of that community-based work requires funding as well.

It has been very hard during pandemic times to make sure those things keep going, particularly as quite a few of our volunteers are in an older age cohort and they were subject to some pretty heavy stay-at-home orders in the early days but let us hope things are on the improve.

I am very much a pragmatist; my voting record will show you that. I like to make sure that law reform is done properly, that it is at the right level of government, that the detail is right. Sometimes even in this place, when we are specialists at legislative reform, we get drawn into these binary arguments that are very much to the extremes and it is promoted somewhat by social media.

It would be remiss of me not to note the investment and thinking that is going into our digital lives. Social and digital inclusion is an incredibly important element for all of us now. That inclusion and the barriers to inclusion can be manifold and are very individual and bespoke to a person's particular circumstances. If you are unable to access social media, if you are a young single mum and cannot afford a phone, as I have heard in some cases, you are immediately removed or disconnected from your group of friends, perhaps when you most need them. Those issues matter. We are in the information age and we need to think about these things.

Having said that, I think the entirety of Tasmania, and perhaps the nation, is over the social media abuse and the pile-ons that happen. It is important if we can all try to lead from this Chamber, in these roles to act with some restraint, to try to have manners online and not hesitate to block and cut people off if conversations are going too far.

These things are organic in the sense that we are learning how to manage these issues. Of course, trial by social media and trial by media can happen. I am old-school; I want to see proper processes, proper policies. I want to see professionalism and the care of people during these processes. That comes from having been a legal practitioner. It would not take much for people in this Chamber to anticipate that these sorts of issues, when they spill out, need to be managed carefully and with fairness.

I hope I am delivering for Clark. I am trying to deliver for Clark. We have landed quite a few good projects, many of which I have worked on for years and years, so I am very pleased to see them come to fruition.

That brings me to thinking about the Budget and what it is and why we have a budget. It is not the same as a household budget. We are managing an entire government but we are managing the entire society and many communities of interest.

I have done a lot of work over the last eight years, in particular, on multicultural affairs, refugee issues and specifically Aboriginal affairs. It was in the early days that I brought forward the concept of looking to Victoria, in particular, and other states and territories, regarding a pathway to treaty process. It was not as easy as saying - and I know Cassy would probably disagree with me - 'Let's do a treaty'. It is actually a pathway process because much of the work that needs to be done is to bring people to the table. To do that, there is going to have to be quite a bit of shuttle diplomacy.

We have an opportunity to do that now. I am very supportive of this process and will work with the marvellous Tim McCormack, who I know from legal fields, and former governor, Kate Warner, who was my criminal law lecturer. Both are intelligent, warm and sensible people who have their finger on the pulse of these issues. By no means do I believe it is going to be easy. It is going to be all hands on deck. I hope there will be strong support in this Chamber for that process, which is considered, careful, collaborative and brings people into the conversation. I am very pleased to see that moving forward.

The Budget feels like it has songlines that move through it on issues that matter about Tasmanian pride with the AFL team, state pride; around safety and security of our people; around education and lifting people up; around health and things that matter to our older Tasmanians. These issues and these conversations lead us to understand where we place money and how we divide up the budgetary pie.

This is why it is important that alternative budgets, for example - we can call it what we will - that alternative visions are put forward. Where would you take money from and place it to? How do you prioritise those matters? Those are the things that need to be articulated because to just pick out one issue and say, 'well, we have put too much money into X, what about Y?' is a very simplistic way of looking at the world. A better way to do it would be to say, 'This is the vision' - and the Greens have done it with their budget - 'and this is how we would like to achieve that vision'. At least then you bring a goal together and you know what you stand for. That would be good if it could happen.

We have all been aghast at what has happened in Afghanistan. I have been working very closely, one-on-one, with many Afghani members of our community. I even want to start crying now. What is happening over there is terrible. We are trying to get people home and do what we can to do that. It is a very difficult situation.

I know I only have a few seconds left. I want to come back to the poem, which is an unusual way to start, but the poem with which I started, to say in this place we need to stand up and step up and speak up on issues. We obviously need to work together at times across the Chamber but at other times it is the Government that leads, and this Government is leading well. The Budget is very solid. You should all not hesitate to ensure that you are the captains of your own souls.

Time expired.

Ms JOHNSTON (Clark) - Mr Speaker, I have listened intently to the contributions of members over the last two days and I have been struck by a common theme that has come from all sides of politics. That is finger-pointing. I have heard over and over from the Government that the problems we are now facing are as a result of Labor's poor management seven years ago. From the Opposition, I have heard over and over again that the Liberals have had seven years to fix it and have done nothing. Quite frankly, this level of debate, if you can call it that, gets Tasmanians nowhere and I do not particularly care whose fault it is. I am more interested in what we are going to do to fix it.

While both sides of politics have admitted and recognised at various times that there are elements of our economy doing extraordinarily well and going from strength to strength, all sides of politics have also admitted and recognised at various times that there are people who are missing out. It is those people I want to speak about today because that is really the challenge facing this parliament today.

How do we ensure that everyone in this state benefits from our prosperity? How do we make sure that no Tasmanian gets left behind? What can we do to ensure that we are looking after schools or communities who experience disadvantage? That is the power of a budget.

Healthy Tasmanians are Tasmanians who can contribute and participate more in our community and in our economy. It is a universal priority for all members of this House. I welcome the Government's commitment to increase spending in this area. There is no doubt that an increase in spending to deliver elective surgeries will help and be good news to those who have been suffering in pain on the waiting lists. There is no doubt that funding for an additional 48 paramedics is going to go some way to reducing the growing pressures on Ambulance Tasmania.

I get a sense that we are chasing our tail with our health spending. This is what I am consistently hearing from people who talk to me about their concerns with the health system. It seems that we are constantly trying to play catch-up, spending more and more money just to manage the symptoms of our broken health system rather than treating the underlying condition. The underlying condition is the poor health of Tasmanians, putting pressure on our hospitals and health services. We have the unenviable title of being the country's unhealthiest state. We have the highest stress levels, body mass index, blood pressure and smoking rates in the country, with the highest rate of heart, stroke and vascular disease. We have the highest rate of chronic kidney disease, the highest rate of adult obesity and the highest incidence of depression.

With these kind of indicators, unless there is an urgent intervention, it is easy to see how health can become the bottomless pit in a budget. That would make no sense economically and it certainly does not look after the wellbeing of Tasmanians. It is not rocket science that investing in preventative and community health in keeping people well in the first place or supporting people to live healthier lives reduces, over time, the demand for acute health services. It takes a bold government to not just pay lip-service but invest meaningfully, funding and investing heavily in these areas. It is an intergenerational investment in Tasmania's health that is needed.

Another area where prevention is better all-around and cheaper than the cure is in Corrections. I have no doubt that everyone in this Chamber wants a safe Tasmania. Perversely, our ever-increasing budget commitments to building more prisons and housing more prisoners is having the very opposite effect. Our high recidivism rates are a testament to the mantra that jailing is failing. We are spitting individuals out of our corrections systems who are not rehabilitated and ready to contribute to our community but, instead, people who are leaving prison damaged, more broken than when they went in, and not nearly enough support around them to reintegrate and rehabilitate.

This does not keep Tasmanians safe. It costs approximately \$120 000 every year to keep a person in jail. Imagine for a moment, if sometimes instead of jailing a person we spent that money on addressing the reasons why they offended in the first place, or on protective measures to ensure that they do not offend again. Whilst I acknowledge and welcome some increase in funding for rehabilitative programs, in the context of the overall Corrective Service spend, it is clear that the priority is still on locking people up. This is financially unsustainable and causing increasing social harm.

Another example of where we are at real risk of tipping more and more money into a bottomless pit rather than addressing the problem, is transport. It has long been recognised that you cannot build your way out of traffic congestion. To the contrary, is the experience of communities all over the country, Tasmania included, that when we build another road or add another lane, it quickly fills up with more and more cars, adding to more and more traffic congestion. Traffic congestion comes at a social and environmental cost. It also comes at an economic cost too with decreased productivity. An efficient and effective transport network supports our economy.

Unfortunately, in Tasmania we have for generations under-funded passenger transport with the lowest dollar spend per capita on public transport of any state. When we do this, we wonder why our traffic congestion problems continue to get worse. It is a definition of madness

doing the same thing over and over again and expecting a different outcome. It is like an episode of the ABC television classic, *Utopia*.

My electorate office continues to be inundated with people experiencing housing stress. I constantly hear from people who are paying a disproportionate amount of their household income on housing because the cost of private rental has skyrocketed - people who live in fear of yet another rent increase because they are not coming in \$10 increments anymore. They are coming in \$50, \$100, \$200, \$250 increments. I hear from people who cannot enter the housing market because they cannot afford to save for a deposit because the rent takes so much of their income there is nothing left at the end of the week to save. The really heartbreaking ones are the ones where they are sleeping rough, couch surfing, or being shifted around from shelter to shelter with nothing but a seemingly never-ending wait for a home. These are people who, but for the grace of God, could be any one of us here in this Chamber. Sometimes it is a sudden health issue, a loss of employment, a rent increase, domestic violence, family breakdown or addiction that leads them to be experiencing homelessness.

Only last week I had a young mum come into the office with three children, aged 10, seven and two, who was forced to leave her long-term public housing home where she had been a model tenant for nine years, to escape domestic violence and protect herself and her children from a violent partner. That was 12 months ago and since then she has reached her maximum stay at each of the women's shelters. She can't get private rental help because her impeccable housing record doesn't count as a reference in the private rental market. At the end of this week she is going to have no option but to sleep with her three children in her car, all because the government can't assist her with a home to keep her and her children safe.

The ripple effect of homelessness cannot be underestimated. Someone who is homeless is more likely to have poor health. Someone who is homeless is less likely to engage in education and training. Someone who is homeless is more likely to be caught in the criminal justice system. This all takes taxpayers' resources, something that is entirely avoidable. Whilst I welcome an increase in spending to build new homes in the coming years, and I welcome increase spending in emergency or crisis accommodation, it is what happens between that first emergency or crisis and ultimately finding a new home where Tasmanians are falling through the cracks. They fall through the cracks when they have exhausted their allocated time in shelters, or shelter accommodation is not suitable, yet they still have some time to wait on the housing list. Talking about homes that will be ready in 2025 or later is cold comfort to these people.

I have no doubt that all members of this House would also agree that education is the key to young people thriving and is an important protective factor against social and economic disadvantage. We would think that given this universal understanding that any funding provided in education could be considered a long-term saving in other portfolios. However, we consistently see over many years a chronic underfunding of public education. We cannot even fully fund the schooling resource standard. That is not a gold standard either; that is the bare minimum requirement. We do not even meet that. It is hardly surprising that we have poor literacy and numeracy outcomes. It is another false economy.

The Premier repeatedly said while delivering the Budget that we were in a strong financial position with a strong economy. He then doubled down on this the next morning at the TCCI budget breakfast and said that his Government was making intergenerational infrastructure investment. Every day I sit here and listen to the Dorothy Dixers from

Government backbenchers asking him and his ministers to outline how this Liberal Government is working to secure Tasmania's future. The answers we get are a mere regurgitation of the same stuff that governments of all persuasions have said for years. Same same, different government but if you are one of the Tasmanians on a hospital waiting list, things are getting worse. If you are one of the Tasmanians waiting for public housing, things are getting worse. If you are one of the Tasmanians in our public schools, your school still is not being fully funded. If you are one of the Tasmanians tied up in the criminal justice system, either as a victim or offender, things are getting worse. If you are a Tasmanian caught in traffic congestion in your daily commute, things are getting worse. It is time to do something different.

If Tasmania's economy is going so well, as the Premier would have us believe, then I strongly suggest there has never been a better time to be bold as a government and to make the intergenerational policy and funding shifts that actually address the root causes of disadvantage, rather than trying to bandage over a broken system. The people of Tasmania have given the Government four more years to demonstrate their worth. The Opposition is virtually missing in action. It is a unique position the Government finds themselves in. My challenge to this Government is this: do not squander the opportunity to do the right thing. You are making some of the right noises, there is no doubt about that, and there are plenty of people to advise and encourage you and who will back you in, especially in the community sector if you start making some progressive and sustainable funding decisions. My bet is that if you did, then perhaps in four years' time, come the next election, the Premier's Government would genuinely be known as a government that actually does secure the future for Tasmanians.

[3.30 p.m.]

Ms BUTLER (Lyons) - Mr Speaker, I rise to provide my response to the Appropriation Bill No. 1 (2021). This is a budget of honouring election commitments and administration and debt, a budget speech which was described as deceitful by economist John Lawrence. I quote:

... a dishonest characterisation of the economic realities since it focused only on net operating surpluses while ignoring other means of debt. I have never seen such a deceitful speech in all my life. He seriously wants everyone to believe we are going to be in a surplus in the next few years. If you look at net operating balance, it is a completely different figure to the operating surplus in the cash flow statement. In one sentence he has compared apples to oranges.

That is a pretty damning indictment of a budget, one would say.

The Government now claims that Tasmania is on track for a surplus despite racking up millions of dollars of additional debt with very little means or investment in industries to generate revenue to repay that debt: a debt of \$2 million a day, \$86 000 an hour, a debt of \$3.5 billion by 2025. It is going to take generations of Tasmanians to pay off this Government's debt. It has no vision, no reform agenda, nothing to reshape our beautiful state, and promises of infrastructure that are rarely completed.

The new Bridgewater bridge project is not funded to reflect completion by 2024, as promised. In fact, it is underfunded in this Budget and over the forward Estimates with a completion date of 2024 and a deficiency of \$46 million over the forward Estimates. There is

no certainty that Infrastructure Australia will actually sign off on the Australian Government contribution at this stage. There is no set design for the project. All we have seen previously are the disastrous earlier plans and one that actually looked like a brontosaurus which prompted the local community to label the bridge 'the brontosaurus bridge'.

No rail link across the Derwent River, cutting off a capital city from the rest of the state, is also a major issue. It cuts off opportunity. It reminds me of the ideas of the early European settlers in our country where they planted seeds for willow trees. A willow tree looks quite odd for the first 20 years or so of its growth and then at 40 years it starts to look like a lovely shaped tree and then by 50 years it is a beautiful tree. By 100 years it is a magnificent tree. People do not plant willow trees to get to see them themselves in their own lifetime; they build them for future generations to enjoy the beauty of those trees.

There is no insight at all when it comes to this Bridgewater bridge project. It is being built for the now instead of being built for the future. That is one of our biggest problems. With these quick turnovers of governments and election cycles, there is not enough planning for the future or investment for the future.

There is no better time than now to invest and build that bridge because it is not going to get any cheaper. Now is the time to build that bridge with enough space to have a rail line on it. It does not have to go on it now but the space can be built there now because that is thinking about the future; it is not just thinking about the now. We need to think outside the square.

Despite community consultation and overwhelming support of maintaining space for a rail line in the design, it was not even included in the scope. I thought that was a real cop out. Why not build, as I said previously, enough space on that bridge for the future? Why not build that space now? The spin which the minister peddled on that rail line is that if there is a business case for a rail link across the Derwent for a passenger rail in the future, then they will build it then. I do not see how it could be a more feasible option to build a whole new bridge structure around a rail line when you are building one already. I cannot see how that would double the price, which I think the minister stated in this morning's debate. It does not make any sense to me; it seems like a lot of spin.

Public transport is a service to the community and an investment in viable public transport for a municipality that is growing at an astounding rate. When I have done doorknocking in the area around the bridge and asked people what they thought, you would be amazed at how many people want a bridge that is built for the future. That is the feedback they are giving me at the doors. They want a bridge that is built for the future and they would like there to be space there for rail for the future. It is for the future, not for the now.

