

**Wednesday 4 September 2019**

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

### **RECOGNITION OF VISITORS**

**Madam SPEAKER** - Honourable members, it is my great privilege to welcome to parliament grade 5 and 6 students from Hagley Farm Primary School.

**Members** - Hear, hear.

### **QUESTIONS**

#### **Tasmanian Industrial Commission - Alleged Leaking of Submission**

**Ms WHITE question to MINISTER for JUSTICE, Ms ARCHER**

[10.03 a.m.]

You are the minister responsible for the Tasmanian Industrial Commission. Yesterday the member for Clark, Sue Hickey, claims that her submission to the Industrial Commission arguing for an \$80 000 pay rise was leaked to the media in order to damage her. Did anyone in your office, did you or anyone associated with you, leak the member for Clark's submission?

#### **ANSWER**

Madam Speaker, I would normally thank the Leader of the Opposition for her question. It shows they have already run out of questions in question time. They are going to the absolute gutter in terms of questions.

Yes, I have responsibility for the Tasmanian Industrial Commission but to have some loose and tenuous link on this matter is really quite ludicrous and to ask your first question -

**Ms White** - It is a yes or no answer.

**Madam SPEAKER** - Order.

**Ms ARCHER** - I can answer the question, no.

**Madam SPEAKER** - Warning number one, Leader of the Opposition.

#### **Tasmanian Industrial Commission - Alleged Leaking of Submission**

**Ms WHITE question to PREMIER, Mr HODGMAN**

[10.04 a.m.]

Will you ask Tasmania Police to investigate allegations from the member for Clark, Sue Hickey, that her confidential submission to the Industrial Commission was leaked to the media?

## **ANSWER**

Madam Speaker, I thank the Leader of the Opposition for the question. I will not direct Tasmania Police to do anything. That would be entirely inappropriate -

**Ms White** - You ask others.

**Madam SPEAKER** - Order, warning number two, Leader of the Opposition.

**Mr HODGMAN** - It again demonstrates the lack of substance and credibility of the Leader of the Opposition as is evidenced by the first two questions today. They claimed in front of the party faithful that they were going to get back in touch with Tasmanians, that they understood the issues that concern Tasmanians, that they thought the economy was something they should be interested in now.

The first two questions we get today are the same spurious conspiracy theories with no substance that shows that they still have not listened to people like Paul Lennon, Julian Amos and Harry Quick who say they are out of touch. They are dealing with peripheral issues and they are not focused on the things that matter to Tasmanians. This is again evidenced in this House this morning.

### **Hobart Private Hospital - Healthscope Lease Terms**

**Dr WOODRUFF question to MINISTER for HEALTH, Ms COURTNEY**

[10.06 a.m.]

You have gifted the long-term lease of Hobart Private Hospital to Healthscope which is owned by a Canadian company, Brookfield, and controlled from an off-shore tax haven in the Cayman Islands. Fact. Those structures are created to aggressively minimise tax and hide information. You have renewed the lease with Healthscope, the same company that has been operating at a loss during the previous lease period, failing to provide essential emergency services and apparently allowing maintenance of our public building to fall to deplorable levels.

Tasmanians need to be confident that Healthscope's lease conditions will not include sweet deals for the company that was a Liberal Party donor. Will you protect the interest of tax paying Tasmanians and come clean with the lease terms that you are secretly negotiating?

## **ANSWER**

Madam Speaker, I thank the member for her question. I welcome the opportunity to talk about the deal that has been negotiated with Healthscope for the Hobart Private Hospital. We know that having a co-located public and private facility on that site is good for Tasmanians. It is good for access; it is good for patient flow. As I outlined last week, aspects of this deal such as being able to have an ED open 24/7 means that -

**Greens members** interjecting.

**Madam SPEAKER** - Order, please.

**Ms COURTNEY** - This will see more Tasmanians being able to access the services that they need. This will allow Tasmanians to be able to flow through the hospital better. This will support our hardworking doctors in the ED department that we know is under pressure; this will help support them and it will help support our paramedics to ensure that they are getting off the ramps. This is a good deal for Tasmanians. It is a good deal for the health system.

It is unfortunate that the Greens seek to undermine such an important -

**Ms O'Connor** - We just want transparency.

**Dr WOODRUFF** - Point of order, Madam Speaker, it goes to relevance. I asked what the deals were, not that they were a good deal. What are the deals that are being negotiated?

**Madam SPEAKER** - I am sorry, that is not a point of order but it has been heard.

**Ms COURTNEY** - Thank you, Madam Speaker. As I was outlining with regard to -

**Ms O'Connor** - No you were not.

**Madam SPEAKER** - Order, Ms O'Connor, I will have to give you a warning.

**Ms COURTNEY** - Madam Speaker, after a rigorous open and competitive process Healthscope has been selected as the preferred operator of the Hobart Private Hospital. Healthscope and the Government have struck an in-principle agreement that will see a greater return to the state, improved integration between the Royal Hobart Hospital and the Hobart Private Hospital, and increased capital investment in the site itself.

Most importantly, there will be improved delivery and continuity of services in line the Government's strategic health objectives. This is a deal that is delivering for Tasmanians. We are seeing more capital investment, we are seeing better integrated services, we are seeing the ED open 24/7. This is a good deal and we know from other -

**Dr WOODRUFF** - Point of order, Madam Speaker, what are the deals that have been arranged? How long is the lease?

**Madam SPEAKER** - That is not a point of order.

**Ms O'Connor** - We are just getting fluff from the minister, with respect, Madam Speaker.

**Madam SPEAKER** - I am sorry, Ms O'Connor, but you know the rules.

**Ms COURTNEY** - As was outlined last week, there is an in-principle agreement and other aspects are being negotiated at the moment. The member would know with this type of negotiation it is important that we have sufficient probity and due process in this type of important decision that would impact Tasmanians and Tasmanian taxpayers. I have every confidence in the negotiating team to be able to handle this in an appropriate way that will get the best outcomes for Tasmanians.

**Greens members** interjecting.

**Madam SPEAKER** - Dr Woodruff, I will have to give you a warning too.

**Ms COURTNEY** - Madam Speaker, this is a deal that will deliver for taxpayers, for Tasmanian patients and for the people -

**Ms O'CONNOR** - Point of order, Madam Speaker, under standing order 45, relevance. The minister is continually avoiding the question. We do not need to know that it is a good deal; just some details of what has been negotiated and what terms there are for the people of Tasmania.

**Madam SPEAKER** - You will have to find another mechanism for asking that question. That is not a point of order and you know how I feel about standing order 45. Please proceed, minister.

**Ms COURTNEY** - Madam Speaker, as I was outlining, Healthscope has been named as the preferred operator. There are continuing negotiations about the contracts happening at the moment so that we can close the finer details that are being conducted with appropriate probity because obviously these types of arrangements would have commercial matters involved. I stand here today and say that we will see more capital investment, we will see better integrated services and we will see an emergency department that is open 24/7. This is good news and a good outcome for Tasmanians.

### **Tasmanian Economy**

**Mrs PETRUSMA question to PREMIER, Mr HODGMAN**

[10.11 a.m.]

Can you please update the House on how the Hodgman majority Liberal Government's long-term plan to build a stronger Tasmanian economy is working? Is the Premier aware of alternative approaches?

### **ANSWER**

Madam Speaker, I welcome the question on our economy which continues to perform strongly despite some national headwinds, and it does not happen by accident or chance. It happens because we have a buoyant, confident business sector that is supported by this Government and the Morrison Coalition Government to deliver the right environment so they can continue to invest and support jobs growth in Tasmania. We are continuing to deliver our long-term plan which has always been about a strong economy and good financial management.

This is not a revelation to us. From day one we have been all about opening up our economy and creating the right business conditions for Tasmania. We are certainly not going to take our foot off the pedal; we cannot be complacent. That is why in this year's Budget we have taken a deliberate decision to plant our foot, keep our economy strong and invest in infrastructure that our state needs now and also for the future. The infrastructure we talk about is our hospitals, our schools, affordable housing, our roads and rail, and important sectors that are fuelling the growth in our economy, like tourism. This Budget also delivers on our track record of forecast surpluses for the next four years.

Despite the opposition from the Labor Party, that has no credibility when it comes to managing our finances, we will continue to be an efficient manager of our state's finances and have an efficient government delivering better services for Tasmanians, because good budget management also helps support growth and confidence in our economy. We were re-elected on a very strong policy platform to maintain the growth in our economy and manage our finances well. Tasmanians can

trust us to deliver because there are more than 13 000 Tasmanians employed now than when we came to government. Business confidence is the highest in the country; tourism, trade and exports are the highest in the country. Our population growth, as CommSec reported in Hobart yesterday, is extremely positive.

You cannot trust Labor with the economy because Rebecca White has just realised, after two and a half years as leader of the party, that the economy is important. They still have not produced an alternative budget, they still have no shadow treasurer, they still have no economic development policy. The last time they had one, when they were in government, two-thirds of Tasmanian businesses thought it held them back and that was at a time when they were happily in government with the Greens. The only policy they have now is to undermine confidence, to snipe and chirp, criticise and scare local communities, and that damages our economy. The only thing they are doing to our economy, other than now talking about it, is damaging business confidence.

Madam Speaker, I welcome the question. It is the second time I have had this one, and I am starting to get suspicious because it is the toughest question I have had all week. It is a hard one to answer. What is the alternative? The truth is that there is no alternative whatsoever. I could not find one. The only thing we have are the words in front of the Labor Party faithful on the weekend. The thing you need to look at is not the words, look at the track record and look at their action. Labor's track record was 10 000 jobs lost, a state economy in recession, budget deficits forecast and the lowest levels of business confidence in the country.

**Ms O'Byrne** - You have lost 5100 in the last 12 months.

**Madam SPEAKER** - Ms O'Byrne, warning two.

**Mr HODGMAN** - That is their track record. When you look at their action, they cannot produce an alternative budget or cost what they promise. They cannot even appoint a shadow treasurer.

As the Leader of the Opposition has said in the latest version of her narrative, apparently the Greens have stood in the way of economic development in our state, but the truth is that Rebecca White has stood with the Greens and her colleagues on 90 per cent of the votes in this parliament. Now suddenly they say the Greens are the worst thing for Tasmania. They have stood side by side with the Greens, not only in government but they continue to do that in opposition. Actions speak louder than words. Perhaps the most disturbing thing about the Leader of the Opposition is that she simply does not know what she stands for and what her position is. Their position on poker machines during the election was suddenly abandoned because they say, like a lot of policies, 'Oh, we're in opposition now, there's nothing we can do'.

**Ms STANDEN** - Point of order, Madam Speaker, under standing order 48, time allocation. I note that the Premier has been on his feet now for more than five minutes.

**Madam SPEAKER** - He has not been on his feet for more than five minutes. I have a five-minute clock so we will go by my clock, thank you. Please proceed, Premier. You have 31 seconds.

**Mr HODGMAN** - Madam Speaker, you cannot even trust Labor to be honest when it comes to a point of order. The truth is, the Leader of the Opposition cannot be trusted on a signature election policy -

**Ms O'CONNOR** - To be fair, Madam Speaker, on the point of order, I have been running my stopwatch too, and the Premier has now been on his feet for five minutes and 29 seconds.

**Madam SPEAKER** - According to this, it has just been reset for another five minutes. I have an official clock which I will be standing by, and I thank you for your contribution. The problem we have here is that no one sticks to the one-minute question. They do a lot of essays half the time and that gives greater flexibility to the Government to have longer question time.

**Ms O'Connor** - That was a Dorothy.

**Madam SPEAKER** - That is the system and it is something that this House has agreed to. I will not take any more frivolous points on that because I have the official clock supplied by the parliament.

**Mr HODGMAN** - Thank you, Madam Speaker, I will conclude. It is a serious matter that you cannot trust the Leader of the Opposition and nor can you trust Labor.

### **Tasmanian Industrial Commission - Submission from Ms Hickey**

**Ms WHITE question to PREMIER, Mr HODGMAN**

[10.18 a.m.]

Yesterday you attempted to distance yourself from the Liberal member for Clark's outrageous and out-of-touch cash grab. Sue Hickey doubled down on her claim that she deserved a pay rise, arguing that she works 24 hours a day. Incredibly, she also claimed that a chauffeur-driven ministerial limousine is not a luxury, while in the same breath saying:

No-one knows more than me at the coalface what these people are going through trying to live on Newstart.

If a pay rise for Sue Hickey is not government policy, have you instructed the member for Clark to withdraw her submission to the Tasmanian Industrial Commission?

**Madam SPEAKER** - Can I make a statement here? Some of this behaviour - the hypocrisy is galling. You are attacking a member of the parliament who cannot speak for herself. You know that submission was put in by the Speaker, and that is why I am distinguished in the Speaker's gown. For somebody on your salary, which is significantly more than the person in question, the hypocrisy is galling. I am ruling that question out of order because the person cannot defend herself.

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### **Motion**

#### **Dissent from Speaker's Ruling**

[10.19 a.m.]

**Ms WHITE** - Point of order, Madam Speaker. I dissent from your ruling.

**Madam SPEAKER** - You can dissent all you like.

**Ms O'Byrne** - It is a formal motion of dissent, Madam Speaker. It is in the Standing Orders. Seek some advice from the Clerk.

**Madam SPEAKER** - We will have a motion then, but I suggest you use your decorum and think about what you are actually doing.

**Ms WHITE** - Madam Speaker, I dissent from your ruling, and I move dissent formally in your ruling because these questions should be heard.

**Madam SPEAKER** - Are you prepared to say your own wage?

**Ms WHITE** - The member for Clark has made public statements and done so in the media. Given the fact that a submission was made to the Industrial Commission, that you then spoke about as an individual member of this parliament seeking a pay rise.

**Madam SPEAKER** - Sorry, the Speaker spoke about it. You are reflecting on the position of the Speaker. It was the Speaker's submission.

**Ms O'BYRNE** - Point of order, Madam Speaker.

**Madam SPEAKER** - You do need to sit down, and so do you.

**Ms O'BYRNE** - Point of order, Madam Speaker.

**Madam SPEAKER** - No, I am still standing. Sit down again. I am just going to stand here because you must not reflect on the Speaker, and the whole thing was about the Speaker. In fact, I might even reflect on it for five minutes, so take your time to think about it.

**Ms O'Connor** - Meanwhile, out in the real world.

**Madam SPEAKER** - That is exactly right.

[10.25 a.m.]

**Madam SPEAKER** - Can I have your submission in writing please, Ms White?

**Ms WHITE** - Yes.

**Madam SPEAKER** - Please give it to the Clerk.

[10.26 a.m.]

**Ms WHITE** (Lyons - Leader of the Opposition - Motion) - Madam Speaker, as per Standing Order 152, I have dissented from your ruling because it is impossible to distinguish what comments are made by the member for Clark and by the Speaker of this House, particularly when the person in question goes out and does media specifically about this matter.

There is no other person in this place who is asking for a pay rise for themselves, and this does require scrutiny. It is only the member for Clark, the Speaker, who is seeking a pay rise for themselves. The questions that have been put today in this parliament are regarding the use of taxpayer money. It does bear up to public scrutiny that we should be able to put such questions to

the Premier and to the Attorney-General, as put earlier, because the public is obviously quite interested to understand the reasoning here.

The question that I put to the Premier is a fair one to be asked. It was simply whether or not the submission would be withdrawn. The public has a right to know.

**Time expired.**

[10.27 a.m.]

**Mr FERGUSON** (Bass - Minister for Infrastructure and Transport) - Madam Speaker, it gives me no pleasure to rise on a question of dissent when this is clearly just another stunt from the Leader of the Opposition - the temporary, current Leader of the Opposition - who has walked into the House today with a stunt. It is clearly a pre-prepared set play that has been arranged by the Leader of the Opposition.

I make a few points, Madam Speaker. It is for the Speaker to rule whether a question is in order or not in order. I did not hear anything in what the Leader of the Opposition has just had to say to make a case as to why her question was in order. She did not make any such point, and that really was the key point. Yes, any ruling of the Speaker may be challenged under Standing Order 152. There is nothing particularly remarkable about a member wanting to raise a dissent motion. It must be done in writing. I could not help but notice from my chair that the Leader of the Opposition had her dissent motion pre-written, ready to go. I was watching carefully and that is what I observed.

Madam Speaker, what seems to be at issue here is that you have ruled a question out of order.

**Ms WHITE** - Point of order, Madam Speaker. The member has just misled the House and he should reflect very carefully on what he just said, because it is improper to do so.

**Madam SPEAKER** - I think you could sit down because that is misleading the House.

**Mr FERGUSON** - Madam Speaker, what the Leader of the Opposition has done in this House is make an art form of asking questions when it suits her, which brought the Speaker, or the member for Clark, into her question. When it suited you on issues of housing or health or pay for public servants, you are quite willing to do so, but when it does not suit you, and you find that your question is out of order because it is actually an attack, you find that you want to do these pre-prepared attacks.

Madam Speaker, frankly I do not need to speak for seven minutes. This is clearly a case of the Leader of the Opposition, who is on borrowed time at the moment, wanting to waste the parliament's time. The Government is concerned with one thing, and that is continuing to grow our economy: to continue to grow jobs in Tasmania. For this side of the House it is not a one-day exercise. It is not a new policy that we wake on a Sunday morning and give an attempt at a speech to the party faithful and we can only sustain it for a day. No, this is our daily mission: every single day, to fight for Tasmanians, to grow our economy, to stand up for the working people of this state and give them a greater chance of a job; to give our young people an education system that can help them obtain a job here in our state, not having to flee the state and look for jobs elsewhere because of job-destroying policies of the Labor Party and the Greens.



This is a stunt. The House can decide what it wants to do with this motion, but we will not supporting the Leader of the Opposition with her desperate attempt to save her leadership from the O'Byrnes when she has run out of puff on jobs.

[10.30 a.m.]

**Ms O'CONNOR** (Clark - Leader of the Greens) - Madam Speaker, what a woeful performance from the Labor Party in here today - unproductive, vindictive, childish and petulant. We are in the middle of a climate emergency. We apparently have a crisis in the public health system. It was all you people could talk about after the election. Health was your number-one priority and you are silent on it now, having changed tack over the weekend. Silent on health, silent on housing, silent on climate. You are a disgrace.

We will always support a debate on a matter of dissent or confidence or censure, so we will support having the debate. That has always been a position of principle for us. I did wonder about those kids from Hagley School who were up there watching the fuss that question time devolved into today. I felt sad for them that they think this is what democracy looks like. They think this is what parliament does every day.

We will line up with you - do you want that? We will line up with you to have the debate. We will have this debate and see how the vote goes, but you should be ashamed of yourselves. What you have decided to do is spend the next two and a half years of this term of the parliament having a nice, little, spiteful holiday from doing what is right by the people of Tasmania, from putting forward constructive ideas about how to advance their future wellbeing and prosperity in a time of climate emergency. You should be ashamed of yourself.

Mind you, you are members of the same party whose Queensland colleagues revoked native title on the Adani lands, so we know there is no low you will not stoop to. You are an absolute disgrace. You are letting down every person who cast a vote for Labor at the last state election. You did that when you walked away from your pokies policy and you are doing it now. You are lazy and vindictive.

[10.32 a.m.]

**Mr O'BYRNE** (Franklin) - Madam Speaker, to say this matter -

**Madam SPEAKER** - Sorry, Mr O'Byrne, I just have to reset your time. I am sure it is going to be long.

**Mr O'BYRNE** - We want a debate about the priorities of the Hodgman Government, which is so divided and so ramshackle that a question was put to you, Premier, about your actions in backing in your supposed priorities. A member of your team put a submission to an industrial commission asking for significant wage increases for politicians. This is not only a matter of intense public scrutiny, it goes to the heart of the matters you are focused on.

If you do not think this is emblematic, we have just come off the back of 18 months of dysfunctional negotiations on public sector wages. You have cleaners in hospitals on \$50 000 and all your Government can do is tell them that they are not worthy.

The question we put forward was a matter of your actions as Premier to ensure that the people of Tasmania know that your priorities are in their interests and not your own self-interest. If you

think the matter of politicians' wages are not emblematic of your focus and are not an intense issue for the people of Tasmania, you have another think coming.

Emails, phone calls, messages, social media - the media are focused on this because it means you are not focused and have no connection to the everyday life of Tasmanians and the struggle they are going through. You are talking about wages, but the median wage for a person in Bass is \$558 per week and the median wage for a person in Braddon is \$523.

**Mr FERGUSON** - Point of order, Madam Speaker. The member ought to be relevant to his Leader's motion, which is dissent on whether or not the question was in order, not his audition speech.

**Madam SPEAKER** - Sorry, because I was not paying attention I missed that, so I cannot make a ruling.

**Mr O'BYRNE** - Madam Speaker, the matter at heart and the reason the question is in order is that not only was the subject matter covered in the first two questions that the speaker put forward in terms of the subject matter, two questions were allowed in order -

**Madam SPEAKER** - It was your member, not the Speaker.

**Mr O'BYRNE** - Sorry, the member who put the two questions before, those questions were considered in order and this is on the same subject matter. The question goes to the heart of what the Premier will do to take responsibility for making sure that he is representative of the people of Tasmania understanding their day-to-day struggles.

We have made it very clear that we think asking for significant wage increases is in the Liberal Party DNA, such as when former premier Ray Groom, back in the 1990s, led the charge for the 40 per cent wage increase. Liberal Party DNA, feathering your own nest. You say that in this place we need to ensure we reflect the needs of the Tasmanian people, that we can, in our every action and every step, ensure we are in touch with their day-to-day struggles. Then you have a member of -

**Ms O'Connor** - Honestly, give us a break - your hypocrisy. Whip out your tiny knives.

**Mr O'BYRNE** - You are just irrelevant and your bitter and twisted contribution that you put forward is just a reflection on you, not on us.

Let us be very clear: this question should be put in order. It is about establishing the Government's priorities and Premier, when you believe one of your team has stepped out of line, you take the necessary step as leader of your party and of the Government, to ensure these matters are properly heard and resolved. Your weasel words yesterday saying, 'Well, we have nothing to do with it, we are a united team, we are a majority government but it is up to the Industrial Commission' does not cut it, mate. It does not cut it. This is fundamentally about your leadership in terms of your ability to manage your team. You constantly gloat that you are part of a majority team, yet you refuse to lift a finger to ensure you represent a united voice and a united front for the Tasmanian people.

**Ms O'CONNOR** - Point of order, Madam Speaker. Given that we are debating a dissent motion on a decision of yours, it would be great if Labor actually laid out the case for why the question is in order. We have not heard the case for why the question was in order.

**Mr O'BYRNE** - The case is very clear. We have asked a number of questions about the issues of politicians' wages that is a matter of intense public interest, as you have seen over the last 24 to 48 hours. Two questions were raised on this matter prior to the third question being ruled out of order. That is the substance of why we believe this question is in order. But the fundamental premise of the question is about the Premier's leadership and his ability to show he has a majority team, and we know he does not.

Let me go on. For the people of Clark, the average median weekly personal income is \$638. In Franklin, it is \$642; in Lyons, it is \$510; in Tasmania overall, it is \$573. To say that we deserve wage increases, and your silence to act on the actions of one of the members of your team, is an endorsement of it - it can be read no other way. Allowing this to roll through and hoping it goes away shows an enormous lack of leadership on your behalf, Premier.

[10.38 a.m.]

**Mr HODGMAN** (Franklin - Premier) - Madam Speaker, question time is now being frittered away by another Labor stunt demonstrating their priorities and how they use their time. It is about stunts and slogans, not substance, personal attacks, no credibility on what matters to Tasmanians, and a focus on what Labor people are complaining to you about very publicly - and some not so publicly but around the traps - that you just do not focus on what is important to Tasmanians. You are blowing the hour you get to ask questions of us about matters that are important to Tasmanians and you come in here and argue with us about how much we get paid. Do you seriously think you are earning yours?

I go back to what I said and the first real question I was asked was about the economy. That is what is important to us: jobs, investment, opportunities for Tasmanians around our state, helping more Tasmanians get into school or education and into work, and building the prosperity of Tasmania. That is what we are focused on. But no, yours is all about a stunt. You come in here and want to have an argument about pay rises.

We found out yesterday, and you may not have asked for it, but you took a full pay rise secretly, quietly, when it was given to you last year. We did not, but you did, once again demonstrating the complete hypocrisy of the members opposite who try to take the high ground on this.

They say this is a matter about pay rises. They have no leg to stand on.

**Dr Broad** - You did take a pay rise.

**Madam SPEAKER** - Dr Broad, warning two.

**Mr O'BYRNE** - Point of order, Madam Speaker. I bring the member's attention to the subject at hand and that is whether the question is in order or not.

**Madam SPEAKER** - Order, Mr O'Byrne, that is so out of order. Premier, continue.

**Mr HODGMAN** - Thank you, Madam Speaker. For the member who spent most of time of his contribution talking about the issue most important to him - leadership - you cannot direct anyone else as to how we can spend our time.

On that issue, there is nothing strong or tough or any leadership displayed in running around undermining your own leader, as you do, to the member for Clark. Everyone knows about it, so do not come in here and lecture anyone else about leadership. There is no leadership in that.

**Mr O'Byrne** - That is rubbish and you know it.

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

**Mr HODGMAN** - You have demonstrated also that this is nothing but a stunt. It is not about the ruling. It is not about the proceedings of the House in question time. It is about a stunt. It is a set piece and once again you have taken the opportunity to try to out-shine your embattled leader, Rebecca White, who, as we have heard from true Labor leaders in recent times, is not focusing on the issues that matter.

We heard from the Labor Party at their State Conference, that they promised their faithful they would get back in touch with Tasmanians and focus on the things that matter. Two days later they come into parliament and orchestrate a stunt which is depriving themselves of an ability to ask questions on things that do matter to Tasmanians. It is an appalling waste of time and an abuse of process.

Our priorities are very clear: strong economy; investing the dividends of a good budget into health, education, affordable housing and ensuring that Tasmanians have the infrastructure that our growing state needs.

As I have always said, we will get on with the job of delivering that and not be distracted by what is the latest in a ridiculously long line of stunts from a lazy, out of depth, Labor Party.

[10.42 a.m.]

**Ms O'BYRNE** (Bass) - Madam Speaker, I go to the motion before the House, unlike the Premier, which is that we move dissent in the ruling. The reason that we move dissent in this ruling is because this question to the matter of the member for Clark's request for additional public dollars to be spent on her is in the public interest.

Standing Order 43 says -

**Madam SPEAKER** - Can I ask you to refer to the fact that the Speaker asked for it, not the member for Clark?

**Ms O'BYRNE** - Yes, Madam Speaker, we do struggle with both of those titles. I shall call you the Speaker for the purpose of this debate, thank you.

The Speaker of the Tasmanian Parliament, who works 24 hours a day, has raised the request for additional money to be paid to the Speaker. Under Standing Order 43, that is another public matter connected with the business of the House.

We asked three questions on this subject yesterday. We have accepted two questions on the subject today. The question and the topic is either in order under the Standing Orders or it is not. If it was allowed previously, it can be allowed.

**Mr Ferguson** - What? Are you saying you asked the same question three times now?

**Ms O'BYRNE** - Thank you for your interjection, Mr Ferguson. I will keep talking because nobody else will stop you interjecting.

It is in the public interest because, quite frankly we all knew what the salaries were when we took this job. If we did not think they were enough, we could have chosen another pathway. If we actually thought they were not enough, we did not have to do the job. The only person who is asking for additional money is the Speaker. The only person who is arguing for that, the same time that the Speaker, as the member for Clark, voted with the Government to stop hardworking decent committed working public servants getting a pay rise. The inconsistency in that is outrageous.

It is a matter of public interest. It is a matter for the House to be debating. The fact that the Premier does not want to answer these questions goes to the fact that he will not stand up and say that it is unacceptable. Your motivations for that are clearly your own. They are all about your own stability and leadership.

Let's look at how new people in new jobs in the public service in Tasmania stack up. An entry level paramedic in Tasmania is paid about \$69 000, a police rookie is paid about \$60 000, new teachers can expect around \$60 000. There is a significant differentiation between what people are paid in this state. There are no grounds for the Premier not to stand up and answer this question and say, I will instruct that that be withdrawn. If you are not prepared to do that, then the Premier has to stand up and say, I will not allow this to be given effect.

When we reflect on the situation we have here and the lack of time that is being allowed to debate this, we are not allowed to reflect on the Speaker because, historically, the Speaker never speaks for themselves. The standing order exists because the Speaker is unable to make public commentary about the Speaker's role. That is what the Standing Order protects and I would contend that that is no longer the case.

**Madam SPEAKER** - Excuse me, Ms O'Byrne, the Speaker spoke on behalf of future Speakers; the position. Just remember that.

**Ms O'BYRNE** - This question is in order, Madam Speaker, because it is consistent with questions that are being asked.

**Madam SPEAKER** - I am not questioning whether it is in order. I am asking you to be factual. That is all.

**Ms O'BYRNE** - Madam Speaker, the motion before the House is whether your ruling to rule it out of order was correct. If you think it is in order for us to be raising the issue then you cannot rule the question out of order. You have ruled the question out of order because you know you have the numbers today. I am sorry but that is exactly what is happening here. If the question was okay for the two questions earlier today, if it was okay for the three questions before, if the issue of MPs' salaries has been okay in question time in the past - as it has been over the years - then it falls under Standing Order 43, which says it is in the public interest. The opposition has the right to ask the

question of government. You can choose to use your numbers but let us be very honest - everybody knows what is going on here.

**Ms O'CONNOR** - Point of order, Madam Speaker. Can we have the question read out again?

**Madam SPEAKER** - Yes, Ms O'Connor, I will ask the Clerk to do that.

**Ms WHITE** - The question was to the Premier and it was, 'yesterday you attempted to distance yourself from the Liberal member for Clark's outrageous and out-of-touch cash grab'. Sue Hickey double-downed her claim that she deserved a pay rise arguing that she works 24 hours a day. Incredibly, she also claimed that her ministerial limousine was not a luxury, while in the same breath saying, and I quote, 'no-one knows more than me at the coalface what these people are going through trying to live on Newstart'.

The question to the Premier is, if a pay rise for Sue Hickey is not Government policy, have you instructed the member for Clark to withdraw her submission to the Tasmanian Industrial Commission?

**Madam SPEAKER** - Okay are we going to have the vote? Yes, let us get this over and done with.

**The House divided -**

AYES 11

Dr Broad  
Ms Butler  
Ms Dow (Teller)  
Ms Haddad  
Ms Houston  
Mr O'Byrne  
Ms O'Byrne  
Ms O'Connor  
Ms Standen  
Ms White  
Dr Woodruff

NOES 12

Ms Archer  
Mr Barnett  
Ms Courtney  
Mr Ferguson  
Mr Gutwein  
Mr Hodgman  
Mr Jaensch  
Mrs Petrusma  
Mr Rockliff  
Mrs Rylah (Teller)  
Mr Shelton  
Mr Tucker

**Motion negatived.**

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**Renewable Energy Production**

**Mrs RYLAH question to MINISTER FOR ENERGY, Mr BARNETT**

[10.53 a.m.]

Can you please advise the House how, under the Hodgman majority Liberal Government, Tasmania is powering the nation's renewable energy production?

## **ANSWER**

Madam Speaker, I thank the member for her question. It will not surprise members in this place that the Hodgman majority Liberal Government is all about jobs. We are all about development, growth and jobs, building a stronger economy, and our plans for energy development in this place is exactly part of our future.

I am pleased to advise that our Tasmania First Energy Policy has set that vision and our targets to be part of the renewable energy powerhouse of the nation, and that is what we are delivering. We are delivering what this nation needs: low-cost, reliable, clean energy. I am delighted to welcome the Morrison Coalition Government's announcement today that Australia will reach its 2020 large-scale renewable energy target ahead of time -

**Ms O'Connor** - That is a lie.

**Madam SPEAKER** - Order, Ms O'Connor. It is not helping.

**Mr BARNETT** - thanks in large part to Tasmania leading the nation in the development of renewable energy projects. Tasmanians can be immensely proud that it was Tasmania's Cattle Hill Wind Farm that saw the milestone surpassed - \$300 million, a 148 megawatt wind farm, 150 jobs during construction and 10 jobs ongoing, with tens of millions invested in local businesses, whether that is Hazell Brothers, Gradco or Haywards. All of these local businesses are benefiting as a result of that investment, all backed by a power purchase agreement with Aurora Energy, connected to the grid thanks to TasNetworks, a government business enterprise.

It is the policies and planning of the Hodgman Liberal Government delivering and leading the way. We now have Battery of the Nation, hydro, new wind farm projects and the Marinus second interconnector all set to create thousands of jobs and billions in investment for Tasmanians over the coming years.

Last weekend the state Labor Party had a conference. What did they say about the Battery of the Nation or the Marinus project? Zippo, nothing, nil. No policies and no plans when it comes to energy - nothing. It is all politics, no policy. Unlike Labor and the Greens we continue on this side of the House to back renewable energy projects. You simply cannot trust the Leader of the Opposition, Rebecca White, and Labor when she says that they do not want to do another deal with the Greens. They cannot be trusted. We just saw them a few moments ago voting together. That percentage was 90.5 per cent, and guess what, it is going up. Labor and the Greens are voting together.

In 2018 Australia led the world in clean energy investment, with renewable energy targets exceeding investment in renewables, not slowing. The Morrison Liberal Government is focusing on delivering affordable and reliable power. That is what we can deliver in Tasmania with our Battery of the Nation plans and our plans for the Marinus link, thanks to the backing of \$56 million to fast-track those development plans.

**Mr O'Byrne** - You don't know what it buys you, though.

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

**Mr BARNETT** - I quote the federal minister, Angus Taylor, who said today:

Wind and solar need to be backed up to meet peak demand, which is why the Government ... is supporting the development of Marinus link ... to turn Tasmania's Battery of the Nation vision into reality.

I am grateful for the support of our federal coalition colleagues and the wonderful support they are delivering. That is terrific. We are setting the vision. We have the policies in place in Tasmania and we have a plan to make it happen. We are one step away from reaching 100 per cent fully self-sufficient, fully renewable by 2022. What did the Clean Energy Regulator say in the last 24 hours? He said Tasmania has already reached 95.9 per cent.

**Ms O'CONNOR** - Point of order, Madam Speaker. I draw your attention to Standing Order 48. We have already lost more than half of question time due to Labor's stunt and the minister has been speaking for four minutes on a Dorothy Dixer.

**Madam SPEAKER** - He has 14 seconds to go.

**Mr FERGUSON** - On the point of order, Madam Speaker, given that that the standing order has been raised, I draw your attention to the fact that standing orders do not set in place a maximum speaking time. I totally accept it is appropriate for you to be keeping time, but every member nonetheless has a guaranteed allocation of questions. I look forward to what the minister has to say.

