

Tuesday 22 May 2018

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

QUESTIONS

Housing - Tenancy of Public Housing Properties

Ms WHITE question to MINISTER for HOUSING, Mr JAENSCH

[10.03 a.m.]

On 13 April, you staged a photo opportunity at Warrane. You claimed to be handing over the keys to two new public housing properties, which were then left empty. In your first week of this parliament, almost three weeks ago, you said your advice was that tenants would move in by the end of that week of 4 May. You told this House -

Housing Tasmania has advised me that the two new units in Warrane have been offered to tenants ... One tenant is a priority applicant and is expected to move in by the end of the week.

Did that tenant occupy this property at that time or did you mislead the parliament?

ANSWER

Madam Speaker, our Government is getting on with the job of putting more roofs over the heads of Tasmanians who need them. You have had a couple of weeks to come up with some good questions about what we are doing to solve Tasmania's housing shortage issue and provide houses for Tasmanians who need them. The best Labor can come up with is this issue they have been running with, that somehow there is some discrepancy between when houses are built, when they become available and who is going to move into them.

The units I believe the Leader of the Opposition is referring to have been tenanted. I am told the so-called delays in tenants being active enough in their homes, to satisfy Labor, relate to their personal circumstances. Labor is bringing attention to the circumstances of Tasmanian citizens, vulnerable people, who are being assisted into housing. They need to do their homework and ensure they have their stories straight. In some cases they are trying to catch a minister out on whether he gave a time frame for people moving into those houses. It looks as if they are staking out homes of vulnerable Tasmanians who are being placed in houses off the social housing register and keeping a diary of their movements in and out of those houses and the time it takes for them to set up house.

An offer is made to a potential tenant when a property enters the housing system. These potential tenants will view the house and decide if they wish to accept it. An offer is made to another applicant if it is not accepted. Once it is accepted, the normal lease signing process is followed and the applicant makes their own arrangements to move in, which means that a house can be tenanted, allocated to a tenant, and there is a period while that tenant moves in, leaves their other property and actively takes up their tenancy.

I ask Labor to please stop sending your vans out to these addresses after we do a media release, stop spying on people in their homes to work out when they take up their active lease. Please respect their privacy and stop throwing them around in here as if it was an important question.

Ms WHITE - Point of order, Madam Speaker. I take personal offence at the claims made by the minister that Labor members of parliament are spying on people in their homes. I ask him to withdraw.

Madam SPEAKER - I did find it a rather unusual accusation. Mr Jaensch, would you like to withdraw that comment of stalking, please?

Mr JAENSCH - Madam Speaker, I am happy to withdraw if I have offended the member. What I want to draw attention to is the practice. When people have been allocated a property they deserve to have their privacy respected.

Housing - Tenancy of Public Housing Properties

Ms WHITE question to MINISTER for HOUSING, Mr JAENSCH

[10.06 a.m.]

I remind you that you staged a photo opportunity handing over the keys to properties five weeks ago. How long have each of those properties at Warrane been occupied?

ANSWER

Madam Speaker, I thank the Leader of the Opposition for watching the media and seeing that we are putting out good stories every week about the new properties we are releasing into the market for Tasmanians who need them.

When a government commits \$200 million of Tasmanian taxpayer's money to the development of portable housing for Tasmanians we have an obligation to show Tasmanians, in general, and those people who are waiting to be placed in suitable accommodation, that we are putting properties on the ground, we are taking action, and we have a plan to ensure every Tasmanian who needs one gets a roof over their head.

I did speak with the media at some houses in Warrane, Punchbowl and in Cooee, and around the state where we are rolling out our Affordable Housing Action Plan properties; 2500 of them over the eight years we have funded our housing strategy so far. I handed the keys to Housing Tasmania. They then go through the process to match that house with a tenant, which I outlined; someone who needs an affordable, appropriate, suitably set up house to live in. Housing Tasmania commences a process of tenanting that property. Once a person has accepted a tenancy, it is up to them when they move in.

Ms WHITE - Point of order, Madam Speaker. Standing Order 45 goes to relevance. The minister was asked a specific question: how long have each of those properties at Warrane been occupied? I ask you to draw the minister's attention to the question.

Madam SPEAKER - The minister has finished his answer, I am sorry. I believe he had a very good attempt to try to answer it.

Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse - National Redress Scheme

Ms O'CONNOR question to PREMIER, Mr HODGMAN

[10.09 a.m.]

Recommendation 88 of the final report of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse was that, 'State and territory governments should implement these recommendations to remove limitation periods as soon as possible'.

The Limitation Amendment Act 2017 has yet to be proclaimed, prolonging the trauma of survivors of child sexual abuse. ABC News last night told the wrenching story of Tasmania abuse survivor, Pamela, who is begging your Government to sign up to the National Redress Scheme. At the same time you are failing to proclaim this legislation and failing to commit to redress, your Government has re-tabled the Sentencing Amendment (Mandatory Sentencing for Serious Sexual Offences Against Children) Bill 2018, which is identical to the bill that was blocked by the upper House last year.

Will you stop pursuing your flawed populist agenda and instead focus on implementing the recommendations of the royal commission and experts on matters of child sexual abuse? On behalf of survivors, we ask when will your Government proclaim the Limitations Amendment Act of 2017?

ANSWER

Madam Speaker, I thank the member for the question, which conflated a number of issues into one and again, typically and sadly, has diminished an important national reform that goes to supporting victims of abuse which this Government has said from a very early stage we would be looking to involve our state in, noting that Tasmania was one state that took the initiative some years ago to provide an ex gratia scheme of support for the victims of abuse who were placed into the care of this state. That, along with how it could best be determined that any survivor of abuse could be effectively captured in a national redress scheme, was a matter that required careful attention by this Government. It was also a matter raised by the Leader of the Greens, who expressed some reservations about the structure of the national redress scheme and urged caution with respect to signing up to it.

Ms O'CONNOR - Point of order, Madam Speaker. I feel that the Premier has misrepresented me.

Mr HODGMAN - I am not talking about you, I am talking about your national leader, who was understandably expressing not reservations, but wanting to be assured that the national scheme would effectively capture those people it is intended to support.

In relation to the Limitations Act, as we have always said, proclamation of that legislation would coincide with any commencement of a redress scheme to ensure that survivors were offered a choice of recourse. It is much more complicated and complex than the member is suggesting. The Attorney-General, who later today will be outlining our response to this matter and indeed the national redress scheme, will touch on a number of these.

With respect to mandatory sentencing, we will not resile from our commitment to ensure that people who commit horrendous crimes against young children will be subject to jail. We will not resile from our commitment to ensure that those in our community who work to protect us get the protection of laws.

I note, in passing and as a matter of interest, that the Victorian Labor government is also looking to move into this space as well and show that at least the Labor Party in Victoria puts victims first, as opposed to the Labor-Greens position here which seeks to give offenders a 'get out of jail free' card.

Government Plan for Tasmania

Mr SHELTON question to PREMIER, Mr HODGMAN

[10.13 a.m.]

Tasmanians have again strongly endorsed the Government's plan for Tasmania, most recently at the Prosser election. Can the Premier please update the House on how the Hodgman Liberal majority Government, and its new member in the other place, will deliver on its plans to take Tasmania to the next level?

ANSWER

Madam Speaker, I thank the member for his question. The result at the recent Prosser election was a clear endorsement for the Tasmanian majority Liberal Government. We are a government with a plan and the team to deliver it.

We are delighted to welcome the new member for Prosser, Jane Howlett MLC, into the team. Jane is very much a committed, determined and persevering type. She has fought a number of campaigns and will be a great representative of the people of Prosser. She went into that campaign strongly advocating for the things the people of Prosser care about and what their community needs - education, building infrastructure, and taking a tough stand on those who commit horrible crimes against children and sending them to jail where they belong. These were all policies that were strongly campaigned on by the new member for Prosser, Jane Howlett.

There is no doubt this election result was a ringing endorsement of what my Government is doing. There was plenty of choice for voters. There were 13 candidates for the people of Prosser to choose from and they elected the endorsed Liberal candidate, Jane Howlett, who received 53 per cent of the vote, not dissimilar to what this team received a couple of months ago at the general election. She will be a strong part of my team. She will not be interested in the political playtime that so occupies Labor and the Greens but will be focused on delivering the plan and getting on with the job we are elected to do.

There are more than 11 000 more Tasmanians employed in an economy which is one of the strongest in the country. Retail trade is the second best of all states and territories. Business investment is outperforming the national average and business confidence is the highest in the country. I know members opposite would love to not see it that way but we will do everything we can to ensure Tasmanians are confident about the future and continue to invest and employ more Tasmanians.

We have the budget that was left by you lot back into balance and it will be an ongoing body of work for us to maintain that. Heaven forbid, if you had been elected you would have taken us back into the deficit and debt that you left us four years ago. We accept the fact that there is much more to be done. We will continue to invest in the benefits of a strong economy and a better budget into health and education, lifting standards in both, which we are doing, and also supporting those in need and keeping cost of living pressures down.

It is a plan that has been endorsed at two recent elections and it is one I respectfully suggest all members of this parliament should respect. For those who might have hoped that it was it for elections for some time, the fine people of Braddon have another one to look forward to after the sitting Labor member, Justine Keay, finally did the right thing and accepted she is not eligible to sit in the federal parliament. The people of Braddon will reflect on the fact that another local member, Jacquie Lambie, resigned as soon as she realised she was not eligible to sit in parliament. Yet Justine Keay presumably -

Members interjecting.

Madam SPEAKER - Order. A little order, please.

Mr HODGMAN - Jacquie Lambie, on realising she was ineligible to sit in the parliament, did the right thing and resigned effectively straight away. Justine Keay, however, no doubt at the suggestion of Labor leader, Bill Shorten, has hung on for as long as possible and tried to get away with it. At the upcoming election the people of Braddon will have their say on that and also on who is the best candidate for the division of Braddon. The former member, Brett Whiteley, has achieved a lot. It is time. Investments into roads, hospitals, and the Living City project, which we visited last week and is a magnificent development in the state - all these things Brett Whiteley contributed to and he is in a much stronger position as a member of government to represent his community.

While those opposite are still complaining about the election results we have just had in this state, we look forward to another opportunity for the people of Braddon to have their say and we wish Brett Whiteley all the very best.

Housing - Vacant Public Housing

Ms WHITE question to MINISTER for HOUSING, Mr JAENSCH

[10.19 a.m.]

Can you detail how many public housing homes are currently empty or boarded up? Can you provide precise and accurate details of how many houses are sitting empty at the same time hundreds of Tasmanians are experiencing homelessness?

ANSWER

Madam Speaker, I thank the member for her question. While a small number of Housing Tasmania properties may be vacant at any one time, it is not uncommon that properties people assume to be public housing are not directly owned by the government. Public housing properties can be vacant because the tenant is on holiday, the previous tenant has moved out and maintenance is being done, or the property is no longer useful for meeting the need of the Social Housing Register and will be sold. Some properties have been held for re-development to replace no longer useful

properties with a larger number of brand new dwellings. The turnaround time for public housing properties has fallen by 28 per cent under our Government compared to the previous government. The turnaround time between tenanting, so the time that houses spend empty in transition on average is now 24.1 days, which is below the national bench mark of 28 days and below the-

Mr O'BYRNE - Point of order. It is a very specific question. It is how many houses are currently unoccupied. If he does not know the answer he should say 'I do not know', and he will report to the House. Clearly he does not know.

Madam SPEAKER - You are all very aware of the latitude given in answering some of these questions. We do not yet know what the minister is going to say.

Mr JAENSCH - Thank you, Madam Speaker. I was about to say that the turnaround times for public housing properties in Tasmania is now 24.1 days, whereas under Labor and the Greens it was 33.6 days. I pay tribute to Housing Tasmania, Housing Connect partners and others who are constantly managing and deploying our public housing stock to meet the needs of people on our Social Housing Register. We are assisting more than 3000 Tasmanians through our private rental assistance program and we are investing \$200 million in our two affordable housing action plans to build about 2500 new homes for Tasmanians.

Extreme Weather Event - 10 and 11 May 2018

Mr BROOKS question to MINISTER for POLICE, FIRE and EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT, Mr FERGUSON

[10.22 a.m.]

Can the minister please update the House on the recovery from the extreme weather event and subsequent flooding that occurred on 10 and 11 May 2018, causing major disruption and substantial damage to communities in the south of the state? What much-needed assistance has been provided to those affected by this devastating event?

ANSWER

Madam Speaker, this is an important subject and one that should bring parliamentarians together to support people who have been going through difficult times. The recent extreme rainfall around southern Tasmania has again shown us the damage that can be done by these kinds of events. In the 24 hours leading up to 9 a.m. on Friday 11 May, more than 120 millimetres of rain fell in Hobart and surrounding areas. It was the wettest Hobart day since 1960 and the second highest recorded May rainfall in a single day for Tasmania. The Bureau of Meteorology reported that by Friday morning Mount Wellington had recorded 236 millimetres - the highest rainfall ever recorded on the mountain.

During the storm, between 12 000 and 15 000 homes lost power and flash flooding caused a number of motor vehicles to be swept down streets. The State Emergency Service logged more than 400 calls for assistance, with an additional 110 requests logged by Tasmania Fire Service. They responded remarkably and we are grateful for their work.

This event gave rise to significant issues with water inundation and damage across residential and business properties, as well as damage to community facilities and essential public assets.

A number of assistance measures for individuals have been activated, in answer to Mr Brooks' question, under the natural disaster relief and recovery arrangements with the Australian Government. Support for local government under this policy has also been activated. That was done in incredibly short time, announced on the Monday after those events. The Department of Premier and Cabinet, the responsible agency for then managing recovery at a state level, is establishing a small recovery unit within its Office of Security and Emergency Management specifically to help local government coordinate state government activity in relation to recovery from this event. The recovery unit is working with impacted councils to set up affected area recovery committees to ensure they get the support they need.

The impacts of events like this one can take time to fully emerge. The Government will therefore continue to consider and investigate options for additional support for individuals, councils and businesses affected by the extreme weather.

It is vital that we learn from our experiences. That is why in late 2016 former Auditor-General, Mike Blake, was commissioned by the Government to conduct an independent review of the devastating floods of 2016. Mr Blake's report was released publicly in June 2017 and the Government has been getting on with the job of implementing the recommendations of the Blake review. I had to, unfortunately, correct misinformation being promoted by members opposite that that report had not been considered. I announce publicly that the Government had formally considered that report in late 2017. A major flood mapping project, worth \$3 million with equal contributions from the Tasmanian and Australian governments under the natural disaster relief and recovery arrangements, is currently in its planning phase. Those two governments committed to that funding over the summer period. We did not grandstand on this. We did not try to announce it with fanfare. We have been getting on with the job. I am also able to advise that the Office of Security and Emergency Management and the State Emergency Service are both closely involved in this flood policy work.

This Government is strongly committed to enhancing community resilience and to supporting actions that mitigate risk and help communities recover after natural disasters like this one. I hope I can speak for all of us when I say that we wish to thank all of Tasmania's emergency services personnel, employees and volunteers, who acted with diligence and bravery. They did an incredible job in the face of extreme and challenging circumstances.

Housing - Assistance for Homeless

Ms WHITE question to MINISTER for HOUSING, Mr JAENSCH

[10.27 a.m.]

On 24 March you announced a \$500 000 package which you said would be used to assist homeless Tasmanians into cabins and hotel and motel rooms before winter sets in. Since then, despite repeated questioning, you have been unable or unwilling to provide details of how many individual Tasmanians have been assisted.

Today, at this moment, how many individual Tasmanians facing homelessness have been helped into accommodation with this funding and, importantly, for what length of time are people able to remain in that accommodation before they are evicted?

ANSWER

Madam Speaker, within a week of becoming minister I was able to, with the support of Cabinet and our Party, be on the front foot with \$500 000 to address the very urgent needs of people who find themselves in acute housing stress across greater Hobart and across Tasmania. I want to make sure that when we make reference to this we are not singling out Hobart as the only place where people experience homelessness, and also that it has not just been the last three months in which Tasmanians have been experiencing homelessness. In our understanding and our language we need to respect that the circumstances of homelessness are unique to every individual. The lack or availability or affordability of suitable housing or shelter may be just one factor of many that contributes to their homelessness and which needs to be addressed when we extend services to them.

The Opposition is obsessed with trying to ping me on how many people were helped from a point in time with a certain amount of money. I point out to the Opposition, Madam Speaker, and anyone listening that Housing Connect, the service established in 2013, is the entry point for people into the system of allocation according to their needs across a range of categories of housing. Housing Connect, its excellent people and the networks they work through provide, on average, housing responses and solutions to about 320 families a month - 80 families each week - through social housing and private rental assistance.

Mr O'BYRNE - Point of Order. I understand the minister is keen to clean up his three prior non-answers, but this is a specific question about the \$500 000 package and the impact it has had. We ask him to answer the question.

Madam SPEAKER - The minister is reaching the point.

Mr JAENSCH - This \$500 000 package is not dedicated or uniquely allocated to a single cohort of people who became homeless on some day in the past three months. Every day, as there has been for decades and forever, there are people in Tasmania who find themselves in acute housing stress.

During this term of government and in previous terms of government we have resourced Housing Connect and its network to be on the ground, reaching out to those people and providing them with the services and solutions they need. Within a week of becoming Minister for Housing, we dedicated an additional \$500 000 to that effort, three more people on the ground, resources to broker shelter and accommodation for people who need it, and a promise that if they need more resources to meet the demand we will provide it. We are not making a distinction between the people they helped the day after that, and since then, from the people they were helping the week before. We know there are people moving in and out of a housing crisis every day. There are also people moving in and out of the solutions we are providing for them.

It is a gross oversimplification of this very complex human tragedy for the Opposition to be bringing this issue to the House to score points, when we are resourcing the service they helped create to reach out to everyone who needs a roof over their head and ensure they have one.

Federal 2018-19 Budget - Effect on Tasmania

Mr SHELTON question to TREASURER, Mr GUTWEIN

[10.33 a.m.]

Can the Treasurer update the House on the federal Budget and what it means for Tasmania?

ANSWER

Madam Speaker, the Deputy Premier made the point that the Greens hate infrastructure and they hate roads. It is no wonder they do not want to hear anything about the federal budget -

Ms O'Connor - Why are we sitting here wasting taxpayers' money on Dorothy Dixers?

Mr GUTWEIN - Madam Speaker, I am about to explain how \$1 billion worth of funding is flowing from the federal government into roads, jobs and opportunities for Tasmania. All we hear from the Greens is further carping.

The 2018-19 Budget is welcome. It provides significant funding to Tasmania. As a result of that budget, and the Greens will not like this, we see \$1 billion put into Tasmania's infrastructure. It will boost our economy, grow jobs, and assist in developing economic infrastructure into the long term.

The federal government contributions include an historic \$461 million commitment to the replacement of the Bridgewater Bridge, which is of critical economic importance to Tasmania. The other side had funding committed from previous coalition governments and did nothing on the bridge. They could not do it. It demonstrates a difference between this and that side. There is \$400 million in funding for roads of strategic importance, together with funding of nearly \$60 million for freight rail. Improving our road-rail networks will deliver enhanced efficiency and productivity necessary for long-term economic growth.

In addition to these landmark commitments -

Ms O'Connor - What a ripper of a budget.

Mr GUTWEIN - Once again they are demonstrating they hate infrastructure, they hate roads. I had a look -

Ms O'Connor - You have people living below the poverty line; no money for Newstart, no money for housing.

Madam SPEAKER - Order.

Mr GUTWEIN - I had a look at what else the Greens hate. I dug out your budget response from last year. Do you know what else the Greens hate, apart from roads and infrastructure? They hate Tasracing - they want to shut down the racing industry. We know they hate forestry. They hate AFL football - they want to shut down the Hawks. You hate the V8s.

Mr O'BYRNE - Point of order, Madam Speaker. The member for Lyons, Mr Shelton, had a very clear question. It was on the federal Budget and the delivery to Tasmania of the rivers of gold with the GST, which is under risk. I think Mr Shelton deserves a mention.

Madam SPEAKER - I will uphold that point of order.

Mr GUTWEIN - We will come to learn in this place that he will take any opportunity to continue his job application.

Mr O'Byrne - I am the only bloke standing up for Mr Shelton.

Mr GUTWEIN - You only have to open the door a crack -

Madam SPEAKER - Order. In my Speaker school training I had the pleasure of watching question time more than once and it is very chaotic, as it is now. We have the Treasurer on his feet and we should show more respect.

Mr GUTWEIN - The point I was getting to, in terms of what has been a fantastic Budget from the federal government with \$1 billion worth of infrastructure spending, is the Greens cut roads funding in their alternative budget. It is no wonder they do not like the federal budget.

The federal budget also delivered increased health, education, housing, and aged care funding. The tax relief, which will see two out of every three working Tasmanians see more money in their pay packet, means our economy will benefit. These are real funding commitments on this side of the House; not the funny money we see from Bill Shorten, not the imaginary mirage he brings forward. The federal budget is good for Tasmania, and very good for regional Tasmania. It is very good for Braddon, which will benefit from the \$400 million for roads of strategic importance. Mr Whiteley will have the chance to deliver for that community as he has delivered in the past. Investment, jobs and opportunity underpin our confidence.

Extreme Weather Event - Damage to Salmon Pens

Dr WOODRUFF question to MINISTER for PRIMARY INDUSTRIES and WATER, Ms COURTNEY

[10.38 a.m.]

Last Thursday there was extreme rainfall, floods and wild winds across southern Tasmania focused around Storm Bay and the D'Entrecasteaux Channel. Extreme weather events are expected to occur more frequently with our increasingly volatile climate system under real climate change. We have heard reports from multiple sources that salmon have escaped from broken nets with holes the size of trucks in them, including salmon with reported pilchard orthomyxovirus that may pose a biosecurity risk. Can you confirm whether up to 600 000 salmon have escaped from broken nets in southern Tasmanian waters? Can you confirm if you have asked the three companies to resubmit their operational plans for Storm Bay in light of these events?

ANSWER

Madam Speaker, I thank the member for her question. I am very proud that Tasmanian aquaculture companies are at the forefront of the world in developing technologies and farming

techniques in high-energy offshore environments. This is a good thing. The farming of Atlantic salmon in sea cages in offshore farming environments is challenging. As we heard from the Minister for Police, Fire and Emergency Management, we had an unprecedented event occur in Tasmania.

While the recent storm event damaged infrastructure belonging to Huon Aquaculture and generated marine debris that was reported in some areas and was washed ashore, the Government is encouraged by the steps taken by the salmon companies in their responses to the events of 10 May. The Government will continue to support this industry through implementation of our sustainable industry plan to ensure that this industry grows and creates jobs in regional areas. The Government is the strongest supporter of the salmon industry.

Dr WOODRUFF - Point of order, standing order 45, to relevance. I asked a specific question about whether the minister could confirm 600 000, not a puff piece.

Madam SPEAKER - The minister will be getting to that shortly.

Ms COURTNEY - Thank you, Madam Speaker. The Government is aware of the fact that there was some salmon debris found on shore and there was some damage to salmon pens because of this. We will continue to work with the salmon industry to make sure that any damage from the storms and any fish escapes that happened because of the storm will be addressed.

Recognition of Visitors

Madam SPEAKER - Honourable members, I draw the House's attention that we have guests in the Chamber. They are the Legal Studies students from Rosny College - welcome.

Members - Hear, hear.

Housing - Extreme Weather Event

Ms WHITE question to MINISTER for HOUSING, Mr JAENSCH

[10.42 a.m.]

In the lead-up to the floods 11 days ago, when it became clear Hobart would be at the centre of a significant rain event, what did the Government do to ensure people sleeping rough in the Hobart Rivulet would be safe? Why didn't the Government attempt to find suitable alternative accommodation for Hobart residents sleeping in tents at the showgrounds and why were these people forced to seek makeshift shelter in sheds and stables?

ANSWER

Madam Speaker, I am not a meteorologist but I question the assertion that when it became obvious that we were going to have the unprecedented emergency events that we had -

Ms O'Connor - The Bureau of Meteorology forecast it four days before the floods.

Mr JAENSCH - Still -

Ms White - 'Still'? That's your answer?

Mr JAENSCH - There are people on the ground every day reaching out to and supporting people who find themselves in acute housing stress right across greater Hobart - not just the showgrounds and the Domain - and across greater Hobart and Tasmania, Hobart Connect and its networks are out on the ground assisting people and providing them with services. It is a statewide issue and every day there are workers on the ground reaching out to and supporting people who find themselves in housing stress.

The funding we provided, in addition to the normal funding for Housing Connect and its partners, is being used to secure a mix of cabins and hotel and motel accommodation, with the emphasis on providing safety and security for those in greatest need, particularly over the winter period and around the events of the last week or so.

Additional people on the ground has meant that Housing Connect has been able to deploy more resources to known areas where people have been living in tents and sleeping rough, daily working with them to move them into appropriate shelter and accommodation and offering them services, should they choose to accept them.

On the day of the extreme rainfall event last Thursday and subsequent days, those teams have been going around to each of those locations where they know, through their networks and intelligence, that there are people in acute housing crisis, providing them with solutions and assisting those who choose to take those solutions up into more appropriate accommodation shelter, giving them resources and applying some of the other services that people in those complex situations need from time to time. I am confident from the reports I have had that they have been out on the ground in the areas of greatest need, offering support to people who need it and there are people moving out of acute housing situations and into appropriate shelter.

Extreme Weather Event - Flood Mapping

Dr BROAD question to MINISTER for POLICE, FIRE and EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT, Mr FERGUSON

[10.45 a.m.]

On 5 June last year, the Government received a report into the 2016 Tasmanian floods which contained 24 recommendations. Among other important findings, it was recommended the state government undertake a comprehensive assessment of flood mapping. Last Wednesday you told Leon Compton on ABC radio, and confirmed in your answer to a Dorothy Dix question today, that Cabinet did not consider the recommendations of the report until November, six months after it was delivered. Flood mapping has not started and will not begin until late this year, at least, and it will then take at least three years to complete. Why did the Government ignore the urgency of this report and why have you done nothing in the year since it was received?

ANSWER

Madam Speaker, the premise of that question from the member opposite is absolute garbage. It is a disgrace that the Labor Party would stoop to such a ridiculously low level to play politics with people's lives being in danger, and that is what we saw. We never see the Leader of the

Opposition happy except when other people are going through misfortune. It is a disgrace the way the Labor Party conducted themselves during the extreme weather event.

To the point of the question from Dr Broad, the Government has not delayed whatsoever. It has taken professional advice from our eminent people in the Department of Police, Fire and Emergency Management. Our experts have experience and expertise in recovery and provided advice to government about the best way to respond to the Blake report. I take this opportunity to thank Mr Blake for his report. It was independently written. It was not produced by government, Dr Broad. It was provided to government. Government then takes advice, considers the recommendations and formally decides what to do with them.

Dr Broad, I know you and Ms White were disappointed to find that your Monday's expert statements were wrong. They come out while people are still mopping up in their homes and businesses, people are still concerned about their living arrangements, getting their workers back to work and helping Hobart city get back to its normal operation. Labor could not help themselves - they were straight out there, jumping with glee on the misfortune of people in southern Tasmania with their ridiculous statements which turned out to be incorrect and falsely asserted.

Members interjecting.

Madam SPEAKER - Order.

Mr FERGUSON - It is true and I am very cross on behalf of all the people who worked very hard and through the night concentrating on the actual task, the emergency response and then the early stages of rapid assessment and recovery. They would be appalled to know. They would not have heard you on the radio because they would have been focused on their task.

Mr O'Byrne interjecting.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER - Order, Mr O'Byrne.

Mr FERGUSON - Madam Speaker, it is my responsibility to correct the false assertions made by members opposite. Just because they had not seen the Government's response, they attempted to make it political. Talk about changing leaders of the opposition. There was a leader of the opposition who said that the government has Labor's full support for flood response - that was Bryan Green. That seems like a lifetime ago when the previous leader of the opposition pledged full support and said the government has Labor's full support.

Mr O'BYRNE - Point of order, Madam Speaker. There was a clear question on behalf of the Opposition which was why he sat on a report for 12 months. It is not about history. It is not about former members of the House. You can look backward and try to cover it but why did you sit on a report for 12 months?

Madam SPEAKER - That is not a point of order.

Mr FERGUSON - That was just a mini-speech and not a very good one.

I am going to finish that quote because it is important. I know the member did not want me say it, but this is what Mr Green said -

The Government has Labor's full support when it comes to responding to the crisis.

Far from sitting on the report the Government has been acting on it.

Members interjecting.

Madam SPEAKER - Order. We have visitors in the gallery and I would like to show them that it is a professional group here arguing some very significant points. Please do not waste the time of the House and let us listen to the minister wind up.

Mr FERGUSON - It is disappointing news for the Leader of the Opposition. The Government considered the Blake report in November 2017 and instructed agencies to progress all the recommendations. I know that Labor is only ever happy, Ms White only has her mojo, when other people are going through tough times.

Blake Report into 2016 Floods - Implementation of Recommendations

Dr BROAD question to MINISTER for POLICE, FIRE and EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT, Mr FERGUSON

[10.51 a.m.]

Can you confirm that the Government's approach to this important report into the 2016 Tasmanian floods and its recommendations has been so lacking in urgency that a year after it was delivered those recommendations have not been acted on? Can you confirm that the departmental staff were only made aware last week, in the wake of the Hobart flooding event, that they were responsible for implementing those recommendations, almost a year after this important report was delivered to the Government?

ANSWER

Madam Speaker, I thank the member for the question. I can confirm that his assertions are rubbish. The Government considered the Blake report and instructed agencies to progress their recommendations immediately. I hope you realise, Dr Broad, that has been a collaboration across government. The Department of Police, Fire and Emergency Management together with the Department of Premier and Cabinet have responsibilities to implement them.

To illustrate that your claim is rubbish is the fact that the Premier and the Prime Minister agreed on a \$3 million fund in December 2017 and January 2018. That was an early progression of the recommendations. To suggest that agencies just woke up last week is offensive to the public service. Labor should hang their heads in shame at the way they conducted themselves. If the Labor Party was genuinely interested in this issue why did they wait until after the floods to show an interest in this work? They are hypocritical. The Government has been getting on with the job. The fact that the Government has not been grandstanding or issuing statements does not change the fact that work has been ongoing. I pay a tribute to the former minister, Mr Hidding, for taking the lead on much of this work. Dr Broad, shame on you for waiting until after the flood event to even bother showing an interest.

Hermal Group - Engineered Wood Project

Mr BROOKS question to MINISTER for RESOURCES, Mr BARNETT

[10.54 a.m.]

Can the minister advise the House of progress with the game-changing Hermal engineered wood project in the north-west. In particular can the minister advise on the impact of the project on jobs?

ANSWER

Madam Speaker, I thank the member for his question and his strong interest in the north-west coast, the forest industry in particular and the importance of jobs.

I was delighted last week to join the Hermal Group representatives, the Burnie mayor, Alwyn Boyd, and Brett Whiteley, the federal Liberal candidate for Braddon, who has served the people of Braddon well in the past and I hope he does so again in the future. It was a great opportunity to announce that the Hermal Group has secured the site for their \$190 million investment in Tasmania's forest industry.

It is an 80 hectare site at Ridgley Highway at Hampshire. It is in the heart of some of the most productive timber lands in the country. It is also the heartland of the Burnie district, which 80 years ago was among the first regions in the country to capitalise on the forestry industry, value adding through the development of the hardwood pulp and paper industry. There has been a serious decline in the pulp and paper industry on the north-west coast. Hermal Group's \$190 million investment is going to be Australia's largest hardwood plantation-based saw mill. It will be the first plantation hardwood-based cross-laminated timber production plant in Australia.

