

**Thursday 23 May 2019**

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

## **QUESTIONS**

### **Unemployment Rate**

#### **Ms WHITE question to TREASURER, Mr GUTWEIN**

[10.03 a.m.]

The Hodgman Liberal Government has already been recorded in history as being prolific in producing reams of glossy brochures which amount to little more than talk and no action. They contain broken promise after broken promise. Before the last state election, you produced your most deceptive glossy brochure yet which contained sweeping promises you broke, ignored or appear to have no intention of keeping. You went a step beyond your 2014 promise to reduce Tasmania's unemployment rate to at least the national average, promising to reduce the unemployment rate to the best state in the country. Last week, after half a decade of Liberal government, it was confirmed that the Tasmanian unemployment rate is the worst in the country and Tasmania has lost 3800 full time jobs in a year.

Despite your promises, why does Tasmania have the worst rate of unemployment in the nation on your watch?

#### **ANSWER**

Madam Speaker, I thank the member for that question. Talk about lead with your chin. Let me cast my mind back to a few years ago when Tasmanians were leaving the state in droves, when the unemployment rate had an eight in front of it, when 10 000 jobs were lost. Who could ever forget that?

**Members** interjecting.

**Mr GUTWEIN** - We hear once again the incessant chirping from the bloke who only a couple of weeks ago told us that in 2010 he inherited the best unemployment rate in the country. In over four years he took it to the worst - the dis-economic minister.

This Government has a strong record of delivering on its promises. We said we would fix the budget and we did. We said we would create jobs and we have created 13 000 of them. This Budget will create even more.

**Members** interjecting.

**Mr GUTWEIN** - It is the height of hypocrisy for that side of the House to raise the issue of jobs in this place. Their record speaks volumes - the highest unemployment rate in the country, and 10 000 jobs lost at its peak. At its peak, they stayed in recession. That is their record. On this side of the House nearly 13 000 jobs have been created. We have one of the fastest growing economies in the country. That is our record and we stand by it.

## **Youth Unemployment**

### **Ms WHITE question to TREASURER, Mr GUTWEIN**

[10.06 a.m.]

On all indicators, you are utterly failing Tasmanians on jobs. Last year you promised to reduce Tasmania's youth unemployment rate to at or below the national average. Today, youth unemployment is at 14.3 per cent compared with 11.9 per cent nationally. Youth unemployment in south-east Tasmania is 17.8 per cent. It is harder for young people in Hobart to get a job than in any other capital city in the country. Why have you so utterly failed young Tasmanians who can't get a job on your watch?

### **ANSWER**

Madam Speaker, the only people who were doing well under that lot, when they were in government, were the people who were selling tickets at the airport or at TT-Line for people who wanted to leave the state. They were the jobs they created.

Spare a thought for the kids who were in regional Tasmania when you were the economic development minister and you were putting their parents out of work because you had hooked up with the Greens. You stayed with the Greens for four years to stay in government and the price was the devastation of regional Tasmania. During that period, I sat in lounge rooms with people who were losing everything they had worked their lives for. They had no jobs or assets and their kids had no future. That was the legacy that side of the House left.

On this side of the House we will continue to support a strong growing economy. That is the best opportunity we can provide for Tasmanians in search of a job. We unashamedly support that principle: keep the economy growing; it will attract further investment and it will attract more jobs.

Our record is there for all to see: 13 000 new jobs created versus 2000 on that side. What you should do is spend a little time apologising to regional Tasmania for the damage you inflicted on them for four years.

They took us into recession. They had an unholy alliance with the Greens to remain in government. The price that was paid was the jobs and the futures of people in regional Tasmania. They should never forget that.

## **Climate Change**

### **Ms O'CONNOR question to PREMIER, Mr HODGMAN**

[10.09 a.m.]

Premier, 98 per cent of scientists globally have reached a consensus that we are in the grip of a climate emergency. This is a time in human history when strong ethical leadership is required.

Young Tasmanians who gathered in their hundreds here yesterday are crying out for leadership on climate. Yet from you and the Opposition Leader for that matter, they heard nothing during our debate yesterday, then they watched you vote against the declaration of a climate emergency in line with the UK, Irish and ACT parliaments and 528 councils worldwide.

There were young people in tears in the reception room after the vote. They had witnessed an epic and disheartening failure of leadership in this place.

Premier, were you absent from the debate yesterday because you did not want to face them, or because the dominant climate inaction faction in your Cabinet won the day again?

## **ANSWER**

Madam Speaker, I thank the member for her question. Without wanting to reflect on the matter before the parliament, which was resolved yesterday, I did take a keen interest in what was being said in the debate and the arguments that were being made.

**Ms O'Connor** - You were not here. You did not even show your face.

**Mr HODGMAN** - We have these magical things in our offices called televisions when you can actually do two things at once. So we can continue to develop our strong plan and our agenda for the future and also watch your attempts to sensationalise, alarm and frighten people by extreme language, which achieves nothing other than your own political purposes.

I noted the excellent points made by the minister who is responsible for not only our environment but ensuring that we continue to deliver on our climate action plan. I have outlined at length in this place, as has the minister, the many actions we are taking. I hope for those people you talk to, those young and older Tasmanians who are concerned, that you at least have the decency and integrity to say to them there are a number of things that this Government is doing.

There might be more. There might be ideas that you have, but to come in here and to suggest that we are careless about the state of our environment and climate change is entirely untrue, because our action plan demonstrates exactly what we are endeavouring to do. There are plenty of people in our community who are concerned but they also should be informed with the facts. It is a sad state of affairs that a member of the parliament, none less than the Leader of the Greens, continues to deliberately keep herself in the dark or to pretend that she is not aware of the things we are doing and not support them.

## **Government Contracts**

### **Mr BACON question to TREASURER, Mr GUTWEIN**

[10.12 a.m.]

Before the election you made an important promise to Tasmanian business. You promised that 90 per cent of all government contracts would be awarded to Tasmanian-based businesses by 2022. However, the facts are that last year State Growth signed contracts worth \$290 million but only \$114 million of that money, less than 40 per cent, went to Tasmanian businesses. Of the \$252 million awarded by the Department of Health and Human Services only \$155 million went to local Tasmanian-based businesses. You are not even close to your promise. Why have you broken this promise to Tasmanian business?

## **ANSWER**

Madam Speaker, I thank the member, Mr Bacon, for his question. What a fantastic outcome we have been delivering for Tasmanian businesses, the most confident in the country. It behoves

me to point out again that back in 2014 two-thirds of Tasmanian businesses thought that that lot's policies worked against them.

Regarding the question, the advice I have before me is that our policy is doing exactly what we set out to do. In the second quarter of 2018-19 Tasmanian businesses secured 96 per cent of the total value of open procurement contracts. By number, Tasmanian businesses also secured 92 per cent of open procurement contracts. This is up from 63 per cent back in 2013-14 under the former Labor-Greens government. The Government has already, on those statistics, met the target that we set. The member's newfound interest in this is interesting considering that back when he was finance minister Tasmanian businesses only got two-thirds of the contracts. At the moment it is over 90 per cent.

We will continue to support Tasmanian businesses. As a government we have done what we said we would do in rolling out the strongest infrastructure program the state has ever seen, ensuring that that reaches right across the state into the regions, creating jobs and, importantly, attracting additional investment, and with that additional investment more jobs being created. This side of the House, 13 000 jobs, that side of the House, 10 000 lost and an economy in recession.

### **Budget 2019-20 - Educational Outcomes**

**Mr SHELTON question to MINISTER for EDUCATION and TRAINING, Mr ROCKLIFF**

[10.15 a.m.]

Can you update the House on how the Hodgman majority Liberal Government is maintaining the momentum in education in order to improve educational outcome?

### **ANSWER**

Madam Speaker, I thank the member for his question. Education continues to be a major priority for the Hodgman Liberal Government which is why in this year's Budget we are, once again, investing record amounts, staff, schools and resources to lift education outcomes in Tasmania. The state Budget handed down this afternoon includes \$7.1 billion over four years for education and training. We have a clear plan, as our Agenda 2019, which we released early this year, demonstrates. We are getting on with the job to ensure young people, no matter where they live, have easy access to high-quality, inclusive learning opportunities.

Our education agenda this year has a real focus on equity, access and inclusion, and one of our greatest success stories in education has been years 11 and 12 extension school policy. This year we have seen Penguin District high, Kings Meadow High, Prospect High, Winnaleah District and Parklands High extend. Making years 11 and 12 of senior secondary locally available has been enthusiastically embraced by school communities, families and students. It is no wonder, because in the last four years TCE attainment has increased by 10 per cent.

Earlier this year I had the pleasure of launching the pilot locations for our nation-leading preschool initiative for eligible three year olds to ensure children with the most need have the opportunity to access quality early learning. This initiative recognises the importance of the early years as a time of remarkable brain growth that sets children up for success and will be extended statewide next year.

With the unprecedented long-term funding secure through the signing of the bilateral national school reform agreement last year, we are able to provide certainty regarding the appropriate level of resourcing for key focus programs. This includes the introduction of the disability needs-based funding model which I spoke about yesterday. This model will better support students with disability to access, participate and engage in education and has been welcomed by families across the state. Supporting student wellbeing is critical to ensuring our children and young people are engaged and successful learners.

Earlier this year I launched the Mental Wellbeing Action Plan and the Principal Wellbeing Action Plan to ensure students and education leaders get the support they need to flourish. These actions will build on and support the work we began last year when we released Tasmania's first Child and Student Wellbeing Strategy. We value education and we value our educators. We have begun the largest ever recruitment drive in Tasmanian public schools and we have also started community engagement on the building of new schools in growth areas. We are employing more staff in our schools since coming to government - 221 more teachers, 231 more teacher assistants, 41 more school administration staff and 64 more support staff.

We understand that a quality education is a passport to a better life and we will continue to invest strongly to ensure that students, no matter where they live, have access to the best education that can be delivered.

### **Apprenticeship and Trainee Numbers**

**Ms O'BYRNE question to TREASURER, Mr GUTWEIN**

[10.19 a.m.]

Before the last election you promised a 40 per cent increase in apprentices and trainees in the private sector by 2025. However, as you would be aware, the truth is that apprenticeships and traineeships are in freefall, with some 2000 apprenticeships disappearing. You are clearly heading in the wrong direction. Can you explain how 2000 apprenticeships have gone when you promised Tasmanians that the number would steadily increase?

### **ANSWER**

Madam Speaker, I thank the member for that question. I do not have advice in front of me regarding the current number of apprenticeships in the state. The Government has provided \$5000 in grants to small business to employ apprentices and trainees. The Government has introduced the payroll tax rebate to support not just apprentices and trainees, but young people as well. As a result, we are seeing a significant increase in the number of jobs in this state, up to 13 000 jobs compared to 10 000 being lost on that side of the House.

There are more women employed today than there were when we came government. The unemployment rate no longer has an eight in front of it.

**Mr O'Byrne** - No longer has an eight in front of it.

**Mr GUTWEIN** - Is that something you are proud of?

**Mr O'Byrne** - Are you proud of the fact that you have had the best economic conditions and you are driving it into the ground?