**Madam SPEAKER** - Yes, I will have to extend him by another 30 seconds or so.

**Mr BARNETT** - As I was saying, we are on track by 2022 to be 100 per cent and the Clean Energy Regulator backs us in. They have said in the last 24 hours that we are on track with 95.9 per cent, so we are on track for that 100 per cent by 2022. This is good news. Labor and the Greens hiked up those power prices by 65 per cent. We know they have no policies on the other side when it comes to energy, but there is one thing Tasmanians do know. They know that the Hodgman Liberal Government has plans for more investment, more jobs, for downward pressure on power prices and delivering what Tasmanians really need, and they know that the Hodgman majority Liberal Government has got their back.

### **Forester Kangaroos - Numbers and Culling**

**Dr WOODRUFF question to MINISTER for ENVIRONMENT, PARKS and HERITAGE, Mr GUTWEIN**

[10.59 a.m.]

A 2001 report on management of Forester kangaroos in Tasmania estimated the population then was 26 000 animals. The assessors recommended that no more than 10 per cent of the population from each region in Tasmania should ever be culled. On the Australian Government's website, apparently from the early 2000s, the Forester kangaroo was assessed as being not vulnerable on the basis that some 600 were culled each year in the Midlands and 60 in the north-east. Since 2014 a recent RTI from DPIPWE tells us a staggering 51 000 Forester kangaroos have been allowed to be killed under crop protection permits issued by DPIPWE. That is nearly twice the number of the total estimated population. Do you have any idea what the current population of Forester kangaroos is in Tasmania? When was the last comprehensive population survey conducted, including within each region?



## ANSWER

Madam Speaker, I am happy to take the question, but the minister responsible for crop protection permits -

**Dr Woodruff** - We're not talking about the permits. We're talking about the population.

**Madam SPEAKER** - Order.

**Mr GUTWEIN** - In terms of the question and the detail you have asked for, I will seek some answers from the department. But the minister responsible for permits made the Government's position perfectly clear yesterday and provided a comprehensive answer of the balanced approach we take. Regarding the detail the member was seeking, I am happy to see what I can find and provide a response to the member when I have that to hand.

### *Spirit of Tasmania - Delivery of New Vessels*

#### **Mr O'BYRNE question to PREMIER, Mr HODGMAN**

[11.02 a.m.]

Yesterday you dodged questions about the biggest infrastructure project in the state's history. You did nothing to inspire confidence that the new *Spirit of Tasmania* vessels that are so vital to supporting jobs and investment in Tasmania will be delivered on time. Have you been given any indication that the delivery of the *Spirit of Tasmania* vessels will be delayed beyond the date you promised of 2021?

## ANSWER

Madam Speaker, I thank the member for the question. I was very clear yesterday in parliament as to the current circumstances - the well-publicised difficulties with FSG, the shipbuilder, the action being taken by the Government and the TT-Line board to ensure that our contractual arrangements are in place and the fact that no money has changed hands, also protecting the state, but also in the event of any delay or other circumstances we would inform Tasmanians as to that.

The speculation of the member who asks the question is typical of a desire to raise concern, to scare people and dampen confidence in our economy when I very clearly outlined the circumstances with respect to this matter. As I have said, the *Spirits*, as they now operate and can continue to operate, are doing so with increased capacity. There are now more passengers, more freight and more sailings across Bass Strait, a far cry from when the member who asked the question was the minister responsible for the *Spirits* and the TT-Line, when he was actively trying to undermine private investment on Bass Strait with a flawed business model that we were able to stop when coming into government. If we had had any more of the Labor-Greens government that was another policy failure that would have happened.

I have been very clear as to the circumstances of this matter. It is not true for the member who asked the question to assert anything otherwise, but if there are any changes to the circumstances we would inform Tasmanians, noting that we have in place strong contractual arrangements, no liability to the taxpayer expended, and nor would there be in breach of any contractual arrangements, and also importantly contingencies in place.

## **Tasmanian Investment Growth**

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

[11.04 a.m.]

Tasmania has many competitive advantages such as our natural resources, parks and reserves, as well as our historic landmarks. What is the Hodgman majority Liberal Government doing to deliver on our plan to grow investment in Tasmania and are you aware of any alternative policies?

### **ANSWER**

Madam Speaker, I thank Mr Tucker for the question and his interest in this important matter.

Under our plan, our economy is one of the fastest growing in the country. It leads the other states and territories on many of the key economic indicators. Our businesses are confident, they are investing and they are creating jobs. The Hodgman majority Liberal Government's long-term plan is working and our policies are supporting Tasmanian businesses -

**Ms O'Connor** - Why are you smirking?

**Mr GUTWEIN** - I will get to you in a moment. Our policies are supporting Tasmanian businesses and backing our industries to grow. Our investment into energy, irrigation, tourism and health, the education sector, as well as our unprecedented investment into our spectacular national parks and our nation-leading expressions of interest process are all contributing to our success and are all supported and underpinned by our \$3.6 billion infrastructure plan.

Tasmania's wind development potential is significant, as is the opportunity for pumped hydro, and backed by a second interconnector, it will stimulate the economy and deliver jobs over years to come, particularly in regional Tasmania.

Our tourism industry is going from strength to strength. We have announced the preferred location of our \$20 million investment to develop Tasmania's next iconic walk, a development that we know from experience will bring a significant economic boost to the region, and through our nation-leading EOI initiative, we are working towards -

**Ms O'Connor** - It is not nation leading to flog off the last free real estate.

**Mr GUTWEIN** - our goal of making Tasmania the eco-tourism capital of the world, which is something that I would have thought the Greens would have supported.

The extraordinary opportunities these projects present to the regions in which they are developed for all Tasmania are recognised by all except, of course, if you are Bob Brown and the Greens. Yes, the Greens have opposed forestry, they have opposed mining, they now oppose aquaculture, whilst telling us that Tasmania's future was in tourism. Yet, whenever there is a proposal for a tourism development in our parks and reserves to improve the visitor experience, all we hear is their opposition. Now the Greens, led by their spiritual leader Bob Brown, so long the supposed champions of renewable energy, are even opposing wind farm developments, which they once championed.

The Treasury building is another case in point. As it stands it is a magnificent building, but it is not fit for purpose as a contemporary office building, and the public has no access to it. We have announced a process to re-imagine its purpose and role for the benefit of all Tasmanians that will improve public access and protect and enhance its heritage aspects, but still the Greens try to block us.

Yesterday, the member, who interjects, demonstrated that her hypocrisy knows no bounds. In Estimates this year, Ms O'Connor called on the Government to consider a long-term lease arrangement. She said, and I quote -

That is right, and as you know, Treasurer, you could do that through a long-term lease arrangement.

**Ms O'Connor** - A hundred years.

**Mr GUTWEIN** - Madam Speaker, I do not disagree. I have said on many occasions that divestment takes many forms, and our process makes clear that long-term lease options of up to 99 years are on the table. But now, Ms O'Connor, true to form, is saying that is not supported by the Greens, 'We no longer support it. We were there once, but we are no longer there now'. That is laughable. But at least the Greens will take a position. At least the Greens have some policy platform, even if they keep backflipping on it, twisting and turning in the wind, as I said yesterday.

Contrast this with Ms White and Labor. After five-and-a-half years in Opposition, Labor still has no plan to keep Tasmania's economy strong, no plan to protect jobs, no plan to attract investment, no plan to ensure that we protect our way of life. We know that Labor is nothing more than a wholly owned subsidiary of the Greens. We saw a prime example this morning -

**Ms O'Connor** - Point of order, Madam Speaker. The Treasurer has used offensive words, Standing Order 144. We have nothing to do with the Labor Party and we are -

**Madam SPEAKER** - Seeing that you have taken offence, I am sure the Treasurer would be -

**Ms O'Connor** - It is an outrageous slur.

**Mr GUTWEIN** - Madam Speaker, the member has made her point, and I do not blame her after that disgraceful display this morning. Again you could only point to the evidence, and in parliament the bond is growing even closer.

In 2015, Labor and the Greens voted together 62.5 per cent of the time. In 2018 it was 81 per cent, and to date this year, Labor and the Greens have voted together in 90.3 per cent. In fact, if we add this on, it will be closer to 91 per cent of the time after this morning.

I do want to make one point, and it needs to be raised. It was something the media walked past in the last session. The question needs to be put to Labor, who stand for nothing, whether they voted truthfully when they were in parliament in the last session. In the last session of parliament, an amendment was moved by the Greens to a motion that was brought in, in respect of TAFE. The Greens amended the policy to read -

**Mr O'BYRNE** - Point of order, Madam Speaker. He is reflecting upon a previous vote in the House.

**Madam SPEAKER** - I am going to take advice on that. It was a different parliament. You are ruled out of order.

**Ms O'BYRNE** - Point of order, Madam Speaker. He is referring to a vote in the last sitting weeks.

**Madam SPEAKER** - We have another opinion, which is slightly different, but I am still ruling it out of order.

**Mr GUTWEIN** - Thank you, Madam Speaker. The House needs to understand what actually went on. The member for Clark moved an amended motion to change the wording of the Labor Party motion from 'policy for' to 'only policy'. Then, albeit Mr Bacon is not here, but Dr Broad, Ms Butler, Ms Dow, Ms Haddad, Ms Houston, Mr O'Byrne, Ms O'Byrne, Ms Standen and Ms White all voted for an amended motion that said they only had one policy. Is that the truth, or were you misleading parliament?

**Ms WHITE** - Point of order, Madam Speaker.

**Madam SPEAKER** - I have a point of order and you have gone over time.

**Ms WHITE** - It is a reflection on a vote taken in this House previously, which is out of order. I ask the member to reflect on that because it is not in keeping with the standing orders. Also, we only have one TAFE policy, which is one more than you have.

**Ms O'CONNOR** - Madam Speaker, on that point of order. Yesterday morning on radio, Ms White falsely told listeners of Triple M that we voted against that TAFE policy. I want to put it on the record that she completely misrepresented to all the listeners of southern Tasmania what we did in that debate.

**Madam SPEAKER** - Thank you. It is now an order. Treasurer, you have gone over your five minutes, but I am going to indulge you with another 30 seconds.

**Mr GUTWEIN** - Thank you, Madam Speaker. I have reflected on that comment by Ms White, and I will treat it with the same disdain that every comment she makes in this House should be treated with. They voted in this place for an amended motion that said they only had one policy. The question needs to be asked: did they vote truthfully in this place as you would expect them to, or not? That is a question the Leader of the Opposition needs to speak to when she goes out the front today.

## **Hydrogen Generation Strategy**

### **Mr O'BYRNE question to the PREMIER, Mr HODGMAN**

[11.13 a.m.]

It is clear that you are doing nothing to secure jobs and investment in the new hydrogen industry for Tasmania. Half-time Hodgman has left the field while other states are rapidly advancing their plans for hydrogen generation. In September last year, the Queensland Government released their scoping document for their strategy for the hydrogen industry, and in May this year, they released their industry strategy for 2019 to 2024. They have already hosted delegations from both Japan and

South Korea. When will we see a hydrogen strategy for Tasmania, or is it a fact that you haven't even started one?

## **ANSWER**

Madam Speaker, I thank the member for the question, the same question I had yesterday and which I answered. I outlined a number of things the Government is doing, but maybe the member was not in the House at that time, being kicked out, so you could not even spend half of your time in the parliament doing the job you are paid to do.

We are seriously pursuing opportunities in hydrogen. I invite the member to look to what I said yesterday in response to this very same question. I can repeat it again if he would like. His question is baseless, without foundation and another example of not being able to trust Labor.

I will make the point as well that as the minister has outlined, a number of key initiatives in the energy space being undertaken by this Government, yesterday, as is often the case, the member who asked the question, Mr O'Byrne, tried to take credit for all the development that is happening in renewable energy. It started under this Government and we are continuing to deliver and not only supporting Tasmanian energy effort but also Australia's effort towards renewable energy. Another untruth that this is all the great work of the member for Franklin, Mr O'Byrne. It is not. It is work that has been done by this Government that we are delivering.

The final point I will make - and I want to point to the fact that this is a Labor Party that you simply cannot trust - on the weekend, the Leader of the Opposition promised to the party faithful that no longer would they be standing with the Greens. Two parliamentary days into it they are straight back with them.

**Mr O'BYRNE** - Point of order, Madam Speaker. It goes to relevance. This is about hydrogen and jobs. The people in the Tamar Valley are looking for government leadership.

**Madam SPEAKER** - Mr O'Byrne, that is not a point of order. Please sit down.

**Mr HODGMAN** - Thank you, Madam Speaker, it is very relevant. Again, I will refer to the hypocrisy of the member who interjects. Whilst they now claim they want to separate themselves from the Greens, back in the day when they were in government together they were very comfortable and very supportive of the arrangement. The member who continues to interject, Mr O'Byrne said back then, and I quote, 'The Tasmanian Government is already starting to show the -

**Ms O'BYRNE** - Point of order, Madam Speaker, and it is to relevance. If the Premier has a strategy on hydrogen he should table it.

**Madam SPEAKER** - That is not a point of order. I am very tired of these frivolous, disruptive points of order. From here on in, they will be ruled out much faster.

**Mr HODGMAN** - Thank you, Madam Speaker. I will remind Mr O'Byrne of what he said back in 2010 about their cosy arrangement with the Greens and how good it was back in the day. He said his government - the Tasmanian government - had already started to share the benefits that come from collaborative government:

Labor and the Tasmanian Greens are working closely together to demonstrate a cooperative politics that is providing strong, stable government and protecting our precious environment.

That is what David O'Byrne said about Labor and the Greens being in government together. You cannot trust them and if anyone wants a more contemporary reminder of that, I pointed to the fact that the Leader of the Opposition still does not know whether she wants Madeleine Ogilvie back in the Labor Party or not. She has no position on that. When the member for Franklin, Mr O'Byrne, was asked about it the very same day, he said, 'Of course we would. She has Labor heritage running through her veins. Of course, she would be welcomed back.' He has a very strong position on this matter. He was quite happy to point that out to the media when he had an opportunity. That demonstrates the chaotic, divided and dysfunctional nature of the Labor Party under your leadership.

### **Infrastructure Projects**

**Mrs PETRUSMA question to MINSTER for INFRASTRUCTURE and TRANSPORT, Mr FERGUSON**

[11.19 a.m.]

Under the Hodgman majority Liberal Government Tasmania is undergoing an infrastructure investment boom. Can you please update the House on Tasmania's pipeline of infrastructure projects and the importance of this to business and industry?

### **ANSWER**

Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague for the question which is about jobs in Tasmania as well as growing certainty and confidence and supporting our state. We in this Government will not be distracted by the stunts by the Labor Party. We will get back to business immediately.

Tasmania has the nation's most confident businesses which is a very good thing. Our construction industry is going from strength to strength under the Hodgman majority Liberal Government, which continues to provide certainty, not just on Tuesdays but every day, that we will fight for jobs in Tasmania.

Tasmanians are able to see that activity on the Midland Highway project which is now ahead of schedule and the building boom in the private sector with all of the hotel projects underway. For example, there is also the irrigation investment growth across our agricultural lands and the private sector agribusiness that is co-investing for the future, as well as the national interest in our renewable energy projects and the great potential of the Battery of the Nation and Project Marinus.

The Government is committed to ensuring our private sector continues to contribute to job growth and our strong economy. Unlike members opposite, this side of the House recognises that to grow jobs we have to support business. The private sector, the people who risk their own capital creating opportunities, investing in our state, create opportunities for Tasmanians and our young people.

That is why we are so excited to release the second annual 10-year infrastructure pipeline. This has never been done before this Government. It is this Government which has pioneered it. The second 10-year infrastructure pipeline document released last month captures more than \$15 billion in the known projects with a value over \$5 million each. This includes an unprecedented future

program of work on our roads, bridges, ports, rail, airports, irrigation, water and sewerage, tourism infrastructure and electricity supply.

The Government understands that having that pipeline of work shared with the public, shared with our private sector and civil construction firms, our consultants, this strong and deep knowledge can present them with greater certainty and an ability to plan their workforce. We also know that such a big pipeline of work brings challenges with it as well. Industry is telling us that our 10-year infrastructure pipeline provides valuable information to allow them to think through capacity, training, resourcing and project timing. It is also a valuable dataset for the growing private sector, consulting and contracting sectors.

In the year to December 2018, there was around \$1.2 billion in engineering work done on economic infrastructure in the state. The pipeline also documents a further \$1 billion expenditure over the same period on social infrastructure like schools, our public hospitals, housing, public housing and similar investments to help people to live their best lives.

I encourage members opposite to read the pipeline document. I know they have not seen one before the election of the Hodgman Liberal majority Government. I know the member opposite who puts himself out there as the expert on infrastructure, Mr O'Byrne, did not ever have the wherewithal to put together a similar plan. History records that under the Labor Party doing deals with the Greens they were kiboshing infrastructure. They lost jobs. Who could forget Mr O'Byrne standing where I am right now with his glossy EDP, the Economic Development Plan, which that government released on the very day that they put their signatures on the death warrant for the forestry industry, where Rebecca White and the Greens sold out Triabunna, sold out the forestry sector and caused turmoil in regional communities around Tasmania.

That is right. Heads down looking at your phones, not willing to apologise to Tasmanians for the devastation, the absolute jobs devastation that you created on the day that you released your Economic Development Plan. That went pretty bad; 10 000 jobs were lost. Never mind the police that you sacked. Never mind the nurses that you sacked, the 10 000 people who lost their jobs in Tasmania because you were desperately clinging to your jobs by doing a deal with the Greens.

I invite the Labor Party to get on board with our infrastructure pipeline and support it. Do not criticise it, because what you are doing is undermining confidence in the community. If you want to have your road to Damascus moment you have to have to keep going to Damascus. You have to keep accepting that if you want to grow jobs in Tasmania you have to stop undermining our private interests around the state.

I commend the infrastructure pipeline to members and note that in the near future we will be releasing our 30-year strategy as well, something never done by the Labor Party. I know you are earnestly looking forward to it, because you have never seen one, but you will see one very soon. It is the Hodgman Liberal Government that is standing up for jobs, not Labor, not the unions, not the Greens.

## **Combustible Building Cladding**

### **Ms BUTLER question to PREMIER, Mr HODGMAN**

[11.25 a.m.]

You have been criticised for your inadequate response to the nationwide cladding crisis. Other states have taken this issue much more seriously and have begun combustion testing to identify

buildings over two storeys with dangerous combustible cladding, as well as buildings in bushfire-prone areas. We simply do not know how many residential buildings in bushfire-prone areas have dangerous combustible cladding on them. With the fire season just around the corner, will you commit to a new audit of buildings in bushfire-prone areas in order to reduce risk to residents and first responders?

## **ANSWER**

Madam Speaker, I thank the member for the question. We will do anything we can do to protect our communities better and have done and will continue to do so. We will also continue to be led by the experts around this debate. I acknowledge that I and the Government have been criticised about this matter by you, but we have been well supported by the experts in this matter who are informing what we do and ensuring Tasmanians' safety is paramount.

You have been misleading Tasmanians or scaring the hell out of them with some unfounded, unsubstantiated and very unwise commentary from a member of parliament who should be better informed on these matters before taking such reckless action. It is another example of preferring to frighten people than help them. It is more about politics and political point-scoring, as your own question says, and not about the facts.

I again place on record our Government's response to this very important matter. Since 2017 the Director of Building Control has used his powers under the Building Act to restrict the use of ACP with polyethylene core in Tasmania. At the same time, the audit of buildings undertaken for potentially high-risk cladding was completed in 2018 and was conducted with the assistance of independent fire safety experts. Again, you are questioning their qualifications or capacity to undertake this work. That is unhelpful scaremongering and it is unfounded.

The audit identified 42 buildings to be at low risk, with one, the LGH, to be of high risk, and the cladding work completed in 2012 - under the previous Labor government - the Government took action to rectify.

**Ms BUTLER** - Point of order, Madam Speaker. I would appreciate an answer to the question, which was about -

**Madam SPEAKER** - It is not a point of order; sit down.

**Mr HODGMAN** - I am seeking to put the facts before this House and the Tasmanian people about this matter to assure them of the appropriate course we have undertaken to ensure Tasmanians are safe and aware of the work that has been done, because under your Labor government in 2012, that cladding work done at the LGH has thankfully now been removed once identified by the very audit process that you criticised. The experts stated that in the case of the other 42 buildings:

The use of ACP results in no additional risk to fire safety for those buildings.

The Director of Building Control has provided specific audit assessment results to each of the owners of those 42 buildings to ensure that they are fully informed on the low risk associated with their building.

It is also important to remember that all buildings are flammable and that appropriate risk assessment and management is always appropriate and important. Building safety is focused on



the safety of occupants and limiting the spread of fire, not necessarily preventing a fire in the first place. The Government's advice is that the Tasmania Fire Service is fully prepared and can deploy appropriate tactics to deal with firefighting on our tall buildings, including those that have a diverse range of flammable materials such as aluminium composites.

The Government's actions are in stark contrast to Labor, which has been fear-mongering and scaring local communities. A lot of complaint and criticism I have heard around this debate has been about the things you have been saying and doing. Notwithstanding that, we will not be distracted from the job and anything further we can do to ensure that Tasmanians remain safe. There is much more we do to keep our state fire safe in a number of respects which I am happy to elaborate on at a later time, but I will not allow the member who asked the question to dishonestly represent the facts. Again, you cannot trust Labor and what they say, but what we have done is in fact improved safety. We have ensured that the experts who can inform this debate and our policy response are leading the debate, not you.

**Ms Butler** - Inadequate.

**Madam SPEAKER** - Order, Ms Butler, warning number one.

### **TEMCO - Energy Usage**

**Mr O'BYRNE question to PREMIER, Mr HODGMAN**

[11.30 a.m.]

You appear oblivious to the risk faced by 250 workers and many more indirect jobs if TEMCO closes its gates or enters care and maintenance, but there is another risk that affects every single electricity user in Tasmania. TEMCO is one of the biggest energy users in the state and if it closes, fixed transmission costs will be redistributed across the network, which means higher power bills. What advice have you received about the impact on the power bills of homes and businesses across Tasmania if TEMCO was to close?

### **ANSWER**

Madam Speaker, I thank the member for the question. You can just feel him wishing the worst for Tasmania and the northern community that his sister represents, and it is quite disturbing. I do not in any way at all accept the claims of the member who asked the question about our engagement with that business and others, the broader community and the people who work and live within it. We will continue to engage with them, as we will with our energy companies and any other parties who may be affected by a decision made once this process has concluded.

I am not going to continue to entertain the Opposition's lustful desire to speculate as to worst-case scenarios. Of course we will do all we can now and in advance to support the community and the business. It is entirely untrue from the member whose one plan he released with great fanfare in government, the economic development plan, led to the state slipping into recession just three months later, so we will not take advice on plans from the member either.

## **Housing and Accommodation Support Initiative - Colony 47 Partnership**

**Mrs RYLAH question to MINISTER for MENTAL HEALTH and WELLBEING,  
Mr ROCKLIFF**

[11.32 a.m.]

Can you update the House on the Hodgman majority Liberal Government's partnership with Colony 47 to trial the Housing and Accommodation Support Initiative for Tasmanians with a mental health illness?

### **ANSWER**

Madam Speaker, I thank the member for her question and interest in this matter. The Hodgman majority Liberal Government is continuing to deliver on our election policy commitments. As part of the Government's commitment to invest in health, education and Tasmanians in need, we are investing \$1 million over two years for the trial of the Housing and Accommodation Support Initiative. This initiative is about providing Tasmanians living with mental illness with better clinical and psychosocial rehabilitation supports linked with stable housing and supported accommodation. This is a clear acknowledgement that mental health cannot be viewed in isolation and that Tasmanians struggling with their mental health often are also dealing with other major issues such as unstable accommodation where support is also required.

If we want to prevent a cycle of illness and relapse and have better patient outcomes, we need to look more closely at how we can better integrate services so that people can get more holistic support. A steering committee comprising senior personnel from the Department of Health, Housing Tasmania and Colony 47 is overseeing the pilot project in southern Tasmania. Colony 47 is responsible for the co-design and implementation elements of the new service to ensure the program meets the needs of consumers. Importantly, carers and family members are encouraged and supported, where the person is in agreement, to be involved with plans for the care of their loved ones.

This exciting pilot is based on a very successful program in New South Wales which found that when housing was linked to appropriate clinical and rehabilitation support, people were better able to overcome the often debilitating effects of mental illness and live more independent lives. The valuation of the New South Wales program also found the majority of participants - around 90 per cent - were successfully maintaining their tenancies, their mental health was improving and they were spending less time in hospital. We hope to similarly improve the lives and opportunities for more Tasmanians by trialling the service in southern Tasmania.

I am pleased to advise the House that the psychosocial staff have been recruited and have commenced the next phase of the service establishment, which includes developing processes to engage an initial number of consumers over the coming weeks.

This very important initiative represents our Government's commitment to improving outcomes for Tasmanians living with mental ill-health, giving people the very best chance to lead happy and positive lives, recover from or able to successfully manage their mental illness.

**Time expired.**

## MATTER OF PUBLIC IMPORTANCE

### Wages

[11.36 a.m.]

**Ms O'BYRNE** (Bass - Motion) - Madam Speaker, I move -

That the House take note of the following matter: Wages.

I appreciate the opportunity to discuss the issue of wages and the setting of wages in Tasmania, particularly in light of the past 18 months where public servants have had to fight tooth and nail with this Government in order to get any recognition of their right to a pay rise. For 18 months, they have been treated with contempt and as if they did not matter; 18 months of the community having to support them as they have taken action in order to raise their issue.

Why does it matter? It matters because the Australian Bureau of Statistics wage price index for the Tasmanian Public Sector increased by only 1.5 per cent in the year to June last year as the pay dispute with the Government continued to run. That was the lowest increase for public sector workers on record. That is how bad it goes. They have not had any kind of increase, much less the cost of living increase.

It matters because we need to look at what happens in terms of wages. I touched on it in a discussion earlier today. The way in which the average weekly ordinary time earnings for working Tasmanians is significantly below the national average: \$1377, \$276 below the national average. For months and months, the unions representing our 29 000 public sector workers were locked in negotiations, supposedly negotiations with the state Government. It was a state Government that often did not turn up; a state Government that did not negotiate in good faith over the 2 per cent pay rise cap for public servants which they argued, should be lifted. Remembering that 2 per cent was put in during the global financial crisis and the public sector workers did the right thing and said, 'We get this. We get that there is a global financial crisis and we get that there is not enough money. We will work with you to accept that cap'. It was always on the understanding that if the economic situation changed, that it would be better and they would be rewarded for that loyalty and the commitment they gave to their state.

They were not. They were treated with absolute disrespect by this Government. The Government has scrapped the cap and that is a good thing to see, but we also know that negotiations are starting pretty well straight away because we are still so far behind in the ongoing industrial relations framework for our public servants.

Let us talk about how the wages have an impact. At entry level on paper, paramedics in Tasmania are paid \$69 000 with their Victorian juniors topping the nation on \$76 000. Police rookies in Tasmania are paid just under \$60 000. Both New South Wales and Western Australia junior officers take home \$71 000. New teachers in Tasmania can expect just under \$60 000. If they had a job in the Northern Territory they would be getting over \$73 000. In Queensland and South Australia, negotiations have moved upward on the pay scale as well.

Overall, there are significant differences in pay scales. We have one Tasmanian nurse who did not want to give her name because she is frightened about retribution that this Government gives public servants. She said that when she moved home in September for family reasons as a level 3 nurse, she did the maths and her current base salary in Tasmania was \$8000 less than her base salary

in Queensland, and you wonder why you have all of those unfilled positions. These things are concerning.

Let us have a look at what it means for an average wage. On 1 July 2019 the minimum wage in Tasmania was \$740.80 per week for a 38-hour week. That gives you \$19.49 an hour. Newstart, if you are single with no children, is \$277.85 cents a week. On a 38-hour week that would equate to \$7.30 per hour.

Someone on \$190 000 per year is actually going to get \$3653.80 per week, on \$96.15 cents an hour. You might think it might be a little bit outrageous for anyone on \$190 000 to be suggesting that their life is not going so well, that they are finding it a little bit hard for themselves to manage. That is not the case and I will quote from an article by Emily Baker from the ABC where it talked about the Speaker of the Tasmanian Parliament suggesting that \$190 000 for the Speaker salary was not enough. Quoting the Speaker in this article, she said:

I recognise that most of our public servants believe they are underpaid and a lot of people would like to see Newstart increased, and we do look like we've got significantly larger salaries.

But I can tell you we're working very, very long hours, seven days a week and sometimes putting ourselves at great risk.

Tasmanian firefighters put themselves at risk and they are the lowest paid in Australia. They are required not only to fight fires, but also deal with hazardous materials and a multitude of rescue situations on a daily basis. That does not happen in other jurisdictions where fire services are not only appropriately resourced with specialised areas of operations, but they are also paid much better than ours are, the most multiskilled fire service officers in the country and yet the lowest paid.

I only have a very limited amount of time and I am getting a bit nervous that I will run out, because I am really concerned that we have this position that somehow our public servants are doing all right, because they are not. They are the lowest paid in the country. For the Government not to act a little bit more firmly - actually it is the inconsistency in their response - when Tasmania's hardworking public sector members, who are the lowest paid in the country, want to get more money and only a couple of per cent more, only a few per cent. They are not asking for an extra \$80 000 a year; they are only asking for a little bit more money and they are treated with contempt by this Government.

The prolonged industrial dispute over the wage negotiations was insulting, absolutely insulting. When I do recall the Treasurer - sorry, members of the Government, I will be very careful I would need to quote and check if it was the Treasurer, in my mind it is - but members of the Government talking about it being okay because the conditions are so much better and everything is so much better down in Tasmania. Historically, one of the reasons we have been paid less is because it was easier and more cost effective to live in Tasmania, but that is clearly not the case anymore.

HACSU member, Kimbra Pettit, who worked at the Royal Hobart probably put it best. She talked to the media asking why somebody might deserve a pay rise when health workers do not. She said:

Sue Hickey is a Liberal MP. We had to negotiate with her Government for 18 months to get a pay rise. Where was she when my colleagues and I were

fighting tooth and nail to get a pay rise from the Government? We are on about a quarter of what she gets a year. We are the ones who need better pay, she is only out for herself.

Everyone can draw their own conclusion as to whether someone on \$190 000 needs more money, but Tasmania's hardworking public servants deserve better. They deserve better than the treatment by this Government and they deserve better as negotiations commence into the future.

**Time expired.**

[11.44 a.m.]

**Mr GUTWEIN** (Bass - Treasurer) - Mr Deputy Speaker, I was going to begin my comments by saying what a self-serving contribution that was. Let us put some facts on the table first and foremost in terms of politician's pay. It was this side of the House and all Liberal members last year accepted a 2 per cent wage increase against the recommendation of the TIC. I am not sure what the Greens did. I note in the previous parliament they took a 2 per cent wage increase but provided the balance to charities or to NGOs, I think.

**Ms O'Connor** - Yes, we contribute more.

**Mr GUTWEIN** - Last year this side of the House took a 2 per cent wage increase. The Tasmanian Industrial Commission had recommended that politicians receive a wage increase in line with the wage price index, which at that time was 2.5 per cent.

I know what this side of the House took and that was 2 per cent in line with Government wages policy, yet we have just had that self-serving hypocritical contribution from the member who, I understand, took the wage price index increase of up to 2.5 per cent. How hypocritical of that member to come into this place and argue that, as a government, we are not cognisant of the wage needs or circumstances of the public sector.

The other point I would make - and again, it is one that the other side of the House seemed to walk past - is that the benefits of a strong economy have seen wages in Tasmania grow at the second-fastest rate in the country over the last 12 months.

**Ms O'Connor** - Only private sector wages.

**Mr GUTWEIN** - No, I am talking private and public sector combined. If you look at the Australian averages, the Australian average total hourly rates of pay excluding bonuses, for the June quarter 2019, was 2.3 per cent and in Tasmania it was 2.5 per cent. It was only bested by Victoria, which had 2.7 per cent, largely, I suspect, on the basis that they locked down public sector wage agreements a few years earlier at 3 per cent to 4 per cent for some of their public sector employees.

I make the point that the hypocrisy of Ms O'Byrne in this place is breathtaking. When she was the minister, she spent more than \$1 million on legal fees fighting the paramedics in the Supreme Court over the work value case. That is the truth, isn't it? A million dollars in legal costs, taking your own public servants, paramedics, to court. What we have done is landed at a sensible one-year agreement of 2.35 per cent with a sign-on bonus as well, which ensures that those who are paid under \$80 000 a year receive up to 0.15 per cent in addition over and above that, and then with a sliding scale for those on more significant incomes so they do not get the full benefit of 0.15 per cent. We have landed a sensible outcome that we can afford and, importantly, is in line

with the major indices like CPI and certainly broadly in line with the wage price index. But again we hear the hypocrisy.

The most damaging thing you can do to someone in respect of their wage is to have them lose their job. When they were in government in the last term, 10 000 Tasmanians lost their jobs. They lost all of their income and, in fact, many of them had to leave the state to find work. That is what happened when Labor and the Greens were in government. As to the self-serving hypocrisy of the member who has come into the place this morning to talk about wages, she should spare a thought for the individuals, the families, the people throughout our regions who have lost their jobs and everything they owned under that Labor-Greens government.

We saw this glaring revelation over the weekend that what they should start to focus on is the economy and jobs. As I said yesterday, the road to Damascus is a long one. We know that for the better part of this term, in fact evidenced again today, you will vote with the Greens in more than nine out of 10 instances. That says it all. You have no credibility in this place whatsoever based on your past performance. The empirical evidence is in. When you have control of the economy you wreak havoc on Tasmanians. You did it in the last term and took our unemployment rate up over 8 per cent. We had 10 000 Tasmanians lose their jobs at the peak and our economy went into recession, yet you have the gall to come into this place and talk about wages and the fact that you care about people.

Your record stands stark. You have demonstrated in the past that you cannot be trusted with the economy, you certainly cannot be trusted with people's wages because you took a wage off 10 000 of them in the last term, and any contribution that you make in this place should be treated with the disregard that I have just expressed.