Including space for a rail line on the new bridge project must be considered. It must be more viable to build it now as part of the new bridge, instead of slugging the next generations of Tasmanians with the task of building an entirely new bridge dedicated only to rail. I am pretty sure they are going to be paying off this \$2 million a day in debt, which the Government will be accumulating. I feel for future generations and how they are ever going to be able to do that.

For a government that is addicted to debt - and you are addicted to debt, otherwise you would not be accruing so much - it would be beneficial to invest in a project that would take

the burden off the future generations of Tasmanians as they will be paying back the debt you have accumulated over your term of government at the rate of \$2 million a day.

In relation to the rail link, Brighton Council stated that:

Cutting off the rail link does effectively sound the death knell for a northern suburbs light rail project.

Brighton is one of, if not the fastest, growing regions in the state and it requires significantly better transport services to cater for an expanding community and to ensure its future sustainability and development.

The design should be revised. At a minimum, it must have four lanes, two in each direction, a pathway for pedestrian traffic, a separated bicycle path as well as provision for a light rail track or alternative public transport option.

It is very short sighted to leave out a rail line option in the plans for the new bridge, not just for potential passengers but also for freight coming from the Brighton depot into Hobart.

That quote from Brighton Council talks about the future. It does not talk about the now. That is the theme with this project, which does seem to be understood. That makes me reflect that there is no vision or reform coming from this Government. It is all administration, more than anything else. You have to do more than administrate; you have to reform and think of the future.

It is tedious and to me, the Budget was lacking anything other than a lot of spin and limited substance. 'Debt without any investment into creating revenue streams to promote new industries'. There is no talk there about a new Tasmania and no talk about where we are going into the future.

One of my new portfolios, which I am delving deeply into at the moment and doing as much reading as I can, is the Tasmania Information, Communication and Technology portfolio. I am not surprised but am alarmed at how far behind we are in that portfolio area and our digital capacity as a state. Yes, some resourcing is going into it, but we are so far behind the eight ball if you compare us to other states. For example, in New South Wales, the minister for IT is the minister for customer service as well. It is a crucial part of the government structure. I do not like to praise Liberal governments too often but they are really nailing that; they are so far ahead of where we are and where we need to be. You can play catch-up as much as you can, but it is moving at such an accelerated pace. We really have to up the ante and start investing in that area because we are almost living in the Dark Ages compared to the rest of the world when it comes to IT and our digital capacity.

Also, the issue of mitigating cyber-risk is a big problem, which the Attorney-General cited in 2020. I know we have written a digital inclusion strategy and that is great. At least there is a strategy, because we wrote one in 2011. When this Government came in, according to the Attorney-General's office, it was scrapped. That is not playing politics. That is fact. That is what has happened. It has really put us behind the eight ball. My understanding is that there is an operating budget of \$4.8 million over four years for whole-of-government cyber-security. I will be prosecuting this in Estimates because I cannot decipher where the

responsibility lies for that whole-of-government cyber-security strategy, and whether there are sufficient compliance checks, training capacity and resourcing for any of that.

We are far behind where we need to be because it is such a large risk. We are starting to see that with ransomware across the world. I know the Government is starting to invest in this but I am not sure whether it falls to the Premier's responsibility from DPAC, whether it falls to each government agency's individual responsibility, or whether it falls to the minister for IT. Who is responsible? It is unclear who has that total responsibility for compliance with our cyber-security. It is a mess and it is not going to improve unless we properly resource it.

Another area in my portfolio I would like to discuss today is the Government's 'high-vis army'. Love the concept: great optics, really good for a media play, I suppose. You get the minister out there with a hard hat on, and some hi-vis, making lots of announcements. It is a good example of spin. I love the concept; it is a marketer's dream, but it is missing a lot of opportunity.

Funding the Housing Industry Association \$250 000 a year annually over the next four years; Civil Contractors Federation, \$1 million a year over the next four years; and Master Builders, \$1 million a year over the next four years to attract more workers to the industry, to identify skills and gaps, and fill them. It is true, it needs to be done. It is a really great concept but it is under-resourced. To market the industry, to encourage Tasmanians to pursue a career in the sector and training to increase workforce is a good idea but it is under-resourced. HIA, CCF and Master Builders are all good operators. They know their industries well but it is under-resourced. We will support the Civil Contractors Federation as part of a coordinated effort as well and it is good to have those three groups working together. That is important.

The Government policy states that this funding will increase the workforce by 25 per cent. Industry advice is that there is no way that the funding to the MBA, the CCF and the HIA will even touch the sides of the resourcing required to bolster the building and construction sector. We all know that, but it is a start and it is good to have these groups engaged. I appreciate that 'high-vis army' is a punchy title. You get your hard hat, you get your hi-vis vests; I understand that but I do not think it is going to be enough.

It is a good move but the sector is stating that it needs at least 7000 people to bolster the workforce to meet demand. With a current workforce of 20 000, that leaves the Government already about 2000 short to meet that underfunded policy. It is already off to a shaky start.

We are concerned that the under-resourced high-vis army media stunt will be impacted by the building material shortage, which is having an impact on homeowners and home builders right now. Our regular communication sent to Mitre 10 trade managers to help the organisation support customers provides a list of price increase notifications for 2021. It shows 79 Mitre 10 suppliers, including suppliers of timber, steel and cement, are raising prices from 2 per cent to 22 per cent due to supply restrictions. That is from the period of January to August, over the last eight months. It is a really big deal.

In April, prices of Summit Steel products rose between 15 per cent and 21 per cent, prices for drymix concrete and cement products rose by 6.9 per cent, and decking timber and plywood supplier Keyland Ply increased prices between 6 per cent and 12 per cent. Cost inflation is causing prices to rise across all categories. That is a really big problem, especially in timber.

Cost pressures in freight, raw materials and labour costs are placing the industry in a vulnerable position, yet I have not heard anything from the Government around that supply issue to date. That is going to be a really big problem for us moving forward, especially with the pressure put on the building and construction sector as the drivers of the economy, that we are going to have supply issues. We know we have workforce issues - that policy of the high-vis army is a good policy, it is a good idea - but we are still going to have big problems and supply is just going to escalate that problem.

Builders are unable to quote for jobs in advance due to material costs rising up to 25 per cent. It is creating uncertainty for the future of the sector, especially here in Tasmania because we are very much at the bottom of that food chain. We need to be thinking about supply. I would love to see some more strategy from the Government and something robust about how we are going to tackle that as a state. At the moment you have touted it as a huge driver of our economic recovery, yet supply is a massive issue.

I congratulate the Government on agreeing to work with industry to release a detailed pipeline every six months to give industry the confidence it needs to plan and hire in the building construction sector. It is a very good idea because it addresses peaks and troughs, which has always been an issue. I gather that means that within the next two months the Government will be sitting down with industry and being honest about the pipeline of work.

The infrastructure budget spend has been cut by a significant amount, with a shortfall of over \$650 million in infrastructure spending. We do not know if the Government has even been able to secure the funding from Infrastructure Australia for the Bridgewater bridge. That all might fall. We will find that out by the end of this year. There is only so much we can do in planning for that.

If you are not going to get the federal funding, which you did not last time you went for it - they said it was too expensive and it did not provide value - that is still to be determined. We look forward to that getting across the line but I really hope you do not short-change the project, as you are trying to minimise the cost to get the money from Infrastructure Australia. Whether we like it or not, it is a huge investment. It will be the biggest infrastructure investment in Tasmania, if I have my wording right there. It is a massive investment, so we want to get it right.

There is also the same amount of funding for the botched northern prison project which continues to be a masterclass in belligerence and a blatant waste of taxpayer dollars. There is still no community consensus. I attended a community meeting. Tania Rattray also attended that meeting. I note there were no members from the Government at that meeting. This was in Westbury and it was attended by about 250 to 300 people. It was a freezing cold night. It was beautifully organised but there were no heaters in the place and it was really cold so they did well to get that number of people. They did a show of hands towards the end of that meeting and there was barely any support for that prison site. That is the second prison site. You still do not have the community consent there at all.

It is interesting that you have not changed the \$270 million investment into that northern prison even though this one where you have relocated it three kilometres up the road to the middle of a conservation area - which makes no sense other than political sense - there is no gas, no power, no sewerage and there is literally no infrastructure at all in place on that site. It is in a protected nature conservation area which has masked owls and wedge-tailed eagles. It

is a bad look for the Government because you keep going on with this belligerent, 'We're going to build it, we're going to build it in Westbury', but the site makes no sense on an economic level. It is not feasible at all.

Another problem with the site, which I am sure you will stumble across, is it is going to be built in the middle of a bushfire-prone area and these are some of the most vulnerable people in our community. They are going to be in a maximum-security prison in the middle of a bushfire prone area. How on earth are you going to transport 350 prisoners, staff and all the people who support that prison system - or whatever the capacity is going to be of your new site - out of a bushfire prone area? Where would you take them to safety? How would you do that? It is ludicrous to say that it is going to cost the same as the original site which was next to an industrial site and it was flat. This certainly is not flat. It makes no sense how that will cost the same as the previous site. We do not believe that aspect of your Budget.

This morning it was interesting to hear the Government berating our Labor Leader, Rebecca White, for her insight into the Budget's complete oversight of the cost of living and the escalated situation many people in our communities are experiencing. I could not believe how arrogantly that came across from the Government. Our Leader did a very good job of prosecuting that yesterday because you did completely lack cost-of-living and any kind of responsibility, management or even acknowledgement that there are so many people in our state who are struggling with the rising cost of living.

The Government's fuel time app is interesting. That was introduced last year, I believe, by the minister. I remember putting that legislation through. I will not reflect on the debate but it was stated at the time that the fuel app would reduce the cost of fuel. To be frank, it has not. All it has done is provide a real-time account of the ever-increasing cost of fuel. It has done nothing at all to drive down prices which is what we said would happen.

In Tasmania, the cost of fuel has increased by more than 32 cents a litre over the last 12 months and the state average today is \$1.55. As a comparison, I will compare the Government's pathetic progress at reducing or actually doing nothing to reduce the cost of fuel for Tasmanians compared with other states. We can have a bit of snapshot about what their costs are in those states at the moment. You should probably be embarrassed by the outcomes especially because you put a strategy in last year to reduce the costs, which did not reduce the costs at all. If anything, it looks like it has increased them.

In Victoria, the average price of fuel today is around \$1.45, nearly 10 cents a litre cheaper than Tasmania. The Victorian price of fuel has remained steady over the last 12 months. In Brisbane today, the average of fuel per litre is \$1.44. The price in Brisbane has dropped by 5 cents per litre over the last 12 months. That is 11 cents per litre cheaper than Tasmania. In Adelaide today, the average fuel cost per litre is \$1.33. That is more than 20 cents per litre cheaper than Tasmania. The fuel price in South Australia has dropped by 10 cents per litre over the last 12 months. Ours has gone up by 30 cents. In Perth today, the cost of fuel per litre is \$1.38 cents. This is more than 20 cents per litre cheaper than Tasmania. Western Australia has also experienced a drop of 5 cents per litre over the last 12 months.

With this evidence, how can this Government state that they are working to reduce the price of fuel for Tasmanians? You are not. It has gone up by 30 cents. Every other state has either reduced their fuel prices per litre or stabilised the price per litre. Here in Tasmania, we

have some of the most expensive fuel and food, rent costs, also with the lowest wages in the country. There is nothing ground-breaking, formative or even reformative within this Budget.

I now have the honour of looking after IT and Science. I will be asking the question to the minister in Estimates, but it is only a half-hour Estimates period and by the time the minister spends 10 minutes with the Dorothy Dixier, telling us how great he is being, if I am lucky I might get three or four questions. I will be asking, because I am keen to see how it is structured, because it does not make much sense, who is responsible for what. I am looking forward to that.

I am pleased to see they are putting money into the Health human resources IT system, even though that will not scratch the surface but it is a good start. I am pleased to see there will be a total of \$36.7 million budgeted for major government IT projects. That is a good idea. You really need to start because we are so far behind. They are building a new parliament website too, so that will be a nice addition.

It is good to see that Tasmania Police will receive funding for Project Unity. That brings them up to a standard where they are not using draconian software to be able to conduct their business. That is overdue but well and truly required. I am concerned about the overall cyber security of the government and what we are doing to monitor compliance and who is responsible for that, so I will be prosecuting that during Estimates.

I am also delighted that I will now be looking after the Veterans' portfolio and I am pleased to see in the budget that there is an increase in funding for the Headstone Project. I recently attended a Headstone Project in Oatlands and Woodsdale and that was a moving and fantastic ceremony. It is good to see they are being resourced.

[3.58 p.m.]

Mr STREET (Franklin) - Mr Speaker, it gives me great pleasure to speak in support of the 2021-22 Budget and it is a budget that delivers all of the commitments we made to the Tasmanian people at the May 2021 election and it sets forth a plan for Tasmania's future.

I was going to begin with a critique of some of Labor's criticisms and commentary on the Budget but I have decided to go the positive route first and talk about some of the things within the Budget that are particularly important to me and then I will finish with some comments on Labor and the Opposition.

First, Tasmania's position in regard to climate change and emissions reduction. Tasmania continues to be a leader in renewable energy in reducing emissions and fighting climate change and it is vital as we deliver our plan to secure Tasmania's future. We achieved 100 per cent self-sufficiency in renewable electricity last year and for six of the past seven years we have achieved net zero emissions. As the world looks to reduce emissions, these strengths form an important part of our brand and our competitive advantage. I was genuinely excited to see that the Budget sees the creation of Renewables, Climate and Future Industries Tasmania which will be established by October this year.

Renewables, Climate and Future Industries Tasmania will be supported by Treasury with a whole-of-government view to capture the opportunities, jobs and investment that Tasmania's unique renewable energy emissions position provides. Its formation will be guided by

Treasury, by DPAC and State Growth and it will also include the work of Renewables Tasmania and State Growth in the Climate Change Office in DPAC.

It will provide the necessary advice to ensure that investment in renewable energy, hydrogen, Marinus Link and Battery of the Nation projects, along with climate change adaptation and mitigation, are strategically considered and that Tasmania then harnesses the opportunity available to underpin the investment and jobs that these sectors will deliver. I genuinely believe that Tasmania right now is where the rest of the world wants to get to in terms of our position on renewable energy and emissions reduction and it is something that we can take advantage of and set ourselves up over the next decade for the century to come.

I have spoken in this place a number of times about the mental health sector. Mental health and its importance is now receiving the sort of focus and spotlight that it deserves. As a government, we are now taking a best practice approach to building a contemporary integrated model of mental health care so that people can get more holistic support and making sure also that they get it in the right place at the right time.

The housing and accommodation support initiative that we have been running in the past 12 months will now become permanent with \$2.1 million of additional funding over the next four years to enable this program to continue to support vulnerable Tasmanians. The initial trial program provided clinical and psychosocial rehabilitation supports and it was also linked with stable housing and supported accommodation.

A total of 28 clients have been supported through our two-year pilot program. This program is a partnership between the Tasmanian Health Service, Housing Tasmania and Colony 47. It is something that I wholeheartedly support as I am sure everybody in this place does. The budget also sees additional funding of \$8.8 million to continue the broader rollout of the Tasmanian Mental Health Reform package across the state.

Another initiative that is particularly important to me is the emergency mental health co-response team. A team will be introduced in southern Tasmania with \$5.1 million over the next two years to see mental health clinicians travel with police and ambulance officers to attend mental-health-specific triple zero calls. This will mean that patients will get faster access to mental health services and, importantly, hopefully, what it will also do is lead to fewer people having to be admitted to hospital, which will reduce the pressure on our hospitals across the state, which we know is particularly important.

Prevention is always better than cure but the fact of the matter is that we have Tasmanians who are suffering from drug and alcohol addiction right now. This is why we have committed \$10 million into the treatment services in this area and it will support 65 residential rehabilitation beds across the state; it will provide funding to the peak body, the Alcohol, Tobacco and Other Drugs Council, for a reform agenda project officer; it will help other community-based organisations including the Drug Education Network, Holyoake's Gottawanna Program, the Alcohol and Drug Foundation and the Salvation Army's Friday and Saturday night street teams.