**Mr GUTWEIN** - When Mr O'Byrne became the economic development minister, he proudly -

**Ms O'BYRNE** - Point of order, Madam Speaker. I do think this is important. We have asked a very serious question of the Treasurer about why he says that apprenticeship numbers will increase when they are actually decreasing. He is not answering the question, or giving any explanation as to why we have a fall in apprenticeships. He is giving an election commitment that clearly has not worked because we have fewer apprentices now.

**Madam SPEAKER** - Order. I do not know what the minister is about to say next.

**Mr GUTWEIN** - The total number of apprenticeship and traineeship commencements has increased by around 4850 new commencements in the 12 months to September 2018.

**Members** interjecting.

**Mr GUTWEIN** - Madam Speaker, I will repeat that -

**Members** interjecting.

**Madam SPEAKER** - Excuse me, Treasurer. I am just going to calm the room down so that you can make your point nice and clearly.

**Mr O'Byrne** - Do not read too far. You have picked up the wrong one, mate.

**Madam SPEAKER** - Mr O'Byrne, warning number one.

**Mr GUTWEIN** - Madam Speaker, I am informed that in Tasmania, trades apprenticeship commencements have increased by 11.1 per cent over the 12 months to September 2018.

Madam Speaker, 4850 new commencements in the 12 months to September 2018, while over the same period, total commencements nationally were decreasing. Trade apprenticeships continue to be strong, the trade commencements increasing by 11.1 per cent over the 12 months to September 2018. We have provided \$5 million through the previous Budget for grants to small businesses to take on apprentices and trainees, an additional \$7.5 million was then committed in last year's Budget to provide grants to small businesses to take on apprentices and trainees. We had also supported the payroll tax rebate for apprentices and trainees.

The evidence is there for all to see. We have a strong, growing economy; jobs are being created. We are attracting investments. We are putting on trainees and apprentices.

### **Climate Change Emergency - Health Effects**

**Dr WOODRUFF question to MINISTER for HEALTH, Mr FERGUSON**

[10.24 a.m.]

The mental health impacts of climate change are only just emerging. Predictions from the world's most respect authorities are becoming more dire, including that we have just 11 years to

dramatically change course and avoid global heating that would bring catastrophic changes to all life. More people, especially young people, are absorbing this scientific evidence and becoming increasingly distressed at a lack of recognition and leadership from governments. Many young people are terrified and depressed. They see a future without hope and they cannot muster the energy to live in the today.

Are you aware of the eco-anxiety and some solastalgia present in so many young people? Are you preparing for the trauma communities will suffer from escalating and more extreme bushfires, floods and storms? Have you met with the Tasmanian branch of Doctors for the Environment to seek advice from medical professionals on how best to prepare our communities and support young people?

## **ANSWER**

Madam Speaker, I thank Dr Woodruff for the question. I will answer this question in two parts.

The first is to say that the Government has a very strong plan for mental health. We are implementing it and are already seeing the benefits of that in our community. We have seen a \$104 million commitment to strengthen, to improve and to grow mental health outreach services in the community, in our hospitals. We are building infrastructure. In late March, we saw the roll out of Dr Groves, our Chief Psychiatrist's, own innovation that we have funded called Mental Health Hospital in the Home, about which I am hearing very positive feedback in the lives of people who can be supported. It is a wonderful outcome. We will continue to roll out our package of measures and I am happy to discuss that in detail at the appropriate time because we are committed to working with all our stakeholders.

**Ms O'Connor** - You are avoiding the question.

**Mr FERGUSON** - I said I would answer this in two parts. We are working with all our stakeholders because not only do we want to talk up the importance of resilience, prevention, early intervention and the acute supports that we need, we want to take action and we are. This Government has overseen the largest expansion of mental health services across that spectrum of care of any government ever in this state.

The second part of my answer is one that is more reflective of what the green movement is doing to young people in our country.

**Ms O'Connor** - Do you think they are stupid, do you? And that easily led?

**Mr FERGUSON** - If you would just be good enough to listen to the answer.

**Ms O'Connor** - No, I know exactly what you are going to say.

**Dr Woodruff** - We know where you are going. It is the United Nations, 98 per cent of scientists worldwide, it is not the green movement.

**Madam SPEAKER** - Order.

**Mr FERGUSON** - No, you do not want to listen. I applaud and the Government applauds those people of goodwill who want to raise a legitimate issue and see legitimate practical solutions

to assist our community with climate change. That is precisely what this Government is doing in a meaningful, positive and practical way.

**Dr Woodruff** - Are Doctors for the Environment your stakeholders, minister? Have you met with them? Do you even know they exist? Did you listen to the question?

**Mr FERGUSON** - If you would just listen to others like the Premier, who outlined that this Government is contributing through our genuine action plan. The Premier even offered that if others can come with other ideas that we can consider, we will do that.

**Dr Woodruff** - Have you heard of eco-anxiety? Are you responding to that?

**Mr FERGUSON** - That is the kind of Government we are. That is the kind of minister that we have in this area, Ms Archer, who is leading this work. You ought to be congratulating the Government and the minister for those initiatives.

**Dr Woodruff** - Will you listen to young people if they come to you and talk about their concerns? Will you listen to them? Will you commit to listening to them?

**Mr FERGUSON** - Where I draw the line is where you are actively distressing children in our community. You have used the words 'terrified', 'depressed' and 'eco-anxiety'. There is a place -

**Dr Woodruff** - It is their words. Will you listen to them, minister, if they come to you? Will you commit to listening to them?

**Madam SPEAKER** - Order, Dr Woodruff. Warning number one.

**Mr FERGUSON** - If you will please be reflective of the impact that some of the rhetoric can have -

**Dr Woodruff** - We are very concerned about it. We are concerned about the effect of your climate denialism.

**Madam SPEAKER** - Order, warning number two.

**Mr FERGUSON** - on vulnerable young people who are entitled to a belief in the future, that the adults in our country and in our state care for their future, care for their interest.

We have a responsibility for these growing young minds, indeed the youngest of children, to nurture and protect them and give them a comfort and a belief in safety and a belief in a positive future. To do otherwise is highly damaging and something that people should be called to account for doing.

You may well make claims of inaction against others in the political sphere, but I invite the Greens and the green movement to not drag in children and to allow them to have anything other than a safe and a positive sense of wellbeing in their present and in their future. Otherwise you are distressing children and young people in a way that is very harmful and very unfair. Those comments were made here yesterday and I support those comments.



## **Mining Sector Activity**

### **Dr BROAD question to TREASURER, Mr GUTWEIN**

[10.30 a.m.]

You promised Tasmanians they would see a 50 per cent increase in new mining ventures over five years from last year. Why then is Tasmania already tracking so badly in this crucial sector? Under this broken promise, mineral exploration has fallen by almost 22 per cent over the past year. This is since you made that promise going into the last election. Why are you so utterly failing the mining sector, one of Tasmania's most important sectors for regional jobs?

### **ANSWER**

Madam Speaker, I thank the member for that question, noting I am not the mining minister but I am happy to have a go at it.

The Government is highly supportive of the mining and mineral processing sector in Tasmania. This sector is an economic cornerstone of this state, contributing a significant amount to the general economy and more than 50 per cent to our exports. It supports more than 5600 jobs. As a government, we are committed to ensuring that the mining and the minerals sector is a key component of the engine room of the Tasmanian economy.

In 2017-18 the mining industry paid \$36.9 million in mineral royalties; \$1.6 million in rentals and other fees. As Treasurer, I say good on them and may they keep going for a long time yet.

We are supporting the industry by progressing key initiatives, including: providing input into zoning under the planning scheme to ensure that strategic mineral resources are not sterilised and are kept available for future generations; providing ongoing land access for mining; and a strong stance on no more lock-ups. We provided \$2 million for the Exploration Drilling Grant Initiative. We have provided support to ensure we can increase greenfield mineral exploration. There is \$2 million there to support the industry in their endeavours.

Furthermore, we committed \$1.4 million over four years to the Geoscience Research Initiative program aimed at reducing mineral exploration risk. We have our \$1 million mining sector innovation initiative, which will see exciting new technologies and solutions to mine rehabilitation, and other cutting-edge projects explored. We are developing a mineral exploration investment attraction plan as part of the government's mining for Tasmania's future.

This side of the House is a strong supporter of the mining industry, unlike that side of the House who were trying to shut it down by locking up more land. I make the point again that the Tasmanian economy is strong. We are attracting investment and creating jobs. The difference between that side of that House and this side of the House could not be more stark. We have created nearly 13 000 jobs across the sector - 10 000 jobs lost on that side of the House and a state in recession.

**Ms O'Byrne** - Jobs are being lost under you.

**Madam SPEAKER** - Order. Ms O'Byrne, that is warning number two.

## **Budget 2019-20 - Health Funding and Investment**

### **Mrs RYLAH question to MINISTER for HEALTH, Mr FERGUSON**

[10.34 a.m.]

Can you outline why Health is a priority for the majority Hodgman Liberal Government and what the Government is doing to build a better health system?

### **ANSWER**

Madam Speaker, I thank the member for Braddon, Mrs Rylah, for her question. I assure her and this House that Health has been a priority for this Government since day one. We acknowledge the challenges; we acknowledge that our staff and our hospitals are under pressure because of increasing demand. We have acknowledged what we do and that we want to do more. That is exactly what is happening.

Every single year, the Hodgman Liberal Government has put more funding into Health, investing for growth to support our hard-working staff to deliver more services under the Hodgman Liberal Government and, importantly, meeting the increase in demand for acute care.

We have already seen significant investments come online over the past five years, none more so than our huge recruitment efforts. They have resulted in 130 new beds and over 800 new staff for our health system since 2014. We are very pleased with this growth because we know it is supporting our patients and our community. In terms of nurses, that is 500 more nurses. In terms of doctors, that is over 100 more doctors. It is 60 more allied health professionals and, on top of that, it is 50 more paramedics.

These staff do not just appear out of nowhere; they need to be funded. They can only come as a result of a focused and sustained commitment to funding that new capacity. To fund it we needed to fix the Budget. How good is our Treasurer? How good is our Premier? How good has the Government been in fixing the mess left behind by the Labor Party? Did anybody notice how blue the sky was on Sunday? How good is our Deputy Premier and Education minister?

I would like to tell you some more about \$757 million. We are getting on with the job. That is a huge amount of resource that this Government is putting into the health system. We know that members opposite blushed at the figure, but it shows our measure of commitment to sorting out issues in Health and growing capacity so we can meet that demand.

Our plan is about building the facilities. We need to expand the capacity. We have spent the last five years making up for 16 years of under-investment, in poor health infrastructure and indeed a redevelopment that was left in ruins. Tasmanians can now be assured that there is a lot to look forward to.

Stages 1 and 2 of the redevelopment, \$780 million of health infrastructure supporting not just the south but the whole state, is now fully funded and, as at 3 o'clock, being delivered. This investment is absolutely crucial for our state, as I outlined yesterday. As health ministers - at the least the good ones always will - I thank our colleague the Treasurer for the support provided so we can deliver these improvements, and our Premier who believes the same.

Today we are announcing a bigger, better ED, separate spaces for paediatric patients, dedicated facilities for mental health patients and a bigger ICU for the north as well.