### **Time expired.**

**Ms O'CONNOR** (Clark - Leader of the Greens) - Mr Deputy Speaker, I want to say on this issue, a pox on both your houses. At the federal level we have the Liberals and Labor lining up to entrench wages inequality in this country, hand massive tax cuts to the rich, do nothing about the fact that many corporations in Australia pay zero tax, and in the case of Labor, to pay lip service on the need to raise Newstart, which is \$40 a day, an unsurvivable amount of money. It is interesting that for many years now the Greens at the federal level have recognised along with the social services sector that Newstart is a cruel underpayment and we have been moving to make sure that Newstart is raised so that there is an element of liveability there so the people who are on Newstart have the resources not only to live and feed themselves but to go out and seek employment.

There has been nothing from Labor on the need to raise Newstart until after the federal election. They could have made a real difference here, to the development of a better policy on Newstart and sending a message to people who are living on the margins in this country that they support raising Newstart, but we did not get any of that and there has been no substantive action from either party at the federal level to reduce the level of wages inequality in this country.

As the gap between rich and poor gets wider and wider, more people are pushed to the margins and more families with children are struggling to feed their children. This is as a result of neoliberal policies from both the major parties in Canberra - so I say again, a pox on both your houses.

Once you start at a federal level providing massive tax cuts to the wealthy, what you inevitably do is run down public services. If government does not have the revenue to fund public hospitals,

quality public schools and increase affordable housing, you diminish public services. That is exactly what is going to happen because of the collusion at the federal level between the Liberal and Labor parties to hand a massive tax cut over the years to the wealthier in our society, which will only increase social inequality and only put downward pressure on the wages of public servants particularly.

It is poor form when parliament spends large amounts of time on the public purse talking about politicians' pay, and that is what the subtext of this matter of public importance debate is about. It is about the charade that we saw in question time this morning where Labor was prepared to use a submission that the Speaker, I would argue perhaps unthinkingly, put into the Tasmanian Industrial Commission as the basis for political point-scoring. We made the decision when the invitation came from the Tasmanian Industrial Commission on MPs' pay not to make a submission and I am really glad we did not. But, if we had, we would have said that Tasmanian members of parliament are actually paid quite well to do the work that we do, we are very grateful for the wages we receive, and it is an honour to stand in here as a member of parliament, particularly as a Greens member of parliament.

In terms of the amount of pay members of parliament get, when the parliamentary salaries and allowances legislation came before this place, we tried to make sure that MPs' pay was pegged at the same rate as the public sector indexation, because we argue that we are public servants. There was an opportunity there for parliament not to be caught up in this mess, and for us to recognise that we are public servants, and to have the same rate of increase each year - the indexed rate of increase each year as public sector workers. I believe that was a lost opportunity for the parliament. It would have made sure we were not in this messy situation we are in, in relation to pay.

In our office, we had a look at Tasmanian wages over the past four years, and on our statistical analysis, overall wages here have increased at the equal highest rate of any state each year, and ahead of the national average each year. Private sector wages have increased at a higher rate than the national average each year, but with the public sector - and this is why I queried you on the statement that you made -

**Mr Gutwein** - In this current year?

**Ms O'CONNOR** - Every year is my advice - public sector wages have increased at a lower rate than the national average each year on our statistical analysis. We certainly have some capacity within our office to really crunch statistics.

**Mr Gutwein** - We do too.

**Ms O'CONNOR** - You have Treasury, but -

**Mr Gutwein** - I am just wondering what measure you are using, wage price indexing or -

**Ms O'CONNOR** - We have CPI, overall Tas, private, public, so it is ABS data.

**Mr Gutwein** - The measure for wages - it is ABS, wage price index?

**Ms O'CONNOR** - No, there is no wage price index metric here that I can see. Public sector wages growth has been lower than private sector wages growth in three out of the past four years, because this Government consistently undervalues the work that is done by our public service, and

only this year has had to concede that capping public sector wages at 2 per cent was unreasonable and unjustifiable. Particularly if we are to believe what the Treasurer says about living in a golden age, which I tell you they do not believe in the northern suburbs of Hobart, they do not believe in Brighton, and they do not believe in rural and regional Tasmania.

We are very disappointed in how question time devolved this morning. If we were going to have a debate about wages that went to talking about each party's policy that would be constructive, but it is pretty clear that the purpose of this matter of public importance has simply been to extend the politics of question time this morning.

**Time expired.**

[11.58 a.m.]

**Mrs PETRUSMA** (Franklin) - Mr Deputy Speaker, I welcome the opportunity to contribute to this matter of public importance. I support a line that Ms O'Connor just outlined that this whole debate, this whole matter of public importance today, is hypocritical. It is hypocritical that the Opposition today has raised the issue of wages when, as the Treasurer has just outlined, last year when the Tasmanian Industrial Commission recommended an increase for members of parliament of 2.5 per cent, the Liberal members only took a 2 per cent increase. At the time I was minister, and I knew that it was important that we protected our Budget so that we could invest in the things that matter most to Tasmanians. We needed to be able to invest more money into health, into education, into looking after the most vulnerable. For me in my portfolios, I wanted to make sure that the money went where Tasmanians needed it most. I was proud of the fact that we only took the 2.2 per cent. We know, or it has been alleged, that the Opposition took the whole 2.5 per cent.

The next speaker can put on the public record whether Labor did take the whole 2.5 per cent, because if they did take the whole 2.5 per cent, then this whole matter of public importance is just hypocrisy of the highest order. They are coming in here lecturing us, when we took 2 per cent, and they, as it has been alleged, took the whole 2.5 per cent, because that really reflects their attitude to this whole issue.

If they truly cared about investing more dollars into health, education, looking after our most vulnerable, they should have only taken 2 per cent, like we took 2 per cent, because that means there would have been more money available for those other portfolios.

We do call that the next speaker be given the opportunity to put on the record: did they take 2 per cent, or did they take 2.5 per cent? What percentage did they take? We know under the previous government that the member for Bass, who was the previous health minister, sacked a nurse a day for nine months, and she comes in here lecturing us on how we have looked after public servants. The member for Franklin, when he was the minister for police, I believe sacked around 110 police officers, and they have the gall to come in here and tell us about this Government and our wages policy with our hard-working public servants.

I place on the record today my deep thanks and appreciation to all the public servants I had the pleasure of working with when I was minister for over five years. Each and every day I appreciated their commitment and everything they wanted to do, especially in my portfolios, for our most vulnerable Tasmanians. That is why this Government is committed to ensuring negotiated wage outcomes are fair, affordable, and reasonable. That is why we have been negotiating in good faith with unions, and will continue to do so for future agreements.



Importantly, the Government is pleased to have recently reached agreement with the majority of public sector unions for a one-year agreement. Given that the majority of these agreements have now been registered in the Tasmanian Industrial Commission, Tasmania's hard-working public servants will receive a pay rise in coming weeks. This one-year agreement includes a 2.1 per cent per annum increase in wages, fully back-dated, with a further increase of 0.25 per cent per annum, as well as a sign-on bonus of up to \$120 from the date of registration of the agreement.

As the Government has always said, public sector agreements must be fair, reasonable and affordable, which is what this agreement represents. I note that this Government, through the Premier and the Treasurer, have already expressed their deep thanks and deeply appreciated the good faith and leadership shown by the Australian Nurses and Midwifery union, as well as Tom Lynch and the leaders of the other public sector unions, for coming back to the negotiating table, which allowed us to negotiate this outcome for our hard-working public servants.

In regards to the wage increase, it is important to note that this wage increase is higher than recent increases in the cost of living. The Consumer Price Index over the year to June 2019 confirms that the one-year agreement is higher than the recent cost of living increases. This is because the CPI rose just 2.3 per cent over the year to June 2019, which is less than this new one-year agreement. In fact, since the introduction of the Government's wages policy, the CPI has risen just 1.8 per cent on average per annum, which is less than our wages policy. Therefore the public sector workers will receive a higher wage increase than CPI. The good thing about the CPI is that it is an arm's-length measure, which is independent of government, and the CPI confirms that the wage agreement is fair and reasonable.

In regards to the next steps, importantly, as agreed with unions, negotiations have already recommenced for the final two years of the deal. As the Treasurer and Premier have indicated, the Government looks forward to continued good faith negotiations in the coming months.

I reiterate that today is the opportunity for the Labor Opposition, for the next speaker, to put on the public record exactly what increase they did take over the last year. Was it 2 per cent, 2.25 per cent, or was it 2.5 per cent. The members of the Government only took 2 per cent because we wanted to make sure that the wage increases were reasonable but that we could invest into areas that Tasmanians are equally passionate about which is health, education and cost of living.

### **Time expired.**

[12.05 p.m.]

**Ms BUTLER** (Lyons) - Mr Deputy Speaker, I am honoured to speak on wages on this debate. I will start by running through some facts about wages. When we talk about wages, I am not going to talk about our Speaker of the House thinking it is appropriate to ask for an \$80 000 increase to an already quite generous salary. I am not going to talk about the fact that they are so out of touch with reality that they think a chauffeur driven car is not a luxury.

The Deputy Speaker and I average about 2000 kilometres a week, driving around our electorates. It would be an absolute luxury to have a chauffeur, but we are hard workers and we are not out of touch. I do not know about you, but I am certainly not out of touch with my community, Mr Tucker.

The fact is, at the moment here in Tasmania, 7 per cent of women are unemployed and 13.7 per cent of women are underemployed. This means they are not looking for work anymore.

They have given up because the jobs are not there for them. In Tasmania, 5100 full-time jobs were lost in the last 12 months. Fact. Unemployment is 6.7 per cent. That is the highest unemployment in Australia. Underemployment is 10.4 per cent.

**Ms O'Connor** - We would love to hear a plan from Labor about what you are going to do to address that.

**Ms BUTLER** - People have stopped looking for work. In south-east Tasmania, youth unemployment is 17.8 per cent -

**Ms O'Connor** - Tell us what your plan is.

**Ms BUTLER** - Can I ask the Deputy Speaker to interject? It would be really good.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** - Order.

**Ms BUTLER** - In southern Tasmania, 17.8 per cent of young people are unemployed. That is not something worth laughing about. Overall, we have the unenviable statistic of 15 per cent of young people in Tasmania - over the whole state - being unemployed. Your Government is not growing an economy. You are growing inequality. You sit on the other side of the room looking as smug as a bug and you are growing inequality.

The gap between the haves and have-nots is what is happening in our society at the moment. If you had any concept of how people are living, in reality, in your electorates, you would understand the concept of the working poor. I spoke to a lady at the weekend who has two jobs and she still cannot make ends meet. She works as a cleaner during the day on a very low wage and she has a hospitality job at night. She has children as well. Your people cut her penalty rates as well. When she is not hanging out with her family on a Sunday, getting the kids ready for school, she is actually being paid less because of the Liberal Government policy to withdraw penalty rates.

Low wages are holding our state back and they are working into your mantra which is 'Look after big business, tell everyone how well Tasmania is doing and grow inequality'.

**Ms O'Connor** - Whip out that mirror.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** - Order.

**Ms BUTLER** - That is all you are doing. We know that 50 per cent of Tasmanians have functional illiteracy and you are here telling us that everything is okay. Hundreds of people are dying of preventable illnesses every year in Tasmania and most of them have low wages and they cannot afford private health. You are growing inequality.

The jobs you have created are not spread evenly across Tasmania, are they? People in rural and regional areas are badly affected. For instance, if you are a young person who lives in Oatlands and you want to catch a bus to look for work in Glenorchy or Hobart, the first bus leaves at 11 a.m. That will not get you to a potential workplace until 12 o'clock. The last bus leaves at 3.30 p.m., so you have three-and-a-half hours to work. If you can afford a car, fantastic, but when you are a young person on Newstart, it is a really expensive thing.

**Ms O'Connor** - Why didn't your federal colleagues support lifting Newstart before the federal election?

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** - Order.

**Ms BUTLER** - This is what happens when you do not create enough equality and opportunity for all people across your whole communities. You are growing inequality in Tasmania; I cannot state it enough.

The growth in part-time roles instead of full-time roles is another little statistic that the federal Liberal Government likes to play around with, with Newstart. You only have to work for one hour a week, to be not classified as unemployed. One hour a week. Basically, that is a way for people like yourself to stand up and say, 'The unemployment rate is only 6 per cent'. The actual unemployment rate is a lot more than that. There are not many people across the Chamber who would have any idea what it feels like to try to live on a very, very low wage, especially if you are working a significant number of hours a week trying to earn that very, very low wage just to pay the rent, which is also well and truly out of kilter.

For some reason I got the impression from this side of the room today that the Speaker of the House was thinking it was acceptable to ask for an \$80 000 pay increase. I got the impression from the other side of the room that for some reason they thought that this was acceptable. I did not hear one, 'Oh, that is completely wrong', or 'devastating, or how out of touch could a member of the Liberal Party be'. There was none of that at all. There was no indication that it would be removed. I was spun-out by that so I am wondering whether you are going to put the Speaker in the lovely little razor gang where you are going to find \$450 million to cut from essential services. They will be jobs, will they not? They will be jobs; they will be jobs that you will be cutting. We have a skill shortage -

**Time expired.**

**Matter noted.**

## **ROADS AND JETTIES AMENDMENT (WORKS IN HIGHWAYS) BILL 2019 (No. 26)**

### **Second Reading**

**Resumed from 3 September 2019 (page 97)**

**Mrs RYLAH** (Braddon) - Mr Deputy Speaker, the Government's long-term plan is working but we recognise there is more work to do, and this bill that we are debating is an element of that plan. We know that we are contributing substantial work into infrastructure and this has created opportunities and challenges for us.

I want to highlight some of the work that we are undertaking. In the 2018-19 federal budget, the Australian Government committed to \$461 million over 10 years for the Bridgewater Bridge replacement on an 80/20 joint funding arrangement with the Tasmanian Government. The Australian Government has now committed to \$530 million over 10 years to the Tasmanian roads package under the Roads of Strategic Importance Program, with the initial focus on the Bass

Highway corridor. Under the Roads of Strategic Importance Program, the Australian Government has committed \$60 million to the upgrading of the Bass Highway from west of Wynyard to Marrawah; \$35 million for further upgrades to the Murchison Highway; \$24 million for the upgrade of Birrallee Road between Westbury and Frankford; \$15 million for the upgrade of the Lyell Highway between Queenstown and Strahan; \$16 million for the Old Surrey Road and Massy-Greene Drive upgrade, and \$130 million for the Hobart to Sorell corridor upgrade.

Under the Urban Congestion Fund, the Australian Government has committed \$25 million for the Hobart congestion fund, and \$10 million for the Tasman Highway Intelligent Transport Solutions.

Here is some core background information. In 2019-20, the Australian Government investment in the roads and programs delivered on the following initiatives and established programs, the continuation of the largest ever single investment in the Midland Highway; commencement of the Bridgewater Bridge replacement project; long-term development planning for the Domain Highway interchange; commencement of the Hobart Airport interchange upgrade; completion of the Huon Highway/Summerleas Road intersection upgrade at Kingston; completion of the sealing of the Highland Lakes Road between Liawenee and Haulage Hill; completion of the intersection upgrades for the Bass Highway at Wynyard - greatly appreciated; commencement of the first stages of the Roads of Strategic Importance package, with the focus on the Bass Highway that I have just mentioned; continuation of the Heavy Vehicle Safety and Productivity Program; continuation of the road maintenance funding for the national network; replacement of bridges as part of the Bridges Renewal program across state and local roads; and cost-effective treatment of locations with a record of casualty crashes through the Black Spot Program across state and local government.

The Hodgman Liberal Government is delivering road, rail and bridge projects to address congestion in our cities and towns, and to deliver safer, more efficient freight corridors for our world-class producers. When you look at the size and the scale of investment in our state road network, you realise how important it is to maintain the highest standard of works, and to rectify informal accesses onto our network. We do not want gravel spilling onto our roads. We want high-quality construction and services, and therefore limiting informal accesses and ensuring all access and work is completed or rectified to meet the highest standards, to minimise the safety risk to all road users, and preserve and extend our roads.

The Government's long-term plan is working, but there is more to be done. This bill is part of that project. This bill will also enable access everywhere on our state highways, ensuring the access is constructed in the safest locations, and to the specified safety and construction standards. I commend the bill to the House.

[12.17 p.m.]

**Mrs PETRUSMA** (Franklin) - Mr Deputy Speaker, it is a pleasure to speak on this bill. I note that this legislation is designed to amend the Roads and Jetties Act 1935, to allow the minister administering the act to address the issue of incomplete or substandard work, as well as issues of informal accesses onto highways that have the potential to become a safety risk to all road users, or that could lead to damage of our road pavement.

These amendments are necessary because unfortunately there have been issues with incomplete works, particularly vehicular access works onto state highways where property owners have commenced works but have left them incomplete. These incomplete works not only have the

potential to become a safety risk to road users, but there is the potential that this becomes a financial risk to the state in relation to maintenance of the road pavement.

There are also instances where vehicular access onto a state highway does not meet a required standard and has become a real safety concern. This is an important fact to note, especially when you consider that the state road network covers around 3755 kilometres of road, all but 189 kilometres of which are sealed. That is a lot of road to maintain at a high standard, so I congratulate the minister and the department for their efforts in keeping our roads safe, and these amendments will keep our new future roads safe as well.

There are a lot of new roads being built, or proposed to be built, especially in the south of the state. Not only in my electorate of Franklin, but in the commuter towns around Sorell and Midway Point and the southern beaches, where investment is occurring at an almost unprecedented level, as well as the work being undertaken in the electorate of Clark, between both sides of the Franklin electorate in the CBD, and for the state-managed feeder routes for our capital city.

Some days I have to travel from around Cambridge Park into town, and I am looking forward to the completion of all these works, as I am sure all other commuters are. I was delighted that during the election campaign the Hodgman Liberal Government made major election commitments in relation to the South East Traffic Solution, which will make huge improvements to the lives of commuters, not only from where I join the road, but from Sorell and the southern beaches as well, in terms of travel times, safety and amenity.

Under the South East Traffic Solution, six projects are going to be developed which will be of significant benefit to the productivity of our freight industry, and enhance the tourist experience for those travelling to areas such as the east coast and the Tasman Peninsula. These projects have been jointly funded by the Morrison-Hodgman government to the tune of \$162.5 million, and work is well underway. The South East Traffic Solution consists of six road upgrade projects along the Sorell to Hobart corridor, and a feasibility study. These projects are: the Hobart Airport Interchange project; the highway duplication of four lanes; the removal of the roundabout at Midway Point and duplication of the highway across Midway Point; a comprehensive feasibility study examining duplication of the Sorell causeways; the Sorell Southern Bypass; and an overtaking lane on the other highway near Iron Creek. Planning work is now well advanced for the highway upgrades, and construction of these projects is expected to start in the current term of Government. The Hobart Airport Interchange project will provide a long-term solution of a graded, separated interchange, and was tendered in April 2019. Tenders are now closed, and construction will begin in early 2020, with completion scheduled for 2022.

The Tasman Highway corridor is a critical road network, particularly for commuters, freight and tourists, and is a category 1 trunk road from Hobart to the airport roundabout. From the airport roundabout to Sorell, it is a category 2 regional freight route road, and it is also the major access from Hobart to the east coast via Sorell and the Tasman Peninsula, which includes the Port Arthur historic site.

The Sorell municipal area - including the southern beaches communities at Dodges Ferry, Carlton, Lewisham and Primrose Sands - has one of the highest population growth rates in Tasmania, increasing at a compound rate of around 1.7 per cent per year, which is nearly three times the average Tasmanian rate, with the population projected to increase by 40 per cent over the next 16 years. This is why all these projects for this area are necessary. I congratulate the Government and the minister for their commitment to these projects, because there is a heavy reliance on motor

vehicles for transport in these regions, with 80 per cent of people using cars as their method of travel, because of the distance.

In regards to the Hobart CBD area, in 2018-19, the Tasmanian Government allocated \$30.8 million over four years as part of the full \$73.5 million commitment over the next six financial years to assist with managing with the growing peak-hour traffic demand in the Hobart CBD and beyond. Traffic flow around Hobart is a key focus, and we are currently implementing the Greater Hobart Traffic Solution, which will help improve the efficiency of our road networks and public transport.

Yesterday I was delighted to ask the Minister for Infrastructure and Transport to update the House on the Hodgman majority Liberal Government's latest measures in our plan to alleviate traffic congestion in the Hobart CBD and key feeder roads. As he said, the reason we are seeing more traffic on the roads is because there are more people in work under the Hodgman majority Liberal Government. It is great there are now more people with jobs, and there are more people also choosing to make Tasmania their home. They love Tasmania and they want to be part of it.

Because our economy, population and jobs have been growing strongly, this has resulted in increased traffic which leads to longer commute times during peak hour. I admit that over the last 46 weeks since new measures have come in place, it has been about five minutes quicker for me, so time is getting better when I am coming into town, which is a relief for my kids when I am dropping them off to schools. I know the frustration of people in their cars but, coming into town, you definitely notice it is getting a lot easier getting to and going up Davey Street.

As the minister outlined yesterday, the Greater Hobart Traffic Solution is a long-term plan with short- and medium-term actions dealing with the problems. It is a package of measures that involves management, better infrastructure and better technology. The Government took over responsibility for the Davey and Macquarie streets couplet from the Hobart City Council because that was the missing link in the state road network that links to the north, the east and the south. They have been taking action on the roads that the state now controls and it includes measurably improving traffic flow by changes in the way the traffic signal sequencing works.

The Government has also begun rolling out our new fleet of rapid response tow-trucks to ensure that breakdowns and crashes on roads which block and hold up traffic can be dealt with more swiftly. They have also extended the tow truck hours on the Tasman Bridge to be an all-day operation, not just during peaks. I congratulate them on that initiative as well as the fact they have installed new towaway signs on Macquarie Street clearways and announced that vehicles that are parked illegally and hold up traffic in those clearways will be towed away from 14 October 2019. That announcement alone has already led to improved parking behaviour in those areas at the times when there is to be no parking, which has allowed easier traffic through the town. The good thing about giving such a wide range of notice is that it has allowed people to prepare for that change and enforcement and they have extended the clearway hours by one hour every morning. This frees up our roads and allows the community to be able to use all the available lanes.

I was also delighted to hear yesterday from the minister as part of the Hodgman majority Liberal Government's commitments for those who commute on the Southern Outlet the commencement of the Government's new rapid response towing service, to operate on the outlet as well as on Davey and Macquarie streets between 7 a.m. and 9.30 a.m. and between 3.30 p.m. and 6 p.m. As he outlined, the effectiveness of our new rapid response towing fleet has already been demonstrated since the commencement of the service on the bridge and the Tasman and Domain

highways. Sadly, last week there was a five-car pile-up on the bridge during the morning peak hour traffic. However, because of the minister and the department's efforts, those five cars were cleared up within 35 minutes. That is fantastic, especially when it is in peak-hour traffic. I congratulate the minister and the department on that.

**Mr Ferguson** - Hear, hear. And the new trucks have been built here in Hobart.

**Mrs PETRUSMA** - Yes. It is wonderful to hear that the trucks were built here in Hobart as well.

Since this new service started, the average tow-away time is under 15 minutes and there have been 18 incidents responded to, including 11 vehicles towed away. The minister also said yesterday that a dinghy had to be towed away as well. He may be able to share with us a bit more when he sums up what the back story was to that, but I thought it was a fascinating comment yesterday. All of those incidents would usually have held up traffic and made people's travel time longer, but this is one of the many measures that the minister and the department is implementing.

The minister announced recently further measures to reduce congestion in Hobart, particularly for Kingborough and Huon commuters, another part of the beautiful Franklin electorate, including calling for tenders for a consultancy to develop detailed sign options for a fifth Southern Outlet transit lane to link with bus priority measures on Macquarie and Davey streets. This fifth lane will connect to bus clearways in the city and along with the transit lane and Kingborough park-and-ride facilities will be the first of the city commuter transit reforms planned for each of the three major arterial routes and will ultimately connect to a city transit hub to support ongoing population growth.

I note too that through the City Deal \$20 million has been allocated to address traffic issues affecting Kingborough, including redevelopment of the Kingston bus interchange and park-and-ride facilities to provide a higher volume of passengers in the future. The Government recognises the role of park-and-ride facilities in contributing towards several areas of our Greater Hobart Traffic Solution program, namely improved passenger experience, efficient movement of people and infrastructure investment. Park-and-ride facilities also have the potential to provide the benefit of reducing congestion on the Southern Outlet and Hobart's arterial network more broadly and all the subsidiary benefits that come with that, as well as reducing pressure on parking in the Kingston and Hobart CBD.

I note that this announcement was warmly welcomed by the Mayor of Kingborough, Dean Winter, who described this project as an opportunity to make a big impact on traffic congestion. If we can use the project to promote public transport or even carpooling during peak periods along with investment in park-and-ride infrastructure, we can make a real dent in congestion.

I note that the first phase of planning for the Hobart transit centre is also well underway, which involves identifying the size of the area required and functional needs as well as examining the technical feasibility of an underground facility at lower Elizabeth Street and Franklin Square. Expert consultants with experience in designing transit centres and advising on operational requirements have also been appointed to undertake the initial feasibility work.

It is also good to know that work is underway in planning for the establishment of a cross-river ferry and improvements to Hobart's bus network, along with the fact that the Tasmanian and Australian governments have also committed to the delivery of the new Bridgewater bridge.

It is also important to note that all levels of government can and do play a role and can contribute to managing congestion in Hobart. We need to recognise that three-quarters of morning peak and two-thirds of afternoon peak traffic travel to and from Hobart. For example, the City of Hobart has a key role to play in implementing traffic management solutions through its responsibilities for providing for passenger transport, managing clearways on our streets, parking, pedestrian flow events and construction activities within the Hobart CBD.

It is also important to note that the behaviour of people travelling into the CBD also has significant impact on congestion, so adjusting travel times to avoid peaks, avoiding queuing across intersections, not parking in clearways and no standing zones, as well as proper merging and general courtesy on our road network all ease congestion and make the journey more pleasurable for all.

The Department of State Growth will continue working with the Greater Hobart councils, Metro Tasmania and Infrastructure Tasmania to implement other measures to reduce the volume of traffic during peak periods, such as improvements to public transport to make them more efficient and attractive to Hobart commuters.

I want to make a comment on some other works that are being done in my electorate, or close to my electorate, because it shows the importance of these amendments of this bill today. In the Franklin electorate on the eastern shore there is the East Derwent Highway duplication at Geilston Bay of \$22 million. I note that planning and design work has commenced to address these safety concerns. It will provide better traffic flow as well as safe and appropriate intersections along this section of this very busy highway. That is especially the focus at Geilston Bay between Lindisfarne and the Grasstree Hill roundabout.

As well there is road safety and transport efficiency works with planning investment being done to maintain liveability because of our booming economy and the Government will invest \$4.8 million in planning for key projects that are vital to ensure transport efficiency in and out of the Hobart CBD. In Franklin this includes highway access ramps at Rosny and associated key access projects, which is in the early planning phase, the Rokeby stage 3 early planning phase as well and the Bowen Bridge eastern connector feasibility.

In Richmond Road, Colebrook Main Road, \$24.3 million will be invested there. This Government has developed a master plan for the upgrading of the road between the Tasman Highway and Richmond to improve safety by providing wider lanes for cyclists, junction upgrades, road alignment improvements and sealed layby areas for slow-moving vehicles to pull over. I also note that for the long-awaited Cambridge bypass delivering the Richmond Road to the Acton roundabout; \$12 million has been put aside for that construction work. I know from living out that way that project is very much looked forward to.

Another initiative in the electorate of Franklin is the Channel Highway diversion at Huonville. Since standing for election in 2009 I know that the Huon Valley Council has been very passionate about wanting to have the Channel Highway diverted from the first wooden bridge from the river to connect to the road network midway along the Huonville retail precinct, because it will free up a large wedge of land along the riverfront which could be developed as public open space or as a focal point for festivals and public events. It will definitely transform what could be a huge focal point for the local Huonville community to have that busy highway removed from that area. I have seen trucks coming from Cygnet trying to turn left nearly remove part of the end of the bridge and it is hard for all users to go left or right at that intersection. If that can be improved it would be wonderful for all concerned.



I note also that the Huon Highway has already had upgrades of \$1.5 million invested to address safety concerns and works to address a black spot at Howden are also proposed. We also have the visitor economy roads package where the Hodgman Government is investing \$72 million to improve our iconic Tasmanian tourism roads, the single biggest investment ever in visitor road infrastructure in Tasmania's history. This is part of our commitment to ensure that Tasmania's reputation as a premium destination is protected for locals and visitors alike. This investment will seal gravel roads, build more passing lanes and add new courtesy stopping bays, which are critical for the thousands more driving visitors, campervans and caravans visiting the state.

It is exciting that our visitor economy is booming. Currently we are on track to not only reach but exceed our target of attracting 1.5 million visitors to our state every year by 2020. To do that we need to make sure that our infrastructure is appropriate, particularly our roads, and that it meets the needs and expectations of visitors and locals. This work will improve the experience of the growing numbers of travellers visiting our state as they travel to experience fast-emerging icons, including in the electorate of Franklin at Bruny Island as well as the Huon Valley. On Bruny Island \$8 million over five years has been allocated for further sealing of the Bruny Island main road and other road safety priority works. This funding will also be used to provide assistance to the Kingborough Council to install new waste collection points or toilets in necessary locations.

In the Huon Valley \$12.5 million is being used to seal the popular Hastings Cave Road that leads to the Hastings Cave and thermal springs experience. I know that work commenced last season. Unfortunately, because of the fires, part of it has been delayed but when completed that is going to make a big difference, especially for our visitors because, unfortunately, some rental car companies do not allow hire cars to go on gravel roads. It will be good to get that sealed to make a difference to an area that was tragically affected during the bushfires. There is also \$2 million for priority widening and surface improvement on the Arve Road. These are vital arterial roads to the Huon Valley and to see the attractions in the region and at the same time support local jobs and community access. I look forward to those roads being finished to enhance the visitor experience through safer and more efficient roads.

To conclude, I congratulate the minister and the department for their efforts in keeping our existing road networks safe and for making all these future roads safe as well. Being biased and wearing my Franklin hat, southern Tasmania is a great place to live, work and raise a family, but also for visitors to come and see the many beautiful attractions Tasmania has. We want to keep it that way by investing in infrastructure but also, more importantly, having in place measures in legislation that will help to make it a safer and better experience for all of us.

[12.41 p.m.]

**Mr TUCKER** (Lyons) - Madam Deputy Speaker, I am pleased to speak on this bill today. The state manages 3500 kilometres of roads and highways, many of them in the electorate of Lyons. The matter of ensuring high standards of work of third parties is of particular relevance to property owners in the electorate of Lyons, where many of these state roads and highways traverse.

The purpose of this bill is to allow the Crown to better manage works undertaken on state highways by third parties under the Roads and Jetties Act to deal with incomplete, substandard and informal works. This is critically important from a perspective of road safety and for the amenity of road users, especially our locals and our record numbers of visitors visiting the areas in the state, especially on the east coast of Tasmania.

As a sixth-generation north-east resident, and the only resident representative of this area in the House, I will speak of the outstanding investment the Government is making in road infrastructure across my electorate. The Tasmanian Government funded the development of the Great Eastern Drive Action Plan in 2015 between Orford and St Helens, which has boosted regional tourism on the east coast. The Break O'Day region is one of six councils in Australia that rely heavily on tourism. I have seen this firsthand in my experience on the Break O'Day Council and the reliance of our community on those people coming there and keeping our businesses open. I also think of some of the projects that we have done jointly with the state government to bring tourists to the area that benefit the whole area, such as a sports stadium and also now mountain bike tracks, which will be opening on 22 November. With these projects we need good infrastructure and that is what I am here to talk about.

The Tasmanian Government has committed \$30 million over five years to upgrade the Tasman Highway from the Sideling near Scottsdale through to Orford. The Government has also committed \$4.5 million to extend the Great Eastern Drive along the Binalong Bay Road and this commitment has been very well received by the local community. It will benefit us greatly with the mountain bike tracks ending at Swimcart, so all of these people will be travelling the Binalong Bay Road and it is very important this road is upgraded to a certain standard to accommodate the extra traffic that will be travelling on it.

The Department of State Growth has been working with the local tourism businesses, the East Coast Regional Tourism Organisation, the Break O'Day and Glamorgan-Spring Bay councils and the community to plan and develop the program of work for delivery over the next five years. Upgrades will include overtaking opportunities, passing opportunities and stopping bays, improved safety around popular tourism experiences and shoulder-widening, as I have just mentioned with the mountain bike tracks. The first contract was completed in May 2019 for the following: Cherry Tree Hill, north bound passing lane at Glen Gala. The pull-off and rest area at Four Mile Creek and basic right-turn treatments at Skyline Drive, Freshwater Street, Beaumaris Beach access and Dark Hollow Creek access, which are all along the Scamander area and were of great importance to be upgraded.

The tender for further intersection improvements was advertised in June 2019 and is currently being evaluated. The selection of intersections to be improved was based on road safety considerations. They are the Coles Bay Road intersection, the Basin Creek Road intersection and the Flagstaff Road intersection. The last two intersections are extremely important for the safety of the local Break O'Day community because these two intersections are the two intersections for the Flagstaff mountain bike track area, which will be opened again on 22 November.

Future projects planned for delivery in 2019-20 and beyond include additional overtaking lanes between St Helens and Dianas Basin and straightening of these roads as well as safety improvements of up to 30 sites along the Great Eastern Drive to improve visitor experiences.

Experiences like the Great Eastern Drive will help achieve our target of attracting 1.5 million visitors to Tasmania each year by 2020. How great will that be for Lyons and in particular, Break O'Day and Glamorgan Spring Bay council areas? How great is it to work with the minister on these projects and deliver them to my community?

Finally, we are starting to get back on our feet. In May 2015, the Australian and Tasmanian governments launched the Midland Highway 10 Year Action Plan. As part of the Midland Highway action plan, there are dozens of individual projects where third parties require a permit to undertake

works. These include vehicular access, maintenance, vegetation management, fencing, structures, channelling and stock crossings. This is a commitment of \$500 million over 10 years, the largest ever single investment in the Midland Highway which will result in a much safer highway for all users.

The funding is provided on an 80/20 basis. Using the AusRAP methodology which is an international road safety audit approach, adopted by the combined national automobile associations, to underpin our investment strategy, the objective is to raise the standard of this strategic highway to a minimum three-star AusRAP rating.

Fifteen projects have now been completed since works commenced on the Midland Highway 10-year Action Plan in 2014. Projects currently under construction include St Peters Pass to south of Tunbridge, commenced construction March 2018, \$25 million; Perth Link Roads project, design and construct contract commenced in September 2018, \$92 million. This project is the largest single investment to date within the Midland Highway program and has probably been one of the most talked about parts of the Midland Highway projects.