This investment is coming to Tasmania because we have the conditions. We have delivered economic prosperity and that is continuing. In terms of jobs - 160 jobs during the construction phase and more than 200 jobs during the ongoing operation of the mill - it is a huge shot in the arm for the north-west coast, for the people of Braddon, and for our timber industry. I am delighted on behalf of the Government to have accepted the recommendation of the Tasmanian Development Board to assist the Hermal Group with a \$13 million grant and training support, and a development loan of up to \$30 million. That is why we are delighted with the progress so far.

The Government has been advised that in addition to securing the site at Hampshire they have opened an office in Burnie. They have appointed a chief executive, Chris Skeels-Piggins, to lead the Burnie team. He will start work on 4 June. They have appointed another highly credentialed forestry leader, Mr Vince Erasmus, to head Solarwood International, the brand under which the Hampshire production plant, will be marketed. The project requires planning and development approval and relevant environmental approvals before it can proceed. The company supports an open approach to the regulatory process.

The company has invited expressions of interest from locals interested in working at the plant and from businesses to be involved during the plant's construction process. So far 500 people and businesses have put their hand up to help, including 350 enquiries about employment. They were interested in a job on the north-west coast and this Government with that support hopes to deliver. There have been 150 businesses offering to work on the project. This is very encouraging. It delivers jobs and adds value and confidence to the timber industry across Tasmania, but particularly

on the north-west coast. It is welcomed at Burnie with open arms from the mayor and from the Liberal candidate for Braddon, who supports not just the timber industry but the creation of jobs across the coast. We are very pleased about that.

The Hermal Group's proposed cross-laminated timber production plant will be a game-changer. Securing the site is a major step forward.

Extreme Weather Event - Effect on Seals and Sharks

Dr WOODRUFF question to MINISTER for PRIMARY INDUSTRIES and WATER, Ms COURTNEY

[10.59 a.m.]

Accompanying the report of salmon pens with holes the size of trucks in the sides, we have also heard of dead seals being washed up on shorelines. You dodged the last question to confirm the reported largest global escape of salmon. Can you confirm whether there have been reports to your department of seal or shark deaths resulting from storm effects on fish farm operations?

ANSWER

Madam Speaker, I thank the member for her question. As I outlined in my previous answer, the weather conditions experienced in Storm Bay as a result of the event were severe. As we understand, the salmon industry is constantly evolving and adapting to the challenges of marine farming. Events such as the recent storm continue to test and challenge technologies and systems. This approach leads to continual improvement in technologies and practices and they will underpin sustainability of the industry's expansion in Tasmanian waters.

Ms O'CONNOR - Point of order, Madam Speaker. It goes to relevance. This is the same answer the minister read out earlier. The question relates to whether there were reports to her, through the department, of seal and shark deaths. Answer the question.

Ms COURTNEY - As I was outlining, salmon infrastructure across Tasmania held up well.

Dr Woodruff - No, it did not.

Madam SPEAKER - Order, please allow the minister to answer.

Ms COURTNEY - However, damage was sustained by Huon Aquaculture at operational sites off Trumpeter Bay and on the east coast of North Bruny Island. Marine farming equipment broke free and debris was washed ashore. MAST promptly issued a notice to mariners advising that some equipment had broken free from Huon Aquaculture sites, urging mariners to navigate with care and report any debris.

Ms O'CONNOR - Point of order, Madam Speaker. I ask you to bring the minister to the question, please.

Madam SPEAKER - I ask the minister to answer the question.

Ms COURTNEY - I am outlining the process that leads up to the question, so if you could please listen I will address your areas of interest.

I am pleased to report Huon Aquaculture has been responsive to this extreme weather event. I thank all their staff members because it was important we put the safety of workers first. The company implemented a response plan, which involved the retrieval of debris from the shoreline within a matter of days. No environmental harm has been reported as a result of that infrastructure washing ashore or its subsequent removal.

Huon Aquaculture has now reported that a preliminary assessment indicates some fish have escaped as a result of the damage sustained. This notification was made to the department in accordance with marine farming licence conditions. My department will continue to work with Huon Aquaculture to quantify and assess the losses. Both Huon Aquaculture and Tassal have been in regular contact with the department and have been cooperative in providing post-storm updates.

Time expired.

CONSOLIDATED FUND SUPPLY BILL (No. 1) 2018 (No. 9)

CONSOLIDATED FUND SUPPLY BILL (No. 2) 2018 (No. 10)

**CONSOLIDATED FUND APPROPRIATION (SUPPLEMENTARY
APPROPRIATION 2017-18) BILL 2018 (No. 11)**

ELECTRICITY SUPPLY INDUSTRY AMENDMENT (PRICE CAP) BILL 2018 (No. 13)

First Reading

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

MATTER OF PUBLIC IMPORTANCE

Floods

[11.08 a.m.]

Dr BROAD (Braddon - Motion) - Madam Speaker, I move -

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

We discussed floods in question time today. It is timely to have this discussion and it is an important matter that we note.

We have climate change projections showing a warming atmosphere will mean the intensity of our current events will only increase. A warmer atmosphere can hold more water, which quite often means the events we are seeing will be more extreme in their nature. There is no doubt we have seen instances of this.

During my time as a councillor on the Central Coast Council, in 2011 and 2014, the council saw two floods that exceeded the one-in-100-year scale. On the east coast we have seen St Helens Hospital flooded twice. It had to be moved and rebuilt. In June 2016, we saw floods across the state in which three lives were tragically lost: one in Latrobe, one in Evandale, and one in Ouse. We saw during the first flood in 2011, in Gunns Plains, bridges lost, washed away, and people isolated for a number of days. In 2016 there were again bridges lost in Gunns Plains, further up the river. What we are seeing is that much of the burden of cleaning up the floods and making reparations is borne by local government.

In the events of 10 May, we saw flash flooding in Hobart where we saw cars floating down what were streets. We saw scenes in the engineering department at UTAS where water was coming into the carpet. We saw very heavy rains that fell over kunanyi/Mt Wellington. All the water in the catchment of Mt Wellington basically ran three ways: it ran into Margate and flooded there, it ran into Lachlan and Molesworth and flooded there, and then also flooded into Hobart.

After the tragedy of 2016, where three lives were lost and there was flooding all over the state, the government commissioned a report by Mike Blake. That report was comprehensive. It sought feedback from councils and so on and resulted in a number of recommendations when the report was released in June 2017. What we heard today in question time was that that report was not considered by Cabinet until November, six months later. Up to this point we have seen pretty much no movement on those recommendations. In the executive summary's second paragraph, the most important point was, he observed gaps in flood studies and flood plans, both in comprehensiveness and currency of plans. Flood studies, associated floor mapping and flood planning were inconsistent, may not be contemporary, use different methodologies and there were questions about access data, ownership and review.

From my time at Central Coast Council where we had two floods in excess of the one-in-100-year flooding, it was obvious that our flood mapping is not current. The climate is changing, the intensity of the events is changing, and despite catchments like the Forth and the Mersey having Hydro dams, it does not protect towns from flooding. There is an urgency in doing flood studies.

There was recognition that past decisions to invest in flood levies in Launceston City and the Northern Midlands Council had worked on the occasion in 2016, so there are things we can do to protect people. Flood mapping and planning is number one. We do not want people building houses on flood plains. We want there to be proper management and proper processes. What we heard in the interview with Leon Compton was that basically nothing has been done.

Regarding flood mitigation and flood mapping, there is data already available. For example, there is a lot of LiDAR that has been flown over the state, including flood prone areas. LiDAR is a technology that gives you very accurate elevations. For example, Mt Wellington has been done. There is gridded climate data for the entire state, so flood mapping can be done now. We do not have to wait for data to be collected. We can do flood mapping now.

I urge that this is done with more urgency. Waiting for another three years makes it very difficult. Recommendation 1 was that in flood-prone communities the respective municipal council develops and reviews flood related sub-plans within the municipal emergency management plan at least every two years and submits each sub-plan to the regional controller for approval. It is very difficult to do flood planning when you know that the one-in-100-year flood mapping is not accurate. You need to update it every two years.

At the moment, we are looking at a report that came out in 2016, and no flood mapping will be available apparently for another three years. That is four years since the report was handed down before we get any new flood mapping, which makes it very difficult for recommendation 5, that the Government undertakes a comprehensive assessment of flood mapping in Tasmania with the view of identifying data gaps, quality currency and so on. There is a whole bunch of planning reliant on that flood mapping.

One of the things highlighted in previous floods is the lack of intelligence in terms of the impact of floods and flood warnings. We had warnings that there was going to be an event coming over southern Tasmania. We did not know exactly where it was going to hit and when it did hit, we had no prediction mechanism to say that this was going to be a flood and was going to hit this and this area. We do not have the appropriate flood gauging, in terms of rain gauges and river gauges. We do not have that in place because we need the effective flood mapping to identify the areas where we need to put them.

Time expired.

[11.15 a.m.]

Mr FERGUSON (Bass - Minister for Police, Fire and Emergency Management) - Mr Deputy Speaker, that was a pitiful performance from the member opposite who has tried to cook up a little storm of his own today in the parliament. It has backfired badly because this member came into parliament today with questions that were misinformed, incorrect and based on false assertions.

I will repeat some of the things I emphasised in my three answers to questions this morning, one in response to my own colleague, and two in response to Dr Broad. The first thing that has to be said, and I hope members opposite would have some grace to at least agree, was that the extreme weather was just that - extreme. I have given the data on that as to just how remarkable the downpour was. It was the wettest Hobart day since 1960 and our emergency services personnel performed impeccably across the board, even to the point that one Tasmanian life was saved through the intervention of our emergency services personnel, someone who would have drowned but for that intervention.

Whilst the Government and its agencies were working around the clock to respond to the immediate emergency, while the initial rapid impact assessments were being conducted over the weekend, the Labor Party was juicing themselves up for Monday press conferences as the Monday's experts. We see this after every weekend on the sport - all the Monday's experts come in, they know what player should have got on the field, they know who should have been benched, they know how that goal was missed and how it could have been got. They know everything, Monday's experts, and that is what we saw from the now absent Leader of the Opposition and the flailing member opposite, Dr Broad. That was a pitiful behavioural display by Labor on the Monday, even while our SES, including volunteers, were out mucking in to clean up and respond to that crisis for many people in southern Tasmania.

Some of the things alleged by Dr Broad in his question today were offensive. To suggest that the report had been sat on for a year is just not true.

Dr Broad - Six months.

Mr FERGUSON - I heard a year from one of your colleagues. I believe it was you who said that the report had been sat on. Not at all, and I have already debunked that, because it was an

independent report and in responding to it the Government did consider it formally, exactly the opposite to what Labor alleged. That was incorrect, but why wouldn't they know? I give credit to the Opposition that they might not have known that Government had formally considered the report. Why did they not know, Mr Deputy Speaker? Two reasons. One, we did not grandstand - no fanfare, we just got on with the job. Two, Labor was too lazy to even be bothered to ask. They have never put in a request. There has not been a question in this House until after the storm. Dancing on the misfortune of Tasmanians is what Labor has been caught doing. Even Bryan Green had the grace to say that the Labor Party would stand with the Government in responding. That has obviously fallen apart.

I will address directly the matters of flood mapping. I had to clean up the Labor Party's mess on the Leon Compton program when a number of people thought, 'Oh, you beauty, we've got the Government on the ropes on something at last'. Not at all. Not only had the Government formally considered, not publicly responded to, the recommendations and initiated government agencies to start progressing them, my colleague the former minister, Mr Hidding, was instrumental in this work as was the Premier and the Prime Minister. They were actions that were already started that can be pointed to today if only the Opposition had been interested in the substance, not the style of all of this.

In cleaning up the mess of the Labor Party, I pointed to the flood mapping program. It is an extensive piece of work. Yes, it will start this year and, yes, it is a three-year project, Dr Broad, but nobody has ever said that nothing will happen for three years, as you alleged in your statements just now. If you had done your homework you would know, Dr Broad, that Mr Blake made a series of recommendations into greater data awareness and having a common operating platform for flood studies. This is work that is underway right now. That is not waiting for three years.

You are correct, Dr Broad, that there is data we can aggregate and provide on a more common basis. That is happening. The suggestion that the Government has not been operating with due haste is completely wrong. If the Government has made any mistake here, it is because we did not do this with great grandstanding. We have not gone out with fanfare about how good we are. We are responding to the Blake review. That is the rhetorical comment I made on the Compton program.

The Labor Party has been flailing around. We are not interested in your stupid politics. We are focused on saving people's lives in an emergency. We are focused on supporting our paid and our volunteer personnel who are supporting the clean up and the recovery process. We are concentrating on the whole-of-government efforts that are being led by DPAC to support communities, local governments, individuals, families and businesses to get back to their normal lives.

That is why, Dr Broad, you have let yourself down. I would have had you as a bit better than this.

Dr Broad - The recovery is excellent. There is no problem with recovery. There is a problem with the planning.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER - Order.

Mr FERGUSON - What you have done today is offensive.

Dr Broad - Planning, flood mapping.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER - Order, Dr Broad, the minister has the call.

Mr FERGUSON - Rebecca White only ever has a grin on her face when other people are going through difficult times, whether it is health, housing, or a flood emergency. Rebecca White is only interested in jumping with glee when other people are going through misfortune. That is pathetic -

Ms Dow - That is out of line.

Mr FERGUSON - It is not out of line. It is a fact and it has been the track record of the Leader of the Opposition. Our communities deserve better from the Opposition than these grubby tactics being played.

If Dr Broad is truly interested he should keep his questions coming and scrutinise the Government about progress on those recommendations. However, leaving it until after a storm gives your game away.

Time expired.

[11.22 a.m.]

Dr WOODRUFF (Franklin) - Mr Deputy Speaker, the issue of climate change is serious; it is real. The people of Tasmania deserve the Government to take this seriously and to think of the future. There is no doubt we are undertaking a planetary experiment that has never been undertaken in the history of Earth. We are collectively responsible for increasing greenhouse gases. At the moment we are on a trajectory of more than 2.5 degrees, but the expected increases are somewhere between 6 degrees and 7 degrees higher than background levels have ever been. Temperatures on the planet have been 2 degrees higher in previous times, but sea levels were also 25 metres higher than they are today. Nobody who works in science or who chronicles the rate of destruction and extinction of species and biodiversity does not understand that we are living in real time climate change.

We must change what we are doing. We do not have the luxury of talking about this as a future issue. This is not something for our children to deal with. We, here, in this House, every adult in Tasmania is responsible for the lifestyle that we live and is responsible for the way we respond to the current environment. Our children will be living in a future that is more climatically volatile. We have now increased the Earth's temperature, which means we are increasing the amount of water that is going into the atmosphere. With every 1 degree temperature increase we are seeing a 7 per cent increase in the amount of precipitation. That precipitation dumps in extreme levels, so we will see more frequent flood events like we saw in southern Tasmania last week. We will see more extreme winds like we saw in Hobart last night. We will see more extreme dumps of snow in the Northern Hemisphere - snow storms that have not been seen for hundreds of years. That is what a volatile climate system produces when there is more precipitation because of the heat in the atmosphere.

When the Auditor-General, Mike Blake, told us in his report that research by the Climate Change Office and national research notes there is a growing climate change risk and the need for adaptive strategies and investment in flood mitigation infrastructure to make us more resilient, we are obliged to act on that information. This Liberal Government still refuses to use the words

'climate change'. This minister came into the House and talked about flooding last week and winds and did not mention those words. The failure to accept the reality of what is happening to us is a scandal. It is an outrage to everyone in Tasmania and to the future generations who will be living here because it puts us all at dire risk.

We have to understand what the implications are for our infrastructure. We have to make decisions about future industries based on the carbon emissions they will produce. We cannot approve a southern woodchip port that will increase the amount of logging in native high conservation value forests. We cannot afford more carbon emissions. We cannot rely on the massive amount of liquid fuels coming here across the seas from Singapore. We have to electrify our transport. We have to look at our transport options with an eye to the future. We have to look at how we produce our food and we have to produce a policy.

This Liberal Government still has no policy on climate change. The task of this Government is to immediately produce a climate change plan for the next four years that will decrease the island's use of liquid fuel, because we cannot rely on it anymore. We need a plan for how we are going to feed ourselves, how we are going to maintain a regular and safe water supply and how we are going to have flourishing, low carbon industries. We need more caring industries and more caring jobs - they are low carbon, they are people intensive. That is what we will all be doing more of in the future. We will have access to communication systems and access to electric and renewable energy transport systems that mean we will be able to invest in that industry.

Time expired.

[11.29 a.m.]

Ms DOW (Braddon) - Mr Deputy Speaker, today I share my experiences of the floods of 2016, particularly in the electorate of Braddon. In June 2016, Tasmania experienced the worst floods in 90 years. Just a fortnight ago we saw another unprecedented flooding event in southern Tasmania. During the 2016 floods, 400 requests for assistance were received by the State Emergency Service and more than 100 people were rescued. Lives were threatened and lost, and homes and businesses were inundated.

The independent review of the June 2016 flood events is titled 'Shared Responsibility, Resilience and Adaptation', and this encapsulates the actions that need to be taken in our communities right now to enable us to be prepared for future events.

The independent report outlines 24 important recommendations for implementation in Tasmania, including comprehensive assessment of flood mapping, SES and Fire Service Tasmania community-aligned education programs and a central flood policy unit. I encourage the Government to share with local communities the work that has been undertaken around the implementation of these key recommendations as has been asserted by the minister today.

During the 2016 flood recovery period I was the mayor of Burnie and Deputy Chair of the north-west Regional Flood Recovery Committee and worked alongside Chair, Mayor Peter Freshney, Commander Peter Edwards, and government agency representatives. Through the work of this committee we learned of the true impact of this event on our communities and local community leaders, particularly in the communities of Sheffield, Wynyard and Latrobe, which were the worst affected. In my community in Burnie, extensive damage was done to businesses in River Road in Wivenhoe as they were inundated with timber debris from upstream that accumulated against the TasRail Bridge over the Emu River. It was a difficult time for communities and the task

force did its best to liaise with government, coordinate the recovery process, and prioritise infrastructure repair. This included roads and bridges, of which there were many to repair, improving alert systems and community communications, and to highlight to government the importance of planning for future flood events through mapping, mitigation strategies and infrastructure.

Last week, Labor candidate for Braddon, Justine Keay, and I met with the General Manager and Mayor of the Latrobe Council. We discussed, amongst other things, the importance of planning for future flood events and of all levels of government working together to coordinate and fund this.

The events of the last weeks in Tasmania bring back many memories of an event that was devastating for communities, including Latrobe. Local government leaders are determined to improve systems and communication and to put in place mitigation infrastructure to prevent future flooding events. It is our responsibility to work with these communities to ensure safety and to protect livelihoods and homes. Latrobe Council is committed to future-proofing its town from future flood events. As a local member, I am committed to working with them through this process and advocating for funding for important community infrastructure, including improved alert systems and levees, as they plan for future mitigation.

In the words of the independent report, we look again at shared responsibilities. Shared responsibility is important. It is important the state and federal governments work with local communities, such as the Latrobe community, to work through and implement the recommendations from the independent flood inquiry.

I acknowledge, during National Volunteers Week, the important work our volunteers do in our local communities, particularly the work of the SES and others during natural disasters and emergencies in Tasmania. I thank them.

[11.33 a.m.]

Mr BROOKS (Braddon) - Mr Deputy Speaker, it was interesting to see Ms White's leadership, who again seems to think she is above the MPI and has set up her shadow minister, Dr Broad, to lead with his chin and politicise the misfortunes of people the day after. That is what we saw.

It is not surprising, with the inexperience of those opposite and Dr Broad, that they will continue that trend. My friend and colleague, the minister, pointed out the differences between the leadership of Mr Green and the current leader. There is no secret he and I shared a difference of opinion on many matters. Even the previous leader of the opposition would not stoop to a level as low as that under the leadership of Ms White, as we saw this week.

In the 24 hours leading up to 9 a.m. on Friday 11 May 2018, more than 120 millimetres of rain fell in Hobart and surrounding suburbs. It was the wettest Hobart day since 1960 and the second highest recorded May rainfall in a single day for Tasmania. It was an amazing amount of water. The Bureau of Meteorology reported by Friday morning, Mt Wellington had recorded 236 mm, the highest rainfall ever recorded on the mountain.

The videos of water heading for Hobart were remarkable footage. It put in place the amount of water we saw and the impact it was having, with vehicles floating down the street. You see it quite often overseas but we have not seen it in Tasmania in recent times, particularly not in the Hobart CBD. It was a quick period and I acknowledge the member for Braddon in her comments

about the volunteers and the work they do in an emergency and in other circumstances. We saw that as well in 2016 and in the flood in 2011.

As a member of the opposition in 2011 and a member of the government in 2016, I believe there was a shared feeling amongst all members of both Chambers. We had a job to do: to look after the people affected, focus on what we can learn from this, and what can we do to mitigate these circumstances where possible. The minister clarified several important facts, and untruths being stated by those opposite, around the circumstances. We take this seriously, the misfortune so many people have felt through floods and natural disasters in Hobart, Braddon, Tasmania, throughout the country and throughout the world. It requires rapid response from people willing to give up their time, sometimes their own life, to help rescue and protect those in harm's way. It is of such a serious nature that it should be seen by the community that we are all together in responding to those circumstances.

The minister also pointed out he has no problems being asked questions about accountability, what we can do for the future and what we have learned from the past. He made a valid point that the opportunism of those opposite on the Monday was inappropriate and a betrayal of the community because we should have been working together to fix the challenges they faced.

Due to the extreme weather event and flooding that occurred on 10 and 11 May that caused major disruption and substantial damage to communities in the south of the state, the most heavily impacted local government areas were Hobart, the Derwent Valley, Glenorchy, Huon Valley, Kingborough and Clarence. Tasmania's emergency services and volunteers did an incredible job in the face of extremely challenging circumstances. I can assure the Tasmanian community and this parliament that every person on this side of the House will work with any level of government or anyone in the community to ensure the support around these circumstances is there. That is what we will continue to do.

Time expired.

[11.40 a.m.]

Mr SHELTON (Lyons) - Madam Speaker, I am at that stage in my life when I look around the Chamber and can say I have seen a few more flood events than a few others in the Chamber. It is an occurrence that happens naturally.

The Greens have been saying, and over my lifetime I have seen, the climate is changing. There is no doubt. The significance of events is increasing. That is why we need to be prepared. I congratulate the Government on the work they did, and through the Blake report, in educating our communities from the state and local government perspective. There are many in this Chamber who have had local government experience. Local government is at the forefront of any of these flooding events. The federal and state governments, particularly in the events of 2016, combine to assist local government in overcoming the issues of major flood events. It is not one sector bearing all responsibility. It is a matter of coming together as a community; federal, state and local governments coming together and overcoming these issues. It is so important for local communities that this occurs.

I note the 2016 event and the significant flooding in the Meander catchment, the Mersey catchments in the north. There are issues around one-in-100-year floods, one-in-150-year floods, and 200-year floods. The reality is that nature is a beast we cannot control and we cannot predict. Therefore, the work -

Dr Woodruff - We can control it and we can predict it.

Mr SHELTON - We cannot predict a single event and the extremities of it, except for planning for the scenarios that might happen.

Dr Woodruff - The Bureau of Meteorology did predict that event. We just weren't prepared for it. We didn't plan for it. That's what you need to do.

Mr SHELTON - The issue is that we are planning for it and the significant work -

Time expired.

Matter noted.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

National Redress Scheme - Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse

[11.04 a.m.]

Ms ARCHER (Minister for Justice) - Madam Speaker, in an important and historic step forward, the Hodgman Liberal Government will opt in to the National Redress Scheme, a key recommendation of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse.

Our decision to opt in to the National Redress Scheme builds on Tasmania's proud record of supporting victims, including through our \$54 million Abuse in State Care compensation scheme that operated between 2003 and 2013, that assisted more than 1800 survivors who were the subject of sexual, physical or emotional abuse whilst in state care as children. We recognise more needs to be done, which is why the Tasmanian Government will join with the Commonwealth, and other states and territories to sign up to the estimated \$3.8 billion National Redress Scheme. With an estimated cost of around \$70 million over the life of the scheme, Tasmania's participation will be provided for in the upcoming state Budget. Survivors will be eligible for payments of up to \$150 000 as well as a substantial contribution toward counselling, plus other associated support services.

With a decision now made to join the National Redress Scheme, and consistent with my commitment in the past, I have also instructed my department to take the necessary steps to commence the Limitation Amendment Act from 1 July 2018, being the date that the National Redress Scheme will commence.

The decision to opt in to the National Redress Scheme has come after months of complex discussions with the Commonwealth, and in the context of an extensive and significant body of work produced by the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Childhood Sexual Abuse.

The Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse was established by the Australian Government on 11 January 2013. The Royal Commission was tasked, amongst other things, to consider the effectiveness of redress for survivors of institutional child sexual abuse consistent with paragraph (d) of the terms of reference as follows:

what institutions and governments should do to address, or alleviate the impact of child sexual abuse and related matters in institutional contexts, including, in particular, in ensuring justice for victims through the provision of redress by institutions, processes for referral for investigation and prosecution and support services.

To inform its work in relation to 'ensuring justice for victims through the provision of redress by institutions', the royal commission considered relevant state and territory government and non-government institutions redress schemes, including Towards Healing (Catholic Church), Redress WA, and the Tasmanian Abuse in State Care Ex Gratia scheme.

Over the life of the royal commission they conducted 8013 private sessions, received 25 964 letters and emails, and handled 42 041 calls. They held 57 public hearings to examine the various institutional responses to child sexual abuse, involving such organisations as the Salvation Army, Catholic Church, YMCA, Scouts Australia, Swimming Australia, schools, residential homes and health care providers.

In November 2014 the royal commission also sat in Hobart to examine allegations of child sexual abuse locally.

In addition to enquiring into specific institutions, the royal commission also held hearings to explore specific issues, including the operation of out-of-home care providers, the provision of redress and the need for civil law reform, as well as how the criminal justice system responds to such cases of sexual abuse. The royal commission also conducted roundtable discussions with various experts, government and non-government officials, service providers, churches, victims, and survivor advocates to consider what institutions and governments should do to better protect children against sexual abuse.

This was an extensive, important body of work and in September 2015, the royal commission released its Redress and Civil Litigation Report containing the royal commission's final recommendations on redress and civil litigation.

The royal commission recommended, amongst other things, that the provision of effective redress for survivors be achieved through the establishment, funding and operation of a single national redress scheme established by the Australian Government.

The work of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse made plain to all Australians not just the scale of abuse that occurred in institutional settings, but through the evidence of brave survivors we gained a greater understanding of the lifelong and often catastrophic impacts of such abuse.

To quote the Chair of the royal commission, the Hon Justice Peter McClellan AM:

What many may consider to be low levels of abuse of boys and girls can have catastrophic consequences for them, leading to a life which is seriously compromised from what it might otherwise have been. Both boys and girls are left with a distrust of adults and difficulties with intimacy. Inappropriate touching of boys may leave them with confusion as to their sexual identity. This can result in life long difficulty in relationships which can cause problems in other aspects of their lives. Although the impact on the lives of abused persons has been

reported within the academic literature I have no doubt that it is not well understood by the general community. In my role as a judge I have been called upon to review many of the sentences imposed upon people convicted of the sexual abuse of children but I readily acknowledge that, until I began my work with the Commission, I did not adequately appreciate the devastating and long lasting effect which sexual abuse however inflicted can have on an individual's life.

In an interim report the royal commission also noted that:

- there are both short-term and long-term effects of childhood sexual abuse, and many effects may be lifelong;
- children and adolescents face emotional, physical and social impacts;
- these impacts often extend into adulthood, affect life choices and mental health, and may lead to victims committing suicide;
- the nature and severity of the impacts vary between survivors; and
- the impacts extend beyond the immediate victim, affecting parents, colleagues, friends, families and the community.

Indeed, in 2016 the Australian Institute of Family Studies released a report that outlined the ways child sexual abuse can negatively impact on victims and their relationships with others, finding that it impacts:

- mental and physical health;
- levels of tension, anxiety and conflict in the family;
- long-term relationships with family members, including with extended family such as in-laws and cousins;
- marriage and partnerships;
- victim/survivors' education and employment opportunities as a result of traumatic stress; and
- social connectedness.

On 15 December 2017 the royal commission presented a final report to the Governor-General, detailing the culmination of a five-year inquiry into institutional responses to child sexual abuse and related matters. The final report comprised an executive summary and 17 volumes, and contained a total of 409 recommendations covering a broad range of areas. This report brought together all the royal commission's work which included their previous recommendation that a nationally consistent redress scheme be developed.

Tasmania's Previous Redress Scheme

Tasmania has long recognised the need to make redress to those who had been abused in Tasmanian institutions. Tasmania's Abuse in State Care compensation scheme operated between

July 2003 and February 2013, and assisted more than 1800 survivors who were the subject of sexual, physical or emotional abuse whilst in state care as children. In total, the state made ex gratia payments worth over \$54 million. Those payments were wholly funded by the state regardless of whether the claimants were abused in wholly state-run institutions or institutions operated by non-government organisations on behalf of the state. In doing so, the Tasmanian government provided equal access for claimants irrespective of the institution or type of abuse.

Although applications to the Abuse in State Care scheme closed in 2013, the Tasmanian government established the Abuse in State Care Support Service that provides an ongoing scheme for eligible survivors of abuse in state care. The service is aimed at assisting survivors overcome the impacts of the abuse and improve their lives. The service is administered by the Tasmanian Department of Health and Human Services. Claimants may be awarded up to \$2500 for goods and services to assist with education, employment, counselling, family connection, and medical and dental services. This scheme played an important role in redressing the abuse that so many vulnerable Tasmanians had experienced. However, it was clear from the scope of the royal commission's findings that more needed to be done.

In line with the work being done by the royal commission, and the harrowing details of sexual offences being revealed, the Tasmanian Government is undertaking or has undertaken a range of reforms including:

- the continued roll out of Tasmania's Registration to Work with Vulnerable People Scheme;
- amendments to Tasmania's Limitation Act to allow victims of historical sexual abuse to take civil legal action against perpetrators of their abuse;
- the introduction of statutory aggravating factors for crimes of serious sexual abuse;
- the removal of good character as a mitigating factor for perpetrators of sexual abuse when that good character facilitated their offending;
- mandatory treatment for sex offenders;
- reforms to the crime of rape to bring it into line with community expectations;
- the introduction of court intermediaries to provide greater assistance to vulnerable people involved in the court system; and
- the introduction of mandatory terms of imprisonment for serious sexual offences against children.

Development of the National Redress Scheme

A key factor among the findings of the royal commission was the need for a nationally consistent redress scheme. The nature and impact of historical child sexual abuse means that many survivors have not had the opportunity to seek compensation for the injuries through other legal processes. It is not feasible for many of those who have experienced institutional child sexual abuse to seek common law damages because of issues such as the passage of time, high threshold of proof, availability of records and identification of responsible parties.

Redress schemes provide an alternative avenue for the provision of redress to civil law claims recognising the problems many survivors of historical child sexual abuse face to bring successful civil actions. Redress schemes have been historically established to provide an alternative to getting compensation through the courts. They provide particular cohorts of victims' access to some form of redress for wrongs suffered, such as the Stolen Generations, Child Migrants and Asbestos Injuries. The rationale for redress is not to compensate for damages for the abuse suffered, but to make a monetary payment to acknowledge the harm done. Redress has a restorative focus and includes services that may not otherwise be accessed in a civil settlement, such as counselling supports, institutional responses and apologies.