**Ms White** interjecting.

**Madam SPEAKER** - Order.

**Mr FERGUSON** - We are getting on with an LGH redevelopment, long since neglected - \$87 million, including supporting it with a master plan so that it is carefully managed. We want to see more care delivered for more Tasmanians. The most exciting part of this redevelopment is the first part, which comes online later this year. For the first time ever, we have the inclusion of acute mental health in-patient facilities for young Tasmanians. I have been to the building site; indeed, I have been there with the Premier. They are doing a great job on site. We looked at the progress being made. It is looking magnificent. I recommend the drive up Howick into Charles Street any time to check out that redevelopment, which will include women's and children's facilities.

Northern Tasmanians are also struggling with parking at the LGH. I am telling you that northern Tasmanians are excited to see that we are now advertising for an expansion of the carpark. The work is steaming ahead; there is a tender out to add two new levels to the multi-storey carpark. The Hodgman Liberal Government is taking the state to the next level; now we are taking the carpark to two more levels.

Also, we have now finished the first part of the Mersey redevelopment. That is a three-part million-dollar redevelopment. We have taken the hospital back -

**Ms O'CONNOR** - Point of order, standing order 48, the minister has been on his feet for more than five minutes answering a Dorothy Dix question on the taxpayers' dime.

**Madam SPEAKER** - That is not a point of order, but I will allow the minister to sum up.

**Mr FERGUSON** - Thank you, Madam Speaker. There is so much good news so I will sum up. I cannot let the North West Regional Hospital go without a mention. We have very exciting works planned there and supported by the re-elected Morrison Liberal Government. We are going to do some very special things at Burnie to provide better facilities. That will include a brand-new antenatal clinic and \$10 million to upgrade acute facilities, thanks to the Morrison Liberal Government which, I can advise the House, was re-elected on Saturday.

### **Irrigation Infrastructure**

**Mr TUCKER question to MINISTER for PRIMARY INDUSTRIES and WATER, Mr BARNETT**

[10.40 a.m.]

Can you outline how the Hodgman Liberal Government is delivering irrigation infrastructure that is transforming Tasmania's agriculture?

## ANSWER

Madam Speaker, I thank the member for Lyons for his question and strong support for rural and regional Tasmania, and there is no greater supporter of rural and regional Tasmania than the Hodgman Liberal Government.

Irrigation is transforming rural and regional Tasmania; it is creating jobs, it is increasing production and farm exports are on the up. Why is that? Because water is liquid gold. Irrigated agricultural products across Tasmania - 8 per cent of our agricultural land delivers 52 per cent of our agricultural products. That is fantastic and proves again that water is liquid gold.

Tasmania is 1 per cent of Australia's land mass yet we are blessed with 13 per cent of Australia's water and we are making the most of it. It is a comparative advantage and the Hodgman Liberal Government is delivering. How is this being done? It is happening because we are working effectively with the federal Morrison Coalition Government. Yes, it was a very beautiful blue sky on Sunday morning, Mr Ferguson, a wonderful deep blue sky, and how good is ScoMo, Madam Speaker? We are working with the Morrison Coalition Government, together with our farmers and our farming communities, to build the irrigation scheme for the future.

With today's Budget we will be maintaining the momentum, investment and growth, investing in infrastructure, and that will be announced this afternoon at 3 p.m. by the Treasurer. We are looking forward to that. Record investment in job creating infrastructure, that is what we are on about, and irrigation is a key part of that plan going forward. We have a plan and we are delivering. This will help us get to our \$10 billion in agricultural output by 2050; we are on track and we have delivered.

In tranche 2 we have the Southern Highlands, North Esk, Swan Valley and Duck schemes. They are already built and water is available; it is happening - growing those crops, vines, fruit and vegetables, and delivering grass for our growing dairy industry. We are delivering and it is fantastic.

We have one more to come. Scottsdale will be completed in 2020, but then there is tranche 3. The Hodgman Liberal Government is working with the Morrison Coalition Government to deliver tranche 3, the pipeline to prosperity. It is very exciting, and those efforts are delivering. That was backed by the Australian people and \$100 million has been put on the table - thank you, Morrison Coalition Government. That announcement was made. It is a commitment that has been given and we are backing it, together with our \$70 million, which will be confirmed again in our Budget this afternoon, \$170 million from the Coalition in Canberra, working with the Hodgman Liberal Government, working with our farmers for tranche 3.

Tranche 3, when fully implemented, will deliver 10 irrigation schemes over the next eight or so years, 78 000 megalitres, thousands of jobs, and a \$114 million increase in agricultural production per annum. That is a fantastic asset and a wonderful investment for Tasmania and its people. In the first phase there would be \$170 million plus the investment from the farmers which will mean the first phase of at least five irrigation projects will proceed and we are continuing with the planning for those proposed schemes.

I put on the record our sincere thanks to the Morrison Coalition Government for that commitment working with the Hodgman Liberal Government. The Australian people have backed the Morrison Government. They have rejected the high-taxing Labor plans and their leader and they have backed ScoMo. How good is ScoMo?

## **Budget 2019-20 - Health Funding**

### **Ms WHITE question to TREASURER, Mr GUTWEIN**

[10.45 a.m.]

The woeful performance of your colleague, the Health minister, will be recorded in the history books so future generations will have a blueprint of how not to run a health and hospital system. He has continually told Tasmanians that your Government has improved the health system when that could not be further from the truth. That is reflected in a clear message being sent to you by the front line. AMA state president Dr John Burgess described your latest recycled health funding announcement as a stunt. Dr Burgess said yesterday, and I quote:

The hospitals in this state are in crisis. They need staff. Those staff need to be recruited and it is only then the beds can be opened. We are very disappointed that the Government has made, yet again, an announcement but has not backed it up at the same time with evidence of funding to actually recruit staff.

**Mr Ferguson** - They have not seen the Budget.

**Ms WHITE** - That is interesting. Do you dispute the AMA president? I find that curious. Last year you promised that 90 per cent of presentations to emergency departments would be treated within four hours by 2022. The fact is under this Government staff are struggling and treatment times are blowing out, with only 63 per cent of ED presentations currently treated within four hours, a steady decline from 64.7 per cent in 2016-17 and 66.3 per cent in 2015-16. Despite your promises, why are emergency treatment times going backward, placing lives at risk?

### **ANSWER**

Madam Speaker, I thank the Leader of the Opposition for that question. It is telling that obviously the Health minister has bested her. If you want to ask questions on health I suggest you ask the best Health minister this state has seen.

Let me make some points. We have invested significantly in Health. Unlike that side of the House where the member for Bass was sacking a nurse a day for nine months in their last term, we have invested and employed people on the front line - more than 500 nurses, over 100 doctors, more than 60 allied health professionals and more than 50 paramedics, and there are more to come.

I would say to those who want to criticise this minister or this Government in terms of Health, have a look at the performance in terms of hiring the frontline staff we need to deal with what is unprecedented and rising demand. When the flu season hit in 2017 we had a spike in presentations. Under normal circumstances you would expect that to abate, but it has not; demand has stayed high. As Treasurer my job is to work with this Health minister and this Premier and ensure that we provide the investment that is both affordable but, importantly, that is required, and that is exactly what we have done. There has been record spending on Health every year since we came to government. This year again there will be \$8.1 billion spent on Health across the four years, and we will continue to invest.

Madam Speaker, I will have more to say about that this afternoon. We will build and we have started on stage 2 of the Royal. We will ensure that we have a functioning, performing hospital providing the space that we require, unlike that side of the House. I must remind Tasmanians who

are watching that they started talking about the Royal Hobart Hospital in 2006. Then they spent \$10 million scoping out a waterfront hospital. They burned that \$10 million before then coming back to rebuilding the Royal. By 2014 they had not laid a brick. Eight years, they had not laid a brick.

As Treasurer, I thank the Leader of the Opposition for that question. As I said at the start of this question, it is obvious that this Health minister is besting the Leader of the Opposition. The Leader of the Opposition used to be the health spokesman and then hand-balled that off. Unfortunately she could not give it to Ms O'Byrne based on her previous performance, so it sits in the upper House.

Today's Budget will maintain the momentum. It will invest for growth and it will deliver record funding for health.

### **Ambulance Ramping Times**

#### **Ms WHITE question to TREASURER, Mr GUTWEIN**

[10.51 a.m.]

As you entered the last state election you promised Tasmanians you would reduce emergency ambulance response times to the national average. Ambulance paramedics know, patients know and you must know that often very sick people are being ramped in ambulances outside Tasmanian hospitals for hours at a time, placing their health at further risk and dangerously preventing crews from attending other emergencies. Why does Tasmania on your watch have the longest ambulance response times in the country?

#### **ANSWER**

Madam Speaker, I thank the Leader of the Opposition for that question and note that they are obviously running a tactic to have the Treasurer on his feet at every opportunity this morning. It seems blatantly obvious that they have run out of other tactics in the parliament.

I will not take on face value the statistics that the Leader of the Opposition has just provided. What I will say is that we are building more capacity. We have employed more staff - more nurses, more doctors, more allied health professionals, more paramedics. We are building capacity by finishing off the Royal Hobart Hospital. In 2006 that side of the House started talking about the capacity constraints at the Royal Hobart Hospital. What did they do in eight years? Nothing. Zero. Zip. Not a brick was laid.

This Health minister has that project back on track. This Health minister has employed more nurses, more doctors, more allied health professionals, more paramedics than anyone on that side could ever point to. In fact, the member who just opened her mouth and interjected was sacking a nurse a day for nine months. That was doing nothing to improve capacity in our hospitals.

We will have more to say on health this afternoon. The Budget I bring down today will maintain momentum, it will invest for growth and it will deliver record funding for health.

## **Forestry Industry - Good Neighbour Protocol**

**Mrs RYLAH question to MINISTER for RESOURCES, Ms COURTNEY**

[10.54 a.m.]

Since the election of the Hodgman majority Liberal Government five years ago the forest industry is growing strongly again after it was almost decimated under the former Labor-Greens government. With plantations playing a key role in that growth can you detail the measures being taken to ensure that tree growers operate in harmony with neighbouring property owners?

### **ANSWER**

Madam Speaker, the Hodgman Government is maintaining momentum. I am delighted that the forestry industry is investing for growth. The Government is a strong supporter of the forest industry, a great renewable industry and a major employer and creator of wealth across the state, particularly in regional areas. The forestry sector employs about 5700 Tasmanians and the Hodgman Liberal Government shares the industry's optimism for continued sustainable growth into the future. What a stark contrast this is to the dark period under the Labor-Greens government when two out of three jobs in forestry were lost.

It was very disappointing to sit her yesterday and hear Ms O'Connor celebrate the rapid and wide-scale downsizing of the industry. This is a disgrace. She says she is so concerned for young people. Yesterday, she said that her legacy was downsizing the forestry industry.

With the support of the Hodgman Government, Tasmanians are now confidently investing in the forestry industry to support their families and their communities. This is particularly the case in the plantation sector. In this year alone, there has been a 6.5 per cent increase in timber harvesting activity on private land and a growth trend that will continue, given the age profile of the trees already in the ground and the rate of new plantings.