The St Peters Pass to south of Tunbridge project will continue into early summer of 2019. The large Perth links project will continue construction through to 2020. The remaining yet to be upgraded sections of the Midland Highway are being scoped for delivery as part of the second five-year agreement within the 10-year action plan. Two of these, Spring Hill and Melton Mowbray to Lovely Banks will be issued for tender in August and September 2019 respectively with the remaining sections to follow from 2020 onwards.

As at August 2019, 82 kilometres or 56 per cent of the 146 kilometres of the Midland Highway 10 Year Action Plan is complete, with nine kilometres currently under construction. The St Peters Pass to south of Tunbridge immediately north of York Plains project, will continue construction to summer 2019-20.

The following Midland Highway projects have been completed: south of Kempton, road widening, turning facilities and installation of central flexible safety barriers; north of Spring Hill, road widening and installation of central flexible safety barriers; south of Spring Hill, road widening and installation of central flexible safety barriers; and Mud Walls Road junction upgrade south of Tunbridge, stage one and two curve improvements, south bound overtaking lanes, central flexible safety barriers and safe turning facilities.

Other projects include, the Esk Main Road junction at Conara, with the slow vehicle turnout a very important part coming from the local East Coast area to our main trading centres; the Kings Meadows Connector roundabout; Mangalore to Bagdad stage one, central turning lane and junction upgrades through Bagdad; and the Kempton to Melton Mowbray stage one new overtaking lanes, junction upgrades, central flexible safety barriers and turning facilities; the Kempton to Melton Mowbray stage two new overtaking lanes, junction upgrades and central flexible safety barriers and turning facilities.

In addition, White Lagoon Tunbridge to Mona Vale additional overtaking lanes, junction upgrades, alignment improvement and a central flexible safety barrier and turning facilities; Perth to Breadalbane duplication; Symmons Plains to south of Perth, additional overtaking lanes, junction upgrades alignment improvement and central flexible safety barriers and turning facilities; Epping Forest to Powranna, additional overtaking lanes, junction upgrades, alignment improvement and central flexible safety barriers and turning facilities; Mangalore to Bagdad stage two at Mangalore,

a central turn lane to allow safe access in and out of adjoining properties, widening and sealed junctions with right-turn lanes and sealed shoulders for vehicles to move out of the traffic lanes before turning and the installation of safety barriers; and at York Plains, additional overtaking lanes, junction upgrades and alignment improvement, central flexible safety barriers and turning facilities.

All of these improvements are helping with our local visitor economy that is coming through but also, more importantly, they are helping our local economy in our farming areas, giving them greater flexibility with their transport machinery and also their trucks.

How great is it to see this investment in Lyons? Everyone is talking about this level of investment in Lyons through my district and both the Midland Highway and the Great Eastern Drive are very important, not only to businesses, the freight industry, farmers and town folk but to the increasing number of visitors to our state who see and remember the standard of our state highways.

[12.53 p.m.]

**Mr FERGUSON** (Bass - Minister for Infrastructure and Transport) - Madam Deputy Speaker, I express my appreciation to members of this House for their comments across the board on this legislation. I acknowledge that I have taken a note of the range of questions that have been asked. I can respond to those now and if time beats me I will continue my remarks at a future opportunity.

I particularly acknowledge members who have been able to interpret the legislation from a safety point of view. This is about ensuring that our state road and state highway network is as safe as it ought to be, not just for those property owners and road users who adjoin the highway. I heard throughout the debate something from the second reading speech which has reverberated throughout the whole debate, which is this is about all road users. It is about ensuring our 3000-kilometre road network is safe for all road users. Along the way, we completely respect and understand that access to the state road network is self-evidently important for property owners adjoining the highways and we have their interests at heart so they can have safe access onto the road.

We want to make sure that in this first world country that Tasmania has first world highway connectivity, including to those private properties. We want every access point to be as safe as it ought to be and, in some cases, they are not always as safe as they ought to be. Regarding the powers that would be provided to the minister, I would not expect on a day-to-day basis, that myself or a future minister for Infrastructure would be individually writing those instructions to people. It would be intended that they would be delegated in any event but, nonetheless, the head of power is being provided through this legislation.

I will now turn my attention to the questions raised, including those by Mr O'Byrne and by Ms O'Connor.

In relation to the question about the bill generally, the amendments proposed by this bill arose from the need to address a number of situations where third-party works on the state road network - predominantly the construction of private property accesses - were constructed either without the necessary approvals, or not in accordance with the conditions of approval.

These works compromise the safety of all road users. I am not advised that this legislation emanated from a particular section of road, but nonetheless that is the advice I have been provided. It is more of a historical and current barrier within the current legislation that we seek to resolve.

The department always seeks to reach an agreed position with property owners prior to using the provisions of the legislation, current or future. This includes writing to the property owner explaining the situation, providing an opportunity for the works to be completed properly, or for a permit application to be submitted - even at times retrospectively submitted - where the original works were not approved, which I think responds to Mr O'Byrne's question about how is this going to work on a day-to-day basis.

In most cases, this course of action is sufficient to resolve the issue, because most people, being reasonable, would want to do the right thing, and would want to be seen by the Government to be managing their property access issues safely and appropriately. However, in some cases we do need to have the ability to take more directive action, and so the head of power needs to be provided in our law.

While recourse under the current legislation includes a range of options - including for works to be undertaken by the minister, with costs recovered from the landowner - these options are essentially limited to reinstatement of the road to its original condition. That means the investment in any work undertaken by the landowner to that point is lost as the offending works are removed.

The proposed amendment increases the options available to include completion or rectification of works, retaining the value of the landowner's investment to date. The amendment also formalises the process of providing retrospective approval, which I think was a question from Ms O'Connor. Under the proposed amendment, the department will continue its current administrative practice, seeking to reach an agreed resolution of the issue prior to utilising the provisions of the legislation. During the process, the department provides the landowner with the opportunity to respond, citing any mitigating circumstances or putting forward alternative works or time frames for completion.

These responses are, and will, always be considered before resorting to recourse under the legislation. In extreme cases, the landowner can pursue normal administrative review processes. Again, I think that was a question from Mr O'Byrne around natural justice.

In the case of informal accesses, the department will take action only where it believes the access poses a risk to users of the access, or road users generally. While an illegal access is an illegal access, consideration can be given to the established custom and practice when considering recourse under the legislation. On the day-to-day practical operational implementation of the legislation, that is how our hard-working public servants engage themselves with the public.

The amendment mandates a minimum time period of 60 days be provided in any direction, to complete or remove unapproved or incomplete works, but the minister has discretion to allow a longer period for resolution.

The current legislation allows for a time frame to be prescribed, but does not mandate any minimum period. A minimum period of 60 days is considered reasonable, given that the works required will generally be minor in scope and complexity. Of course, there is discretion in specifying a longer time frame for complex works, or where weather prevents immediate resolution.

The member for Clark, Ms O'Connor, also asked if these provisions applied to contractors undertaking works for the department as part of the capital works program. The answer to that question is no, as contractual provisions already cover situations where a contractor fails to meet its contractual obligations. Contractors are obliged to remedy any defective works identified by the contract superintendent, within time frames specified by the superintendent. Work contracts

include contract security provided by the contractor in the form of the bank guarantee in favour of the principal or retention of contract payments, which the principal can draw on if required to step in and complete works.

Given the clock, I will continue my remarks at a later time. They will include responding specifically to the questions that have been asked of me in relation to the Melton Mowbray connection, noting that it is currently under review by the Coroner in respect to the recent very sad fatality. I just wanted to say that before the bell.

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

## **MOTION**

### **Strategic Growth Plan for Tasmanian Forests**

[2.31 p.m.]

**Mrs RYLAH** (Braddon) - Madam Speaker, I move -

That the House -

- (1) Supports the Hodgman majority Liberal Government's Strategic Growth Plan for Tasmanian Forests, Fine Timber and Wood Fibre.
- (2) Notes -
  - (a) our forest growth plan is built on the pillars of resource security, financial sustainability, job security, research and innovation, and a stronger role for the private sector;
  - (b) that through the positive actions of the Hodgman Liberal Government we have seen a 70 per cent increase in the volume of wood fibre delivered from the State's sustainable production forests;
  - (c) that the Labor Party's revised State Platform commits Tasmanian Labor to support 'the 2019 policy developed by federal Labor to grow Tasmania's forest industry';
  - (d) that Paragraph 73 of Chapter 4 of Labor's National Platform is explicit: 'Labor will continue to support the implementation of the Tasmanian Forestry Agreement (TFA) as a future pathway for the forest industry in Tasmania. This includes providing resource security for the iconic special timbers industry, under agreed terms. Labor supports this as a broad industry plan to achieve the outcomes intended from the TFA';
  - (e) that the Labor-Greens Tasmanian forestry deal resulted in the loss of more than 4000 jobs - two out of every three jobs in the industry;

(f) that the Leader of the Opposition, Hon. Rebecca White MP told the ABC on 20 March 2017 that she has 'no regrets' about this disastrous forestry deal; and

(g) that the Greens policy is to close Tasmania's native forestry industry.

(3) Calls on Labor to abandon its plan for a return to the dark days of the TFA.

Madam Speaker, a vote is required today.

The Hodgman Liberal Government is building a stronger Tasmania and since we came to government in 2014, our economy is the fastest growing overall in the nation. Our disciplined management has delivered the best business conditions in the country which drives economic growth and helps to retain jobs, create new jobs and opportunity for Tasmanians. A key aspect of this growth and confidence has been the renewal of our forest industry.

Today, I speak in support of the Hodgman Liberal Government's Strategic Growth Plan for the Tasmanian Forests, Fine Timber and Wood Fibre, backed by \$4 million from the state budget in investment.

I recently had the privilege of representing the Minister for Resources at the 2019 Tasmanian Timber Awards. This inaugural event brought together more than 300 people from all sectors across the forests, fine timber and wood fibre industry, to celebrate excellence and best practice in the Tasmanian timber industry. Thirteen awards were presented from areas such as innovation, environmental excellence and regional and community development, recognising experts in their field. Individuals and organisations were awarded for excellence in timber processing, environmental management, forest growing and management, harvesting, skill development and creating unique innovations in any area of the Tasmanian timber industry. The judges ranged from environmental scientists to sawmillers to policy makers.

The Tasmanian forest and timber industry is a hardworking and proud industry, proud of its world-class products and services and proud of its achievements in growing as an industry, an industry that was almost destroyed by the Labor-Greens Tasmanian Forest Agreement.

**Ms O'CONNOR** - That is a lie. Point of order, Madam Speaker. The member for Braddon is not telling the truth in here. She knows full well that the forestry industry came to government on its knees in 2009-10 begging for help because the industry was already in decline.

**Madam SPEAKER** - Thank you, that is not a point of order, but let Mrs Rylah proceed.

**Mrs RYLAH** - That is why one of the first actions the Hodgman Liberal Government took after the 2014 state election was to rip up the job destroying Tasmanian Forest Agreement, a deal which locked-up the forests and destroyed two out of every three jobs in that industry.

Unlike Labor and the Greens, the Hodgman Government stands by our timber industry. We recognise that working forests create jobs and that the forest industry plays an important part in Tasmania's regional economies. Every reforestation coup cements a strong future for jobs and careers in our regions and reforestation is, and has been, a key focus of our sustainable forests. Furthermore, we listen to and support our forest industry as part of the strategic growth plan for the Tasmanian forests, fine timber and wood fibre industry.

In 2018, the Hodgman Liberal Government provided \$100 000 in seed grant funding to establish the Tasmanian Forests and Forest Products Network to represent the shared views, aspirations and expectations of those who have a stake in the future of a sustainable Tasmanian forest, fine timber and wood fibre industry. The network has a wide membership base and run a range of communication activities. The 2019 Tasmanian Timber Awards event, that I just mentioned, was the culmination of this work so far: an excellent night, an enthusiastic audience and strong support for their sustainable and growing industry.

The Hodgman Government has a strong mandate, which was renewed only last year, to support jobs in the forest industry. Our growth strategy is built on four pillars - resource security, financial sustainability, job security and a strong role for the private sector. This has freed up the industry to deliver a 70 per cent increase in wood production since the dark days of the Labor-Greens coalition.

We do not want to go back but that is exactly what Labor and the Greens are planning if they ever get the chance. The Greens make no apology and no effort to hide their agenda. They want to finish the job they started and shut down the native forest completely. They could not hide the impact of the disastrous backward step if they tried.

The Schirmer report shows that the forest industry supports more than 5700 jobs across the state, many of them in regional areas. Schirmer also shows that the native forest sector supports more than 40 per cent of those direct jobs, more than either the hardwood or the softwood plantation sector.

**Dr Broad** - You might want to read all of Jacki Schirmer's work. Read some of the stuff from pre-2010 about the collapse of managed investment schemes.

**Madam SPEAKER** - Order, please. Through the Chair.

**Mrs RYLAH** - That means shutting down native forestry would shut down more than 1250 direct jobs and if the same ratio applies to indirect employment the toll would rise to more than 2300 jobs. What a disastrous, destructive policy position for a political party to take. No wonder they lost seats in Bass, Braddon and Lyons and no wonder their Braddon vote has collapsed to less than 5 per cent. Surprise, surprise. People overwhelmingly do not vote themselves out of a job or opportunities: jobs not only for themselves but for their children and their grandchildren. Forestry families and communities have a strong intergenerational connectiveness.

That brings us to the Labor side of the coalition of chaos. We know that after getting a drubbing by voters at successive state and federal elections, Labor is trying to change its spots. The only problem is that the attempted cover-up shows them up as a bunch of hypocrites. The Leader of the Opposition is singing from a tired old ALP hymn book. She claims that Labor has learned its lessons with the Greens and we will not make the same mistake ever again. The only problem with that is that Labor has trotted out the same weasel words decade after decade and always finds a way to rekindle the relationship when there is a chance to get back into the government benches. It happened with Michael Field, strike one, and it happened again with David Bartlett, strike two. Oh, but it will not happen again, next time -

**Members** interjecting.

**Madam SPEAKER** - Can we have some discipline please?



**Mrs RYLAH** - Tasmanians know Labor cannot be trusted. The current attempts to show a shift to a more pro-industry position cannot hide the reality.

**Dr Broad** - Oh yes, Tony Rundle never happened. What happened to Ray Groom? Did he step aside or what happened then?

**Madam SPEAKER** - Order, Dr Broad. I am going to have to ask you to leave if you keep this up.

**Mrs RYLAH** - As usual the ALP is leaving itself open to plenty of wriggle room to implement its disastrous forestry lock-ups with the Greens. Tasmanians will not be fooled by the snow job. According to the latest state ALP platform, the White team would have people believe, 'Labor strongly supports Tasmania's sustainable native forest industry and the thousands of regional jobs across the state that depend on it'.

Labor also believes Tasmania now has the appropriate balance between timber production and conservation of its forests. Labor does not support the establishment of any new reserves such as the Tarkine National Park, Tarkine World Heritage Area, or the transfer of any other timber production forests into reserves. However, hidden in between is the real intent. Quote -

Tasmanian Labor supports the 2019 policy developed by federal Labor to grow Tasmania's forest industry.

Chapter 4 of Labor's national policy platform says at paragraph 73, quote -

Labor will continue to support the implementation of the conditions of the Tasmanian Forestry Agreement (TFA) as a future pathway for the forest industry in Tasmania. This includes providing resource security for the iconic special timbers industry, under agreed terms. Labor supports this as a broad industry plan to achieve the outcomes intended from the TFA.

In other words, Labor is still joined at the hip with the Greens, and remains committed to the infamous forestry lock-up that Tasmanians have rejected in election after election. That is a threat that Tasmanians, and particularly the people of Braddon, cannot afford.

About 356 000 hectares of forest were saved from permanent lock-up by the Hodgman Liberal Government when the so-called 'peace deal' was ripped up. By recommitting to the TFA, Labor appears to be committing to putting these 356 000 hectares into permanent reserves, so locking it up for good. As Senator Duniam said on 1 May, 'The so-called peace deal is dead, buried and cremated, yet it appears Labor now want to exhume it'.

**Dr Broad** - It was Tony Abbott who said that, by the way.

**Madam SPEAKER** - Order, please.

**Mrs RYLAH** - We also know where the Leader of the Opposition stands on the latest deal. She told the ABC on 20 March 2017 she has 'no regrets'. To rub the message in, the Opposition forestry spokesman, the member for Braddon, Dr Broad, has confirmed he is also a supporter. In fact, he was bragging about it. He was quoted in *The Advocate* on 1 May last year saying that the deal 'prevented an industry collapse' and its funding 'underpinned an economic transition that is

now driving the North-West economy'. These comments confirm that after years of strong growth under the Hodgman Liberal Government, the forest industry is once again under threat from the Labor-Greens coalition of chaos.

We know what the Greens would want from any deal: the lock-up of another 10 per cent of Tasmania through their Tarkine National Park and the extension of the World Heritage Area. This is a frightening prospect.

We know what happened to forestry jobs in Braddon under the disastrous forestry deal. Almost one-third of forestry jobs lost in Circular Head, 44 per cent of forestry jobs lost on the West Coast. At Burnie, the losses were 70 per cent. At Devonport and the Central Coast, almost four out of five forestry jobs disappeared. Unbelievably, it was even worse at Waratah-Wynyard, and worse still at Latrobe, where the forestry jobs losses peaked at just under 95 per cent. When you add it all up, more than 1250 forestry jobs in Braddon were trashed under the Labor-Greens deal. An attrition rate of more than 17 per cent.

**Ms O'Connor** - No, it was actually that Gunns collapsed, because its model was unsustainable.

**Members** interjecting.

**Madam SPEAKER** - Order, please.

**Mrs RYLAH** - Under the supportive forestry policies of the Hodgman Liberal Government, there has been a dramatic turnaround. People can see for themselves, the increase in log trucks on the road, and the extent of forestry exports on the Burnie port. Britton Timbers recently announced their acquisition of specialty timbers and special veneers in Corinna Timbers, a veneer and panel processing facility in Somerset, aligning Britton's ongoing strategies to produce quality decorative timber and timber products for the furniture and joinery industries.

Britton Timbers is a family owned company which has operated for 112 years, with Tasmanian oak and blackwood timber processing at Smithton, and has timber distribution centres in Melbourne, Sydney and Brisbane, taking our Tasmanian brand to the mainland. The acquisition means that Britton Timbers will now employ more than 180 people in permanent positions, of which 105 are in regional Tasmania. They will be integrated and diversify its product offering - a very positive step for Britton Timbers.

We have also seen renewed commitment in investment, including the proposed \$190 million Hermal project to create Australia's biggest plantation hardwood sawmill, and the first plantation hardwood cross-laminated timber plant. Some exciting things are happening in their Wynyard pilot plant.

Why on earth would anyone want to go back? The reality is that in successive elections Tasmanians have shown they do not want a bar of this nonsense, and the people of Braddon even less. They will not settle for weasel words. Labor claims to have learnt its lessons. This motion offers a chance for them to back up that claim. Will they support the motion, and support the resource security that underpins the continued growth in the forest industry? Or will they oppose the motion, and once again vote with their soul mates the Greens, to go back to the lock-ups and disasters that were a hallmark of the so-called peace deal. There is nowhere to hide. They cannot sit on the fence. What is it going to be?

[2.47 p.m.]

**Dr BROAD** (Braddon) - Madam Speaker, oh my goodness, what was that? You would have thought the member who just resumed her seat might have learnt some lessons from the last election. Yes indeed, that perpetuating complete lies is not a pathway to being elected into parliament, and we certainly saw that at the last election.

The member who has just resumed her seat talked about hypocrisy, talked about Labor being hypocrites and so on. Talk about hypocrisy herself, because it is the Liberal Government that is locking up forests. In late June, the newly minted, federal Liberal environment minister and self-confessed environmentalist, Sussan Ley, announced on 28 June 2019 that the state's forests and woodlands dominated by black gum, or Brooker's gum, would be listed as critically endangered under Australia's Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act. In effect, this means that 17 000 hectares of forest found on Tasmania's north and east coast have been added to this list, and are therefore locked up. We know that the minister must not have been terribly proud of this, because it was dropped at the 'take out the trash time' on a Friday afternoon. We all know that when ministers want to make a contentious decision, or something they want to slip through to the keeper, the time they do that is Friday afternoon, hoping with all hope that it just slips on past and nobody notices.

I am assuming this listing is something that has been bandied around federal parliament for some years, and has met a lot of resistance over the years. It would not have surprised me if this particular instrument was waved underneath the minister's nose when she first sat down at her desk and signed it without too much due diligence. Here, sign this minister. In effect, it targets only Tasmania, so in their explanatory statement it is only Tasmania that is targeted under this forest lock-up. Dropped at 'take out the trash' time.

It was met with a lot of resistance from the state's peak farmers group, the Tasmanian Farmers and Graziers Association. In the *Mercury* on 4 July 2019, it was noted that the decision to list two Tasmanian tree species as critically endangered was 'appalling and ill-informed, the state's peak farmers group says'. Federal Environment minister Sussan Ley last week listed Tasmania forests and woodlands dominated by black gum or Brooker's gum as critically endangered communities.

In Friday's edition of *Tasmanian Country*, TFGA CEO Peter Skillern said the listing would come at a big cost to farmers.

What it will effectively do is lock up further private farmland to make it extremely difficult to undertake on any on-farm infrastructure improvements where these species exist. The reality is that these species are not endangered and the distribution of both is widespread throughout Australia. However in Tasmania these two eucalypt species often reside in the very gullies that are most suited to on-farm water storage.

I hope the member for Lyons is taking notice of this; it might affect his property.

With this listing, having access to these vital areas will now be very difficult. Mr Skillern said the decision has been taken with only belated consultation with farmers and with no suggestion that they would be compensated for potential loss of income. 'Once again, farmers are expected to bear the real economic and social cost of these decisions', he said.

There is never any suggestion that farmers should be compensated for these imposts but I am sure that if the Federal Government started restricting the use of backyards in the leafy suburbs of Hobart, Launceston or mainland cities, we would hear the call loud and clear.

This Liberal Party decision was warmly welcomed by campaign manager for the Wilderness Society of Tasmania, Tom Allen, who said the listing would affect the Prosser dam. What does Mr Tucker think about that? Mr Allen is quoted as saying that the proposed Prosser dam would affect 20 hectares of black gum forest and presumably this project can now no longer precede. He said:

Given this new listing, the Wilderness Society believes it would be scandalous if the proposed dam - with its flooding of swift parrot habitat and now listed as critically endangered black gum forest - went ahead.

Mr Tucker might want to reconsider his options. Fundamentally what we need the new environment minister, Sussan Ley, to do is put in place new environment laws that actually work and new environmental protection agencies to turn around the decline in nature in Australia. We have this Liberal Party decision to lock up forests warmly welcomed by not only the Wilderness Society but, I might also add, the Tasmanian Conservation Trust. This decision has locked up 17 000 hectares of forest and has smashed a whole number of potential dam sites.

Today I had a look at the LIST map. The member for Lyons, Mr Tucker, might be particularly interested in this because it impacts his electorate and especially the east coast, the north-east and, for the member for Bass who is in the room, the Tamar Valley. It has locked up many dam sites and will prevent farmers taking actions like clearing forests to extend pivot circles so you can get an entire circle. That will be banned now if it contains any of these forests. It will also mean that you will not be able to clear regrowth. The member for Lyons, Mr Tucker, might want to check out his own property to see if he is impacted because he probably is.

This green tape that the federal Liberal Government has put in place in the dead of night - slipped it out on a Friday afternoon - has been welcomed by the Tasmanian Conservation Trust and the Wilderness Society and yet I do not hear a peep out of the members for Lyons and Bass about this forest lock-up.

I had a look at Tasmap. I have had a bit of experience using Tasmap and you can look up proposed dams and also use the forest layer that contains these two species of Brooker's gum and swamp gum. It is not only the Prosser dam that could be impacted by this; there is a number of proposed dams on rivers in the north-east of Tasmania and the east coast, including a proposed commercial dam near Bicheno, which I can only assume is for a tourism development. You can see quite clearly from the map that the pondage area of this proposed dam impacts the *Eucalyptus ovata*, the swamp gum, so it is going to be very difficult, if not impossible, for this commercial dam for a tourism development to go ahead. I do not hear boo from the member for Lyons about this. That is a significant impact on your community, Mr Tucker. This is a decision from the federal Liberal Government to lock up forests. It is going to have real-world impacts.

I also notice there were farm dams near Royal George, near Avoca and near Bridport. These are proposed dams that are going to be virtually impossible to build because of this decision by a federal Liberal Government to lock up these forests and slip the notice out on a Friday afternoon. It is an absolute disgrace. It will also severely limit any irrigation development, any building of

dams in the Tamar Valley, which the member for Bass, Ms Courtney, might want to have a look at, because it seems there is a large number of creeks and gullies that will be significantly impacted. The only option for these members of the community would be to sign up to Tas Irrigation water if indeed they come to their area, because there is no other option. This decision by the federal Liberal environment minister to lock up forests will prevent these dam proposals from going ahead. It is an absolute disgrace.

The TFGA is off their bikes about this and I have not heard boo from any of the Liberal members who are so keen to point the finger and talk about the forest industry. This forest lock-up is going to impact farmers. What does Mr Tucker think about that now? There is no comment; he is just looking at his shoes. It is very ordinary.

Many regional economies will be impacted by this lock-up. It has the potential to smash job-creating industries with the stroke of a pen. On the east coast, if you want to prepare a vineyard development or you want to start cropping or put in pivot circles and so on, this decision by Sussan Ley at the stroke of midnight will have a significant impact on your business.

I would be interested to hear if Mr Tucker has had any people come to his office and complain about it. Maybe the decision is too new and they will only find out when they go to start building the dams and find out that the dam they have proposed and have approvals for will no longer be able to go ahead. Has Mr Tucker had any of these? Maybe he is just trying to duck and cover on this decision too.

There is no doubt that this motion as it stands is arrant nonsense. We know the Liberal Government is very happy to perpetuate complete lies. We have heard them in this place a number of times talk about the Triabunna woodchip mill as if it was Labor that sold the mill, knowing full well it was Gunns, in a desperate attempt to remain solvent, who sold it to two individuals with nothing to do with the government. Indeed, if the Liberals and their 'let the market decide' approach suddenly has a problem with the sale of the Triabunna woodchip mill, they cannot look at the Labor Party. It was a commercial decision. They even had a pretend inquiry into it to determine that it was actually a private transaction with nothing to do with the government, yet they come in here and try to point the finger and blame it on Labor.

They also try to blame things on Labor like the collapse of managed investment schemes. That is right. Eric Abetz's baby project of managed investment schemes collapsed and took mum-and-dad investors with it. That was very damaging to all regional communities and a number of people who invested in managed investment schemes. I do not hear any tears or guilt about the collapse of managed investment schemes due to Mr Abetz's taking down mum-and-dad investors and trashing their retirement investments. They never talk about that.

They do not talk about the collapse of Great Southern. They do not talk about the collapse of Timber Corp. They do not talk about the collapse of Forestry Enterprises Australia and they do not talk about Gunns. Gunns went out of business. It was not government that sent Gunns out of business; it was Gunns themselves and the collapse of managed investment schemes.

**Ms O'Connor** - It was government policy that sent Gunns out of business, absolutely.

**Dr BROAD** - We can talk about this -

**Ms O'Connor** - It was government policy. Before we got in Gunns was on its knees.

**Dr BROAD** - The member who resumed her seat, Mrs Rylah, also talked about the industry and projects like Brittons. Britton Timbers taking over Specialty Veneers at Somerset is a fantastic thing. Their value-adding proposal there is magnificent and that is what the resurgence in the Tasmanian industry is based on. It is based on value-adding. It is based on certification and largely based on plantations.

The Hermal Group has said time and time again that they are not interested in native forest. They want to create a product based on two things: plantations and certification. For that to happen the last thing that they need is the Liberals coming into this place trying to ignite more conflict. That is what this whole motion is about. It is about a wedge and trying to create conflict which ironically will drive these businesses out of town. We give 100 per cent support to the Hermal Group, just like we support Britton Timbers. Just like we support Hydrowood. Brittons and Hydrowood, where did they get money from? From the forest restructure package. Hydrowood: that magnificent project that I have heard members of this place and especially members of Government, very happy to praise the awards they have won and they are a magnificent company. They have won a number of awards. How did Hydrowood get going? We do not hear anybody from the Government talking about how Hydrowood got going. Where did their money come from? Where did that seed money come from? It came from the forest restructure package.

It is just so typical of the Liberal Government here. They will claim credit for everybody's work. They are happy to cut the ribbons but they will not acknowledge where this actually came from. They will not acknowledge the impact of the high Australian dollar. They will not talk about the impact of the changes in the Japanese market. They will not talk about the massive impact that changes to the forest industry have had. Instead they try to point fingers.

When there is an opportunity to stand up and make a difference, to make something happen, to make a change that they should no doubt be doing. What do we hear? We hear crickets from that side. No action at all. That is why this arrant nonsense of a motion here needs to be amended. This motion needs to be amended.

Madam Speaker, I move the following amendment -

Omit all words after 'House' and insert instead -

- (1) Notes the Hodgman Liberal Government's actions on forestry do not match their words.
- (2) Notes the State Liberals have broken their promise not to support forest lock-ups by failing to stand up against the federal Liberal Government's decision to lock-up forests containing Black Gum and Brooker's Gum.
- (3) Calls on the Federal Liberal Government to reverse its decision to lock-up forests containing Black Gum and Brooker's Gum.
- (4) Notes the decision was made without consultation with Tasmanian farmers and will tie the construction of new dams in the north and north-east coast up in red tape.

Here now we have an opportunity for the Liberal members opposite to vote on a point of action that they can take to unlock forests so that they can do something. They can stand up for their

constituents, they can take note of the words of the TFGA that highlight how this appalling and ill-informed decision can be reversed by the environment minister, Sussan Ley. Coming into parliament, Sussan Ley has said - and I am probably paraphrasing a bit - but she called herself an environmentalist. She will be an environmentalist as the federal environment minister and she will have that environment notion in her mind when she makes decisions and she will take these decisions to Cabinet. She will have the ability to do things like this and she will argue that point around the Cabinet table with her federal Liberal and National Party colleagues. I am not exactly sure how this would have gone down if it was in a Nationals area, if this was not just something that could be used only to target Tasmania. That is the thing about this decision. This decision only targets Tasmania.

It does not recognise the impact of that decision either in the instrument and the explanatory statement so it is critically endangered and then we are going to lock it up and that will impact all sorts of irrigation development on the East Coast and the north-east.

Over a number of years, there has been a lot of debate previously, especially in the north-east around Tomahawk, Bridport, et cetera, because a lot of the creek lines and a lot of the dam sites contain these two communities of black gum and Brooker's gum. What that means is that it is halting any sort of dam development. Now that is significantly holding up development in those areas. There is huge potential in the north-east for a massive expansion in industry, like the dairy industry. This decision impacts things like viticulture developments and if you have a look at the map, in the Tamar Valley especially, you can see huge areas of *Eucalyptus ovata* - black gum - which highlights that there is a lot of it along all the creek lines in the Tamar Valley -

**Ms O'CONNOR** - Point of order, Madam Speaker, I think the alleged doctor has misled the House. Just because you can see a lot of trees does not mean the species has a healthy population. In fact, that is exactly the line that the former premier, Paul Lennon, used in order to justify ongoing old growth logging, that there sure are a lot of trees out there. I ask Dr Broad to clarify his statement.

**Madam SPEAKER** - Thank you, it is not a point of order, but you have been heard.

**Dr BROAD** - We are a bit of a glass jaw over there. The Liberals actually have a chance now to stand up and take note of their own words. They can stand up for their own constituents on the East Coast and the north-east and try to reverse this decision -

**Ms Courtney** - You can stand up for your communities.

**Dr BROAD** - Stand up for my communities? This is a decision of a federal Liberal minister. This has been bandied around for at least 10 years and it is only on the Friday afternoon on 28 June that this one slipped out, passed through the keeper, and hoped that nobody would notice. Well, people did notice and people are talking about the impact of it.

Mr Tucker is over there grinning. Maybe he should look at his own property and see if there are creek lines that contain these two forest types because it may impact him. He might not be able to build a dam because of this green tape that the federal Liberal government has foisted onto us.

This is a call to action; the Government needs to take note to try to reverse this decision. Instead of just sitting there and pretending that nothing is happening, they should actually do something. That is why it is the first point: it notes that the Liberal Government's actions on forestry do not match their words. They are involved in forest lockups. They are letting this slide through to the

keeper. They are not arguing against it and they need to because if they do not, then what we have is a situation where developments are blocked and we are going to have issues trying to develop regional jobs in these communities on the East Coast.

Tourism developments - I was shocked to see that tourism development near Bicheno, an 8 megalitre dam, a commercial dam, so I am assuming that it was for a tourism development. It has *Eucalyptus ovata* in the pondage area. How is that going to go ahead? Is it one of these situations where the Government just hopes that no-one notices? Just like they did with their farm tax. They slipped it into the Budget, that nice little one line in the Budget, hoping that no-one would notice. We alerted people to this issue that, in their wisdom, the Government was going to tax investment on farms. I have not heard Mr Tucker, the member for Lyons, talk about that one. He was happy to duck for cover on that one.

It was only when the businesses impacted started ringing the minister and telling the Treasurer, especially, that all the things I was saying were true, that they managed to do a spectacular backflip, and a welcome one. Is this one of those decisions as well? They are just hoping that people will not notice until they try to develop their dam, until what they are trying to do to develop their business, develop their commercial enterprise, clear a Centre Pivot circle and they will find themselves in court. Is that when people are going to start to notice? Is that when Mr Tucker, the member for Lyons, is going to take note and try to do something? It may be too late.

There is an opportunity to communicate with the federal minister and ask what is going on here. They have power and the ability to try to not just talk the talk but walk the walk. They are very happy to cut ribbons and take credit for everyone else's work, just like Hydro would, like the investment in Brittons; all that restructure money.

Who built the Dial Blythe Irrigation Scheme? Where did the money for the Dial Blythe Irrigation Scheme come from? You do not want to acknowledge where that money came from because it came as part of the forest restructure package. Caterpillar got money out of it. There is a whole bunch of companies doing really well out of that money that was invested back into the community that was part of the whole restructure project.

Things were pretty dire. The industry had collapsed. Management investment schemes had collapsed and what did we have? We had the Liberals come into government and they have done virtually nothing. They are happy to cut the ribbons and take credit for everyone else's work but they are not happy to do the hard work. Is Mrs Rylah going to agree to this motion that she stands up for state farmers and so on?