In November 2016, in response to the royal commission's 2015 report on Civil Litigation and Redress, the Australian Government announced a Commonwealth Redress Scheme and indicated their intention to invite states, territories and other non-government institutions to opt-in to the scheme to deliver redress to survivors of institutional child sexual abuse. The Commonwealth Government also announced an independent advisory council bringing together a broad group of specialists, including survivor groups, legal and psychological experts, to provide advice on the implementation of the scheme.

Tasmania has worked closely with the Commonwealth, as well as other Australian jurisdictions, on the design of the scheme. Tasmania's experience, having previously run our own redress scheme, meant that as a state we were well placed to inform these discussions.

The Commonwealth has estimated that overall the scheme will cost \$3.8 billion. Ensuring the details of a scheme of such magnitude are workable has been a mammoth task. However it has never for us been simply a matter of dollars and cents. The need to ensure that the scheme is best able to achieve its stated purpose has always been at the forefront of my mind - it is to provide support to people who were sexually abused as children whilst in the care of an institution.

The design of the Commonwealth's scheme will provide eligible claimants with a maximum monetary payment of \$150 000, provide emotional and mental support through counselling, and allow for personal and direct contact by claimants with responsible institutions where available and sought by the claimant. The scheme will operate for 10 years.

As the Hon Dan Tehan MP, Minister for Social Services, has told the Commonwealth Parliament:

The scheme will adopt a survivor-focused and trauma-informed approach; access to redress will be simple, and support will be available throughout the application and acceptance processes.

The scheme is not intended to replace legal avenues to seek justice. It is intended to provide a survivor with a means to access a sense of justice, through monetary redress and through restorative supports.

It is intended to be faster, simpler and less distressing for survivors and to provide governments and institutions with the means to deliver justice to their survivors.

It is designed to enable survivors to engage with the process at their own pace.

The Commonwealth has committed to providing support services for the life of the scheme. These are broad-based services that will include support for financial and legal needs as well as timely access to trauma-informed and culturally appropriate support for people during the application process. These support services are to enable applicants to engage effectively in the process and to assist them to make their applications in a way that minimises the trauma that recounting these experiences can cause.

In addition to states and territories, the Commonwealth consulted with a broad range of stakeholders in developing the National Redress Scheme, and the bill that underpins it. The scheme operator is the Secretary of the Commonwealth Department of Social Services. A national Ministers' Redress Scheme Governance Board, chaired by the Commonwealth, will have oversight of the scheme and decision-making powers in relation to amendments to legislation, rules and other matters as defined within the terms of reference.

It is also proposed to establish a redress scheme which will bring together representatives from participating government and non-government institutions. The scheme operates on an opt-in basis, meaning that non-government institutions will be required to opt in before those that experienced abuse in their care are able to have their applications assessed.

Applications will be triaged to enable priority applications to be assessed first, for example where the survivor is elderly or is suffering from life threatening health problems or other factors considered appropriate on a case by case basis.

There was the need to strike a balance between making the scheme accessible, and ensuring there was public confidence in its integrity. Where the design of the scheme has landed avoids the risk of bringing the scheme into disrepute or adversely affecting public confidence in it.

There has been some criticism that the maximum payment is \$50 000 less than what was recommended by the royal commission. However it is important to note that under the national scheme the average payment is expected to be \$76 000, some \$11 000 higher than what was estimated by the royal commission.

The scheme operator will be responsible for receiving applications and assessing claims, as well as requesting relevant information from participating institutions. However, the ultimate decision on each application will be made by independent decision makers, engaged by the Department of Social Services but not answerable to the operator or the government in relation to the assessment decisions they make in relation to individual applications.

Participating state governments will be invited to nominate independent decision makers. The test to be applied by these independent decision makers is the standard of 'reasonable likelihood'.

As I have mentioned, in addition to a redress payment, successful applicants will also have access to counselling services, as well as a direct personal response from responsible institutions if they wish. This reflects that redressing past wrongs is more than the payment of monies, but about also providing assistance with the ongoing effects of such abuse, as well the acceptance of blame by an institution.

As a condition of accepting redress, eligible survivors will be required to sign a deed of release, releasing the responsible participating institution(s) from further civil liability in relation to the sexual and related non-sexual abuse within the scope of the scheme. No confidentiality

requirements will be imposed on the survivor as a condition of signing the deed of release. Importantly, the scheme will not release alleged perpetrators from any criminal or civil liability which may exist for their wrongdoing. And the scheme will provide survivors with the opportunity to obtain legal advice from a legal support service funded by the scheme, prior to signing the deed of release and accepting redress.

Whilst we can never undo the suffering experienced by so many, Tasmania's involvement in this scheme acknowledges the wrong that was done to Tasmanian survivors, and is a significant step towards organisations taking responsibility for the sexual abuse that happened to the children for which they had a duty to care.

Clearly, the National Redress Scheme is open not just to government institutions, but also non-government institutions. We have given close consideration for what non-government institutions in Tasmania may be liable, and I have already been in contact with a number of them. Given the sensitivity of this issue I am not going to go into any detail on this point, but what I will do is call on the leaders of Tasmania's non-government institutions that may be liable to recognise the significance of this issue, and the opportunity this scheme provides their organisations to address damage caused to those they once had a duty to protect. I urge organisations not to fail these victims a second time and I note a number have already made public comments to this effect.

The Commonwealth's National Redress Scheme is to commence from 1 July 2018, subject to the successful passage of legislation through the Commonwealth Parliament.

I will table legislation to bring Tasmania into the scheme in the coming months. However the structure of the scheme provides that Tasmanians will be able to commence the application process once the scheme commences, and access the available support services for this process.

Today's historic announcement is one of which all Tasmanians should be proud. It is one that should be above politics - it is the result of long and detailed discussions between governments of all persuasions who, together, recognise the importance of doing what needs to be done to seek to redress the wrongs of the past.

I sincerely thank all those who have worked so hard to bring us to this point, particularly my department. Make no mistake, these are complex discussions that needed considerable care and attention to ensure an open, transparent and fair process in the best interests of survivors.

This is truly an historic day for Tasmanian survivors. We acknowledge your deep suffering, we have learned from the past, and we sincerely hope that through the National Redress Scheme, we can better support you now and into the future.

[12.06 p.m.]

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

That the ministerial statement be noted.

The Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse was established by Labor Prime Minister Julia Gillard in November 2012. Since it was established the commission has handled 42 041 calls, conducted 8013 private sessions, received 25 964 letters and emails, and made 2575 referrals to authorities. The commission released its recommendations regarding a redress scheme and civil litigations arrangements in September 2015.

The Commonwealth Government advised in November 2016 that it would be establishing a commonwealth redress scheme for survivors of institutional childhood sexual abuse. States were encouraged to opt in to the scheme, which would provide a maximum of \$150 000 compensation to victims of abuse. However the redress scheme offers more than monetary payment and includes services such as counselling, institutional responses and apologies. It has a restorative focus.

Labor welcomes the announcement by the Government today but regrets that it has taken this long. There has been ample time for states and territories to work through the details of the scheme. New South Wales was the first state to legislate for redress. Victoria, the ACT, Queensland and the Northern Territory have all committed to joining. South Australia agreed to opt in after a deal was struck to recognise the state's own compensation scheme, not dissimilar to the Tasmanian situation. Tasmania and Western Australia are the last states to sign on.

The delay has not been fair to victims who have waited, in some cases, decades for closure. I have met with survivors, heard their stories and listened to them express the impact the trauma has had on their lives. They tell me they are frightened of their memories and the impacts of this abuse has been felt their entire life. I have met with CLAN, the Care Leaders Australia Network, who have been tremendous advocates and I take this opportunity to acknowledge their bravery in sharing their stories, those individuals, as well as those organisations, who have advocated and helped result in the establishment of the royal commission which took place in 2012. I also acknowledge institutions such as the Anglican Church which has been urging Tasmania to act so that they can progress their own arrangements for redress.

The Labor Party gave its clear commitment earlier this year that Tasmania needed to opt in to the National Redress Scheme. Nobody is suggesting this was a simple process, but a clear commitment to sign up to the scheme, pending the finalisation of details, would have provided much-needed clarity and certainty before today. We urge the Government to now act with urgency and work collaboratively with all parties to progress the relevant administrative and legislative requirements so that survivors of institutional sexual abuse can seek redress through the national scheme from 1 July this year.

On behalf of the Tasmanian Labor Party I express our appreciation for the work of those in the department who have helped negotiate this outcome and who have worked through the detail of Tasmania opting into the scheme. I would also like to acknowledge the survivors of abuse, recognise their pain and suffering and offer our heartfelt commitment to ensuring redress is offered and hope that it helps with healing.

The Tasmanian Labor Party gives our full support for Tasmania opting into the National Redress Scheme.

[12.11 p.m.]

Ms O'CONNOR (Denison - Leader of the Greens) - Madam Speaker, it is fair to say that all over Tasmania today there will be people who suffered profound trauma and damage in their lives when they were children who will breathe some sigh of relief to know that Tasmania now has accepted its responsibility to be part of the National Redress Scheme.

I congratulate the Attorney-General for taking this on, bringing it forward and making this announcement today, having spoken to survivors of past sexual abuse and understanding that these are psychological and emotional scars that never go away and cause lifelong damage. This decision

by the Tasmanian Government, which is warmly endorsed by the Greens, will be welcomed by survivors of past sexual abuse.

According to the royal commission, it is estimated that around 7500 Tasmanians could be eligible for redress or to take civil litigation through the courts now that the Limitations Amendment Act will be proclaimed from 1 July 2018. This means that there are now two courses survivors can take to seek a measure of justice and compensation. One is through the courts, now that the time limits will be removed from 1 July, but for someone who has endured child sexual abuse, going through a court process has enormous potential to re-spark trauma. The redress scheme provides that alternative. It also provides an alternative for people for whom the perpetrator may no longer be alive. It is very important that we have these two key recommendations of the Royal Commission into Institutionalised Child Sexual Abuse dealt with by the Tasmanian Government.

I acknowledge the hard work of the Care Leavers Australasian Network and the presence in the Chamber today of Leonie Sheedy, who has come down to watch the ministerial statement, and the relentless advocacy of CLAN to represent people who governments, institutions and the wider community, in many ways, had forgotten, or if they had not forgotten they had chosen not to acknowledge how many thousands of people there are walking among us who are damaged because of hurt and abuse inflicted on them when they were children.

I also acknowledge the leadership of the Anglican Church in Tasmania and the presence in the Chamber of Bishop Richard Condie. This is real leadership from the Anglican Church. A very important part of healing wrongs of the past is recognition of the wrong and the hurt and an acknowledgement of responsibility. The Anglican Church, the Catholic Church, the Salvation Army and a number of church and charitable institutions are part of this tragically sorry chapter in Australia's history.

The Anglican Church in Tasmania has stood up and accepted responsibility for the past wrongs. It has had to make some extremely difficult decisions that have impacted on the diocese and on parishioners. There are many in the community who acknowledge this is the right thing to do. The Anglican Church's leadership is an example to the Catholic Church, to the Salvation Army and to other church and charitable institutions that it is time to step up because the national redress scheme requires churches and charities to be part of this healing process.

It was a source of frustration to the Greens, as I am sure the Attorney-General knows, that it has taken so long for Tasmania to opt into the redress scheme. We started asking questions about this, I think back in 2016 -

Ms Archer - 2017.

Ms O'CONNOR - 2017, and you were not attorney-general then. I know your predecessor, the late and much beloved attorney-general, Vanessa Goodwin, did take this matter very seriously. I acknowledge her work in this area.

I am not sure, perhaps it is something we can talk about after this debate, why the date of proclamation of the Limitations Amendment Bill has to wait until 1 July, because for every day that legislative mechanism is not law, is a day survivors do not have that choice of seeking compensation through the civil courts.

I am not going to be churlish in this debate today. It is too significant. It is a very important day for Tasmania. It is a very important day for people who survived child sexual abuse. We should take a moment in this place to acknowledge that some people did not survive, that there are people who went through that whose lives were shattered and who never recovered. There are people who have taken their life as a result of the abuse they suffered when they were children in the hands of people they should have been able to trust. That is a part of this story that is too rarely told and we need to acknowledge there are people who were abused as children for whom life became unbearable.

Ms Archer - That is why we call them survivors.

Ms O'CONNOR - That is right. We strongly support this move by the Tasmanian Government today. It is very important. On behalf of the Tasmanian Greens, I say to the survivors of child sexual abuse, I hope this brings you a measure of comfort to know that the Tasmanian Parliament, the Tasmanian Government will be part of a national scheme that recognises your pain, your suffering, the impact that has had on people you love and who love you. To the survivors of abuse in the past, on behalf of the Tasmanian Greens, I give our unwavering commitment to represent you in this place and now to be part of a parliament that has at last signed up to the national redress scheme and which has passed legislation that will give survivors the right to seek a measure of justice for crimes that were committed against them when they were children.

[12.19 p.m.]

Mr HODGMAN (Franklin - Premier) - Madam Speaker, I look forward to signing the Intergovernmental Agreement on the National Redress Scheme for Institutional Child Sexual Abuse on behalf of the State of Tasmania, the culmination of a nation's work, commenced in 2012, the establishment of a royal commission which received thousands of submissions from brave Australians, which is a remarkable act of bravery but also an important opportunity for our nation to reflect on the nature, cause and impacts of abuse and for Tasmania to join a national redress scheme which was a key recommendation of the royal commission, as well as many other important recommendations the attorney has outlined to make institutions child-safe, to provide advocacy support and therapeutic services in our community and to prevent these things, as best we can, happening again. It follows, as I mentioned in question time, a scheme previously implemented by the state government in 2002 or 2003 to provide around \$54 million in abuse-in-state-care compensation.

It is very complicated and much work has been done. With respect to the timing of these important reforms, the New South Wales and Victorian governments announced they will join the scheme on 9 March this year. The ACT indicated its intention to participate on 19 March this year. Queensland and Northern Territory governments announced they will participate in the scheme on 30 April 2018. We do so formally on 22 May. To be fair, and I acknowledge and appreciate the comment of the Leader of the Greens not to be churlish - unlike the Leader of the Opposition who tends to be so in important speeches - it is reasonable that within a time frame that is not too inconsistent with other states, we acknowledge the extraordinary complex work that has been undertaken. This is a significant commitment which will accept applications from victims who have been abused within an institution, acknowledge harm done, provide support such as counselling, and importantly, a response, an acknowledgement, that they were failed, they were harmed and that we, the institutions and the government expected to protect them are sorry for that.

The royal commission has been an exceptionally challenging process for many organisations and institutions. I acknowledge the willingness of our institutions to participate and to show

leadership and advance their involvement in the scheme, which will reflect on past wrongs and, importantly, better support those who come within their care and into contact with them, to provide greater protections into the future. We have pursued this scheme with some priority. It is critical to ensure it is effective, that it is transparent and has the confidence of the survivors who will use it. The national leader of the Greens made the point that it was essential before anyone could sign up to a scheme to ensure that every person who needs to be covered is, that there be no inequity or lack of access. That is, not to deny anyone their right to receiving support envisaged under this scheme but to ensure that the scheme is able to deliver it. We owe it to the survivors to make sure the scheme is effective, transparent and has the confidence of all those who use it and not, at some future time, to look back and wish that we had got it right.

There is a debate, I accept, on the limitations legislation, and the timing of the legislative changes in that regard are valid. We understand and appreciate that this does provide, as previous speakers have said, not only the ability for people to access the scheme that will mean they do not have to go through common law proceedings or other courses of action that may not provide the support that this scheme will. It may be less stressful for those individuals and is one that is important in providing financial recognition for what has happened and to reflect that a wrong has been perpetrated on innocent people, but also to provide additional support. There are more than 400 recommendations in the final report brought together by the royal commission over its five-year inquiry. It sets out what they heard, concluded and recommended, which is also very important. Work is underway to respond to the recommendations of the royal commission and much has been done, as the Attorney-General said, to ensure the best outcomes and protections for vulnerable children and young people.

We will continue to work very closely with the Commonwealth Government and other states and territories to identify areas where there is an opportunity for joint initiatives and national collaboration. This is key, because no state or territory is immune to the findings of the royal commission and each jurisdiction can often differ, but the issues it brought to light exists all around our country which is why it is important we continue to work together to continue the process that the royal commission started. There will be other important milestones relating to redress as we work towards the commencement of the scheme which we will do as quickly as we are able, including the signing of the intergovernmental agreement and the introduction and passage of referral legislation.

I also acknowledge the extraordinary amount of work that has been done by the relative departments and the previous attorney-general and the current Attorney-General, punctuated by the brief time that I had as attorney-general. I am very conscious of the extraordinary amount of work that has been done not only in Tasmania but at a national level. I thank the staff and look forward to their ongoing engagement and assistance to ensure that the scheme is effective and delivers some form of support not only through money but most importantly through support, counselling services, assistance, a willingness for our community to accept a wrong and, most importantly, for those poor victims who suffered so much an understanding and recognition that our community, our state, says that we were wrong. We failed these people and for that we are truly sorry.

[12.27 p.m.]

Ms HADDAD (Denison) - Madam Speaker, I add my comments today in recognising that the establishment of the Commonwealth redress scheme was one of the vital recommendations of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse. It will ensure that organisations, including the states, take responsibility to make amends for the sexual abuse that happened to children they were responsible for. It will only have its full intended impact if and

when each state and territory opt in to provide redress to people who suffered at the hands of state-based institutions - indeed, most likely the majority of institutions.

I commend the Attorney-General for making the decision and the Tasmanian Government for opting into this scheme. The Attorney-General was right with her words. This is something that is above politics and recognises that survivors of child sexual abuse deserve recompense and to be recognised for the pain they suffered. We owe an obligation as parliamentarians to ensure that those kinds of wrongs are never suffered by future generations.

The state signing up will also mean that non-government institutions including churches and charities are able to participate in this scheme. I add my acknowledgement to the work that the Anglican Church and their proactive stance to take responsibility for the actions of the past that happened in that institution.

As we heard other speakers explain, redress can be awarded under the scheme. It is not just about financial recompense, although that is one available award of up to \$150 000, but equally importantly the scheme will also be able to provide access to psychological or psychiatric support and direct responses, for example apologies from institutions, if that is something that survivors want to pursue.

I commend the Government in joining with New South Wales, Victoria, the Australian Capital Territory, Northern Territory and Queensland. There are now thousands of survivors who can claim redress under this scheme in Tasmania and that is good. However, we heard both the Leader of the Greens and the Premier explain that going through civil action is not always going to be something that a survivor of child sex abuse would want to go through. However for many it is the only, and in some cases the most appropriate, form of redress because we know some survivors of child sex abuse are directly excluded from the scheme, including non-citizens and permanent residents, people who have committed sexual crimes themselves and people who have spent more than five years in prison, even if these crimes, abhorrent as they may be, can be directly linked to the abuse that they suffered as a child.

My point in explaining this is not to critique the Commonwealth scheme but simply to point out that awards under the scheme are but one avenue through which survivors can seek redress. Others can and should include other state-based redress schemes, such as those we have seen previously in this state and others, individual settlements with state governments for abuse in state-based care, individual settlements for other redress awarded under church-based schemes, such as the one operating now in the Anglican Church in Tasmania and elsewhere, and civil action through the courts. This needs to be a choice for survivors in accessing the avenue of redress that is most appropriate to their particular circumstances.

We have heard many very important words said today about the redress scheme and I am glad the Tasmanian Government has made the decision to opt in, but it really bears more highlighting of the fact that this will also include the proclamation of the Limitations Amendment Bill that was passed last year. I understand the Government linked the proclamation of that bill to the decision made on redress. That is not a decision I agreed with. It is quite unusual to see legislation passed and not proclaimed. However I think that is a very good thing and needs to be recognised because for so many survivors this could have happened earlier, but they now will have this opportunity to take civil action through the courts.

Recently I met with a Melbourne-based lawyer who already has 150 clients on her books ready to take action through the Tasmanian Supreme Court. They have been prevented from doing that until this legislation is proclaimed. I will give a couple of stories to illustrate why this is so important and why the Commonwealth redress scheme, as important and worthy as it is, is not always going to be the most appropriate means of recompense for all survivors of child sex abuse. Jayne, who I met with recently, had a bit of a rough time growing up in Launceston. She ended up leaving home at 13 and moved into the home of another family who had an older male child more than seven years her senior. She lived with that person's family and while there Child Protection Services visited her home weekly and the family received a weekly payment from them as well as Centrelink benefits for the care of Jayne. She says it was abundantly clear to Child Protection Services that she was in a sexual relationship with the man more than seven years older than her and indeed she became pregnant to that man at 13 and lost her baby at 14.

Despite this awful and traumatic experience Jayne went through, she is ineligible for redress under the Commonwealth scheme because even though her circumstances were known to Child Protection and she received weekly visits from officers who documented the abuse, the pregnancy and the loss of that pregnancy, she was not made a ward of the state. While the state at the time was aware of her situation and abuse, she was never officially in state care and therefore will not be eligible under the redress scheme.

I met with Jayne recently and she gave very generously of her time and experience, as she did with the royal commission. It is incredibly hard for people like Jayne and all survivors to have to relive these horrible experiences. I thank her and so many others for their generosity and strength in joining with the several calls for the Government to enact this legislation.

Another example is Tony, who told his story to an ABC journalist, Erica Vowles. He was about seven when he was put into a Salvation Army boys home in New South Wales by his mum after fleeing their father in Queensland. He lived in that home between the ages of seven and 10 and was horrifically abused in ways that I do not want to read into *Hansard*. He left that institutional home at about 13 and stole a car in New South Wales. He was trying to get back to Queensland to find his father because, in his words, his mother did not want to know him. He ended up falling into a spiral of decline - drug abuse, petty crime -

Time expired.

[12.34 p.m.]

Mr JAENSCH (Braddon - Minister for Human Services) - Madam Speaker, I applaud the hard work of the Attorney-General and her predecessors in getting Tasmania to this important point. As the Attorney-General has said, this is an issue that should have been above politics but sadly we have seen in Tasmania that this is not always the case. While this Government has been hard at work constructively engaging with the Commonwealth and other Australian jurisdictions on the details of this historic scheme. It has faced ill-informed commentary from the sidelines that has done nothing but create confusion and uncertainty for vulnerable survivors.

As the Government has been saying all along, it is critically important that all involved in the scheme have details right to ensure it is effective, transparent and has the confidence of those who will use it. With something of this magnitude, of this significance and of this much importance to so many vulnerable people, this was never a situation where any government could make the decision to opt in because it was politically expedient to do so and simply say they will worry about

the details later. To have done so would have been a great disservice to the very people that the scheme seeks to assist.

I have been particularly disappointed in attempts to attack the Government over its approach to the limitations reform. When the Limitation Amendment Bill was before this parliament, where it received tripartisan support, the link to the redress scheme was clearly stated. The bill was clearly drafted to commence on proclamation. No issue was raised with this at the time and no attempt was made to amend the bill, yet it was used to attack the Government when it was thought politically expedient to do so. It was said that civil litigation and redress apply to different groups. This is overly simplistic and simply not correct. There are many survivors who will now have the choice between the two options.

The work of the royal commission highlighted that some people who have suffered child sexual abuse will not be able to effectively access compensation through civil litigation for a range of reasons. We offer survivors a clear choice. Misinformation being spread with assertions that Tasmania is the only state not to have undertaken limitations reform were also wrong.

Ms O'Connor - Who said that?

Ms O'Byrne - No-one said that.

Mr JAENSCH - Had they bothered to look, they would have seen that South Australia has not taken action to amend their -

Dr Woodruff - Who is 'they'?

Madam SPEAKER - Order, please.

Mr JAENSCH - limitation laws and Western Australia, like Tasmania, has passed an amending act but is yet to commence. This Government -

Ms O'Connor - Talk about misreading the room.

Mr FERGUSON - Point of order, Madam Speaker. This debate has been conducted with members respectfully listening to each person. I ask that you direct the two members to allow Mr Jaensch to continue his contribution uninterrupted.

Ms O'CONNOR - On the point of order, I was simply pointing out by way of interjection that Mr Jaensch is misrepresenting those people who advocated for survivors on the Limitation Amendment Bill. He has totally misread the room and dragged the level of debate down. It has become acrimonious.

Madam SPEAKER - I uphold the point of order and ask Mr Jaensch to continue his speech.

Mr JAENSCH - This Government, more than any before it, is committed to protecting Tasmania's victims and vulnerable children so they do not become victims in future. We have pursued numerous reforms that demonstrate that commitment. As Minister for Human Services I would like to briefly outline some of them.

In 2016, our Government committed to a comprehensive reform of services to children called Strong Families, Safe Kids through the creation of a collaborative service system that can respond swiftly to ensure the safety and wellbeing of children. The reform recognises the need: to bring the right help for children, young people and their families at the very earliest opportunity; to deliver intensive support to families and avoid the need to remove children or young people from their homes and families; to provide more support for child safety officers toward best outcomes for children and their families; and to collaborate with all parts of the service system to deliver an integrated system that can respond innovatively and effectively to support families, communities and professionals.

We are delivering on this commitment, this integrated system for child wellbeing and safety, through the additional investment of over \$20.5 million between 2016 and 2020. We have a plan that is being delivered through a range of initiatives, including -

The creation of a child advice and referral alliance to ensure that services across the system share the responsibility for responding to the needs of children and their families;

The recruitment of more than 40 more staff to work in or to directly support the front line;

The delivery of an additional \$1.15 million investment for a 12-month trial of an intensive family engagement service designed to work with families with complex needs to prevent the imminent separation of children from their primary caregivers;

We have invested \$350 000 for the Adolescent Integrated Case Co-ordination Trial, which is working with up to 20 young people to improve their developmental outcomes, wellbeing and safety and reduce risks, such as the pathway to the youth justice system and homelessness.

We are developing a child and youth wellbeing framework that will help promote a common understanding of child wellbeing across the service system and provide the basis for a more integrated service system, and the children's advice and referral service to improve our ability to provide timely information, advice and assistance to better support children and their families, especially vulnerable children.

This investment is aimed at supporting front line child safety officers, increasing support to families and intervening earlier with families in need. The key component of Strong Families, Safe Kids is to better support families before they reach crisis. By giving earlier support, children are less likely to be removed from their families and relationship breakdown can be prevented. For young people, this breakdown often means absences from school, an increased likelihood of drug and alcohol abuse, homelessness and mental health problems.

We are getting on with the plan, it is being implemented and we expect to see significant positive changes in the way we work with vulnerable children and families. For those listening today, I hope this gives them some confidence, some heart that there has been generational change in the system of care for young, vulnerable people. Over the last few weeks I have been out meeting people involved in our child safety service and they are professional, highly networked people. They love their work and they are doing a great job.

Time expired.

[12.41 p.m.]

Ms ARCHER (Denison - Minister for Justice) - Madam Speaker, in the short time I have to make a contribution on the debate, I will clarify a couple of points.

It is true to say the scheme will not accept applications from incarcerated survivors but there is an exception: except where the scheme operator considers there are exceptional circumstances. Any survivor who has been convicted of a sentence of five years imprisonment for a single offence will be referred to the relevant state attorney-general for advice on whether the survivor should be excluded. There will be exceptional circumstances. I envisage their incarceration, as a result of what they have been through in life, may qualify for that. It will be assessed on a case by case basis.

In relation to the Limitations Amendment Bill, it is important we provide survivors with choice, that they did not potentially make the wrong decision by pursuing civil action when they could take redress. It is expensive and it is a higher standard of proof, being the balance of probabilities as opposed to the reasonable likelihood test. We linked those two together for that purpose.

Statement noted.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY

Resumed from 2 May 2018 (page101)

[12.43 p.m.]

Mr ROCKLIFF (Braddon - Minister for Education and Training) - Madam Speaker, it is a great pleasure to support the Address-in-Reply to Her Excellency. I thank Her Excellency for the warm, generous and strong role she plays as Tasmania's Governor.

I am humbled the people of Braddon have once again shown their faith in me as their representative in this parliament, a role I do not and will never take for granted. As I have always tried to do, I hope to represent the people of Braddon and all of Tasmania to the very best of my abilities and work hard every single day to ensure Tasmania can be at its best.

I congratulate our Leader, the Premier of Tasmania, Will Hodgman, on his exceptional leadership and emphatic result he secured from the people of Tasmania. It is a great privilege and honour to be returned as a majority Liberal government in what was the best consecutive win for a Liberal government in 100 years.

It is the people of Braddon to whom I owe the greatest thanks. Being elected for a fifth term is a great honour. I congratulate my colleagues who again demonstrated a strong performance by winning three out of the five seats in Braddon.

I pay tribute to Team Braddon, as it is called. It is testament to the hard work of the Braddon Liberal team over the last four years and their work within the Braddon community. I congratulate my colleague Mr Jaensch on his re-election for a second term and joining the ministry and the valuable contribution that he is already making in our government through his advocacy for his electorate and through his new portfolio. Mr Brooks has been a colleague of mine since 2010. He

ran a very strong and a very entertaining campaign this time around in 2018. There is no doubt Mr Brooks' high vote indicates he is well respected by the people of Braddon. It is a testament to his hard work in the community.

I also acknowledge my former colleague, Mrs Rylah, who worked very hard for her community but unfortunately missed out on her seat. Such is the nature of the job we are in. Many across the Braddon community will remember Mrs Rylah's work and her advocacy in key areas on behalf of the community. In particular, she played a key role in the working group set up in Edith Creek after the factory closure.

I extend my congratulations to all other parliamentary Liberal Party members for their excellent efforts through their campaign.

I congratulate you, Madam Speaker, on being elected as the member for Denison and in your new role as Speaker.

I acknowledge the contribution and the hard work of Nic Street, who very narrowly missed out on a seat in this House. I have acknowledged Matthew Groom's contribution at another time.

My fellow Braddon colleagues, Ms Dow and Dr Broad: I commend Ms Dow on her excellent first speech and I wish her well in this place.

I also make a special thank you to my electorate officer, Pauline. Pauline has been with me since January 2006 and retired very recently. She has been a wonderful contributor to our team and a wonderful front of office and electoral officer throughout that time. She has worked extremely hard over the past 12 years and I wish her the very best in her retirement. I miss her but I welcome my new electorate officer, Steph, who is doing a wonderful job.

I thank my family and my friends who supported me throughout the 2018 campaign, particularly my father, who put up just about every sign. I did not realise until the Sunday after the election how many signs my father had put up. We spent a good eight hours taking them all down. My dear wife, Sandy, and my three little girls provide endless support. Without their support I would not be able to do this job.

Our team is very strong and we ran a great campaign. That is why we are here. I am proud of that and I am excited to be here at the start of another term, when we have so many good, strong policies to deliver.

I am honoured again to be in the role of Deputy Premier of Tasmania and appreciate the faith that my colleagues and the people of Tasmania have shown in me to undertake this role. It is also a great honour to represent the people of Tasmania as Minister for Education and Training, Minister for Infrastructure and for the first time, Tasmania's Minister for Advanced Manufacturing and Defence Industries.

Education is fundamental to the future of Tasmania. Our young people are our future. How we educate them and shape them to go onto further study or to work and make positive contributions to society is extremely important. Over the past four years, we have invested in education, we have invested in literacy and numeracy specialists, school nurses, more than 60 additional professional support staff, 107 more teachers and we have extended 38 high schools to years 11 and 12. We are implementing an entirely new education act and we are undertaking significant improvements in

the early years. We have seen some wonderful improvements in our NAPLAN results, in our retention of students to year 12 and in our achievement for the Tasmanian Certificate of Education which is up over 10 per cent to where it was under the previous government.