It is important that this growth in plantation assets occurs in harmony with all stakeholders, particularly those who are on neighbouring properties. To this end I congratulate Private Forests Tasmania and the entire forestry sector for the newly released Tasmanian Forest Managers Good Neighbour Protocol. This protocol has been developed to promote cooperation and the free exchange of information between Tasmanian forest managers and neighbouring landholders. Establishing a positive relationship based on mutual respect will lead to proactive management of issues such as fire mitigation, the threat of invasive weeds, habitat management, boundary fence security and the management of natural and cultural values.

I am delighted to inform the House that the major plantation growers on both private and public land have signed up to the protocol. These include Sustainable Timber Tasmania, Forico, SFM Forest Products, Pentarch Forestry, Timberlands and PF Olsen Australia. This protocol is available for any forest managers and growers to subscribe to. I encourage all those with an interest in plantation assets to inquire through Private Forests Tasmania and sign up to the protocol.

The protocol is an innovative and contemporary approach to neighbourly relations and the entire industry should be commended on its proactive approach. It is clearly in everyone's interest to maintain positive and constructive relationships with their neighbours. This protocol establishes that issues and problems are generally best addressed at the local level, by local people working

together. Where a constructive relationship exists, based on mutual respect, any issues that arise between neighbours, clearly have a much better chance of resolution.

Signatories to the protocol agree to provide a transparent explanation of the forest practices plan, applicable to the forested property and to inform neighbours and key stakeholders of any forest operations. It was a delight to join industry participants recently at Agfest for one of their first tests they have had together in the announcement of this protocol. The collaboration we are seeing in the industry, the investment we are seeing in the industry and the jobs in this industry have been created because the industry has confidence thanks to the Hodgman Liberal Government.

Our policies, our economic management and our support of regional areas is why the forest industry is now thriving. This Government knows the importance of providing confidence. This industry employs thousands of Tasmanians across regional areas.

We see that firsthand in far north east Tasmania. I was there last week at a sawmill at Branhholm and saw investment in the sawmill. Local jobs being created across Tasmania, the local jobs that you celebrated being destroyed. I was in a nearby forestry coupe and saw young people being employed, young people on equipment, family businesses investing in this industry. We know the importance of the forestry industry, along with the minerals and mining industry, in creating jobs in regional areas.

These jobs are created because they have confidence in what this Government is doing: the confidence that the Treasurer and this Government's policies have created. We have delivered on our election commitments and we will continue to deliver on those. Industry has confidence because of the Hodgman Liberal Government. We are looking forward this afternoon to seeing the Treasurer deliver on his budget commitments.

**Ms O'CONNOR** - Point of order, Madam Speaker, under standing order 48, relevance. The minister has been blathering on for five-and-a-half minutes on the taxpayer's coin.

**Ms COURTNEY** - Madam Speaker, it is very unfortunate -

**Madam SPEAKER** - I think she has finished, thank you.

### **Budget 2019-20 - Climate Emergency Funding**

**Ms O'CONNOR question to TREASURER, Mr GUTWEIN**

[11.00 a.m.]

The devastating climate-induced bushfires of this past summer have knocked a hole in your budget in the order of tens of millions of dollars. With an El Niño summer on the horizon and more fires a certainty, have you made sure this is a climate-ready budget? What are you doing to respond to the climate emergency to ensure our infrastructure, housing and health system and councils at the front line of the climate emergency are ready for a future which is already here?

**ANSWER**

Madam Speaker, I thank the member for that question and her interest in this matter and I commend her on wearing Liberal blue today; it is fantastic.



**Ms O'Connor** - It's not Liberal blue, it's sky blue.

**Mr GUTWEIN** - The point should be made that this Government has done more for bushfire mitigation than any government before us. We have stepped up to the plate and invested money and done more to protect communities and our assets than any other government before us.

The fuel reduction burning program and the use of predictive modelling, as well as the way we have introduced our emergency management plans, ensure that this state is safer than it has ever been before. It is this Government that has done that, not you. When you were in government with the Labor Party you worked together to stay in government by shutting down the economy, shutting down the forestry industry, taking us into recession and costing the state tens of thousands of jobs.

**Ms O'CONNOR** - Point of order, Madam Speaker. The Treasurer is misleading the House. The world was in a global recession and the forest industry was in downturn going back to 2006.

**Mr FERGUSON** - On the point of order, Madam Speaker. That is entirely disorderly and not a point of order.

**Ms O'Connor** - The Treasurer was misleading the House.

**Madam SPEAKER** - I am ruling it out of order. Proceed, Treasurer.

**Mr GUTWEIN** - Madam Speaker, I can understand why the member would want to shut me down on that basis. We were the only state that went into recession in that period. That is when you were in government and Labor was clinging to the Treasury benches by having two Greens in Cabinet who were developing policy for them. That policy, as you well know, was to lock up more land and shut down the forestry industry. That is a statement of fact. As a result, we went into recession, 10 000 jobs were lost at its peak and the budget had red ink all over it.

**Ms O'CONNOR** - Point of order, Madam Speaker, under standing order 45, relevance. What we are asking here is how much preparation the Treasurer has made for the climate emergency in this Budget?

**Madam SPEAKER** - It is not a point of order and I believe he is answering it.

**Ms O'Connor** - Just say the word 'climate'.

**Madam SPEAKER** - Order, Ms O'Connor.

**Mr GUTWEIN** - I was making the point that this Government is more prepared than any government before it because we have invested significant amounts of money to ensure that we have a bushfire mitigation plan to reduce the risk for both our assets and our people, which is exactly what we should do. When the member was in the previous government the aims of the day - and you full well know that this is a statement of fact - were to shut down the forestry industry and lock up more land and, as a result, it cost the state by going into recession and it cost us 10 000 jobs. That was the net effect of when you were in government. You did not introduce a bushfire mitigation program. In fact, all you used to do was whinge about the smoke.

In wrapping up, I will be bringing the Budget down this afternoon at 3 p.m. and it will be a budget that will maintain momentum and investment for growth. It is a budget that will create jobs

and, importantly, it will invest record amounts into health and education and looking after the most disadvantaged.

**Time expired.**

## **STATEMENT BY SPEAKER**

### **Reflection on Previous Debate**

[11.06 a.m.]

**Madam SPEAKER** - Honourable members, I have important advice for the House. We are now about to move on to the matter of public importance which will be introduced by Dr Woodruff, member for Franklin, and it is on climate emergency.

The advice I have is that before we commence debate on today's MPI, I need to remind the House of the provisions of standing order 142, which prescribes any reflections upon any vote of the House. Given the House debated a motion on this subject yesterday, I remind members to avoid reflections on the outcome of the vote itself and direct their contributions to the subject.

**Ms O'CONNOR** - Point of order, Madam Speaker. I would like to understand why this advice was not provided yesterday when I talked about the vote, or on the back of question time this morning when we asked about the vote, and why this advice has been provided now, after the matter has been raised in this place by us, following the debate yesterday, a number of times?

**Madam SPEAKER** - The reason is because we only received advice of the MPI this morning.

**Dr WOODRUFF** - Point of order, Madam Speaker. I would like to understand why you just provided that advice today when we have had matters of public importance that have only been advised on the day, as is required, numerous times in the past. I wonder why you have chosen to make a special case out of today.

**Mr FERGUSON** - On the point of order, Madam Speaker, we will not be tolerating this debate at this moment in time. I invite you, Madam Speaker, to write to the member.

**Madam SPEAKER** - I can assure you I am acting on very formal advice. If you would like to proceed, please do so.

## **MATTER OF PUBLIC IMPORTANCE**

### **Global Climate Emergency**

[11.08 a.m.]

**Dr WOODRUFF** (Franklin) - Madam Speaker, I rise to talk about the global climate emergency, which is obviously such a matter of disinterest to members of parliament that they are all leaving the Chamber on both sides, Labor and Liberal.

Madam Speaker, I do take account of your advice and will be very clear that I will be talking about the narratives that appeared yesterday. There are a number of narratives developing in this Chamber and I am interested to explore how they are so closely aligned.

Yesterday's debate about the global climate emergency sits within the context of the global discussion about the climate emergency facing the planet and all the species on it, including the human animal. We brought on a discussion in this place on the back of science and the evidence that was catalysed by the United Nations in their report last October of the climate change emergency, and on the back of hundreds of councils around the world, 532 at last count, two national governments - the United Kingdom and Ireland - and a subnational government, the ACT in Australia, which have all recognised that the world is in a state of climate emergency.

What we heard from the Liberals yesterday is a narrative that the minister has embellished upon this morning, which is that it is the Greens' fault. 'It is the Greens' fault that we are even having the conversation about a global climate emergency. The Greens are beating up the issue. The Greens are - '

**Ms ARCHER** - Point of order, Madam Speaker. Members cannot mislead the House by saying that we have said certain things. By all means directly quote from *Hansard* but if you are not sure about what is said, or you are trying to put words into my mouth, then check the content. I am not going to stand for being misled in this House. You have called a number of members to account on a number of occasions. I am not going to stand for it myself.

**Madam SPEAKER** - I am glad you have put that on *Hansard* but I have been advised it is not a point of order. Sorry about that.

**Dr WOODRUFF** - Madam Speaker, I hope I will not be continually interrupted by members of the Government who are taking away our private members' time by standing up and denying the narrative they are spinning about the Greens. The minister said this morning that it is the green movement that is responsible for causing the eco-anxiety which our young people are experiencing. For causing the tears of concern, depression and, frankly, terror that people are talking about on the streets.

Yesterday, hundreds of students and young people were at a snap protest. I am so saddened for them by the failure of this House, by the failure of every Liberal and Labor member, to recognise the global state of climate emergency.

The Liberals are also failing to recognise that we must move on from our addiction to coal in this country. We must come up with a just transition for people who are working in coal industries in Queensland and elsewhere in the country. It is their addiction to the money from the coal industry that flows to Liberal parties and the addiction that the Labor Party has to the exact same industry, which is failing young people.

The Liberals were supported lockstep by the Labor Party yesterday. It also thinks it is the green movement, in particular, the Greens party's fault, that Bill Shorten is not prime minister. Rather than look at themselves, they would prefer to blame the Greens for an Adani convoy, which was picking up thousands of voices as it moved up to the Carmichael mine site in Queensland. The Bob Brown Foundation was cheering on with everybody else who understood that we have to look for a just transition and move away from jobs in coal. Like it or not, the world community will not be carving out a privileged little niche for Australia to continue to flog off that deadly fossil fuel.

Last October, the United Nations, hundreds of scientists, collectively told us that we have to stop burning coal. That means we have to stop mining it. They have given us what was likely our final warning, delivered in Korea. We must keep warming to 1.5 degrees at the most. They found that the current trajectory we are on is 2 to 4 degrees - up to 4 degrees by the end of the century. That is a catastrophic change to this planet; to all the systems that life depends on. Humans, animals, plants and every other species are travelling towards a very dark future.

The Liberals are now determined to spin out another few more years for the coal industry, along with Labor and blame the green movement for beating up fear in young people, for causing record rates of anxiety and depression.

I am proud to be part of a movement that speaks the truth. I am proud to listen to the scientists, to listen to the 132 governments including Australia, the United States, the United Kingdom, Canada and China, that have told us one million species are already facing extinction. I am proud to be part of that movement. Every other person who is a member of the Greens is proud to stand with those children. Our firefighters have declared an emergency. This summer, the fire chiefs told us that we have to change; we have to understand, we have to do things differently. I am proud to be part of that movement.

