

**Wednesday 25 September 2019**

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

### **RECOGNITION OF VISITORS**

**Madam SPEAKER** - Honourable members, I draw your attention to the presence in the gallery of guests from the Adult Education class, the Corridors of Power. Welcome to parliament.

**Members** - Hear, hear.

### **QUESTIONS**

#### **Community Safety - Prison Escapees**

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

[10.02 a.m.]

Tasmanians are rightly outraged that a dangerous and violent criminal with a history of escaping custody was placed in minimum security and was able to so easily jump the fence. It is only thanks to the work of Tasmania Police that Graham John Ennis is back in custody.

This is just the latest in your Government's series of failures to keep Tasmanians safe. Another offender remains at large in Burnie, after running out the door of the Burnie Police Station.

**Mrs Rylah** - Did you read this morning's *Advocate*? We have been there. Get your facts right.

**Madam SPEAKER** - Order, Mrs Rylah.

**Ms WHITE** - Prisoners have been released by mistake because you cut funding for the critical IT upgrades. Rather than an internal review, will you commit to a full and independent inquiry into the custodial system so that Tasmanians can be assured that they are safe in their homes and that these dangerous failures will not continue to happen?

### **ANSWER**

Madam Speaker, I thank the member for her question.

**Members** interjecting.

**Madam SPEAKER** - Order, please. Could we have some discipline?

**Mr HODGMAN** - It was under a Labor-Greens government that there was not only an audit into the operations of our Tasmania Police Service but an inquiry by the Integrity Commission no less into the management of Tasmania's Prison Service.

**Ms O'Connor** - Commissioned by the minister, an independent audit.

**Madam SPEAKER** - Order.

**Mr HODGMAN** - I acknowledge the excellent work undertaken by the TPS, our prison service and also Tasmania Police. I thank them and all those who work in a very difficult environment. We extend our thanks to them and our ongoing support for them in their place of work.

We also strongly regret the level of concern within our community and we understand it. It is not acceptable for prisoners to be escaping lawful custody. Will you apologise for the 28 who escaped our prisons when you were in government? We will accept responsibility. We extend our regret to the community impacted by it, but I have not heard a peep from Labor about what happened when they were in government. Their track record was absolutely appalling.

**Members** interjecting.

**Madam SPEAKER** - Ms O'Byrne and Ms O'Connor, I am allowing a bit of tolerance.

**Mr HODGMAN** - As I say, more needs to be done and is being done. Yesterday I referred to the infrastructure upgrades that were being done in our prison service - the building of new prison infrastructure as opposed to the selling of prisons under Labor. We have made investments into improved systems to ensure that management of our prison population is contemporary - with \$24.5 million we are investing to do just that. That did not happen when Labor was in government when the system was a shambles.

**Mr O'Byrne** interjecting.

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

**Mr HODGMAN** - We are investing not only in the infrastructure -

**Ms WHITE** - Point of order, Madam Speaker. It goes to standing order 45 on relevance. I asked the Premier whether he would commit to an independent investigation rather than an internal review. I ask if you would draw his attention to the question, please?

**Madam SPEAKER** - That is not a point of order, as you well know, but I have allowed it on *Hansard*. There you go.

**Mr HODGMAN** - I was going to inform the House of the additional resources we are putting into our prison service by way of additional correctional officers. We are investing more than happened under Labor and the Greens. We are seeing far fewer escapes now. I note an interjection from the member for Lyons who, frankly, should apologise and correct the record for dishonestly stating something in this place yesterday in question time, which was entirely untrue. It demonstrates that all Labor care about is scaring people.

**Ms White** - You should read the question.

**Mr O'Byrne** - Look up your answer. All of your answers.

**Ms White** - You misled the parliament yesterday.

**Mr HODGMAN** - That is all you are endeavouring to do. We are investing more.

**Madam SPEAKER** - Mr O'Byrne and Ms White, I am trying to give you leniency, but please do not pressure me.

**Mr HODGMAN** - We are investing more. Our community is safer. Obviously, this is an unacceptable breach and we acknowledge that. It needs to be investigated by the experts, those who manage and operate our prison system, and those authorities that have the expertise to understand the circumstances behind this, and to continue to ensure that our prison system is safe and secure. It needs to be done by experts not armchair critics like the Leader of the Opposition.

### **Community Safety - Prison Escapees**

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

[10.07 a.m.]

Despite a long history of violence and escapes, including shooting at police and threatening farmers at gunpoint while on the run, Graham John Enniss was in the minimum security Ron Barwick Prison. The Police Association, whose members worked tirelessly for more than 24 hours to return Enniss to custody, is rightfully asking questions about why he was in minimum security. Police Association President, Inspector Colin Riley, said:

I just question why he was in minimum security, noting he shot at police and has been reported to escape quite a bit. Given the information I have got, minimum security doesn't seem right.

I believe that is only reasonable and I believe that the public thinks that is reasonable. Tom Lynch from the Community Public Sector Union said that prisoners are having their classification downgraded as a result of prison overcrowding. Why was this dangerous and violent criminal in the minimum security Ron Barwick Prison?

#### **ANSWER**

Madam Speaker, I thank the member for the question. I repeat what I have said on the Government's appropriate position on this matter. These issues need to be properly investigated by experts, not armchair critics, to understand the circumstances around this matter.

There are legitimate questions to be asked. They have been asked by me, the Attorney-General and the Minister for Corrections. Answers will be provided. That is our expectation and that is what the community would have of us.

I can inform the member, who basically asks the same questions as she did yesterday, that this matter will be properly investigated. The individual concerned has been taken back into custody without incident and has been reclassified as a maximum security prisoner. The investigation is underway. The immediate review that we have demanded of prisoner classification systems is underway and it would not be appropriate to pre-empt that as the reckless Opposition would have us do.

Again I make the point that I do not recall Labor explaining themselves when 28 prisoners escaped from Risdon and when 35 walked out of Ashley. The shadow attorney-general, Ms Haddad, was working at this time for former Labor minister for corrections and attorney-

general, Judy Jackson. In this period the prison system was in crisis and had some of the worst escape rates in the country. During this time there was a multi-day siege at Risdon involving 20 prisoners.

**Ms WHITE** - Point of order, Madam Speaker. The question is, why this person was in the minimum-security prison? The Premier has not answered that question. That is the question Tasmanians are asking and the Government needs to answer it.

**Madam SPEAKER** - Unfortunately, it is not a point of order but the question has been heard and the Premier may answer.

**Mr HODGMAN** - The Opposition think they know it all. They think they understand it all but we will leave this to the experts and will be responsible and considered in our response. It should be allowed to occur. We should not have the unfounded scaremongering we see, or the dishonesty we heard from Opposition members yesterday. All that does is scare people and that delights this Opposition.