Despite all this there is much more to do. I am very pleased to be implementing our education and training election commitments, including extending all our high schools to year 12 by year 2022 and employing 250 more teachers in our classrooms. Recently at a roundtable discussion with stakeholders in Tasmania's education workforce I was joined by the Australian Education Union, the Tasmanian Principals Association, the University of Tasmania, the Peter Underwood Centre for Educational Attainment and the Teachers Registration Board. Our discussion focused on the wonderful opportunity we have because of our commitment to shape the education workforce into the future. We are committed to a strong workforce development plan and 250 additional teachers over the course of the next six years will be a great opportunity for Tasmania. Quality teaching is one of the determinants of students' success. I am looking forward to continuing to work with this group to implement our commitment to place the 250 more teachers in our schools.

We will also have a literacy coach in every school to further improve literacy results. We will provide a free year of pre-school for disadvantaged or vulnerable three year olds as well. In addition we will be placing 80 additional full time equivalent teacher assistants in the early years. The early years will continue to be a focus of our Government, because as well as the significant social benefits of ensuring as many of our children as possible gain the best start in life there are significant economic benefits as well. For every dollar we invest in education, particularly in the early years of a child's life, we reap significant reward.

We have guaranteed TAFE will receive at least 70 per cent of training funds. Over recent years we have provided around 80 per cent and expect that to continue. We will be investing heavily in TasTAFE including extended Drysdale delivery in establishing two more centres of excellence in trades and water and, of course, in agriculture. There are exciting times ahead in education and training. I embrace that opportunity again for a further term.

Over the past four years we have invested heavily in Tasmanian infrastructure the most visible of which is our road infrastructure investment. We have made the largest ever investment in the Midland Highway, with \$500 million invested by the state government and Commonwealth over 10 years. As a regular traveller on the Midland Highway I can see that improvement every week.

The federal government has confirmed funding for a new Bridgewater Bridge. This is welcome, long overdue news. Coupled with the state government's commitment to funding our share of the bridge we can look forward to working together to deliver a new bridge for Tasmanians. We will not be spending the money on anything else, which is what occurred under previous governments. The allocation of that funding is for the Bridgewater Bridge, which is a huge opportunity for southern Tasmania. It was great to be at the launch the other day with Senator Richard Colebeck and Tony Foster, the mayor of Brighton.

Another very pleasing signal that our plan over the last term has been successful is that we have seen unprecedented passenger growth on the existing *Spirit of Tasmania I* and *II*. I pay tribute to my predecessor, the Honourable Rene Hidding MP, the member for Lyons, for his leadership in infrastructure over the past four years and in particular the policy settings around TT-Line and the investment that was made under the leadership of the TT-Line's board, the CEO and the minister, Mr Hidding. We have doubled day sailings, invested in the refurbishment of passenger areas and reduced average fare prices by around 15 per cent. The refurbishment of the *Spirits* provided a

welcome economic boost for the north-west, creating up to 200 jobs at that time. Because of the actions taken under our Government, the *Spirit* passenger numbers have risen by an incredible 31 per cent. That is fantastic news for our tourism industry and rural and regional tourism most particularly. I commend TT-Line for the wonderful job they have done in recent years.

Record freight volumes is another signal of a very strong and growing economy. We have also achieved record freight volumes, which is fantastic for our exporters and primary producers who favour the *Spirits* for their last-to-leave and first-to-arrive service. Complementing that is the SeaRoad investment as well, Chas Kelly's investment, which is wonderfully complementing our freight capacity in Tasmania. I commend Mr Kelly for his commitment and significant investment.

We are an exporting state. From my understanding we export around 90 per cent of what we produce, so our freight capacity is very important, as members would appreciate. It was good once again the other day to be with Senator Richard Colbeck and our candidate for the Braddon by-election, Mr Brett Whiteley, when we spoke of the freight equalisation program and the importance of that to Tasmania, and that continuation was announced in the recent federal budget, which is most welcome news.

When it comes to the TT-Line, the passenger numbers and our freight capacity, this has resulted in record profits with the dividends sensibly invested into a specially legislated fund for vessel replacement. At the time the Labor Opposition opposed that fund but it enables an earlier replacement. TT-Line is now well down the path of the process to begin to bring two new ships to Tasmania, which is not only welcome but very exciting news.

The next-generation vessels will be more than 30 per cent larger than the current *Spirits* with an even bigger increase in passenger and freight capacity. Every single sailing of the next generation of the *Spirits* will be able to bring an additional 500 visitors, 115 additional passenger vehicles and 85 additional freight trailers.

These new ships will take things to the next level for our booming tourism sector and will help us in achieving our plan to get more tourists here, staying longer and spending more while they are here. On average, travellers on the *Spirits* stay nine nights longer than air travellers, spend \$1200 more and stay at over twice as many places while they are here. It goes to show the value of this investment to the community and the \$750 million investment in our new ships.

Again, the message is clear. We know there is more that we can do. Throughout this term we will continue an unprecedented focus on infrastructure to ensure Tasmanians have the best quality of life possible. This includes significant road infrastructure upgrades in the south, the north and the north-west, including those specifically supporting increased tourism growth. Further, we will focus on traffic solutions in the south-east, including Hobart and Launceston and in the north in the West Tamar-Launceston couplet, and we are committed to delivering Derwent River ferries, light rail and a new Bridgewater bridge.

Our plan for infrastructure development includes many interdependent commitments. For example, a fifth lane on the Southern Outlet is intrinsically linked to our plan to take over Davey and Macquarie streets. We will not only improve the flow down the Outlet into Hobart but also through the CBD. I note that since this parliament opened for a new term we have already moved to take over Davey and Macquarie streets and started initial consultation on the fifth lane on the Southern Outlet as well, which is very pleasing.

I also consider myself tremendously fortunate to have gained the ministerial responsibility for advanced manufacturing and defence industries. I gained a real passion and appreciation for advanced manufacturing during my time as chair of the Caterpillar transition task force.

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

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY

Resumed from above.

[2.30 p.m.]

Mr ROCKLIFF (Braddon - Minister for Education and Training) - Madam Speaker, I was speaking about my portfolio responsibility of Advanced Manufacturing and was talking about the Caterpillar Transition Taskforce, of which I was chair for a little over 12 months. I know the mayor of Burnie, now the member for Braddon, was also on the task force. It was a successful exercise in filling a number of jobs lost as a result of Caterpillar centralising their operations to Rayong in Thailand, with the loss of 280 direct jobs and a number of businesses that supported those 280 direct jobs. It was a big hole to fill but the Caterpillar Transition Taskforce did its job. Many grants we offered were taken up and the great majority of those jobs were established as a result of a number of recommendations we implemented.

One of those was to support our advanced manufacturing sector and to sell what the sector has to offer. It occurred to me, and I did not have full appreciation of this at all, in our advanced manufacturing sector we are dealing with northern Tasmania particularly, but there are other examples across Tasmania. We have a competent and skilled workforce, and competent and innovative businesses in the advanced manufacturing space. This gave me greater insight into the potential in the advanced manufacturing sector.

One of the recommendations of the task force was to set up a centre of excellence in advanced manufacturing in Burnie, which I understand is going well. I am excited about the advanced manufacturing opportunity and it plays into Tasmania's space of high-quality, premium product, whether that is parts or components for larger machinery such as heavy underground mining equipment or the defence industries. Tasmania has a niche role to play, as we do in the niche role we play in the quality produce we grow, such as in sending cherries to Korea and in other examples of our exports around the world.

I mentioned the defence industry. I am also excited to be Minister for Advanced Manufacturing and Defence Industries. This is a real opportunity for Tasmania. There is a large federal investment in the defence industry. We do not have our per capita share of that. We have about 0.03 per cent of the national defence spend and if we had 2 per cent per capita we would gain many more opportunities. We are not going to demand or say we deserve our fair share. I believe we can command our fair share by supporting the skilled businesses we have in the defence industries. Right now is an exciting time for this sector, with a number of Tasmanians companies producing innovative products with national and international interest.

Last month I was in the United States with eight Tasmanian businesses advocating our strengths in competitive manufacturing and defence industries with our defence advocate rear admiral, now retired, Steve Gilmore, who is a great ambassador for this state and a fantastic defence advocate. He opened many doors for those businesses in Tasmania. I was proud of our Tasmanian businesses at the Sea-Air-Space Expo in Washington DC. There were 21 businesses at this expo, of which we had seven or eight. Tasmania was a third of the expo stands, which was fantastic and a testament to the innovative and clever people we have working in Tasmania. Huge regard was shown for the Tasmanian capability in advanced manufacturing. As a government, we want to see this grow and create more jobs and prosperity for Tasmanians.

A few weeks ago I had the opportunity to visit the Elphinstone factory at Wynyard to see the next generation of Metro buses coming off the production line. This is a world-class product made right here in Tasmania. Pleasingly, the level of local content in our buses is around 37 or 38 per cent, significantly above the benchmark of 30 per cent. This \$31 million project has resulted in 26 new jobs at Elphinstone and further employment benefits at local suppliers. The bus contract is one sign of the advanced manufacturing capability we have in this state and gives us a great platform to build on as we take our state and our economy to the next level.

After the trade mission to the United States I spent some time at Pivot Maritime International, which manufactures state-of-the-art simulation systems. I am speaking of the advanced manufacturing defence industry. PMI made several new key relationships through the trade mission and is confident of growing its businesses. We will see these relationships grow in coming months, years and well into the future. Tasmania has about 30 businesses already operating in the defence industry, generating sales of around \$340 million each year in areas including design, manufacture and service of maritime parts for naval ships and submarines for the Australian, New Zealand, Singapore, US and Israeli defence forces. Tasmania is becoming more highly regarded as a niche producer of key components and our future potential is significant.

I mentioned the Australian Government's plans to invest \$195 billion in defence in the next eight years. We believe there is significant growth and opportunity in this sector for Tasmanian companies focused on high quality advanced manufacturing in these products, of which we are increasingly highly regarded.

I am proud of the achievements the Government has made over the last four years, particularly in my own area, in education. I am proud of our achievements and outcomes. Our levels of retention and attainment are increasing. There is much more to do across Government and I am pleased with the team we have, with a great deal of energy and a great deal of conviction to do the job. I am looking forward to the next four years, to continuing the role of education and training and in my new areas of responsibility.

We are waiting for another first speech, which I look forward to. I welcome the new members to this Chamber and commend them on their excellent first speeches heard a few weeks ago. I wish everyone in the Chamber, particularly our new members, including yourself, Madam Speaker, all the very best, and welcome back, David.

[2.39 p.m.]

Ms HOUSTON (Bass - Inaugural) - Madam Speaker, I rise to deliver my inaugural speech and formally commence my role representing my constituents in Bass and serving the people of Tasmania. I am very proud to have been elected as Labor member for Bass. This is a privilege and a great responsibility, one I will carry out to the very best of my ability.

I also take this opportunity to congratulate all other members in this place on your elections; many have returned and many, such as I, have been elected for the first time.

Madam Speaker, I am a proud Tasmanian. The roots of my family tree run deep into the ancient heart of this island. I am in the words of my great grandmother's great grandmother, 'A native of this colony and a daughter of the original and rightful inhabitants of this place'. This island has been our home for thousands of generations. We have hunted, gathered, fished and farmed here. We have built lives and raised families, formed communities and we have left our mark upon this island as it has upon us. Following the invasion of these lands in the early days of the colony we survived a genocide and dispossession. We endured enslavement and exile and fought to return to our homeland. Through necessity we became part of the colony occupying the no man's land between indigenous and colony. We avoided the gaze of the state. Even through such difficult times we persevered and at times prospered. We have contributed greatly to the social and economic fibre of this state.

I come from a long line of ordinary working people - proud, honest, hard working Tasmanians who have toiled for centuries to shape our state. They built the roads, worked the quarries, felled the trees and milled the timber, built the towns and laid the railways, drove trucks and trains and buses, grew the food and swept the streets. They sheared the sheep and worked the mines. When they heard the call they marched off to war and when they came back injured they were pretty much ignored.

My grandmothers, one a widow and the other the wife of a wounded World War II veteran, worked their fingers to the bone for starvation wages in textile factories. My mother started her working life in one of those factories aged just 15. The necessity to work and help her parents make ends meet put a premature end to her education. She worked in that factory until a ban on married women working put her out of the workforce and saw her spend the next decades raising her six children and helping raise the next generation. It is largely because of her dedication to family that I was able to work and study and succeed.

We are working class Tasmanians. I grew up in a family with strong Labor values; a family where fairness, honesty, justice and equality were impressed on me from a very early age. My grandfather had a list of commandments, rules to live by: when you are old enough to work, work hard. It does not matter what you do as long as it is honest work. When you get a job, join the union. The union will look after you. If they call a strike walk out with them. Never cross the picket line. No-one likes a scab. As soon as you are old enough enrol to vote and vote Labor. Always vote Labor. Those other lot do not care about us. As with many other things time has proved him right.

Injustice was apparent to me from a very young age. I recall my grandfather's struggle to claim a Veterans Affairs pension in the 1970s. His application was rejected despite his active service in World War II, his injuries and him being offered a TPI pension following the war. He declined the pension as a younger man. Instead he declared that he had the right to work. And work he did until age and the consequences of his war wounds caught up with him. By then, however, the Fraser Liberal government seemed to have forgotten his service to his country and initially denied both the legitimacy of his service record and his pension claim.

This situation led us to an encounter and an enduring relationship with an excellent role model in Gill James, a former member for Bass. It was from her I gained an expectation of what a politician should be: caring, compassionate, committed and relentless in her pursuit for justice.

She is for me the very embodiment of Labor values. It is largely because of her impression on me as a small child that I stand here before you today. It is often said that you cannot be what you cannot see and in her I could see that working class women had a place beyond the home and beyond the factory floor. If I can be the type of politician she was I will serve the people of Bass very well.

The Labor Party is the party of ideals. It is one of our many and greatest strengths. Enduring principles of justice, equality and opportunity mean we are the party that puts people first. If ever people needed to be put first it is now.

No member of this House should find it acceptable that the cost of living increases while wages stand still. Our standard of living is in a downward spiral, we are in the midst of a health and housing crisis, our hospitals are at breaking point, ambulances are regularly ramped and homelessness is at a critical point. Winter has closed in and families are living in tents and garages, while both private and public housing sit empty. The elderly struggle to make ends meet and many will be cold this winter because they cannot afford to heat their homes.

Young people cannot access the skills and training they need to obtain employment. Working families struggle with basic costs like food, rent and electricity. The most vulnerable are forced to wait weeks for assistance from Centrelink. Meanwhile, emergency assistance supplies are stretched as more and more families find themselves in hardship, created by increased costs of living and stagnant wages.

Many vulnerable children are living in situations that are unsafe and not receiving the support and assistance they require. Over the past decade, an increasing disparity in the training and job opportunities on offer in our state, particularly the north of the state, compared with the mainland, has led to more young people being forced to leave our state. This must be rectified.

The role of government is to serve the best interests of the people. Only a Labor government can do this. In a democracy it is the role of government to build a decent society for all. A good society should be seen as more than an economy. It is an expression of our common and shared humanity. A good society, a decent society is a place where nobody is left behind, where we look out for one another and care for each other.

It is the role of government to provide the very best health care to every member of our society. Health care is a basic human right. It should be free, universal and publicly provided, rich or poor, refugee or Aboriginal, frail or fit, old or young. None of these attributes should hinder the quality of health care a person receives, but it does.

Everyone is entitled to a home. Not just housing, but a home, a stable, safe and secure place to live. It is the job of government to ensure everyone has somewhere to call home.

One of government's greatest obligations to the people, is to ensure that everyone has an equal opportunity to pursue an education.

It is also government's role to ensure that people who want to work can get a job. Right now, tens of thousands of Tasmanians want a job or more hours of work, but they simply are not available. This is no fault of their own.

It is government's responsibility to create work for all who want it. Good work, decent work, full time with fair pay and the full benefits of the conditions that have been fought and won by generations of working people in the struggle for a better world.

It is government's job to ensure that people have the ways and means at their disposal to live a decent life; not just to get by, but to live a good life. That means supporting people who are struggling, not penalising or punishing them. The treatment of people who rely on often measly and unacceptably low Centrelink payments to get by is appalling. The government should be looking out for people and helping them to improve their lot.

It is government's role to fix this situation. They should be raising wages, raising the minimum wage, protecting penalty rates, improving conditions for working people. We should be making it easier for those who need help to access assistance. We need to raise the payment rates. Some payments are shockingly low. It is well past time for these payments to be raised to give honest people who are down on their luck, through no fault of their own, the dignity and respect they deserve.

We need to stop penalising people who are doing their best to look for work, who want to work, when we have already established that no such work exists. Welfare should not be a dirty word. Living wage and full employment is something we should aspire to. It is all about the common welfare of the people.

I am a proud member of EMILY'S List. While I am in this place, I will always strive to expand the access women have to full reproductive health and termination services. This is the right of all women, including and importantly, women in remote parts of our state.

One of the government's greatest obligations is to keep our people safe. When we talk about safety, one area that is always overlooked by Conservatives, is workplace safety. The right to go to work and come home at the end of the day, unscathed, is paramount. It is government's role to make sure this is a reality for all workers. Sadly, this was not the reality for my father who, after a serious workplace injury, was never able to return to work. His experience had a profound impact on his life and our entire family. I will never forget it and I will dedicate myself at all times to improving workplace safety and holding bosses to account where safety is neglected. Our success in doing these things that are the responsibility of government are the markers by which we can measure our society's strengths.

I come to this role with a great deal of life experience. I have six children aged between 14 and 31, and seven grandchildren. When my eldest child was born I was just 15. At that time this put an end to my education. The general feeling of the conservative education sector of the day was that my presence would be a bad influence on other girls, so I was excluded from my high school education aged just 14. A lack of viable alternatives meant I never completed high school.

By the time I was 21 I had three children and was working at the local abattoirs as a cleaner. I later operated my own business for my some time before returning to education in my 20s. I was a single mum with three kids and various part-time jobs when I signed up for an Aboriginal enabling program at the University of Tasmania in 1996. It was a constant struggle to keep a roof over our head and three children clothed and fed. It often meant long hours working for minimum wage in between classes and study commitments. Nonetheless, I persevered. I never gave up and never gave in. I graduated with my first degree in 2001 and my second in 2005. I worked throughout and had three more children in this time. I was employed in a lecturing role in 2004 and left academia

to work in the community service sector in 2008. By 2009, I was the acting CEO and general manager of a mid-size not-for-profit resettling refugees in the north of the state. Following that I worked in a community development role with Anglicare Tasmania. That role ended with my election to this House.

I know what it is like to balance work and family. I already had three children when I met and married my current husband in 1999. We had three more children between 2000 and 2003. He spent the first four years of our relationship as a fly-in fly-out worker spending six to 12 months at a time on a ship at sea in the Middle East and Asia, earning less than \$1500 per month. It took until mid-2003 for him to be allowed to stay in Australia and work here. Then he spent four to six weeks at sea per swing. I worked full time, was undertaking a research degree and looked after our three young children. I often spent more than half of my income on child care. Those years are a bit of a blur now.

It has been a 33-year journey from pregnant teenager to my swearing-in to the House of Assembly. It was been a journey with hardship and poverty, suffering and hope. It was a journey marked by people in positions of authority and power telling me you could not have children and an education, or have a large family and a career, or work when you are pregnant or have small children. You could not be a politician. I have never taken well to be being told I cannot do things and generally I respond by proving them wrong. It is a journey I could not have made without the opportunities provided to me by an education and the opportunity to re-engage with education as an adult. It is a journey I could not have made without the support of strong, smart and determined women who work so hard to ensure others have the opportunity for a better life. Indeed, I could claim to stand on the shoulders of giants if only any of those women were over five foot two.

These people will feature prominently among those I must thank for assisting me on this journey, but first, thank you to my husband, Victor, my greatest supporter and tireless campaigner. Thanks also to my children and grandchildren, who have endured and participated in two campaigns. Thank you to my mother, who often feared what I would do next but never tried to stop me. Thank you to all the remarkable Labor women who have supported me, particularly Michelle O'Byrne, Gai Brodtmann, Gill James and Jessica Green. Thank you to EMILY's List for their support, and to those who paved the way and understood that education really is the greatest equaliser.

I acknowledge the wisdom of the late Aunty Molly Mallett and her work in improving access to education and child care. I thank Dr Linn Miller for her support throughout my education; Aunty Patsy Cameron for her support, instruction and advocacy; Aunty Lola Greeno for her kindness and encouragement over the years; and Aunty Suzanne Maynard for always turning up when I needed you the most and for being here today. For the enduring friendship and support of Kellie Maynard, thank you. I also thank the union movement, particularly my union, the Health and Community Service Union, a force to be reckoned with and one which does so much to support many working Tasmanians.

I thank the Labor Party for believing in me and endorsing me as a candidate in two elections. I thank the Labor members for Bass, including Adam Clarke, who supported me for my first preselection. To the small but dedicated team of volunteers that supported my campaign, I thank you. Your help will always be cherished and never forgotten. I particularly thank Debbie, a volunteer who went above and beyond to help my campaign after I met her at a community forum in Ravenswood.

I also thank our leader, Rebecca White, for her support and encouragement as well as her tenacity and enduring fighting spirit. You are an inspiration to us all. I also pay tribute to my fellow Bass Labor candidates. We had few resources but we each gave it our all. I thank my cousin, Peter James, for his unwavering faith in me and always believing I would win a seat.

Finally, I make this commitment to those people who voted for me: I will always fight for you. I will never give up on the principles I stand for and you voted for. I will always look out for the worker, the vulnerable and the dispossessed. I will work my hardest to improve your lot in life and make our society a fair, decent and good place to live. Equality and fairness will be my mantra. This is my enduring commitment to you. I thank the House.

Members - Hear, hear.

[2.57 p.m.]

Ms STANDEN (Franklin - Inaugural) - Madam Speaker, I rise today to deliver my inaugural speech and begin my acknowledging the traditional people of the land upon which we meet today, the Mouheneener people, and pay my deepest respects to elders, past, present and emerging.

Madam Speaker, I take this opportunity to congratulate you on your election and appointment as Speaker. I also recognise newly elected Labor members Ella, Anita, Jennifer and Jenna, who I know, like me, must feel humbled to have been elected on this, their first attempt. I congratulate all members on their re-election and thank my returning Labor colleagues and those from the other place who have been so supportive. I look forward to working with you all.

There are some moments in my life of which I am very proud - deeply satisfying moments. There are other deeply challenging moments that have placed a great deal of weight and responsibility upon my shoulders. There have also been moments of great reflection about what is, what has been and what could be - deeply humbling and motivating moments. As I stand here in this place today, in this moment I am proud, challenged, humbled and motivated.

To the people of Franklin, thank you for your vote. I consider it a vote of confidence but also of challenge, responsibility, humility and enthusiasm. I will always endeavour to do my best to meet and hopefully exceed your expectations.

Just over 5000 people placed their trust and faith in me and gave me their number one vote and I know that for some of those people it was the first time they voted Labor. I will work hard to deliver for those people and for all the people of Franklin that I am humbled to have been elected to represent. I promise to offer to those who seek my help, compassion and understanding without judgment of situation or circumstance and determination to make a positive difference.

I would like to share a story about two grade 10 students. One was very capable, with a great deal of support from her family, healthy competition from her peers, and many role models who believed in the value of education. She was consistently told she was a very bright student. In the schoolyard, approaching the end of grade 10 year, however, her mother was told that despite being very clever she could not possibly be given the science prize because she was a girl and, by implication, being good at science would not take her anywhere.

The other grade 10 girl came from a family for whom education was not so important. She wanted to do well but without a school bag or the right books, a quiet place to study and a role model to give her advice, encouragement and support, making her way through grade 10 was pretty

tough. She loved science but was told at home it would not take her anywhere. Ralph Waldo Emerson said, 'To be yourself in a world that is constantly trying to make you something else is the greatest accomplishment.'

Madam Speaker, one of these girls is me and I have worked with the other. Since grade 10, I have had a fierce belief in the importance of a good education, the opportunities it presents and the doors it can open. I know the early years are the foundation, but relationships, role models, kindness and equitable access to education beyond those early years are also key factors in developing literacy and numeracy, and arguably in developing a healthy, kind, prosperous, innovative and productive society. No matter what a student's background, postcode, gender or history is, it is my belief that an interest and an ability should take you anywhere. This is the responsibility of an education system and of everyone in the community.

I have always said there are no hard jobs, only hard workers. I worked as hard in my first paid job as a teenage casual retail assistant as I have as a senior public servant or community leader. As I stand in this place I am uncertain what lies before me but I embrace the responsibility of my role as a member of parliament, I intend to work hard and I intend to take this opportunity to make a contribution to the lives of all Tasmanians, especially the people of Franklin and those most vulnerable and marginalised, to give them a voice and to make a difference.

Following a career spanning over 25 years I hope to bring to this role my experience, my hard work ethic, judgment and a willingness to accept responsibility for my words and actions. I have always admired substance over style but I hope I can bring a bit of both to my parliamentary career. Over time, I have also learnt the importance of being a good listener. I do not presume to come equipped with experience and knowledge to tackle all the issues I expect to come before me. I intend to listen well and to have the good judgment and wisdom to weigh that advice carefully, anchored by my values and armed with a determination to act accordingly.

My father is a retired doctor who worked in the Tasmanian health system for many years, first on the north-west coast, then Launceston and finally Hobart. He worked hard. He worked long hours and was on many occasions the only specialist obstetrician and gynaecologist in the region and on-call 24 hours. I did not see as much of him growing up as I would have liked. Over his career he delivered around 10 000 Tasmanian babies and if I had a dollar for every time a woman has said to me 'your father delivered me', or 'my children', I would be a very rich woman.

My dad made an important contribution to women's and children's public health services across Tasmania. He is an early adopter, a pioneer in his field, undertaking further study in fertility and laparoscopic surgery, setting up birthing suites with bean bags and baths; putting women and babies first. He introduced the first ultrasound service in the northern region using a Betamax recorder. At the time he considered it superior to VHS. He has never had much luck with technology. The dedication, passion and commitment he has for his profession and for teaching is profound. Around 20 years ago, he set up a specialist training program in his field in Tasmania that is so critical to building and retaining our future medical workforce. Most current Tasmanian specialists in his field have trained here. If it was not for him and his peers the model now would likely be a regional model, combining Victoria and Tasmania, and specialists from his field would likely train here and settle elsewhere.

My love of learning and my dedication to health and to helping vulnerable people comes from both my parents. My mother was a nurse and like so many of her generation made raising her four children the main priority over her career. The eldest of five children, money was tight and the only

boy in the family was given the opportunity to attend university. My mum tirelessly volunteered in our local communities as well as later establishing her own small retail business.

In the 1970s she was one of a small group of dedicated women who made over 2000 Christmas puddings every year, which began as a fundraiser to pay the rates for the local scouts group in Burnie. I understand that tradition continues in Burnie today. My mum was always heavily involved in school parents and friends associations and fairs and she even ran the school canteen for a while. She has volunteered for numerous charities and bakes and makes sandwiches most weeks for her local church's charity shop. She has always been a doer and she does not have much time for talkers.

My parents taught me that if a job is worth doing, it is worth doing properly. Together they modelled hard work, both paid and unpaid, ambition, devotion to one another and to family, generosity, and a commitment to community. They gave me confidence and self-belief and taught me my core values of service to the community, hard work and compassion. My older brother was a bright student but he always said that 51 per cent meant 1 per cent too much effort. He is now a Qantas captain and also passionate about his motor sport. No doubt his attitude to precision has changed, which I am sure is a comfort to the travelling public. My younger brother struggled with learning. We wondered how he would make his way in the world but we need not have worried. He graduated from university with a prize, as a surveyor, and today he is a very successful businessman. My younger sister is a gregarious and creative type and none of us were surprised when she left school to take up a hairdressing apprenticeship. With numerous awards, she is well-recognised in her profession because she so cleverly understands customer service as a critical part of business success. Each of us approach learning in our own way but each of us found our way thanks largely to the value our parents placed on education and training. I am forever grateful for that start in life.

During my teenage and early adult years at university I became aware of instances and rumours of sexual assault, bullying and harassment. As a survivor myself, I am determined to use this time in parliament, through legislative change and leading social and cultural change, to tackle injustice in this area. I believe as a society we have barely scratched the surface of what is a significant and widespread issue. The #MeToo campaign and progress, thanks particularly to courageous women, especially in the sporting and entertainment industries, are leading important change. We are witness to an emerging awareness, zero tolerance and willingness to speak out against sexual assault and bullying and I am proud to add my voice.

I am proud to be elected to this parliament comprising an historic majority of women. I am also proudly the first openly gay Labor member of the Tasmanian Parliament. I am a proud feminist and I am aware that today I stand on the shoulders of community activists, people such as Rodney Croome who will be well known in the place, but also my Aunt Felicity, an alderman, mature-age university graduate, fierce feminist and lifelong activist. Equality and diversity are important to me and although in my lifetime I have witnessed important social progress - marriage equality comes to mind - since women of my age and older and LGBTI people are currently the fastest growing demographic for homelessness in Australia, clearly there is still some way to go.

Another of my lived values is for things to change, first I must change. I suppose I was in my mid-40s when I realised the voices of senior public servants and community sector leaders, like me at the time, are often effectively silenced.

These people are unable to criticise government through letters to the editor or opinion pieces. They are potentially conflicted, even in political association and they usually cannot contribute as experts and thought leaders in community debate.

I believe in representative democracy, that our state is best served when its parliamentarians represent the diversity of the community it is expected to represent. When the opportunity came for me to run for parliament, I saw this as a way for me to add my voice. To stand up, or even get out of the passenger seat and into the driver's seat. I hope to represent the large number of public servants and community sector workers in this state who dare not speak out against the government.

Working as an allied health professional in north-west Tasmania, I was confronted by the burden of preventable chronic lifestyle disease in the region. I began to understand that while diet contributes to overweight, cardiovascular disease, diabetes and some cancers, there are many other contributors such as household budget, upbringing, physical activity and mobility, education and mental health. One profound experience demonstrated to me the value of prevention and early intervention for better health outcomes. For a couple of years I regularly saw in outpatients clinic a young man in his mid-twenties suffering an unusual and dangerous combination of anorexia nervosa and insulin-dependent diabetes. I weighed him every appointment and when I took his diet history he told me what he thought I wanted to hear. I realised the zero sum game we were playing when he was admitted to ICU in a diabetic coma and the attending doctor showed me his emaciated body days after one of our appointments. If only we had earlier had a specialist eating disorder service with a multi-disciplinary approach to supporting people like that young man.

This experience and many others like it, sharpened my commitment to public health nutrition to provide education, choice and opportunity for people to make healthier food choices and prevent chronic lifestyle disease. Rather than judgment, compassion and understanding, education and, importantly, better policies to foster collaboration, opportunity and provide resources are key to a healthier future for Tasmanians. I soon learned that working in the health profession was always difficult and complex. In the face of increasing demand and workforce problems there are never sufficient resources. Governments always seems to prioritise acute care over preventative health services.

I decided to complete a master of business administration to open doors beyond health and the public service. Although I have made a contribution in other sectors, I have continually come back to the public service because I have realised my values are deeply based in addressing inequality through universal access to strong public health, education and other services.