We are also focused on promoting good health by prioritising ill-health prevention, including early intervention in empowering Tasmanians to improve their own health and wellbeing with \$20 million in the Budget. I have to say that while the Government can provide

the money, it is up to individuals to take responsibility for their health and improve their own health outcomes.

There are Tasmanians living with disability right across this state. They do not need our pity; what they do need is our support. The budget delivers for them. It sees \$1.2 million over the next four years to establish the first ever Tasmanian Disability Services Commissioner. I know that is a funding commitment that received overwhelming support during the Treasurer's speech. The Disability Services Commissioner will help ensure people with disability in their families receive the inclusive and accessible support and services they need, including those supported through mainstream services.

Importantly, this is not a top-down approach. We are continuing to consult with key stakeholders and Tasmanians with disability on this important role and we will listen closely to their feedback. I want to commend the minister, Sarah Courtney, for the work that she is doing in this space, the work she has done and the work that she will continue to do.

The Budget also includes \$1.4 million over the next four years to boost the Tasmanian Autism Diagnostic Service, which will deliver three additional assessors to meet demand and help support more Tasmanians to access necessary services. We will continue our investment of more than \$1 million dollars in annual funding for independent advocacy organisations, such as Speak Out Advocacy, Advocacy Tas and the Association for Children with Disability and critically, the Budget includes \$660 000 over the next four years to support the National Disability Services, the NDIS, as the peak body for local disability providers.

The Budget continues a strong investment into the NDIS with over \$1 billion committed over the next four years. We are proud, as a government and this parliament should be proud, that 10 900 Tasmanians now benefit from the NDIS, including more than 6000 who are receiving supports that they need for the first time.

I made the point in my inaugural speech in this place, some five years ago now, when I was talking about the Tasmanian Aboriginal people that there was an attempted genocide in Tasmania, more than 200 years ago. It was not successful but it is important that in 2021 that we acknowledge the fact that it took place. It has to be the basis for every conversation we have with Tasmanian Aboriginal people about every issue that we deal with. We were in the wrong.

For 40 000 years or more, Tasmanian Aboriginal people lived in this place, I was going to say, 'happily', but I do not want to judge whether they were happy but they lived -

Ms O'Connor - I think they fought a bit.

Mr STREET - They probably did fight a bit, but they lived here sustainably. They lived a far better life before Europeans got here than after, particularly initially. That is why I am supportive of the \$200 000 that has been committed to supporting Professor Kate Warner, the former governor, and Professor Tim McCormack from UTAS, who are currently engaging with the Tasmanian Aboriginal people to find out what the pathway to reconciliation could look like and what is important to them. It really does not matter what is important to the Tasmanian Government or to non-Aboriginal people in this conversation. It is about what is important to Tasmanian Aboriginal people.

The work that Professor Kate Warner and Professor McCormack are doing complements the work being undertaken to deliver Tasmania's first implementation plan under the national agreement on closing the gap. To support this work we are providing an additional \$4 million towards building Aboriginal community-controlled organisations to better meet the needs of Tasmanian Aboriginal people. We are also committing \$970 000 over two years to support major Aboriginal policy reform initiatives, including drafting new Aboriginal heritage legislation and finalising the review into the model for returning land.

I spoke about this in this place when the initial review of the Aboriginal Heritage Act happened but if anybody doubts the attitudes or the ingrained attitudes towards Aboriginal people in this state, read the Aboriginal Heritage Act 1975. The language that was used, the attitudes that are contained within that act are a pretty clear indication of what Tasmanian Aboriginal people are trying to tell us right now. The 2021-22 Tasmanian Budget is securing Tasmania's future and we will continue to work with Tasmanian Aboriginal people to deliver better outcomes for them and their families right across the state.

I commend the minister, Sarah Courtney, on the work that she is doing in the skills, training and workforce space. Now more than ever, it is vital that we secure Tasmania's future. It is why we are investing in the skills and training that our industries need. The Budget includes more than \$135 million of new investments to create a workforce that will drive our economy forward across a range of skills, training and workforce growth initiatives.

The centrepiece of this investment, a policy that we successfully took to the election, is the \$98.6 million four-year plan for TasTAFE which will ensure we build a future-focused TasTAFE, and this \$98.6 million includes \$37.6 million to deliver 100 extra TAFE teachers, and \$10 million for virtual campuses which will increase access for regional students. It includes \$2 million for Skill-Up which provides free short-courses to support job readiness, \$4 million to increase TasTAFE access for rural and remote students and \$45 million for TasTAFE facility upgrades and transition funds to the new TasTAFE model.

There has been a lot of talk from the Opposition in the last few days about the need for the Government to have their ear to the ground, like they have their ear to the ground and they have been out talking to businesses. I encourage the Labor members opposite who do not support the TasTAFE policy, and the investments that we are making, to speak to some businesses which are currently hiring graduates from TasTAFE. It is quite clear when you speak to those businesses that TasTAFE is not delivering everything that it needs to, and it is why we are investing the money. It is not to denigrate the work that is being done at TasTAFE now but it is clear that we need to do more and that is why we are committing nearly \$100 million to TasTAFE.

I very quickly want to touch on the \$10.6 million that we have committed to the new local jobs hubs in Burnie, Brighton, St Helens and in particular, obviously for me as a member for Franklin, in Huonville. I commend Bec Enders, the Huon Valley mayor, for her advocacy in ensuring that Huonville was included in this particular program. She is excited about what this can bring to the Huon Valley. She has worked closely with Kerry Vincent, the Sorell mayor, a municipality that hosts one of the current hubs. As I said, she is very positive about the future for the Huon Valley in relation to this jobs hub.

I was going to get up on the adjournment last night to talk about the situation in Afghanistan but then I spotted this line item of \$190 000 to support migrant and multicultural

employment programs, delivered through the Migrant Resource Centres in the north and south and it gives me the opportunity to say what is going on in Afghanistan at the minute is horrifying. It is not enough for us to stand in this place and say, 'It is horrifying'. To view the footage that has been on the news for the last 10 days and then see a member of our federal parliament, Pauline Hanson, come out and her first reaction to having viewed that footage was to say, 'They can't come here, they are not compatible with the Australian way of life,' I can barely think of a more inhumane statement to make, although let us face it, she has a history of making these sorts of statements.

There are two things I want to make clear about this. The first one is regardless of why we were in Afghanistan, we were there for 20 years. The men and women who served in the army forces were sent there by the government. What is going on in Afghanistan now is no reflection on their service but let us be quite clear that what is going on in Afghanistan and the people who are vulnerable, they are vulnerable because of us. They are vulnerable because we asked the Afghan people to work with us in what we were doing. They placed their trust in us and they made themselves more vulnerable to forces like the Taliban. To abandon these people now that we are withdrawing our forces and just say, 'Good luck with whatever comes your way', is unacceptable.

If you can watch the footage of Afghan people chasing a plane down the runway, and that includes a 19-year-old member of the Afghanistan soccer team who clung onto a wheel as the plane was taking off and then fell from 5000 feet to his death, and think that we do not have a responsibility to those people to do everything we can to ensure their safety, I am sorry, we have lost something important as Tasmanians and as Australians. It is not enough just to watch it on the news of a night time and feel sorry for them. We actually need to make practical decisions that help these people.

Now that I have touched on a few overarching policy areas, I want to talk about a few of the projects in my electorate of Franklin, particularly some of the ones we committed to at the election. The first one is \$10 million for Stage 2 of the \$30 million Kingston Health Centre upgrades. The Public Accounts Committee that I am now a member of, last week received a report from the Auditor-General talking about the emergency departments at our hospitals across the state. One of the things that stood out to me was that presentation to emergency wards across the state in our hospitals have grown eight times faster than the population has grown in Tasmania. There is no amount of money that we can throw at the health system that is going to solve this problem entirely in our hospitals. We need to reduce the number of presentations to our major hospitals and that is why investments into centres like the Kingston Health Centre, so people can get the treatment they need closer to home, rather than presenting to the Royal Hobart Hospital, is particularly important for my electorate of Franklin.

The first day of the campaign was spent with other Liberal candidates and the premier in the Huon Valley and one of the first stops we made was to the Hastings Caves Thermal Pool to announce that we will be investing \$3 million in improving that facility, particularly the disability access to the pool which at present does not meet contemporary standards. In one of the lighter moments of the campaign, you had to be there to see the looks on the faces of the people who were in the pool at the time when the Premier arrived, walking down the path, out of the bush, with 14 television cameras chasing him down the path, filming him for the news that night. To say that it spoiled their idyllic afternoon in paradise would be an understatement.

After the visit to the Hastings thermal pool we went around the corner to the Dover Medical Centre and announced we would be spending \$1 million on upgrading the Medical Centre, including \$300 000 for a new helipad. Whether members from outside the Franklin electorate realise it or not, Dover is an incredibly isolated community but it is a community whose population swells dramatically in the summer time as people leave Kingston, Blackmans Bay and other areas of the state to go to their shacks. It is simply not practical when something goes wrong for these people to drive to the Royal Hobart Hospital as it is an hour and 20 minutes, maybe longer, depending on traffic conditions. To have a health centre at Dover that can provide the services they need as well as a helipad to allow remote access for paramedics to get to Dover quickly, is important.

We committed \$26.6 million for six new Child and Family Learning Centres statewide and I am pleased that one of those is going to be built in Kingborough. We need to provide the best possible start for children in Tasmania and that is what these centres will do, particularly for the people in Kingborough.

The other item I have highlighted is the upgrades to the Cockle Creek camping area and access. It will surprise no one who knows me well to know I am not a massive camper, but I am told that Cockle Creek is one of the better places in the state to camp. To the people who will take advantage of those facilities which include my Franklin colleague, Mrs Petrusma, who is a keen family camper herself and has advocated many times for me to join her in the great outdoors, but I have not, I am sure she will enjoy the new facilities at Cockle Creek when they are completed.

I will touch on some school improvements that are happening in the electorate of Franklin: \$15.1 million for the redevelopment at Cambridge Primary School, and \$6.5 million for the redevelopment at Lauderdale Primary School. I acknowledge my colleague, Mrs Petrusma, for her advocacy for these projects. It was something she brought to my attention and something we have worked particularly hard for over the last couple of years and to see those projects come on line, those two schools are very happy. They are growing schools in growing areas and they need the new facilities that the money we are providing will build.

There is \$2.9 million to fund the remaining works at the Southern Support School. If you did not know where it was, you could drive past it every day without knowing it is there, on Clarence St. Earlier this year I visited the Southern Support School with the then minister for Education, Mr Rockliff. The staff at that school and the work they do, I cannot commend them highly enough. They are phenomenal people doing phenomenal work to support some of our most disadvantaged kids and to help them get a start, and develop them for a future - a productive and satisfying future. It is a really important investment.

Before I finish, I want to comment on some of the commentary from the Opposition. It does not give me any pleasure to do this but it has to be put on the record because the people of Tasmania need to understand what is going on in this place at the minute. The Labor Party has spent every day since the Budget was delivered criticising our Budget and what we have proposed in it. They had a chance to rise in this place in the last two days and put forth an alternative plan, but they did what they have done for the last eight years and they squibbed it.

As I said last week, I do not know whether it is because they are lazy or because they do not believe in anything, so it is difficult for them to articulate a plan. Maybe it is because they are so inward-focused at the minute that they do not have the time to relieve themselves from

their internal battles to put the work in. Whatever the reason is, Tasmanian people deserve better than they are getting from those opposite.

The complaints have come from Labor since last Thursday. Even their complaining is nonsensical and inconsistent. On the weekend, we had Mr Winter and Ms White out criticising the Government support for businesses and telling us that we need to do more - support that I might add, is part of the largest support package per capita in the country during this pandemic. They called for us to do more. That is a legitimate position to take but you then had Dr Broad, the shadow treasurer, criticising the Government for the level of debt we are taking on as well. Nothing speaks better to the Labor Opposition than this.

Opposition members interjecting.

Mr STREET - You can interrupt all you like but there are only two conclusions that can be reached out of this mixed messaging from the weekend: that is either that the shadow treasurer and Opposition Leader have not spoken about the Budget and the messaging to come out of it or they are so shallow and hypocritical that they think they can get away with advocating for more spending and less debt at the same time.

The shadow treasurer had the opportunity to get up in this place yesterday and detail what elements of our Budget he does not support. Or, conversely, if you do support every element of our Budget, Dr Broad, besides the debt position that we have taken on to fund it, what taxes would you raise or introduce to reduce the level of debt that the Government is taking on? The Opposition Leader had the opportunity to outline what extra support packages to support business she would institute if she was in Government, seeing as she feels we have not done enough. How much would they cost? Would she take on extra debt to provide this support or would she cut spending in other areas of our Budget to fund this extra business support?

Dr Broad - You have run out of ideas over there.

Mr STREET - I have run out of ideas? You do not have a single idea, Dr Broad. Dr Broad, the member for Braddon, the shadow treasurer, and the Opposition Leader have both spoken in this place in response to the Budget and gave not one new initiative. Then they have the cheek to sit there and, by interjection, say that I have run out of ideas. I think not, Dr Broad.

We took a plan to the May election. We are delivering that plan. The people who do not have a plan, who do not have an idea are the eight people opposite - and I have to count you because, let us face it, if we do not keep an eye on you people, you keep reducing in numbers each day, so we need to keep an eye on you.

Mr Speaker, we have heard multiple contributions from Labor members pontificating about their role in this place to hold the Government to account. It is true that that is their job. However, to have any credibility in holding us to account you need to avoid the hypocrisy and double-messaging that we are seeing from them. The Opposition had the opportunity to address all of these issues over the last two days and they have proposed nothing.

There is some good news. The good news is that the Tasmanian people recognised in May what a lazy, dysfunctional Opposition the Labor Party has become. They saw through the deceitful scare campaign Labor ran, particularly around Hydro and TasTAFE. They saw straight through it, Dr Broad. They have seen it all before, they saw through it and they voted

for a third term of a majority Liberal Government in Tasmania for the first time. This allows us to stand here and deliver the 2021-22 Budget and our plan for Tasmania.

[4.24 p.m.]

Mr O'BYRNE (Franklin) - Mr Speaker, I rise to speak in response to the Budget handed down last week and, in doing so, acknowledge the work of the Treasury officials to support them in doing that.

In a sense, budgets are a statement of values. They are a tangible demonstration of the mark a government seeks to make on their community, not only in that point in time in response to immediate needs but also by the decisions contained within the vision for the future of this state. While there are many worthy initiatives in this Budget - and I echo the sentiments of the member who just resumed his seat in terms of the investments in my seat of Franklin - it sadly reflects the narrow-minded thinking and reactionary approach this Government has taken over the last eight budgets. It is a missed opportunity, falling back to the short-term pump-priming and political hole-plugging approach that betrays the needs of our community and the need for a larger, more constructive and forward-thinking vision that this moment demands.

There is no doubt the Budget has been handed down at a time of great uncertainty. While COVID has ravaged economies and communities around the world for the last 18 months, it is clear we are far from seeing the end of its impacts. Budget papers identify clearly the uncertainty of the COVID-19 pandemic and the risk it presents. The risk would be clear to anyone to see if we were to have an outbreak on this island, not only materially on the Budget but also the impact on the broader Tasmanian community and our health system. It would be devastating.

You only have to see the impact it is having on the community of New South Wales and, to an extent, in other states. It is heartbreaking to watch. Having said that, I wish to draw your attention to the optimistic assumptions underpinning these Budget forecasts. Page 24 of Budget Paper No. 1 states that the economic forecast and projections within this Budget assume that 'outbreaks in other jurisdictions are effectively contained and relatively short-lived'. Further, the Budget forecasts assume 'that there are no extended state border restrictions that materially impact the Tasmanian economy'.