**Members** interjecting.

**Madam SPEAKER** - I am making a ruling. Mr O'Byrne has his second warning and the Leader of the Opposition has her first. I plead with you to refrain. Please proceed.

**Mr HODGMAN** - Thank you, Madam Speaker. The longest, saddest faces we saw when news came through that this prisoner had been apprehended were on members opposite. They were so disappointed.

**Mr O'BYRNE** - Point of order, I take offence at that. It is outrageous. To say that we would take joy in someone so dangerous being out in the community, a community that I represent, is offensive.

**Madam SPEAKER** - Your point has been taken. I ask the Premier to consider withdrawing that.

**Mr HODGMAN** - I certainly do, Madam Speaker, but your offensive scaremongering of the people you purport to represent in that community is also shameful and disgraceful given that there was a siege for several days with 20 prisoners involved, including taking hostage one of our prison's staff, under your government and that was not resolved speedily. There were 28 escapes from Risdon and 35 walkouts from Ashley. You are in no position to claim any expertise in this area.

### **Logging in High Conservation Value Forests**

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

[10.11 a.m.]

Yesterday, in your embarrassing response to our question on your no-show for the climate strike, you praised the Prime Minister for his climate leadership, despite him deciding not to attend the UN Climate Summit, and you suggested your Government is leading on climate. The reason Tasmania's emissions profile looks as good as it does is in significant part due to the work of the

conservation movement over decades because we got the loggers out of more than half a million hectares of high conservation value carbon-banking forests.

**Mr Ferguson** - Oh, okay.

**Madam SPEAKER** - Order.

**Ms O'CONNOR** - They are the facts. You are anti-science but they are the facts. We got the loggers out of more than half a million hectares of high conservation value carbon banking forests and the more evolved players in the industry have moved into plantations. Can you confirm that your Government plans to open more than 356 000 hectares of some of the most carbon-dense forests on the planet to loggers from 8 April next year? How will you explain that to the children in the time of climate emergency?

**ANSWER**

Madam Speaker, I thank the true leader of the opposition for the question. If they want to take credit for Tasmania being the climate change leader that we are, fine.

**Ms O'Connor** - It is the forests. We are not a climate change leader.

**Mr HODGMAN** - Well, we are.

**Ms O'Connor** - No. Emissions are going up everywhere.

**Mr HODGMAN** - We were the first jurisdiction in Australia to achieve zero-net emissions. We will be 100 per cent renewable by 2022. We are delivering on what is a nation-leading action plan, Climate Action 21, with a number of initiatives that will go to improving our emissions footprint, to reducing those emissions, and actions that are supporting Government's efforts and the non-government sector, business, industry and those in our community who we do understand are concerned about this issue and we hope are informed with the facts and not only the Greens version of things. It is not honestly reflecting how far Tasmania has come.

**Ms O'CONNOR** - Point of order, Madam Speaker, relevance. I wrote that question so that it specifically pointed to the issue of the plan to open up the high conservation value carbon-bank forests and draw the Premier's attention to the question. He is deflecting.

**Madam SPEAKER** - Whilst I have empathy for you, Ms O'Connor, it is not a point of order. I cannot force the Premier to say anything.

**Ms O'Connor** - He needs to answer the question about the forests.

**Mr HODGMAN** - Thank you, Madam Speaker, and I will but the Leader of the Greens opened her question with a statement about Tasmania's status when it comes to emissions reduction and climate change policy, and it is important the facts are on the record. I am sure that all those people, who I understand are concerned about this and choose to protest and to rally, want to be informed with the facts. They do not get them from the Greens. For them, this is their *raison d'être*, it is a campaign for them. We are about action and about delivering -

**Greens members** interjecting.

**Madam SPEAKER** - Order, Dr Woodruff. I am going to give both of you ladies a warning.

**Mr HODGMAN** - the lowest per capita emissions of all states and territories achieved by Tasmania. Emissions per person decreased between 1990 and 2007, a reduction of 96 per cent, and it occurred when our population was growing. Our state is one of the lowest net emitters of carbon dioxide on the planet. Renewable energy generated will be 100 per cent by 2022 and our Government's commitment is to invest in renewable energy, in climate research and science and a number of initiatives. I hope the member who asked the question will inform those who come to her to understand the facts will be equipped with these.

With respect to our working forests, we are committed to rebuilding an industry that was decimated by Labor and the Greens, with jobs lost and it negatively impacted on our economy. We have always said that our growth strategy for this important industry is based on resource security, financial sustainability, job security, a stronger role for the private sector and positive environmental outcomes, which are critical. The purpose of the Government's approach to Future Potential Production Forest land and the reason we introduced the *Forestry (Rebuilding the Forest Industry) Act in 2014* was to secure a wood bank to provide for future sustainable forestry production in Tasmania. The act sets out a process to exchange with or, after 8 April 2020, to convert Future Potential Production Forest land to Permanent Timber Production Zone land. To exchange that land requires the acceptance of both Houses of parliament. The act does not mandate that anything must happen on a particular date. There is no conspiracy in the legislation that passed this parliament. It does not mandate that anything must happen. No exchange of FPPF land has occurred or even been sought since the *Forestry (Rebuilding the Forest Industry) Act* -

**Ms O'CONNOR** - Point of order, Madam Speaker. I believe the Premier is seeking to mislead parliament. He is on the record as seeking access to those reserved forests. It has been reported in *The Australian*.

**Madam SPEAKER** - Order, that is not a point of order.

**Ms O'Connor** - He is misleading.

**Madam SPEAKER** - I know you are very passionate about it, Ms O'Connor, but I ask the Premier to proceed.

**Mr HODGMAN** - That is the advice I have. It has not occurred, as the member might suggest, and there has been provision for special timbers access since 2017, but I am not aware of any application to do so. The Government is continuing to engage with stakeholders in relation to this land and its role in the future of our forest industry. There has been no proposal to access this resource presented to Government of which I am aware. We note interest from an industry that is revitalised under this Government, but any process will be thoroughly assessed in line with the requirements that have been set down by legislation that passed through this parliament. With the exception of areas incorporated into the Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area, the FPPF land is not and has never been part of Tasmania's formal reserve system. The claim that all this land is of high conservation value comes from the Greens and their discredited Tasmanian Forest Agreement.

**Dr Woodruff** - No, it doesn't. It came from the forestry sector. You are the Bolsonaro of Tasmania. It is criminal.

**Mr FERGUSON** - Point of order, Madam Speaker. I suspect you may not have heard the appalling interjection from Dr Woodruff. I ask you to have her withdraw her claim with that word, criminal.

**Madam SPEAKER** - I did not hear it. If that is what you said, Dr Woodruff, could you kindly withdraw it unreservedly?

**Dr WOODRUFF** - Thank you, Madam Speaker. I did not say he is criminal. I said this is criminal. There is nothing wrong with that and I stand by those words because they are factual. It would be criminal to log those forests.