It is because of my compassion for people that I am also a strong supporter of safe voluntary assisted dying laws. It is time for Tasmanians suffering intolerable pain to be given the right to end their own life surrounded by the people they love. I acknowledge the work that Lara Giddings and Cassy O'Connor, together with community sector leaders, have progressed in this area. I put on record my support to continue it.

I am a determined, no regrets kind of person. Anything is possible with hard work, some good people around you and a bit of luck from time to time. When I became a single mother, the single part was not planned. I returned to the workforce as a full-time senior public servant within nine weeks of the birth. I remember dashing up to the childcare centre to breastfeed my baby during the day and the terrible pain of leaving him with old family friends when I had to travel and stay overnight in Canberra. It was not ideal for anyone, but it was necessary and we made it through, loved, supported and resilient.

At this point I acknowledge the support of my son's wonderful early childhood educators for the amazing work they do, not only to improve school readiness for kids like my son, but for all the times they provided support and advice to me. Pauline, Kerryn, Alicia, Bianca, Simon, Sarah and Katy you are the best. I will always fight for appropriate wages and conditions to match your professionalism and the valuable role you play as educators and family support workers.

Madam Speaker, I do not regret returning to work so soon. It was the only choice I had if I was to support us. As fate would have it, it would lead me to the role of general manager of the Smith Family in Tasmania where I could help disadvantaged children and families get the most out of their education and create a better future for themselves. This is a role that affected me personally and deeply and would ultimately lead me to stand as a Labor candidate.

My experience has taught me that better community outcomes could be achieved with greater cooperation between not-for-profit organisations and also between agencies working with communities in high need. In various roles I have been involved in tackling entrenched disadvantage. Place-based models can work well and I note a collective impact approach in Clarence Plains is showing promising early progress.

When communities recognise the need for change and leaders take responsibility in the process, remarkable improvement is possible. In too many communities, well-meaning organisations duplicate services and fragment the service system. For too long, well-meaning but patronising government and not-for-profit agencies, have done things to but not with communities.

In the town of Franklin, the Living Boat Trust and Wooden Boat Centre work literally side by side. These organisations promote tourism, protect maritime heritage, develop skills and training and, importantly, also build social capital. Community spaces like these and neighbourhood houses, men's sheds and the like bring people together and build confidence and relationships across the community. People and communities like these do not need a solution but advocates in parliament that can take their great ideas, secure the resources to allow them to grow and develop and find a stage to share and promote this great work so other communities can benefit from that passion, commitment and innovation.

During my campaign I set goals, surrounded myself with a small group of good people, dug in and worked hard. 'No regrets' was my mantra and I am so proud to be standing here today. Over the campaign I began to realise the privilege of connecting with people and communities across the electorate in this way. I realised that no matter the outcome of the election, I would be forever a better public servant.

Throughout my campaign I was honoured that so many people opened their hearts and minds to me to tell me their stories, their ideas and their concerns. Three stories stood out. First, an Aboriginal woman, a 67-year-old school cleaner, who works 20 hours per week and with her part pension manages a modest private rental at \$200 per week. When I came to her door she was looking after three of her grandchildren. She is looking forward to retirement this year, although she worries that young school cleaners do not look after kids and families these days the way she would like. Her landlord plans to sell her home and she knows she cannot afford to buy. Private rental properties are scarce and she knows there are many people on the public housing waiting list. She knows she will be forced to leave her home of nearly 10 years and she fears she will not be eligible for public housing. This woman represents the tip of an iceberg in terms of a major problem in housing and homelessness and cost of living today. I know of many others. A complex problem

deserves a sophisticated response and I hope to contribute to solutions to address these significant issues.

Second, there was the young man recovering from substance abuse but struggling without the fallback of a residential rehabilitation facility. Clearly, he was couch surfing and dependent upon his friends to keep a roof over his head but aware that too often youths in his position are drawn back into destructive paths without the proper support. I was struck by his openness and vulnerability. He so badly wants a better life and by the way highlighted for me the need for significant improvements in public oral health. So many people I spoke with obviously are suffering atrocious pain and suffering as well as expense due to inadequate preventative oral health care.

Finally, I spoke with three nurses in a week who had decided to leave their profession. One recent graduate felt so overworked and unsupported, first in the public system and then the private system, she had retrained and pursued casual work in hospitality. There is nothing wrong with working in hospitality but what struck me was the wasted investment in education and training for that young woman and for our state. As a former health professional, I am concerned that we need to do more to retain health workers, not just through competitive wages but just as importantly supportive conditions.

Throughout the campaign I was also struck by a growing concern about openness and transparency in government decision-making at all levels of government and in particular planning and development decisions. I believe people would like to see more genuine and timely consultation with the community on these decisions.

Madam Speaker, my experiences have shaped my values - hard work, no regrets, kindness, loyalty, honesty, respect for diversity and equality - but I have not lived my experiences alone and I did not run my campaign alone. As I mentioned, I surrounded myself with a small team who advised, strategised, organised and rolled up their sleeves with me.

To Rebecca White, for putting your faith in me - I am proud to have won this second seat for Labor in Franklin and to be a part of your team. To Lara Giddings and Fran Bladel, for your belief in me, mentoring me and walking with me on this journey, I cannot thank you enough. In fact, I owe a debt of gratitude to a great many Labor women mentors but I especially want to thank Julie Collins, Lorena Bromfield, Michelle O'Byrne, Carol Brown, Catryna Bilyk, Lisa Singh and my EMILY's List mentor, ACT MP Suzanne Orr.

Jane Atkinson is one of the most hardworking, committed and ethical people I know. I thank her for being my campaign manager, coordinating my field campaign and building a small but committed volunteer base to support me. Thank you also to Stuart Benson, Michael, Karelle, Gordon, Jarryd, Megan and all the hardworking people who contributed to the central campaign for their advice and encouragement. I thank Joe and Phil for their marketing expertise, and Josh and Harry, bright young things in the future of the Labor Party. I thank Stephen, Greg, Margaret, my other fellow branch members and the many ALP members who believed in me and our shared cause. Thank you to the many wonderful volunteers who pounded the pavements with flyers, joined me out doorknocking, made phone calls and put up posters. I thank friends and colleagues, many of whom who had never engaged in politics before. Your time and effort were critically important and I hope each of you know that.

Thanks to Maddie, who spent the last couple of weeks of the campaign with me living in our house, sharing the doorknocking load and any other job I asked of you and keeping me focused no matter how overwhelming things seemed. Thanks to Neville, who drove down from Launceston most Sundays to letterbox and make, erect and check signs, and Carole for her unswerving belief in me. Thanks to my parents, who held fundraisers for me in their home, supported my family, doorknocked, letterboxed and dug in whenever I needed them. Thanks to my brother, who took a couple of days to travel from interstate to help out with letterboxing. I know all my family was in my corner. Thanks to my dear friends who believed in my campaign enough to donate their time and money and kept my feet firmly on the ground at the same time. You know who you are and I love you.

Thanks to my partner, Kate, for keeping things going at home despite working her own demanding full-time job. She also made time to lend her skills helping me with social media, drafting and editing the occasional speech and article. This was our decision together and she has never once doubted it or me. To my son, Nicholas, who is as proud of his mum as I am of him, I love you more.

The campaign is over and here I am. Hand on heart, I will work hard, surround myself with good people and tackle the roots of inequality. I will fight for the people of Franklin for access to a good education, to a highly effective health system, for affordable housing, for career pathways and secure jobs. I will fight for a safe and kind society and wherever possible put good policy over politics with evidence-based decision-making. Finally to my year 10 science teacher, whose name I cannot recall now, I say never ever underestimate my determination.

Members - Hear, hear.

[3.24 p.m.]

Ms O'CONNOR (Denison - Leader of the Greens) - Madam Speaker, it is always a pleasure to listen to the inaugural speeches of new members. I congratulate Jennifer Houston and Alison Standen on fantastic inaugural speeches. There are a couple of things in there that I might have disagreed with but they were moving and impressive inaugural speeches. The same, too, to Jen Butler and Ella Haddad who gave really interesting and good inaugural speeches, and to Anita Dow who gave a very heartfelt and deeply thoughtful speech about the north-west of Tasmania. One of the things I took away from her speech was the fantastic description of the landscape and the people's connection to place. Well done, Anita.

To every member in this place who has been elected or re-elected, I extend congratulations and on behalf of the Greens to you, Madam Speaker, to you election to the Chair and also to acknowledge that with your election to the Chair I believe this parliament will be one of the best parliaments Tasmania has ever seen. From the Greens' point of view we are committed to working constructively and being part of a reformist, energised and visionary parliament for the people of Tasmania.

Mr Ferguson - This is your 2010 speech.

Ms O'CONNOR - Gee, you have a good memory. You really listen carefully to what I say.

Mr Ferguson - I remember you saying exactly those words.

Ms O'CONNOR - I did not say exactly those words because Mr Polley was in the Chair in 2010 even though we did have a balance of power parliament.

If elections in Tasmania were a free, fair and genuine contest of ideas, a contest of vision for the future, I think we would have a Greens majority government in this place. Our vision for this beautiful island and its people extends well past the next election, and always has, and deep into the twenty-first century. We stand here for our children and our grandchildren and we have a vision for a climate-resilient and adaptive Tasmania where our human rights are enshrined and protected, where every child in our schools is given the opportunity to shine in a well-funded public school system and if they choose to go to TAFE, in a well-funded public TAFE system. A Tasmania that strongly protects and in fact culturally treasures its children, where every Tasmanian can feel secure that there will be housing there for them, they will have a home and the rent will be affordable.

The policy we took to the election on housing and homelessness I believe is the policy that needs to be implemented by this parliament. We know that Hobart is now becoming the least affordable capital in the country, in fact in rental terms more unaffordable than Sydney. We know there are people sleeping at the Domain, at the showgrounds, or sleeping on couches at friends' places. It is not good enough. In the ACT they have a policy in place that limits rental increases to the consumer price index and that has made sure that rents are fair. Here, particularly in the south of the state, rents are soaring. One of the reasons they are soaring is because of the explosion in the short-stay accommodation market.

This parliament will have to look at regulating the short-stay accommodation market because the evidence tells us it is the fastest and most effective quick fix for making sure there are homes available for people who need them. At this point the new Housing minister does not have a plan for housing. We know that. The new Housing minister, unlike his predecessors in the role including Mrs Petrusma and myself, has not allowed his department to brief either the Greens or the Labor Opposition on what plan he has for dealing with the housing emergency. Mr Jaensch, that is a mistake. In government we never denied a request for an opposition member to be briefed, certainly in my agencies when I was the minister. You have made a mistake and I ask you to have a look at it.

We had a vision for Tasmania that we took to this election where we are planning for population increase and are not making ad hoc decisions as the population continues to grow. We have to look at the Tasmania we want to be 50 years and 100 years from now because there is no question whatsoever that our population will continue to grow. We will see exponential growth in our population as the climate continues to disrupt places all over the planet.

We also took a policy to the election that said if we are going to have a city deal with the Commonwealth, let us not make this political, let us not allow it to become ad hoc and a thunder of bizarre bus tunnels, more roads, more lanes on more roads so more cars can come. Let us make this a genuinely consultative city deal through which we invest in public and pedestrian infrastructure and create a city for people, not for cars.

We had a vision for Tasmania that has always been our vision for Tasmania; a Tasmania that is powered by renewable energy, where our transport systems are electric. We have a vision for Tasmania that is in our DNA and has been part of who we are for the last 40 years: a Tasmania that recognises it is the custodian of some of the most beautiful, unique and ancient wild places on the planet; a Tasmania that is proud of its World Heritage Area, protects wilderness and cultural values in our world heritage area - not a Tasmania that allows them to be exploited for private profit. Our

vision is of a Tasmania that looks after its forests, the great reservoir of carbon, the gift we can give future generations; forests that should be protected for their intrinsic value and for their value to a healthy climate.

Our vision for Tasmania is a resilient self-sufficient just and progressive Tasmania, a Tasmania that is in charge of its own destiny, where our sovereignty is not put at risk by foreign influence and foreign donations.

It is now almost three months since election day. The dust has settled but the stink of a democracy corrupted by filthy lucre, by untold millions in dark money, remains. It hangs over this place, heavy in the air. To clear the air, Tasmanians need to know what happened. We need the Integrity Commission to look at this election and the millions of dollars of dirty money that flowed into Liberal coffers. It is the perfect task for the Integrity Commission. If the Integrity Commission cannot do this and will not have public hearings and if the Integrity Commission is not enabled to do this, then we need a royal commission or a commission of inquiry.

We need to deal with, as a matter of priority in this place, the reform of Tasmania's donations framework. We have the weakest, most ordinary and corporate-enabling donations disclosure framework in the country. We saw evidence of that at this election. We need to have real time donations disclosure in place, a ban on donations from corporations and developers, a cap on spending and a ban on donations from foreign governments and foreign companies.

It is a matter of public record that the Liberals took money from an individual representing a company that the federal Liberals were warned about by ASIO. We need to be very careful of attempts to influence our democracy in Tasmania through foreign donations. We made the commitment during the election campaign that we would bring on a debate about foreign influence and ownership in Tasmania and we will do that. It is a matter being talked about in the community. People are muttering, people are worried. People do not know how to talk about the increased influence of the Communist Party of China on public and political life in Tasmania. For any member of this House who has not read Clive Hamilton's book, *Silent Invasion: China's Influence in Australia*, I recommend you do so. Do so cautiously, objectively, but read this book if you want to understand some of the challenges that Tasmania, Australia and large parts of the world face as a result of the growing aggression of the Communist Party of China. We are seeing it in the South China Sea.

We do not know how much money the gambling industry spent trying to buy government for the Liberals. The estimates are between \$5 million and \$10 million. This predatory industry falsely painted this issue as one of personal choice, failing to recognise all the evidence about how difficult it is to make informed personal choices when your life is falling apart, when you are experiencing alcohol addiction, drug addiction or family violence or mental health breakdown. The industry wholly misrepresented the number of jobs affected if poker machines were wound back from pubs and clubs. The evidence of that is manifest and most recently in a paper Anglicare sent to me and, no doubt, to the leaders of other parties, which laid out some of the issues around poker machines in pubs and clubs with particular reference to the last election.

While the Leader of the Opposition is not in the House at the moment, I lay this challenge down to the Labor Party. The Labor Party took to this election, after relentless pressure from the community sector and the Greens over an extended period, a principled position on the removal of poker machines from pubs and clubs, a position that would save lives and livelihoods in the future, a position that would prevent the proliferation and continuation of poker machines in some of our

poorest communities out to the year 2043. The challenge now to the Labor Party is, will you stick with that position? Will you hold that policy? Will you be able to resist the internal pressure, Mr O'Byrne, to change the party's policy on poker machines in pubs and clubs?

If the Labor Party holds its position on poker machines, should they win government after the next election, the industry will not be able to cry sovereign risk. There would only be a sovereign risk argument, fallacious as it is, if the industry had no idea what was coming. This will be the test of the Labor Party in this term of government, because key decisions and key moves in this place will be made that will affect gambling industry policy in this state. We need Ms White to come into this place, commit to sticking with the policy and commit to revoking the deed, should the Labor Party win majority government in 2022. We need Ms White to resist that internal pressure and deny the industry the opportunity to squeal sovereign risk, should the policy settings change after the next election.

In her Address-in-Reply response, the Opposition Leader talked about the Greens as a party looking for a cause. I had to smile inside because, of all the parties in this place, our track record of 40 years of advocacy for this island's environment and its people is unbroken. We have stayed true to this island's wild places. We have stayed true to the forests and the marine environment. Ever since we were born as a party, going back to the days of Lake Pedder, it is in our DNA to stand up for this island and its people. It was because of the Franklin campaign that the Southwest Wilderness was initially declared in 1982. It was because of Greens in government during the Field minority government that significant extensions were made to the Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area in 1989. It is because the Labor had more numbers than us in that term of government and the forest industry had huge sway over the Labor Party, as it continues to have over both the Labor and Liberal Parties, that significant parts of the contiguous ancient forests that bordered the 1989 boundaries of the TWWHA were left out, and they were left out at the behest of the industry.

Between 2010 and 2014, again, significant extensions were made to the boundary of the Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area and that scientific wrong was in part corrected because we made sure the most extraordinary tracts of the Styx, the Weld, the Florentine, the Picton and the Great Western Tiers were added, as they should have been in 1989, to the Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area. It is the wilderness, it is natural Tasmania that underpins our economic strength, our agricultural sector and the increased numbers of tourists coming to Tasmania.

Our cause is the same as it has always been, to stand up for this island and its people. We do not back down on policy positions. That is why I lay the challenge down to Ms White on the issue of pokies. We would also like to know what the Labor Party is going to do about increased commercial exploitation of the Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area and other protected areas and public lands.

We know the Liberal Party is enabling an unprecedented assault on our wild places: unprecedented access to private developers to exploit wild places. We know what the Liberals stand for: they stand for the making of money. As we released on Sunday, they stand for manipulating management plans in order to enable private development. They stand for allowing the Office of the Coordinator-General, in fact, the Coordinator-General himself, to advise the Minister for Parks on development inside the Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area.

There has been from Labor on this issue, absolute silence. There has not been silence from the Labor Party on the proposed cable car to kunanyi/Mount Wellington. We have heard a lot from them in this place about it. Labor supported Ms Archer's bill in 2013, a private member's bill that

removed the veto power of the Wellington Park Management Trust, taking away that one extra layer of protection from the mountain. Then late last year, the Liberals brought in legislation to facilitate the Mount Wellington cableway, to privatise the pinnacle of kunanyi and to smooth the way for a divisive development. That legislation had the support of Labor and it got through the upper House with Rob Valentine being the only upper House member who voted against it.

People need to understand how Labor operates on the ground. They vote for the cable car and then go into the community and code against it. In the media they talk about their concerns with the process, the process they enabled, the process they voted for.

Dr Broad - It is a conspiracy.

Ms O'CONNOR - It is not a conspiracy, Dr Broad, it is a fact. I have been associated with the Labor Party in some way or another longer than you, Dr Broad. I know your party quite well, Dr Broad. I know how you code out there in the community on an issue while you undertake legislative perfidy in this place. I know it very well, Dr Broad.

The test will also come on the issue of the marine environment. The Liberal Party is in lockstep with the Labor Party on the rampant expansion of fish farms in the marine environment against significant community opposition and the weight of scientific evidence. Will the Liberal Party and the Labor Party back unreservedly the expansion of fish farming in Storm Bay? The level of public concern about this industry's impact on the environment will only increase as the industry moves into Storm Bay. We know that over the past week-and-a-half the industry, the regulators and the minister have been ill equipped to deal with extreme weather events. We did not get a straight answer out of the minister this morning about the mass fish escape and the potential for seal and shark deaths. That is highly regrettable.

Ms Courtney, unfortunately you have never been in this place in opposition and you do not understand ministers, when they get to the table, should give honest answers.

Mr Barnett - I think that is offensive.

Ms O'CONNOR - Do you think so? It is an observation of what happened in here this morning. You know this industry has problems, you know it is poorly regulated, you know there has been no baseline work done on the marine environment in Storm Bay. My question to both parties is, will you continue to roll over to that industry and allow it to do what it wants and set up a wall - a plastic curtain - across Storm Bay when we know that the industry has already spoilt Macquarie Harbour? We know about the impacts on D'Entrecasteaux Channel. This is a test on both parties, in particular the Labor Party because you have some capacity to do something about this. What will you do to protect Storm Bay?

Peter van Onselen, an academic at ANU and sometimes writer, observed wryly sometime before the election, 'If you want to know what the Labor Party is going to be doing in 10 years time, have a look at what the Greens are doing now'.

Mr O'Byrne - That is just arrogant.

Ms O'CONNOR - Well let us give you some examples. Acceptance of climate change, advocacy of renewable energy, same sex marriage, the banking royal commission, and live exports. Who advocated for the banking royal commission for six years? Senator Peter Whish-Wilson. Now

we have the Labor Party over the line on live exports - that is a good thing. What we now need to see is Labor-

Mr O'Byrne interjecting.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER - Order, Mr O'Byrne.

Ms O'CONNOR - The things people say about you out in the electorate, Mr O'Byrne. A test now of Labor federally will be will you change your refugee policy and be more humane and make sure we are not imprisoning people indefinitely in off-shore prisons with no hope for the future?

Speaking of the future and looking forward, this is a very interesting parliament for a number of reasons. The most significant is that we now have a majority of women in this House. Having listened to the inaugural speeches of the newly elected Labor women, it will improve the quality of the debate. It will increase the level of transparency and accountability to have a majority of women in this place. I hope that it leads to more civil discourse. It is very significant that we now have a majority of women in this House and we have a female Speaker. It is also a very interesting parliament because it is a highly balanced parliament. We have the next best thing to a balance-of-power parliament. In fact, it really is a balance-of-power parliament. Let us be honest and upfront about this. We have a newly elected Speaker who is committed to being independent and has given confidence and supply to the Government, but has made a very clear statement about making decisions that are in the best interests of Tasmania and the Tasmanian people. We can deliver a restoration of the numbers in this place so that we are not quietly acknowledging the decisions to cut the numbers was a mistake, so that we are all agreeing that restoration of this House would improve governance.

It would improve the quality of people that the premier of the day has to choose from to form a Cabinet. It would ensure that significant policy areas and decisions are not being made by political advisors. Restoring the numbers is an important task for this balance-of-power parliament. We could also move forward on a human rights act for Tasmania so that the rights of citizens are enshrined and upheld in the law, so that the rights of citizens cannot be taken away or impinged on by bad government law or by the conduct of corporations. We need to have a human rights act for Tasmania. It is the Labor Party's policy; it is the Greens' policy. I am hoping that there will be other votes in this place that can assist us to deliver a human rights act for Tasmania.

From a personal level, I want to see this parliament once again, openly and honestly without the contamination of politics, deal with dying with dignity legislation. This is a human rights issue. We know that out in the community the vast majority of people - it does not matter how they vote and often it does not matter what age they are because they understand human autonomy and their rights - the vast majority of people support the right of an individual who is enduring interminable, irrelievable suffering for which palliation provides no relief to make the choice to end their life supported by people they care about and supported by the law. Ms White, the Opposition Leader, is going to co-sponsor this legislation with me. I am very hopeful that a member of the Liberal Party will also agree to co-sponsor this legislation and we can table and debate it earlier in this term rather than later and have a calm and rational debate that delivers dying with dignity legislation in Tasmania.

There is a date approaching that means much to people who are Greens or Greens' supporters or conservationists, and that is 1 July 2020. That is the day that 356 000 hectares of some of our most beautiful forests will be on the chopping block under the Liberals' policy. From the southern

forests to Bruny Island, the Tasman Peninsula, Wielangta, the Blue Tier, the Great Western Tiers to the extraordinary Tarkine wilderness, there is a myriad of natural values and carbon sequestration values and they are all threatened. These are the forests that were set aside for protection under the Labor-Greens government with the support of industry and the environment movement, and they should be protected. They are worthy of protection. They are extraordinary places and we will be fighting hard to make sure those forests go into reserves, as they should.

We will continue to campaign for a Tarkine national park because I encourage any member who has any interest in the geological and natural history and the Aboriginal history of Tasmania to do some deep reading on the Tarkine region. It is a place of outstanding universal value that could go on the World Heritage list with no problem whatsoever. It is a wilderness unlike any other place on Earth. It contains significant tracts of ancient rainforest, tall eucalypt forest and Aboriginal history, particularly along that north-western and western coastline that dates back tens of thousands of years - hut depressions, middens, amazing, extraordinary history. In many parts of the world if you had a wilderness like that, a natural and cultural treasure in your backyard, it would have been protected a long time ago. We believe the day will come when the Tarkine is protected and we will continue to fight for that.

The last thing I will say is that Ms Woodruff and I are here to fight for Tasmania, to fight for this beautiful island and its people and to continue the legacy of the Greens in this place of standing up for Tasmania's environment, standing up for our forests and protected areas, and for our brand which underpins our economic and social wellbeing. We may be diminished, and I sure do miss Andrea Dawkins, but we are a mighty little duo and we will be working very hard because we know that in this place the Tasmanian environment's strongest voice is the Greens and in this term of the parliament the environment will be front and centre.

Time expired.

[3.54 p.m.]

Mr BARNETT (Lyons - Minister for Resources) - Mr Deputy Speaker, it is a privilege to again serve the people of Tasmania in this place. At the outset I congratulate the two members who gave their inaugural speeches this afternoon, Jennifer Houston, member for Bass, and Alison Standen, member for Franklin. Congratulations. They were excellent contributions. It is a wonderful honour to be in this place. It is true we have differences of opinion in a range of areas but they were genuine and heartfelt messages shared with the objectives to advance Tasmania's interests.

It is a great honour and responsibility to be here and I have taken it very seriously during my public life, first as a senator for Tasmania in February 2002, then as parliamentary secretary and then from July 2016 as a minister in the Hodgman Liberal Government.

At the state election on 3 March Tasmanians delivered a clear message that was convincingly in support of a stable majority Liberal government and the plans we have for Tasmania to take Tasmania to that next level. Tasmanians voted for a continuation of the growth, progress and opportunity of those past four years. As Her Excellency Professor Kate Warner, mentioned in her speech some weeks ago at the opening of parliament, it was the first time since the 1970s that any political parties surpassed 50 per cent of the primary vote in consecutive elections and indeed the first time in over 100 years that a conservative party achieved that result. It is a great achievement and many congratulations to our leader, Will Hodgman, for his efforts in all those years of opposition and then our time in government. We have come a long way as Tasmanians and as a

state in the last four years. Much of that is as a result of the decisions this Government has made. Tasmania is definitely in a stronger position relative to where we were when this Government won office back in 2014.

When we came to office more than four years ago the budget was in deficit and red ink as far as the eye could see. Now it is black ink as far as the eye can see, with surpluses over the forward Estimates.

Members interjecting.

Mr BARNETT - I heard an interjection about it being lucky. It is not luck, it is hard work. Many challenges were presented to this majority Hodgman Liberal Government and we accepted the challenge because Labor and the Greens had wrecked the budget and presented deficits as far as the eye could see. There were cumulative deficits of \$1.1 billion over the forward Estimates when we first came to government more than four years ago.

They lost more than 10 000 jobs and we have created more than 11 000 jobs, so I am happy to take those interjections and respond with facts on the record. *Res ipsa loquitur* - the facts speak for themselves: a Latin maxim from my law school days recalled for the member for Franklin.

We can see that business confidence is up. In fact it is at record levels. We have seen the NAB report, we have seen the Deloitte report, with business confidence the highest in the country in Tasmania. That is fantastic and on the record for all to see. We can see the building construction sector is booming with cranes dotting the Hobart and Launceston skylines. On almost every economic indicator, we are doing better than we were a few years ago.

As I travel around the state, across the electorate of Lyons and the rural and regional parts of this great state, I hear story after story of Tasmanians making the most of the new opportunities resulting from our growing economy, the new jobs that are being created, the new enterprises creating new opportunities. There is a sign of confidence and a spirit of optimism in the air. This is good news.

Quorum formed.

Mr BARNETT - Confidence is in the air. You can feel it when you are in the community. You feel that spirit of optimism around the state of Tasmania. It is encouraging. Our economic growth is increasing our population and more people see the opportunity to work, to raise their families, and this is providing an opportunity not seen for years and perhaps decades. As it has been said before, there has never been a better time to live, to work or invest in Tasmania. I look forward to playing my part in this Government to further build this state over the coming four years.

With respect to some of my ministerial roles, I thank the Premier, Will Hodgman, who has invited me to continue to serve. I look forward to continuing to work with him, my Liberal colleagues and the team to take Tasmania to next level. In this capacity I will continue to serve as Minister for Resources, Minister for Energy, and Minister for Building and Construction. I am delighted to build upon the work we have already done in these important areas; the jobs and opportunity growing sectors of the state. Alongside these roles, the Premier has asked me serve as Minister for Veterans' Affairs. It is a deep and personal interest of mine. It has been for a number of decades - supporting veterans and Tasmania's military heritage. It is important to acknowledge their service and sacrifice. As many members here would know, this appointment is a dream job

for me and I look forward to working with our veteran community to promote and support their needs, and their families.

I will share different aspects of these portfolios and start with Energy. My focus on the ensuing period is that Tasmanians come first, that is the Tasmania First energy policy. The availability of secure, reliable and affordable energy is essential for Tasmanian households and businesses and to create Tasmanian jobs. This Government is committed to delivering the lowest regulated electricity prices in the nation by 2022. That is our target and objective. Along with that, we are aiming for 100 per cent self-sufficiency with fully renewable energy by 2022. We saw yesterday with the Cattle Hill Wind Farm announcement, which is on track; \$300 million, 48 turbines, 150 jobs during construction, 148 megawatts added to our growing renewable energy powerhouse as a state. It is all putting us on track toward 100 per cent fully self-sufficient renewable energy by 2022.

As the central initiative of the Tasmania First energy policy, the Government will move to de-link the Tasmanian wholesale electricity prices from the mainland price. Why should Tasmanians be paying mainland prices for Tasmanian energy? We should be paying Tasmanian prices for Tasmanian energy. We will de-link from the Labor/Greens linking that occurred in 2013. We will move away from that and we have already acted. Today, the Treasurer tabled legislation to cap regulated electricity prices to CPI.

Mr O'Byrne - What happens when the cycle moves and it is cheaper on the mainland?

Mr BARNETT - You do not support the capping, Mr O'Byrne?

Mr O'BYRNE - Point of order, Mr Deputy Speaker. He sought to -

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER - Mr O'Byrne, which standing order are you referring to?

Mr O'BYRNE - Standing order 44, on relevance. I did not make any reference -

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER - That is not a point of order.

Mr BARNETT - The Labor Party has been caught out because they do not have a position on the capping of electricity prices at CPI.

Ms O'BYRNE - Point of order, Mr Deputy Speaker, standing order 144, offensive words against a member. The minister has implied we took a position on the bill when he was genuinely asked a question. He regularly misrepresents members in this House and he should cease and desist.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER - That is not a point of order.

Mr BARNETT - The Labor Party has been caught out. They cannot state their position as to whether they support or oppose the CPI cap on electricity prices.

Quorum formed.

Mr BARNETT - I am pleased the member for Franklin has interjected with respect to the CPI capping of power prices. All Tasmanians want to know if they support the capping of power prices at CPI maximum for the next three years under the legislation introduced today. The Labor Party has not declared their position. We want to know. The Tasmanian people want to know whether

they support higher power prices. Let us remember that under the Labor Party, under Mr 'Byrne and when he was minister for economic development, he was the minister for recession in Tasmania during that time. The minister responsible for 10 000 jobs lost under his watch. In fact, he promised 15 000 jobs and lost 10 000 jobs.

The power prices under Mr O'Byrne and the Labor-Greens government, when he was in power under the Labor government, saw a 65 per cent increase. They have the gall to interject in this debate with respect to power prices and the importance of low power prices for Tasmania and they would not declare their position. Do they support the capping of the CPI? Yes, or no? It is that simple. The Labor Party has been caught on a barbed wire fence and it is becoming very uncomfortable. Dr Broad is moaning and groaning. He will not declare his position as to whether he supports lower power prices and the CPI cap, or whether he wants a higher power price.

That is our policy. That is what we are doing. We are delivering the lowest power prices in Australia by 2022. That is our target; fully renewable and reliable energy. That is what the rest of the country wants. We have it here in Tasmania. It is our competitive advantage and we want the Labor Party to come on board rather than knock, criticise and be a sideshow alley. We are in the main game here. We are delivering for Tasmanians and it is high time they came on board.