We will continue to come in here every week, every day and talk about the truth until the Liberal and Labor parties recognise that for Tasmanians, and show some leadership and act.

**Time expired.**

**Members** interjecting.

**Madam SPEAKER** - Order

[11.15 a.m.]

**Ms STANDEN** (Franklin) - I seriously do not know what goes on in this place sometimes.

**Madam SPEAKER** - Neither do I.

**Ms STANDEN** - Madam Speaker, thank you for the opportunity to speak on the issue of climate change. I am pleased to put on record that I personally, and that the Labor Opposition, acknowledges the climate emergency. Furthermore, we are committed to a just transition for working people who rely on carbon-intensive industries for their livelihoods. Labor understands that climate change is one of the most significant and complex challenges facing our community. Climate change is no longer a vague or a distant threat; it is here, and it is having environmental, social and economic impacts that cannot be ignored.

Tasmanian Labor believes in real action on climate change. Only Labor took a comprehensive climate policy to the recent election that was good for the environment, households and the economy.

**Members** interjecting.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** - Order.

**Ms STANDEN** - The Liberals and their climate-sceptic mates are hopelessly divided about climate change.

Tasmania has seen first-hand the impact of increased intensity and frequency of extreme weather events like the floods of 2016, the severe bushfires of 2013, and in Tasmania's world heritage areas in 2016 and 2019. We saw what weather variability can do to our energy security with the energy crisis in late 2015 and early 2016.

Warming waters have brought challenges that we have not seen in Tasmania before, such as Pacific Oyster Mortality Syndrome.

Increased weather and climate variability has the risk of negative impacts on people's health, placing increased cost-of-living pressures on many in the community who are already least able to afford it.

Tasmanian Labor understands that the threat of climate change is real and it is immediate. As such, it requires true action to be taken. That is why Tasmanian Labor yesterday moved an amendment to a motion to reflect its values and to ensure that we put on the record the ways in which the Labor Opposition would, in government, work for real action on climate change. Labor is committed to ensuring that Tasmania is a leader in response to climate change.

**Ms O'Connor** - Adani.

**Ms STANDEN** - Our climate policy is based around five key areas -

**Ms O'Connor** - Adani.

**Ms STANDEN** - First, providing clear policy leadership.

**Ms O'Connor** - Adani.

**Ms STANDEN** - Second -

**Ms O'Connor** - Fracking.

**Ms STANDEN** - Tasmania is a leader in addressing climate change. Third, setting responsible and achievable targets.

**Ms O'Connor** - This is not the policy you took the 2018 state election.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** - Ms O'Connor, I officially warn you for interjecting, for the first time.

**Ms STANDEN** - Fourth, harnessing the energy technology of the future, and fifth, climate-friendly communities. We will continue to work with the energy industry to manage the rising challenges of climate change, emissions reduction and energy efficiency.

**Dr Woodruff** - You sure will.

**Ms STANDEN** - We understand that Tasmania has a huge natural advantage when it comes to renewable energy.

**Dr Woodruff** - Adani.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** - Dr Woodruff, I warn you for the first time officially.

**Ms STANDEN** - We also understand that Tasmania needs not only leadership in energy to keep our energy security intact but also to seize the opportunities available to us as a renewable energy powerhouse.

Our climate policy will restore a minister for climate change; provide clear policy leadership; establish Tasmania as a leader in addressing climate change; set responsible and achievable targets; harness the energy technology of the future; assist our communities and businesses to adapt to the risks presented by climate hazards; and support climate-friendly communities.

This generation is the first one to experience the real impact of climate change and the last with the opportunity to act. Young people and their future are at stake. I have been engaged with those involved with School Strike for Climate and congratulate Toby Thorpe and others in their efforts to insist upon change. I attended a presentation from the COP 24 that he attended in Katowice last year. He and the group of delegates presented three simple calls to action, to the Tasmanian Government -

1. to support all schools in Tasmania in making the transition to renewable energy.
2. to reform the energy resource allocation to schools to allow for renewable energy savings to be kept by schools.

I note that the minister for Education attended that presentation. I am interested to hear from him, and the Government, about what action has been taken in relation to that. The last part of that motion -

3. to establish a youth climate council with state-wide youth representation of climate leaders.

I acknowledge that young people are in many ways leading in this area. Toby is intending to attend COP25 in Chile in December this year. He and other youth leaders are to be commended for the action they are taking. As a civic leader and shadow minister for climate change, I am very keen to hear and learn from their experience and insights.

**Ms O'Connor** - Do you agree that it is not the Green movement that is elevating concerns?

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** - Order.

**Ms STANDEN** - Yesterday, the Opposition did not vote against the Greens motion. We are the first to admit that the Tasmanian Climate Change Office and the Government's Climate Action 21 has made some commendable ground, but there is more to be done.

**Time expired.**

[11.22 a.m.]

**Ms O'CONNOR** (Clark - Leader of the Greens) - Madam Speaker, we brought this matter on as a matter of public importance debate today and we acknowledge the advice that has been received by the Speaker in relation to not reflecting on the vote.

I will say a few things about the young people who watched yesterday's debate. One of the young women who was in the reception room with her eyes brimming with tears, achieved a perfect score last year on her exit from college. She is a person of the highest intelligence. The young people who were in the reception room yesterday are highly engaged. They are not being led by the Green movement. They are being led by the scientists. They are being led by the fire chiefs who know this is a climate emergency.

We are now seeing a narrative from the climate inaction faction that it is somehow the Greens who are scaring young people. That is so insulting to the intelligence and the connectedness of young people today. It is insulting to the 1.5 million students who engaged in the global strike for climate a couple of months ago. It is insulting to the hundreds of students who gathered on the lawns of parliament yesterday in a snap climate protest. We are not going to get anywhere in giving young people hope for the future if we have dishonesty about what is driving their fear, their eco-anxiety, their solastalgia.

We had the Health minister this morning again in a state of denial about the impact on the mental health of young people of the climate emergency that we are in. Stop insulting young people. They are much clearer about the future that we are facing than 23 members of this House, other than Dr Woodruff and I. It might pain members to have us come in this place and keep talking about the climate emergency. It might tweak at their sense of morality, but we are going to keep doing it because we will stand with those young people. We accept the science. We know that the world is in a climate emergency just as those young people know it.

The Minister for Health this morning was saying we have a responsibility to give young people a sense of hope in the future. That is why we moved to have a climate emergency declared yesterday, because when you declare a climate emergency there is a sense of purpose and action.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** - Order, Ms O'Connor. You are reflecting on the vote.

**Ms O'CONNOR** - Mr Deputy Speaker, I am not reflecting on the vote. I am reflecting on the debate.

Greta Thunberg is one of the most remarkable and inspirational people on the planet now. She is a 16-year-old student from Sweden who has led a global climate movement. That is what gives young people hope. A sense that they are part of something bigger, that they are working on this together and that if they keep standing up and rattling the cage of inaction and the deniers there might be change. The world has 10 years to avoid the worst extremes of the climate chaos that human beings have caused.

It is nauseating to sit in here as we did in question time today and in the debate yesterday and hear the glib responses to the concerns that we are raising on behalf of young people, mums, dads, grandparents. The trivialities that we have to listen to in this place. I am not speaking about you, Environment minister, not climate minister. I am speaking about the sort of garbage that comes out of the mouth of the Treasurer, of the Health minister. I am speaking about the silence from the Leader of the Opposition, the trite contributions of Dr Broad, who forgot yesterday that the Prime

Minister at the time, Julia Gillard, worked with the Greens to deliver a price on carbon and had the temerity to blame the Green movement for Labor's appalling election campaign. If you cannot have a good hard look at yourself off the back of that campaign when you are backing Adani and fracking in the Northern Territory you deserve to lose, and you deserve to lose the next election.

My fear is that Labor will react to that election loss by lurching further to the right, by backing Adani even harder. It is worth pointing out that in this federal election there were half a million more Australians who cast their vote for Labor and the Greens than there were for the Coalition in terms of primary votes. That surely says something about the will of a majority of the Australian people for there to be real action on climate.

It breaks young people's hearts when they see both the major parties, the party of government, in this place and in this country backing a coal mine that would consign future generations to the bleakest of futures. We can do better.

**Time expired.**

[11.29 a.m.]

**Ms ARCHER** (Clark - Minister for Environment) - Mr Deputy Speaker, I have a number of titles. As I have explained to the House on a number of occasions, I do not need to extract out of my portfolios special names. Of course, climate change fits into the Environment portfolio.

I always say I thank the members for raising this important issue. Yes, it is an important issue but we did have the debate yesterday so I feel restricted because if I get up here and make our position, which is very clear unlike Labor's position, then I will be repetitive and I will be reflecting on the vote and the debate from yesterday. Suffice it to say that from our Climate Action Plan the words that were used is that it is a 'serious and urgent issue', and I do not resile from that.

I have not said that the Greens are causing this fear. What we fear as leaders -

**Ms O'Connor** - The minister behind you did.

**Dr Woodruff** - By implication, that was very clear.

**Ms ARCHER** - If I can finish, because there is this serious and urgent issue and concern in the community, we as leaders need to be careful about the language we use and that we do not play on that fear, that we do not create -

**Mr Ferguson** - Distress.

**Ms ARCHER** - Thank you, minister - and that we do not amplify their very legitimate concerns or cause unnecessary fear. We need to be very cautious -

**Ms O'Connor** - A student with a perfect score was in tears, not because of anything we did.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** - Order, Ms O'Connor.

**Ms ARCHER** - about our language and show leadership and calm and deal with this issue with action. Yesterday I deliberately went through the initiatives of our Government in relation to Climate Action 21 -



**Ms O'Connor** interjecting.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** - Ms O'Connor, you are officially warned for the second time.

**Ms ARCHER** - Mr Deputy Speaker, I invited members to have a look at that plan and to also look at the implementation plan. I am not going to read from it, do not worry, but members like to deny we have a plan. The Hodgman Liberal Government has a plan on climate change and climate action and we have initiatives that we have funded.

I want to touch on something else to add to this debate rather than be repetitive to what Ms O'Connor referred to. She made reference to the fire chiefs - I think it was the fire chiefs or the emergency leaders - and a comment made in April this year in relation to statements calling for action from the Prime Minister and all state and territory governments in relation to a range of topics including responding to climate change. I want to respond to say what the response has been at a national level in that space because, as we know, climate change requires a number of different actions across a whole range of different sectors.

We touched yesterday on transport, farming and other issues we need to act on and create efficiencies in such as our households, our businesses and our industries, and that is of global concern and significance in relation to the action that we take. It needs to be at a local, national and international level.

In response to the national level in relation to this issue, the Australasian Fire and Emergency Services Authorities Council, or AFAC, has acknowledged that the increasing severity of extreme weather events - which are prolonged heatwaves, storms, floods and bushfire weather - are ongoing concerns for emergency services. That is a fact and we have acknowledged that, certainly this season. To deal with these matters AFAC has established a climate change group to develop a discussion paper identifying current and potential impacts of climate change for the emergency management sector.

The Tasmania Fire Service chief officer is the AFAC sponsor for this group and the TFS director of community fire safety is the deputy chair. We welcome their participation in this. It is a really important issue, as I have said, at a national level, for us to be dealing with this as state and territory leaders in conjunction with the federal government.