**Madam SPEAKER** - Okay, we will not labour it, thank you.

### **Defence Industry and Advanced Manufacturing Business - Government Support**

**Mrs PETRUSMA question to MINISTER for ADVANCED MANUFACTURING and DEFENCE INDUSTRIES, Mr HODGMAN**

[10.19 a.m.]

Can you please update the House on how the Hodgman majority Liberal Government is delivering on our long-term plan to keep our economy strong and to support Tasmania's defence industry and advanced manufacturing businesses? Are you aware of any other approaches?

#### **ANSWER**

Madam Speaker, I thank the member for the question. The second part of that question is very hard to answer. I welcome the question on the importance of the economy - a revelation for the Leader of the Opposition, but it is not news to us. It has always been at the heart of our plan. We now have a strongly performing economy - indeed, the strongest performing economy in the country. There are 13 500 more jobs for Tasmanians than when we came into government. The Opposition say they realise that the economy is now important but we have not seen much from the Leader of the Opposition since she told her party faithful that, nor indeed from the new shadow treasurer since that time.

For the benefit of the Opposition, the first thing you need to do is to have a plan. That would be a good start. In your case that means an alternative budget, but you failed that test. In our case though, our plan that we have taken to elections and delivered through successive budgets, is delivering and it includes increasing our effort and support for those areas in which we have a strong competitive advantage. That includes for our export sector, and it is this Government that has delivered Tasmania's first Trade Strategy and growth in our export sector has increased at the fastest rate in the country. It is also under this Government that we have delivered Tasmania's first Advanced Manufacturing Action Plan which we are now consulting on refreshings to help facilitate growth and to transition the sector to be more globally competitive, which is happening.

It is this Government, not the former government, that launched our first Defence Industry Strategy and appointed Tasmania's first Defence Advocate, Rear Admiral Steve Gilmore, to facilitate in the development of defence opportunities and grow the number of local businesses that are able to access significant defence supply contracts. This is happening as well, because there is an enormous opportunity for our state, our manufacturers and institutions, such as the University of

Tasmania, to take a strong share of our nation's efforts to modernise our land, sea and air defence capabilities.

Amongst other strategies, we have, under this plan, undertaken some important trade missions and supported trade expos and have assisted the defence and maritime industries to generate additional trade and investment. For instance, in May this year, the Government led a delegation of Tasmanian companies to the international maritime exposition Sea-Air-Space in the United States.

In a fortnight, there will be a Defence Tasmania stand at the globally significant Pacific International Maritime Exposition in Sydney. I am delighted to advise that this year we have the largest space at that expo and the largest industry participation we have organised for this event to date. I thank those businesses and organisations who have committed to the Team Tasmania effort at Pacific 2019. It is Australia's only major international commercial and naval exposition and it is important that Tasmania has a presence there as part of our strategy to support local businesses and present a very high-quality image and profile to increase visibility and awareness of what we can do.

There are eight leading Tasmanian defence and maritime companies who have confirmed their participation on the Defence Tasmania stand, with at least an additional five Tasmanian companies attending the expo. The Defence Tasmania stand will also be in partnership with the University of Tasmania's Defence Network, the Australian Maritime College and AMC Search and representatives from the Tasmanian Minerals Manufacturing and Energy Council. They will also attend Pacific 2019 for its duration.

Under our strategy and through the efforts of our Defence Advocate, we have facilitated industry and defence contracts, assisted businesses to navigate the complex defence sector and helped government and industry to identify medium and longer-term opportunities for our industry. Already, Tasmanian companies are seeing substantial success in supplying both Australian and international defence forces. Our leading Tasmanian companies are innovators and manufacturers of very highly regarded, world-class goods and services. Pacific 2019 will further cement our reputation within the defence and maritime sector.

After five and a half years, while the Opposition Leader has suddenly apparently realised the economy is important, they still have no plan other than to undermine confidence and stability in our state. We will do whatever we can, and Tasmanians and businesses can trust this Government to deliver because it is under this Government that Tasmanian businesses are the most confident in the country and they are operating in the best performing economy in the country.

### **Community Safety - Budget Cuts**

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

[10.24 a.m.]

Yesterday you refused to answer repeated questions about whether the prison service would be cut as part of your \$450 million razor gang. This morning on radio Attorney-General Elise Archer again refused to rule out cuts to the prison budget. In light of your Government's recent failures to keep communities safe, any cuts to the prison service would be reckless in the extreme. Will you

finally rule out cuts to the prison budget or come clean and tell us how much has been cut? Risdon Prison is a pressure cooker ready to blow. Have you lit the fuse by imposing further budget cuts?

## **ANSWER**

Madam Speaker, I wonder what the member who asked the question was thinking when working for a Labor corrections minister who was presiding over a siege in our prison where 20 prisoners took a correctional officer hostage and it lasted for some three days. This was also when prisoners were walking out of Hayes. I think eight went through that period that I refer to and 28 walked out or escaped from our prison service during the term of that government. It is more lazy politics from the Labor Party on this issue and more scaring of our community.

I refer to my previous answer and note the very sensible observation from the Attorney-General in that interview this morning that we are hardly cutting when we are building more prison infrastructure - not selling it like you did - and we are employing more correctional officers. As I said yesterday, we have started a major recruitment campaign. How could recruiting up to 90 new correctional officers over the next 12 months be described as cutting the budget? It is farcical.

**Ms HADDAD** - Point of order, Madam Speaker, under standing order 45. That is all very interesting, but the Premier could be really clear and simply rule out whether there will be budget cuts.

**Madam SPEAKER** - As you understand, it is not a point of order. Please proceed, Premier.

**Mr HODGMAN** - It is not more than just very interesting -

**Members** interjecting.

**Madam SPEAKER** - Order. This is getting very unruly. No chatting across the Chamber.

**Mr HODGMAN** - I note the observations from the lazy Labor Opposition - political playtime once again. They say it is all very interesting that we are just employing another 90 correctional officers and investing \$350 million on existing infrastructure.

**Ms Butler** - So you're not cutting prisons?

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

**Mr HODGMAN** - We have appointed a custodial inspector as a result of the broken system that we inherited under Labor and have increased and improved the systems and technology there.

We will be an efficient government, we make no apologies for that, and we should be. We will not do what Labor was going to do and that is cut to the bone. Labor Leader Rebecca White told us that is what they were doing, nearly cutting to the bone. We will not do that. We will ensure that our Budget remains in strong shape so we are able to afford the 90 additional correctional officers that will be coming into our system, the \$350 million investment into infrastructure, as well as doing all of the other things that this Government is now doing because our Budget is strong and because our economy is the best performing in the country.