All of us in this Chamber hope for a best-case scenario moving forward. We do not want extended lockdowns, we do not want continued border closures but, most of all, we do not want COVID-19 running rampant through vulnerable communities with a low vaccination rate. We must be realistic though and recognise Tasmania's luck could run out and we may find ourselves in lockdown. If that happens, the Government needs to step up and offer real support to those groups that will do it tough and not waste the opportunity for reform and implementing better ways of doing things.

The economic impact of the mainland lockdowns is being felt here in Tasmania, not only in the cancellations of bookings for our tourism and hospitality industry but also the great uncertainty created, with now more and more mainlanders simply not even risking their trip to Tasmania. After 18 months of this we are now seeing the cumulative impact it is having on our tourism and hospitality sectors. Their ability to survive after taking hit after hit is severely diminished. We have all heard stories of survival, then recovery, only then to be dashed again by the recent turn of events.

Whilst recent Government announcements of support are welcome, it is clear that for many businesses it will not be enough. More needs to be done and the inability of the Government to have a comprehensive economic plan that assists in diversifying the Tasmanian economy and building genuine partnerships to enable growth and innovation is beyond disappointing. We will feel the impacts of this inaction for years to come.

We should also acknowledge that there is a cumulative impact on our public sector workforce, the wonderful people who deliver essential services. They are under enormous pressure. The fatigue and cumulative pressure they are under is significant and should not be disregarded. From the nurses and staff at the COVID-19 testing centres and vaccine clinics, to the contact tracers and border staff, to the teachers facilitating remote learning for the first time, so many Tasmanian public sector workers have stepped up over the last 18 months.

In short, the environment is tough but that should be no excuse for a lack of ambition shown in this Budget. Despite the spin of this Government, the fundamentals of the Budget are not as strong as they would have us think. We know, going into this pandemic, that the Government was already staring down a massive blowout in net debt of over \$1 billion. We know that they have relied on GST windfall gains and outrageous raiding of the government business enterprises to fund their cobbled-together fiscal strategy. We know the chronic under-delivery of infrastructure spending has continued to be banked by this Government and dressed up as good budget management when in reality it is failing communities across the state with a non-delivery.

This year is no different with barely \$600 million spent out of a \$1 billion-plus program. We know their own Treasury department has called out this mismanagement multiple times in the budget sustainability reports released over the last few years.

Having said that, in these times governments across the world are being given a licence to take the necessary steps, via their balance sheet, to support the community through what is a once-in-100-year event. However, that licence should not be seen to be given without qualification. The Budget position must be sustainable. The measures taken must be reasonable and the medium- to longer-term strategy must be clear. Our debt position is deteriorating with net debt blowing out to in excess of \$4 billion. This debt position is compounded when you take into account the unfunded public sector superannuation liability, combined with a debt being held on the books of our government business enterprises. It soon starts to add up.

This Government points to the apparent surplus as they have forecast in the forward Estimates. We know there is significant doubt about the Government's ability to deliver these and we know that on the key measure, which in my mind is the underlying net operating balance, the measure that removes the impact of one-off specific capital projects funded by the Commonwealth, shows significant deficits across the forward Estimates. It is close to \$600 million in this year's Budget.

Again, we have seen the Budget papers: the reliance on the continuing GST windfall gains from the Commonwealth. These runs of windfall gains cannot be lost forever. In fact, we know they will not because of the removal of the transitional agreement on revenue that falls over into 2026-27: the outcome of a terrible deal for Tasmania, negotiated by this Treasurer.

These illusory surpluses based on underspend and infrastructure delivery failure will simply not be sustainable. The community will simply not accept that. We are in tough times. The community is calling out for support in the short term and also giving this Government the political capital to make some structural changes to build a more sustainable budget. However, we have not seen that challenge being taken up by this Government in this Budget.

In Health we again see the sugar hit investment in this year's Budget. We then see the investment drop away over the forward Estimates. The investment in elective surgery is welcome but where are the initiatives to deal with the ambulance ramping, bed block, and the bottlenecks in our system that delay access to health care and place even more pressure on a system that cannot take anymore?

We see an announcement outlining funding for more positions for health professionals but with little or no initiatives to address the current situation where many positions are simply unfilled because the work environment you would place them in is precarious and in the words of many health professionals 'unsafe'.

In housing we again see the business-as-usual approach with the announcements of hundreds of houses being built over the forward Estimates. This Government's track record on delivery is woeful. The 4240 people languishing on the public housing waiting list would also be disappointed in this Budget. The Budget papers reveal the public housing waiting list is expected to blow out to 5000. It is now taking on average 68 weeks for people to access housing. That may be 68 weeks living on a couch, in a car, in a tent and in a vulnerable situation.

This is not acceptable and if this is the situation when we are supposedly the economic envy of the nation, what might happen to the housing waiting list if we are affected by prolonged lockdowns? There is a housing crisis. In question time yesterday, Mr Ferguson referred to people seeking access to housing as being 'on the margins of society'. That phrase epitomises his misunderstanding of how dire the situation is. Housing is no longer an issue affected only by people on the so-called margins of society. By this Government's inability to respond to the housing needs of Tasmanians and in their inaction, creating a crisis, it is now a mainstream issue, affecting tens of thousands of Tasmanians. Being able to have a roof over your head is a foundational bedrock of a happy life and being able to fulfil one's potential. Without it, the consequences ricochet through our community and the costs are far greater than the sum of the investment in social and affordable housing. A business-as-usual approach to the housing crisis will not cut it. Again, it is a missed opportunity.

I will not spend too much time outlining the various Liberal infrastructure promises made over the last eight years because they will all be familiar to you. Too familiar, perhaps, because they are the same promises and vague commitments that resurface every year. Projects that were supposed to be delivered or be well underway by now have fallen years behind schedule, or have failed to progress much at all.

This Government has demonstrated a chronic inability to deliver infrastructure on time. As a result, much of this year's supposedly record level of infrastructure spend, is an accumulation of this infrastructure under-spend over the last few years.

In my electorate of Franklin, we see major traffic congestion issues that have impacts across the Greater Hobart region but the key announcement at the recent elections - South Arm

Highway and Pass Road upgrades and the Rokeby Road upgrades, the Alcona interchange upgrade and even the Huon township bypass, the link road - will not be delivered until the time the next election is due. That is the time line that it is scheduled, not according to the record of this Government. It is too little too late.

For many years, the Government's single key economic card played has been to pump stimulus into the building construction and civil construction industries. The stimulus is, of course, welcome but it is only one piece of the puzzle. You can pump support in but the industry can only go so fast. When the industry is desperately dealing with a major skills shortage, a skills shortage that has been talked about for years, with little or no effective government response, it will act like a dead hand on that stimulus, which exposes the ill-timed and poorly thought out attack on our TAFE system.

This system, chronically underfunded over the two terms of this Government, is now facing an uncertain future as it is clear that the Government has little or no idea what they are seeking to achieve with the corporatisation of this trusted institution. TAFE should be invested in to respond to the skill shortages and be supported in building stronger partnerships with industry, rather than being dismantled. The corporatisation of TAFE is the wrong idea at the wrong time and the consequences of it will be profound.

The only spark of a forward-thinking initiative in this Budget is the creation of the new entity, the Renewables, Climate and Future Industries Tasmania, an organisation reporting directly to the Premier. This new entity is tasked with delivering on the promise that is our renewables energy future, namely hydrogen, Marinus and through that link, pumped hydro, wind and other renewable energy projects and associated uplift but let us be clear what this really is.

The Government and, in particular, the Minister for Energy, Guy Barnett, have been talking big on this issue, making grandiose predictions about these projects for a number of years now but, particularly in relation to Marinus, the minister and his Government have abjectly failed to explain who will pay for it, what the ownership model will be and what the arrangements will be for the Tasmanian consumers, factoring in the cost and its impact on the National Energy Market.

We know that the Government was late to the party on hydrogen and have been playing catch-up ever since. We have now heard from industry players that the role Government is planning on delivering on the hydrogen promise is far from helpful. This new entity is not a big, bold new visionary exercise; it is a rescue mission. Let us call this what it is. It is an acknowledgement of the failure of both this Minister for Energy and the Office of the Coordinator-General to progress these important projects for Tasmania. This Government celebrates its position on response to a climate emergency by effectively taking credit for work done here over successive governments. The response to the recent IPCC report demands more action as do the Tasmanian community. The business-as usual approach, simply does not cut it.

The Government has multiple leverage points on dealing with the cost of living and the cost of doing business in Tasmania, particularly through our government business enterprises but in this Budget there is zero attempt to conceptualise a different way of doing things and the structure of these GBEs to maximise the impact they have on our economy and our community.

Let us get the government business enterprise working for Tasmania. Again, another missed opportunity by this Government.

In conclusion, we are in some of the toughest of times but we are a resilient community, a strong community and we will get through this together. The Tasmanian community has provided an authority for this Government to be bold, to not only get us through this moment in time but importantly make decisions to take the necessary steps to set this state up for the world that follows. In my view, this Budget misses that opportunity.

[4.40 p.m.]

Mr TUCKER (Lyons) - Mr Deputy Speaker, first, I congratulate the Treasurer for delivering the 2021-22 Budget. During 2020, Australians were tested like never before and then again in 2021. We continue facing one of our biggest challenges with the global pandemic. Tasmania's economy has been hit hard and many Tasmanian businesses are continuing to do it hard. Tourism is at an all-time low. Borders remain closed. Tasmanians are fighters. We are strong and a proud state, having the strength and ability to fight back and support each other.

The actions this majority Liberal Government have taken are working and now we continue to strengthen our economy and build on strong foundations created over the past seven years. During this pandemic we have listened to Tasmanians, felt their pain, assisted where possible, and this is why our budget will deliver even more opportunities for the people of Tasmania and our economy. It is important to secure Tasmania's future, to support businesses to maximise growth and continue to invest in our infrastructure, which shall result in more job opportunities.

Our economy has bounced back and our unemployment rate is low. It is the lowest we have seen for many years. This is why we must continue to support education and skills, and improve our TasTAFE system. The Liberal Government will invest \$37.6 million into TasTAFE, delivering 100 extra teachers over four years, with a further \$10 million for a virtual campus, allowing increasing access for our regional students over two years, and \$4 million over two years to increase TasTAFE access for rural and remote students with Libraries Tasmania. We recognise how skills training is important, with a further \$45 million to upgrade TasTAFE with a transition fund for a new model over four years.

Education, training and skills is vital in securing Tasmania's future. Overall, \$8 billion into this sector will see Tasmanians receiving the education and training they need to obtain the skills to secure jobs. This Liberal Government will invest in updating and providing new schools and training facilities around the state, and \$4 million will see the agricultural VET program at Bothwell, upgraded and expanded over three years. Just as important, there will be \$26.6 million invested over three years for six new child and family learning centres statewide. In my electorate of Lyons, there is \$50 million towards a new 7-12 Brighton High School, and construction shall continue for the new \$20 million kindergarten-year 12 at Sorell School. The Jordan River Learning Federation will see the completion of its \$4.3 million redevelopment.

Our Trade Training Centres are specialised centres enabling adults and school students in the community to undertake accredited training in purpose-built facilities. The success of these centres has been overwhelming. By committing \$1.5 million for the expansion of the Southern Trade Centre it will become an asset for the local communities. Agriculture is an area that is growing extremely fast and it will be recognised by delivery \$2 million at the Bothwell District School over three years to upgrade and expand agriculture VET programs.

I will add a statement made by Tania Hunt from the Youth Network of Tasmania, on 26 August 2021:

This Budget contains record investment by the Tasmanian Government to improve the health and wellbeing of Tasmania's children and young people that will support the successful implementation of the Tasmanian Child and Youth Wellbeing Strategy Action Plan 2021-25.

YNOT congratulates the Tasmanian Government for its commitment and future focus on our most important asset - our children and young people. We are particularly pleased to see targeted investment in supporting young people aged 16 to 25 years to navigate work, education and training in a COVID-changed landscape. We are investing in youth navigators, youth connectors and the fit for work project. We are also pleased to see a significant investment in the areas of youth mental health, housing initiatives, and youth participation and engagement activity.

Our building sector is going from strength to strength. Construction is booming. Then there is the boost for more affordable housing - \$315 million will bring the total investment to over \$615 million for social and affordable housing and homelessness across Tasmania; and by 2027, the building of 3500 new social houses.

I will put a comment that came from Pattie Chugg, also on 26 August, from Shelter Tas:

Shelter Tas and our members are pleased to see the investment of \$615 million into social housing and homelessness initiatives. We particularly welcome the \$2.1 million ongoing funding for the Housing Assistance and Support Initiative that supports Tasmanians living with mental illness and \$11 million to fund Safe Spaces for the coming year. The announcement of \$15.3 million for innovative new youth housing and homelessness initiatives is vital to meet the needs of young people experiencing homelessness. The \$6 million towards the two new \$20 million supported accommodation facilities for older Tasmanians in the north and north-west of the state will complement the excellent service provided by Wintringham in the south.

Another way to help boost housing supply in Tasmania is the \$2.5 million Auxiliary Dwelling Grant program which opened on 30 June 2021. Eligible applicants must construct a new auxiliary dwelling and make it available for rent for at least two years. This program will meet the record growth we are seeing for rental properties. We know building more homes is the solution and for this reason we are investing a record \$615 million into social and affordable housing and homelessness initiatives which includes a commitment of \$280 million extending our building program for new social housing for Tasmanians in need, the biggest record in Tasmania for decades.

The additional 3500 new social housing homes, including 1500 already being built, is supporting thousands of jobs in our building construction sector and locking in a future pipeline of work. As promised, if re-elected, we will also deliver on investing \$10 million into the Headworks Holiday for new residential subdivisions to unlock new land supply; invest an additional \$10 million into the Home Share to support low-income Tasmanians buy their own

home; increase the property threshold for a 50 per cent stamp duty concession for first home buyers and pensioners downsizing; put downward pressure on rents to assist in our tight rental market by delivering a reduction in land tax; two new supported-accommodation homes for older Tasmanians in the north and north-west of the state, providing more facilities to the 25-unit social housing complex the Liberal government has already opened in Hobart. We will also continue to invest in new youth housing models to support more young people into safe and secure housing across the state.

This Liberal Government continues to invest in our youth with \$15.3 million for new youth housing and homelessness which includes a residential care pilot program for young people under 16 years who are not in the care of the state and who are unable to live at home. The 2021-22 Budget delivers for the community in some key areas - \$100 million to implement Tasmania's first-ever Child and Youth Wellbeing strategy over four years.

The Liberal Government has acknowledged and responded to more than 3500 responses via a consultation period earlier this year which included children and young people voicing their hopes and dreams for Tasmania. The focus will be on the first 1000 days of a child's life. This will include providing pre- and post-birth support for those who have been assessed by Child Safety Services as being at imminent risk of having their baby placed in care.

Nurse Home Visiting Program will be targeted to families identified as having complex needs in a statewide community, a paediatric service, ensuring the health of vulnerable children and young people, enabling assessments in one location provided by a team of medical professionals.

There is funding of \$4.3 million over four years for the development of a digital platform, providing 24/7 access via any device for Service Tasmania Government Services, along with energy discounts for around 90 000 eligible concession customers on their 2020-21 winter energy bill. The \$30 000 first home owners grant; \$4.8 million to employ new family and community support workers and extend the Neighbourhood House capital improvement program. These new support worker roles will increase capacity to help address issues such as mental health, addictive behaviours and relationship breakdowns.