**Ms O'Connor** - You do realise it is the scientific assessment that these plants are critically endangered?

**Dr BROAD** - It had been bandied around for a number of years and it sat on numerous environment ministers' desks.

**Dr Woodruff** - Bandied around?

**Dr BROAD** - It had been discussed for a number of years. It seems like maybe the federal minister, in signing the approval for the Adani mine - no reaction; I was waiting for that but it did not come - decided to trade off Tasmania. This was all done at around the same time. This decision



only targets Tasmania. It is a forest lock-up in every way and that is why we need to try to encourage, through this motion, the Liberal Government to match their actions with their words.

This motion is worthy of support and I urge the members, especially the member for Lyons, Mr Tucker, to support this and stand up for his constituents, and Ms Courtney, because in the Tamar Valley and the north-east, this will have a massive impact on them. When they realise that this is a federal Liberal Government decision that is going to significantly impact their businesses and their ability to build dams, to clear pivot sites and so on -

**Ms Courtney** - You're creating fear again. All you know how to do is undermine confidence in business and industry.

**Dr BROAD** - This is coming from the TFGA. I have directly quoted the TFGA here so you can take note of their words and not necessarily mine. If you do not believe me, fair enough, but what about Peter Skillern from the TFGA? He was saying this listing would come at a big cost to farmers. Member for Bass, Ms Courtney, these are your constituents. Member for Lyons, Mr Tucker, these are your constituents. The Prosser dam is going to be blocked.

This Liberal Government policy to lock up forests was warmly welcomed by the Tasmanian Conservation Trust and the Wilderness Society and damned by the Tasmania Farmers and Graziers Association. Which side of this argument do the Liberals want to be on? Do they want to stand for these lock-ups and the hypocrisy of their own position, or are they going to support this amendment so they have to live up to their rhetoric and do something instead of biding their time and waiting for everyone else to do the hard work?

[3.13 p.m.]

**Ms O'CONNOR** (Clark - Leader of the Greens) - Madam Speaker, if you want a clear indication of how far Labor has fallen, that speech, delivered by so-called Dr Broad, a scientist allegedly, tells us everything we need to know -

**Dr BROAD** - Point of order, Madam Speaker. I draw offence to the word 'allegedly'.

**Ms O'CONNOR** - I will make my argument. If Dr Broad takes offence because I have called his scientific credibility into question, I am sorry about that -

**Dr Broad** - No, you haven't. You have called the University of Tasmania into question.

**Ms O'CONNOR** - but Dr Broad has made one of the most unscientific contributions that this parliament has ever heard, and that sure is saying something.

It is important, although you would not have known that from Dr Broad's contribution, mangled as it was, to understand that this was an assessment undertaken by a body of scientific advisers to the federal government and the assessment on the evidence is that the black gum and the Brooker's gum are critically endangered trees. What a disgrace when you have a scientist in this place make the statement that there sure are a lot of ovata out there so the species must be fine.

**Dr Broad** - I did not say that.

**Ms O'CONNOR** - You basically said that. You knew how unscientific that sounded because of the look on your face. I know you knew that because you smiled immediately.

I listened to this debate on forestry from both the member for Braddon and her colleague, the member for Braddon and, to be honest, I despaired for those kids who came in here to listen to the climate emergency debate and were stricken and in tears downstairs. I despair for the children who will be on the lawns of this parliament on 20 September because they are crying out for leadership, guts and the capacity of their leaders to accept and understand the science on climate.

Australia has one of the highest rates of deforestation in the world and Queensland particularly is deforesting apace.

**Dr Broad** - What about Tasmania?

**Ms O'CONNOR** - What about Tasmania, asks scientist Dr Broad. I cannot remember the exact figures but Tasmania now has less than 10 per cent of the original forest cover on this island.

**Dr Broad** - Rubbish - 10 per cent? You're kidding yourself.

**Madam SPEAKER** - Order, Dr Broad.

**Ms O'CONNOR** - Vegetation communities are fragmented across the state and if you Google Earth this island, it looks like a crocheted blanket, so fragmented are the vegetation communities and the forest cover here.

This scientist, Dr Broad, makes that kind of outrageously luddite-like contribution to a debate in here three weeks after the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change released its report *Climate Change and Land*. That report is really clear about the impact of deforestation on global heating and the potential for forest protection and reforestation to mitigate global heating. I am certain Dr Broad has not read even the summary for policy makers. Let the *Hansard* note that while Dr Broad is sitting here he made no response to that statement. Did you read the report?

**Dr Broad** - No.

**Ms O'CONNOR** - No. Thank you very much. Let me read some bits to you, Dr Broad.

**Dr Broad** - Thanks for that. What about the substance of the motion?

**Ms O'CONNOR** - What do you mean the substance of the motion? It is utter crap.

**Madam SPEAKER** - Order.

**Ms O'CONNOR** - As was Mrs Rylah's. A race to the bottom. A pox on both your houses on behalf of my children and every child who strikes for climate. When you are old and not in this place, I hope you go back and read the garbage you just spouted out then and feel the deepest shame as you crank up the air conditioner because global temperatures have risen two to three degrees by then. Dr Broad is laughing at that statement.

**Dr Broad** - Your ridiculous hyperbole is what I'm laughing at. You just talk about it.

**Ms O'CONNOR** - This is from the IPCC's report:

The likelihood, intensity and duration of many extreme events can be significantly modified by changes in land conditions, including heat-related events such as heatwaves ... and heavy precipitation events ...

Changes in forest cover for example from afforestation, reforestation and deforestation, directly affect regional surface temperature through exchanges of water and energy.

Dr Broad, I note that you are not listening to my reading of the IPCC report on climate change and land. Here is another part of the summary for policy makers.

Climate change creates additional stresses on land, exacerbating existing risks to livelihoods, biodiversity, human and ecosystem health, infrastructure, and food systems. ... Increasing impacts on land are projected under all future GHG emission scenarios.

Future land use depends, in part, on the desired climate outcome and the portfolio of response options deployed ... All assessed modelled pathways that limit warming to 1.5 degrees C or well below 2 degrees C require land-based mitigation and land-use change, with most including different combinations of reforestation, afforestation, reduced deforestation ...

That is the science. What the science is telling us - at a time when the Amazon is ablaze, as well as the forests of Siberia, as well as the forests of Africa -

**Dr Broad** - What about renewable energy? Should we talk about that, or are you avoiding that as a topic?

**Madam SPEAKER** - Order.

**Ms O'CONNOR** - is that we must keep the carbon that is in the ground in the ground, and we must reforest in order to draw more carbon down out of the atmosphere.

Madam Speaker, you do not get much good news in this space, but I found something online last night which is a story of 20 African nations that run across the south of the Sahara Desert. They have agreed, they are committed, to planting a 7000 kilometre green wall, from coast to coast in order to stop the spread of the Sahara and increased desertification. This IPCC report makes it clear that this is part of the answer. Reforesting on a massive scale is part of the answer to global heating, and it is something that we must do.

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**Member Suspended**  
**Member for Braddon - Dr Broad**

**Dr Broad** - You have to recognise how well Tasmania has done. We are not sub-Saharan Africa. We are not Solomon Islands. We are not New Guinea.

**Madam SPEAKER** - Order, Dr Broad, I have given you so many hints to be quiet, and you are not getting them, so maybe you would like to take a coffee break for 30 minutes. I will ask you to leave and think yourself lucky it is not 24 hours.

**Dr Broad withdrew.**

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**Ms O'CONNOR** - Just on his way out, hopefully he is listening, here is another part from the report.

Sustainable land management, including sustainable forest management, can prevent and reduce land degradation, maintain land productivity, and sometimes reverse the adverse impacts of climate change ...

We will not be supporting either the amendment, or the ridiculous motion that was put forward by Mrs Rylah, which is full of falsehoods. A number of falsehoods that are repeated by Mrs Rylah and indeed her colleagues on frequent occasions is that the forest industry collapsed between 2010 and 2014. That is completely untrue. The data is there. From 2006, when you have a look at publicly available data, the forest industry was shedding about 300 contractors a year. The reason industry leaders like Terry Edwards and Barry Chipman at the time came to the government and said, could you please provide us a pathway through to sustainability of the industry was because the industry, was on its knees.

One of the reasons the industry was on its knees is because Gunns was collapsing, and Gunns was collapsing long before the Labor-Greens government came to office. The reason the contractors were being shed was because Gunns was falling over. The reason that Gunns was falling over is that it was logging old-growth forests that increasingly the global market saw as being on the nose, because customers wanted timber that was genuinely sustainably harvested.

Gunns collapsed because it was operating on an unsustainable business model. The only reason it survived as long as it did was because of the massive subsidies that the people of Tasmania and the taxpayers of Australia were pouring in to prop up Gunns Ltd. In any industry, in any business sector, if you have a monoculture, you have no safety net for survival. All of Forestry Tasmania and the policies of successive government policies, Labor and Liberal, was to focus subsidies and policy on maintaining Gunns because it was the primary operator in native forest logging in Tasmania and when Gunns went down Forestry Tasmania went down.

I am not going to stand here and listen to lies from both members for Braddon, one of whom is apparently a scientist. The reason Gunns collapsed is a matter of historical record. For anyone who has not read *The Rise and Fall of Gunns Limited* by Quentin Beresford, I recommend it. It is referenced and it documents what happened to that evil corporation.

**Ms BUTLER** - Point of order, Mr Deputy Speaker. I draw your attention to the fact that our colleagues are being called liars and that is inappropriate in this House.

**Ms O'Connor** - Your colleagues, Mrs Rylah and Dr Broad?

**Ms BUTLER** - Yes, by yourself. My colleague has just been called a liar by yourself. I do not think that is appropriate, Mr Deputy Speaker.

**Ms O'Connor** - What standing order are you referring to?

**Ms BUTLER** - It is unparliamentary. It is offensive language.

**Ms O'Connor** - Offensive language?

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** - Order, I ask the member to withdraw it.

**Ms Butler** - It is not appropriate, it should be ruled out.

**Ms O'CONNOR** - Like you bringing the scientific panel that advised the federal minister on critically endangered species into disrepute?

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** - Order, I ask the member to please withdraw it.

**Ms O'CONNOR** - What am I withdrawing, Mr Tucker?

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** - The comment that you made about them lying.

**Ms O'CONNOR** - Which one? What did I say?

**Mr O'Byrne** - You referred to Dr Broad as a liar.

**Ms O'CONNOR** - I said they have told lies.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** - Order, I ask the member to withdraw it please.

**Ms O'CONNOR** - Sorry, I get up in here like Dr Woodruff and tell the truth in this place. If the truth hurts, I withdraw the use of the word 'lie'.

We will not be supporting the amended motion. We will always accept the science on climate, and the science on what is a critically endangered species. Even the scientists in a conservative Liberal government have looked at these two eucalypt species and recognised that they are critically endangered.

In the middle of an extinction crisis, you would think a listing of critically endangered might influence a scientist in this place, but apparently not. That is a matter of enormous regret because we are elected to this place to tell the truth. The truth is that the independent scientific advisers to the federal government determined that these two species - the black gum and the Brooker's gum - are critically endangered.

I am appalled, on behalf of young people who expect better in this place, by Dr Broad's contribution, and I am completely unsurprised by Mrs Rylah's.

[3.28 p.m.]

**Mrs RYLAH** (Braddon) - Mr Deputy Speaker, today we heard not a peep out of Labor on their forestry policy and the future for Labor on forestry. We did not hear a thing, not a word, not a peep out of the secret and silent position of federal Labor and the Tasmanian Forest Agreement. Your federal colleagues and the TFA are a serious threat to Tasmania's forest industry and we know that. Labor locked up half the state under the Labor-Greens accord and that is a tragedy.

I would like to address the ovata and brookeriana issue. The Australian Government decision to list Tasmanian forest and woodland dominated by black gum and Brooker's gum as a new critically endangered community is disappointing. It will add costly and unnecessary duplication to existing state approvals. Under Tasmanian law, any land use activity, forestry or non-forestry, that has the potential to impact on a threatened community is already regulated through our high-standard forest practices system. These points were made very clearly to the Australian Government during consultation of this listing proposal.

An important role of the Tasmanian Government is to represent the interests of Tasmanian agriculture and our farmers, and we raised with the Commonwealth a number of concerns about the proposed listing. We put in a written representation and lobbied. The Tasmanian Government had a clear objection to this change and remains disappointed by the decision and maintains our position that the listing serves -

**Time expired.**

**Question - That the amendment be agreed to - put.**

**The House divided -**

AYES 9

Dr Broad  
Ms Butler  
Ms Dow (Teller)  
Ms Haddad  
Ms Houston  
Mr O'Byrne  
Ms O'Byrne  
Ms Standen  
Ms White

NOES 14

Ms Archer  
Mr Barnett  
Ms Courtney  
Mr Ferguson  
Mr Gutwein  
Mr Hodgman  
Mr Jaensch  
Ms O'Connor  
Mrs Petrusma  
Mr Rockliff  
Mrs Rylah (Teller)  
Mr Shelton  
Mr Tucker  
Dr Woodruff

**Amendment negatived.**

**Question - That the motion be agreed to - put.**

**The House divided -**

AYES 12

Ms Archer  
Mr Barnett  
Ms Courtney  
Mr Ferguson  
Mr Gutwein

NOES 11

Dr Broad  
Ms Butler  
Ms Dow (Teller)  
Ms Haddad  
Ms Houston

Mr Hodgman  
Mr Jaensch  
Mrs Petrusma  
Mr Rockliff  
Mrs Rylah (Teller)  
Mr Shelton  
Mr Tucker

Mr O'Byrne  
Ms O'Byrne  
Ms O'Connor  
Ms Standen  
Ms White  
Dr Woodruff

**Motion agreed to.**

## **MOTION**

### **Investment in Jobs - Motion Negatived**

[3.39 p.m.]

**Ms WHITE** (Lyons - Leader of the Opposition - Motion) - Madam Speaker, I move -

That the House -

- (1) Condemns the Liberals and the Greens for failing to stand up for working people.
- (2) Further condemns the Premier, Hon. Will Hodgman MP, for breaking his promise to make Tasmania's unemployment rate the best in the country - instead Tasmania has the worst jobless rate in the country.
- (3) Notes the Liberals have done nothing in response to the loss of 5100 full-time jobs in the past year.
- (4) Recognises Hon Will Hodgman MP has no plan to protect jobs at TEMCO or diversify the economy by investing in new industries such as hydrogen generation.
- (5) Further notes Hon Will Hodgman MP has failed to invest in the Burnie Port.
- (6) Agrees that when it comes to jobs, the Greens are just as bad as the Liberals.
- (7) Further notes the hypocrisy of the Greens has held back jobs and investment in Tasmania for decades.
- (8) Further notes that at the height of the forestry debate the Greens claimed tourism was the answer. Now tourism is the enemy.
- (9) Further notes the Greens claim to support renewable energy but Bob Brown has argued for the construction of a coal fired power station in the Fingal Valley and Senator Nick McKim famously described wind farms as 'giant parrot blenders'.
- (10) Agrees that only Labor can be trusted to fight for working people.

Madam Speaker, right now in Tasmania we have a situation where our unemployment rate is the highest in the nation. The Liberals took a promise to the people of Tasmania at the last election where they said not only would they not go into net debt - which is a promise they have broken to the tune of \$1.1 billion - but they also promised that by 2022, Tasmania would have the lowest unemployment rate in the country. Right now we have the highest unemployment rate in the country and it is only a couple of years away where they have to meet that target and they are tracking woefully.

Looking at the job's figures right now for Tasmanians, we know that they are finding it harder to find work in Tasmania than any other state in the country. We also can see that our unemployment rate, being the highest in the country at 6.7 per cent, is the worst in Australia.

Underemployment, which is the number of people who want more paid work is 10.4 per cent, which is the worst in Australia. The participation rate is 60.3 per cent, which is the worst in Australia. Very concerningly, that means the people have effectively given up looking for work. The results are even worse for women. The female unemployment rate is 7 per cent and 13.4 per cent of all women in the workforce are underemployed and a participation rate for women is 56.4 per cent.

In the past 12 months, under the Liberal Government, 5100 full-time jobs have been lost in Tasmania. The Government crows about creating jobs, but they never acknowledge the fact that just this year, just in 12 months, 5100 people have lost full-time work. That is an astonishing figure for so many people to have lost full-time work in one year when, broadly speaking, the economy is in a reasonable place.

The exchange rate is very conducive to trade in Tasmania, the Australian dollar is low, which means visitation to Tasmania is more attractive to those who are travelling. The interest rates are very low which makes it more attractive for businesses to borrow money and yet, even given all of those macroeconomic conditions pointing in the right direction, 5100 people have lost full-time work in Tasmania.

That means those families are struggling to make ends meet. It means that people are struggling to find enough hours to keep their heads above water. It means the people like Luke who I met with a couple of weeks ago, who is working two jobs, is still struggling to put food on his table, stay healthy, and look after his family because he still cannot get enough hours. People like Luke, who works as an education facility attendant cleaning schools for five days a week, then goes to another job to work security at night, just to make up enough hours. He is sleeping in his car in between shifts because it is uneconomical for him to drive back to his residence and then drive back to town to go to his second job. He still cannot get 40 hours. What he is asking is not unreasonable. It is what most of us would hope to be able to achieve, and that is a steady, secure, well paid job, that helps us look after our families, put food on the table and have a good quality of life.

Yet under this Liberal Government, in the last year alone, 5100 Tasmanians have lost full-time work. That is a startling figure that they do not talk about. All they share is the rhetoric and the jargon and about how well they are doing while poor Tasmanians like Luke are struggling and sleeping in their car in between shifts just to make ends meet.

When I take a look at what is happening in some of our regions, the figures are even worse. You look at the youth unemployment rate, or you look at what is happening on the North-West Coast where 40 people a day are losing full-time work. That is a staggering figure and it is



impacting on our regional economies, and on our regional communities. Too many people right now are being denied the opportunity to gain full-time employment under Will Hodgman's government.

We have a Government that is completely hands-off and asleep at the wheel when it comes to significant important projects for Tasmania. We have raised them in this parliament to try to elicit some reaction, some response, some semblance of a plan from the Liberal Party about how they are going to support existing jobs, as well as create new jobs.

The response from the Premier has been underwhelming, to say the least. We have a situation right now where workers at TEMCO and Bell Bay are anxiously awaiting the outcome of the review that is underway. There are 250 direct employees there, 150 contractors and an immeasurable number of indirect jobs that are supported by the operations of South32 at the TEMCO site at Bell Bay.

That is an important project for our state. Important business. It supports the northern economy. It also is a significant electricity customer for our state. What is the Government doing to make sure that those jobs at TEMCO are protected? The direct jobs, the contracting jobs, the indirect jobs, the local community, the local economy. The Premier could not articulate one thing this Government is doing to protect those jobs at TEMCO. He said if the company went to him and asked for something he might respond but he himself has not proactively reached out to them and offered any assistance or support whatsoever. He is leaving it until the eleventh hour before any decision might be made and right now those people are waiting for the outcome of that review and this Government is nowhere to be seen.

You think about the impact the loss of a significant customer like that would have on the electricity network. They consume, I think, about 15 per cent of Tasmania's electricity. If that customer is lost from Tasmania those costs will be shared across the rest of the network users. That means mums and dads, small businesses, every other customer of electricity in Tasmania will have to pick up the tab. What is that going to mean for the cost of living for Tasmanians in our state?

The Government is not talking about that. The Premier could not even answer a direct question about that today in question time. It is as though he has not considered it could be a problem he might have to face up to, just like the energy crisis in 2016. This Government is reactive, they are hands-off and the Premier has rightly deserved his moniker of half-time Hodgman because he displays that aptitude, his hands-off lazy aptitude every single time there is a big project that he has no answer to when tough questions are asked.

We have a problem with this Government. It does not even want to create new jobs in our state. The opportunities for hydrogen in Tasmania, clean hydrogen, hydrogen that can be created by renewable energy sources that will differentiate us from other markets across Australia that are currently actively pursuing hydrogen strategies is not even being contemplated by this Government.

There is a national strategy that is being released in December this year. The Premier could not guarantee that Tasmania would be a part of it. Queensland has developed a strategy: Western Australia, Victoria; in fact, I believe nearly every other state has a hydrogen strategy. Tasmania does not have a hydrogen strategy. Hydrogen generation in Tasmania could generate 500 jobs. That is nothing to thumb your nose at and yet the Premier is asleep again. He has gone out to lunch while every other state is busy working on developing their hydrogen strategies. They are contributing to the national hydrogen strategy. They are engaging with those customers in

international markets to make sure they are on the front foot so that they can sell hydrogen when the opportunity becomes available. The Premier is not.

He might have visited Japan but he has done nothing about building on that opportunity since that happened. That will mean that Tasmania is disadvantaged when it comes to the opportunities we have to realise hydrogen jobs in our state.

At the last federal election, the Labor Party promised funding for a feasibility study for hydrogen generation in Bell Bay because we realise that could create 500 jobs in our state. It capitalises on our brand advantages with renewable energy being the main driver of the generation of hydrogen for Tasmania. That would give us a competitive edge. There are so many things when it comes to hydrogen that tick the boxes for our state and yet the Government and Will Hodgman are completely absent from any engagement with the national strategy. Of the two submissions that came from Tasmania to that national strategy, one was from Hydro and was not particularly effusive in its praise for the opportunities for hydrogen and the other was from the Northern Tasmania Development Corporation and John Pitt, which was a very strong proponent and advocate for hydrogen in Tasmania. There have been crickets and frogs over there from the Government when it comes to this.

Let us have a look at some of the other projects Tasmania currently has before it that this Government is failing to take advantage of and realise the potential for our state. The Burnie port master plan is an opportunity for us to really grow the engagement our mineral and forestry sectors have with the rest of the world and to export more products off this island and generate more jobs for Tasmanians. The master plan is a 15-year strategy, yet the 10-year infrastructure pipeline did not list a single cent from the Tasmanian Government to support any of the initiatives.

This strategy was released last year so now presumably there is 14 years to realise the strategy and for the next 10 years this Government has no plan to spend a single cent at Burnie port. Either they forgot about it in the pipeline document, completely forgot that they had the Burnie port and they should have invested \$80 million in that to realise the 15-year strategy as outlined in the master plan, or they are not going to. It is one or the other. You either forgot about Burnie or you are not going to invest a cent there from the state Government for the next 10 years. Neither is acceptable when you think about how important that is for customers exporting off that wharf. You have Ta Ann, Forico and renewable energy companies who are looking to bring in significant projects using that port, as well as cruise ship visitors. Nothing again.

This Government is letting Tasmanians down. There are significant opportunities but they are simply not even awake to see them put a strategy in, put a dollar behind or protect existing jobs. This is particularly alarming when we have the highest unemployment rate in the country. You would think the Government would be mobilised and motivated to make sure that Tasmanians can stay in work, not see a situation where 5100 full-time jobs are lost in one year, and that we can create new jobs. It appears that they simply have gone missing.

They are not the only ones letting Tasmanians down. I will turn my attention now to the Greens because there is another significant project in the north-west and that is Robbins Island, which is a renewable energy project that has the opportunity to create a lot of new clean energy for Tasmania and potentially the rest of the country, but also jobs. This is a project I have been to visit, I have been briefed on and have sought feedback from the proponents about. I support it going through the planning process because I understand how important renewable energy is for us to be able to support mums and dads and businesses to have low energy prices, but also the responsibility that

we have to our global community to reduce carbon emissions. This will be able to replace coal-fired emissions created -

**Dr Woodruff** - Oh, come on. This is the same party that just signed off on the Adani coalmine, revoked native title licences at the Adani Carmichael site, and you lecture people in this place about looking after the future? It is disgusting.

**Ms WHITE** - Now I am hearing interjections from the Greens but Bob Brown promoted a coal-fired power station in the Fingal Valley in his opposition of renewable energy. What is this noise over here, Madam Speaker?

**Madam SPEAKER** - I really do not know. Please just calm down.

**Ms WHITE** - Madam Speaker, Bob Brown was a proponent of a coal-fired power station for the Fingal Valley and he has spoken out against the Robbins Island wind farm before it has even gone through the planning processes. This is a project I would have thought the Greens could get behind. I would have thought after all the years of them talking about the need for further investment in renewable energy, we would have seen them get behind a project like Robbins Island so it can go through the planning processes without anyone having a whack at it or giving it a hard time -

**Dr Woodruff** - You might have noticed we haven't made a position statement on Robbins Island as the Labor Party is now looking at the development.

**Madam SPEAKER** - Order, Dr Woodruff. You are not helping.

**Ms WHITE** - before they have even got to the starting line, but oh no, not Bob Brown. I suppose it is not surprising when you think that it was Nick McKim, now senator, who said that he regarded wind farms as parrot blenders, so they have not strayed too far from their rhetoric from a couple of years ago with Bob Brown arguing for these projects to be squashed before they even get a chance to go through the proper process.

Let us have a think about Basslink. I am just having a look back at some remarks that were made about the opposing of Basslink when it was first proposed. Christine Milne, former state Greens leader and then adviser to Senator Bob Brown, argued that the ropes would have a limited life, after which time the cables will separate, increasing the magnetic field generated. She went on to say that:

A significant environmental impact that has not been resolved is the increased damage that will occur downstream of the Gordon River hydro-electric power station in the Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area. If Basslink proceeds the pattern of energy produced by Hydro Tasmania will change. More energy will need to be generated in Tasmania during periods of peak electricity use in Victoria and less will be required at other times, as energy will be imported from Victoria.

This will mean wider extremes in water flows downstream from the power station and increased damage to riverbank vegetation. This would represent a 'systematic degradation of the ecological and geological features of the Gordon River and therefore also the Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area'.

That was the Greens then opposing Basslink. We know they have called wind farms parrot-blending machines. We also know they oppose Robbins Island. These are renewable energy projects that give opportunity for Tasmania to generate revenue so that we can fund essential services like health, education and housing. This is a renewable energy advantage we enjoy that no other state has and we should be able to capitalise on that. We should be able to make money out of that for the benefit of all Tasmanians. We should be able to have the lowest power prices because of our renewable energy advantage. The Greens stand opposed to that.

They said through the whole forestry debate that tourism was the answer. Tourism was going to be the new industry for Tasmania and we could invite people here to enjoy everything that we appreciate so much about tourism. We know they oppose projects that have potential to increase visitation to our state so we can show off our state. The Cradle Mountain cableway is a project that Ms O'Connor opposes. That is a project that would get cars off the road and see visitors able to enjoy an iconic destination for Tasmania, Cradle Mountain. They could come here to experience that. There would be the opportunity for investors to be able to have certainty so we can showcase Tasmania to the rest of the world.

The Labor Party supports the Cradle Mountain cableway. We think it is a sensible project. It is disappointing again to see the Government fail to release the expressions of interest for that project for more than 18 months now. There are developers I have spoken to who are scratching their heads. This is a project I thought we could agree on, but apparently not. The Government has done nothing for well over 18 months since they started an expression of interest process. They are calling for investors to come forward to see that project vision realised. Crickets and frogs again. Zero from the Government who knows, or should know, that 40 full-time jobs a day are being lost on the north-west coast. The Cradle Mountain tourism project could create good jobs, construction jobs and then ongoing tourism jobs. There has been no update to the community on what is happening with that expressions of interest process.

The Labor Party backs the cableway. We understand that this is an important investment for the north-west. It is important for us to be able to showcase the icon that is Cradle Mountain, but the Government is nowhere to be seen and the Greens oppose it. Maybe they are in bed together when it comes to this project. Maybe behind the scenes they have struck some kind of deal to make sure that project never gets off the ground. Maybe they can clear that matter up once and for all here today.

Let us continue talking about the Greens' opposition to tourism. I will talk about AFL. We brought AFL to Tasmania to revitalise the northern economy, to provide opportunities during the winter months for there to be greater visitation and greater economic activity in the north of the state. It was not just about the footy. It was not just about going along to see our nation's sport. It was also about driving business activity in the north of the state in the winter months. The Greens opposed AFL football in the north of the state -

**Ms O'Connor** - What? I beg your pardon?

**Ms WHITE** - You do. In your -

**Ms O'CONNOR** - Point of order, Madam Speaker, this is a complete falsehood. It has been the Greens' longstanding position to be opposed to the sponsorship deal.

**Ms WHITE** - Madam Speaker, maybe the Greens could come out and say they do support AFL in the north of the state now. I am pretty sure Launceston and Burnie would really love to hear that.

**Ms O'Connor** - Madam Speaker, I will make a contribution, but you are just undermining the push for a unity ticket on AFL. That is what you do.

**Ms WHITE** - That is rubbish. It wasn't me. That was the other side. Take a look at them. You opposed the V8 Supercars, which we know is a tourism drawcard and brings a lot of people to Tasmania. These are initiatives we support but the Greens do not support, and it proves they simply do not understand Tasmanians and what they want to enjoy. People want to go out and have a good weekend and watch the V8 Supercars. They want to be able to go to a game of footie, and the Tasmanian government, when Labor was in power, gave opportunities for Tasmanians to do that. This Government has continued it, and we support that, because these are good activities that people love to look at, and it drives visitation to the north of the state in the winter months, which we know is good for businesses, and it is good for jobs.

The Labor Party is a strong supporter of working people. We will stand up for people's jobs every day of the week. The Liberal Party might talk about jobs, but they do not talk about working people. They do not talk about secure jobs. They do not talk about well-paid jobs. In fact, they went to war with their workforce for nearly two years, saying they did not deserve a pay rise that kept up with the cost of living.

This is a Government that says you are all right, keep going, pat people on the head, you will be alright, mate, but we are not going to pay you what you are worth. We are not even going to pay you a pay rise that keeps up with cost of living. This is a Government that treats its workforce with contempt. They might talk about jobs, but they do not talk about the worker, and the people, and the families that perform those jobs, and go home to support their communities, volunteer, run the fire stations, run the volunteer ambulance stations, run the Rotary and Lions Clubs. People only do those things when they have secure, well-paid jobs.

Without that, they are trying to string two or three casual jobs together and make ends meet. They are people just like Luke, who I referenced earlier, who is exactly that person. All he wants is a 40-hour working week, and this Government is denying people like him the opportunity. What we have seen is 5100 full-time jobs go in just 12 months. May I remind members that the actual minimum wage for Australians right now is \$740 per week. That is for a 38-hour week. That is equivalent of \$19.49 an hour. If you are on Newstart, you get \$277.85 per week. If you space that out over a 38-hour week, that is equivalent of \$7.30 per hour. It is pretty bloody miserable.

We support people being able enter the workforce. We support people having secure, well-paid, meaningful jobs. We are disgusted at this Government's lack of support for TEMCO, at their lack of action creating new jobs in the hydrogen sector, and their lack of action investing in the Burnie port, to support the industries that rely on that to get their products off this island. They have not done enough. They are sitting on their hands and we are seeing them just squander opportunities.

Do not get me started on Macquarie Point. There are so many projects in this state that are sitting there, waiting for the Government to actually do something more than just have a few press releases and ribbon-cutting events. They actually want a Government that is going to take an

interest in them. We have an opportunity to do something about that. This is why the Labor Party has called on this parliament to support our policy of free TAFE courses in areas of job need.

There are so many opportunities for people to get training, if only they could get in and do the courses. We are hearing from the construction and building industry, aged care, disability care, the healthcare workforce, tourism and hospitality and agriculture. They are looking for skilled workers, yet at the same time we have the highest unemployment rate in the country.

The Government could get behind Tasmanians. Give them a chance to get the skills that industry is looking for. Back them in with some training. Fund TAFE properly, and actually back our policy, which would provide 5000 Tasmanians with the opportunity to get a qualification that will give them a job here in Tasmania.

I am sick to the back teeth of hearing about people being flown into Tasmania to take jobs that could be undertaken by a Tasmanian. We should be training our people. We should be training Tasmanians. Under Labor, people will get a chance to get a job here, in those industries and areas of our economy that we know are growing, and who right now are struggling to find a workforce, which should not be the case.

The youth unemployment rate is as high as 20 per cent in the south-east of the state. Young people in the northern suburbs, who are waiting to get an apprenticeship, have to wait three months before they can sit a driver's licence test. What is the Government's response to that? Privatising driver's licence testing. That is not going to help the young man in Glenorchy who is waiting to get an apprenticeship, who has an opportunity to take up a job, but can't sit his driver's licence test until January.

These are the simple things this Government should be fixing right now, but they are doing nothing. They could be providing training opportunities to people, giving them the qualifications and skills they need to get jobs here in Tasmania, where we know jobs are available. It is not that hard.

Another thing they could be doing is providing training and apprentice opportunities for Tasmanians on publicly funded projects: the hospital project, the roads projects rather than dismissing a brilliant initiative that was brought in by a former Labor government where a percentage of the workforce had to be apprentices and trainees. You have not enforced that.

You could give opportunities right now for businesses to train apprentices and trainees, and train the next generation of Tasmanians to get the skills our state needs, to make sure we continue to have strong communities and a strong economy to make Tasmania a fairer and better place, which you are not. You are missing out on the opportunities that are right before you.

You are so disinterested and lazy. We have seen 2000 apprentices lost in Tasmania in the last five years, yet you scoff at TAFE and the opportunities to provide free training courses for young people, and people who are retraining, so they can actually have a career in our state.

**Mrs Rylah** - Remember what you did to TAFE. Does anyone have memories of what Labor did to TAFE?

**Ms WHITE** - May I remind you, interjecting over there, Mrs Rylah, that 5100 Tasmanians lost full-time work this year. What are you going to say about that: 5100 Tasmanians have lost

full-time work this year and you are not supporting TAFE. We have heard multiple stories of people having their courses cancelled. Electro technology courses cancelled. They are the next electricians for our state, cancelled. Nursing courses with caps put on them, so enrolled nurses now have to not only pay more to do the course, but fewer of them can do the course because you have capped the places.

These are areas we know that have been identified where we have skill shortages, and we should be training Tasmanians for these jobs. You are nowhere to be seen. In fact you are making it harder for Tasmanians to get the skills we know our state needs so that we can continue to grow and to prosper.

I am fed up with the lack of action from the Government when it comes to supporting Tasmanians and working people to get a fair go. Not only have they been standing in the way of progress, the Greens have also been standing in the way of progress.

The only party that will stand up for working people and make sure Tasmanians can get the training they need, the jobs they need, secure meaningful work to support their community and our community, is the Labor Party.

[4.09 p.m.]

**Mr FERGUSON** (Bass - Minister for Infrastructure and Transport) - Madam Speaker, I am very pleased to rise and speak to the motion, which is another poor stunt from a poor and struggling Opposition Leader. She says she is sick and tired of lack of action on jobs. What she said on the weekend is that she is sick and tired of herself and her party, who have actually taken themselves away from a connection with real Tasmanians and the aspirations of people across Tasmania. She was chastised by her own party for taking the party so far to the left that they were cosyng up to the Greens. They got a message and they have admitted that they are disconnected.