## Traffic Congestion

### Ms OGILVIE question to TREASURER, Mr GUTWEIN

[10.28 a.m.]

The dual scourges of unemployment and traffic congestion are hitting working families hard. Each electorate has unemployment challenges, with areas in Bass at 12.6 per cent, Braddon 12.3 per cent, areas in Lyons over 20 per cent, Franklin 16.3 per cent, and in my own electorate of Clark, areas at 13.4 per cent. Working families are fed up with the traffic congestion, and a prime local example is when the Southern Outlet-Davey Street link becomes a frustrating parking lot and people cannot get to work. It is time to open the sluice gates on public works and major projects to tackle jobs and traffic in one hit. What is the hold-up?

### ANSWER

Madam Speaker, I thank the member for Clark, Ms Ogilvie, for her question and her interest in this matter that broadly impacts on the economy - on the one hand, jobs and on the other, investment in infrastructure. Let me be clear for the House that it is this Government that has brought down a \$3.6 billion infrastructure program, the single largest infrastructure program in this state's history; \$3.6 billion of which \$2.8 billion is in the general government sector. I am pleased to inform the member that around \$1.6 billion of that goes directly into roads. It will build bridges and roads, and it will improve congestion. Importantly, it will create jobs. We made the point when I brought down the Budget that the national economy is slowing.

**Dr Broad** interjecting.

**Madam SPEAKER** - Order, Dr Broad. That is warning number one.

**Mr GUTWEIN** -Even the Labor Party should be able to understand that. We recognised that in this Budget. We recognised that we had the fastest-growing economy in the country; an economy that was attracting investment, creating jobs and providing opportunity for Tasmanians. Importantly, we understand that the national economy will have an impact on Tasmania. What we chose to do in this Budget was, rather than pulling back, we stepped up a gear and to invest even more in infrastructure. The Budget forecast indicates that there will be an expected 10 000 new jobs generated as a result of the infrastructure spend that we are rolling out.

There is a matter before the House and I should not comment on a bill that is before this place, but we are seeking to remove red tape and impediments to ensure that we can get more projects to market more quickly. This House today will have an opportunity to consider the bill again that we were debating in the last sitting of the parliament, which seeks to ensure that we can get projects to market more quickly.

I hope that the member for Clark might find her way to consider favourably what we are looking to do. It is not one single lever that you pull. What you need to do is to remove red tape at whatever level you possibly can to ensure that what you can do is get the infrastructure spend out to the market. Importantly, by getting that infrastructure out to the market we will create jobs. We will create jobs in those areas that you have spoken about - the north of the state and here in the south.

**Ms O'Connor** interjecting.

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

**Mr GUTWEIN** - Ms O'Connor constantly interjects. I make the point that was made very well by the Deputy Premier when he was the infrastructure minister. No wonder she mumbles because the Greens hate roads. What we want to do is build the infrastructure for tomorrow. The Budget frames that and, importantly, it will deliver jobs. What we should be doing in this place is removing whatever red tape we possibly can to ensure that we can get the money out the door more quickly.

### **Logging in High Conservation Value Forests**

**Ms O'CONNOR question to MINISTER for RESOURCES, Mr BARNETT**

[10.33 a.m.]

We just heard the Premier deny that the logging industry is after the TFA second tranche reserves, but it is clear that the Forest Industries Association, whose members were paid tens of millions of dollars to get out of logging high-conservation-value carbon-banking forests, are now lining up to get back in to them. An industry delegation was seen heading to your office yesterday.

National media reports suggest the focus of the industry's pitch to you to reopen reserve-value forests that were independently assessed, and which would undoubtedly restart forest conflict, is 64 000 hectares that they have already identified they want to get into.

What is the nature of your discussions with the Forest Industries Association? Where are those 64 000 hectares of carbon sink forests they want to clear fell and burn in a time of climate emergency?

**ANSWER**

Madam Speaker, I thank the member for Clark and Leader of the Greens. It is wonderful to be able to talk about forestry and the clear response of the Hodgman Liberal Government to rebuild the forest industry since the Labor-Greens government, when you were there with the Labor colleagues, walking hand-in-hand, killing off the forest industry. What happened? Two out of three jobs were lost while Labor and the Greens were in government. The industry was decimated; taken to its knees. Four thousand jobs across Tasmania in rural and regional areas were lost.

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

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

**Mr BARNETT** - That is a great shame. Guess what? The people of Tasmania sent a message. They said, 'We want to rebuild the industry. We want to back the Hodgman Government'. That is what they did in spades in 2014 and then in the next election. We have a mandate to build the forest industry. Why do you think it is a surprise that the timber community and representatives of the timber industry want to speak to the minister for Resources and members of the Hodgman Liberal Government? They want to rebuild and continue to rebuild the forest industry. We have runs on the board. This question is coming from the Leader for the Greens whose policy is to put out of work more than 1000 Tasmanians. They want to halt and close native forest harvesting in Tasmania. That is the Greens policy. The question is, what does Labor think about that policy?

Let us make it very clear. We have plans to continue sustainable growth of our forests.

**Ms O'CONNOR** - Point of order, Madam Speaker, standing order 45. The minister has pressed that auto-loop speech he gives, but we want to know about your discussions with the Forest Industry Association and where those 64 000 hectares are. Please answer the question.

**Madam SPEAKER** - I am going to make a point on these standing order 45 points of order. I am going to extend the minister's time by a minute for that interjection. That is not a point of order. Thank you.

**Ms O'Connor** - Perhaps you could direct him to answer the question.

**Madam SPEAKER** - He is already up to 3.3 minutes. Minister, you have a short time.

**Mr BARNETT** - Thank you, Madam Speaker. I appreciate your observations and ruling in that regard. That was an unnecessary interjection by the Greens member.

**Ms O'Connor** - You have not answered the question. He has not gone near it.

**Mr BARNETT** - The Premier has answered it thoroughly already in this place.

**Ms O'Connor** - No, he has not.

**Madam SPEAKER** - Order, Ms O'Connor, please. I am trying to hold off giving you another warning.

**Mr BARNETT** - The future potential production forest is a wood bank.

**Ms O'Connor** - It is not.

**Mr BARNETT** - It is a sustainable growth.

**Ms O'Connor** - It is a carbon bank.

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

**Mr BARNETT** - Productive forest and it is a wood bank. It is not how the Greens describe it. We have interests; of course there is interest. We continue to engage with the stakeholders in this place. So far there have been no proposals to access this resource presented to Government. However, we note the interest of industry and we welcome it.

**Dr Woodruff** - Have you met with Wilderness Society?

**Mr BARNETT** - We welcome the interest of industry because they create jobs. They are a sustainable industry. Wood is sustainable; it is renewable.