As we recover from the impacts of COVID-19, this community-led place-based initiative addresses a key recommendation to increasingly fund such resourcefulness. Back in 2020-21, the then shadow minister, Mr David O'Byrne, said that the state budget did not deliver a plan for jobs with unemployment set to spike at 8.5 per cent. What an example of Labor having no understanding, no trust in Tasmanians and no plan to deliver. Just last week, we stood at a 4.5 per cent unemployment rate, a far cry from the 8 per cent. How many times can Labor get it wrong?

Then Dr Broad, in heading down the same path of mistruths, no guidance and alternative budget. Just like fist pumping into thin air, Dr Broad's alternative budget is heading the same way. The shadow treasurer said this week:

How can Mr Gutwein, who has been Treasurer for over seven years, continue to put the state in this position? We all know that you need to spend money to make money, make sacrifices and to take risks.

I ask you, Dr Broad, where would you make changes and take cuts? Would you sacrifice our hospitals or our housing? Tell me what and where would you make cuts?

Then we had Ms White's reply speech, which was all about housing and the cost of living. Tell me this, Ms White, how does one afford to live if they have no education, no skills and no job? Do you plan for all Tasmanians to be fully subsidised by the Government?

The Tasmanian Liberal Government will continue to secure Tasmania's future and get more Tasmanians into work and back industries to create employment. Over the next four years, a total of \$5.7 billion will be invested into job-creating infrastructure aiming to support 28 000 jobs around this state. Our plan is to deliver local jobs to local people, which will be assisted through the launch of a \$6.5 million Tasmanian employer bonus fund. The aim of the fund is to support eligible employers to take on a job seeker as we appreciate the cost of employing new staff members and challenging too many businesses.

The fund will provide up to \$6500 over six months to help eligible employers meet costs and remove barriers. There are guidelines around any funding. This one is tailored for eligible Tasmanians who have been registered with Centrelink as unemployed for six months or more, registered with a disability employment service provider or the NDIS, parents or carers returning to work after six months or more after being out of the workforce, and people aged over 45 years returning to work after six months or more being out of the workforce.

The new jobs must be for a minimum of three months on a casual, part-time, or fixed term or permanent basis and provide employees with at least 15 hours. The fund combined with many other initiatives are tailored to assist people in securing a future. Lyons alone will benefit with the new Job Hubs investing \$10.6 million over three years - \$1.324 million to pilot youth connectors who will be focused on getting young Tasmanians into work over two years.

We recognise the valuable investment business makes and want to ensure businesses are confident and prepared to take on more apprentices, trainees and young people. As I have said before, businesses are the engine room of our economy and they will lead our recovery. There has never been a better time to hire an apprentice or a trainee, so let us make it easier for businesses to do just that.

In this Budget we will invest \$800 000 to boost Business Tasmania to support businesses over the next four years and \$750 000 into the Digital Ready program. We are offering many grant opportunities and have plans to develop and expand export markets over the following three years and a trade strategy over four years. This Government will also assist Incat, which sets the global benchmark in aluminium ship technology, offering a broad range of career opportunities. Helping to secure Incat's new build of a 120-metre vessel would secure the existing 500 jobs for those currently employed and would open up opportunities for a further 150 new employees.

Our Opposition Leader keeps mentioning that we are spending money here and there. Yes, we are spending money, otherwise we cannot make money and we cannot make opportunities. We would not be able to build the economy but at least we have a strong plan and remain positive. We are a half-glass full not a half-glass empty, like a lot on the other side.

Australia has managed the COVID-19 pandemic successfully with positive outcomes over the past year. We have recovered faster than estimated. Our position over the next few

years is encouraging. Let us not forget back in June 2020 when Ms White begged our Premier to set a date to reopen Tasmania's borders against expert health recommendations. Ms White was quoted at the time on 20 June 2020:

However, here in Tasmania our borders remain closed and our businesses remain constrained with the Government still sitting on the fence when it is going to make a decision about either.

Is it not fortunate that we have not listened to Labor, who are hopelessly divided and confused? This Liberal Government has a responsible approach and does not play politics with Tasmanian's lives and wellbeing. This is why people are saying that they do not know what Labor stands for. I have one word: incompetent.

By taking the responsible approach our economy grew in strength with growth in revenues, enabling us to fund all our 2021 election commitments, new initiatives, whilst adding additional infrastructure investment and additional funding to meet the increasing demands in our health system.

This Budget includes a total investment of \$4.6 billion on infrastructure investment: \$3.8 billion delivered through government agencies, with \$2 billion for roads and bridges; \$503.7 million towards hospitals and health, \$4 404 million for human services and housing; \$335 million going towards schools and education and skills; law and order to receive \$238.8 million; tourism and recreation and culture \$183.6 million; with \$154.4 million to support ICT for service delivery; \$385 million for the largest port redevelopment in the history of Tasmania, which will see \$240 million for the port of Devonport. Redevelopment will generate up to 1700 jobs with completion expected towards the end of 2026. Increase in capacity should see an additional \$36 million into the Tasmanian economy.

The \$145 million upgrade for the port at Burnie will change it into a committed bulk export terminal, generating up to 1000 jobs across five years. Once completed, the tonnes of iron ore exported per annum could potentially generate \$3.5 million in mining royalties. The \$700 million to support Hydro Tasmania in the redevelopment of the Tarraleah Power Station, creating up to 250 construction jobs and doubling in size of the 220 megawatts, with up to 24 hours of storable energy.

Energy is an essential service and we are committed to reduce costs of living and deliver the lowest structured power price by 2022. Let us not forget one important factor: over the last seven years, with a Liberal Government, these power prices have increased about 2.2 per cent. Under Labor's watch, Tasmanians felt the pain of a 65 per cent climb over the seven years. The Opposition is consistent with a map of disaster, sitting on the fence, spreading fear, and provoking menacing rumours.

The Gutwein Government has many other projects we are fully funding. These projects are designed to set Tasmania and Tasmanians up for the future, investing in communities and supporting growth and job opportunities. These include equity contributions of \$65 million to the Stadium Authority Trust to oversee the development and management of stadium assets and \$64.6 million to the Macquarie Point Development Corporation to progress the next stage of the Macquarie Point development.

A number of the next-generation infrastructure projects extend beyond the current forward Estimates period, including the Launceston General Hospital redevelopment stage 2, the West Tamar Highway traffic solution, projects funded under the Roads of Strategic Importance program and the \$80 million Tamar River bridge.

The Government is committed to an ongoing pipeline of work to provide the building and construction sector with the confidence to continue to invest and employ.

With significant investments already in health, we still face challenges due to increasing demands. To ensure Tasmanians receive the right support, no matter where, we shall invest \$10.7 billion over the next four years. There is \$5 million to our GP after-hours support initiative, on top of an existing \$3 million, enabling GP clinics and pharmacies to support people in their local communities after-hours, taking pressure off our emergency departments. There is funding to support Cancer Council Tasmania, GP Assist, Epilepsy Tasmania, Hobart District Nurses and the Palliative Care clinical nurse educators. We need to improve our digital technology and a \$15 million downpayment will enable work to start on key areas of a 10-year digital health transformation plan. There is \$198 million additional funding to meet increasing demands on our hospitals and to support the opening of beds.

The Gutwein Liberal Government is keen to work with clinicians, healthcare staff and stakeholders on a combined solution-based approach to face the challenges we have in health. This process will involve help from the newly established Health Staff Recruitment Taskforce, which includes representatives from the AMA, ANMF, HACSU and UTAS. The task force will be addressing the need to attract and retain staff in every region of our state, with a particular focus on supporting elective surgery, opening an additional 50 permanent beds across the state and taking pressure off emergency departments.

The Tasmanian Liberal Government is focused on recruiting and retaining health staff across our state to support our \$196.4 million elective surgeries and endoscopies which will be supported by an additional 280 health staff over four years, which is currently underway. With this injection, we expect to see approximately 30 000 elective surgeries and endoscopies combined over the next four years, ensuring Tasmanians receive their surgery within the recommended time.

A recruitment campaign has already been launched for the trauma and acute surgical unit at the Royal Hobart Hospital for acute surgery and complex trauma and admissions. To be able to deliver care sooner and enable our private hospitals' ability to support our public hospitals, to assist with demand, \$20 million will be invested with a further \$52 million to strengthen in-home palliative care and community health care.

Dental statewide will receive \$5 million, helping provide around 20 000 additional appointments. Enabling greater access to the medical cannabis controlled access scheme, \$2 million will be provided. The Heart Foundation will receive \$600 000 to support patients following their hospitalisation for a heart attack or angina. There is \$600 000 to support cutting-edge treatment for children with cancer. Family planning clinics will receive \$346 000 to establish and deliver new women's health services.

Our farming and agricultural achievements have evolved over the years and farming has fed the growing population and provided an underlying economic requirement that has been vital to Tasmania's success. Our agricultural sector is a significant contributor to our economy,

not only providing for our population by producing food for our tables as well as wool and raw materials and clothes we wear but, most importantly, agriculture is the largest contributor to the Tasmanian economy.

The Tasmanian Liberal Government continues to grow the annual farmgate value of agriculture to \$10 billion by 2050. Agriculture is one of our most important industries, employing more than 7500 Tasmanians in regional and rural communities. Tasmania's fresh produce is the envy of the world. This is why the Tasmanian Budget 2021-22 delivers on our agricultural sector to create more jobs and sustainable growth.

This Government has already delivered on an agreement made with the University of Tasmania and has established a Tasmanian Agricultural Precinct at Newnham. This is going to make Tasmania the first authority in Australia to co-locate agricultural science, water management, industry development and biosecurity functions into a single sector. This sector is close to my heart and I understand the value and importance to deliver in this area. To have included in the Budget \$15 million in the state-of-the-art research facilities at the new Tasmanian Agricultural Precinct with a satellite hub in Hobart is an amazing opportunity.

It is exciting to have \$3 million for the Agricultural Development Fund to support agricultural research, extension and development, with an extra \$2 million to expand the Strategic Industry Partnership program supporting key sectors such as the beef, dairy and fruit and vegetable industries.

To list further much-needed funding we shall improve: \$2.6 million to fund a new three-year rural business resilience package to support Tasmanian farmers and manage the impact of drought on farming communities; \$2 million for a new Primary Producer Safety Rebate Scheme to provide cashback rebates for farmers that implement safety measures; \$2 million to complete the \$7 million modernisation of our research farms at Elliott and Forth.

The continued partnership with Landcare will see an investment of \$900 000 to expand the Landcare Action Grants program.

I know too well the importance of our natural resource - water, liquid gold - and this Budget will deliver \$30 million into water resource and irrigation. This will include \$23.6 million over four years to supersize tranche 3 of Pipeline to Prosperity, meeting increased demands for the Don, Tamar, Sassafras, Northern Midlands and Fingal irrigation schemes.

To have the largest irrigation scheme in Tasmania would mean combining the existing South East Irrigation Scheme with an extension to the scheme. This extension would involve \$5 million for Tasmanian Irrigation to develop a business case to deliver the South East extension scheme. The South East Extension Scheme will run through Colebrook, Campania, Richmond and the Coal Valley, then Sorell, which will provide an additional 19 300 megalitres of water to the existing scheme for agricultural producers throughout these regions and, in turn, will deliver investments and create hundreds of new jobs. Our Government has a statewide Pipeline to Prosperity irrigation plan and this project is part of that plan. When completed it is expected to deliver more than 78 000 megalitres of water, to create up to 2600 full-time jobs, trigger an additional \$150 million in on-farm private investment and inject an estimated \$114 million each year into the sector and economy more broadly.

I will finish quickly on another subject. This Government goes from strength to strength delivering on promises and providing the best outcome for all Tasmanians and the Tasmanian Aboriginal community. The Gutwein Liberal Government will continue to improve social, cultural and economic outcomes for Tasmanian Aboriginal people in promoting greater understanding and respect for the Aboriginal culture.

Time expired.

[5.10 p.m.]

Ms FINLAY (Bass) - Mr Deputy Chair, I rise this evening to speak in response to the Budget handed down last week. In the short 10 weeks that I have been in this place I provide some context around my commentary in terms of the outcomes that I seek to ensure occur for our Tasmanian community, particularly our northern Tasmanian community and the people of Bass, the community that elected me to be here. In being here and finding myself on this side of the House, I am determined to ensure that I do my very best to keep the Government to account. That is our role and in the last 10 weeks I have done my best to stand up to that.

In reviewing the first budget to this level of scrutiny since my time here, I wanted to put it through the lens of the things that are important to me. My why, my purpose is about my kids. It is about the kids of Tasmania and their future. What do we do now to incrementally improve the opportunities in Tasmania? How can we ensure they can have a future where they can believe in possibilities, where they can dream of opportunity and they can feel confident that in making Tasmania their home, they have a way to participate, a way to contribute and that they too could be leaders in the future?

One of the things that brings me to action more deeply than anything else is when I see injustice. If I see injustice I want to make sure that we break down those barriers that are in place and that often have been set by the status quo, so that we can improve opportunities for people. In doing that, the community expects us as leaders to be brave, bold, have courage to stand up and identify things that are not right, that are not okay and that could be done better. That is the lens that I have taken to reviewing the Budget this year.

In doing so, I want to make sure that our commentary is always fair. That where things are good that it is acknowledged, but where things could be better perhaps a commentary is provided, but perhaps an offer of being able to join with others to provide a strong opportunity is possible.

I remember on the day that I was sworn in there was a service early in the morning. In my inaugural speech, I used a quote from the Bishop of the early morning service of that day, and he said, 'It is not particularly profound to suggest that we could not solve a lot of these problems without pretending that one party or another had a monopoly on the solutions'. He went on to say:

In order that we can solve the critical solutions that are happening in Tasmania right now, we need to bring our best selves. We need to bring all of our best selves, all of our collective wisdom and energy and our minds from both sides of parliament so we can tackle these issues together.

The lens that I bring, following these last 10 weeks is to ensure that things that can be done better are highlighted, but things that are done well are acknowledged.

I love Tasmania and I seek to serve to both protect all that is good, but actually to support and raise up all those who struggle or who are perhaps not doing as well as they could do in this great place and that will be individuals, families, communities. It will be industry and business and in the 10 weeks that I have been here I have made it a commitment to go out and talk to many people in our community and that again provides the filter, the lens across which I look at this Budget.

The last couple of weeks - and this again is another lens that I look through at the Budget - have been disappointing for me. It has been disappointing where I have trusted that when a government says they are seeking to provide clarity, confidence, when they are seeking to make commitments to people in our community, I am concerned that when perhaps something does not go right, or could be done better, there is not an ability, or a willingness to acknowledge that and do better. There is not a willingness to correct things that have not gone so well. That makes me worry about commitments in the Budget now which perhaps may not come to fruition. The grand plans that are presented and launched may not, in fact, be delivered. Again the filtering of my commentary is with that in mind.

I will start with comments about Bass and then move into my shadow portfolio areas. I am concerned about the level of commentary that happens concerning various people in our community: many people in our community who are doing it tough right now and perhaps who have never been in that situation before. There are many people in our community who have never had the worry of how they will make the rent this week. How will I pay the mortgage payment? How will I put food on the table? There are people I have had conversations with in the last few weeks and months who are sharing with me that they are making choices as parents right now to not eat so they can feed their children.

When you hear across the Chamber, does the Opposition simply want to pay for everybody, it really disregards the reality of the broad spread and diverse hurts that are being felt across our community right now, across all sectors. I acknowledge the previous speaker, Mr Tucker, the member for Lyons, who says the agricultural sector is doing really well right now. I want to acknowledge right now that there are many in our community who are doing extraordinarily well and that should be celebrated and acknowledged. However, at the same time there are many in my primary industries portfolio, particularly in fisheries, where there is a real struggle, perhaps in a way that they have not felt before.

It is important that we are sensitive and we bring empathy to the comments that we make in regard to the communities that we need to stand up and support right now. In Bass, whether it be a young person, whether it be a family that has experienced hard times - often close to breaking point - we need to be really careful about our commentary.