Through the National Resilience Taskforce, Tasmania has actively contributed to the national disaster risk reduction framework which overtly identifies the pressures being experienced by the emergency services sector in response to climate change. Within the strategic directions framework of the TFS and State Emergency Service there are clearly identified priorities around building community resilience in the context of climate change.

Actions in support of addressing the impacts of climate change include ongoing funding for the Government's fuel reduction program, including specifically identified funding for the Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area using a risk-based approach; implementation of a flood-mapping project as part of the newly established Flood Policy Unit; community resilience programs, including bushfire-ready neighbourhoods; and a project to enhance remote area firefighting resources in Tasmania.

The Tasmanian Government has actively commissioned and engaged in research in partnership with the Antarctic Climate and Ecosystems Cooperative Research Centre and the University of

Tasmania to get downscaled Tasmania-specific future climate projections to inform strategic planning and risk assessment, assess the viability of prescribed burning under climate change and undertake a future fire danger risk analysis for Tasmania.

I get sick of, particularly the Greens, coming into this House saying that there is inaction by this Government on climate change. Talk about Climate Action 21 and the implementation plan. I have just run through what we are doing and that is just a small part of what is being done in relation to fire management, SES and our response in relation to extreme weather events. In our time in government we have had to deal with a major flood and fires. Tasmanians are resilient and we want to have those wraparound services and programs which allow Tasmanians to be comforted by the knowledge that they are in good hands and good leadership.

[11.36 a.m.]

**Dr BROAD** (Braddon) - Mr Deputy Speaker, there is no doubt that climate change is a serious issue. What we are seeing unfortunately from a national level is that this next three years of a Morrison Coalition Government will not see any real action on climate change. That is going to make any transition down the track even harder because the best way to make a change is to start early and in a small way rather than have to start later when the change has to be much faster and more painful.

I have people ask me if I believe in climate change. I say it is not about belief. It is about the evidence and the evidence is overwhelming. The scientific community all around the world, not just climate scientists but all the other branches of science that hang off it and study various forms, whether it be geology, meteorology and so on, have all come to the same conclusion - climate change is happening and happening very rapidly and we are seeing some very concerning signs.

The Greens are right when they say one thing that the models have got wrong is the speed. The models are having to be adjusted because the speed of change is faster than even they predicted. We are seeing a number of uncertainties in what is happening on the globe, for example, the melting of the Greenland ice sheet. What impact that will have on sea level rise is unknown because there are other issues at play. It is not just about the volume of water contained in the Greenland ice sheet; it is more complicated than that. We are seeing the rapid melting of the Greenland ice sheet, well in excess of any predictions, so much so that there are areas of Greenland now that are very much warmer than they have been even in that so-called warm period when the Vikings colonised Greenland.

What we are seeing is the weight of the ice sheet itself. If the ice sheet in Greenland melts we might have a circumstance where the weight of that ice is depressing the crust of the Earth. If that ice sheet melts it will not only be the volume of water that creates sea level rise, it will be the rise of the crust of the Earth itself. How much of an impact that will have is unknown. We have all these issues at play here.

**Ms O'Connor** - Did you know the planet has already wobbled on its axis?

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** - Ms O'Connor, you are sitting on your last warning.

**Dr BROAD** - There is so much uncertainty around what would happen to the warming we are seeing in the Arctic tundra.

**Dr Woodruff** - The United Nations report, Dr Broad. Have you read that?

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** - Order. Dr Woodruff, I will warn you for the second time.

**Dr BROAD** - I am talking about climate change and being very serious and you are just having a crack.

We also have uncertainty with issues like the Arctic tundra. There is an inordinate amount of moisture locked in permafrost. As that permafrost melts, in effect the frozen water table is dropping, it releases methane. Methane is a much more significant greenhouse gas in its warming effect than carbon dioxide. A molecule of methane compared to a molecule of carbon dioxide has about four times the warming effect. The melting of the tundra and the reduction in that permafrost could set us on a path of climate change that we cannot control. That is a significant issue.

This is why there is so much uncertainty in the models. That is why the models are under-predicting the rate of change. That is why we need to make changes. We do need to transition to a clean energy economy. Technology is one of the key aspects of that. I would like to see far greater emphasis on technological solutions and the world investing in further research into transformative technologies.

If we had a massive publicly funded global investment in technologies such as cheaper batteries, renewable energy and so on, that would actually increase the pace of that change. We could develop whole new industries in Australia. CSIRO was once one of the pre-eminent research organisations in computing. CSIRO has always had a great presence in agricultural research. It would be great to see a massive investment from the federal government into research into climate-adjusting technologies. That would not only benefit the whole world but also potentially create industries for Australia in facilitating that transition.

The science is very conclusive that this is a problem we need to tackle. We need to start now. The later any real action starts the harder the hit. The globe has gone through a number of discussions. Areas like Africa, for example, which is currently trying to claw its way out of poverty, need to skip a step. They need to move from a very poor economy and skip the carbon-intensive step and move to a low-carbon economy as they develop. In telecommunications, Africa has skipped the step of a wired telephone system and gone straight to mobile phones. If the globe could invest in technologies and provide them patent-free to the world then we could see countries like Africa transition out of poverty and skip that carbon-intensive step in their economy. Their economies could develop at a rapid rate and also be low carbon.

**Matter noted.**

## **SUSPENSION OF SITTING**

[11.43 a.m.]

**Mr FERGUSON** (Bass - Leader of Government Business) - Mr Deputy Speaker, I move -

That the House do now adjourn until the ringing of the bells.

**Motion agreed to.**

**Sitting suspended from 11.44 a.m. to 3 p.m.**

**APPROPRIATION BILL (No. 1) 2019 (No. 21)**

**APPROPRIATION BILL (No. 2) 2019 (No. 22)**

Her Excellency the Governor recommended expenditure for the purposes of the bills from the Consolidated Fund.

**First Reading**

Bills presented by **Mr Gutwein** and read the first time.

**Madam SPEAKER** - In accordance with the resolution passed by the House on 22 May 2019 I now invite members of the Legislative Council to enter the Chamber to listen to the Treasurer's speech.

**APPROPRIATION BILL (No. 1) 2019 (No. 21)**

**Second Reading**

[3.00 p.m.]

**Mr GUTWEIN** (Bass - Treasurer) - Madam Speaker, I move -

That the bill be read the second time.

It is my privilege today to deliver the Hodgman majority Liberal Government's sixth Budget. In the last six years Tasmania has come a long way and today we are a prouder, more diverse and much more confident society.

Our economy is one of the fastest-growing in the nation. Tourism is booming, our construction sector leads the country in first home buyers, approvals, commencements and completions. Our businesses have the confidence to invest, to employ and to think bigger than they ever have before.

This Budget is the next step in the Government's long-term plan to grow our economy, create jobs, invest in essential services and protect our way of life. This Budget is about maintaining the momentum and investing for growth. This Budget unashamedly invests record amounts into infrastructure to drive our economy, to enable us to deliver record investments into health, education and looking after the most vulnerable.

We will deliver more and better services for all Tasmanians. We will hire more nurses, doctors, teachers, paramedics, and police officers. We will invest more into the hospitals that provide the health services that we need and we will invest more into the education of our most precious resource, our students and our people.

While we have faced revenue writedowns in GST and stamp duty, we have determined not to take a backwards step in terms of investing in the infrastructure our growing state needs to underpin our economy to generate the revenues we need to deliver essential services.

This Budget increases our investment into intergenerational infrastructure, in health, education, and housing, in roads, rail, and bridges, in water and sewerage infrastructure, and in our parks and tourism assets, to secure our way of life and the future of our economy right around this state.

Madam Speaker, Tasmanians are reaping the benefits of the Hodgman majority Liberal Government's long-term plan. The Tasmanian economy is strong, diverse and growing. Nearly 13 000 jobs have been created under this Government. Last year, Tasmania's economy grew at 3.3 per cent, its highest rate in a decade, and our gross state product was over \$30 billion. On a per capita basis, our economy is growing the fastest in the nation at nearly double the Australian average. This Budget forecasts this growth to continue, and remain above trend, at 2.75 per cent next year.

Tasmanian businesses view our policies as the most popular in the nation, and this has been the case for close to two years. Retail spending is at near record levels. Our tourism sector is vibrant and booming, with visitor numbers and spending continuing to grow. Tasmanian exports are booming and we exported more than \$3.76 billion worth of goods in the year to March 2019, 6.6 per cent higher than the previous year. Our housing and construction sector leads the nation. As a result, our population is growing at its fastest annual rate in nearly a decade, and nearly three times faster than just a handful of years ago.

Madam Speaker, it was not always this way. Before we came to government, our economic circumstances were dire. Under Labor and the Greens the state had been in recession and the unemployment rate rose to 8 per cent. Confidence was at rock-bottom and two-thirds of small businesses thought that Labor-Greens policies were working against them. Tasmanians were voting with their feet - they were leaving the state in droves.

We had a difficult job to do when we came to government. We made the tough choices to get our economy back on track. We fixed the budget, rebuilt confidence, attracted investment and created jobs. Our plan is working, but we know there is always more to do. The Government has worked hard to get the budget back in the black. This is of key importance because it supports confidence, attracts investment and, importantly, enables record levels of investment into essential services.

I am pleased to confirm that once again our Budget will be balanced and in surplus this year, and right across the forward Estimates. Even after significant revenue downgrades, unprecedented demand for health services and the devastating summer wildfires, we will still deliver a \$41 million surplus, our fourth in a row.

As I indicated recently in this place, we have had to write down more than half a billion dollars in GST receipts and stamp duties, compared to the estimates in last year's budget. The Government has worked through these challenges responsibly and sensibly, and made the difficult calls. We have determined to underpin continued growth in our economy by increasing our already record level of investment into infrastructure, whilst investing record amounts into health, education and looking after the most vulnerable, and we will do this whilst continuing to balance our books without increasing taxes to Tasmanians.

Government businesses are performing well against the backdrop of the strong economy. Those businesses that have the capacity to provide increased returns to the Tasmanians that own them, such as MAIB and Tascorp, will contribute special dividends, whilst Hydro and Sustainable Timber Tasmania will meet the cost of some non-commercial activities.

The definition of a 'foreign investor' will be enhanced and from 1 January 2020, the rate of the surcharge on residential land will be brought into line with other jurisdictions. The surcharge on primary production land will also increase, and a foreign investor land tax surcharge will be developed and introduced from 1 July 2020.

All other states have introduced a point of consumption tax on wagering and we will likewise introduce one from 1 January 2020 at a rate of up to 15 per cent, after consultation with stakeholders, on the net wagering revenue of betting companies. Whilst historical agreements limit the revenue from this measure, we will work closely with the local racing industry to ensure that the net benefits are appropriately shared between government and the industry.

These measures will provide some additional revenue, but the impact of the revenue losses described previously means that we will need to ensure that the public sector is as efficient and effective as possible.