**Dr Woodruff** - They take money from taxpayers.

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

**Mr BARNETT** - It is the ultimate renewable and we love it. Wood is good. The sooner the Greens know about it, the better.

The question is, what about Labor? What about the Labor Opposition? What is their position with respect to this wood bank? They have been deathly silent. I want to know their position from my shadow minister. Do you support the view of this Government that, one, wood is good; two, it is sustainable, and three, this future production forest FPPF land is sustainable, is renewable and is a wood bank. You signed the agreement with the Greens to lock it up. The Tasmanian people sent a message, 'Rip it up, no more lock-ups'. The Tasmanian public can be very clear; no more lock-ups on our side. The question is: what is the position of the Labor Opposition? Do they support the fact that wood is good and this is a wood bank, yes or no?

### **Budget Cuts - Frontline Services**

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

[10.39 a.m.]

In recent months you have repeatedly refused to detail the savage impact of your \$450 million cuts to frontline services. These RTI documents reveal the secretary of Treasury wrote to all department heads on 25 June advising them of the amount they needed to slash from their budgets. Department secretaries were given until 8 July to complete comprehensive details about where the cuts would be made; that is just seven days.

It is now beyond doubt that you have known the full detail of these cuts for months. However, that detail is still being hidden behind a sea of black ink. How long do you think you can keep Tasmanians in the dark about the impact of your savage cuts on jobs and services?

### **ANSWER**

Madam Speaker, I thank the former shadow treasurer for the question and repeat what we have consistently said in this place about not only what we will do but when we will report to our community, to parliament and to those hardworking state servants within our Government, who the Opposition will delight in scaring and whipping up concerns around. We have said we will deliver an efficiency dividend across all agencies around 0.5 per cent, a lot less than has happened in other jurisdictions and certainly nowhere near close to the cutting to the bone that was happening under Labor and the Greens.

I know the importance of our economy is something new to you and budget management is not something you can do, but for any government to deal with national headwinds in our economy or natural disasters, increased demands on services in our hospitals, our schools and the need to build more infrastructure that our growing state needs, this all costs money. We need to be an efficient government and we believe that raising around 0.5 per cent is eminently doable by any good government. These savings will be finalised over the coming weeks and days, as we have committed to do. It seems to have escaped the attention -

**Opposition members** interjecting.

**Mr HODGMAN** - I can hear the member for Braddon mumbling over there but I am not entirely sure what he is saying today.

**Dr Broad** - Would you like me to be a bit louder then?

**Mr HODGMAN** - I heard what he said yesterday though - a very weird and creepy thing he said yesterday. I hope he is not doing it again today.

**Dr Broad** - Weird and creepy? What are you talking about?

**Mr HODGMAN** - You know what you said.

**Members** interjecting.

**Madam SPEAKER** - Order. Honest to goodness, this is just chaotic. There is mumbling from both sides of the House. I ask you to desist and we will have a bit of mindful debate.

**Mr HODGMAN** - It was. If you do not think talking about the Attorney-General putting on a show over in the prison is a weird thing to say, then that shows -

**Dr BROAD** - Madam Speaker, point of order. That is offensive.

**Madam SPEAKER** - Dr Broad, which standing order?

**Dr BROAD** - Standing order 45, on relevance. We have asked about savage cuts to services and jobs and he will not answer. If the Attorney-General has an issue with what I have said, maybe she should check the corrected *Hansard* - 'c', not 's'.

**Madam SPEAKER** - Order. As you know, that is not a point of order. Dr Broad, I expect better behaviour than that.

**Ms ARCHER** - On the point of order, I can indicate to the House that at the end of question time, on indulgence I will be seeking an apology from Dr Broad and I will set out the reason why.

**Madam SPEAKER** - Thank you, I will give the opportunity at the end of question time. Dr Broad, that is not a point of order, as you well know. I am extending the Premier's talking time by one minute.

**Mr HODGMAN** - Thank you, Madam Speaker. I am not sorry if the member is offended by what he said yesterday, but we will come to that matter.

As we have said repeatedly, we are working through a process that was identified by the Government, by the Treasurer, in the budget speech. Treasury has written to all agencies in relation to savings requirements and agencies have been working with their ministers - surprise, surprise - to identify specific savings measures, with a focus on things like vacancy control, natural attrition, and the reduction of discretionary spending in areas such as advertising and promotion, travel and transport and consultants. We believe we can adequately make savings in these sorts of things and not cut the front line, and certainly not cut to the bone, as Labor did when they were in government. The savings will be finalised shortly. It is a process that takes time. It needs to be responsibly and sensibly worked through by government and, as we announced in the budget period, we will report progress at the end of the first quarter outlining the savings that agencies will be required to deliver with further progress reports to be provided in the midyear update.

## **Working Together for Three-Year-Olds Program**

**Mrs RYLAH question to MINISTER for EDUCATION and TRAINING, Mr ROCKLIFF**

[10.45 a.m.]

Can you update the House how the Hodgman Liberal Government is delivering on our long-term plan to invest even more in education to support young children and their families, and does he know of any alternative approach?

### **ANSWER**

Madam Speaker, I thank the member for her question and her interest in this matter. Tasmanians can rely on the Hodgman Liberal Government to deliver what we say we will. We are committed to providing access to free preschool for our vulnerable three-year-olds as part of our election policy of taking education to the next level. We know that investing in the early years to ensure young children have access to high-quality early learning experiences benefits all young children and improves education and life outcomes. Getting it right in the early years means getting it right for life.

Earlier this year we launched the pilot program Working Together for Three-Year-Olds, a program that provides 400 hours of free early learning for vulnerable three-year-olds. This nation-leading initiative, led by the Department of Education, was co-designed with families, early childhood and education and care providers, and relevant wraparound services.

The key purpose of the Working Together for Three-Year-Olds program is to provide free access to quality early learning for young children who would not normally have the opportunity to engage in early learning programs. This program was specifically designed to support families to overcome a range of complex barriers that prevent young children from engaging in quality early learning.

The pilot program, which took place from February to July 2019 across 11 sites, involved 51 young children and their families. It has recently been hailed as a great success through an independent evaluation process. The overall results of the pilot program confirm that the Working Together for Three-Year-Olds program is considered to have achieved a strong effectiveness rating. It is a program that is addressing barriers to participation and creating opportunities for children to learn, make friends and build confidence to set them up for a great start in life. It also fosters supportive connections to help parents and carers.

I was heartened to hear how well received the additional support for families and young children has been, with one carer participant claiming:

I didn't have much hope for my child before. I thought he would be put straight into the too-hard basket, but after this and all the help, I've got so much more hope for him and have never been so excited for his future.'

Further recommendations from a parent participant, who says:

It excites me to see what people are willing to do what they need to do to help my child. It makes me know that they do care.