There are strong initiatives in the Budget that I am hopeful are delivered that will go some way towards supporting these members of our community. I acknowledge the contributions that are being made to the Neighbourhood House network across Tasmania. There is no doubt that the Neighbourhood Houses, the Men's Sheds, the community organisations are being overrun at the moment. They have more members, more people in their community coming for greater support, whether it be the freezer fillers that they are creating through volunteers in their community, whether it be the food boxes or food parcels that are provided.

In recognition of the challenging times, I acknowledge the contributions made to Neighbour House networks, the Men's Sheds and other organisations that are providing those environments for people in our community to offer all that is needed. It is not all about providing funds to support people in need. Often all that is needed is a conversation, somewhere where you can have an open conversation with someone and be brave enough to share your challenges. Perhaps a suggestion of a service or a suggestion of a different way could be made right now so that what is hopefully a short period of hurt now can be experienced in a slightly better way by people in our community.

It is always easy to say that things are going well but the reality is, right now, we have the lowest GSP per capita, the lowest productivity, the lowest workforce participation rate and the highest proportion of the population receiving income support payments.

There is no doubt that one of the best ways to provide a framework for your future is through education. I acknowledge some of the capital projects that are included in the Budget. Again, where there have been projects that have been committed previously and have not been delivered within a term or within a time frame, when you raise expectations in a community and you make an announcement, you set an expectation that there will be change, that something good is coming and something different will occur.

One of my roles over the balance of this term will be to ensure that there is oversight on the progress and delivery of commitments such as the major redevelopment at Exeter High School, or the upgrade to the Glen Dhu swimming pool which, from memory, was brought to the attention of the Government by constant lobbying from this side of the House. Many young people from northern Tasmania learn to swim and develop their water safety through the Glen Dhu swimming pool.

I acknowledge the final funds that are being delivered to finish the kindergarten at East Launceston Primary School, the new school that is going to be delivered at Legana and also the Child and Family Learning Centre delivered into the East Tamar. While those things are positive and there is an expectation set now that things will be delivered in the community, some announcements that have been made which give me the concern about things, whether they will be followed up. They have been referred to as 'signature policy announcements' around the health services in Launceston, particularly at the LGH.

I understand that there was an explanation of this given this morning. However, when you raise expectation in the community that the Stage 2 of the master plan will be delivered but there is not one dollar identified in the Budget, which is what we are talking about now, it raises expectations.

I had an email from a family, a friend, over the weekend where their elderly father, around 80 years of age, had to call an ambulance for a critical moment and arrived at the Launceston General Hospital to be ramped in an ambulance for hours. Members of our community continue to have these experiences and then we have these big announcements and people think there will be change, but this change is a long way into the future. We need to be very careful about how we raise expectations in the community, not only for the Stage 2 developments of the master plan, but there was a lot to be said about the co-location of the private hospital with Calvary in Launceston. There is a lot said about the size and scale of that as well. However, I understand that there may have been an MOU signed but people are looking for outcomes for health in Launceston.

Traffic infrastructure gets a lot of conversation in the south and I know that congestion in the south is critical but equally so in the north, unless action is taken to ease traffic concerns for both the East and the West Tamar in the Tamar Valley, then this too will get to a point where it is out of control. There has been much said about the new Tamar River bridge. There has been much announced about the Tamar Valley transport traffic vision and it has been suggested that the feasibility work shows that it is constructable, viable and can be delivered, the announcement said, with construction being completed by 2028. It says that this will make great improvements to the travel times and safety on the West Tamar Highway, removing the traffic from key West Tamar activity centres but you go across the bridge and then what? For a lot of the announcements that are happening it is all very well and good to make an announcement, make people feel comfortable and confident about what is being announced, but what are the next steps and where is the true solution to some of the issues that are being identified?

It is a bit like the commitment that has been made to the kanamaluka/Tamar River estuary. There has been a lot said about the catchment management needs of this area and then focusing in on small areas like the area identified in the current kanamaluka/Tamar River estuary vision, and the Government in the election seemed to believe that by committing a small amount of funds - and really although it is a large number for many, beyond comprehension - \$4 million, a small amount of funds towards an issue that needs far greater investment may allow people in the community to feel like this is a solution.

The reality is - and there was a letter today in *The Examiner* from a Mr Ken Terry saying that he would likely expect the \$4 million may not even cover the bureaucratic paperwork in the planning, getting the approvals, let alone actually having any dredging occur. Again, raising expectations in the community of solutions without actually being able to deliver a complete outcome is really disappointing for our community.

I was explaining it to a younger person recently and said 'dredging in the river is like playing at the beach: you draw a canal to your sandcastle and a wave comes in and it is gone again'. These targeted dredgings provide recreational access in the Tamar River estuary for \$4 million - \$2 million a year over two years - and then what? These are the concerns I have about many of the commitments that are being made in the Budget right now.

The other concern I have is, and again it is because of my experience, particularly over the last couple of weeks, which I have found disappointing, that it seems easy to say one thing or to make a mistake on saying something and then having to correct it or not having to stand up to it and there is always a response for everything. Someone may bring forward a fact and then someone responds in a really random and different way. You ask a question and then the answer does not match up to the intention of the question.

I do not think you can hide from the fact that, at the moment, our financial position is challenged. You cannot take away from that. We had the Fiscal Sustainability Report released from our own Treasury which indicated that. It is a little like a house of credit cards where there are many people we will know personally who have had this difficult and confronting situation where they may not be able to meet their current needs, so they lay out their operational monies, their weekly groceries or their fuel, onto a credit card. Once that gets maxed out they get another credit card to try to pay off the payments on that credit card. They might find themselves spiralling into debt, trying to keep up with the basics, not actually making any improvements in their life.

That is how I feel at the moment about the state's Budget, that it is a house of credit cards. One thing goes wrong and one thing puts extra weight onto this state right now which, in these uncertain times of COVID-19 is possible, it could all come crumbling down. We need to be honest about that. As I said at the beginning, being brave or courageous about the way we talk about the reality of our circumstances would be welcomed because then we could join together to find solutions to those problems. People say, 'You talk about debt and you think that is a negative thing', but debt can be positive. We can leverage funds in a positive and productive way as in a personal household where you are paying for fuel and groceries on a credit card, it feels like that is what is happening in Tasmania right now.

We built the Hydro many years ago because it was a productive piece of infrastructure that would provide for the future of Tasmania. They are the kinds of big, bold projects that should be happening now because we can use money at a great price to invest in important things to continue to be productive, not only for the basics.

There has been much said and I completely support it, that there are sectors that are doing well right now. There is no doubt that agriculture in my shadow portfolio of primary industries and water is doing exceptionally well. For that we acknowledge and celebrate those people who for generations have been intelligent and clever about the way they have developed and grown their sectors and many of the sub-sectors and they are providing that backbone for the Tasmanian economy.

Unfortunately, in my shadow portfolio area, which also covers fisheries and aquaculture, it is not always the same story. One of the areas where I would like to see us work together across the House and one of the areas that Tasmanians need us to stand up together, is in the area of aquaculture, and I speak of our salmon industry. Labor is clear about this: we are strong and stand clearly behind the salmon industry. On the other side of the House, we need to hear more and there needs to be more done, to ensure that not only Tasmanians, but our country recognises the value of the salmon industry in Tasmania. The salmon industry supports thousands of Tasmanians and their communities and that is something that should be celebrated. There is no doubt that the suppliers and indirect benefits it provides to Tasmania is important. Where we have a world-leading industry that is under attack now, we need to do more to stand up and stand up together to support that industry.

I said I would acknowledge things that are positive and I will do my best to ensure that these things come to fruition. I acknowledge the Government's investment with the University of Tasmania in the Tasmanian Agricultural Precinct in Newnham in Launceston. That is something that I remember back in 2000 as mayor of Launceston, when we said we would be a city of education and open to the world. One of the key pillars of that at that time was to try to implement an agricultural precinct into Launceston. It now feels that things are coming together and that will be important, not only to northern Tasmania but all Tasmania, to bring those research facilities together and I acknowledge that.

I acknowledge the challenges in the sector as well. There are challenges with seasonal workers, challenges with trade pressure and challenge with biosecurity. Again, we need to stand up to those challenges and do all we can to protect the Tasmanian brand, to protect those people who are delivering the produce and delivering the things that create the value in that Tasmanian brand.

There are lots of small contributions that have been made in that portfolio and I probably do not have time to acknowledge them all but I am willing to stand up and be a champion for all of these sectors. I know that the minister has acknowledged my contribution in that already to this point and, in addition to keeping to account these contributions, I also want to stand up together to celebrate those things that are positive.

There was a commitment for Stadiums Tasmania in the Budget, an area of particular interest to me. There is no doubt we all recognise the importance of sport. Active, healthy communities can be economic contributors. I note today that my love of basketball and the importance of investment in this infrastructure, brings to my attention that we have an Australian 'moment in history' being made today, with Keryn Nylander being appointed to the chair of the Tasmanian JackJumpers. It is great to see a local in that role and I cannot wait to see that team on the court - and on courts in northern Tasmania.

That brings me to one of my other shadow portfolio areas - small business. As Mr Tucker, the member for Lyons, just said, small business is the engine room of the economy. When I spoke to my first matter of importance last week, it is clear to me that an engine does not work unless all the elements are well-supported and looked after. I know that Mr Tucker and others understand this fact. In order that we can best support what is critical to Tasmania across all sectors on all scales, we need to make sure that we are listening to people in business right now.

I acknowledge there has been a shift in the current grants supporting small and micro businesses and that has been welcomed. I have had a flood of emails from people thanking us for our role in that. They acknowledge Labor's role in being able to support young families, and people who are making a supplementary income into their family. That small amount that has fallen to below \$50 000, which has now been acknowledged, is making all the difference in those families. However, I am concerned about how long it takes to respond to the concerns in our community and to understand what is needed to support our community.

Yesterday, we brought to the attention of the House the concern with the treatment of payroll tax over JobKeeper payments. I will briefly speak to that. This afternoon in the response to the Budget, those people on the other side of the House said that we lack credibility because all we seek to do is hold the Government to account. That is our job. Our job is to bring forward a voice on behalf of people who need support right now, in order that things can change, that the backbone of our economy and the engine room of our economy does not fail.

In the Budget we have an allocation of \$300 million that can be invested into support for our small businesses in Tasmania; yet the other side of the House says, 'Well, where do you think you are going to get the money from? Why do you always want to spend more?' It is not about spending more; this is about investing a dollar now so that in the future that dollar amount does not have to be increased to correct failure to maintain support for jobs, for workers and for their communities.

There is no doubt that although there are many who are doing well, there are more that are struggling and that struggle is short-term. It is not about long-term handouts; it is about getting people from this moment, where they are at risk of their employees losing hours or losing their job, to a situation when the cycle will turn, and border restrictions are lifted so that people come back to Tasmania. We know it will happen because we will make a contribution. People will come into Tasmania because they recognise it as a great place to be. It is not good

for Tasmanian businesses to then struggle to deliver; it is not good for the businesses that have invested hours and dollars in training their staff to get to this point and to lose their staff.

I will make a reflection on financial impacts, although it is not a reflection on this Budget. In the House yesterday, the Minister for Small Business misunderstood a policy and misrepresented what was happening to people in the community right now. Today in the House that minister said something different but did not correct the record. People who are filling in their annual returns right now are being lobbied with unexpected payroll tax liabilities and do not know what to do. It has been suggested that they ring a help-line. The calculation is there. They are now actually having to pay payroll tax when they thought they would not have to pay anything. For many people, the JobKeeper payments have tipped them over the threshold and now they have unexpected liabilities.

It can be crippling for a person who is finding it difficult right now, to have to come up with, say, \$7000 - which was one of the examples that we were given - to pay a liability that they had not accounted for. That money might have been intended for wages, or for future investment that now will not be delivered on. It is unreasonable to expect our community to manage their businesses and cashflow when the other side of the House cannot get clear policies to provide certainty for the people who are the engine-room of our economy.

The other part of my suite of shadow portfolios, which I love, is start-ups. There is not much said about start-ups in this place, or generally; sometimes a start-up is a bit misunderstood in the community. Some people might believe that a start-up is simply a new business, and people are opening new businesses all the time - and they should be commended for that. Having opened new businesses from scratch myself, numerous times before, I know how hard that is.

A start-up is a business that can scale rapidly without necessarily just needing more people. It could be a great idea - a technological idea, for example, or an innovation. It is solving a problem and then being able to deliver that, not only locally but perhaps internationally. There is a journey that a start-up, an entrepreneur has to go on, to get from an idea, to delivery, to making sure that it is viable; and then getting through the scaling process, which in itself is tremendously complicated - and maybe to the ultimate outcome, to an exit.

I am happy to see that there are funds in the Budget for enterprise, that support the ideation-stage of start-ups to get people through those early moments in the life of a start-up. I acknowledge that the funds in that area have been extended up to the north-west coast, to the Cradle Coast Authority, to give them some support up there with enterprise. It is a niche space that does take some understanding. Being able to make sure that your product is viable and successfully scaled with the investment that is required, and with the complex process of attracting investors and then being able to deliver; to get through that and then be successful, is the part that really needs support - particularly from Tasmania. It is hard and expensive to compete from Tasmania against others who might be employing people from other parts of the world.

I call on those who have responsibility for this space to really get in and understand what it takes to get from the idea to the exit; and that we support the whole process in Tasmania, because the benefits are game-changing. Whether it be locally or globally, they will make a massive difference to the bottom-line of the Tasmanian economy. That is an area that I am really excited to be a part of and to support. I believe that as a Tasmanian community we could

do better at understanding that culture of giving something a go and failing, then having another go and building that big idea that makes a game-changing difference not only to the world, but also to the economy of Tasmania.

As I conclude now, Mr Deputy Speaker, I re-confirm my commitment to Tasmania; to acknowledging things when they go well, and to having the courage to call out things that are not going so well. I could not be more proud, at the end of my first 10 weeks in this place, to be part of the Labor team, to have the support of the Labor community and to be representing Bass to the very best of my abilities.

Labor is determined to make sure that all Tasmanians get a fair go. We are determined that our economy is working across all sectors, large and small. We are determined that the Tasmanian economy needs to work for everybody - especially for the children who will have the future of this great place we call home.

[5.40 p.m.]

Mr ELLIS (Braddon) - Mr Deputy Speaker, the Treasurer has handed down a budget to deliver on our election commitments and to secure Tasmania's future. As he said in his Budget speech, now more than ever, it is vital that we secure Tasmania's future; that we secure the health and safety of Tasmanians, that we secure our economy and the jobs it supports and that we secure our future by providing better and more modern services for the Tasmanian community.

This is a budget that will have far reaching impacts, including setting up our state for the next 100 years with major developments in energy and hydrogen. We will deliver record investment in health, safety and wellbeing for all Tasmanians. There is \$5.7 billion-worth of infrastructure projects which will support thousands of jobs and underpin the productivity of future generations. The Budget will also support communities right across the north-west, west coast and King Island, and deliver on our commitments and their priorities. Most of all it is a budget for intergenerational growth for all Tasmanians.

What is the position that we find ourselves in? This Government came to office after our predecessors left a legacy of intergenerational theft and intergenerational decline. Deficits, putting the groceries on the credit card - \$426 million worth of deficits. Sacked nurses, more than a nurse a day for nine months. Sacked cops, closed wards, crumbling infrastructure that to many visitors of Tasmania was simply a joke and embarrassing. The goat track of the Midland Highway, the Tetris game that was Burnie Court -

Members interjecting.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER - The member will be heard in silence.

Mr ELLIS - They left an empty barn. Money stripped from the fund to pay the pensions of retired public servants, aspirations for our children that ended at year 10. When they went to an election in 2014 they were blaming the abject economic crisis our state felt in 2014 on the GFC in 2008.