This Government will always live within its means and this Budget introduces a modest efficiency dividend of three-quarters of 1 per cent. In practice, this means that next year the Government will work to save 75 cents out of every \$100 that it spends. This modest measure will not impact on the provision of frontline services. Rather, it will come from expenditure such as consultants, travel and advertising, as well as targeted vacancy control and natural employee attrition, without affecting essential services. These measures ensure that we can deliver the services that Tasmanians expect while the Budget remains balanced and in surplus each year over the Budget and forward Estimates.

Madam Speaker, for the next financial year, a budget surplus of \$57 million is forecast and increasing surpluses across the forward Estimates period are also forecast. While modest, next year's surplus is an important element of our responsible financial management.

The bushfires earlier this year and the ongoing challenge of the unprecedented increasing demand in our health system demonstrate how a surplus provides the capacity to deal with challenges. This is why we will not do what those opposite continually call on us to do, and that is to spend with no regard for the future.

This Budget delivers a balanced set of books, record investment into health, education and protecting the most disadvantaged, whilst underpinning our economy by investing record amounts today to deliver the infrastructure we need for tomorrow.

Public sector wages make up nearly 50 per cent of our expenditures. Wage increases must be fair, reasonable and affordable. If wage growth is unsustainable, so will be our finances. Today, because we have managed the Budget well, we employ more nurses and doctors, more teachers and support staff, more police and firefighters and more rangers and specialised staff than ever before to provide the services our growing population needs.

We will provide sensible and affordable wage rises that enable more staff to be employed rather than pay unsustainable wage rises that will ultimately mean that less can be employed and less services can be delivered.

Our latest wage offer included increases to a range of terms and conditions and a wage increase of 7 per cent over three years, offset by sensible savings. This policy delivers a fair, reasonable and affordable wage increase that is sustainable. The AEU has put this offer to its members to be voted

on soon and we will continue to negotiate with other employee groups in good faith to achieve an appropriate outcome.

In accordance with the current policy, wage increases of 2 per cent are factored into the Budget. In line with our recent offer, increases higher than 2 per cent per annum are to be funded by identified savings. This ensures that the wage increases are affordable into the long term.

Having acted to bring our financial framework into the twenty-first century, this Government will now take steps to bring our public sector framework into the twenty-first century as well. The current State Service Act 2000 was developed during the late 1990s and is now nearly two decades old. Since that time, rapid technological, demographic and social change has occurred and arguably the act is increasingly irrelevant and outdated.

In our recent wage offers to unions we proposed a review of the State Service Act to deliver a framework for a public service that is effective and efficient and can meet the challenges of the next 20 years. The review will identify the structural, legislative and cultural improvements that will transform current structures, services and practices to deliver a more effective and efficient public service, fit for the twenty-first century. The review will be led by a steering committee comprising representatives from the unions, the public, private and the not-for-profit sectors, and we will provide more details regarding its structure and resources in the first quarter of 2019-20.

Madam Speaker, as I have explained, central to our plan is strong financial management and a growing economy, because this allows us to invest more into services. Our economy is strong, jobs are being created and our population is growing again, but we need to maintain this momentum by investing for growth.

Our strong economy is the engine room that generates the revenue that enables us to invest record amounts into the essential services that Tasmanians need. Whilst growth in our economy continues to outpace the nation's, there are headwinds forecast for the national economy and we must insulate ourselves against that.

The 2019-20 Budget includes a record \$3.6 billion investment into job-creating intergenerational infrastructure that will support future growth, attract investment and create jobs. Our record-breaking infrastructure program includes \$2.8 billion in agency-funded social and economic infrastructure, as well as nearly \$800 million in investment to support infrastructure undertaken by our government businesses and TasWater.

The choice we have made is to stay the course and increase our investment into the infrastructure the state needs. That will mean the state will carry a manageable level of net debt. The level of infrastructure investment over four years is unprecedented in the state's history, but then so is our population growth, which today is more than double our long-term trend. So too is our growth in interstate and international visitors, and so is the growth in exports and our construction sector. With that growth will come both opportunity and challenge. This Budget provides the foundation to both grasp the opportunities and to respond to the challenges.

Madam Speaker, in Tasmania's export-facing economy we need an efficient road and rail network to transport our exports to market. We also need to ensure that Tasmanians can get to school and work on time and access all parts of this state safely. The centrepiece of our \$2.8 billion infrastructure package is a massive \$1.6 billion for roads and bridges. The Budget delivers better roads right around the state, including the Tasman Highway from Hobart to Sorell, the Bass

Highway from Wynyard to Marrawah, the Murchison Highway and completion of the Perth Bypass. All of these projects will underpin local Tasmanian businesses and the jobs of Tasmanians.

The Budget begins the delivery of the new Bridgewater bridge, Tasmania's largest-ever transport infrastructure project at \$576 million, with expected completion in 2024. This future-focused Budget also brings forward \$1 million to commence feasibility studies on alternative traffic routes through Hobart, including considering whether bypasses, tunnels or a mix of both form part of the broader cityscape in coming years.

Madam Speaker, the 2019-20 Budget delivers \$352.6 million in infrastructure investment across our hospitals and health system. We will complete stage 1 of the Royal Hobart Hospital Redevelopment later this year. Building on stage 1, \$91 million is allocated to fully deliver stage 2 and will be used to expand the ED to meet growing demand and comprehensively refurbish A Block providing space for additional beds, whilst expanding the ICU and J Block.

The Budget continues our plan for the Launceston General Hospital, with \$76 million over four years, and \$22.4 million for the North West Regional Hospital for an eight-bed acute medical unit and a purpose-built antenatal clinic, as well as \$32 million for a significant capital upgrade for the Mersey.

Madam Speaker, a world-class education deserves world-class facilities. The Budget also invests in total \$194 million into educational infrastructure. This includes new schools in Legana and Brighton, significant rebuilds at Penguin and Sorell and redevelopments at Devonport High School, Cosgrove High School, Hobart College, Riverside High School, Tarooma High School, Southern Support School and School Farms. It also includes funding for primary schools in East Launceston, Illawarra, Lansdowne Crescent, Molesworth, Snug, Spreyton and Montagu Bay.

There is also \$6.8 million in infrastructure upgrades for other schools right around the state and \$15.5 million towards six new Child and Family Learning Centres, as well as \$7 million towards a Centre of Excellence in Clarence and \$5 million for one in Burnie.

The Budget invests \$170.6 million into our law and order infrastructure. The Budget includes \$64.8 million in funding for the Southern Remand Centre and \$15 million to upgrade the Burnie Court complex. Funding has also been provided for the new northern prison, which is expected to cost around \$270 million, and we will undertake consultation with communities about identified sites in 2019-20.

We are investing an additional \$125 million for our Affordable Housing Action Plan 2, bringing the Hodgman Liberal Government's investment to almost \$200 million over eight years, the largest investment into affordable housing in Tasmania's history. I am pleased to announce that we will bring forward \$20 million in expenditure to accelerate the provision of affordable housing sooner for those who need it most.

Our national parks, along with many of our key reserves, are one of this state's most precious assets, and nearly \$132 million of investment continues into infrastructure to ensure that they can keep up with demand whilst ensuring our outstanding brand is maintained and enhanced.

Madam Speaker, the Government continues to make strategic investments into its government businesses and TasWater. This Budget includes nearly \$800 million in equity investments that will



support important and necessary investment in job-creating infrastructure undertaken by our businesses and TasWater.

The importance of Tasmanian Irrigation to our agricultural sector and our economy cannot be overstated. The Budget includes \$170 million over four years for Pipeline to Prosperity tranche 3 irrigation projects, delivering additional water security for Tasmanian farmers.

Our partnership through our shareholding with TasWater is of critical importance to the state. Another \$180 million over four years will be invested to improve our water and sewerage infrastructure, which will see a total of \$300 million invested by the state over a 10-year period. This funding will improve water and sewerage outcomes and support major projects such as the removal of the wastewater treatment plant at Macquarie Point, the Launceston wastewater and sewerage combined system improvements and the Freycinet Peninsula wastewater system.

The Government knows that rail is an important part of getting freight off roads, and getting our resources to markets. In partnership with the Australian Government, a total of \$256 million over the next four years will be invested to further build capacity in our rail network.

We are strong supporters of our forestry industry and will invest \$575 000 to enable a weighbridge at Parattah to be established so that our southern forest resource can be transported north more efficiently.

Madam Speaker, Tasmania has what the world wants, and to capitalise on that growth, Tasmania needs to meet that demand. TT-line is no different, and it is seeing spectacular growth in its freight, passenger and vehicle markets. To meet this demand, the Government and TT-Line will deliver two purpose-built vessels that are bigger, better and can accommodate more passengers and cars.

As our population and economy continue to grow, our cities are at risk of becoming more congested. The Government recognises that public transport is a key part of the solution in addressing such demand. The Budget contains funding to continue to progress the Derwent River ferry service, a single ticketing system for buses and ferries, and additional bus infrastructure. This will support and underpin a new bus transit centre to be constructed in Hobart and the scoping study will report on options shortly.

Madam Speaker, in recent years there have been significant and unprecedented increases in demand on our services, and this Budget responds where it is needed most. As a result, this Budget will deliver a record investment of \$8.1 billion for health. The Government has continued to listen and engage with Tasmanians and the health sector, and we are responding.

Over the Budget and Forward Estimates, \$544 million more will be spent in health than forecast in last year's budget. This includes \$240 million in additional funding to the Tasmanian Health Service and Ambulance Tasmania to address increasing health demand.

To demonstrate the level of our response to increasing health demand, compared to the last budget of the Labor-Greens government there is nearly \$2.3 billion more being spent over four years. A decade ago, health expenditure comprised around 25 per cent of the budget and this Government has increased it to where it now represents nearly 32 per cent of total budget expenditures.

For all the negativity of those opposite, it is this Government that has had the capacity and dedication to invest more into health than ever before. In our first term of government we hired an additional 100 doctors and more than 370 more nurses, more than 50 more paramedics and more than 60 more allied health staff. We have continued our investment and while we know there is always more to do, this Government is delivering. In total we have now hired over 550 more nurses, over 160 more doctors, over 90 more paramedics and over 110 allied health professionals.

The fact is our hospitals are under strain, which is why we have worked hard to get the Royal Hobart Hospital rebuild back on track, saved the Mersey Hospital and significantly invested into the LGH as well as into our regional hospital network. There is \$2 million to boost access to women's health services, targeting those who have waited the longest on the elective surgery waiting list.

The Budget provides \$20 million for our Ambulance Service to continue the rollout of 42 paramedics in regional areas, and a \$4.5 million boost over six years for the Ambulance Tasmania state operations centre. The Budget also sees the continuation of \$51.8 million over five years in funding for a new dedicated aeromedical helicopter service.

Madam Speaker, mental health is a key priority of this Government. The Budget continues our plan to deliver 27 more mental health beds with a new purpose-built facility for St Johns Park and an additional \$1.7 million for an equivalent mental health Hospital in the Home service. We are rolling out 30 more drug and alcohol rehabilitation beds with \$4 million over two years, and we are investing \$2.4 million over three years for community-based drug and alcohol rehabilitation beds in Ulverstone to better support the north-west.

Madam Speaker, we know that education is a major contributor to improving social and economic outcomes, including health, happiness, life expectancy and productivity. That is why this year's Budget delivers record education expenditure of over \$7.1 billion over four years, an increase of \$349 million compared to last year's budget.