Part of our Tasmania First energy policy is Hydro actively investigating a substantial expansion of the on-island generation through the Battery of the Nation project. Simultaneously, TasNetworks is exploring the feasibility and business case for the second Bass Strait interconnector. Under our Tasmania First energy policy we will be capping electricity prices, as in legislation introduced this morning. We plan to move Momentum call centre jobs to Tasmania from Victoria; more jobs for Tasmanians. We will be keeping the natural gas flowing freely and at fair prices for industrial, commercial and residential customers. We are reviewing the solar feed-in tariff. We are establishing a farm energy advocate in Aurora and delivering the other elements of the energy on farm policies, such as the review of irrigation tariffs and the energy and irrigation audit program and loan facility. We are delivering the Community Solar and Energy Efficiency Package, a cost neutral transition for PAYG customers to new PAYG system and promote large-scale renewable development.

There is much to be done. That is our job and we are doing it for the benefit of all Tasmanians. We are driving the development of our renewable energy generation opportunities. We are the renewable energy power house here in Tasmania and we are making the most of it for the benefit of Tasmanians because Tasmanians come first.

We are encouraging private sector developments. I have mentioned Cattle Hill. I have mentioned Granville Harbour wind farm on the west coast, a \$280 million wind farm underway. That is contributing to our capacity to deliver a 100 per cent renewable energy self-sufficiency by 2022. I have recently announced the one year extension for the highly successful Tasmanian Energy Efficiency Loan Scheme. It is a terrific partnership between the Government, Westpac and Aurora Energy. It has already helped nearly 2300 Tasmanian homes and businesses to purchase energy efficiency products such as solar panels, heat pumps and double glazing by providing three-year interest-free finance, and an additional \$20 million in finances is being made available with that recent announcement. We are very pleased about that because it will help many Tasmanians in need. It will be a boost in energy efficiency right around the state, not just for retailers and small businesses.

The resources sector is a key economic driver in Tasmania. I am proud of it and proud to be in this role. Forestry and mining is creating thousands of direct and indirect jobs, particularly in rural and regional areas, and provides the lion's share of Tasmania's exports earnings every single year. This Government recognises the key role that our resources sector plays in Tasmania and is committed to backing it to the hilt because there is no better friend of the resources sector than the majority Hodgman Liberal Government. We are very proud because it is on the back of the Labor-Greens government where confidence plummeted to amongst the lowest levels across the country and the resources sector was hit for six under them.

Production is up and there are exciting new opportunities opening up. For example, mining and mineral processing is a key pillar of Tasmania's economy. Across the state the sector employs more than 6300 people and accounts for 55 per cent, or \$1.53 billion, of the state's exports in the last financial year. There has been some good news in the mining sector in recent months. In the last 12 months, for example, there has been the return to operation of the Henty Gold Mine near Queenstown, creating more than 100 new jobs. There has been a significant increase in the mineral royalty revenue collected in the financial year, with \$39.4 million during that 2016-17 year, up from the \$17.8 million collected during the previous year. That is really encouraging and says there is more turnover, more activity, more production and more exports.

The granting of the mining lease to Stellar Resources for the Heemskirk Tin Project could eventually see a mine employing up to 180 people and we hope that continues. The positive news from Renison tin mine regarding the feasibility of the Rentails tailings project would see a capital investment of over \$200 million and the employment of up to 160 people. We have seen a surge in mineral exploration spending, with the latest figures from the ABS for the December 2017 quarter showing a 23.7 per cent increase in spending over the previous quarter and a more than 140 per cent increase over the December quarter in 2016. We would still like to do more and we are doing more. The Government also continues to work closely with CMT - I have mentioned this in this place and publicly - in terms of the progress with respect to a possible restart of the iconic Mount Lyell copper mine.

Last year we invested \$9.5 million to enable key works at the mine, each of which is essential to the restart of the mine. This investment is already creating jobs with a restart of operations at the mine estimated to create hundreds of direct and indirect jobs. A restart would also allow legacy environmental issues to be addressed and the best form of mine in that regard is an operating mine. During the election of the Government, we committed \$2 million towards a new mine exploration grant program for mining exploration drilling within Tasmania. This latest commitment comes on the back of existing programs driven by the Government including our \$1 million mining sector innovation program committed to last year, which is aimed to help keep the industry at the cutting edge of technology and best practice.

A \$1.4 million geoscience initiative program was introduced last year and is designed to improve our capability to attract exploration investment through providing new geoscience data and mapping. Our mineral exploration investment attraction plan and the relocation of Mineral Resources Tasmania to Burnie will increase the linkages between the Government and the industry where we can work in partnership. It would be so good if the Opposition could support and put on the record their support for that move of MRT from Hobart to Burnie. It has been underway and in operation for all those years now. The former leader opposed it and now we hear a muted sound from the other side.

I would love to hear an interjection on whether you have a position, member for Franklin - through you, Madam Speaker.

Ms O'Byrne - You can't ask Madam Speaker to approve an interjection. Don't be ridiculous.

Mr BARNETT - I hear muffled noises, I hear shuffling, but he will not say whether he supports the MRT's move to Burnie. Does he support the view of his former leader, who opposed it, or doesn't he? He will not declare a position. Isn't that interesting? This job application process is really hurting for him.

Members interjecting.

Madam SPEAKER - Order. Minister, you have stirred them up.

Mr BARNETT - There are many interjections coming from the other side.

Forestry is the life blood of many communities across rural and regional Tasmania since our early days. It has been a well run and sustainable industry and it is getting better. It is creating more jobs and providing opportunities for Tasmanians, particularly in those regional areas. For one tree harvested, we plant three. We are proud of our forest industry. It was brought to its knees under the Labor-Greens government and is now on its way back. It is rebuilding.

Under the Labor-Greens government, more than 4000 jobs were lost. Two out of three jobs in the forest industry went out the door, lost. Families were torn apart. Families with fly-in fly-out workers, very sad. We are now rebuilding. Production is up, exports are up, jobs are up and confidence, importantly, is up. There is no more exciting development than the announcement last Friday of a \$190 million development of Australia's largest hardwood plantation sawmill in Australia out the back of Burnie. The first and largest cross-laminated timber hardwood manufacturing facility is planned for the back of Burnie.

It was great to be there last Friday with the Burnie mayor, Alwyn Boyd, and also Brett Whiteley, the federal Liberal candidate for Braddon, to support that announcement. It has the full support of everyone on this side of the House today. It has every opportunity of being a game-changer and providing value-adding downstream processing jobs for Tasmanians.

With respect to the Government's support for the industry, there is no better friend of the forest industry than our majority Hodgman Liberal Government. We have \$4 million back in the strategic growth plan for the forest, fine timber and wood industry here in Tasmania, a plan to double the industry value-add to \$1.2 billion by 2036, and we are on target for that.

The National Institute for Forest Products Innovation is based in Launceston. Here it is in Tasmania - terrific news for us. We have the Regional Forest Agreement signed by the Prime Minister and the Premier last year, a 20-year rolling agreement providing resource security underpinning economic, social and environmental values in the industry going forward, providing that confidence. We also have the wood encouragement policy. We were the first state to institute that under our leadership here. The Government promulgated that. It has now been taken up by the University of Tasmania and other entities around the state, promoting Tasmanian timber and Australian wood here in this state.

The building construction sector is definitely on the up. You can see the cranes around the Hobart skyline and elsewhere around the state, including in Launceston, the north-west coast and the rural and regional areas.

Regarding jobs, when we started more than four years ago there were a little over 16 000 jobs, a few months ago there were 23 800 jobs and the latest statistics are saying more than 25 000 jobs. It is on the up. It is on the back of nation-leading building reforms. They are not my words. They are the words of the Master Builders Australia and the Housing Industry Association. They are nation-leading building reforms to make it easier, faster and cheaper to build. This is one of the reasons underpinning the confidence. I was pleased to be at HomeFest on Sunday to announce the \$20 000 boost for the first home owner for those young families to get their first home built and provide a boost for the building construction sector, particularly the housing sector. On top of that, we have a target to increase the numbers in the industry by 25 per cent in the next five years. We have a target to increase the number of apprentices and trainees by 40 per cent by 2025. We also have the payroll tax rebate scheme to encourage jobs. For new apprentices and traineeships we offer a funding grant of \$5000 per apprentice or trainee for small and medium size businesses. We have policies in place we want to deliver and we are getting on with the job.

In the building and construction sector, a report and recommendation by Professor Peter Shergold AC and Bronwyn Weir for the Building Ministers' Forum confirmed Tasmania's approach is in line with the recommended national best-practice model. Have a look at it and you will see that Tasmania is leading the way in this country. That is why they say we have delivered on nation-leading reforms. It is a clear endorsement of the Government's approach.

Workplace Tasmania is delivering on its objectives with a reduction in workplace injuries in Tasmania of 16 per cent in the past four years. There was also a reduction in red tape in the worker's compensation scheme for workers, businesses and medical staff last year. There has been increased access for volunteer firefighters to compensation for cancer that would be linked to occupational exposure. You have seen investment in an asbestos awareness campaign that was nationally recognised and awarded for its impact. We will continue to build on the work already done through initiatives such as legislating to investigate recognising post traumatic stress disorder for certain occupations and the annual Worksafe Month campaign coming up in October. Safety is everybody's responsibility and I intend to build on the work already done to help make Tasmanian workplaces the safest in the nation.

In consumer affairs, in the past four years we have streamlined regulation for property agents and strengthened consumer protections through reform of the Property Agents and Land Transactions Act. We have improved petrol price transparency by funding the GasBuddy app and the code of practice to ensure fuel price boards only show undiscounted fuel prices. We have reduced the red tape and delivered savings for incorporated associations through amending the Associations Incorporations Act. We have reduced the red tape and compliance cost by streamlining the residential tenancy bond system to allow property agents 10 working days to lodge bonds in lieu of the current three days and introducing electronic bond lodgement. We have worked with other jurisdictions to amend Australian consumer law and provide consumer protections so that they can be strengthened through enhanced price transparency in online shopping, stronger voluntary recall requirements and increased penalties for those caught doing the wrong thing. I am very pleased as chair of the Consumer Affairs Forum we will be having a meeting later this year of all consumer affairs ministers in Hobart. It is pleasing to see the introduction of the ACL has, among other things, led to a \$3.5 billion decrease in business compliance costs. This week is Scams Awareness Week. There is much to learn and much to be aware of when protecting consumers.

I thank those in the public service for their support in all of those portfolio areas.

Finally, it is a great honour to be involved with Veterans Affairs. We have 10 500 veterans and ex-serving personnel in Tasmania and we want to deliver for them. We have committed \$750 000 to support our veterans' peak body funding status and indexation for RSL Tasmania, to help Parks Tasmania deliver a health and wellbeing program for returned service personnel, grant funding for RSLs, the funding of centenary armistice events in 2018, the Teddy Sheean grants, and continuation of the Frank MacDonald Memorial Prize. I welcome home all those Frank MacDonald Memorial Prize group participants.

As a member for Lyons, I congratulate Jane Howlett on her election. Today is the day she was sworn in as a member of the Legislative Council and I congratulate her for her great success. I know she will do a terrific job. It has been a great pleasure working with Rene Hidding, Mark Shelton and a special commendation to John Tucker during the campaign. I thank all those involved in the campaign for their terrific support, especially my family, Kate, my loved ones as well as my volunteer supporters.

[4.25 p.m.]

Ms O'BYRNE (Bass) - Madam Speaker, I enjoy the opportunity to contribute to the Address-in-Reply. Six new members of this House of Parliament, one elected as Speaker and five amazing speeches we have heard. I have been inspired by the passion that has driven those members and I look forward to a really exciting parliament with them.

Ms O'Connor said that having more women in parliament could lead to better behaviours. I am not convinced it is women's job to improve behaviour. It falls back on that line of women being damned whores or God's police. We are either terrible or responsible for ameliorating and managing the behaviour of men. When Carmen Lawrence was first elected to the federal parliament, people said to her, 'This is wonderful, we will see better behaviour.' She said, 'Frankly, it is not my job to make people behave better.' It is not the job of women to do that.

We will see a greater engagement in having a parliament with equity in numbers of women. It means more will be brought to policy discussions but it is not our job to behave better. To be fair, both Ms O'Connor and I have been ejected from the parliament a couple of times, so we are possibly not in a position to suggest that either.

I thank my team for my re-election. I was first elected in 1998. I have won and lost state and federal elections. You cannot do it without the support of your team, particularly the three people who work in my office, Glen, Ann and Shannon, who worked tirelessly during the campaign. Alan Stacey has been involved in every one of my election campaigns and he has just retired. Everyone in Launceston will know Alan Stacey. He is a bit of a character. Alan has always run the finances in my campaigns. I want to put on the record the amazing dedication this man has to the Labor Party and so many community organisations. It was probably one of the reasons he was selected to run with the Commonwealth Games flame. He is a highly regarded community member.

Thanks again to so many volunteers who knocked, called, hosted poster sites, letter dropped, helped out. There are too many to list. I am gradually writing everybody a little note. I thank the industrial organisations, the unions that supported me, my union, United Voice, who has always represented its members with great passion and also the MUA, whom I have had a long association with.

You would have heard EMILY's List mentioned by all our women candidates. I was once the national co-convener of EMILY's and have just stepped down as a state convener. It was set up by a number of amazing women but particularly Joan Kirner in Australia as the base of an American organisation. EMILY stands for Early Money Is Like Yeast, because it makes the dough rise. It recognises that traditionally women do not have the financial resources and organisations to call upon to run for parliament. It recognises that often when women have extra money they spend it on their families rather than themselves. It also recognises women need mentoring and support. You cannot be what you cannot see and we believe when women support women, women win. It was wonderful to see EMILY's List having such a successful outcome in Tasmania with good, progressive women elected. I will talk about them later.

I thank my fabulous husband who is my chief poster putter-upper. He keeps me sane or attempts to keep me sane during election campaigns. We ask a lot of our families in election campaigns and sometimes we forget to be as grateful as we should for the sacrifice they have made. My children are teenagers now so they find politics a different experience from when they were little. It used to be fabulous to see people on television and now, as a teenager, it is not as fabulous. I thank my amazing, passionate, progressive daughters for their support.

This was a tough campaign personally and for a number of the Labor family. Greg Philp was a long-term public servant who worked in Treasury for many years. When he retired and moved to Launceston he wanted to give a bit back, so he volunteered in my office and then took on a paid role while still volunteering in my office. Greg Philp was an amazing human being. He provided the most wonderful environment for people coming into the office. He was measured, kind, genuine and lovely. We do not pay tribute enough in this House to the work our electorate staff do in the difficult circumstances they are presented with, and the great kindness with which they resolve and act on those members' behalf.

Greg was diagnosed with cancer just days before Christmas. It was originally lung cancer and then identified as oesophageal cancer, incredibly aggressive and not a battle from which he could recover. He had an incredible spirit toward it but he died only weeks later on 22 February, during the election campaign.

It was heartening to see so many of his public servant friends at the funeral in Launceston. There was an overwhelming representation of the government at Greg's funeral. Greg was kind, he was funny, he was decent, he was intelligent, he was an absolutely mad cricket tragic, and a Hawks devotee. He loved the Hawks but he loved making things better for people and he was an incredible supporter of democracy and its role, and how important it was for people to engage in the democratic system we have before us.

Greg's health deteriorated rapidly and he became concerned he might not have the opportunity to vote in the state election. He was on the phone to the electoral office asking when we are going to call the election. When they called it he was asking when the postal votes were going to be sent out. This was an issue for Greg in hospital. Some poor sweet soul at the electoral office wanted to make him feel better because he was so distressed. They said it is only one vote, maybe you should not worry about it. I do not know what Greg said but I know what he said to me afterward. Greg was adamant he should have the right to vote. I thank the electoral office, who made sure one was sent directly to him when the postal votes were issued. It was effectively taken out of the mail bag and directly sent to the hospital in which he was receiving palliative care. The hospital was waiting for it in administration, raced it up to him and we believe that may have cast the first vote in the

state election. Given he was so very passionate about democracy and the right for people to have their say, it was a fitting thing.

We wrap our arms and our hearts around Deb, Linda and Susan who loved Greg so much. The final song played at Greg's funeral was an entirely appropriate one because, as the song said, Greg Philp was a mighty fine man. I wanted to pay tribute to him today.

It was also a difficult time because a couple days afterward we buried my very young cousin, who took his own life during the campaign. Any life that is lost is devastating but Liam was very young. One of the things that struck me at the end of it and the reason I raise it here, because it is not something one would normally bring to this House, it was wonderful this his parents were immediately offered counselling to deal with the trauma of losing him. It was counselling that he could have done with. I pledge that I will be adding my voice in a stronger way to ensuring young people gain access to that counselling and support. I do not know that it would have made a difference, no-one will ever know, but to not receive support when you are so desperately in need of it is not sustainable.

I am proud of the campaign we ran and thank all those people who supported us. I make reference to those members who did not make it back to this place. I have won and lost elections so it gives you a different feeling about how it is for people who lose. I pay tribute to our colleague, Madelaine Ogilvie; it cannot be said that she did not make her mark in this parliament while she was here. She was a strong and very passionate voice. Andrea Dawkins, my colleague in Bass, whilst a different political party, I believe all of us recognise Andrea had not intended on politics as a pathway. She was here by the nature of a redistributed vote, but she was very passionate and fought for issues of great concern. I am sure Mr Rockliff would agree she made distinct points on education every time she stood to speak. She made a difference here. Nic Street: I recall a couple of fantastic speeches from Nic and I wish him well. I understand there may be attempts to see him back in the parliament. He gave some great speeches and took some principled positions, which I admire. Joan Rylah, who was the member for Braddon and also very passionate about her community, regularly spoke with great passion about her community. I recognise them all.

I recognise you, Madam Speaker, and congratulate you on your elevation to the exalted role. It is a significant position to hold in this parliament and I wish you well in the role. You are committed to good outcomes in parliament and, hopefully, to working in the areas of increasing participation and some of our less represented groups in parliament.

Jen Butler, Ella Haddad, Jen Houston and Alison Standen gave some of the best speeches I have heard. They were amazing and I am excited to work with such fabulous people. It is great to have David back again as well. When David and I argue everybody finds it rather uncomfortable but of all of us in this place, we are the two who know how to argue and move on from it. I am pleased to see David here. I often make references, as siblings do, that are a little derogatory, but David is intelligent, articulate and passionate and I love working with him. It is good to have him here.

I want to recognise all those people who stood and lost. It is a hard thing to do. Not one person in any political party stood because they did not want to make a difference and they did not want to do the right thing. They all need and deserve our commendation for standing and wanting to be part of the democratic process.

I pay tribute to the Labor people who stood in Bass. Brian Roe is a long-term friend and would make an amazing member of parliament. I wish him well in his well recognised international career. Adam Gore has run for us before. He is a young man with an incredible future ahead of him and I am looking forward to seeing him participate again. Owen Powell stood for the first time at a difficult time. He could not campaign due to family ill-health issues. We all looked at his campaign and were excited about the different approach he came to around politics and community.

The parliament has changed. It is a lot closer in numbers and a much tighter environment, and is also seen in the numbers of women. The ACT has 56 per cent women, as a territory. We are the first state with 50 per cent women. The Northern Territory is very close on 48 per cent. The Labor Party feels we should receive some credit for this because 50 per cent of our upper House members are women, 70 per cent of our lower House members are women, 50 per cent of the House of Representative members are women and 100 per cent of our senators are women. It makes me think a lot about this debate.

How do you increase women's participation? I firmly believe rules around affirmative action do that. If merit is going to work, then in all political parties we would have already seen more women. There are not many capable women within the Liberal Party who would be there if the structure was there. From our experience, we changed to 50 per cent law in 1998. We had to go hunting because women did not find the pathway in politics. We had to encourage women to stand. Now we do not have to use our affirmative action rules so much. They are there but we do not need them because our party is full of women who deserve a place in parliament and expect to be pre-selected for a place in parliament.

It has changed the culture of our organisation so that women take leadership positions naturally in the party. That is why wanting change to happen by itself does not address the existing prejudices, the existing discriminations and the existing barriers women still find themselves in. Many men in political parties will say, 'I don't discriminate, it is not me', but the reality is every single one of us in this place has a place of privilege. We are not always good at understanding our own unconscious biases. Political parties need a more structured process if they want to deliver that significant change. If merit was going to work, then it already would have. We do see that.

We learned the lesson. We had a lot of women elected in the parliament of 1993. When it came to the federal parliament in 1996, when there was a massive swing against us, we lost a lot of those women because they were not in safe or winnable seats.

The Liberal Party found that in subsequent elections. They had an increase in women in their 1996 campaign and have less women in their federal parliament now. That is the reason we went to an affirmative action bill and I believe it has made the difference. It is so condescending to tell women they have to have affirmative action and they are only there because they are a woman. From what we heard with the inaugural speeches from our women who have been elected this time, there is not one of them you would say is here because they do not deserve to be here. They are all competent, passionate, clever and will participate. What we have done is change the structure of our party so they can naturally take on those elected positions.

I am very pleased to have been reappointed as Deputy Leader of our party; it is an incredible honour. My portfolios have somewhat stayed the same and somewhat changed. I look forward to continuing the discussions in education. I am an unashamedly passionate fan of public education and since the Treasurer is in the room I will put on the record that Queechy High School - the public high school - has the numbers in this place in that we have three members out of the 25 who are

Queechy High graduates. In fact, two of us have children at Queechy High so we are keeping the tradition going. There is no greater societal leveller than public education and I firmly believe our public schools need to be made up of a range of members of our society because that is how you create a diverse community. That is one of the great things about Queechy.

One of the issues we are facing in public schools across the nation is that there has been almost a stratification of the economic status of students who go there. However, as more people are turning back to public education - and the most recent national data shows that people are returning to public education - we hope to see that re-engagement and hopefully increased funding to public education but also allows a really good diverse school base which means that all children get a great exposure to the world they live in.

The early years is an area we have named as a portfolio now. We worked very closely with the early years community during the school starting age debacle and they are incredibly passionate people. They are highly skilled people who provide an amazing service. We will be keeping an eye on the changes the state Government plans to make around what it is calling its intensive program for three-and-a-half year olds in that we do not want to see those children identified or marginalised in community areas as well. We want to increase participation but we want to make sure we do so in a genuinely equitable way. As has been mentioned already today, I support the professionalising of the wages of our early education care sector. I know that I could not have done my job without those amazing people taking care of my children and I left them in the care of highly trained people because I knew they would get the best care.

I again have the portfolio of Women and the prevention of family violence. There is a discussion paper out at the moment on the update of those policies and I look forward to the opportunity hopefully being offered to us to participate in that but my views on supporting women are well known in this House. We have created a new portfolio of equality. There has been some very interesting work done on this in Victoria. I look forward to being able to pursue some work from this side of the House particularly in the areas of not so much discrimination law, but ensuring that those groups seeking equality have mechanisms with which to do so. That does not mean naming up groups and saying that this is a discriminatory process under the antidiscrimination laws, but there are capacities to do some fair employment work and there are some really interesting international models around that.

Innovation and the digital economy is a new area for me and I have been very impressed and inspired already by the fabulous innovation and technology and the passion in Tasmania of the ICT sector, so we are in for an incredible future. We have a wonderful opportunity in that, despite Prime Minister Turnbull's behaviour, we have a reasonably good rollout of NBN to the premises that makes a difference. We also have an incredible lifestyle: we are a very attractive place to which those organisations can come.

I want to talk about how proud I am of the campaign we ran. I have been in a few. I believe our campaign was honest and genuine. Perhaps in areas it was bold, but it was always honest and decent. We noticed an increased level in cynicism in the Liberal Party's campaign this time; it became more about winning. In fact, the Premier's former chief of staff, Brad Stansfield, was quoted in the media saying that a lot of their focus was about gazumping Labor rather than delivering good policy. That is possibly something the Premier needs to reflect upon because whilst winning is good, you also need to make sure you are being driven not just by the desire to win but the desire to make a better place. The behaviour of staff in his office in the trolling incidents was deeply shocking during the election campaign. Whilst one staff member was named and resigned,

no-one believes that person acted completely alone and without the knowledge of the leadership team. I am not sure if that is why so many people have left the Premier's office. I do not know if that is linked at all, but I do know this Government has a view that if you are no longer employed you are no longer held accountable. We saw that with disgraced minister, Adam Brooks, and the CEO of TasTAFE, Steve Conway. Both of them were no longer in the position and therefore investigations have not been able to be completed into their behaviour.

There was significant trolling but the most famous issue that made the media was around access to abortion. We will have much more to say about the way the Government has behaved in that way. Intimidating a person who had behaved fairly and honestly in her position and had gone through such a dreadful circumstance was completely unacceptable and the Government should be ashamed of that behaviour.

I want to talk a little about respect and the way we behave in parliament. Mr Barnett mentioned that next week is Scam Awareness Week. We could not see much more of a scam than that which was perpetrated against the Tasmanian public around the pokies campaign. When I first stood for preselection, former minister Lance Barnard gave me a couple of bits of advice. One was not to lie because you are never going to be smart enough to remember who you told it to, and the other was that at the end of the day, you need to look at yourself in the mirror and like the person you see.

Despite it not being a winning one, I know that from our campaign I can look at myself in the mirror and like what I see. I like the campaign we ran. I like the fact we stood up for something that mattered. I do not know if members opposite are able to do that but they should be held to account for the way the campaign was conducted, particularly in the manipulation of information and the political advantage they sought from that. Telling people 5000 jobs were at risk if poker machines were removed was not true. We know even the Government's own report put the figure at less than 400 direct jobs. When the Treasurer was directly questioned about this, he would not say he knew it was not true. He said, 'I trust the industry to know what is going on.' I get that the industry ran this campaign protect themselves but governments, and ministers in particular, need to be honest about the process they are taking. The Treasurer could have said, 'No, our figure is 400 but we don't care, we still think we should fight this campaign'. There is an honesty in that which was not used.

We have seen a growing dishonesty in politics over the years and it damages all of us. It damages our community because people need to have faith that the things we do are motivated by our best intent - and we may have different ideas about what the best intent is - and we should also be honest. The Liberal tactics during the last election were deceitful and this issue is not going to go away.

Then there were the 200 policies that were not revealed prior to the election, particularly the one regarding firearms. I was quite distressed about the firearms one. We need to maintain the National Firearms Agreement and any attempt to breach that is unacceptable. There is also a greater message for the state that experienced Port Arthur in that sometimes the cost of making sure we do not have a massacre is that our laws are tough. That is how it should be. I was disappointed that letters were written and agreements were given. In a state where we probably have more of an affinity with the debate on gun laws, given Port Arthur touched many of us and our friends, that was an incredibly duplicitous thing to do to the Tasmanian Parliament and the Tasmanian public. Yes, it was released and it came out a few days before, but not everybody pays as much attention to the media as we do, so many people went to the election not knowing that was a position that had been held.

There are some portfolio areas I wish to discuss. I will have a number of opportunities to do so. I will finish on issues such as housing.

I have had incredibly distressed constituents contact me over recent months, one of whom I wrote to the minister about. She has an 11-year-old and a five-month-old child. She could not find housing. She is in housing now. She has managed to find something after some time but this person could not gain access. I was told there was a two week wait to stay in Magnolia House, which is the women's shelter in Launceston. She could not even be given a place in the women's shelter crisis accommodation. There was no offer to put her into a hotel. There was no offer to put her into temporary accommodation. It was suggested she could go to Hobart and the women's shelter here but she would have taken her 11-year-old child with her. Everyone knew she was camping in a park out of town because she thought it might be safer. Everyone knew that. Her child had been hospitalised a couple of times and they were discharged knowing they had nowhere to go. That is only one example.

These things really frighten me. There are times when we are dealing with very complex people and the solutions to their problems can also be complex. However, in all my time I have not seen the level of inability to find housing. Sometimes the housing is not always as appropriate as you want; you may be in a two bedroom and you need a three bedroom. I have been stunned at the increase in the number of people coming through our door seeking assistance. The response they have been given and they were frank with this woman was that there simply were no houses available. There was nowhere in Launceston for this woman and her two young children. She has another child who has had to live with her father, so the family had to be broken up. It worries me if we are continually putting families in positions in which they do not have safe housing; the minister has another portfolio responsibility, which is to make sure children are safe. If they are not safe, then the minister who cannot house them has to make other decisions about their future. That is not okay either.

I become angry when, as we come into parliament, there is always a quick line to say 'I fixed something, we have this new plan'. We are not seeing that on the ground. We are not seeing people housed and that concerns me. It concerned me when the minister stood in the House last week and said he is not sure where we are going with these issues. We need him to do his job. He said the Government was caught napping. Other members have said the housing crisis is a growing pain as a result of our growing economy. It is not good enough.

There are some people for whom finding a housing solution may be impossible but that is not the vast majority of people who are homeless right now. We did not take action knowing the bad weather was coming, we did not talk to the people at the showgrounds, we did not talk to those people we know sleep rough in the rivulet and that frightens me too. It frightens me they have become such a norm in our society that we are not thinking this is a terrible outcome. We must act immediately to make sure they are safe.

Being housed does not mean everything is resolved but it is the first step in bringing people back into an appropriate life. I know of a grade 12 student who is at our local college who is homeless and his marks are dropping. What else are they going to do? There were homeless university students on our lawns only weeks ago. These things are not okay. If we want people to make the best of their lives, governments need to take a significant role in ensuring everything that can be done is done to make sure that they are safe and able to participate in society. That is not what we are seeing at this stage.

I thank you, Madam Speaker, for the opportunity to participate in this debate. It is going to be an interesting parliament. I look forward to the quality of legislation we will debate, the quality that comes to this House, being better than it was in the last four years. I hope some of the legislation we send to the upper House goes in the best possible state so we quit the habit of expecting it to be fixed it upstairs. Let us take responsibility in this House to send the best legislation to the upper House so they can do their job as a house of review and not be effectively acting as the parliament or the government, which we saw in the last term.

[4.54 p.m.]

Mr GUTWEIN (Bass - Treasurer) - Madam Speaker, I thought that contribution started off so well discussing Queechy High School and other matters. Before I make any further comment in response to some of the matters you touched on later in your contribution, we used to have four members from Queechy High School in this place. David Llewellyn is also a former Queechy student. He will be most miffed that you missed him.

Ms O'Byrne - He will be. I will have to write him a letter and buy some of his wine.

Mr GUTWEIN - No doubt Queechy looked quite different when he was there.

It is exciting to be here at the start of our second term of government. The last four years we have had strong economic growth, near record levels of employment and a budget with surpluses each year for the last three years, since 2015-16. When we came to government our financial circumstances were significantly different. I have said in this place on a number of occasions we inherited \$1.1 billion worth of cumulative deficits. We inherited net debt forecast to rise to more than \$400 million. As a government, we had to make some difficult but responsible decisions early in the term. Tasmania is in a very strong position as a result. We are seeing confidence in the broader economy, and that confidence is leading to people investing. That investment is leading to jobs and those jobs are leading to opportunity. We have been unashamed in our aims to deliver a better economy because, if the economy is growing strongly and people have opportunity, that will lead to better outcomes for everyone.

I will touch briefly on the campaign. I am pleased my two Bass colleagues are in the House with me, Sarah Courtney and Michael Ferguson. Michael and I have run together and, with the nature of Hare-Clark, against each other on a number of occasions. Once again, the campaign was conducted as it should have been: with respect for all parties involved, both our political opponents and those we ran with under the Hare-Clark system. I acknowledge Sarah Courtney's ascension and say how pleased I am she now has a role in the ministry. I am sure she will do a very good job.