The problem is that the Leader of the Opposition, in having a 28-minute whinge-fest just now, is attempting to show that she has woken up to herself. That she is the problem, that David O'Byrne is the problem, that her whole party is the problem. They have actually lost touch with the Tasmanian community. That is what you said of yourselves on Sunday, and in relation to jobs, I am surprised that the Leader of the Opposition was even able to mention projects that this Government has actually stood up and got going. The Royal Hobart Hospital, for example: this Government has nearly finished building while the previous government did not even lay one brick.

When I hear the Leader of the Opposition wanting to try to toughen up to the Greens, we do not believe it. It lacks any credibility at all. The Labor Party has voted with the Greens 90 per cent of times, just this year alone, and they try to toughen up on the Greens. On one day they talk about jobs, on the next day they drop the subject like a stone. First question up this morning they wanted to again go into stunts. This Labor Party is beneath contempt, trying to talk about jobs when the Government here in Tasmania has actually created great conditions, strong economic activity and strong jobs growth, which the Leader of the Opposition hates. She has hated to see the jobs growth that has occurred in this state and she has denied it at every turn. It is a simple matter of fact, that as at July of this year, we now have 248 000 Tasmanians who are in work, with 13 000 jobs created since this Government was elected in March 2014. But you will never hear that from the current Leader of the Opposition.

**Ms White** - Talk about those people who have lost their jobs.

**Madam SPEAKER** - Order, Leader of the Opposition.

**Mr FERGUSON** - She is not capable of even agreeing that they are the facts of the matter and of which 7600 are women because the Leader of the Opposition tries to make this a gender issue, but 7600 of those 13 000 extra jobs are women. It directly addresses her false claims that she runs out there in the community trying to again scare people -

**Ms White** - Do not try to make it a gender issue.

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

**Mr FERGUSON** - There are 2000 more young people in work and you will never hear that from the Leader of the Opposition who, far from wanting to create a job culture, is actually trying to again undermine confidence in our state. There are 700 fewer long-term unemployed people, and I know that we will always have a need to continue to focus on that and support people off the dole and into meaningful employment. We are all for that, but more full-time jobs and more part-time jobs. The unemployment rate, whatever the number, we would want it to be zero. Whatever the number, you would want everybody who is participating to be able to get a job.

The unemployment rate has come down; it has come down since the election. Who could forget the previous shadow treasurer, Scott Bacon, who at the time was the finance minister, when the unemployment rate had an eight in front of it and he said it was disappointing under the Labor-Greens government years. The fact is that businesses in Tasmania are hiring; the number of internet job vacancies in July of this year grew 13.2 per cent compared to July last year, the highest growth rate in Australia. These results clearly show that our policies are working; your policies failed. You failed Tasmanians.

**Members** interjecting.

**Mr FERGUSON** - I heard the Leader of the Opposition make a comment about not wanting people to come to Tasmania to get work and I found that very insightful. What is happening is Tasmanians are returning home. They are coming back because under Labor and the Greens, under Rebecca White and Nick McKim, they were fleeing the state. Under David O'Byrne's economic development regime, 10 000 people lost their jobs. Young people and forestry workers had to leave out beautiful island state in search of work in other states, including in the mining states, because they had to.

It was the environment here in Tasmania under Rebecca White and Nick McKim. Was it conducive to economic investment and growth? No, it was not. The facts are very embarrassing for the Labor Party because all of the business surveys said, 'We believe the government is actually working against us'.

**Members** interjecting.

**Madam SPEAKER** - Order.

**Mr FERGUSON** - Businesses were saying, regardless of external circumstances, business said that the Labor-Greens government policies were working against them. It is a simple fact. Look what you did to Ringarooma; look what you did to Triabunna; look what you did to Edith Creek, look at what you did to central Tasmania. Look what you did to Dover; look what you did to all of



these places like Sassafras where you put the fear into the community that they were going to lose their school. You were going to close their school.

**Mr O'Byrne** - Every emergency department in the state, look what you did to them.

**Mr FERGUSON** - That is what you were going to do and when I hear the Leader of the Opposition talking about regional Tasmania she is singularly responsible for voting and helping the disastrous forestry agreement hatched together by Labor and the Greens to shut down jobs at Triabunna -

**Ms O'Connor** - And the environment movement, actually. You just lied again.

**Madam SPEAKER** - Order.

**Mr FERGUSON** - You voted to shut down jobs at Triabunna, Ms White, yet you want to talk about jobs in this House today. You are hypocritical and you lack any economic credibility. If you do not like to hear it from me perhaps you would like to hear it from your own party colleagues because that is exactly what they have had to say.

**Mr O'Byrne** - Do you know what the industry says about your forestry minister?

**Madam SPEAKER** - Mr O'Byrne, I just called for order.

**Mr FERGUSON** - Julian Amos, your good friend, has said that Labor needs to move swiftly to fill the position of shadow spokesperson for Treasury and be able to demonstrate to the wider community some competence in this area. That was interesting. You have also seen Harry Quick making it very clear that the Labor Party is disconnected. They have become a city-based party and that nobody ever sees them out and about actually developing policies, meeting real people unless it is a set-up event. That is what your friend Harry Quick said. Your good friend from the Labor Party. I hear the word 'liar' on the other side. I do not know who you are calling a liar but if its Harry Quick you can explain that to him in your own good time.

We have seen the Leader of the Opposition make an art form of being very loose with the truth and the claims that have been made, including in this motion, frankly, are quite appalling. She knows that the Government has actually been creating confidence in the community, creating the right economic conditions for Tasmanians to do well and to get ahead.

For private sector employers to be able, with some confidence, knowing there is a stable majority Liberal Government that is running the state looking after our state's interests, that it is a good time to be investing.

Memo to the Labor Party: confidence leads to investment; investment will lead to jobs. When I hear the Leader of the Opposition talking about TAFE I can barely contain myself. It was the Labor Party that destroyed TAFE in Tasmania. Destroyed it. Can you remember?

**Ms O'Connor** - It was a Greens minister who repaired it.

**Mr FERGUSON** - I will come to that. The Labor Party took away TasTAFE and instead gave us Polytechnic Tasmanian Academy and the Skills Institute. It was an appalling and failed attempt at reform. It went against all the advice. Sue Napier at the time warned against this and it was

rushed; it was a disaster and you were shutting down colleges along the way. You were pulling apart the fabric of Tasmanian vocational success. The price was a very heavy one. It is the Rebecca White Labor Party which has egg all over its face in the skills area.

It is true, Ms O'Connor, what you interject. It was a Greens minister, Nick McKim, who apart from his other failings, including trying to shut 20 regional schools with Rebecca White's support - he might have inherited that from a Labor minister but nonetheless -

**Ms O'Connor** - No, that was Lin Thorpe.

**Mr FERGUSON** - That is my point. He may have inherited that from a Labor minister, but nonetheless the Labor Party backed it in.

**Ms O'Connor** - And he saved those schools.

**Mr FERGUSON** - The Liberal Party moved a bill to save those schools which was voted against by Rebecca White and all of the then Labor Party. It is true and you are correct, Ms O'Connor, to point out to me that it was a Greens minister, Nick McKim, who put a bill through this House to re-establish TasTAFE and with our support, as I recall, because we had been urging that exact outcome.

I will come to some of the points in the actual motion which is entirely flawed and full of falsehoods that are convenient to a Labor leader who is only borrowing that seat for a little while longer because the man who is interjecting already has the numbers. We know that.

**Mr O'Byrne** - For the first 12 months of your Government you turned up cutting ribbons and taking credit for all the economic and innovative investment fund money that would support it.

**Madam SPEAKER** - Mr O'Byrne, that is the third one. No, actually that is the second one.

**Mr FERGUSON** - Sharpening his little knives at night, as we said this morning. The knives are out. The Tasmanian people know it. The Labor delegates at the weekend know it, the unions know it and a lot of people know it - let us just put it that way. The Leader of the Opposition was desperately trying to cling on to her tenuous position at the weekend talking about jobs so let us just stay on theme here with jobs. I would like to bring the House's attention to TEMCO.\

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**Member Suspended**  
**Member for Franklin - Mr O'Byrne**

**Mr O'Byrne** - She is the most popular politician in the state. Did you not see the preferred premier?

**Madam SPEAKER** - Okay, Mr O'Byrne, that is the third one. Out you go and we will see you tomorrow.

**Mr O'Byrne** - What about the adjournment?

**Madam SPEAKER** - No, I do not think so.

**Mr O'Byrne** interjecting.

**Madam SPEAKER** - I beg your pardon? You can apologise before you go out the door or it will 24 hours suspension.

**Mr O'Byrne** - I withdraw, Madam Speaker.

**Mr O'Byrne withdrew.**

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**Mr FERGUSON** - Madam Speaker, the TEMCO business in the Bell Bay industrial precinct is vitally important to this Government for the people it employs and the families it supports. The contractors and their families that it supports are of vital first order importance to our Government. We strongly support that business and it is a lie of the Labor Party that we do not. We strongly support that business continuing, indeed growing and thriving and doing well at Bell Bay. To say otherwise is a lie of anybody in this House.

To say that the Government is doing nothing is an ignorant statement, because members across the Chamber are well aware because I know that they have been told directly by the company that the Government is working with the company to ensure that every line of communication is fully open, that the engagement is real and ongoing. Anything that the Government can responsibly do to support the company is to be considered, and the company is very disappointed, and has said so to us, at the way it is being politicised by the Opposition. I put that on the record. Ms White has been told this directly and yet continues to try to smear the Premier's good name to score a cheap temporary political sugar hit to sustain her flailing leadership.

That business, its employees, its contractors and the community around it are of vital first order importance to our Government and we are closely engaged on the matter. We have met with the company and have ensured they fully understand that we want them to stay. We do not know today if they can stay, or if they will. We understand that the company itself has made commitments around not just reviewing the business but also its own obligations to the stock exchange, hence its relative silence on the matter, and a commitment to advising the community and the stock exchange and government in October when the decision is made as to its future.

What we have seen from the Labor Opposition is the very opposite of providing certainty and jobs growth and economic confidence. Rebecca White and Labor are seeking to undermine it and are already, as they did in question time this morning, actually foreshadowing a closure, which would be the worst of all outcomes, frankly. Members who watched question time this morning will testify that that is what we saw, and the Premier put it very well - lustfully wanting bad news.

**Ms Butler** - I think you're a bit threatened by the Labor Party at the moment.

**Madam SPEAKER** - Order, Ms Butler.

**Mr FERGUSON** - It is not helpful and it will not help anybody. In fact, regardless of a decision in October, those very statements are damaging business confidence in Tasmania. We have left the company in no doubt that the business is supported, we want to be kept involved and that the Government's door is always open. We have expressed our strong support for the operation and the jobs and investment it supports. I understand and believe that no final decision has been

made by TEMCO's owner on the way forward for the operation at this time and, as I have said, they have given undertakings to us about more information at an appropriate stage in the review process.

Although I suspect it will not land anywhere that will be well received, I ask the Labor Party to support our efforts to engage positively with the company and be bipartisan when we have hundreds of families who will be hoping for the best outcome, not the worst outcome that it appears the Labor Party is seeking to have.

On hydrogen; it is entirely wrong and false what Rebecca White, the Leader of the Opposition, has had to say in her motion and her address. Just because we cannot always say everything that is happening it does not give you permission to say nothing is happening. That is what you have done on TEMCO and it is what you are doing on hydrogen. We are working across government, and particularly my colleague, the Minister for Energy, Guy Barnett, and our Coordinator-General, John Perry, and his office, which the Labor Party continues to menace, have been working closely in this sector and with some proponents.

Just because we cannot always say everything in detail that is often commercial in-confidence does not give you the permission, or the right, to tell Tasmanians the falsehood that nothing is happening, that it is hands-off, that it is part-time and there is no strategy. You are wrong about all those things. I ask you to withdraw and cease saying them.

The Hodgman Government is delivering on our plan. It includes our efforts in energy, including renewable energy, and the work we have been doing in hydrogen and ammonia, which you did not mention, with emerging industries in our region calling for clean hydrogen and ammonia. We are actively involved. Why should I have to tell you this when the Premier has already said it on a number of occasions here in this House? It is occurring at a national level through the National Hydrogen Strategy and we are in on it. Tasmania is part of that; we are helping to form it, and at an industry level as well.

Australia's Chief Scientist, Dr Alan Finkel, and the chair of the National Hydrogen Strategy Steering Committee, have specifically visited our state. The minister, Mr Barnett recently met with him personally and I have recently agreed to meet with him also. They have met with us, acknowledging the state's potential at a global scale, including the unique qualities of the Bell Bay industrial zone. This is important because I appreciate and the Government understands that there is uncertainty and fear around the future of jobs at Bell Bay. That is why we are in at the ground level and exploring this very proactively. The Government is leading this opportunity.

The Premier mentioned this morning his trade mission to Japan in relation to this matter, proactively developing opportunities with a range of proponents who have said to us that they are interested in investing in Tasmania. They are attracted to our state and are interested in our clean energy, our existing transmission and port infrastructure at Bell Bay and the Government's appetite to attract, again through the Office of the Coordinator-General, which gets rubbished from time to time by members opposite.

They are telling us that through our engagement, we are a prime place to support large-scale facilities. The Office of the Coordinator-General, on behalf of the Government, is leading these developments and is working closely with Hydro Tasmania. In the area of market potential including possible export, our Government is actively working with industry to examine the opportunities that could arise from a hydrogen industry in Tasmania. It is very exciting and I am glad at least that the Labor Party is calling on us to be closely engaged on that. Just don't give us

your rubbish that nothing is happening. Our state is uniquely positioned. We have great potential to produce hydrogen on a continuous basis and it could provide Tasmania with a key advantage relative to regions, with access to owning intermittent renewable generation because ours is of a quality that has that strong reliability and dispatchable hydro power.

The OCG continues to work with those interested proponents around hydrogen and ammonia and its potential applications in Tasmania. As soon as we can say more we will, but at the moment we are not in a position to tell you everything on the public record that is occurring. Based on the behaviour of the Labor Party lately, I am not sure we could trust you anyway.

**Ms Butler** - Stop being patronising.

**Mr FERGUSON** - The fact is, we are not stopping it, we are exploring it and we are actively speaking to real proponents, Ms Butler.

**Ms Butler** - You are so patronising. We would be more than happy to work with you if you were not so patronising.

**Mr FERGUSON** - That is what is occurring. When you are caught out, that is no defence for you.

When the time is right and there is an active application, we will seek funding from Australian Government agencies including the Clean Energy Finance Corporation and the Australian Renewable Energy Agency. The developments, as I have said, are commercial-in-confidence. I hope we can get at least one up, and we will be working to achieve that if it is at all possible. We are not able to provide a guarantee, nobody can, but we are focused on doing that, and ensuring that the state is as best positioned as it can be to achieve one of those developments.

On the Burnie port, we have been through this, and yet Labor persists with their false claims. Here is an overriding question for the Labor Party: why didn't Labor match our commitments to the Burnie port?

Maybe in a federal election context you cannot do everything. You cannot match everything. But why rubbish the investments the Liberal Morrison Government have made and are making with our support? Why claim there is not a cent going into Burnie port, when there is \$40 million going into the Burnie port that we helped achieve. If you think the Tasmanian taxpayer should pay for that instead of the Morrison Government, you go and explain that to the people of Triabunna that you put out of work. I say to the Leader of the Opposition, it is a good outcome.

**Ms White** - So \$80 million for a 15-year strategy, zero dollars from you.

**Mr FERGUSON** - We will come to that. More of your mistruths. You have built a career on telling mistruths, I say to the Leader of the Opposition. But the record is different, the facts are different, and I can see how uncomfortable you are about your own record on this.

The port is important to us. It has become very important in respect of the highest volume of trade, including both bulk and containerised goods. It is a jewel in our port crown. Burnie is critical to our growing mining industry, which is growing under our Government, and wasn't growing under your government with the Greens, with the vast majority of our mineral exports leaving from this port to markets. That is why we helped to achieve, lobby for, did the work - not the lazy Labor

way. We did the work. We worked with Gavin Pearce and received a great commitment with the federal Morrison Government, and I am very glad that they were returned. That was a very good result for Tasmania.

**Ms O'Connor** - And a lot of children cried. It made a lot of young people cry.

**Mr FERGUSON** - Not at all because of that. The Morrison Government's commitments to our state are second to none, and a Labor government would have been a terrible threat. That is why Tasmanians voted the way they did. We welcome the commitment. I am frankly surprised that the state Opposition would make a claim that it should be the state budget paying for that new ship loader. It is a weird claim to make. We are glad we have made it, and it is a good thing.

**Ms White** - Don't misrepresent me. You are misrepresenting me and what I have said. There is not a cent of state money going into the \$80 million required for the master plan, not even in your 10-year pipeline.

**Mr FERGUSON** - You are rubbishing the fact that it is not state money. It is only for Rebecca White and her Labor Party to explain why they did not match it. It is not in your state budget because you do not have one. You are too lazy to make one.

**Ms White** - It's not in your 10-year pipeline.

**Mr FERGUSON** - You have a lot to say, but you do not deliver. No alternative budget, so what claim can you make, seriously? Your alternative budget opportunity, which the Greens at least do every single year. They do the work, they only have one-fifth of the members you have, and yet they do the work - the real opposition, frankly. They do an alternative budget. Did you put a ship loader in? Probably not.

**Ms O'Connor** - A what? No, we didn't.

**Mr FERGUSON** - Ms O'Connor, in fairness to you, you did not have to, because it is being fully paid for by the Morrison Government. However, Ms White thinks that the state Government should be funding the things the Morrison Government has been prepared to fund.

The Port of Burnie is very significant to our growing forestry industry, which Rebecca White tried to shut down, as well as being the home Tasmanian port for Toll Shipping. I noticed beautiful new ships from Toll - a \$200 million investment - in the backdrop on the day they went out to rubbish the Burnie port. They are larger, faster, low-emission vessels and the port site infrastructure includes berth deepening.

That new Toll ship would not have been in the background of Ms White's Burnie press conference, where she desperately tried to scramble to keep her leadership intact. Those investments only happened after we cancelled the Labor-Greens instructions to TT-Line to smash the private trade on Bass Strait. That ship would not have been there but for this Government. If your Labor-Greens government had continued, you would have smashed the private trade on Bass Strait, so egg again all over your face.

Burnie is an increasingly popular cruise ship destination, with 39 vessels due to visit. The discomfort is palpable, but this is a mess of the Labor Party, not anyone else. Thirty-nine vessels, and why is that? I cannot help but remind Ms White that we have made a multi-million dollar

investment. I believe it is just short of \$2 million for the extra dolphin at Burnie port, funded by this Government. That is a lot of cents. You said not a single cent. That is a lot of cents that is bringing tourists to Burnie. That is great. The beautiful city of Burnie. It is great that 39 of the largest ships are able to visit one of our smallest communities. It is a beautiful city. It has come a long way.

I also remind the Leader of the Opposition that in her error-riddled statement on Burnie port, she has said there was not a cent in our pipeline document for the Burnie port. On project number 205 in the pipeline document, you can see \$35 million outlined in the new high-capacity - you think Tassie should pay for it, do you?

**Ms White** - No, you just need to be truthful.

**Mr FERGUSON** - No-one is telling lies except you, Ms White, because we are clear in the pipeline document about the source of funds.

**Ms White** - But the state Government has not funded those projects.

**Mr FERGUSON** - Do not accuse others of lying when you have made a career out of it.

Second, on project 180, \$6 million outlined for an expansion of the mineral concentrate ship port. That is a lot of dollars. It is a lot of cents. How did the Leader of the Opposition get it so wrong? The TasPorts Port Master Plan, which was released last year, included three -

**Ms White** - You are taking credit for the local council, the Burnie City Council.

**Mr FERGUSON** - I know your greatest problem is not the Government. It is actually David O'Byrne. I understand that, but at least he has left now. You can relax for a little while. I want to finish this point. We know he has you. You are on borrowed time, but I am explaining to you through this debate how you are so wrong about Burnie port. I know you are uncomfortable. You are running down Burnie port. You are running it down. You are running down the community. You are damaging confidence. You are basically telling people that it is doom and gloom for Burnie. I want to put on the record you are wrong.

**Ms White** - You have forgotten Burnie.

**Mr FERGUSON** - You are wrong. I want to finish the point. TasPorts' release last year included three major projects, one of which was to upgrade the port of Burnie to accommodate Toll's larger ships. That is in the master plan. Ms White says that the Government is not proceeding with the master plan. The work was completed this year, Ms White.

**Ms White** - What about all the other projects, the \$80 million? Explain it.

**Mr FERGUSON** - Again, when you call us out, it is better to just remain silent and quietly think about how you do not repeat the mistake again, but you missed it. Again you are just trying to run down Will Hodgman. You are trying to run down the Government, but you are actually running down our state. You are running down Burnie, when there are big investments, good investments, including the Toll ships, which is only possible because the new government that replaced yours cancelled, instructed that the previous instruction be not continued with, to smash the private trade, and that is what you tried to do.

**Ms White** - I do not believe any instruction to do such a thing. You are lying again.

**Mr FERGUSON** - Maybe you are not aware of your own history. I am happy to suffer your accusations, your insults, but the facts tell a very sad story for your history.

**Ms White** - You should speak the facts then.

**Mr FERGUSON** - Ms White, I will continue to tell the truth and I encourage you to start.

Under the Port Master Plan, TasPorts will invest \$80 million at the Port of Burnie to deliver a significant increase in capacity at Tasmania's primary container port. As part of the works, TasPorts aims to mitigate future berth congestion as a result of increased business demand, forestry mining and cruise ships. Key projects which are being completed at the Port of Burnie under the master plan include significant capital dredging. Further dredging work is also scheduled over the coming year to enable access for larger vessels carrying woodchips and forestry products.

I hope that puts to bed the claim Ms White continues to make that there is no investment at the Burnie port. Finally on ports -

**Ms White** - There is no state Government-funded projects in your 10-year infrastructure pipeline. That is the truth.

**Mr FERGUSON** - Oh dear, she is not giving up. When proven wrong, sometimes it is better not to continue repeating the claim.

**Ms White** - You have just proven my point.

**Mr FERGUSON** - Finally, on the ports matter, I cannot overlook the other matter that was raised by the Leader of the Opposition in her error-riddled statement at the weekend, desperately trying to cling to power. TasPorts does continue in relation to the construction of an international container terminal. TasPorts continues to explore the proposal with a number of interested parties and the Government welcomes any opportunity to develop direct container shipping services.

However, given that it was only last weekend, if the Leader of the Opposition had any honesty or integrity, if she was genuine in her support of such an opportunity, perhaps she will explain to Tasmanians, to the House perhaps, why on the same day as her day out in front of the blue ships, her party State Council supported a motion to effectively regulate against the possibility of direct international shipping from a Tasmanian port.

**Ms White** - Explain more, go on.

**Mr FERGUSON** - That is what happens when you are run by the unions. This is very hypocritical of the Leader to even mention it. On the one hand she supports a motion written by the hardest line unions that locks in higher costs and more red tape, and the protection from competition, by defining all shipping that comes to Tasmania as coastal shipping. Then in the next breath you call for the construction of an international container terminal, frankly, which you have just made a development impossible, because of you doing the bidding of the faceless hard men of the union movement -



**Ms White** - It is so you pay people properly; so that you do not rip off foreign workers. You are for ripping off foreign workers, are you?

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER** - Order, Ms White.

**Mr FERGUSON** - that prop up your leadership, at least for now. This surely is the definition of hypocrisy and the Leader of the Opposition with all of the blather that is coming from that corner of the Chamber at the moment just demonstrates you do not have a plan. You do not have a policy, you do not have an alternative budget, you do not have any credibility, you do not have any leadership skill, and you do not have any ability to speak to everyday Tasmanians. You have actually forgotten who your base used to be in my grandfather's day when your blue collar conservatives would have voted Labor. Your DLP-ers would have voted Labor, but you have forgotten those people.

By your behaviour during this debate you have clearly shown that you have also forgotten your own history, your recent history. You have not apologised for your job-destroying forestry deal that you did with the Greens. You have not apologised for the minerals downturn. You have not apologised to the 10 000 Tasmanians who lost their jobs. You have not apologised for destroying TAFE. You have not apologised for opposing our plan to take high schools to year 12, which is giving new life to education and less reason than ever for Tasmanian young people to feel that they have to leave the state in search of work.

**Ms White** - Are you going to apologise to 5100 people who have lost full-time work this year under you?

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER** - Order, Ms White.

**Mr FERGUSON** - The Leader of the Opposition should be condemned. That is why we will be voting against this motion and we will not be supporting it. It is a load of garbage and so is Labor's history.

[4.43 p.m.]

**Ms O'CONNOR** (Clark - Leader of the Greens) - Madam Deputy Speaker, we will not be supporting this garbage motion either. It was not put forward with the intention of anyone but Labor supporting it. It is not an attempt to be constructive or collaborative or to advance policy interests in the interests of the people of Tasmania. It is nothing more than positioning and politicking. It is riddled with untruths, as was Ms White's speech on the motion.

I am not going to talk on this very long, because it is such an inane motion. It is a waste of parliament's time, but there are just a few things that I want to say.

The Tasmanian Forest Agreement, Mr Ferguson, was an agreement that was actually struck between the timber industry's leaders and the leaders of the conservation movement. It was the timber industry that came to government in 2010 when David Bartlett was the premier and asked for help from government to coordinate a process that would assist the industry to have a sustainable future.

It was a long, fraught and difficult process. There were times when it seemed like resolution could not be reached and compromise could not be reached. Compromise in politics is not a dirty word. It is really important that when we are negotiating for an outcome we are prepared to give

and take. That is what the Tasmanian Forest Agreement was. It was a flawed agreement. It was a compromise agreement, but ultimately it gave the industry, the timber industry, a path towards a sustainable future. There is clear evidence of that. Forestry Tasmania is still seeking forest stewardship certification because it knows that. It cannot sell its products in a sustainable way on global markets without FSC.

The Tasmanian Forest Agreement also removed the loggers from half a million hectares of high conservation value carbon-banking forests. The Tasmanian Forest Agreement also extended the Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area which is integral to our wilderness brand; which draws visitors here from all over the world who recognise there is no place on earth like Tasmania.

This garbage that is coming from both sides of the House denies the truth of the positives that came out of the Tasmanian Forest Agreement. It gave industry a measure of certainty for the future. It provided pathways out of unsustainable logging practices. It established the wonderful world-leading globally recognised Derby Mountain Bike experience. It funded the new Hydrowood industry and helped us to chart a path through 30-years of conflict over native forest logging in Tasmania.

Surely, every member in this place wants us to be debating issues that affect the lives of Tasmanians, not constantly fighting and fighting over issues that with people sitting down at the table and negotiating in good faith, we can find a path through. That is what the Tasmanian Forest Agreement was and it was requested in the first instance, not by the conservation movement but by the industry which was on its knees and bleeding after the collapse of Gunns, which happened under a Labor majority government. I am not going to have history rewritten about the Tasmanian Forestry Agreement.

**Mr Ferguson** - You did not mind the TAFE history, did you?

**Ms O'CONNOR** - The TAFE history is pretty clear. It was the Greens minister for education that restored TasTAFE after what was a well-intentioned but ultimately flawed policy to create a polytechnic. The minister made sure that TasTAFE was restored and to the greatest extent possible in the middle of a global financial crisis, adequately funded.

The problem we have with this Notice of Motion, apart from the fact that it is replete with untruths and designed only to make Labor feel good about itself, is that it is more evidence that Labor does not have any intention whatsoever to achieve anything positive in this term of the parliament. Labor has backed itself into a corner where it is at war with the Speaker; it is constantly at war with the Government; it has decided that the Greens are not worth communicating or working with in any way. Labor has retreated to the trenches. We have two and a half years until the next state election and Labor clearly has made a decision that it is worth being utterly useless in this place for the next two and half years in the hope that they will scramble their way back into power in 2022.

To be honest, they do not deserve it yet. They are dishonest; they are hollow inside. They have no meaningful policy platform and they treat this place with contempt and by extension, treat the people who voted them into this place to do right by them, with contempt as well.

Let us go through the Notice of Motion that has been put forward by a Labor leader - after two and a half years in the job, this is the best that she can do. Condemns the Liberals and the Greens for failing to stand up for working people - that is completely untrue. Ms White pretends to be the

champion of working people but we have not heard anything out of Ms White in two and a half years of any substance about how jobs would be created in Tasmania. We have no plan from Labor on job generation or on how to protect the rights of working people.

If you are serious about looking after working people, you have to accept the science of global heating. There is a sign chalked up outside the Duke of Wellington Hotel, wonderful local pub, and it says, 'There are no jobs on a dead planet'. You cannot pretend to be serious about the lives of working people and Tasmanian communities if you are locked into a policy framework of climate denialism, and that is what it is.

Labor will hate being called climate deniers, but they are; you only have to look at their deeds. We have a Labor Government in Queensland that has given a big tick to the Adani mine and that last Friday afternoon, in an unprecedented move by any government in Australia, removed native title on the Carmichael mine lands. At a federal level you have Labor that is signing up to the Parliamentary Friends of Coal and at a state level, Labor's policy platform acknowledges that modelling 'suggests' climate change is happening.

No, Madam Deputy Speaker, the modelling confirms climate change is happening. The Amazon rainforest is on fire, as are the boreal forests of Siberia, while the Greenland ice sheet is melting at four times the rate that scientists told us it would. Only last week in Iceland they held a funeral service for the first glacier to disappear from the face of the Earth. Modelling does not suggest that climate change is happening. The modelling demands of us as policy makers to respond to the science. If we are serious about protecting working people, we must have a comprehensive plan to adapt and respond to climate change.

I have not heard a word about this from Ms White. I did not hear anything come out of her state conference speech on the need for this island to be climate-ready and climate-resilient. What have they done at state conference? They have buck-passed climate policy to national action. Then we had the in-house Labor scientist here, Dr Broad, suggesting that the recommendation of scientists to list two eucalypt species in Tasmania as critically endangered should be revoked. Labor has become an anti-science party.

**Dr Woodruff** - Because it gets in the way of irrigation circles.

**Ms O'CONNOR** - That is right. You cannot look after working people if you are not listening to the science, you just cannot. If you are serious about looking after working people and giving young people opportunities for the future, you recognise the increasing level of automation in industries like fish farming and forestry, and in a whole suite of areas where there are traditional blue-collar Labor voters you are seeing massive and accelerating automation of those industries and jobs being sloughed off in the name of profit. But we have heard nothing from Labor on those huge challenges facing our employment sector in Australia. There is a political point about Tasmania's unemployment rate and more carping about the Liberals, who have done nothing apparently in response to the loss of 5000 full-time jobs in the past year. I am not here to defend the Liberals.

Point 6 of the motion reads:

Agrees that when it comes to jobs the Greens are just as bad as the Liberals.

This remind me of being in high school when you had those bitchy little sessions where people would write nasty things about each other with no substance. There is no substance to that

statement. Each year we put the time in to presenting an alternative budget which lays out a plan for Tasmania's future that extends past the next election, which is as far as the two parties in this House can see. It is a jobs-generating alternative budget that looks at this island through a climate lens, as we must if we are responsible policy makers. I am not going to cop that either.

There is a particular point here. Ms White is trying to make the point that the Greens have held back jobs and investment in Tasmania for decades. That is another lie. It is the conservation movement and the Greens that have spent decades defending wild Tasmania, defending the forests, defending our coastlines and strengthening Tasmania's clean, green brand. The first person to say the words 'clean and green' was Christine Milne back in the Wesley Vale days. Which sectors are wholly dependent on Tasmania's clean, green brand? The agricultural sector, which last time I checked is worth about \$1.5 billion each year to Tasmania and is wholly dependent on our remarkable, wonderful, hard-fought, clean, green brand.

Madam Deputy Speaker, which other sector is wholly dependent on our brand? The tourism sector. People do not come here to see clear-felled coupes or dams where there used to be critically endangered species, or canal estates or fish farms ringing the coastline. They do not come here for that. They come here because they know there is nowhere in the world like Tasmania: nowhere as beautiful and as wild, as quirky, as safe and as peaceful. When visitors are surveyed about why they come here, the word that is used most frequently by visitors to this island is 'wilderness'. They come here because of an ideal of Tasmanian wilderness, and yet we have two parties in this place that do not stay true to the ideal of wilderness or the fact that wilderness is something you could lose so easily and never get back.

We have been attacked by Labor and the Liberals for our opposition to the privatisation of public protected areas. There is plenty of science - I have had it at the Estimates table - which is very clear that wilderness requires protection and has attributes about remoteness and intactness which must be upheld or those places are no longer wilderness. Lake Malbena will no longer be a wilderness when you have between 100 and 200 chopper flights going in and out every year.

If Labor was serious about looking after regional jobs, they would be saying to private developers, 'Why don't you put your developments in the towns and regional centres that sit outside protected areas, so you can provide that stimulus into those communities and into those local and regional economies?' But no, we have a model under the Expressions of Interest process which will see wealthy tourists being flown into a spot - for example, let us say it is Lake Malbena. They will arrive at Launceston Airport, there will be a special transport by the developer to the location for the helicopter take-off and they will fly into Lake Malbena, stay there for a few days, and fly out.

There is no stimulus to regional economies through tourism developments that, like Ian Johnson's proposal for the south coast track, are remote from towns and centres that are crying out for stimulus. If you are serious about looking after regional Tasmania and the jobs in regional Tasmania, you will be directing private developers and commercial interests to build their tourism accommodations outside protected areas.

We would argue - and I say this to Luke Martin from the Tourism Industry Council often because he cannot help himself and devolves into kneejerk attacks on the Greens - the tourism industry should be on its knees thanking the conservation movement for the hard work of decades to protect what it is that makes this island unique in the world. Instead, what we get is environmentalists and the Greens being vilified. Well, we sleep pretty well at night, Madam Deputy Speaker. I sleep very well at night, knowing that my vote contributed towards the extension of the

Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area. I sleep very well at night knowing that my vote contributed towards the Tasmanian Forest Agreement, which gave the industry and this island, for the first time in decades, an opportunity to breathe out, an opportunity for peace, and to have a look at other ways of doing forestry.

Earlier this week I sat down with representatives of Forico and New Forests and it is exciting when you have ethical timber companies working in Tasmania with a sustainability lens, working in the plantation sector committed to reforestation, committed to real downstream processing. It is exciting, but how possible would it have been if we had not have signed up to the Tasmanian Forest Agreement? This is a junk motion and we will not be supporting it.