When we came to office we turned that around. It started from the budget that the Premier and Treasurer Peter Gutwein delivered. He turned it around by delivering surpluses and investing for growth. People are now coming to our state. They view this as a place of

opportunity and hope, a place where you can raise a family, buy a house, get a great job and live one of the best ways of life that you will find anywhere in the world. This is a state that is building for the future, that can see a horizon that is bigger than next year or next election and can see through to the next generation and what it will need for it to succeed in a world that is perhaps more chaotic, more troubling and with great challenges ahead.

One of the strengths of the financial management of the Treasurer and this entire majority Liberal Government is that we have delivered surpluses so that we can respond to a moment of crisis. As we all know, when that crisis came it came quick and it came hard. One of the key things that this Budget delivers is jobs. We are delivering our plan to secure Tasmania's future by supporting confidence, our economy and jobs in every region of the state. It includes a total of \$5.7 billion worth of infrastructure over the next four years which will support 28 000 jobs. I would like to speak in some detail about that.

First, I want to talk about some of the key sovereign manufacturing capability projects that this Government is putting in place. As I mentioned earlier, the world we live in is becoming far more dangerous and chaotic. We live in a region of the world where great challenges will be coming ahead and some of the great power conflicts that we will see in the next century are likely to be fought very much closer to home than they have been in the past.

Tasmania can play its part and there is an enormous industrial build up that is happening, particularly in our defence space, but we need to acknowledge that, if in a global pandemic your nation cannot build ventilators and it cannot make face masks and it cannot make surgical gowns, then we really are in trouble. We want to be able to make sure that our country is producing things. Tasmania has a proud part to play in that. There is \$3 million for the Advanced Manufacturing Plan, accelerating growth grants, \$4.95 million to deliver the advanced manufacturing action plan, \$2.25 million for international business development managers to expand export markets and \$600 000 for tender incentive grant programs for competitive defence industry leaders.

We are aware that the challenges do not just start and end at COVID-19. We have big challenges that we are facing as a nation. Our state can play an important part in that. It will mean jobs for our local economy, just as we saw in times of war in the past or in times of military build-up. Our tradies, our manufacturing workers and the skills that we have in this island state will make a huge difference to that.

I will speak a little more domestically. Dame Enid Lyons, in her first speech to parliament said, 'The foundation of a nation's greatest is in the homes of its people'. There is going to be an increase in the first home owner's grants from \$20 000 to \$30 000 for eligible transactions: from 1 April 2021 until 30 June 2022, an increase in the property value threshold for our 50 per cent stamp duty concessions for first home buyers as well as pensioners down-sizing.

We want to make sure that if you live in Tasmania, you can own your own home. It is one of the foundations of a decent life. It sets up a family, its stability and room to grow. It means that you can live out the great Australian dream in a place that you call home. It means that you can set down roots in the community, where you can volunteer, where you can get a job and you can raise kids and look after your elderly.

We want to back home ownership in Tasmania because we fundamentally believe that that is in the DNA of the Tasmanian people and it is in the DNA of the Tasmanian Liberal Party. We will be supporting home ownership well into the future. This Budget is a fantastic effort in making sure that young people can afford the deposit for a house, that older people can move into a home that is more fitting for their needs as they become empty nesters and that all Tasmanians can have a roof over their heads, one that they can look after, one that they can feel proud of and one that will set them up financially for life.

I was once slightly involved in the Devonport Chamber of Commerce and Industry. One of the fantastic things about being involved in your local chamber of commerce is all the little businesses you get to help, that you get to see, potentially, become bigger employers in your local area.

Sadly, last year one of things that became very apparent before I came into this place was how few small businesses were able to stand on their own two feet when it came to transitioning into the digital economy when COVID-19 shut their doors. While it is not going to be COVID-19 forever, one of the things that will be forever is the transition to digital. It is an enormous opportunity for small businesses that are run close to home in an island state at the end of the world. You can reach a global market and you can reach a global audience. There is \$750 000 for the Digital Ready for Business program to help businesses grow their digital skills. There is also \$2 million for the Small Business Incubator and Accelerator Pilot program. Often these businesses are country businesses too. There is \$2.6 million for the Rural Business Resilience package. There is \$1.34 million to support start-ups for the enterprise hubs including a new hub for the Cradle Coast region.

Small businesses can become big businesses and they can employ a lot of people. More importantly than that, they are a way of life for so many people, including in this parliament. Their entrepreneurial drive, the desire to succeed and meet a need in our community in whatever way, whether it is small or large, drives a lot of people and we are very proud to support them.

For the mining industry, there is \$1.5 million for exploration and drilling grants of up to \$5 million to support the mining sector in exploration with refreshed geoscience initiatives, including Australian Government funding. The mining industry is the heart and soul of Tasmania's economy. It is more than 50 per cent of our exports. It is one of the key drivers of an economic growth in jobs in my region, on the west coast, in particular, but also in the north west where a lot of the manufacturing is done to support the mining industry here in Tasmania and also right around the globe. There are success stories from the likes of Dale Elphinstone and Caterpillar to the smaller guys like Jayben, Harbro Engineering; people who are able to manufacture extraordinary things because of the mineral wealth we have in this state.

I am delighted to see support for King Island Scheelite which, as mentioned before, operates typically in a time of great crisis and great stress in the world, seemingly only open when there is a war on. We want to make sure that Australia has the capacity to manufacture armour plating and armour piercing that comes from tungsten. The only place that it is currently found in Australia in commercial quantities is on King Island. We want to back them to get that mine open and to help our sovereign capability to continue.

While I mention that wonderful little island, there is \$1 million to extend subsidised or underwritten flights to King and Flinders Islands. I was over there last weekend and I am very

proud to go over there on a regular basis. It is one of the most beautiful parts of the world: fantastic golf; surfing and eating, in particular.

Mr Jaensch - Great family activities.

Mr ELLIS - That is why I went by myself. Whether you are a family or whether you are just a miserable, lonely politician like myself, you can fly now from Hobart to King and Flinders islands. One of the most important things that we learnt during the pandemic is just how important it is for all Tasmanians to be connected on what we sometimes call, on mainland Tasmania, an island, but in our little archipelago. They are Tasmanians just as much as we are and they deserve to be connected to their capital city. We are very glad to be delivering that support.

I will also touch on some of the really future-focused intergenerational growth initiatives in this Budget, particularly renewables and future industries. We are talking \$8 million for the Tasmanian Renewable Hydrogen Action Plan as well as Renewables, Climate and Future Industries Tasmania.

Hydrogen is one of the most exciting opportunities Tasmania has seen since the development of the Hydro. There is nothing like it in terms of global growth that we are seeing anywhere else. It is an industry that is starting from nothing and potentially could grow to be one of the most important industrial base industries throughout the global economy.

Tasmania is enviably placed. We have what it takes for hydrogen. That is a lot of renewable energy and a lot of fresh water. We also have great ports and great roads. We have the ability to reach markets and we have a government that wants to deliver on jobs. Hydrogen is an enormous opportunity for us here in Tasmania.

Currently, it can substitute a wide range of industrial applications but what we are really excited about is potentially turning the global supply chain, which has for so long fought against Tasmania, to one that works with us. We are at the end of a very long complicated, messy, dangerous and expensive supply chain, particularly for liquid fuels. They come from dictatorships in the Middle East, transit through some of the most dangerous waters in the world to a region where spiralling uncertainty and COVID-19 are making things extraordinarily difficult. It is then transited to Australia and then shipped across the most expensive stretch of water anywhere in the world.

Hydrogen could completely transform and upend that, putting us at the front of the liquid fuel supply chain right here on the island. The poles and wires to get the power into our houses and the pipes to get water into our homes could be the things that power our cars, put fertiliser on our fields and drive the economic growth for future generations. We want to back those industries and we will keep working to make sure that hydrogen becomes a huge part of Tasmania's future industries.

I want to turn to infrastructure. This is where we are borrowing because we believe that the benefits of the borrowing that we are seeing here in Tasmania in this Budget, in particular, will be felt for generations to come, not just across the forward Estimates. There is \$240 million for the development of the Port of Devonport and \$145 million for upgrades at the Port of Burnie. These are the largest developments on those two ports ever seen in Tasmania. People in the south maybe do not realise that these are our two largest ports. They

contain more than 95 per cent of Tasmania's cargo freight as well as an enormous amount of our mineral wealth, particularly through the Port of Burnie, as well as our cement works which come out of Devonport from the facility at Railton. These are an enormous part of our economy and a huge part of our future.

Upgrades to the ports of Burnie and Devonport will mean that our ports work more efficiently and will bring down the cost of living. It will increase our global competitiveness for all of our exporters as well as those who need to import goods to our island. It is the most expensive stretch of water in the world so we want to make sure that when things get to port, they can work properly and that the ports are fit for purpose.

There is also an enormous amount of investment going into roads. There is \$36.4 million for state road upgrades in the north west and west coast regions. The Bass Highway and the Murchison Highway are my life. I am very glad to be seeing investment across this corridor, from Launceston right the way through to Marrawah, coming from Burnie right the way down through Queenstown and Strahan.

We want to make sure that people can get to work safely and efficiently, that they can get back to their families, that they can earn a dollar on the roads of the north west and west coast, and that these arterial routes are supporting our economy for generations to come.

There is \$7.5 million towards the Kentish and Latrobe flood mitigation projects. Flood mitigation is some of the best money you can ever spend. As we saw in Longford, it is incredibly important for regional towns to be protected from the rivers which normally provide the life blood of those communities but at certain times can also prove to be very deadly indeed. The 2016 floods will never be forgotten by the people, particularly of Latrobe, in my neck of the woods, and at Railton-Kentish in the member for Lyons' electorate. That \$7 million will go a long way towards those projects.

We were asked to chip in when the local councils needed support and we are doing just that. It is going to make a big difference for the safety and future viability of those fantastic towns, which are providing so much of the growth in population in regional Tasmania.

I am a bit of a railway nerd and I have mentioned Railton a couple of times. TasRail: the 2021-22 Budget and forward Estimates includes \$18.4 million in equity contributions from the state and Australian governments for tranche 2 and tranche 3 of the Tasmanian Rail Revitalisation Program. This funding supports the ongoing remediation of Tasmania's freight rail network and the upgrade of the bulk minerals shiploader at the Port of Burnie.

While those on the other side might be keen to talk about light passenger rail, the reality is that Tasmania's rail network is a fantastic freight network. It is so important for getting our heavy, bulky minerals from the west coast up through to the Port of Burnie and on to the markets of the world. It is also important for our cement exporters from Railton to get into the Port of Burnie and do likewise.

We want to support those rail networks because they are the life blood of our regional communities. They link our two most important ports, Devonport and Burnie, to the rest of the state. The Brighton freight hub in the south is essentially the economy of the north west coming rolling down the tracks to help out our cousins in the south.

We want to make sure that those trains can do so safely, that we are not seeing the catastrophic derailments that were happening before our time in government. We want to make sure that it is efficient as well, that the rail is straightened out. When it gets to port, upgrading the bulk mineral shiploader at Burnie will mean we are able to double the capacity of our mineral exports here in Tasmania.

On more niche things for us rail nerds, the Don River Railway: \$2 million. It will support a fantastic volunteer-run, vintage rail program and museum, to get those people onto the main line. It is one of the most spectacular stretches of coastline in the world and currently only enjoyed by the lucky few who happen to drive our container freight trains through that network. We want to make sure that tourists can jump on the Don River Railway in Devonport and go out to the markets in Penguin on Sunday, potentially, and enjoy all the wonderful things that the north-west coast has to offer.

The West Coast Wilderness Railway: \$16 million over the forward Estimates. It is an iconic part of west coast heritage, an iconic part of the west coast's future tourism industry. This funding will support capital works and the maintenance of the railway's operation.

I will also speak about Tasmanian Irrigation tranche 3. This commitment will provide Tasmanian -

Debate adjourned.

ADJOURNMENT

Supported Affordable Accommodation Trust Housing - Sorell

[6.00 p.m.]

Mr TUCKER (Lyons) - Mr Speaker, I rise tonight to talk about the Supported Affordable Accommodation (SAA) Trust housing. On Thursday, 4 August, I attended the opening of a new group home in Sorell for people with disabilities, alongside minister Ferguson, yourself, Senator Abetz, Ms Butler, and I think Ella Haddad was there as well.

Not only will six more Tasmanians with disabilities now have supported and affordable housing, but their ageing parents and carers now have peace of mind that they are living life with more autonomy in a safe environment. There are further land and planning approvals in place for sites in Kingston, Bridgewater, Risdon Vale and Clarendon Vale. In addition to this, the SAA Trust also has two more houses under construction in Perth and Berriedale.

The SAA Trust has an inspirational origin story. Bob Gordon in 2015 raised the suitable housing shortage issue at a family forum hosted by Mosaic after attempting to secure supported accommodation for one of his sons with a disability. Instead of waiting for the issue to fix itself, Mr Gordon acted, first by asking how we could bring people together to build group homes and meet this urgent community need.

Meanwhile, Ralph Doedens, the then CEO of Mosaic Support Services, had also been looking at how to resolve the same issue. The two came together and engaged in an extensive consultation process with clients, families and employees. Together, a floor plan was developed that would provide both privacy and support to its residents. Further requirements

for the project included identifying flat land that is accessible to shops and public transport; they are to be wheelchair accessible, and easily modified to include alternative hoisting equipment to support a range of disabilities; costs of construction are reduced through utilising a simple template that can be reproduced in large numbers; units are to be energy-efficient and easy to clean to reduce maintenance costs; and finally, an office area and overnight accommodation for support workers with internal access to all units to safely administer medications. These principles have remained in place since the trust's first site in Glenorchy through to the business model that it has grown in to today.

In addition to the requirements for each house, the trust has provided a number of goals for their model. From a business perspective they include meeting an important community need to provide suitable long-term quality accommodation for those requiring support at very affordable rental rates. The concept is designed to provide financial returns of around 3-4 per cent for institutional investors. It is a model that is equally transferable to cater for aged care as well as people with disabilities. Among the trust's long list of benefits, the projects provide job growth in the building sector with thousands of full-time-equivalent jobs for disability support workers and potentially for aged care workers.

This is exactly the sort of initiative and innovation a Liberal Tasmanian Government supports. Mr Gordon's story should serve as a reminder that profitable and socially-conscious business ideas can become reality. That being said, I am proud to say that the Tasmanian Government spearheaded this approach through the Community Housing Growth Program in conjunction with \$6 million of federal funding from the Australian Government provided under the Social Housing component of the Hobart City Deal.

It is heart-warming to see such a positive contribution to the Sorell community that affects so many members only minutes from my electorate office. Those six men and women in the area living with a disability are now having more of an opportunity to live freely and independently, to their parents and carers and minds are being put at ease. It is easy to see that these homes have and will continue to improve and positively impact the lives of everyday Tasmanians in need. This program run by SAA Trust in combination with our recent housing announcements in this year's Budget provides hope to those in our community.

We have dedicated \$315 million for social and affordable housing and homelessness, a total investment of over \$615 million with 3500 new social houses to be built from 2021 through to 2027. I look forward to seeing what this group will do next and the innovation it breeds in our community with so many Tasmanians holding on to such fresh and creative ideas.

Legacy Week

[6.05 p.m.]

Ms BUTLER (Lyons) - Mr Speaker, tonight I would like to advise the House, as did Mr Barnett, another member for Lyons, last night, that it is Legacy Week and to state on the record that I have the deepest veneration for the work of Legacy. Legacy is one of Australia's oldest and most trusted charities. Legacy was founded in Tasmania in 1923 in the wake of World War I.

Mr SPEAKER - The badge is on.