Further, Madam Speaker, from a service provider:

This pilot has strengthened the capacity of our staff to network with other service partners and also services in our community that can help support families. The confidence of the children in the Working Together program is growing every day, which makes it really rewarding.

Recommendations from the pilot include keeping families at the heart of the process, continually reflecting on learnings in order to refine, as well as avoiding trying to do too much too fast. These recommendations will be reflected in the 2020 statewide rollout of Working Together, which will see the program expand to 120 placements in 2020 and a further 120 in 2021. Every two years, more places will be opened up in a targeted way, with updated data sourced in 2021 to guide the selection of further locations.

An expressions of interest process opens up in October for early childhood education and care services in targeted locations to apply to deliver the program in future years. Later today I will be naming the identified locations for 2020.

Madam Speaker, I thank all involved in the development and rollout of the Working Together program. It has been a lot of work from the service providers, the early childhood care education sector, all those involved in the wraparound services, the school communities as well, and the Department of Education. There is no greater investment than in education, but also very clear targeted investment in our early years.

### **Budget Cuts - Frontline Services**

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

[10.50 a.m.]

These heavily redacted RTI documents reveal the department secretaries were given just seven working days to detail how they would slash their agency budgets. The former secretary of the Department of Communities, Ginna Webster, pleaded for more time, to no avail. She wrote to the head of Treasury -

As a new Agency (with critical frontline service delivery operations) the savings ask is significant. I do need the time to carefully consider the definition of frontline services and test this with the Ministers.

If your own department cannot define what a frontline service is, how can you possibly claim to be protecting the frontline jobs and services from cuts?

#### **ANSWER**

Madam Speaker, as I have said in response to this question and in my previous answer, since May of this year we have been working through a process with our agencies, which does take time and must be done systematically and in a sensible way to ensure we can make savings that do not impact on the front line. This Government has employed more nurses, teachers, correctional officers and people working in our community to deliver frontline services. It was under the former government that cuts were made. Our commitment is not to do that.

We engage openly and honestly with our agencies about ways in which the savings can be made. We will report on that in due course and will make a modest 0.5 per cent efficiency saving across government. It is a lot less than other governments across the country and it is a lot less than what Labor cut when they were cutting so hard, to the bone, as we heard from the lips of the Opposition Leader, then a member of Labor's razor gang. I refer members to their track record because ours is one of investing more into essential services and not making the cuts that Labor and the Greens did.

**Ms WHITE** - Point of order, Madam Speaker. It goes to standing order 45. The Premier has not clearly given a definition of what a frontline service is. Given his own department secretaries do not know, it is important that he gives that information to the House.

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

**Mr HODGMAN** - For the umpteenth time, I have said we will report as to the savings measures that will be implemented in due course. The know-all Opposition members and those who want to speculate and hope for the worst will have to wait. It will not be happening under this Government but it did under theirs.

There is a reason why the Leader of the Opposition was only a very temporary shadow treasurer because she has acknowledged that she does not understand that the economy is important, or has only now realised it is so. Second, her track record is one of cutting to the bone. Third, I am surprised and disappointed that her deputy is not here to hear this because I would not normally quote Michelle O'Byrne. Perhaps it is she who should be the shadow treasurer because, back in 2011, when Labor had their own razor gang, which cost Tasmanian taxpayers \$800 000 to look to cuts, Michelle O'Byrne said this -

'Is the opposition suggesting the government make savings without systematically considering how to do so?'

...

Each 'working group' has been given a target to shave 5 per cent off their budget, but Ms O'Byrne said this was only a guide.

Well, 0.5 per cent, as opposed to the 5 per cent Michelle O'Byrne and the Labor-Greens government were delivering, is quite a contrast. We will not take lectures or lessons from an Opposition that does not understand the importance of the economy or budget management and when their track record was all of one cutting our services.

### **Transition to Practice Nursing Program**

**Mr TUCKER question to MINISTER for HEALTH, Ms COURTNEY**

[10.54 a.m.]

Can you update the House as to how the Hodgman majority Liberal Government is delivering a long-term plan to recruit more graduate nurses? Is the minister aware of any other approaches or alternative plans?

**ANSWER**

Madam Speaker, I thank the member for the question. The Hodgman Liberal Government is committed to delivering a better health system for Tasmanians. One of the Government's number

one priorities upon being elected in 2014 was to provide more opportunities for nurses and midwives right across the state and that is exactly what we are doing.

The Transition to Practice Nursing Program is a key part of this Government's plan for Health, providing graduate nurses with the chance to kick off their careers in high-quality, supported environments. Open to graduate nurses with less than six months' full-time experience, the program enables graduates to gain a real insight into clinical practice and further their professional development. Rural and regional communities benefit from this. With places like Flinders Island, George Town and Deloraine included, many of our graduate nurses have the chance to experience a range of hospital settings early in their careers.

Earlier this month, the Tasmanian Health Service opened applications for the program and had information sessions in all three regions, offering the opportunity for graduates to ask questions and seek advice about the 2020 program. Applications opened last week and I am looking forward to welcoming the next intake of nurses who will commence in January, April and July next year. This is part of our plan to deliver 180 additional graduate nurse positions over six years, an ambitious policy that is providing and nurturing the health of our workforce into the future. We have already delivered significant amounts of recruitment and there is always more to do. Under the former minister and continuing with me, we have now delivered 1000 more staff into our health system under the Hodgman Majority Liberal Government. This includes 550 more nurses delivering the care that Tasmanians need, delivering new services and providing our communities with support.

This Government has a plan. We have policies and we are delivering on them. The member asked about what the alternatives are. We saw, particularly when Ms O'Byrne was the health minister, a nurse a day was sacked and wards were closed. Michelle O'Byrne took an axe to the nurse graduate program we speak about today, confirming in 2011 that Labor and the Greens would offer less than 100 places, 62 fewer than the previous year and a 38 per cent cut under Labor. In 2020, the intake is set to be more than double this appalling failure by Labor.

We manage our budgets well so that we can reinvest in important frontline services such as health. We have seen this side of the House deliver. We are delivering on the Royal redevelopment. We are delivering on 44 new beds and 4K. We have delivered on a better deal with the Private. We are delivering more services in Launceston and delivering a better 4K for children. We are delivering access solutions to deal with the challenges that we are seeing in our emergency departments, unlike the other side which has nothing to offer when it comes to Health, that has no policies, no plan and no alternative budget. Tasmanians know that Labor stand for another deal with the Greens, a weaker economy, higher taxes and less investment in essential services.

### **Budget Cuts - Frontline Services**

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

[10.58 a.m.]