**Time expired.**

**The House divided -**

AYES 9

Dr Broad  
Ms Butler  
Ms Dow (Teller)  
Ms Haddad  
Ms Houston  
Mr O'Byrne  
Ms O'Byrne  
Ms Standen  
Ms White

NOES 14

Ms Archer  
Mr Barnett  
Ms Courtney  
Mr Ferguson  
Mr Gutwein  
Mr Hodgman  
Mr Jaensch  
Ms O'Connor  
Mrs Petrusma  
Mr Rockliff  
Mrs Rylah (Teller)  
Mr Shelton  
Mr Tucker  
Dr Woodruff

**Motion negatived.**

## **MOTION**

### **Chinese Government Control - Motion Negatived**

[5.05 p.m.]

**Ms O'CONNOR** (Clark - Leader of the Greens) - Madam Deputy Speaker, I move -

That the House:

1. Notes with admiration the struggle of young people in Hong Kong for a more free future and recognises their legitimate fear of Chinese Government control.
2. Agrees the Chinese Government is an oppressive regime that uses fear and intimidation tactics to suppress dissent.

3. Further notes with concern the recent reports of vehicles in Tasmania with Chengguan municipal police markings.
4. Recognises that to many Chinese people, the Chengguan local police force represents arbitrary arrest, detention and violent oppression under the Chinese Government.
5. Further agrees the timing and nature of these reports of fake Chinese police cars across the country suggest that they are profoundly unlikely to be unconnected 'jokes'.
6. Further notes comments made by former residents of Hong Kong now living in Tasmania that the sight of this vehicle evoked great fear.
7. Asserts that foreign powers do not have the right to infringe on the safety and security of citizens and guests of Tasmania.
8. Will not tolerate the continued harassment and intimidation tactics being used by Chinese Government-aligned individuals and organisations in Tasmania.
9. Calls on the Attorney-General to develop an amendment Bill to ban in Tasmania, the impersonation of any law enforcement agency of any jurisdiction.

We will be requiring a vote on this motion and it is my hope that this is something all members of the House can agree on.

Two weeks ago we received a call from a Tasmanian from Hong Kong who had seen outside the window of his unit in North Hobart a car that had the markings on it of a much-feared municipal police force on mainland China called Chengguan. We also know that a call was made to my colleague, the member for Clark, Ms Haddad's office at the time by the same person expressing the same concern and, regrettably, that concern went nowhere.

We recognised that this was a serious and sinister attempt to intimidate people from Hong Kong and potentially people also from the democratic nation of Taiwan, people from Tibet and Uighurs, people from Xinjiang, or East Turkestan province in northern China, where around 2 million innocent people are being detained. There are Uighur people living in Tasmania. The person who rang us, the Tasmanian from Hong Kong, said he saw that car faked up as a Chengguan police car and it evoked in him enormous fear. I also spoke to a student from Hong Kong on Sunday night who showed me other pictures of the same vehicle faked up as a police car and he said, 'It made me feel very, very scared'.

This needs to be seen in the context of increasing volatility in Hong Kong, an inspiring movement for freedom and democracy, and the fact that at university campuses around the country there have been rallies in support of Hong Kongers and attempts by the Chinese government through its proxies here to intimidate people at those rallies, and similar fake police cars have been spotted in Melbourne, Adelaide and Perth.

People might get up and make a contribution on this debate and say it was just a joke and why would we take anything like this seriously, but it is not a joke when it makes people who have come here to live in peace and safety feel terrified and it is not a joke when it is clearly part of a concerted

effort that is happening around the country to intimate people who support the pro-democracy protesters in Hong Kong.

I am certain any member of this place who watched *Four Corners* on Monday night would agree that the protests in Hong Kong are both terrifying and inspiring. For anyone who did not watch *Four Corners*, it was Sophie McNeill's outstanding report filmed over the last couple of weeks in Hong Kong and she was the only person who appeared in that report who was not a Hong Konger.

We heard the stories of students and academics and people who recognise that if they do not fight they will lose their city and all their freedoms. The Chinese government has made it very clear that they are prepared to use lethal force to suppress the push for freedom and democracy that is being generated by young people in Hong Kong.

The movement in Hong Kong is extraordinary. It is a leaderless movement, it is organic and it is highly democratic because all the protesters communicate with each other through online platforms where they get to vote and have a say on how that day's protests or actions will be rolled out.

I watched *Four Corners* the other night with my heart pounding for the citizens of Hong Kong but I also saw in that movement, something that should give activists all over the world hope and lessons on how to make change. You have an organic movement that is totally committed, young people who know that their entire future rests on this fight.

At risk of being pulled up for having a prop in the place, I have some images, one from the front page of the *Mercury* of the faked up Chengguan police car and another from the same vehicle which was parked outside the University of Tasmania.

I refer to an academic paper prepared by the Associate Professor of Department of Government and Political Administration at the Chinese University of Hong Kong, Mr Xi Chen. I quote to you some extracts of his paper which I hope will help members understand why these faked up vehicles have evoked such feelings of fear and insecurity in people who have come here from Hong Kong and other parts of China where the Chinese Government is oppressing people and seeking to suppress that innate and insuppressibly human desire for freedom.

The paper says:

Informal coercive tactics play an important role in maintaining political and social order in authoritarian regimes today, a fact variously attributed to the state's incapacity to monopolise coercive force and to the strategic concealment of repression from international society.

The Chengguan police service is quite unique in that it is a local, or municipal level police service. The paper goes on to say:

The government agency typically tasked with enforcement of urban management rules around vending, traffic, the use of public space, is called the Chengguan Bureau or more officiously the Bureau of Comprehensive Law Enforcement.

While Chengguan bureaus are responsible for many challenging tasks, they are generally understaffed and face strict limitations on the use of force. Like the Sinn Fein system, the Chengguan system suffers from a built-in inadequacy in authority and coercive power.

Ironically, this theoretically constrained law enforcement agency has become notorious in China for the violence and abuse doled out in its name. As one foreign journalist comments, and I quote:

While they wield less power than the police, they become notorious for violence. Hardly a week goes by during which at least a beating by *chengguan* officers is not reported in some Chinese city.

The word '*chengguan*' has even taken on an alternative meaning in Chinese. Don't be too '*chengguan*' is an appeal not to bully or terrorise.

In other words, Chengguan has literally become synonymous with violence.

My final word note from Mr Chen's academic paper in the training manual for the Chengguan, and this is a publicly available document to those researchers who go looking for it, the training manual titled 'The Practice of City Administrator Law Enforcement' says:

In dealing with the subject, take care to leave no blood on the face, no wounds on the body and no people in the vicinity.

Despite the intended secrecy of the manual, the Beijing Bureau of Urban Management acknowledged its authenticity.

That vehicle, faked up to frighten people here, is associated with a repressive, localised police force under a totalitarian, genocidal, misogynist regime which in its training manual has instructions to leave no blood on the face, no wounds on the body and no people in the vicinity.

After we got the call from the Tasmanian from Hong Kong, and unlike Ms Haddad's office did not ignore it, we went -

**Ms HADDAD** - Point of order, Madam Deputy Speaker, under standing order 144. I object to what the member for Clark has said about me. I can provide the Chamber with information about what my office did if that is of interest to the Chamber.

**Ms O'CONNOR** - I know what your office did because the person who spoke to us said that your office suggested they call Tasmania Police.

**Ms Haddad** - That is right.

**Ms O'CONNOR** - You provided no support, no other advice, just off you go and call Tasmania Police. Is that right?

**Ms Haddad** - My office suggested that he should -



**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER** - Ms Haddad, you can raise this in your time. It is not a point of order.

**Ms O'CONNOR** - After we received the call and took it seriously, and took our responsibility to -

**Ms Haddad** - And reported it to the media.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER** - Order, Ms Haddad.

**Ms O'CONNOR** - represent all visitors to this island and all new Tasmanians, we did a bit of research on the legality of these cars. Under the Police Services Act of 2003, section 78, impersonation of a police officer is an offence but it is only if you impersonate a Tasmania police officer. Clearly, there is a deficiency in the legal protection for people from Hong Kong, Taiwan, Tibet or Uighur people who come to Tasmania.

**Ms Haddad** - That is exactly what we said to the man who contacted my office.

**Ms O'CONNOR** - Now that you have provoked me through interjection -

**Ms Haddad** - You said something that is really unfair about the people working in my office.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER** - Ms Haddad, you will be able to make a contribution to this debate soon. I cannot hear what the member is saying so I do ask that the member is shown respect.

**Ms O'CONNOR** - I was not in the Chamber last night when Ms Haddad made a contribution on the anniversary celebrations for 70 years of Communist Party rule in China. I recognise the enormous contribution that Chinese Australians have made to this island and to all of our country, the cultural and economic contribution. There are around one million Australians of Chinese descent. The contribution that that broad community has made to this country cannot be over stated.

However, to stand up in this place on the adjournment and to laud an event that was organised by the Melbourne Consulate, which is recognised by the federal parliament as being a proxy for the Chinese communist government and its United Front work, on the day that the ICAC hearings in Sydney exposed Labor's utter complicity in the foreign influence and interference attempts of a totalitarian regime in this country, and not mention the struggle in Hong Kong, tells us a lot that we need to know about the problem that Labor has with naming up and being honest about the government of China.

When you look at the protests that are happening in Hong Kong, just as it was in Tiananmen Square in 1989, one of the catch cries of the protesters, these young desperate people, is 'tell the truth about China'. We are privileged members of a fragile, imperfect democracy and a free country and that places on our shoulders an enormous responsibility to speak up for people who are fighting for democracy every week.

Silence from the member for Clark on the Hong Kong protests. Talking up an event that was organised by a proxy for the propaganda department of a totalitarian regime is an abrogation of Ms Haddad's responsibility to defend the struggle for democracy wherever it happens in the world.

I was sent an article from ABC News and it is an opinion piece by Kevin Yam, a lawyer who grew up in China and was interviewed for the *4 Corners* report. I am going to read a little bit of it because it is really important that we bell the cat on Labor and its complicity and silence on the struggle for democracy in Hong Kong, its silence on the fragility of democracy in Taiwan, and its abject silence on the plight of the Uighur people. Kevin Yam in an opinion piece says these things:

Before I returned to my birthplace, Hong Kong, to pursue my legal career 18 years ago, I spent 15 years growing up in Melbourne, during which I was an Australian Labor Party supporter. Even after I left Australia and no longer voted in Australian elections I continued to cheer the ALP on from afar.

When it comes to standing up to authoritarians, the ALP has form.

John Curtin led the fight against fascists during World War II. Ben Chifley dealt firmly with Communist-infiltrated unions. Arthur Calwell spoke firmly against Communist movements. Bob Hawke sided with the US against the Soviets and he also granted asylum to all Chinese students in the aftermath of the 1989 Tiananmen Square massacre.

Mr Yam goes on to say:

With such history, if there ever were to be an archetype of people with whom Labor should firmly stand, the people of Hong Kong ought to be it.

Labor has stayed silent.

Millions of protesters in Hong Kong who have protested in recent months are fighting for the very essence of progressive values: freedom from being extradited to face trial of a non-independent judicial system, freedom from fear when exercising one's fundamental rights, the right to democratic governance. They have the courage to stand up to their authoritarian sovereign.

On July 24, peaceful pro-Hong Kong protesters at the University of Queensland were attacked by a nationalistic Chinese Communist mob.

The attack was later praised by China's Consulate-General in Brisbane.

It prompted Australia's Foreign Minister, Marise Payne, to issue a stern statement against such Chinese interference and in defence of free speech.

But the ALP was nowhere to be found.

Then came a similar but larger-scale and more expletive-laden incident in Melbourne on August 16, during which an ABC cameraman was pushed over by a pro-Communist Chinese nationalist.

Similar but smaller-scale incidents took place in other Australian cities in those few days.

What did Hong Kongers get from the ALP in the aftermath of that weekend?

Victorian Premier, Dan Andrews, who signed up to China's Belt and Road initiative, has been conspicuously silent.

As for Federal Labor, Penny Wong (who I have long highly respected) made comments about the need for a calm and mature discussion about China.

Not one word in defence of the freedom fighters in Hong Kong.

In closing, Mr Yam says:

But perhaps I should be not so surprised.

Recent hearings at the New South Wales ICAC are investigating the extent of relationships between the ALP and persons suspected of being close to the CCP.

More generally, the CCP has long sought to quell criticisms from progressives in the western world by accusing those who question its stance and actions as racist.

Does that sound familiar to you, Dr Woodruff?

**Dr Woodruff** - Yes.

**Ms O'CONNOR** - Mr Yam says:

It would not surprise me if the ALP would be subject to accusations of discrimination against mainland Chinese students and migrants if it stood more firmly in relation to Hong Kong.

That said, as someone who is proud to be ethnically Chinese, I actually find it more racist for progressives to think that Chinese people are all in the mould of the CCP and that we are culturally disinterested in democracy and human rights.

**Ms Haddad** - That is what you alleged about Tasmanian Chinese who you say are all communist spies. That is what you alleged.

**Ms O'CONNOR** - That is the most ridiculous statement and shortly I will tell you about Sunday night at Senator Nick McKim's office.

Mr Yam says:

All I ask for is that politicians in democracies such as Australia not shirk from calling out the CCP when it acts contrary to universal values of democracy and human rights, including in relation to Hong Kong.

And given their purported core values, mainstream progressive groups, including Labor, ought to be on the frontlines in speaking up for the courageous people of Hong Kong, as well as for those who stand with Hong Kongers on Australian shores.

On Sunday night in Senator McKim's office on Macquarie Street, I had the great honour to meet some young people from Hong Kong there to recreate a Lennon wall on the street frontage of Senator McKim's office. The stories they told and their courage was humbling. It was a privilege to meet these kids. They are really scared. They do not want to go home, but their home is where their family is. I note that today Senator Richard Di Natale has made a call for asylum to be granted to Hong Kong students who are in Australia now. The city they came from is no longer safe for them.

We should all be standing with the students from Hong Kong. I urge every member of this place to walk past that wall in Macquarie Street and have a look at those messages from these young Hong Kong students. You can make a contribution to the wall and put your own message up. No-one will identify you. You do not have to be as scared as they are. We could not show any of their faces and we could not identify them in any of the social media that we did. This is a profound situation that these young people are in. All they want is to live freely. Every person in this place should stand with Hong Kong.

We want this House to agree that it should be against the law for any person to impersonate any other law enforcement agency of any other country and I hope we will have support for that. No foreign power has the right to infringe on the safety and security of citizens and guests in Tasmania. We must fiercely defend our democratic foundations, we must speak truth to power and we must send a message to every person who comes to this island to live in safety and peace that we will protect them from foreign influence and threats.

We would like to see this House collectively agree that we will not tolerate the continued harassment and intimidation tactics being used by Chinese government-aligned individuals and organisations in Tasmania. We would like this House to agree that the Attorney-General should develop an amendment bill to ban in Tasmania the impersonation of any law enforcement agency of any jurisdiction.

I hope that members of this House can recognise their privilege. We talk about white privilege often and we talk about male privilege. Privilege comes in many forms. We talk about the privileges of the wealthy. There is a certain privilege and responsibility that comes from being born or living in a free, democratic country. This wonderful, flawed democracy that we live in is rare in the world. We have to defend it from threats, foreign influence and foreign interference and we have to be really clear that we will not as a society tolerate foreign actors seeking to cause fear and intimidation to people who come to Australia for peace, safety and a good life and for the freedoms that we take for granted.

As democratically elected members in a democratic parliament it is our responsibility to speak for the people of Hong Kong, Taiwan, Tibet and Xinjiang to make sure that our laws are robust, to protect the foundations of our democracy, and make sure that people who come here from Hong Kong are not allowed to be intimidated by the kind of thuggish impersonation that we saw a couple of weeks ago in North Hobart and at the University of Tasmania.

I also wrote to the Commissioner of Police about this matter, because it is very clear that the police have limited powers to protect people who have fled oppressive regimes overseas. This is an opportunity for the parliament to make sure that never again will a person who has come here for a good life from Hong Kong or Taiwan ever look out their window, or look over the street, and see such a symbol of violence and oppression.

I commend the motion to the House.

[5.31 p.m.]

**Ms ARCHER** (Clark - Minister for Justice) - Madam Deputy Speaker, there is a lot in this motion from the Leader of the Greens, Ms O'Connor, that I have great sympathy with. We do have to protect our freedoms in this country and in this state.

**Mr Rockliff** - Hear, hear.

**Ms ARCHER** - I hear a 'hear, hear' from behind from the Deputy Premier, who was out doing media around the time of what happened at UTAS.

**Ms O'Connor** - Yes, he was and made some impressively strong statements.

**Ms ARCHER** - Exactly, and expressed our concern as a Government, that everyone who lives in our state should have the right to free speech and to express their own thoughts, values and opinions as freely as they wish.

It always has to be within the confines of the law, and I stand to make a contribution today on behalf of the Government as the Attorney-General. I want to mention some factual circumstances, the current state of the law, and what is being done in this space in terms of national developments. I will also observe - with the support, I am sure, of the minister for Police, Mr Shelton - that this is largely an area for police, because we are dealing with the law enforcement agency.

A lot of this work has been developed nationally as part of the meetings held between police ministers from every state and territory, and federally. Sometimes we have a combined meeting with Attorneys-General as well, and there is crossover. Some of these things are not as straightforward as asking that I develop an amendment bill.

It is quite a detailed motion, with many points to it, that presumably because of time Ms O'Connor did not read out. It has nine different paragraphs or points, the last which falls on the Attorney-General to develop an amendment bill to ban in Tasmania the impersonation of any law enforcement agency of any jurisdiction.

There is no doubt that recent events in Hong Kong have raised concerns right around the world, including here in Tasmania. Hong Kong is a very popular destination for many millions of visitors each year from right around the world, not dissimilar to our burgeoning tourism market as well. People go there to visit the sights of Hong Kong and perhaps undertake some of its highly popular shopping. It is also a common stopover point for many Australians as they travel to and from Europe, and it is a gateway for visitors and business representatives alike to go to China.

As with the Australian Government, the Tasmanian Government urges a peaceful resolution to restore confidence in the one-country two-systems formula.

**Ms O'Connor** - It no longer exists, you know? It is one-country, one-system now.

**Ms ARCHER** - Sorry, if my notes are incorrect?

**Ms O'Connor** - You need to follow the news from Hong Kong more closely, I suggest, with respect.

**Ms ARCHER** - Thank you, Ms O'Connor. Obviously, Hong Kong's autonomy underpins international business confidence as well.

We understand that Hong Kong is a significant market for some exporters, and we are not aware of any reports which indicate that Tasmanian exporters or businesses have been affected to date. Any potential disruption to Tasmanian exports to Hong Kong may be at least partly offset by high direct exports to mainland China, as many goods are currently transhipped through Hong Kong to the mainland.

For those Tasmanians visiting Hong Kong for business or pleasure, we recommend for their own safety that they take travel advice on Smarttraveller. That foreign law enforcement and intelligence agencies have no authority in Australia is also something that I want to highlight to this House.

In terms of the concerns raised in this motion, I note and the Government notes that Tasmania Police has received correspondence from Ms O'Connor in relation to the matter, and I am advised the correspondence is being given full consideration. Tasmania Police is engaging and liaising with police services and security and intelligence organisations nationally and in other jurisdictions.

**Ms O'Connor** - Can I just ask by interjection, Attorney-General, in relation to these matters?

**Ms ARCHER** - Yes, in relation to this particular instance, and I will get on to other similar instances across Australia. For that reason I note that Mr Shelton is the responsible minister for the Ministerial Council of Police and Emergency Management, which I referred to, and it is made up of police ministers from the Commonwealth, from each state and territory, and also New Zealand. The President of the Australian Local Government Association also attends that, I understand, because of cities involvement in the regional areas.

The council meets up twice per year, with their next meeting scheduled for 20 November 2019, and I expect that will be also a topic that will be broadly or more specifically on the agenda. That particular council focuses on the broad themes of law enforcement reform and emergency management, and increased collaboration across these types of themes and indeed shared instances, so it is appropriate that the Government informs its position on any need for law reform in this area. It does deal with an overseas type of situation, so we need to base our advice nationally, so there is consistency as well to be a responsible Government.

It is important to note that it is already an offence to impersonate a police officer. Many members in this House would know, but it is important that I get this on *Hansard*. It is under Tasmanian legislation, namely the Police Service Act 2003, and section 78 deals with impersonation. I know this relates to a specific person, and indeed impersonating a member of the Tasmania Police service rather than any kind of any international police officer, but this type of instance has not occurred before in my living memory, and that is why the police are actually engaging with other agencies as well.

In respect of the specific allegations of the car to which Ms O'Connor referred, with Chinese writing on it, which I believe when translated means City Management Law Enforcement, police initially became aware of this matter on 20 August 2019, when a resident of North Hobart, who was originally from Hong Kong, reported seeing such a vehicle. That is obviously consistent with what Ms O'Connor has reported as well. Clearly that caller felt intimidated. Inquiries with that person

by Tasmania Police indicate that they were not directly approached or spoken to in any manner by anyone from the vehicle, and observed it, but obviously it caused them enormous fear.

I am also advised that officers from Tasmania Police have since spoken to the owner of the vehicle, who claims it was not his intent to cause any fear but that his marking of the vehicle was an attempt at humour, and I would say a poor attempt at humour at that.

**Ms O'Connor** - Jokes don't frighten people.

**Ms ARCHER** - No, and I accept that. The writing markers in question are available for purchase on the internet apparently, which is quite astounding in itself, but there you go, that's the internet for you. Police have provided advice as to the appropriateness of the markings and strongly suggest that they be removed. While the marking of the vehicle in this manner is currently not an offence under Tasmanian legislation, Tasmania Police will continue to monitor the situation and continue to liaise with other interstate law enforcement and national intelligence bodies in this regard. Police in other states have confirmed reported sightings of the cars with Chinese writing on them -

**Ms O'Connor** - Police vehicle markings.

**Ms ARCHER** - Yes, similar Chinese writing as the instance in question here. As has been reported publicly, in Western Australia police spoke with the owner of one such vehicle and they agreed to remove the writing from the vehicle. So far it seems to be that people are removing it. It was reported that while it is illegal to replicate the appearance of an Australian police vehicle, there is no law against decorating a car with another country's police insignia on it. South Australian police have also confirmed they have identified the owner of a vehicle which looked like a Chinese police car.

The wording of the motion as it currently is causes some difficulty because I cannot guarantee I can develop an amendment bill to ban this and the work is being done in collaboration with the National Council of Police Ministers.

**Ms O'Connor** - Can I seek some clarification by interjection? Why wouldn't the state of Tasmania and the Tasmanian parliament be able to enact a ban in this way?

**Ms ARCHER** - As I have said on a number of occasions in this place, I am not going to do law reform on the run. I would like to fully inform myself. The Police minister also needs to fully inform himself of the situation, as do his counterparts in other states. It is dealing with an international jurisdiction -

**Ms O'Connor** - No, it's dealing with the Tasmanian jurisdiction.

**Ms ARCHER** - Ms O'Connor, if it was impersonation of a Tasmanian police car, it would be quite a simple matter to ensure that that did not occur again by banning our own, but we are talking about -

**Ms O'Connor** - This is not a question of international law. This is about the intimidation of people here.

**Ms ARCHER** - We are talking about an international situation which needs to be dealt with in the appropriate manner. The appropriate investigations need to occur with other law enforcement agencies and there would need to be consistency across Australia.

**Ms O'Connor** - There is no consistency in criminal codes and crimes acts across the country.

**Ms ARCHER** - I will make the observation that the trade relationship with China and our tourism market is indeed very important to us, so we cannot have a kneejerk reaction to a situation like this without thoroughly considering law reform in the appropriate manner.

Ms O'Connor glossed over the wording of the motion and there are a number of emotive words used in it that I and the Government are not comfortable with so we will not be supporting the context of the motion.

**Ms O'Connor** - Will you make an in-principle agreement to advance this?

**Ms ARCHER** - You have the Police minister and the Attorney-General in the House. You no longer have the Deputy Premier, but I know we have made strong statements about the incidents that have occurred around our city in relation to any stifling of free speech. Any intimidation is unacceptable. The police have dealt with that incident and asked that it be removed, notwithstanding the fact that it was not unlawful, and so far is getting cooperation in that regard.

Let us not have a kneejerk reaction. Let us continue to consult with other jurisdictions and make sure that we have a consistent approach.

[5.45 p.m.]

**Dr BROAD** (Braddon) - Madam Deputy Speaker, Labor supports the rights of the people of Hong Kong to peacefully protest. However, we also have to recognise that this is a very sensitive issue. I acknowledge the comments of the Deputy Premier in terms of the rights of people who reside in Tasmania to free speech and to be able to express their opinions without fear or favour. It is a concern that there was somebody driving around with the badge of a police officer from another country on their car, because it has the potential to intimidate. We believe that no-one should feel intimidated by somebody impersonating a police officer, whether they be an Australian police officer or indeed one from another jurisdiction.

I thank the Attorney-General for her comments and it is somewhat comforting that steps have been taken to remove the sign. Hopefully we will not have this happen again. However, I would like some comments from the Attorney-General, maybe via interjection, in regard to the Police Services Act, especially section 78 which deals with impersonation. It says:

A person who is not a police officer must not do any of the following without lawful excuse or approval of the Commissioner:

- (a) wear or have in possession a police uniform or any other part of a police uniform;
- (b) wear or have in possession any uniform or badge that resembles, or is likely to be perceived as, a police uniform or badge;

...



- (d) impersonate or represent himself or herself as a police officer;

Then (f) deals with having in possession any arms, ammunition or other equipment supplied to any police officer. The penalty is a fine not exceeding 20 penalty units or a term of imprisonment not exceeding two years, or both.

In that act a police officer is defined as:

- (a) a member of the Police Service, other than a trainee or junior constable; and
- (b) a person seconded or transferred to the Police Service as a police officer;

Does that capture all police services? It is talking in very general terms.

**Ms Archer** - No, it is a Tasmanian act.

**Dr BROAD** - We could have a situation where somebody in Tasmania could be impersonating a Queensland police officer or a New South Wales police officer and then escape -

**Ms Archer** - If we did a ban it would not come under that act, because that deals with the Tasmania Police Service. It is a state jurisdictional matter under the Constitution. This is why these things need to be looked at and not done ad hoc. This is my point. There are constitutional issues.

**Dr BROAD** - I am questioning you to get your feedback in an honest -

**Ms Archer** - It only deals with the Tasmania Police Service and you wouldn't fiddle with that act.

**Dr BROAD** - Okay. Traditionally, there is a longstanding practice that issues as sensitive as this need to be tackled by the appropriate level of government. There is a longstanding tradition for states not to interfere in or, indeed, contradict government policy when it comes to international relations. I believe we really need to abide by that. We have to accept that while it may be useful in the current circumstances to take note of the realities and while we value and promote these principles, Hong Kong is a Chinese territory and China is a sovereign country and a communist regime. We have good diplomatic people-to-people trade relations with China in the full knowledge that it is a communist regime, so whatever we as individuals think about it, we do have a trading relationship with China and that is why it is a very sensitive issue.

It does nothing for our efforts to influence any change towards our values to attack China with inflammatory language in the way this motion proposes, especially point 2, which is very inflammatory.

**Ms O'CONNOR** - Point of order, Madam Deputy Speaker. The member for Braddon, apparently a scientist, has again misrepresented us. We did not attack China. Point 2 of the motion says 'agrees that the Chinese Government is an oppressive regime that uses fear and intimidation tactics'. We have not attacked China or the Chinese people. Labor needs to stop misrepresenting this.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER** - Ms O'Connor, that is not a point of order. It is Dr Broad's call.

**Dr BROAD** - That is obviously the member for Clark's opinion and I would challenge that opinion. I believe that isolating a whole country and calling them names is not particularly helpful in making a change.

We know that the one country two systems was agreed for 50 years and not forever. We do have to be mindful of what is happening here. Labor strongly believes that people should be free of intimidation or racism in any form which is why the coded dog whistling language that the Greens, as we have just heard, is appalling. As the member for Clark, Ms Haddad, was discussing in the adjournment last night, these can have real consequences for people in the community. This coded language of the Greens sometimes feels a bit like Pauline Hanson. For example, claims - and we have heard them again today - that every event held by Tasmanians of Chinese descent obviously must be funded by the Chinese Communist Party are inflammatory. As are the claims of every Chinese citizen in Australia must be a spy.

**Ms O'CONNOR** - Point of order, Madam Deputy Speaker, standing order 144. Have some respect. Again, Dr Broad is misrepresenting the Greens' position completely. We talked specifically about an event the night before last which was organised by the Chinese Consulate in Melbourne which is recognised by the federal parliament as an arm, or doing the work, of the United Front department of the Chinese Government.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER** - Ms O'Connor, I know you are passionate about this matter but it is not a point of order. Please do not interrupt.

**Ms O'Connor** - There was a point that needed to be made because he is misrepresenting us and being racist to boot.

**Dr BROAD** - No, you are being racist. You are blind to your own bias. That is the thing. You are absolutely blind to your own bias. Coming into this place and making claims like you have done in here -

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER** - Through the Chair please, Dr Broad.

**Dr BROAD** - Madam Deputy Speaker, making claims that Chinese citizens are under the influence of the Chinese Communist Party, linking every single investor of Chinese origin directly back to the Chinese Communist Party, these things have an effect on people. Ms Haddad has heard numerous instances where people of Chinese descent and Chinese tourists are feeling intimidated because of this coded dog whistling -

**Ms O'Connor** - Aldi bag anyone, \$100 000 in an Aldi bag.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER** - Order.

**Dr BROAD** - You cannot resile from it. You have a bias. Through the Chair, the Greens have a bias. They do not understand their own bias. They cannot see through it.

**Ms O'Connor** - A bias for democracy.

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

**Ms O'Connor** - People who are fighting for freedom.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER** - Order. Ms O'Connor, I do not want to throw you out.

**Dr BROAD** - It is exactly this language that saw election signs being vandalised during the local government elections. This is cause and effect so congratulations to the Greens. Congratulations, but the 'I have Chinese friends' defence just does not cut it. This is quite typical of the Greens. We have to deal with this. The grown ups in the room have to deal with issues like this very sensitively. Penny Wong, for example, has stated that this should be dealt with by our federal colleagues. Penny Wong said:

We are deeply concerned with the situation in Hong Kong. Labor Australia believes in the right of people everywhere to express their views through peaceful assembly.

She followed on to say that she urged authorities to exercise maximum restraint. We need to have this tackled by the appropriate level of government.

The rest of this motion is typical Greens. The Greens can be accurately described as a political placebo. You can define a placebo as an inert substance or treatment which is designed to have no therapeutic value. In other words something completely useless designed to convince people that they should feel better. That is what a placebo does and that is exactly what the Greens do. It is a political party which has no ability to make changes by themselves. A placebo is completely useless but it will make 10 per cent of people feel better even if it says 'placebo' on the bottle. This is an exact case. We have no ability in this place to enforce regime change in China or indeed in Hong Kong.

**Dr Woodruff** - So you have no ability to do anything on any issue because you are not in government. Just go back to Braddon.

**Dr BROAD** - This is the State Parliament of Tasmania. You have to get a bit of a grip. Another name for what the Greens is doing here is called 'virtue signalling'. It is the practice of saying or writing things that show you have correct opinions about something. The Greens are talking about issues simply to show how informed they are and how much they care. Basically, but critically, no-one actually has to do anything. That is what virtue signalling is.

Virtue comes merely from the words, merely by signalling we support the people of Hong Kong - and we do support the people Hong Kong - but that is all you can do. That is all the Greens can do. The Greens cannot effect any change in this instance in terms of regime change in Hong Kong or China.

Now, there is the potential for a bill to be drafted to make it an offence to impersonate a police officer from another jurisdiction or another country. That is something that we could actually do and I am satisfied from the conversation that the Attorney-General put forward that it is something that we should consider. I also agree - because this seems to be happening in other states - we need to have a consistent approach across jurisdictions. The inflammatory language that is contained in this motion in terms of things like number two is simply not helpful.

**Ms O'Connor** - That is a statement of fact.

**Dr BROAD** - Yes. We have the moral superiority of the Greens where their world view is the only correct view and any other opinion is morally wrong. Time and time again when we come

into this place we have this blind self-righteousness which is at the heart of the Greens movement. Any other opposing view or opinion is held by anyone else simply because the Greens know the right version of the truth. The Greens talk down to people like they are stupid for not agreeing with them on every point.

**Ms O'CONNOR** - Point of order, Madam Speaker, standing order 144. I want to point out to the member for Braddon that unlike his party we do not take donations of \$100 000 in Aldi bags.

**Madam SPEAKER** - Can you just hold while I check. Order. I just want to check standing order 144.

**Ms O'CONNOR** - I take offence.

**Madam SPEAKER** - The member has taken offence. Can you apologise?

**Ms O'Connor** - Just tell the truth. Just speak straight.

**Dr BROAD** - I am not exactly sure what I am supposed to be withdrawing.

**Madam SPEAKER** - I am not certain what you are apologising for either but you have been asked to apologise.

**Dr BROAD** - I will withdraw. I do not know what exactly but I will withdraw it.

You honestly believe that the only way people can disagree with the Greens is because they are poorly informed or stupid. There are people who are living a different reality. Food, shelter, getting a job, being able to provide for your family is very important. The Greens are only really ever a luxury. It is no coincidence that the brunt of the Greens' job destroying policies are felt greatly in regional Tasmania where the Greens vote is the lowest. It is the massive irony of Australia in the Greens' politics that in areas where there is literally the least environment the Greens vote is the highest. The more concrete you have and the more high-rises the more Greens voters you have.

**Ms Archer** - How is your vote going in regional areas?

**Dr BROAD** - It is improving. Ask Mrs Rylah how it went last election. We have to have these issues dealt with at the appropriate level but we have the Greens who are just virtue signalling so they will be able to go to their constituency their 10 per cent, the 10 per cent that they make feel better by these largely symbolic motions that they continually bring in -

**Ms O'Connor** - It is not symbolic. It has an action at the end unlike the crap you debated and tabled in the last private members time.

**Dr BROAD** - An action at the end which we have dealt with. What about point number two, you are arguing for regime change in this place. How can we change the regime in China from the Tasmanian parliament?

**Ms O'Connor** - We can support people who are seeking freedom and democracy in China.

**Dr BROAD** - We can do something symbolic, everybody. Thank you. We can do something symbolic and that is going to change everything.

**Ms O'Connor** - Here is Kevin Yam's article. He has just asked for people like us to stand with the people of Hong Kong.