Ms BUTLER - The badge is on. Some 60 000 Australian personnel were killed during the war and more than 150 000 were wounded, with many dying in the years immediately after the war. I am advised that Legacy was born as a result of a promise made between two Australian soldiers in the World War I. As one soldier comforted his dying comrade he promised to look after his wife and children. The promise is the foundation of Legacy. Legacy's vision is that no dependent of a veteran suffers financial or social disadvantage as a result of their loved one's death or injury in service.

Legacy strives to ensure that the partners and children of veterans who gave their lives or health in recognised military service can fully realise their potential. Legacy is predicated on the fundamental belief that veterans have a social obligation to the families of their comrades who gave their life or health in defence of our nation. This is part of the promise.

Legacy's dedication to enhancing the lives and opportunities to families who endure the cost of war has not wavered as we approach the centenary of Legacy in 2023. From the outset, Legacy was involved with young widows and children. This was an era when the widows' pension was a limited income and, in an era, when most women did not have careers to support a family on a single income. The pension did not guarantee that a family was sustainable. Many families fell apart and children of fallen veterans were often placed in state care. We all know that state care in that era was rarely a positive experience. Not only had these children lost their fathers, they were at high risk of losing mothers, siblings and family relationships.

Legatees were there to provide the support and assistance needed to help the widows raise their children. This was part of the promise. Legacy currently cares for around 50 000 widows or widowers of defence force personnel who died on operations or subsequently. Legacy also cares for 1846 children and dependents with a disability. There are also many veterans suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder and other significant physical and emotional incapacity.

I will read some of the quotes from children and family members that have been assisted by Legacy. This is from Major-General Stuart Smith AO. He is a former junior Legatee and Legacy ambassador and he wrote:

When I was aged 5 my father, an infantry platoon sergeant was killed in action in Vietnam and I have firsthand knowledge of the special care, compassion and commitment that Legacy provides.

For me the commitment was personified in the Legatee, a volunteer who provided a legacy of care for my mother, younger brother and I. Our Legatee was himself a Vietnam veteran who consistently reminded us that his support for us was his way of honouring the service of my father and his comrades who did not return from Vietnam.

As a Legacy ambassador I salute the commitment of our Legacy volunteers.

There is another lovely quote in here from Gordon Bray. He is a Network 10 journalist and also somebody who has been assisted by Legacy over his lifetime.

Legacy helped my late mother raise four kids in a difficult financial environment when we lost our father. He served in PNG during

World War II. We all felt a stigma but Legacy constantly eased our pain with practical support through school uniform needs and sporting equipment. Our Legatee, the late Sir Ivan Doherty, was like a second father with his words of advice and wisdom. He was instrumental in securing a cadetship with ABC Sport. My family's debt to Legacy can never be repaid.

Today I had the privilege to meet with Paul Crew and Suzanne Curry from Legacy to learn more about this wonderful group and to discuss the proposed bronze installation honouring 100 years of service. We support this project named across generations. It is quite beautiful really. The installation was designed after speaking with many Legacy families and children determining that love, strength and fun are the key characteristics that represent the legatee who cared for them.

We understand that the installation will be placed beside the Memorial Bridge at the Hobart Cenotaph and we wish them well with gaining support from the Hobart City Council.

Inter-Parliamentary Alliance on China - Support for Uyghur Population

[6.10 p.m.]

Ms O'CONNOR (Clark - Leader of the Greens) - Mr Speaker, I rise to speak tonight as a proud member of the Inter-Parliamentary Alliance on China. This is an international cross-party group of legislators who are working to reform the way democracies around the world respond to the threats, aggression and genocidal behaviours of the Chinese Communist Party.

I will talk tonight about one particular Uyghur who has faced persecution at the hands of Beijing. As we know, according to reports from Human Rights Watch, Amnesty International and other credible researchers it is estimated up to two million ethnic Uyghur Muslims from the Xinjiang region of China have been subjected to an attempted genocide.

People have been put into concentration camps. There have been disappearances, death, forced marriages of Uyghur women to Han Chinese men, the taking of Uyghur children from their parents, the flattening of whole villages and thousands of mosques; the sending of Uyghurs from concentration camps into slave labour across China for many of those brands that many members of our community buy today. The Uyghur people have been hunted and persecuted even when they left Xinjiang and China. Uyghurs in exile, whether they be in the UK, EU, America or here, all tell a similar story of not feeling safe from the reach of the Chinese government.

Idris Hasan, a 33-year-old Uyghur man and father of three had fled China in about 2012 and went to Turkey where he has a wife and three children. After a period of time Mr Hasan did not feel safe in Turkey so he flew threw to Morocco to try to get to the EU where he thought his family could join him. As it turns out, the Chinese government had placed an Interpol Red Notice on Mr Hasan so when he arrived at the airport in Casablanca he was immediately detained. That provoked a global outcry calling on Mr Hasan not to be sent back to China where he would undoubtedly face torture and persecution and potentially - and in fact, most likely - incarceration.

We put out a statement at the time because I regard it as the responsibility of everyone who is privileged to live in a democracy to speak up for human rights wherever you see human

rights are being abused, whether it be here on this island, on mainland Australia or anywhere around the world.

On 6 August as a member of IPAC, I released a statement calling on the Moroccan Government to not extradite Mr Hasan following his arrest under the Interpol Red Notice. I noted that Australian Uyghur communities live in fear. They face intimidation and threats from the CCP and its supporters in Australia.

I hope that other members of the Tasmanian parliament consider joining the Inter-Parliamentary Alliance on China. There are members in this place who have federal colleagues from both parties who are a part of IPAC and I ask that they raise their voices for people like Mr Hasan.

He was arrested at Casablanca airport on 19 July this year, under the Interpol red notice. On 20 July airport officers handed him over to the National Brigade of the Judicial Police National Office for Combating Transnational Organized Crime and informed him that he was wanted by the Chinese authorities for a terrorism case. This is a person who had not lived in China for the past nine years and so what has transpired at Interpol is an understanding that the Chinese government is using Interpol for political purposes to target ethnic minorities.

This would apply not just to Uyghur Muslims, it would also apply to Tibetans in exile, and potentially people from Hong Kong. Fortunately, Australia does not have an extradition treaty with the Chinese government. We would not send a person who faced almost certain persecution, torture and jailing back to China.

This story at least has something approaching a happy ending.

Interpol has cancelled a red notice for a Uyghur man sought by Beijing reports the *South China Morning Post* on 24 August after the international body conducted a review as accusations mount that it is being used to repatriate dissidents to China. 'The red notice had led Moroccan authorities to detain Idris Hasan, a 33-year old Chinese national born in Xinjiang and also known as Idrisi Hashian after he arrived in Casablanca on 19 July from Turkey where he had lived since 2012. 'The Interpol General Secretariat has cancelled the red notice for Idrisi Hashian and informed all 194-member countries,'an Interpol statement said on Monday.

There is a strong innate human desire for freedom and to live a good life no matter who you are, where you have come from, what your gender is, or what your faith is. That is a foundation of universal human rights. We have to respect that.

I hope that other members of this place, particularly one member, my colleague the Labor member for Clark, have a think about the importance of raising these issues and using our voice and our power that we have to speak up for persecuted people no matter where they are in the world.

Time expired.

Stephen John Daley OAM - Tribute

[6.17 p.m.]

Dr BROAD (Braddon) - Mr Speaker, I rise on adjournment to pay my respect to Stephen John Daley OAM. Steve Daley can be best described as a community man. He was a fantastic man. He was so involved with his community that for about a week the classifieds in *The Advocate* were filled with tributes to Steve. To show the measure of the man, his passing made the front page in *The Advocate* on 11 August.

Stephen John Daley OAM was born on 29 May 1951 and he died on 7 August 2021, 70 years old. He was taken far too young. He was so involved with the community. He was known for so many things, it is hard to say what he was best known for. He was CEO of Devonfield Enterprises. He was on many boards over a long period of time, including Family Based Care. He was an inaugural board member of Action Against Homelessness but he was also very involved with sport throughout his entire life.

He was well known as a cycling commentator. He was involved in the Devonport Regatta; he commentated at basketball and the Burnie 10, just to name a few. He was also a past president of the Devonport Athletic Club. He was past president of the Devonport Football Club and on top of that he was Deputy Mayor of Devonport for a period. I think *The Advocate* obituary described him very well in saying:

He was an outstanding community leader and mentor whose voice helped to define the carnival series for a generation of coasters.

Maybe that was what he was best known for but his activities around the community were astonishing and astounding and a credit to him.

I knew Steve well. I had a meeting arranged with Steve, as CEO of Devonfield, one of the number of meetings that I had with him but he had to cancel because at the time he was having trouble with his voice. There was something wrong with his voice. Unfortunately, that was an insight into what would become motor neurone disease. That was the first sign that the disease would eventually take him. His voice was that of cycling, basketball, athletics and so on, and to see his voice go was a tragedy in itself. However, despite the ravages of MND as his condition worsened, he did not actually lose his voice in the end. He could still communicate and that is good. MND is a terrible disease and I would not wish it on my worst enemy.

Steve Daley was an outstanding contributor to the community, and he was well-loved. I attended his funeral at the Paranple Centre, upstairs, that is how large his funeral was. There must have been more than 100 people there. It was a fantastic service. He was a mad-keen Richmond supporter and he had a black and yellow coffin. He departed the funeral to the tune of the Richmond Football Club song. It was a magnificent funeral and a tribute to him. I must pass on my condolences to his wife Karen. He was a much-loved husband. He was a much-loved father figure to Michael, Stuart and Damien and a papa to Jai, Jemma, Cale, Ruben, Zack and Mia. Rest in peace my friend.

Members - Hear, hear.

Darwin Football Association - Annual Dinner and Awards Day
Rotary Club of Burnie West - Annual Ferret Races

[6.21 p.m.]

Ms DOW (Braddon - Deputy Leader of the Opposition) - Mr Speaker, I rise tonight to speak on the agenda about two fantastic community events I attended on Sunday. The first was the Darwin Football Association annual dinner and awards day. It was held at the Yolla Footy Club. Thanks to the Yolla Footy Club for hosting and catering for the event.

There were a number of awards presented to very worthy recipients and I will share these with the House tonight. They were the Ewington Medal for the Senior Best and Fairest player, awarded to Alex Baldock from Yeoman. Runner-up was Brayden Chandler from Natone. The Petterwood Medal, best under 21 seniors, went to Brayden Chandler. The Wescombe Medal, which is the senior goalkicker, Peter Fulton from Yeoman. The Frankcombe Medal, best first-year young player was Fraser Symes from Yolla. The Wells Medal, reserves best and fairest, James Jacobson from South Burnie; runner-up Billy Benson from Yolla. The Crothers Medal, best under 21 reserves, was Leigh Hodgetts from Ridgley. The Watts Medal, which was for the reserves goalkicker, was Kai Schumann from Somerset. The Auto Electric Champion Club was Queenstown. The Patrons Award, which is the most improved club, was Yeoman. The Ray and Viola Shea Trophy for service to the association was David Guy from South Burnie and the Parry Family Volunteers trophy was Brian and Leonie Riley from Cuprona.

The Umpiring Milestones for 50 games, James Cameron; 150 games Andrew French; 350 games Ellis Jacobson; 400 games for Mick Hardy, who spoke on the day, and it was a great speech he gave. The Cameron Clarke Memorial Golden Whistle Award was Andrew Rossiter. The DFA Life Membership was awarded to John Newman from Yolla, Cheryl Gamble from Queenstown and Peter Newson from Queenstown.

My congratulations to everybody involved in the Darwin Football Association - the players, coaches, umpires, volunteers and, of course, all the families and communities that they support and are very much an important part of. I want to thank Barry Dunham for his passion and contribution to the Darwin Football Club as president now for many years and acknowledge Ray Parry for his infamous PowerPoint presentation and vote count that he gives on every annual dinner and awards day, which is always fantastic and gets the crowd going.

To conclude my contribution, I note the important role that grassroots footy plays in our communities, the way in which it contributes to the social fabric of our communities and how I really wish that the state Government would put more focus on grassroots footy across the state and invest in the people that provide so much back to our communities and, of course, the opportunities that grassroots footy provides to anyone from any walk of life in your local community.

I wish the Somerset Roos and the Queenstown Crows all the very best for the grand final on Saturday.

The second event that I want to speak about was also on Sunday and that was the Rotary Club of Burnie West's annual ferret races. I called in on the way home from the Darwin Football Association lunch and it was a great atmosphere at the Menai Hotel in Burnie. There were lots of punters there enjoying the good time that had been had by everybody, sharing a drink, sharing a laugh and a meal together.

I congratulate the Rotary Club. I believe they raised about \$16 000 on the day which is absolutely amazing and was a greater amount than they raised last year. The ALP ferret ran pretty well. We did not get a win while I was there and I did not back a winner on the day but I did manage to get away scot-free from the event without being bitten by a ferret this year, which has to be a good thing.

Royal Flying Doctor Service Launch - Queenstown

[6.25 p.m.]

Mr ELLIS (Braddon) - Mr Speaker, I rise tonight to speak about what was quite an extraordinary event at the Paragon Theatre in Queenstown over the winter recess. It was the national launch of Channel 7's new Australian drama *RFDS* or the Royal Flying Doctor Service. The show itself is a bit of a steamy aero-medical drama that is based in Broken Hill of all places but they were doing their national launch in Tasmania and in Western Australia because they were the only places that could actually have crowds at the time. Queenstown got really really lucky and didn't they do a fantastic job, Mr Speaker, because the guest speaker for the night was one of the most amazing human beings I have ever had the privilege of meeting in my life - a woman by the name of Anne Lewis.

I am not going to be rude and tell you all how old Anne is but suffice to say she is more than four score and 10 so for those who know the old money she is of quite advanced years and has an incredible history of service to our community and to our nation. She was the first female pilot in the RFDS in Australia. She started out in the deserts of Kalgoorlie in 1948. That seems like a heck of a long time ago and she had an incredible career. It was interrupted by the Korean War which she volunteered for. At the time the Australian Air Force was not accepting female pilots so with a group of amazing women from Australia, she went over to the UK to volunteer for the Royal Air Force and served in the Korean War as pilots.

Her first flight in Tasmania with the aero-medical service was Hobart to Queenstown to rescue someone with appendicitis in 1960, again something that seems like an extraordinarily long time ago and just goes to show how vibrant and wonderful a lady like Anne Lewis was. She had more stories than you could poke a stick at and seems to have forgotten more things about flying than today's pilots can ever hope to know. She was a wonderful presence on that night and it was truly a celebration of the Royal Flying Doctor Service which is an organisation that many Australians and Tasmanians have relied on in some of their darkest moments and have also provided them with some of their greatest joys when a loved one who perhaps is beyond hope has been delivered safely to the medical care that they need in a faraway place.

I also want to give a big shout out to the Paragon Theatre which hosted us that evening. It is a beautiful building in the middle of Queenstown, a 1930s Art Deco place, and I say a big shout out to my colleague, minister Jaensch, who was essentially responsible for saving the Paragon Theatre by keeping the floor up when it was going to collapse and they have done a spectacular job with your hands - an absolutely spectacular job and the grand old dame of the West Coast is looking a treat, I have to say. Some people do not know that it was an indoor cricket facility prior to it being restored to its former glory as a theatre and it was an amazing opportunity to be there with them.

They also on that night hosted the launch of Tasmania's new brand as well, Tasmanian, and had some extraordinary local talent in the Paragon Theatre to celebrate everything that is

good about the West Coast, Queenstown, Tasmania, and our contribution to the world. As well, Mr Speaker, I want to give a shout out to the RFDS for some of the services they have got coming up. They will be delivering dental care to the people of the West Coast very shortly and I know that people are really excited to have that care where they live because, as the RFDS says, 'we want the best care in the furthest corner.'

The House adjourned at 6.30 p.m.