Your own department heads cannot define what a frontline service is. In recent weeks, we have heard your Government is cutting elective surgery by 15 per cent, cutting the shifts of casual and part-time nurses, cutting teachers from the Tasmanian eSchool, and you have not ruled out cuts to ambulance or prison services. If these things are not frontline, for the benefit of the parliament and your own departments, can you provide a definition of what you believe is a frontline service?

## **ANSWER**

Madam Speaker, I thank the Leader for the question and refer her to the cuts she and her colleagues made when in government, cutting police, in your case, Mr O'Byrne, cutting nurses in your sister, Ms O'Byrne's case, cutting across the board in a way that the now Leader of the Opposition said was taking it right to the bone.

We are proposing 0.5 per cent of 1 per cent, as opposed to up to 5 per cent or over as the then member of the razor gang, Ms O'Byrne, said. It is not something we will do and we do not believe that travel consultancies' advertising is front line and we will not do anything that compromises essential state services. This Government has worked so hard to put our budget back into surplus, to make our economy strong so that we can invest more, to build, to grow confidence within our business community - the most confident in the country - to invest more and to employ more Tasmanians in the process. That is what we are doing; that is what we are delivering as a government. We will look always to ways that we can be an efficient government because that is what good governments do. Even Michelle O'Byrne said that we need to work through these things.

**Ms WHITE** - Point of order, Madam Speaker. The question was very clearly about the definition of frontline services. I ask the Premier to draw his attention to that and provide a definition, please.

**Madam SPEAKER** - As we know, that is not a point of order. I urge the House to do something about standing order 45.

**Mr HODGMAN** - Thank you, Madam Speaker. For the Leader of the Opposition's sake, we will not be cutting nurses, teachers, police officers; the things that the Leader of the Opposition did when they were in government.

## **Departmental Heads**

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

[11.01 a.m.]

It was not just the Secretary of Communities who expressed concern about the severity and the haste of your Government's cuts. The former secretary of Health, Michael Pervan, also said his department would struggle to produce something robust in the time frame provided, which was just seven days. Just a few weeks later both Ms Webster and Mr Pervan were unexpectedly and unceremoniously moved aside from their roles. Is the message you are sending to the public servants is if they dare speak against your Government's slash-and-burn agenda that they will lose their jobs?

## **ANSWER**

Madam Speaker, I thank the member for the question. I can only say what absolute rubbish; absolute nonsense from lazy Labor. All I have had today are a rerun of questions asked yesterday. A deliberate refusal by the Leader of the Opposition to listen to what we say and to understand what we say by way of an appropriate process that was commenced in May. Of course, we will work very closely with all agency heads. We expect frank and fearless responses from them as to how they undertake their duties and obligations.

As a Government we will accept responsibility for being efficient and effective in what we do, in contrast to what Labor and the Greens have done. We have also said that we will accept responsibility for these savings that we make as a government and be accountable for them. We will report transparently when the process has concluded.

### **Parks and Wildlife Service - Bushfire Readiness**

**Mrs RYLAH question to MINISTER for ENVIRONMENT, PARKS AND HERITAGE, Mr GUTWEIN**

[11.02 a.m.]

Can you please update the House on the work that the Parks and Wildlife Service have undertaken to prepare for the coming bushfire season?

### **ANSWER**

Madam Speaker, I thank Mrs Rylah, member for Braddon, for the question and her interest in what is a very important matter.

Every Tasmanian knows how devastating wildfire can be. The Government is committed to keeping Tasmanians and their families as safe as possible. That is why we have made a record \$55 million investment in our Targeted Fuel Reduction Program. This program has resulted in the statewide relative fire risk being the lowest it has been in 15 years. It is on track to deliver its target for an 80 per cent relative risk rating by 2022-23. In addition to this record investment following the 2016 report the Hodgman Liberal Government committed a further \$4 million to improve bushfire management in the TWHA, including \$500 000 per year for a fuel-reduction burning program. In the first year of this program six burns were completed and last spring eight burns were conducted covering an area of nearly 10 000 hectares. It was evident during the 2018-19 bushfire event that these planned burns slowed the fire and, in many places, stopped it from spreading.

Across the three key firefighting agencies this spring we have 72 planned burns over approximately 1300 hectares scheduled and underway. These burns are prioritised to protect life and property as well as natural values and to deliver strategic fuel reduction to further reduce the severity of any fires or spread of fires during this coming fire season.

In another measure to ensure community safety and to prevent bushfires from starting, from this Saturday the Parks and Wildlife Service will be implementing seasonal camp fire restrictions in designated areas on the east coast as well as in the north east. The east coast of Tasmania has experienced protracted dry spells, leading to drought in some areas with above average day and night temperatures and a low likelihood of significant rain in the seasonal outlook. In the current dry conditions, camp fires can easily escape, spread rapidly and threaten people in campgrounds and nearby communities.

Eliminating abandoned, escaped or poorly constructed camp fires is an integral part of the Parks and Wildlife Service's Community and Visitor Safety Strategy. Last year, the introduction of camp fire restrictions achieved a 50 per cent reduction in escaped fires. In the current dry conditions, we want to ensure that we manage and reduce the risk to life, property and the environment. From this Saturday, the restrictions will be in force.

The restrictions include camp fires, pot fires and other solid fuel stoves. Gas and electric stoves and barbecues will still be permitted, but only in the restricted areas. I encourage Tasmanians to look for the notices, which are in their local papers today and will be in the papers again on Saturday or go to the Parks website for more information.

In addition to our record investment in our Targeted Fuel Reduction Program, the Parks and Wildlife Service has funded the significantly increased dedicated firefighter positions every spring in advance of the summer season.

In February of this year, the Parks and Wildlife Service alone had over 130 fire-trained staff. I am advised that just yesterday, following a significant recruitment exercise, the Parks and Wildlife Service has contracted an additional 19 firefighters for the upcoming bushfire season to complement the core of permanent firefighters within the Parks and Wildlife Service. With approximately 80 staff trained to fight fires in remote areas, the Parks and Wildlife Service continues to support the Tasmanian Fire Service to deliver remote area capability across the state.

We recognise that Tasmania is drier in spots. We recognise that we need to ensure that Tasmania and Tasmanians are ready for the coming fire season. The reason we are able to put on fire staff is because we have the Budget under control. We understand that a strong budget is important. We understand that you need to be running as an efficient ship as possible.

We have no idea what that side of the House stands for. No idea at all. They have not outlined an alternative budget, they have not outlined their policies and they certainly have not outlined how they would pay for things.

I recommend that Tasmanians take the opportunity to look at their local papers, understand where the fire restrictions on camp fires will come in from this weekend and that Tasmanians take care in the lead up to the summer season. Our dedicated fire service personnel across the three major agencies are well trained and they will do their very, very best. We need to ensure that fires do not get away from us and that Tasmanians take every care that they possibly can.