I acknowledge Mayor Bridget Archer, who was unsuccessful in her campaign but only by a little. The member for Bass is here now, and it is an interesting process, Hare-Clark, as you work through the two weeks. I am sure emotions rise and fall on both sides, but welcome to the House. I am disappointed Bridget is not here but as a new member I welcome you to this place and I hope you enjoy your time here as much as I have done and work hard to represent the people of the electorate we both serve. Simon Wood, the alderman who ran with us, did an excellent job in his campaign and he has, as has Bridget, a great opportunity in public life -

Quorum formed.

Mr GUTWEIN - I am certain both Bridget Archer and Simon Wood will be great servants of their community and have great opportunities in front of them in terms of being in public life but

importantly providing good outcomes for the communities they both currently serve as aldermen and councillors.

I thank my family. I know a number of people in this House have young children. Mine were born into a political family. When I came to this place we had no children so my 14-year-old and 11-year-old only know life with me being a member of parliament.

Ms Archer - They knew you when you had hair though, didn't they?

Mr GUTWEIN - They did know me when I had hair - thank you, minister. That is a point they both make.

Setting that aside, being in this place puts an enormous strain on families of all members of parliament. It is an honour and a privilege to serve other people but it is important that all of us take the time to ensure those who are closest to us are not denied the support, the care and love they deserve. Everybody pays a price in this business.

With no reflection on my Hobart colleagues who in the main sleep in their own beds most nights of the week, for those who travel from other parts of the state like I do, this job does keep you away from home, at times for up to half the year. It can be challenging, but I often say to my wife that there are many people who have similar jobs such as shift workers and people who are fly-in fly-out. Many families pay a price in terms of the careers that men and women in those families take on, but the one difference with this job is that for all of us here, it is 24/7. It is a job where you cannot turn your phone off and simply ignore what is going on around you. Like many people in this place over the years, it is not uncommon to get a call on Christmas Day because somebody needs assistance or support. That is the lot but also the privilege of a member of parliament and I am very thankful for the opportunity to have this as a career.

I want to thank a couple of people in terms of my committee. Dorothy DeHais has been around for a long time, has been a great supporter of mine and has worked extraordinarily hard for the Liberal Party and with me over a period of time. I have a wide number of friends and colleagues who support me on a committee and I thank them for all the time and effort that they have put in.

During the last four years, we had a plan laid out and we worked deliberately and with diligence on that plan. That has led to some very positive outcomes. We have the most confident business community in the country. I recall back in early 2015 that for the first time since I have been in the parliament we were able to put a premier on the national stage to proudly declare that Tasmania was the most confident jurisdiction in the country. That signalled the opening of the door, the opportunity that people could now sense was available to them in Tasmania. As a result, we have seen our population increase. We have seen inflows of new residents and, importantly, inflows of new capital as well. Our economy is one of the strongest in the country and we have jobs and people employed at record levels.

That provides the opportunity now for Tasmania to be taken to the next level. We have a great opportunity to deliver on the plan we have now laid out for the next four years, where we will continue to maintain confidence and work very hard to ensure that our community is confident and people have conversations about not what is wrong with the place but what the opportunities are with the place. If we can continue that, we will see growth unheard of in this state over time. That opportunity is not one that all of us in this place will be able to grasp but it is one our children and their children will have the opportunity to benefit from. That is the benefit of being involved in a

job like this and for all of us in this House, the opportunity that we have to ensure that those who come after us receive a Tasmania that is better prepared, better able, has better opportunities and provides a better future for everyone.

In the last term we created around 10 000 jobs. It is now a little more than 11 000 since when we first came to government and by setting the right framework, by ensuring that Tasmanians are confident and by ensuring that investment flows, those jobs have been created. That is a complete contrast to where we were in the previous four years. There have been some reflections in members' speeches from both sides of the House about the last term and prior to that. The one point I would make is that in the period from 2010 to 2014, despair is the word that springs to mind in terms of how people were thinking about the economy. The forestry industry was being shut down. The cities at the time were not all that engaged, and the rural communities were certainly feeling the impact of the changes being proposed under the previous administration. It is interesting that those job losses and the economic downturn spread to the cities and Tasmania for a period was in recession with an economy that then flatlined thereafter until the last handful of years.

I am pleased we were able to deliver the plan we laid out and are able to see the responses that we have. We have seen solid employment growth, not just out of Hobart now, but on the north-west coast and the west coast: the average number of people employed in the year to March is approximately 1500 more than the average in the last year of the Labor-Greens government. There are more than 1600 less people on the unemployment queue in those regions.

In Launceston and across the north-east in my electorate, there have been more than 3000 extra jobs in the last year than in the final year of the former Labor-Greens government. In Hobart and the south-east more than 6500 jobs have been created in the last 12 months and nearly 10 000 since the last year of the Labor-Greens government. The message I want to provide there is not a political one but one that simply says our people are employed and able to take on those opportunities and they will provide a better life for themselves, their families and their communities. As a government, we must provide job creation and ensure that we provide the framework, the necessary support, the confidence and the stability that is necessary for the business community. Unashamedly we will work hard to do that because the outcomes are better lives for Tasmanians.

In terms of the economy in general, the plan and strategy to grow our population is working. We are seeing solid and the best population growth we have seen now in seven years. State final demand, a key component of gross state product, puts us at third strongest of all the states and well above the national average. When you look at what is occurring in the export sector, retail trade, tourism and business and construction, it is a good story across the wider economy.

In terms of exports and the export sector, Tasmanian firms exported goods and services to a value of around \$3.5 billion with more than \$1 billion in exports to China alone. Growth and export sits at 36.4 per cent growth and is outstripping the nation. At the same time, Tasmanian small businesses and the retail sector have been in receipt of strong growth. Since the 2016-17 budget, more than \$0.5 billion has been run through Tasmanian tills every month. That is \$0.5 billion every month for the past 22 consecutive months.

When you look at what is occurring in tourism, we have more visitors coming to Tasmania and those who come are spending more. In the year to December 2017, 1.26 million visitors came to Tasmania, up 2 per cent from the previous year. While the majority of visitors are from interstate, international visitors increased by around 18.5 per cent to 279 000. This means the Tasmanian brand is growing with greater awareness in international markets. Total nights spent by visitors to

the state increased again. These visitors bring new money into Tasmania, they spend new money into our economy, and in the year to the end of the last calendar year, visitor expenditure increased around 8.5 per cent to \$2.3 billion.

Industry sectors are strong. Industry performance across a range of sectors is strong and almost all the sectors of our economy are going very well. Business confidence is at record highs. Almost every major report, whether it be from Deloitte, CommSec, the ANZ or the NAB, has Tasmania now as one of if not the most confident jurisdictions in the country. The economic reports we receive now are, in the main, very positive. Tasmania is taking its rightful place on the national stage. This is a fantastic place to live, it is now a fantastic place to work and raise a family and there is real opportunity in Tasmania.

The next four years will provide us with an opportunity to continue with the plan we have laid down. That plan was about providing stable majority government, increasing confidence, attracting investment and creating jobs.

One of the key election measures and deliverables we will have over the course of the coming 12 months is to ensure we maintain downward pressure on the cost of living. Already we have introduced a bill that will ensure we keep at CPI the regulated energy prices for households and small businesses. Last year this House very sensibly enabled the Government to facilitate the setting of the price of the wholesale energy price and as a result we were able to ensure that over the last four years Tasmania was one of the few jurisdictions that did not see an increase in its energy prices post the carbon tax coming off.

Last year we were also able to protect Tasmanians from the 15 per cent to 20 per cent increases in energy prices that were occurring across predominantly the eastern seaboard, largely driven by market factors that had no impact on the Tasmanian market but were isolated to the mainland both through the price order that was in place which would have flowed through to Tasmanian customers. This House enabled the Government to pass legislation that kept Tasmanians protected from those spikes.

There is a range of other matters I could discuss but I wanted to mention a couple of things in finishing. One is how pleased I am with the announcement today on redress. With other jurisdictions signing up across the country it will provide an opportunity for those individuals who were treated improperly when they were children. We cannot change that but what we can do is make their lives a little easier today. I was very pleased with the Attorney-General's announcement today. It is something she has worked very hard for and has been determined to deliver.

That leads me to another matter I want to mention briefly and that is that as the Local Government minister I am responsible for the Burial and Cremations Act. Recently, the Anglican Church made its position clear in how it would fund its contribution to redress. I have been very surprised and concerned by the level of correspondence and contact from people who are concerned about what might happen to cemeteries and the ongoing management. Some people are concerned about the heritage value of the buildings. I take a more pragmatic approach. At the end of the day there are heritage laws and some of these churches with real heritage value will continue to be protected, albeit in other people's hands. What most of my constituents are raising with me - and this is from all around the state - is what happens to their family members who have been interred, what their opportunities are moving forward to be buried with them, and what will be the role of the cemetery management moving forward.

I met with the bishop last week and had a conversation with him in my role as minister and informed him that we are going to look very closely at the Burial and Cremations Act to make certain that the rights of those family members who are interred, or people who have purchased the right to be buried in a certain location, are protected.

As of yesterday, though, I have declared an interest to the Cabinet and I will be allowing the Attorney-General to take this issue forward because my brother and father are buried in one of the churches being sold and the cemetery attached to it. As minister I would find it impossible to deal with this issue and distance myself from the issues at hand should there be decisions that are required. I have asked the Attorney-General to consider that.

Some of the stories I have heard - and again it is a significant number of Tasmanians that will be affected by this. Thousands if not the tens of thousands of families have family members who have been interred at these locations.

One of my constituents said he had recently buried his child at a church that was being sold. His mother and his father were interred in the same cemetery. He had purchased a plot for himself and his wife and he had no certainty about whether he would be able to be buried, hopefully as he said to me, in 30 to 40 years time. He had no certainty as to whether he could be laid to rest with his family.

These are matters that many Tasmanians are concerned with. We must look at this act and consider whether there are areas that need strengthening. The Attorney-General will be looking at those matters to see whether changes are needed. I thank her for taking on that responsibility.

The coming four years will give us an opportunity to build on the work we have done over the past four years. We are in a great place as a state. Tasmania is confident. People are grasping opportunities. The rest of the country and the rest of the world is looking at us. This is Tasmania's moment in the sun and it is important that we continue to build on the work we have undertaken. It is important to continue to deliver the services Tasmanians need, to take into account the services a growing population will need. In terms of this city, your city, when we consider planning we must put in place frameworks like the Hobart City Deal and greater Hobart act to ensure strategic thinking and decision making is captured, not in an isolated municipality but across the municipalities that are going to be impacted by the transport flows and the population flows that are going to occur.

We are in a very good position. It is important that we continue on this side of the House to be disciplined, to be responsible in our decision making. As the Premier has often said, Tasmania's best days are still in front of us. We are determined, as a government, to ensure we take Tasmania to the next level.

[5.34 p.m.]

Dr WOODRUFF (Franklin) - Madam Speaker, the 2018 Tasmanian election was watched around Australia and has become known for all the wrong reasons. It was an incredibly bruising election. It was bruising for democracy in Tasmania. It was an election that was bought with money flowing into the state from the Federal Group to secure its investment in this state for the next 20 years or more. It was an election that was bought, and the people of Tasmania were sold a pup. Rivers of money flowed into the Liberal Party, staining the Hodgman Liberal Government and the governance and democracy of Tasmania. The fact that an election could be bought in the 21st century in Australia, galled and appalled so many mainlanders and Tasmanians.

The good news is, it reinvigorated me. It reinvigorated Cassy O'Connor, the Leader of the Tasmanian Greens, and it reinvigorated all the Greens' members and the people who voted Green.

It also brought an awareness to the Tasmanian community that was not there before. We have taken for granted systems of governance, fair play and age-old traditions that have stood Australians and the United Kingdom, to which we owe our Westminster system of government, in good stead for centuries. It has helped us have difficult conversations and to negotiate conflict and extreme differences of opinion.

When a company comes to Tasmania and puts in millions and millions of dollars - we still do not know the amount - to buy an election, to make sure they can secure their gambling interests, then we know we are in real trouble.

When I came to Tasmania 11 years ago climate change was something I was concerned about. I came to Tasmania from my career as an epidemiologist to become more active on that issue. It was at that time very much a far-off concern. Two and a half years ago, when I came into the Tasmanian Parliament, it was something that was coming fast, and we were seeing early evidence of the impact of climate change. Today, greenhouse gases are on track to double from the pre-industrial levels in 30 years time. It does not look like there is much we can do to prevent that on the current trajectory. These are levels we have not seen since humans evolved 3 million years ago. At that time temperatures were two degrees higher than they are today and sea levels were 25 metres higher than they are today.

The industries that have supported our way of life for the past 200 years are in decline. We are moving out of the second industrial revolution and into a new era which some people call the 'third industrial revolution' But the impact of the second industrial revolution, our dependence on carbon, our dependence on fossil fuels that were laid down under the Earth's crust millions of years ago, is spawning a change in the climate that is only just starting. We are living in real-time climate change. We are still spewing massive amounts of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere. We have dug up those carbon deposits from another period and we are paying the price for using those fossil fuels.

Climate change is no longer a theory or a model. It is right here, right now. It is in our house, it is on our island. It is happening to the climate around us. It changes the water cycles of Earth: our ecosystem developed over millions of years based on water cycles and cloud covers that move across the planet, on cloud covers that govern the hydrosphere and the ecospheres. They govern everything.

We need to not only manage the changing climate, we need a new economic system. It needs to be a compelling vision. We need a game plan for the future and we need it quickly. We need to be off the carbon deposits we have been relying on for the past couple of hundred years in the next three to four decades if we are to have any chance of avoiding a massive and difficult-to-survive climate change.

So what to do? The economist, Jeremy Rifkin, is very eloquent about this and he has been providing economic advice to Angela Merkel in the German government for more than a decade. He was recently invited to China by the Communist Party of China to provide them with high level advice about how to respond to climate change and how to change industry in response to that. He says we are not reversing the situation; that humans are leaving the Holocene of nice, predictable cycles of climate; that we are into the Anthropocene of totally unpredictable water cycles - every day, unpredictability; that we are moving into the age of resilience; we are not in the slightest bit

prepared for how we have to live and how we have to think. He has clear suggestions for the paradigm shift we need to make. We need new ways to manage power, to make our economic activity renewable, efficiently managed and to have new ways of moving around our economic activity.

These are the bases of the new future we have to choose. We can choose. We can continue with business as usual and we will have more fires, such as the 2016 fires that devastated the TWWHA. We will have more droughts, such as the longest ever recorded marine heatwave off the east coast of Tasmania in 2016. We can have more floods, such as last week, and we can have more extreme wind events and droughts, or we can have a future where we accept the reality of what is happening in the global economic system and in the global climatic system. We can grasp this reality. We can take it with us and we can act to shift us toward the paradigm we must adopt if we are to flourish and survive as an island community and as people who inhabit this planet together.

The Treasurer spoke about the confident economy that is Tasmania. That confidence is wafer thin. This Liberal Government has no climate change future planning in place, nor do they have a vision for such. There is nothing in the vision the Liberals have presented to give, as the Treasurer says, children confidence. What I hear is a desperate lack of confidence, a real concern about the future, in so many young children I am exposed to, my own included. It is not because I go home and talk about this at night - I try to avoid it. It is also the responsibility of parents to speak the truth. We cannot avoid children having these conversations. They are on their phones. They pick up *The Guardian*, they pick up CNN, they pick up World News and they pick up social media. They know what is happening.

The ecologists and the scientists are not modelling what is happening in the future - the loss of biodiversity, the 50 per cent loss of major species on the planet that is predicted in the next seven decades - they are chronicling it as it happens. They are observing it happening around us.

We have a challenge ahead of us. The plan for the Greens is to spend the next four years in parliament identifying the actions we need to be taking as a state, talking about how we must continue to reduce our emissions. Everything we do must be focused on that.

We need to be thinking and actively preparing how we respond to the new industrial paradigm we have to establish and to the challenges of climate change. The Greens' vision is for Tasmania to be a resilient society and for us to have security of supply. We have an immense amount of insecurity in basic things such as liquid fuels. Fifty per cent of all of our greenhouse gas emissions in the energy sector comes from liquid fuel use. All that liquid, every little bit of it, comes from outside Tasmania. Our cars, our whole transport system, our manufacturing sector, our industrial sector is all powered on liquid fuels that come from outside this state. That is not a secure supply chain. Should there be a global influenza pandemic, the federal government's approach to managing that is to lock down every single state. What happens to Tasmania? What is our response to a global influenza pandemic when the federal government locks down every single state and we have no supply chains between Tasmania and the mainland? What does that mean for hospitals? What does that mean for food supplies?

We need confidence in how we manage water between droughts and extreme rainfall events in infrastructure, the management of water for agriculture and for living purposes.

The Greens also have a vision to value the ecosystems we rely on for food, for survival, for spiritual sustenance and for their integral beauty. We are responsible for the wilderness we have,

for the state not only to make money from tourists, but for the planet, for every other human being on Earth who will come to enjoy and wonder at the beauty of the Southwest Wilderness area or the Tarkine National Park. We will achieve that one day and we will do everything we can to make that day come sooner rather than later.

The Greens have a vision for a just and inclusive society that puts communities first, gives people a real voice about the changes in their local area, about the special wild places they love and the sorts of industries we need for the future.

I will give a little more detail about some of the areas we will be focusing our attention on, and in the portfolios I have responsibility for. It would be no surprise to people in this place that we will continue our strong focus on the marine environment and on the disaster the expansion into Storm Bay being proposed would be for that marine environment if it occurs in the way this Government is proposing. That is, the Liberals are proposing to allow three companies to massively expand into Storm Bay without a baseline scientific assessment; without an assessment of the impact on the Derwent Estuary and on the people of Hobart from the potential for algal blooms, heavy metals being suspended from the upper reaches of the Derwent Estuary; and without an assessment of the impact on other commercial fishing businesses. It is also being undertaken without consultation with communities. The consultation done by the three companies is a joke - and was described as such by all the people who spoke at the Storm Bay hearings held in the last couple of weeks by the Marine Farming Planning Review Panel.

There has been no real consultation about the impact on communities around Storm Bay of this major change. Some of the things that came up in the Storm Bay hearings were, for example, where is the water coming from? How is Tassal going to find water for its west of Wedge Island development when they have run the creek running down into the existing development dry? How is this going to be managed when there is such limited water supply on Tasman Peninsula? Where are all the trucks going to go on the state roads and who is going to be affected by them? When are people going to be consulted about things such as truck movements in Tasmania? Communities are expected to suck up these things without any discussion about the impact on their tourism businesses, their school buses, or their driving to work and home in the rain on narrow winding roads. Who is paying to upgrade the roads for these massive increases in trucks?

In addition to the focus on Storm Bay, we will continue to speak for the people in the north-west of Tasmania because the Labor Party and the Liberal Party do not speak for them. No-one else is speaking for them about the proposal for 100 Petuna pens to go under Three Hummock Island. Unbelievable. It is the most incredibly beautiful area, and is a nursery for fish around that Circular Head area. Petuna is proposing to put 100 pens in that area. Fishermen have squid licences up there. It is a nursery for juvenile fish populations that are trying to re-establish after they have been overfished in Bass Strait.

This government is supporting Tassal's bid to put fish farms on the eastern side of King Island. Unbelievable. The community is outraged. They have already submitted a petition on this. Sixty per cent of King Islanders are on the record opposing Tassal trying to establish fish farms off the incredibly beautiful reef there that has world-class surfing, an amazing reef which runs along the eastern side of King Island, as well as all the other commercial fishing operations which are undertaken around King Island. Locals believe them to be utterly threatened by the level of excrement the fish farms would produce which, because of the tides, would wash onto their beaches and into their rock lobster fishing areas.

This has never been a government which has regulated the industry for jobs for the long term or for the interests of the community. This has been a government which has had a completely hands-off approach to big business and they have said, 'If you want to come here, we will open the door, do whatever you want'.

We are seeing exactly the same thing happening in the south at Dover. What we have is a back-door way for the state government to get through a southern port. The southern woodchip port which is being proposed to be pushed through as a development application to the Huon Valley Council is nothing that should go to the Huon Valley Council. This is a state issue and it is being dealt with with no openness or transparency. This should be done with full rigour through the Huon Valley Council. It clearly cannot be undertaken in a democratic way when there is one person, an administrator, sitting on a council that does not have elected members around the table.

This is a major issue and the community is gathering a huge campaign against it. There are so many unanswered questions. Again, they are the same questions because this Government does not deal openly with communities; it does everything behind closed doors. We have secret deals that appear to be operating with companies from overseas. The company that has put in the development application, James Neville-Smith, SmartFibre, is part of the Global Forest Products firm, which is massive, and is based in the United States. It also has connections to a company that is registered for \$1 in the Cayman Islands. There are links to Malaysia and there may be links to Chinese companies as well.

There are so many questions about this proposal, but we can be sure that under this Liberal Government the only way the community will get answers is to have to go through a protest, a community campaign, where they spend their time and money getting legal advice and expert opinions so they can fight their case for their community, because what is at stake for them is 427 Tassal jobs to a community that exists now, for a proposal that has two to three permanent jobs, which is what the CEO Danny Peet said on the record to a public meeting last November. It will provide two to three permanent jobs with this sort of foggy '145 other jobs' somewhere off to the side maybe.

This Government is prepared to balance supporting an international company which will provide two to three permanent jobs but it will support the forestry logging narrative that the Liberals must have. Mr Barnett must continue with the politics of division, the politics of focusing on an old industry which we must move on from because of the reality of the world we live in today. We cannot cut down native forests and release carbon dioxide into the air, threaten the biodiversity of those forests out the back of Geeveston and all the other forests that will be used.

There is still no ban on logging on Bruny Island that has swift parrot habitat, masked owl habitat, and wedge-tail eagle habitat. These are the forests which are threatened by this proposal. It is a massive restarting of the native forest industry and it is about securing the commitment to the old boys of restarting the logging industry. We know that people in the south are kitting up, they are buying B-doubles, and there are more log trucks on the road now even though it has not even got formally to a development application process with the Huon Valley Council. It has all started and it is behind closed doors, which is the way this Government does business.

In the next period of time we will defend our strong, consistent and proud record of tough gun laws in Tasmania. It was a shameful, sneaky and perfidious move of the Liberals to hide a policy they had to buy votes from the gun lobby. The only reason it came out before the election was because the Greens put it on the public record. Not only did these Liberals do something so sneaky and shameful as that, but they would not even be upfront enough and have the courage of their

convictions to defend it to the public before the election. That shows you how wrong their policy is. The only reason it is going to the upper House sham of a committee is so they can weasel out of it and maybe they will drop it off the back burner quietly after they have already bought the votes they needed.

We will continue to stand up for strong, tough laws in this state. We are very glad to have heard the words of Ms O'Byrne about the fact that we must have tough gun laws which sometimes means that people do not get every little convenience they want. But when you are in a state which has had 2000 guns stolen from Tasmanian residences in the last 10 years and the Liberals want to weaken the storage laws, it is total madness. It seems like every fortnight there is another mass shooting in the United States. The only reason Australia has not been in this situation is because of the National Firearms Agreement which Tasmania was a major part of pushing for after the Port Arthur massacre in 1996. We need to make sure our gun laws remain what they are. In fact we have already been weakening them over the last 20 years and they cannot be weakened any more. We will be strongly defending them.

We will be pushing for an Integrity Commission that has teeth. The job of the Integrity Commission is important. The state election was bought by a gambling industry with millions of dollars. We cannot afford for our democracy to be weakened. We have so many challenges in front of us as a community, as a state and as a world. We have to have strong systems of governance and we have to respect the rule of law. We need processes that involve communities that give them appeals, that make everything transparent. We will be pushing for a crime of misconduct in public office. Everybody should be open, everybody should be responsible, and everybody in a position of authority should answer to charges of misconduct if they are brought against them. No-one should be immune from that.

We will look at plastics in Tasmania. We are in a dire situation worldwide with the amount of plastics being produced. We can do something about that. We can have a zero waste strategy in Tasmania. Hobart City Council is the Australian leader in this area. The work of Hobart City Council has put Hobart on the map. I believe *The Project* has been here to laud the work of Hobart City Council. We can be leaders and have great opportunities in Tasmania. Recycling is not the answer. Recycling is a transition approach but we must reuse so we do not waste resources.

I am looking forward to the next four years of working with Cassie O'Connor, with the rest of our mighty team, Alice, Tom, Will, Joe and Sue, and with the other members of the Greens who are very active supporters.

I pay respect to the work of Andrea Dawkins. She gave everything to a role that she would never have felt herself to be born for. She was a person who took the job that was given to her and she did an excellent job. She was well loved and respected. I know she would have felt very positive, Jennifer Houston, about what you bring to this place, your experience and your passion as a palawa woman. She would have felt pleased to have heard your inaugural speech today.

Ms O'Connor - Hear, hear.

Time expired.

[5.53 p.m.]

Mr BROOKS (Braddon) - Madam Speaker, it is a privilege and honour to be returned as a member for Braddon and re-endorsed by the community. What we believe in and what we stood

up for and what we committed to as a team was overwhelmingly backed by the north-west and by the communities in the electorate of Braddon. The result was a really important message. The Liberal Party went to the 2014 election with a cohesive plan for Tasmania, a plan that was about bringing the budget back to a sustainable level and investing in the right areas and reinvesting in health, education and supporting those that need it.

Importantly, we had a plan that was going to give Tasmanian businesses the confidence they needed. Businesses employ people when they are confident. They invest in their businesses when they are confident. When there is instability or dysfunction from a government then they are not quite as confident. The Sensis Business Index is a direct reflection of the leadership of the government and the policies of government and business confidence in government policy. Business owners are asked how confident they feel. Under the previous government it was the worst since the start of the Sensis Business Index. That was how bad business confidence was in government policy.

When our plan was backed in 2014 by the Tasmanian community we saw that trend quickly reverse. Business confidence continued to rise. Business confidence in Tasmania is still among the highest in the country. That is because they know they have a government that understands how they feel, understands what it is like to go to bed at night knowing you do not have the money to pay the wages the next day and what are you going to do about it? You cannot read about that feeling in a book. The sick feeling in the bottom of your stomach when things are not going the way you want and it is all on your head. What are you going to do? We understand what that feels like, because we have been there.

We understand that the small business owners and the medium sized business owners in this state need a government that backs them. If they are confident then they will invest and they will employ people. Their confidence is related directly to consumer confidence. The Consumer Confidence Index is continuing to go through the roof as well. It becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy. Consumers who are buying goods and using goods, retail figures, building construction figures, exports and all of those different indicators reflect what the economy in Tasmania is doing and that flows into confident households.

Confident households leads to consumer spending -

Ms O'Connor - Are they households with a home? Are they households with an affordable home?

Madam SPEAKER - Order.

Mr BROOKS - That means they buy things and that means businesses get more confident. When you look at the Sensis Business Index small business confidence continues to be among the highest in the country. That is not luck. That is not a matter of fortunate timing, it is a matter of policy that this Government has worked very hard with the small business community -

Ms O'Connor - Which policy is that?

Mr BROOKS - and that is why now we are continuing to see the results.

Ms O'Connor - But which policy?

Mr BROOKS - Well -

Ms O'Connor - No, just talk about the things you have done for small business.

Madam SPEAKER - Order, Ms O'Connor.

Mr BROOKS - I know you think you are above the rules because you are a Green and I accept that.

Ms O'Connor - No, I do not. I certainly do not.

Mr BROOKS - I did not interject on you.

Ms O'Connor - I did not lie three times to parliament.

Madam SPEAKER - Order.

Mr BROOKS - I take offence to that, Madam Speaker. I ask that you require Ms O'Connor to withdraw.

Ms O'Connor - Do you really want this?

Madam SPEAKER - We have a point of order. Would you please apologise to Mr Brooks for referring to his lying?

Ms O'CONNOR - On the point of order, before I apologise I would like to understand what he is asking me to apologise for.

Mr BROOKS - Madam Speaker, we know that Ms O'Connor likes to waste time so we go through this -

Debate adjourned.

ADJOURNMENT

Costa - East Devonport Distribution Centre

[6.00 p.m.]

Mr ROCKLIFF (Braddon - Minister for Education and Training) - Madam Speaker, I rise tonight to congratulate Costa on the opening of its newly upgraded East Devonport distribution centre through the jointly funded Tasmania Jobs and Investment Fund. It was a pleasure the other day to be with my colleague, Roger Jaensch, where we both were invited to say a few words. This is a very good example of both Australian and Tasmanian governments working together to deliver sustainable business and job opportunities for Tasmanians. I recently had the privilege of being part of the official opening and can say that the modified atmosphere facility and upgraded distribution centre will ensure Costa continues to expand its operation on the north-west coast of Tasmania and extend its growing season to meet demand that has previously been met by imported product, so it is great news.

The upgrades to this facility included construction of four ambient temperature unloading docks, two refrigerated loading docks, a cooling room, a packing room, new staff amenities and

reconfiguration of the distribution centre for efficiencies. It was great to meet and speak with some of the staff there on the day. This will enable an increased capacity to cool, pack and store berries grown by Costa and third-party growers from the north-west coast of Tasmania and further afield, no doubt. The site has doubled its previous capacity to store berries in a modified atmosphere facility for up to six weeks at a time.

Costa currently farms over 170 hectares of blueberries, raspberries, strawberries and blackberries on the north-west coast of Tasmania as well as operating a distribution centre and modified atmosphere facility in East Devonport. Since 2016 the company has increased its workforce by some 90 full-time equivalent positions in roles such as farm managers, maintenance supervisory roles, horticulture and irrigation specialists and we have already seen the benefits of this expansion flow on to the local community through these increased employment opportunities. I understand additional full-time equivalents are expected to join the operation later this year.

I am very pleased at the growth of protected cropping, as it is called, in recent times. In fact even 10 years ago I would not have thought we would have seen so much growth in protected cropping because Tasmania is traditionally known for its even, temperate climate for unprotected cropping in actual fact, but because of our evenness of temperature protected cropping does work extremely well here. It is great to see such investment by Costa and I congratulate all their managers and employees. It is a great company that has set up and is investing in Tasmania and enables it to further expand and employ more people as a result of the Jobs and Investment Fund and good collaboration and cooperation between both state and federal governments.

Tasmanian Women in Agriculture

Greg Hall - Tribute

[6.03 p.m.]

Ms COURTNEY (Bass - Minister for Primary Industries and Water) - Madam Speaker, Tasmanian Women in Agriculture is a vibrant organisation dedicated to connecting, supporting and celebrating Tasmanian rural women. The 2018 Women on Farms gathering held from 18 to 20 May was a resounding success with farm tours, professional development and networking. The theme of this year's gathering was 'Live, Laugh and Farm', embracing the capacity and vibrancy of Tasmania's rural women.

Tasmanian Women in Agriculture was formed in 1994 to encourage and empower women to realise their full potential. I pay tribute to the vision of the founding members and the support and encouragement they have provided to hundreds of women across Tasmania. Now with membership around 1000 people, the group continues its work to gain and share knowledge locally, nationally and internationally. This was evidenced through the provision of scholarships to attend the Marcus Oldham rural leadership program. There have now been 40 Oldham scholarships supported by Tasmanian Women in Agriculture in 22 years, harnessing the power of education.

It was a delight indeed to join Tasmanian Women in Agriculture at Agfest recently to congratulate this year's recipients, 33-year-old Shannon Barwick, who was recognised for her work in agribusiness and building her community, and 23-year-old Taylor Franklin-Smith, who is working to build on leadership skills in the farming sector.