**Dr BROAD** - There are other people. This is the whole thing. You pick an example. I do not know the individual you are talking about but there are other Chinese people who have expressed to us their concern about the behaviour of the Greens, their coded Hanson-like language with those racist undertones that is resulting in people feeling intimidated and not leaving their homes. This is actually happening.

What about the Greens coming in here and criticising every single project that has any level of Chinese investment? You continually come here and talk about VDL company. Great example. VDL company. It is Chinese. Okay, bad, bad. Laguna Bay is another company. You are blind to your own bias.

**Ms O'CONNOR** - Point of order, Madam Speaker. So the House is really clear on our concern about VDL, it is actually owned, effectively through banks, by the Chinese government. Of course, we are concerned.

**Dr BROAD** - Thank you. You have proved my point, here we go. The member for Clark has literally proven my point.

**Madam SPEAKER** - Sorry, that is not a point of order.

**Time expired.**

**The House divided -**

AYES 2

Ms O'Connor  
Dr Woodruff (Teller)

NOES 21

Ms Archer  
Mr Barnett  
Dr Broad  
Ms Butler  
Ms Courtney  
Ms Dow  
Mr Ferguson  
Mr Gutwein  
Ms Haddad  
Mr Hodgman  
Ms Houston  
Mr Jaensch  
Mr O'Byrne  
Ms O'Byrne  
Mrs Petrusma  
Mr Rockliff  
Mrs Rylah (Teller)  
Mr Shelton  
Ms Standen  
Mr Tucker  
Ms White

**Motion negatived.**

## **ADJOURNMENT**

### **Grievance - Allegation regarding Assistance from Ms Haddad's Electorate Office**

[6.05 p.m.]

**Ms HADDAD** (Clark) - Madam Speaker, in the absence of sufficient time to make a contribution on the private members' time just concluded, I wanted to follow up on some of the points very passionately made by many of the speakers.

First of all, there was an allegation -

**Madam SPEAKER** - Ms Haddad, you cannot revisit a debate.

**Ms HADDAD** - I did make a point of order during the debate that I felt personally aggrieved by some of the statements that the member for Clark said about me and what I said -

**Madam SPEAKER** - Hold that thought for one second, please. You are addressing a grievance?

**Ms HADDAD** - I am addressing a grievance.

**Madam SPEAKER** - That is fine.

**Ms HADDAD** - Thank you.

There was an allegation that a call made to my office was ignored, from the same member of the public who made the allegations as outlined in the member for Clark's notice of motion. That is a really unfair characterisation of what occurred.

He did call my office and he spoke to my staff member, who I will not name here, but she is a young 21-year-old, very passionate about her job, and very passionate about assisting people who come into our office. We have developed a very warm and welcoming office where I have fostered a culture of people being listened to, and listened to with respect, and that is how my staff behave.

In this instance my staff member expressed concern about what she heard, and suggested that the member of the public alert the police, which he then did, and as we heard from the Attorney-General the police, as a result of his making contact with them at the suggestion of my staff member, are acting on this, as they should.

Bringing these matters into the public sphere, bringing them into parliament and grandstanding, is not actually going to assist that member of the public, but speaking to the police, as we heard from the Attorney-General on the debate, has assisted that member of the public. I take the Attorney-General at her word that the police are aware, acting and monitoring, and will continue to monitor that alleged behaviour.

As Dr Broad explained, we agree that it is a serious concern to think that anybody would be impersonating any member of any police force. The Attorney-General through her contribution

said it would not be impossible that she would consider law reform in this area. She does not support law reform on the run. I argue that what has been called for in the motion would not be law reform on the run. It is asking to develop, or in principle give agreement to investigating, some possible law reform in this area, which we would be very interested to see as well.

I will finish by saying - because I realise now I cannot make the substantive points I wanted to; Dr Broad did that very well for us - that I do take personal grievance to the allegation that my office did not follow up on that phone call. I have a very passionate, very capable, 21-year-old staff member who I believe has been impugned in this debate in the allegation that my office did nothing, or that my office fobbed off that constituent. That is not the case.

As a result of the call, we did not make a media play, we did not make a parliament play. Instead we advised that he speak to the police, which he has done, and as we heard from the Attorney-General, the police are acting on those allegations now, which was the right course of action.

I stand here to defend my staff member, who works very hard.

### **Live Life Gala Ball - Alex Gadomski Tasmanian Fellowship**

#### **Maddie Riewoldt's Vision**

#### **R U OK Day**

[6.09 p.m.]

**Ms ARCHER** (Clark - Minister for Justice) - Madam Speaker, I want to change the tone a bit. We mentioned the Live Life Gala Ball that I attended with the Premier on Saturday night, raising funds for the Alex Gadomski Tasmanian Fellowship for research in bone marrow failure syndromes.

Many of us know the Gadomskis. Paul Gadomski is the manager at Cripps Bakery. If I was him, I would be telling you that I have been making bread since 18--, whatever the year is. He does tend to do that. It is a fellowship, named after his and his wife Janet's eldest son, Alexander, who at 21 years of age, after a five-year battle with aplastic anaemia followed by MDS, died as a result of bone marrow failure, which is the essence of the condition he had. We do not know enough about bone marrow failure. There is a lot of research going on and through Maddie Riewoldt's Vision, a Tasmanian research fellowship after the funds raised from last year's ball will start in finding a cure for these failures.

The fellowship has been named in honour of Alex Gadomski, who through his illness still studied. I had the opportunity to assist at one stage throughout his journey when he was having difficulty being able to complete his years 11 and 12, back in my opposition days, and managed to ensure that he could.

I wanted to mention that and the vital work that is being done and Maddie Riewoldt's Vision. If the Premier was behind me he would be prompting me with the figure we have put into it as a government, and indeed the federal government has put a significant amount of money into developing more research through and setting up Maddie Riewoldt's Vision, which has only existed for a few years. We know who Maddie Riewoldt is, with that famous football surname. It was her

vision as well as Alex, both very strong characters who suffered from a similar illness, which caused both of their unfortunate early deaths.

I wanted to highlight the importance of the work being done in this area for members of this House and to thank the Gadowskis for their vision, drive and determination. They know it was very special because it was Alex's birthday as well and there was not a dry eye in the house when that occurred. I am not sure how much was raised on the night but the target was \$130 000, which is a significant amount for any ball of that nature. They have their ways and means of getting extra money out of you, which is entirely appropriate on the night.

Last year they raised an enormous \$190 000 which far exceeded their expectations and ensured that the fellowship would occur. They had Professor David Ritchie speak on the night and answering questions and I had an opportunity to sit next to him. He is the head of bone marrow transplants at the Royal Melbourne Hospital, so he was a pretty significant person to sit next to for the night and learn as much as I could, although I have not remembered it all. He was Alex's specialist and I believe Maddie's as well. Alex wanted to be a medical researcher himself to solve bone marrow failure.

I wanted to mention to members not to forget R U OK Day on 12 September. I thought I would get in early. There was an event at Glenorchy on Sunday which I attended, as did the Mayor of Glenorchy, in encouraging people to get involved in R U OK's vision, which is that there be a world where we are all connected and protected from suicide. Their mission is to inspire and empower everyone to meaningfully connect with people around them and support anyone struggling with life. Their goals are to boost confidence to meaningfully connect and ask about life's ups and downs, nurture ourselves with responsibility to regularly connect and support others, strengthen our sense of belonging because we know people are there for us, and to be relevant, strong and dynamic.

They also encourage people to trust the signs and ask, 'Are you okay?'. Starting an R U OK conversation is four simple steps. One, ask 'Are you Okay?', two, listen, three, encourage action, and four, check in. I thought I would mention that to members of this House to put that on our calendars.

### **R U OK Day**

[6.14 p.m.]

**Mr TUCKER** (Lyons) - Madam Speaker, I feel I am going to do a repeat in some ways with this speech because I am actually talking about R U OK as well.

On Saturday 31 August I had the pleasure of attending an R U OK Day. R U OK is an Australian not-for-profit suicide prevention organisation founded in 2009 by advertiser Gavin Larkin, who is a cousin to my wife. Gavin experienced the suicide of his father in 1995, subsequently resulting in the co-creation of R U OK with Janina Nearn in 2009.

The R U OK slogan was established from extensive research. This research proved that communication with others positively impacts one's mental state. Gavin Larkin believed that getting connected and staying connected is the best thing anyone could do for themselves and for those who may be at risk. R U OK works together with experts in suicide prevention and mental illness, as well as government departments, corporate leaders, teachers, universities, students and community groups. Its activities also align with the Australian Government's life framework.



In a 12-month period it is estimated that 65 000 Australians make a suicide attempt, with an average of 2320 people dying by suicide every year. In fact, around 45 per cent of Australians will experience mental illness in their lifetime, while 20 per cent are affected every year. Theories suggest there is power in that simplest of questions, 'Are you okay?'. Try to answer that question. Dr Thomas Joiner tried to answer that difficult question by describing three forces at play in someone at risk. First, the person thinks they are a burden on others; second, they can withstand a high degree of pain; and third, they do not feel connected to others. Therefore, it is a lack of belonging that we want to prevent by inspiring people to take the time to ask R U OK and listen.

We can help people struggling with life feel connected long before they even think about suicide. A great place to start is with regular face-to-face meaningful conversations about life and asking R U OK? R U OK has a vision where there is a world where we are all connected and protected from suicide. Their mission is to motivate and enable everyone to expressively associate with people around them and support anyone struggling with life.

R U OK goals are: one, to boost one's confidence to meaningfully connect and ask about life's ups and downs; two, nurture one's sense of responsibility to regularly connect and support others; three, strengthen one's sense of belonging knowing people are there for us; and four, be relevant, strong and dynamic. We have a dedicated R U OK Day held on the second Thursday of September each year, which identifies people with emotional insecurities and encourages others to regularly connect with them.

### **Salvos Sleepout**

#### **Louie's Van - Huonville**

#### **Homelessness - Government Response**

[6.18 p.m.]

**Ms STANDEN** (Franklin) - Madam Speaker, I wish to make a brief contribution regarding homelessness, recognising winter has now just passed and we are into spring. The last time this House was sitting was the evening I contributed to the Salvos Sleepout on 8 August. I wanted to flag what a wonderful learning experience that was contributing to fundraising to support the Salvos Street to Home program of nearly \$1500 between myself and Josh Willie and wonderful contributors. Altogether the event raised more than \$48 800 towards the Street to Home program that offers wonderful outreach services to some of the most vulnerable people in our community, offering independence, hope and a way out of their situation.

Interestingly enough, a few short days after that I had the pleasure of meeting with the good folk in Huonville who are extending the Louie's Van service for emergency food relief from the Kingston area down to Huonville. It is only a month or so into that endeavour but there is certainly strong demand in that community and a wonderful volunteer band of people getting together behind that endeavour.

On that occasion I visited the Geeveston Community Centre and was surprised to hear that in that area alone they reckon there were up to 20 individuals sleeping rough in that community. The situation for homelessness is certainly bad and getting worse. Members in this House would know that as at census 2016 there were more than 1600 Tasmanians who were homeless, 38 per cent of those were below 25 years of age. The 8 per cent of those people sleeping rough, living in improvised dwellings, tents or sleeping out is well known but what people may not recognise is that some 30 per cent of the homeless population in Tasmania are couch surfers. These are people staying temporarily with other households.

Attending a national housing conference last week, I was enlightened as to the particular vulnerability of our young people living in those situations and their vulnerability to sexual exploitation. Those living in severely overcrowded dwellings, there are some severe social, mental health and other issues impacting that hidden homeless population within Tasmania that is of significant concern.

I note the Hodgman Liberal Government's package of some \$5 million to address homelessness, of extending shelters, converting the Waratah Hotel, an expo in October and brokerage accommodation but I am not satisfied that there is one additional person or one additional dollar that has gone to assisting the homeless population in Tasmania this winter. In particular, I am concerned about the gaps for people in regional Tasmania. I am concerned about brokerage that has been extended since last winter but I am not sure that there is one additional dollar supporting brokerage, particularly for those with complex needs like mental illness, alcohol and other drug dependency, disability, or young people under 18 who are unable to access brokerage accommodation. There are some serious gaps in the Government's approach to this and I am not sure that families are being well accommodated in this situation.

Though conceptually sound, the extension of shelters has not impacted this winter and it will not for some months yet. The conversion of the Waratah Hotel will not impact until next year. I am concerned that a third winter will go past under this Housing minister's watch. The shelters are full, there is significant unmet need of some 28 people turned away every day, unassisted requests; 42 per cent of those from youths and 37 per cent from parents with children.

The situation is broken. The shelters are full. The system is blocked and much more needs to be done and not one cent, one dollar, one additional person has been assisted from the homeless population this winter and it is to the absolute shame of this Hodgman Liberal Government.

### **Allegation regarding Assistance from Ms Haddad's Electorate Office**

#### **Hong Kong Pro-Democracy Support**

[6.23 p.m.]

**Ms O'CONNOR** - Madam Speaker, I am keen to get downstairs because I have the great honour of hosting some residents of Common Ground for dinner tonight at 6.30.

I wanted to make sure that the record is correct. I am not reflecting on a vote in this House. I am responding to some statements that Ms Haddad made and I wanted to make it really clear that it is not correct for Ms Haddad to say that as a result of her office suggesting the person who contacted them in relation to the fake police car contact Tasmania Police led to the investigation. That is not true.

What was said by this person, who by the way has thanked the Greens for bringing this matter on for debate and shining some light on the situation, is that they had already contacted Tasmania Police when they called Ms Haddad's office and Ms Haddad's office referred them to the federal police who said it was not their issue. They then called our office and we referred them to the ASIO hotline who then referred the matter to Tasmania Police.

It is important that there be a correct record of the events that led to the debate. I also want to make it really clear that we did not exploit this person.

**Madam SPEAKER** - I have to accept this as a point of clarification not as re-opening the debate.

**Ms O'CONNOR** - No, definitely not re-opening the debate and thank you, Madam Speaker, for your guidance.

When this Tasmanian from Hong Kong contacted our office and we referred them to ASIO we did speak to them about telling this story in the media and that is how it ended up on the front page of the *Mercury*. What this person said to us is that he would do media on being scared by this fake Chinese police car and his quote was: 'It was the least I could do when my family are facing bullets in Hong Kong'.

We believed then, and we believe now, that you must cast some light on these issues otherwise nothing changes, otherwise we do not have these debates in this place. We do not debate how we best protect people who come to this island to live, to work, to study, to raise a family, to find peace and security.

Just in response to some of the statements, if people want to go to my Facebook page and see the post that I have put up on the creation of the Lennon wall in solidarity for the people of Hong Kong. There are comments on my Facebook page from people like Joseph Lam. 'Thank you,' Leo Chan. 'Thank you so much for the support.' Leo Chan says:

We really appreciate the support in Australia. China under the CCP is a threat to freedom and democracy. I hope more people realise that. I hope MPs who agree with it urge the Government to take a stronger stand for Hong Kong.

Mille Sui:

Thank you for your solidarity with Hong Kong. They were desperate even when expressing their views resulted in attack. Please assure freedom of speech is respected in Australia and allow no intervention from foreign states, spies and nationalists. Thank you again for your good work.

Chole Chan:

Thank you so much for supporting Hong Kong protesters.

Joe Wong:

Thank you so much for your support, much appreciated.

Psyche Ip:

Thank you so much.

Candy Tong:

Thank you so much for your support.

Casper Mok:

Thank you.

Seth Yau - and this is my favourite comment on my Facebook page. Seth says:

Thank you. I am going to be a UTAS student in the coming February and now I am so proud of it.

Seth should be proud of being a UTAS student. It is one of the great universities. It is inclusive. It has an excellent standard of education. The Vice-Chancellor, Rufus Black, is an outstanding Tasmanian who is charting a really exciting course for the future of the University of Tasmania.

Queenie Chan says on my Facebook page:

Please accept my heartfelt thanks.

Kit Kan-Lin:

Sing Hallelujah to the Lord. This was the first hymn what the Christians launched in this protest in Hong Kong. Thank you for the concern and your understanding. Please pray for all Hong Kongers' safety in the city.

'Thank you, Cassy as a Sydneysider,' says Marco Mui, 'I hope to see a similar support from MPs on this side of the Tasman.'

Yuan Carrie:

Much appreciated.

And on it goes, Joey Kong, 'Thank you, much appreciated.' Galatea Chan, 'Much appreciated.'

My Facebook page is replete with people who recognise that it is important that people with a voice, as we have in this place, stand up for the people of Hong Kong and be a voice for human freedom at every opportunity we get. That is what the Greens are doing in this place and we will keep doing it. We hope that the debates can be respectful and based on the facts and the evidence, and that our overriding purpose when we have these debates is to strengthen the foundations of our democracy.

### **Native Animals - Numbers and Culling**

[6.29 p.m.]

**Dr WOODRUFF** (Franklin) - Madam Speaker, I rise to follow up on a question that I asked the minister for the Environment this morning and to encourage him to provide us with an answer as soon as he is able to. Before I go further on that matter, there has just been a release of yet more information through the *Mercury* from an RTI request that they put in to DPIPWE about the actual numbers of animals that have been permitted to be killed and have actually been killed through crop protection permits in Tasmania in the four and a half years from 2015 to the middle of this year. That information reveals that a staggering 1.857 million wallabies and possums have been killed in that four-and-a-half-year period. They have done the sums and that equates to 1100 animals every

single day over that period. That is 1100 protected native species that have been killed in Tasmania, authorised to be killed every single day.

These numbers are in addition to the tens of thousands, possibly hundreds of thousands, of other protected native animals which were revealed by the right to information request that the Greens put in and we have spoken about that in parliament earlier this week.

**Mr Shelton** - You simply don't understand how much wildlife is out there. You must live in the city.

**Dr WOODRUFF** - They were Forester kangaroos, black swans, galahs, green rosellas and even wombats and platypus.

The reason I asked the Environment minister, Mr Gutwein, about this this morning is that we want to understand what is the evidence of population dynamics that is being used to justify the numbers of crop protection permits that are handed out for each of these species. There ought to be, for protected native animals in Tasmania, an understanding of the population dynamics and the impact that killing permits have on populations in local areas.

We know it was only because of the work of the Wombat Warriors in 2017 that crop protection permits were ceased for wombats in Tasmania, because up until that point 5087 wombats were killed in Tasmania from 2014 to 2018. It was only because wombats were dying in vast numbers from sarcoptic mange and in great pain that there was a spotlight shone on the impact of removing over 5000 healthy wombats from the total Tasmanian population.

Authorising the killing of healthy wombats when we know we have localised extinctions of wombats in other parts of the state because of a disease which was and still is rampant in that population is totally crazy. To people who have never understood this is the case, they are shocked.

We look forward to the minister, Peter Gutwein, coming back. He is not in the House but I am sure he will be watching, so I remind him that we look forward to the response. He said he would give it to us when it was at hand. Given that he has made some strong statements about the comprehensive and balanced approach the Government takes on this matter, it would be pretty obvious that those figures ought to be immediately at hand for his staff. The numbers that we are looking at is the population dynamics for localised areas for each of the native species in Tasmania.

We want to know when the last population studies were done because we and all Tasmanians want to understand what is going on. Clearly, if crop protection permits are to be handed out for landowners, there must be an assessment -

**Mr Shelton** - You obviously don't drive around of an evening.

**Dr WOODRUFF** - This is the point, Mr Shelton. The Forester kangaroo survey that was done in 2000 makes that point exactly. It is very easy to be misled by what you see in front of you in pastured areas. That can hide the fact that populations have become extinct in other areas because of changing landscape. It is all very well to take a single spotlight approach, and I know the Leader of the Opposition is more than happy to encourage us to go shooting wallabies and any other native wildlife that come into our way of a night.

**Mr Shelton** - You live in a bubble. Talk to normal people and you'll find out how big the populations are out there.

**Dr WOODRUFF** - Mr Shelton, normal people want to know that there is some basis to the crop protection permit process and that they not just handed out like lollies just because this Government has failed to fund the Browsing Animal Management Program, failed to put the money where it should to support landowners, failed to do the work to support them with fencing, and all the alternatives to shooting which are available to landowners to employ. This is the job the Government needs to be doing. We have to be looking at keeping our animals with us. Tasmanians want our native animals to be with us in 50, 80 and 100 years time so we have to talk about what a balanced approach means. That means we need the evidence of population dynamics and we need to understand if it even exists at all.

### **Sepsis Awareness Tasmania**

[6.36 p.m.]

**Ms O'BYRNE** (Bass) - Madam Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity to speak tonight.

**Mr Shelton** - The exercise would be good; you've been up about five times.

**Ms O'BYRNE** - I know, I have been up every time but that's okay, the exercise is good for me. I will be much fitter by the end of this week, I imagine.

I want to talk about something in a very positive way but also something quite serious. In being positive I want to extend my thanks to the Deputy Premier, Jeremy Rockliff, and the member for Mersey, Mike Gaffney, for agreeing to join with me in hosting an event for Sepsis Awareness Tasmania. In doing so, I commend Sallyann Geale, who is the chair of Sepsis Awareness Tasmania - she is the founding chair as part of this national organisation - for the work she has done in raising the profile of sepsis and the risks of sepsis and recognising the grief and pain she has gone through, which has brought her to her passion for this cause.

Every three seconds someone around the world dies from sepsis. Next week on Thursday, all members have been invited by Mr Rockliff, Mr Gaffney and myself to a parliamentary briefing where we will hear from a specialist in the area, Dr Juan Carlos Ascencio-Lane, who will be speaking a lot about the impact. It will be as brief a session as it can be, so that people can understand that sepsis is known as the silent killer that takes 5000 lives in Australia each year. Some experts have said recently that it exceeds six times this figure because it is often not recorded as the cause of death because it is a complication of other issues.

It is the leading cause of death from infection around the world, with one-fifth of deaths globally due to sepsis. Every three seconds someone dies. The WHO recognised sepsis as a global health priority in 2017. There is no magic bullet for sepsis and there are different types of sepsis that require different treatments. It is a life-threatening illness that occurs when the body's response to infection damages its own tissues and organs. It can quickly become life-threatening and can affect all body parts.

It is a medical emergency that can be difficult to diagnose and treat and almost any type of infection can lead to sepsis. This includes infections of the lungs, abdomen - such as appendicitis - urinary tract, skin or any other part of the body. It causes more deaths than breast cancer and

prostate cancer combined and exceeds the national annual road toll. There are 100 000 episodes each year in Australia and 75 per cent of survivors are readmitted within one year. As I said, there is a belief that it is some six times higher than identified.

However, an awareness survey has shown that despite the high death rate from this, 60 per cent of Australians have not heard of sepsis, only 14 per cent could name one of its symptoms and only 4 per cent are aware that the death rate is one out of three. Despite the large sepsis death rate in Australia, our medical profession needs support to address that emergency. When it comes to sepsis it could be argued that we are failing because these are preventable deaths and people are dying unnecessarily.

Lucy Hewson from TIPCU, the Tasmanian Infection Prevention Control Unit, says that besides the number of infection control processes that are currently in place, there are no specific programs in place such as the program that exists in New South Wales called Sepsis Kills.

Sepsis is treatable if caught early. It can occur as a result of any infection so it is important to be aware of the symptoms. They are rapid breathing, rapid heart rate, confusion, slurred speech or disorientation, fever or shivering, muscle pain, not passing urine and discoloured skin. There will be a lot more information provided at the briefing. It is important that members take the opportunity to attend and therefore they can take that information and share it within their own communities. The most concerning fact is that sepsis is the leading cause of death of infection from around the world and we need to raise its priority and awareness.

### **Zeehan - Study Hub**

### **Strahan Primary School - Children's University Art Club Activities**

### **Mountain Heights School**

### **Education and Training Advisory Committee - West Coast Council**

[6.40 p.m.]

**Mr ROCKLIFF** (Braddon - Minister for Education and Training) - Mr Deputy Speaker, I look forward to 12 September for that forum.

I rise to commend and congratulate the west coast community for their commitment and focus on actively improving access to education and educational outcomes for all ages and stages. We know that education is the single most powerful driver for positive change in Tasmania, empowering children, young people and adults to succeed and contribute fully to their communities and the future of our state.

Last Wednesday, 28 August, I had a great day on the west coast and had the pleasure of visiting a number of education facilities. My trip included a visit to the newly opened Study Hub in Zeehan with the Mayor, Phil Vickers, and the Study Hub manager, Nicky Bolt. The west coast Study Hub provides support for all learners, from both the higher education and vocational education and training sectors. It means students have the opportunity to stay on the west coast for tertiary study, and in the words of one of the participants -

It is a big deal. It means that I can stay at home with my family and have access to campus-like facilities and support.

The access to Wi-Fi, mentoring, student services, computers, video conferencing, tutors, other education support and printing facilities is certainly being embraced by the entire community. I congratulate the community and the council for developing such a welcoming and inclusive learning environment and also the federal government for their support of the Study Hub in Zeehan. I think it is the old Scout Hall that they have remodelled and it is a very warm, welcoming environment. I can understand why people in the local area would come to it and take some time out to do their study and involve themselves in mentoring and the like. It is a terrific asset for that community.

Whilst on the west coast, I also paid a visit to the Strahan Primary School to take part in the Children's University art club activities. The group of budding artists were engaged in and enjoying the art activity that was being facilitated by the University of Tasmania and the Peter Underwood Centre for Educational Attainment. The Children's University was only launched on the west coast this year, following a commitment by the University of Tasmania to address the barriers to accessing education and training on the west coast. At Strahan Primary School it was great to meet a young teacher who was also actually engaged in the Study Hub at Zeehan - a young educator who grew up on the west coast as well. It is fantastic that she has come back to her community to impart her knowledge to the future generations of that community.

Following Strahan, I had the pleasure of visiting Mountain Heights School, where I had the opportunity to speak with staff, students and the broader community at an afternoon tea hosted by the school. Prior to that I was given a tour of the school. I was there in February or March this year, but again it was great to go back. I am very impressed with the leadership of the school, from the principal across, and the community commitment to ensuring students have a quality education experience, and I commend the students who took us around the entire school. They are great leaders, very enthusiastic, passionate about their school, passionate about the west coast community, well organised, and the afternoon tea was supplied by the students. There is a great kitchen at the Mountain Heights School - food cooked there, coffees, they did a fantastic job, and I am very, very proud of them and indeed the entire school. I congratulate Paul, the Principal, who is doing some wonderful work there on the west coast.

To complete a great day on the coast I was fortunate to meet with the council's Education and Training Advisory Committee (ETAC). It is headed by the Deputy Mayor of the West Coast, Shane Pitt, who has been passionate about educational provision on the coast for many years. ETAC is comprised of council members and businesses and community representatives, and has been working behind the scenes for the last two years on coordinating and driving educational reform for the region, and it is working. I was very impressed to see what they had achieved. They are passionate, and their professionalism is making a difference to the learning opportunities for their community, and has refocused the narrative on training. I would like to again thank Mayor Phil Vickers for his ongoing support for the Education and Training Advisory Committee - ETAC - and Shane, as chair, for ensuring they are now recognised as the go-to committee for all initiatives and funding associated with education and training on the west coast, a great achievement.

We are seeing a really positive coordinated approach on the west coast with key organisations such as UTAS, TasTAFE, Skills Tasmania, State Growth, the Tasmanian Chamber of Commerce and Industry and TasCOSS, all working together with the community and investing significant amounts of funding to support education and access to training. I note that 20 representatives of the area's education and training system recently came together to work on setting a vision for a community of learners, and a three-year plan with strategies and associated actions, which is terrific.



This is a bold, long-term outcome, but ETAC is driven by dedication to the communities and businesses of the west coast. Their leadership is just what is needed. One of the leaders there is Danielle Kidd, who was also presenting that day, so I commend Danielle from the University for her enthusiasm as well.

Projects like this, though, do take time, especially in rural and regional areas such as the west coast. I really thank everyone for their ongoing effort and particularly their collaboration in terms of the education provision, the best possible opportunities, and employment pathways. It is fantastic. The west coast is a terrific community, demonstrating great leadership in education.

### **Australian Manufacturing Workers Union Women's Dinner**

[6.46 p.m.]

**Ms DOW** (Braddon) - Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise tonight on adjournment just to make a very brief contribution about a great event I attended a couple of weeks ago at the Burnie Arts and Function Centre. It was the Australian Manufacturing Workers Union (AMWU) Women's Dinner, which was part of their annual forum. It was so pleasing it was held on the north-west coast this year, enabling a number of women from right across different age groups to attend some of the educational activities associated with that around an interest in the trades, and experiencing some workplace settings and the like, encouraging pathways to employment. The dinner was well attended. There were people from right across the region and right across the state in attendance.

The keynote speakers were exceptional, from people undergoing trades themselves, young women, right through to celebrity chefs, who provided fantastic entertainment for those on the night. I think the most important thing were the messages that were conveyed, about the importance of highlighting the trades, particularly to young women and young men. It was pleasing to note there were young men there enjoying the evening as well.

I extend my thanks to the AMWU and the state organiser, Michael Wickham, for his role in organising this free event, and to thank all of the very generous sponsors who are involved in this event. It could not have happened without their generosity to provide a free event. To everyone involved, congratulations. It really was a great event to attend.

I wanted to read into *Hansard* some of the comments from Mr Wickham in the lead-up to the forum, which highlighted some of the important things we should be considering when we look at pathways to employment for our young people, particularly across regional Tasmania. That is:

Many young women are not suited to academic studies and university, but miss out on great opportunities in trades and vocational education.

The concept was originally in the first two years about promoting higher education and making the most of opportunities. The more you talk to young women, the more you realise that there is a big group who may never get to year 12, let alone university, so now we are focusing on trades and vocations.

That is an important point to make, that indeed there does need to be a greater focus on trades and vocations through our pathways to employment and, indeed, our education system.

## **St Helens Hospital Site - Request for Information**

### **Joe Samuel Burt - Tribute**

[6.49 p.m.]

**Ms WHITE** (Lyons - Leader of the Opposition) - Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise tonight on two issues. The first is to just update the House that after 104 days, I still have not had a response from minister Roger Jaensch, to a letter I sent to the former failed health minister, Michael Ferguson, regarding the old St Helen's Hospital site. It is 104 days now that I have been waiting for the decency of a reply.

The minister has seen me multiple times in this place and has not even bothered to come and update me in person. I express my frustration with the lack of activity there and the disrespect for the St Helens community.

I also would like to talk tonight about a young man whose name is Joe Samuel Burt who is an ambassador for the Commissioner for Children and Young People in Tasmania. He took this role on and has done a report that he has provided to the Commissioner for Children and Young People and it is a report of questions and answers that he has collated regarding the hopes and aspirations for young people involved in the education system. It is a lovely document that he has put a lot of work into. I want to share it with the parliament tonight to give an overview of some of the topics that were raised in his survey and to make note of some of his words as part of his letter of thank you to those who participated.

In it, he says:

Thank you to each and every one individual for supporting me in my ambassador program 2019 for the Commissioner for Children and Young People in Tasmania.

Thank you to everyone who answered the survey in Project 1, also known as Campaign 2019.

Responses to the survey were passed on to the key people in charge of being decision-makers in the beautiful state of Tasmania.

My report will be received by various community members, politicians, maybe even the Premier of Tasmania -

And I want to say here, Joe, it is being received by the entire parliament which means that everybody here is going to be able to hear details from your report, not only the Premier.

It will also go to those people who participated in the survey, school principals, Leanne McLean, the Commissioner for Children and Young People, Facebook users, various staff members to my school and maybe a few others.

Some of the topics that were discussed by Joe where he sought feedback from the young people that he surveyed included the topic of education and opportunities. I will read out a couple of the responses and his answers to those for everybody's benefit.

One of the respondents to the survey said that they would like to see better understanding from teachers, schools, parents, students, community regarding disabilities. For example, autism, ADHD, dyslexia, et cetera, or even more funding and teacher assistance to get these kids the

education they deserve. Definitely more specialists to cover the NDIS roll-out. There is not nearly enough speech therapists, occupational therapists, psychologists, sports, music, drama, cooking, all need to be part of the school curriculum.

That was a question that ambassador Joe received and his response to that question was:

There should definitely be more support for disability children in Tasmania. In fact, there needs to be far more funding for teacher assistance and school support professionals.

He has answered, I would say, nearly 100 questions in this survey. I am not going to read them all out. He has done a power of work and covered a range of topics, including on bullying and mental health where he got a question that said:

More awareness on the implications of bullying, for example, suicide and that sticks and stones might break my bones but words do kill, or even if you haven't got any nice things to say, don't say anything at all.

Ambassador Joe's reply to that was:

These are some great points to say. Bullying and mental health are becoming a real issue.

He took a number of questions and suggestions about how schools could be improved to reduce bullying and improve access to mental health services. That is certainly a key focus for the Labor Party too. We definitely want to see improved services and sources provided to schools to support our young people.

Joe took questions on the topic of safety as well and one of the points raised with him was about more designated safe places in communities.

Ambassador Joe replied:

More designated safe places in neighbourhoods are very important. There needs to be more places available.

He also went on to take questions around the topic of access and necessity supports and services. Some of the feedback he got there was that people would like to see better access to staff including school psychologists, social workers, chaplains, et cetera and to teach kids that it is okay to speak up. Ask for assistance in issues other than only maths, English, et cetera, put your hand up and ask for support. It is not a sign of weakness.

In response to that, Ambassador Joe said:

A fantastic suggestion and very important as some kids find it hard to seek help.

He took questions around the topic of participation and recognition of children and young people.

One of the respondents to the survey said that everything should be affordable to everyone - kid's sports registration, learner's licences, clothes, food, haircuts, et cetera. Whatever our children need to live seems to be expensive or frowned upon. Children are definitely disadvantaged.

Ambassador Joe's reply to that was:

This is a fantastic response thank you. I think school should have access to hairdressing services, but this is up to the parents to manage. Maybe in the future haircuts should be better prices. Also, maybe even school-based hairdressing services. School dentists visits should be brought back too. Sports should all be cheaper or at no cost as everyone deserves the opportunity to do sport. School canteen should be free to disadvantaged families and also food outside of education facilities.

I thank Joe for all the work that he has done as an ambassador on the Ambassador's Program for 2019. I know he is passionate about promoting the views of young people and making sure that we, as decision-makers, are aware of those. I have brought these to the parliament tonight so that everybody in here can hear the views of Joe as an ambassador.

I will be heading to Launceston on 4 October to participate in the Ambassador statewide event where we will all be coming together and hearing from these young people who are the future of our state. I just wanted to acknowledge Joe tonight for all his terrific work.

**The House adjourned at 6.56 p.m.**