Across the Budget and forward Estimates, the Government is continuing its six-year plan for education with an additional \$145 million to hire more teachers and support staff. Since coming to government we have already hired 222 more teachers and our six-year plan supports an additional 250 teachers and 80 teacher assistants.

Included in the Government's most recent wages offer are an additional 95 more specialist teachers in our primary schools, which will result in our primary school teachers having the lowest contact hours in the country. This would be a nation-leading outcome for our children. We understand that education occurs throughout a person's life and the 2019-20 Budget includes \$8 million for free preschool for three year olds from disadvantaged or vulnerable families. Furthermore, this Budget maintains the momentum and continues our plan to extend all high schools to year 12 by 2022.

Madam Speaker, TasTAFE will continue to build the skills for our changing workforce. The Budget includes \$2.9 million over two years to ensure our skilled workforce is able to meet industry demand. This funding will provide for increased prevocational training to support the construction industry, address workforce shortages and train more nurses.

Through targeted initiatives such as the Small Business Grants Program and the Payroll Tax Rebate Scheme, we are continuing to invest in key areas and programs that ensure more Tasmanians

are able to gain the necessary skills to enable them to find employment. These schemes encourage businesses to take on more apprentices and trainees in key industries such as building and construction, tourism and hospitality, and advanced manufacturing. Local job opportunities provide young apprentices and trainees the skills they need to succeed for the rest of their lives while allowing them to stay where they want to be, right here in Tasmania.

Madam Speaker, we want every Tasmanian to have the opportunity to participate in and benefit in our strong economy, no matter where they live. This is why we are investing \$6 million to develop and implement the Government's Strategic Growth Framework which will take a whole-of-government approach to policy, planning and investment for sustainable, long-term growth.

It allows for new initiatives that will help bridge the gap between those who are fully engaged with our growing economy and those individuals and areas of the state that need a little more support. It will enable our record infrastructure investments to be coordinated with education, skills and training programs to unlock the potential of our regions and create even more jobs, so local people have the best chance to live and work in the place they call home. This will ensure we have strong, vibrant and resilient regional communities with strategic growth-creating opportunity for generations to come.

Madam Speaker, the Budget also contains more than \$300 million to provide concessions for electricity, water and sewerage and rates. We will also work hard to keep cost of living low with caps on water and sewerage and electricity prices.

It is now one year since we established the Department of Communities Tasmania to provide a more joined-up approach for our children, young people, families, our elderly, and our Aboriginal communities. To maintain this momentum, an additional \$2.3 million has been provided in the 2019-20 Budget to support the Child Safety Service Redesign. We have allocated an additional \$16.9 million for out-of-home care to support our most needy children and additional funding is also being provided for the Office of the Commissioner for Children and Young People.

The Budget also includes an additional \$6.6 million over three years for the Government's nation-leading Safe Homes Safe Families Action Plan. Funding of \$542 000 is also provided over four years to continue supporting the reset with the Tasmanian Aboriginal community.

The National Disability Insurance Scheme is a hugely significant reform, and this Budget invests an additional \$27.5 million across the Budget and forward Estimates, meaning that just over \$1 billion dollars will be provided in funding to the National Disability Insurance Scheme and to support people with a disability who are not eligible for the NDIS. The Budget also allocates \$850 000 to develop and implement a new strategy for the prevention of elder abuse.

Madam Speaker, we have rebuilt police numbers, adding 113 police officers, and will hire another 125 supported by an additional \$20.1 million to deliver this commitment right around the state. We will also take the first step towards establishing a full-time Special Operations Group by investing \$1 million into a fit-for-purpose facility and allocating \$400 000 for the procurement of specialist equipment.

We will also allocate an additional \$14.4 million to support our courts and related legal services. This includes nearly \$5 million for a new magistrate for southern Tasmania and a replacement magistrate in the north-west and \$2.2 million to support an additional Supreme Court judge. The Government will also continue to fund Community Legal Centres and the Legal Aid

Commission of Tasmania, and we will provide \$3.3 million over four years in additional funding to offset the reduction in funding from the Australian Government. A further \$16.8 million will be allocated to the Tasmanian Prison Service to address rising demand.

Madam Speaker, supported by the actions of the Government to build new housing and incentivise the private sector to do the same, the Tasmanian housing sector is the strongest in the country. Over the year to March, Tasmania led the nation in finance for the construction of new homes, which increased by 19.2 per cent. Last year Tasmania was the strongest state for new dwelling commencements and completions, up 14.4 per cent and 28.3 per cent respectively.

Despite this significant building activity, the Government understands that more still needs to be done. To help improve rental availability we will also extend to 30 June 2023 land tax concessions for properties made available for long-term rental from the short-stay accommodation market and for new builds. To further assist with housing affordability, the Government will extend the \$20 000 First Home Owner Grant and the duty concession for first home buyers of established homes and for eligible pensioners who downsize their home out to 30 June 2020.

We are also working closely with local government to finalise their components of the Statewide Planning Scheme, and this Budget contains \$2 million to complete this task that will help deliver more housing sooner.

Madam Speaker, Tasmania's agricultural sector delivers premium produce. Our plan to take agriculture to the next level includes \$16 million in funding over four years for industry development initiatives across the dairy, red meat, horticulture, wine, hemp, apiary and organic agriculture sectors. These initiatives will support the Government's target for the agriculture sector to reach \$10 billion per year by 2050.

We must work to continually strengthen Tasmania's biosecurity system against those risks that could threaten Tasmania's agricultural production, environment, market access and brand. We will invest \$10.5 million over four years to strengthen Tasmania's biosecurity border and nearly \$4 million will also be spent from the Biosecurity Emergency Response and Research Fund.

Tasmania's biosecurity border initiative will build on our past investments and include additional frontline officers, improved preparedness and emergency response capacity and better engagement with our tourism industry. The biosecurity border package will be funded from fees for the services provided, in line with other jurisdictions across the country.

Madam Speaker, Tasmania leads the nation when it comes to renewable energy and we are on track to be 100 per cent renewable by 2022. In terms of cost of living, we will deliver the lowest regulated electricity prices in the nation by 2022.

Tasmania is now on the cusp of a period of investment into energy projects that will be as important to the state as hydroindustrialisation was last century. Significant investment into Tasmanian renewable energy is already occurring. Recently, the first of 48 new wind turbines were installed at the Cattle Hill Wind Farm in the Central Highlands.

The Battery of the Nation and Project Marinus proposals are the largest projects ever considered in the state's history, with an estimated \$7 billion in total investment. TasNetworks is currently completing the business case and the Budget includes an additional \$56 million in funding towards the delivery of the first stage of approvals for Project Marinus.

Australia's future energy market needs a massive 17 000 megawatts of new energy storage, and the pumped hydro that Tasmania can offer is recognised as the best option for clean, reliable and low cost power to meet that demand. By pumping water from our hydro dams back uphill using excess electricity in the system, we can store our precious water for when it is needed and re-use it again and again, providing increased energy security and enabling us to sell our excess energy to the mainland when it is needed.

Battery of the Nation, underpinned by increased interconnection, will give Tasmanians the lowest possible power prices and make the most of our competitive strengths to deliver billions of dollars of investment, thousands of jobs and a long-term revenue stream to reinvest back into our state.

These are game-changing, visionary projects for Tasmania and we will continue to work to bring them to fruition.

Madam Speaker, while Tasmania's economy continues to grow and contribute to the nation, so too does our sporting prowess. The Budget provides \$400 000 over four years to Hockey Tasmania to assist it to participate in the Hockey One national league. Funding of \$960 000 over four years is also allocated to support women's cricket and \$200 000 in 2019-20 to support hosting Big Bash League and Women's Big Bash League matches in the north and north-west of the state.

Work is underway to consider the case for other national teams being based in the state and in this Budget, \$150 000 will be invested to develop the business case and pathway for a Tasmanian AFL and AFLW licence. The funding will support a project team which will be announced in coming weeks.

Furthermore, we want more of our children engaged in all sports. We are establishing regional sports coordinators in schools who will be sports-neutral and will be the primary point of contact for clubs and leagues of all sporting codes to assist more children to become involved in sport. This policy builds on the Government's Ticket to Play and Levelling the Playing Field policies that encourage as many Tasmanians as possible to get out there, increase participation, and play sport.

Madam Speaker, our strong economy enables us to invest record amounts into essential services and unprecedented levels of investment in infrastructure. However, there is always more to do and this Budget also contains a range of initiatives to further support our economy and create jobs.

Tasmania is a must-see destination for global travellers. More visitors, spending more, are coming here more than ever before. However, the visitor economy is constantly evolving, and it is important to stay ahead of the curve.

Our brand is everything, and to ensure that we are well positioned in a changing global tourism market, the Government is investing \$4 million over four years to establish Brand Tasmania to ensure our brand continues to grow.

The Government will also invest \$5.7 million to accelerate and underpin quality tourism, hospitality and business event outcomes. To maintain the momentum and position the visitor economy for growth, the Government is investing \$151.7 million to support tourism, recreation and cultural infrastructure, with much of this investment occurring throughout our regions. An

additional \$16 million of new investment will support and enhance the regionally important West Coast Wilderness Railway.

New product development on the supply side is critical and this Budget provides a new \$20 million Regional Tourism Attraction Concessional Loan Scheme to support the development of attractions in regional Tasmania such as vineyards, distilleries and breweries, developing accommodation and cellar doors, or adventure tourism businesses.

Furthermore, we will also provide support to the Hobart City Council of \$500 000 to support their restructuring and revitalisation of Taste of Tasmania, one of Tasmania's iconic events.

Madam Speaker, Tasmania has what the world wants, and to ensure that Tasmania's remarkable export growth story continues, the Government will invest \$4.4 million into the Tasmanian Trade Strategy and \$2.8 million over four years to support a new defence strategy. The trade strategy sets out a whole-of-government approach to working with businesses to grow trade, both in Australia and internationally. The defence strategy will assist businesses in our advanced manufacturing, food, health, Antarctic and ICT industries and will complement the trade strategy.

Tasmania's small businesses make up around 90 per cent of our businesses and employ nearly half our workforce. They are one of the state's key drivers of jobs and investment growth. To maintain this momentum the Government has developed a new five-year Tasmanian Business Growth Strategy in collaboration with the TCCI and the Tasmanian Small Business Council. This strategy will be underpinned by an additional \$1 million in support to help grow our businesses and support the establishment of new ones.

The strategy will complement the trade and defence strategies, as well as the work of the Red Tape Reduction Coordinator and Small Business Advocate. It will assist our small businesses to leverage off our record investment into infrastructure.

Madam Speaker, the 2019-20 Budget outlines our plan for the next four years. Whether it be record investments into health and education, providing support for young people or for those who need a hand up, our plan supports all Tasmanians. It unashamedly invests record amounts to build the infrastructure our growing state needs and to deliver our vision for Tasmania's future. It will underpin a strong economy, support businesses large and small, attract investment and will create more jobs. It maintains the momentum and invests for growth.

Madam Speaker, I commend the bill to the House.

**Debate adjourned.**

## **ADJOURNMENT**

**Mr FERGUSON** (Bass - Leader of Government Business) - Madam Speaker, I move -

That the House do now adjourn.

**The House adjourned at 3.42 p.m.**