It is important to recognise the role of women in agriculture and reflect on the pioneers who have cleared a path for many of us. If it is easier to be a woman on a farm today, this can be credited to Tasmanian Women in Agriculture's work.

The Tasmanian Government is committed to supporting everyone who makes up regional communities and supports our vibrant primary industry sectors. I am very proud that our Government has increased funding to Tasmanian Women in Agriculture to \$120 000 over the next four years, and that money was very well received. This reflects our confidence in the demonstrated ability of the organisation to support and empower more rural women to take on leadership roles in Tasmanian primary industries. I look forward to continuing a strong relationship with this dedicated group and I congratulate and thank the many who have made Tasmanian Women in Agriculture and the recent farm gathering a success.

Furthermore, I take this opportunity, while we are on a rural theme, to pay tribute to a champion of rural and regional Tasmania, Greg Hall. Greg's recent retirement from politics allows us to reflect on his decades of service, including as Meander Valley mayor from 1995 and then as a member of the Legislative Council from 2001, representing the divisions of Rowallan, Western Tiers and, more recently, McIntyre West.

As a local Meander farmer, Greg's understanding and advocacy of the rural industry and the people who rely on it was brought to parliament. I thank Greg for his contribution and role in helping shape agricultural policy in Tasmania and for his support of farmers, families and rural and regional communities. Greg's departure sees perhaps the loss of the most sharply dressed politician I know and certainly the loss of one of the wickedest senses of humour. The practical jokes were very clever, always executed in good humour and never actually offended but they were very funny.

I wish Greg a happy and fruitful post-politics life as he continues his involvement with community groups and finds more time to spend on his farm and with his family and friends.

The Drowsy Chaperone - Rosny College

[6.08 p.m.]

Mr O'BYRNE (Franklin) - Madam Speaker, I rise tonight to draw the House's attention to a wonderful performance I attended last Wednesday night at Rosny College of *The Drowsy Chaperone*, which is a Broadway hit.

It was a wonderful evening, full of wonderful performances and wonderful music. The songs, the humour and the presentation of the performance was marvellous. When you see young students, the actors of tomorrow, performing in such a professional and entertaining way, it fills your heart with pride that young Tasmanians can not only mix it with the best, but from a very young age can get access to a professional learning environment for their craft.

I particularly acknowledge some of the young actors in the play. Isaac Sargent was the man in the chair. *The Drowsy Chaperone* is a play within a play where the character of the man in the chair, played by Isaac, talks through his life and through the journey of the performance, talks about his love for Broadway musicals. The musical itself plays an insight into his own life. He did such a marvellous performance in holding it together. He was on stage for either 100 per cent or at least 99 per cent of the whole performance. It was quite a long one-act play and he did a magnificent job.

The drowsy chaperone herself, Georgia Cooper, was hilarious in her performance and held the stage and held her character extremely well. As soon as you start mentioning the actors, you really have to go through them all, so I include Laura Cruise, Mitch Denman, Jack Tinning and Dylan Burgos, who played Adolpho, the Latin lover of the play. He was an absolute scene stealer, he was tremendously hilarious and at one stage I had to contain myself because I was laughing too hard and too loud and the play needed to go on. He did a magnificent performance, as did the other ensemble cast - Polymnia Flouris, Jack Bryce, Brandon Chilcott, Tayla Moschogianis, Elisabeth Nichols, Liam Tope, Lachlan Nossiter, Emily Orange, Lauren Buck and Celeste Davis.

Plays such as this do not happen by accident. It takes a lot of work from teachers and the school environment established at the Rosny College. We need to acknowledge the amazing work of the team behind the team who performed on stage. Darren Sangwell, who is well known to many in the Rosny College and the arts community in the south, was the director and did a magnificent job pulling it all together.

Clare Latham was the production manager and Andrew Castles was the musical director. Andrew has been a stalwart of the musical scene in the public sector in the south. I remember seeing him a number of times at the DEC at the all school performance, with choirs and students from primary schools across the south who come together to perform a number of wonderful musical items. Janelle Stowe was the vocal director and Kristy Baker was the choreographer, who I think was the choreographer for the Uni Review as well. Nicole Ottrey was costume coordinator, Tony Sayer, the technical manager and Cathy Ransom, the production assistant.

The opening night was not only a wonderful performance but it also brought the eastern shore community together within the teggana Collective, which the Rosny College is essentially the heart of, with high schools across the length and breadth of the eastern shore, Campania and Sorell. It was a wonderful celebration of that community coming together, celebrating the wonderful performances by our young students and we should be proud of the work the college has done over many years in hosting and performing plays and musicals. I put on the record my appreciation of the students, teachers and the community who put together such a magnificent performance and they should be congratulated.

Keith Wenn - Tribute

[6.12 p.m.]

Ms O'BYRNE (Bass) - Madam Speaker, it is an education theme because I rise to pay tribute to a long-term educator, principal and leader in our schools, Keith Wenn. He has retired from his position at Launceston College after 16 years. No-one who knows Keith Wenn could suggest that he has ever been backward in talking about the attributes and strengths of public education. He has been an absolute warrior in our education sphere for many years.

He has a career that spans some 46 years and he has touched many lives and shaped many students. I am not sure whether it is a good website, but there is a website called Rate My Teachers and he does pretty well on it. That is always a good sign, although it is the sort of website which might be leaving yourself open to other comment at times.

To list the schools he has taught in would take too much time. He has had a significant career. I have had some excellent feedback from his time at West Launceston Primary School. He was also at Oatlands Primary School. He was there in 2000 when they extended to year 11 and 12 for

the first time. By the very target of programs they offered and their ability to look at how they would transition their children, he had a retention rate for that school above the rate of anywhere else in the country. That indicates the kind of leadership he has shown.

He finished his career recently at Launceston College, and I quote from the *Examiner* in an article written about him. He spent that time as a leader for that college and helping in the broader school environment in Launceston. He said -

'When you're a supposed leader of an organisation, I think when you're leaving, you want to leave at the best time for the organisation.

The time is obvious to me now with the quality of staff we've got, the quality of programs.'

Mr Wenn has helped Launceston College grow from about 950 students to more than 1500, transforming the school into a data-focused, evidence-driven hub, renowned as 'one of the most prestigious public schools in the state'.

'I've been really fortunate to see that whole spectrum of how important education is from Kinder, Prep ... all the way through to these wonderful young people heading off to university'.

He was named Tasmanian Secondary Principal of the Year in 2015 and also awarded the Overall Excellence Award. He says he does not like to look back but prefers to look forward to the achievements still to come at Launceston College. It does not stand as a silo. It has strong community partnerships through arts, sport, music and more. He had led the virtual college, which has supported the extension of schools and he is proud of the work he has done there. He said it has been a great privilege being the Principal of Launceston College and working with the northern community. He said he was not sure what was next, 'The world is still spinning for everyone and I will keep spinning with it.'

As the shadow minister for education, as the local member for that school community, and as the parent of a Launceston College student, I thank him for his passion, dedication, amazing work, and the years of service he has put into the community. I wish him and Rosemary well in his retirement.

Derwent Estuary Program

[6.16 p.m.]

Dr WOODRUFF (Franklin) - Madam Speaker, I rise to present to the House a presentation given by Dr Christine Coughanowr, who is the immediate outgoing CEO of the Derwent Estuary Program. She made a submission to the Storm Bay North Marine Farming Development Plan as to the environmental impacts the Derwent Estuary Program is concerned about and regarding the Storm Bay expansion for the three companies: Huon Aquaculture, Tassal and Petuna.

The Derwent Estuary Program, as most members would know, is a partnership between a number of government, business, scientists and community groups, particularly the Brighton, Clarence, Derwent Valley, Glenorchy, Hobart and Kingborough Councils, the state Government, Nyrstar Hobart, Norske Skog, Boyer, TasWater, TasPorts and Hydro Tasmania.

The program was established in 1999 and manages the Derwent Estuary which has a long-standing history of heavy metal pollution, with some of the highest reported levels of zinc, mercury and lead in the world. It has been an incredibly successful partnership. It has been nominated and awarded the National River Prize.

Dr Coughanowr says -

More recently, the estuary has shown increasing signs of nutrient stress, including nuisance algal blooms, seagrass loss and persistent low oxygen levels in some areas. Previous research has shown a strong link between nutrient loading, low oxygen and release of heavy metals from sediments. Therefore, a key element of our long-term management strategy for the estuary is to manage and reduce nutrients loads, particularly during summer months, when the risks are highest.

She makes the point that marine waters of Storm Bay and the D'Entrecasteaux Channel drive the overall circulation of the Derwent Estuary. Those waters from Storm Bay set the background nutrient levels for the whole system as it creates a salt wedge that travels up from Storm Bay and D'Entrecasteaux Channel toward the Bridgewater Bridge, that far up the Derwent River. A significant change in nutrient inputs from Storm Bay could have far reaching impacts on Storm Bay and on the Derwent Estuary.

Dr Coughanowr was concerned that, given the size and scale of the proposed fish farm expansion and the connectivity of Storm Bay into the Derwent River, it is essential the three proposals currently being considered separately by the Marine Farming Planning Review Panel ought to be planned, assessed and managed together and ought to have a cumulative impact assessment. Without that, she maintains, it is difficult to understand the scale and timing of the three developments and the impacts they would have on the Derwent Estuary and River.

Of particular concern is the potential for increased nutrient levels in the bottom waters of estuary, that these drive the overall circulation of the estuary and the impact on the ecology as a result. Particular concerns would relate to Ralphs Bay, which is shallow and poorly flushed and may be susceptible to drift algal growth; the spotted handfish in the lower Derwent and Ralphs Bay; the Derwent temperate reef communities, including EPBC-listed giant kelp communities, especially those along the Kingborough shoreline; the seagrass and macrophyte communities which are susceptible to algal overgrowth as well as shading; and the heavy metal-contaminated sediments when low oxygen levels can remobilise toxic metals, including mercury, which are existing in the soil at the bottom of the benthic layer in the estuary, and which could have potential impacts on humans, fish, birds and other biota.

Dr Coughanowr pointed to the very large biomass. The numbers being produced for the dissolved nitrogen outputs for all the sewage that is currently discharged into the Derwent Estuary, from the different councils that discharge into the Derwent, is estimated to be 327 tonnes per annum. By comparison, the estimated dissolved nitrogen outputs the three fish farm proposals would provide would be 1892 tonnes per annum, nearly six times the Derwent sewage load at the moment. It would be more than 14 times the Derwent sewage load when the Storm Bay fish farm expansion gets to the full production level being proposed of 80 000 tonnes a year.

What we are looking at, they warn, is the impact of a 14-fold increase in the current nutrient levels coming from Storm Bay and up through the D'Entrecasteaux into the Derwent Estuary, and having an ecological impact - remobilising potentially heavy metals in the Derwent Estuary, as well

as having clear impacts on threatened species such as the spotted handfish and creating algal blooms.

This is a very serious issue that is being raised. The Derwent Estuary Program recommends that the Storm Bay proposal: be managed as a single system; it includes the impacts on the other nutrient-sensitive systems of the Derwent and Frederick Henry Bay; given the scale of the proposed expansion the Derwent Estuary Program is included in the assessment, modelling and monitoring programs; the impact of how the system responds to major storms must also be included -

Time expired.

Mr Gary Baker AM - Tribute

Dr Hans Drielsma AM - Tribute

Bertrand Cadart - Tribute

[6.23 p.m.]

Mr BARNETT (Lyons - Minister for Resources) - Madam Speaker, I am very pleased tonight to pay tribute to three fine and notable Tasmanians, Mr Gary Baker AM, a 50-year veteran of Hydro Tasmania and the hydroelectricity sector in this state; Dr Hans Drielsma AM, doyen of the Tasmanian forest industry; and Bertrand Cadart, the former Glamorgan Spring Bay mayor.

The first two relate to the Australia Day Honours Awards. The investiture took place on 18 May 2018 at Government House, hosted by Her Excellency Professor Kate Warner. Those awards help describe, inspire and strengthen national aspirations, morals and standards by recognising the role models among our communities. Honours are awarded as recognition to those who achieve their best, make a difference and serve others.

There were 28 recipients from Tasmania at this year's Australia Day Honours List out of 895 nationwide, so per capita this is a superior number to the national average and a wonderful achievement for Tasmania. Of those 28 recipients I would like to observe and note part of the journeys for Gary Baker AM and Hans Drielsma AM.

Gary Baker was awarded a Member of the Order of Australia for significant service to the energy generation and supply market in Tasmania, to health and aged care organisations and to the community. Born into abject poverty in the town of Barretta south of Hobart, Gary was the third son of 11 children. Despite being a bright and hardworking student, once he completed grade 10 studies he entered the workforce starting out as a junior employee at the Hydro Electric Commission in 1961. Gary progressed through the ranks and soon his talent shone through in human relations management, where he excelled in building professional relationships and working with staff. He was often seen as an influential senior manager in the making.

Once construction of Hydro's networks neared completion its workforce required downsizing from 5300 in 1985 to 3400 in 1992, and today it is down close to 1000. During this period the Hydro was undergoing what is perhaps one of the biggest makeovers of industry in Tasmania's history and Gary was at the time human resources manager and oversaw these workforce changes. My former boss and then minister, Robin Gray, said about Gary that he achieved the downsizing without attracting a ripple of unfavourable publicity.

He then worked tirelessly to ensure transitioning staff were afforded dignity and respect, which was noted by many, including the unions. For Gary this was more about leading a transformation

that would benefit the people of Tasmania and secure the future of the Hydro than it was about just doing the job. He was appointed corporation secretary in 1991 and in 1998 his career with the Hydro reached its pinnacle when he rose to become CEO.

Over that period he has given 50 years of consecutive to the Tasmanian hydroelectricity energy sector. Some of his roles include employee for the HEC from 1961 to 1999, director of the Electricity Supply Association of Australia in the early 1990s, director of the National Electricity Market Management Company from 1999 to 2008, and director of Transend Networks from 2012 to 2015. Gary also had many other passions outside his positions in the electricity sector and it is no surprise he put in as much enthusiasm and effort into serving on numerous boards where he had many valuable contributions to the community sector. A few of those included director of Calvary Hospital Hobart, chair of the Tasmanian Dam Construction Authority, board and chairman of Crimestoppers Tasmania, and tribunal chairman of the Huon Football Association. During the late 1980s and 1990s Gary also voluntarily advocated for returned servicemen and women using skills he honed in the many industrial relations hearings he was part of for the Hydro Tasmania period as well. He was immensely proud of his ability to assist veterans gain access to TPIs.

I first met Gary Baker when I worked for the former premier Robin Gray in 1988 and 1989 and have known him off and on since then. He was a model worker, natural leader, passionate community member and advocate for those whose voice is not always heard. His professional success was not down to luck. He was able to build his career through a consistent strong ethic and was an excellent communicator showing his attention to detail as a successful employee manager. His service to the industry and community will be widely remembered and it is only fitting he is a recipient of an AM, a fine award in recognition of an outstanding career.

Dr Hans Drielsma AM is someone I have known for nearly two decades. He was awarded a Member of the Order of Australia for significant service to the forest industry, sustainable management practices and certification programs and to professional bodies.

In his younger years Dr Drielsma developed and showed strong interest in the outdoors. He joined the Scouts and would go camping at every opportunity so it was no surprise he pursued a career in forestry. At the time he started his tertiary education forestry was the only industry allowing him to work outdoors whilst using his qualifications. Dr Drielsma went on to pursue post-grad studies in 1978 at Yale School of Forestry and Environmental Studies, where he went on to complete a PhD on natural resources, sociology and forest policy. Throughout his career he has contributed his extensive experience and knowledge to the forest industry where he has held a range of key positions and is held in very high regard, not just by myself but by industry.

He was managing director of State Forest New South Wales, director of the board of directors at the Institute of Forests of Australia, Forestry Tasmania general manager from 1997 to 2005 and then executive general manager through to 2011. He was and still is chair of the Tasmanian Forest Practices Advisory Council. I thank him again for his service to Tasmania. He was director of CRC Forestry Limited and chair of the Australian Forestry Standard Limited.

Dr Drielsma was an influential figure in developing the Australian Forest Certification Scheme, which was later endorsed by the Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification. He was awarded the Norman Jolly Medal for the prestigious Institute of Foresters of Australia, in recognition of outstanding service to the forestry profession.

It is only fitting that he received an AM for his substantial and visionary work in management practices, certification programs and to professional bodies.

I congratulate both Mr Baker and Dr Drielsma on their outstanding awards.

Finally, a wonderful tribute to my friend Bertrand Cadart, former mayor of Glamorgan-Spring Bay, known by some as Le Frog French. It was said in a recent report in the *Sunday Examiner* he had a fruitful life since immigrating to Australia, from playing a role in *Mad Max* to becoming the mayor of Bicheno. Sadly he now has leukaemia. He is living in Queensland. I got to know him over a long period of time. He has been a terrific contributor to Tasmania and the East Coast. In 2005, after five years of living in Bicheno, he became a councillor and then became a mayor. I thank him for his support for the Pollie Pedal.

Ulverstone Rowing Club

[6.31 p.m.]

Dr BROAD (Braddon) - Madam Speaker, I rise this evening to recognise the outstanding season the Ulverstone Rowing Club has had. It has been a very successful year across a number of age groups, especially under-age rowing, under 21s and masters. The Ulverstone Rowing Club has a very good group of masters, especially women, who get out and have a lot of fun rowing. They are a very good addition to the club.

I was MC for the evening, which I have been doing now for the past 13 years. I was joined by my fellow members for Braddon, Adam Brooks and Roger Jaensch, along with Labor Senator Anne Urquhart. We sat at a table with club president, Paul Williams and his wife, Trish. For a long time this has been an event that I have attended with my wife, Alicia.

Ms O'Byrne - Is that your date night?

Dr BROAD - One of the only date nights of the year, along with the Beyond Blue Ball. It is a fantastic evening. I still enjoy being the MC. You wing it every year but it seems to go okay.

It is also the evening where I get to put on my Australian Rowing Club blazer and see just how close I can get the buttons. I can do it up but it is a bit of a stretch, which is not unreasonable considering that when I was fitted for my blazer I was near my racing weight of 70-odd kilos. That was a long time and a few kilos ago.

I had the honour of presenting the most outstanding oars person, which this year was a joint award. The two outstanding young people in the Braddon community were Kate Hall and Joseph Wilson. Both Kate Hall and Joseph Wilson had outstanding years at the state level and at the national level. Kate was the first representative of the Ulverstone Rowing Club in the Interstate Regatta representing Tasmania. She represented Tasmania with honours in the women's lightweight quad scull, where Tasmania got a bronze. She is the first member of the Ulverstone Rowing Club to be in the Tasmanian team since 2003, which coincidentally was the last year that I represented Tasmania. Both Joseph and Kate are attending university. On the night I urged them, with all sincerity, to keep rowing because those two have outstanding talent.

Before I got elected I was reasonably fit and I rowed with Joseph, his brother Sam and Coby Badcock, another very talented youngster, at regattas. We had some success. I am proud of the small role I had in the development of Joseph Wilson. You could see right from when Kate Hall was young that she had something a little bit special. She was a racer but also more than willing to

put in the effort required. Rowing is a sport where you have to put in the effort. If you do not do the work, you do not get the rewards. I hope they keep rowing.

Another highlight of the evening was the award of two life memberships. Life memberships are the pinnacle of club award nights because it recognises outstanding contributions over a significant period. Both awards were to ladies who no longer have children participating at the rowing club. The first award was to Kaylene Ferrier. Kaylene Ferrier has been a mainstay of catering. Ulverstone Rowing Club makes most of its money from catering and Kaylene has been in the kitchen helping out for a number of years.

The second life membership was awarded to Di Bennett. It was presented by Kerry 'Henry' Lynch. He wandered up and got out a rather long speech that dropped to the floor. He was sitting at the same table as Di and said, 'Look, I forgot my glasses, can you bring my glasses up'. So she dutifully brought his glasses up and then he said, 'By the way you have to stay here, because you are the one getting this life membership'. It was very well set up, very well done. Her husband Darryl was already a life member and both Di and Darryl have been involved in the rowing club for a number of years. Then they went away for a number of years and the moment they got back to Tasmania they again started volunteering for the club. Di's role in helping fundraise through the north-west motorcycle show at the Ulverstone Rowing Club has raised serious amounts of money for not only the Ulverstone Rowing Club, but also the Penguin Surf Club. It has been an outstanding effort over a number of years.

Every year when I try to put on my blazer I think that maybe I should do some rowing. I better make some time this year.

The Ponting Foundation

[6.37 p.m.]

Mr HODGMAN (Franklin - Premier) - Madam Speaker, I bring to the attention of the House the work of the Ponting Foundation and what they have done, not only in partnership with Government, but also in supporting young Tasmanians with cancer. The Government entered a partnership with the foundation in late 2016. As a result of that we have seen a dollar for dollar matching of funds raised by Ricky's Biggest Game of Cricket in Launceston last year that raised \$400 000 for the foundation.

The partnership has also resulted in grants being awarded to five very worthwhile projects. One of those was CanTeen's PEER Program. A place of enablement, empowerment and relationship is what PEER stands for. It is a three-day support program to help young people cope with cancer, either in their own way as cancer sufferers or to support a close family member suffering from cancer.

There was some wonderful feedback from the program, which was recently held at Camp Banksia in the north-west. Forty young people came together for the program, made new friendships, challenged themselves with new experiences and had a lot of fun. They had a chance to go kayaking, play bubble soccer, but also importantly to talk about their cancer experiences. Shae Chester, who I was thrilled to catch up with just last week at the opening of the Cancer Council Centre in Sandy Bay, says of the program:

Watching the magic of young people providing support to each other is incredible. We also have our fabulous PEER facilities and our leader members

attend the program. They provided guidance and support for these young people, many of whom are just starting out on their cancer journeys.

Shae pointed out that the Ponting Foundation has been wonderful in helping to make this happen. I am very proud of our Government's partnership with the Ponting Foundation. Most importantly I congratulate the work of CanTeen in Tasmania to support young people with cancer.

The unwavering support shown by Ricky and Rianna Ponting, though, for the support of cancer charities throughout our state is truly inspiring. We look forward to continuing to work with them through the Ponting Foundation to assist more Tasmanians in need.

East Derwent Highway - Traffic Issues

[6.39 p.m.]

Ms STANDEN - (Franklin) - Madam Speaker, I would like to talk about an important road safety issue raised with me a couple of weeks back in relation to the speed limit on the East Derwent Highway, specifically a two kilometre strip from Geilston Bay to Piper Road, where the speed limit increases from 70 kilometres per hour to 80 kilometres per hour, and then 100 kilometres per hour, and the extreme impact on the intersection of the East Derwent Highway with Piper Road and the intersection of the East Derwent Highway and Sugarloaf Road into Risdon Vale.

On 10 May, I attended a meeting convened by Janet Dicker on behalf of Clarence Lifestyle Village residents. It was well attended - around 50 residents attended with me and colleagues David O'Byrne and Jo Siejka. I note Alderman Richard James from the Clarence City Council and a representative from the RACT were also present. Ms Dicker raised at the meeting that 20 email exchanges had occurred with the Department of State Growth over the past 10 months without a satisfactory response. There was one patronising, ageist response dismissing residents' concerns on the basis their eyesight would be failing and how this was contributing to the situation.

It is a serious situation. There have been four serious accidents on this short 2 kilometre strip of highway, one prior to 2015, a fatality, very sadly, in September 2015, and two serious accidents within the last six to eight weeks that were very near misses.

This is an issue impacting cars and pedestrians crossing the road to catch buses. The 2 kilometre stretch of the highway that passes Piper Road is the only strip of the East Derwent Highway between the Tasman Bridge and the Midlands Highway roundabout at Bridgewater that is 100 kilometres per hour. It carries a great deal of traffic, both cars and trucks, and it is particularly heavy around 6 a.m. to 9 a.m. and 3 p.m. to 6 p.m. They showed me a traffic study they had undertaken with great care showing the flow was constant all day, seven days a week, and showing approximately 300 vehicles are using the Piper Road exit onto the highway each day. This includes 100 vehicles from the Clarence Lifestyle Village and a further 100 from Piper Road. In the near future a further 100 are anticipated from a new subdivision that comes by Napier Street to Piper Road and then to the highway.

Cars are coming at 100 kilometres per hour around and over the top of the hill and they are only seen by these vehicles coming onto the highway for approximately four seconds before they are at the intersection. It is not long enough to be safe. There are some vegetation issues and that needs to be cleared. The residents feel, and I agree, this would not fix the problem because speed is the problem. It seems incongruous this is the only stretch of highway that allows traffic to go for such a short distance up to 100 kilometres per hour.

The issue is, when entering the highway, the traffic cannot reasonably go from a stopped start to up to 100 kilometres per hour fast enough for the oncoming traffic. Before they know it cars behind are coming up, tooting and cursing. It is frightening and dangerous for the commuters. After that sad fatality in 2015, there is no right turn from Pipers Road onto the East Derwent Highway for traffic travelling south. Residents need to move very quickly into the right-hand lane so they can go around the roundabout in order to drive around to Lindisfarne and Hobart, et cetera. It is often difficult with the speed of oncoming traffic, which does not allow them to merge or change lanes. Traffic needs to slow down to a 70 kilometres per hour speed limit a short distance down the road from Pipers Road exit north of Pipers Road, but those travelling at 100 kilometres per hour often find it difficult, bearing in mind that is a downhill stretch, the sign is not well placed or visible and it is difficult for traffic to negotiate that section of highway.

At the very least, residents say and I believe the speed limit should be reduced to 80 kilometres per hour all the way from south of Pipers Road down to 70 kilometres per hour prior to the roundabout. Residents have tested this and say that if the speed was lowered along those lines it would add only 27 seconds to the whole trip along the length of the East Derwent Highway. Serious research has gone into this presentation from the residents.

The issue of pedestrians is significant: those who want to catch a bus or have no car, as with ageing residents. There are also several students who need to walk across four lanes of a busy highway without a median safety zone. The issue is difficult, scary and dangerous. Metro Tasmania drivers have talked with local residents and say they find it difficult to see traffic coming over the hill when they move from Clinton Road to the highway. They need to cross two lanes of 100 kilometres per hour coming from the north. They have difficulty trying to join the flow of traffic travelling at a much faster speed from the south and safely slow to a stop. Then they have difficulty entering the traffic again when they cannot possibly accelerate to the speed of the traffic flow instantly. They are not poor drivers, these MT drivers; they are concerned and considerate, and residents agree an accident with a bus could be catastrophic.

There are issues with the bus stop. There needs to be a more stable surface and bus stop shelters are needed.

In closing I commend Jan Dicker and the Clarence Lifestyle Village for raising this important road safety issue. The East Derwent Highway must, if further accidents and loss of life are to be avoided, be made 80 kilometres per hour for its whole length. To only extend the whole travelling time by approximately 27 seconds is nothing, but the safety benefit will be huge. Since the tragic fatality of 2015 there is no right turn, but this has done nothing, had no bearing on the speed of approaching traffic or the situation for cars entering the traffic flow on the highway.

We have written to the Minister for Infrastructure, Jeremy Rockliff, on this matter and we eagerly await his reply.

Lewisham Foreshore Management Association

Housing Issues

[6.47 p.m.]

Ms WHITE (Lyons - Leader of the Opposition) - Madam Speaker, I rise to speak about a local issue in Lyons raised with me by the Lewisham Foreshore Management Association. My colleague for Lyons, Rene Hidding, is familiar with this one.

I met with these constituents recently. We discussed the commitment of \$100 000 made by the Liberal Government to assist with some work they were informed by the minister would begin in October last year. To date, nothing has begun and in the election campaign a further commitment of \$85 000 was promised. I have a number of questions the association has asked me to raise with the Government. They feel like their issue has been ignored. To demonstrate how concerning it is for the safety of those who live along the Lewisham foreshore I will share a post in their Facebook group made by a member of the community on Friday following the flood events and the storms that occurred -

Another 3 metres gone and a tree as well. This leaves less than a metre to the path where there is a sheer drop to the beach. Yesterday's 15 elderly walkers were lucky!! I hope no young children are venturing along the track. Still no signage warning pedestrians of the soft edges. Surely some of that \$100 000 promised at the last meeting could go to signage if nothing else. At least it might help prevent another disaster. So frustrating!!!!

Madam Speaker, I am asking the Government if they could expediate communication with the association and the Lewisham community about what that \$100 000 will be used for. At that community meeting with the member for Lyons, Rene Hidding, where we met with the community group the commitment was to improve the foreshore and spend that money, beginning last year. My understanding from talking to the group is that it has not occurred. They would like to understand what the money will be used for and when it will be spent, and what the \$85 000 promised during the election campaign will be used for. They welcome the commitment but they would like to see some action.

As we are seeing some rather significant weather events recently, they are nervous as there are a number of houses perilously close to the beach and the sheer cliff emerging as that bank is being eroded further and further.

Madam Speaker, I would like to talk about another issue. I had hoped the member for Braddon and Minister for Housing, Mr Jaensch, would return to the House and add to his earlier answers given in question time. I am disappointed the minister seems not to take the questions put to him seriously that were fairly straightforward. We asked a simple question about whether tenants had moved into properties in Warrane by 4 May, which was the date he gave this parliament. It was a simple question and unfortunately despite two opportunities the minister was not able to update the House as to whether any tenants were living in those properties and indeed what date they had occupied them.

It is unfortunate that the minister seems to be using the supply of new houses as a media opportunity rather than demonstrating that those properties have been made available for people to move into and are currently being lived in by people using those properties as homes.

We asked another straightforward question of the minister as to whether he could detail the number of public housing properties that are currently vacant or boarded up but he did not go anywhere near answering that question either. I do not think that was an impolite question to ask or a difficult question for the minister to answer. It certainly was not political and was phrased in a way that was seeking information. I had hoped the minister might come into the House and at least update the parliament with regard to that because he would no doubt have a briefing from his department telling him exactly how many properties were currently vacant. I am disappointed he has not taken the opportunity on the adjournment to update this parliament and the Tasmanian

community, because one issue that is raised very regularly with members on our side, and I am sure members on that side too, is the number of properties that are currently unoccupied and questions are legitimately being asked about why that is the case and when they will be tenanted.

It was a very simple question seeking information from the minister, Roger Jaensch, but unfortunately he was not able to answer, either because he chose not to or he does not know the answer, and either is unacceptable.

The other question we asked was around the assistance package announced by the Government, the \$500 000 that was committed to assist people access housing and whether the minister could detail how many people had been supported. Unfortunately the minister again could not provide an answer to that question. It bothers me that with an issue as important as this the minister is not being more forthcoming with information and details about exactly how the \$500 000 is being spent. That is a very reasonable question for people in the community to have answered and for us as an opposition to ask, especially as we are being contacted daily by people who are desperate for housing and assistance and want to know what access to services they are able to obtain and how they might be able to get support with the announcements the Government has made. They are simple questions seeking information from a minister who is either unable, unwilling or being obstructive in providing updates to the Tasmanian community.

It is not lost on us that every time this minister gets to his feet he seems to question the reason for our asking about these issues in the first place. I quote from his comments earlier today when he said, 'The Opposition is obsessed with trying to ping me on how many people were helped from a point in time with a certain amount of money.' Madam Speaker, he is a minister responsible for a portfolio where he has to be accountable to the parliament for the expenditure of taxpayer money. We are not trying to ping him. We are simply asking questions seeking information about how many people have been helped. It would do the minister well to stop being so defensive and come into this place with a little more humility and seek to provide information when it is asked of him that will benefit the public.

The House adjourned at 6.54 p.m.