**Time expired.**

## **MATTER OF INDULGENCE**

### **Comments made by Dr Broad**

[11.08 a.m.]

**Ms ARCHER** (Clark - Minister for Justice) - Madam Speaker, yesterday during the MPI, Dr Broad made some comments that were quite disturbing to say the least. He appears to have now tried to concoct a defence by saying it was somehow a play on words. I was in the Chamber when he said:

We have a minister who if she put on a show in the prison no doubt it would be a sell-out.

I am the Attorney-General. On reflection, I probably should have sought a withdrawal at that stage. I am not prepared to stand by and allow a comment like that to be made in this House. I think that every woman in this House would probably react in the same way, on reflection, seeing

that. I heard it. I do not think it was a play on words. I hope at the very least that Dr Broad accepts that it was a poor choice of words and he does the right thing and apologises.

**Ms O'Connor** - The question is whether he dishonestly altered the *Hansard* record. Just checking, just answer it.

[11.09 a.m.]

**Dr BROAD** (Braddon) - No. Madam Speaker, I understand that the minister may have taken offence. On 21 September, the minister put out a press statement with the headline, 'True Crime Series to be Filmed in Tasmania.' I was referring a play on words, a pun, 's-e-l-l-out' being 'c-e-l-l out'. For those who do not understand puns, that is a reference to opening a cell door and letting prisoners out. That was the play on words I was referring to, and I would also advise the minister that if you google 'jail puns' you will get near the top of the list that pun, 'cell out'.

**Government members** interjecting.

**Madam SPEAKER** - Order. We are getting an apology.

**Dr BROAD** - Last night I sought a correction from *Hansard* to replace the 's' with a 'c'. I can provide the minister with my notes if she would like to clarify that indeed it is a play on words and was not meant to be offensive. If that pun has also escaped the minister then I will apologise.

**Madam SPEAKER** - That did not sound like an unreserved apology.

**Ms ARCHER** (Clark - Minister for Justice) - Madam Speaker, in light of that I hoped that Dr Broad would at least accept that it was a poor choice of words. I do not think a pun like that excuses a poor choice of words. I reserve my right to take further action.

## **TABLED PAPER**

### **Public Works Committee - Southern Remand Centre Program**

**Mrs Rylah** presented a report of the Public Works Committee on the Southern Remand Centre Program.

## **BURIAL AND CREMATION BILL 2019 (No. 42)**

### **First Reading**

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

### **MOTION**

#### **Extension of Reporting Date - Select Committee on Housing Affordability**

[11.13 a.m.]

**Ms STANDEN** (Franklin - Motion) (by leave) - Madam Speaker, I move that -

The reporting date for the Select Committee on Housing Affordability be extended until 28 November next.

**Motion agreed to.**

## **MATTER OF PUBLIC IMPORTANCE**

### **Budget Cuts**

[11.14 a.m.]

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

That the House take note of the following matter: budget cuts.

I have brought this on for debate given the seriousness of the impact the \$450 million in cuts will have to services and jobs in the Tasmanian public sector and what that means for the Tasmanian community. We put in a right to information request to seek some information from the Government about the extent of the cuts to be felt across agencies and what exchanges had taken place, and that was very enlightening. What that demonstrated is that on 25 June the department secretary for Treasury wrote to every agency and outlined across the forward Estimates the savings they have to achieve. It demonstrates very clearly that no agency is immune, despite clear pressures being felt in Health, in child safety and in our prison system. It demonstrates that further cuts would be reckless, yet what this RTI document shows is blacked-out areas which detail the dollar figures for each financial year and the savings target to be achieved.

This is alarming. The Government has known since 25 June and yet repeatedly when we have asked questions, whether in the Estimates process, here in this place or through the media about the savings target applied for each agency, the Government has not come clean. We know the Premier is the head of the razor gang; it is the Hodgman razor gang, after all, making these cuts. They have known for months the impact these cuts will have across agencies. We also know that the department secretaries pushed back because they were only given seven days to provide comprehensive reports about how they would achieve these cuts, so they asked for more time.

Some of the correspondence between secretaries and the department of Treasury is alarming. If we look at the response from Ginna Webster, who was the then secretary of Communities, to the Treasury secretary, the request at that time was for more time to be provided:

The 8 July timeframe gives us 7 business days to do this and comes at a time when the Agency is balancing end of financial year activities and also when some key senior executives are on leave, along with one of our key Ministers.

Yet there was no extension of time granted. They had to give, within seven days, details of where those cuts would be made, despite not even knowing what the definition of a frontline service was. The same secretary wrote and said -

As a new Agency (with critical frontline services delivery operations) -

I remind the House that this includes Child Protection, Housing and Disability Services -

the savings ask is significant. I do need the time to carefully consider the definition of frontline services and test this with the Ministers.

That was never provided. The time of seven days was firm, there was no extension granted, and this RTI document also reveals that some of those savings tasks were never consulted with the ministers before they were submitted to Treasury, the key one being Health. The Minister for Health and the department secretary at that time, Mr Pervan, did not even talk about the savings tasks that were being submitted to Treasury to say how they were going to meet their obligations. What a farce. Apparently the Minister for Health does not even involve himself in decisions about where the cuts are going to be made, and that is probably why he was sacked from the job.

We had the real leader of the Government today, the Treasurer, saying that they need to step it up a gear around the cuts. That is what they are doing. There are \$450 million of cuts to be made and we are expecting an update of savings measures to be announced at the end of this month. That is on Monday 30 September, the last day of this month, the last day of the first quarter of the financial year, so the Government needs to come clean. Where are the cuts going to be made? How much are the cuts going to cost across agencies? What is the impact going to be on frontline services and is there a definition of frontline services?

The Premier today gave a woeful explanation of how he defines a frontline service, if you would go so far as to say he went to that extent. He could not give a definition of what a frontline service is. His department secretaries do not know what a frontline service is. How is he supposed to be believed when he argues that frontline services and jobs are going to be protected when department secretaries do not even know what a frontline service is? There is no clear definition of what a frontline service is but what we do know is that frontline nursing hours and shifts have been cut. If a nurse is not front line, what is?

Teachers have been cut. Four have gone from the eSchool. If a teacher is not front line, what is? We have seen cuts to other areas of agencies with a 15 per cent reduction in elective surgery. If elective surgery is not frontline service delivery, what is? Maybe the problem for the Government is that they do not know what a frontline service is so therefore everything is on the table. This is the concern. The Government has known since 25 June where these \$450 million cuts are going to come from and these RTI documents prove it. From Monday, which is the last day of the first quarter of the financial year, the Government has to come clean. Your own budget documents say that you will. Our expectation is that that happens.

We have also seen something very strange happen within this Government where a very experienced health administrator, Mr Michael Pervan, has been moved out of Health and a department secretary for communities moved out of that agency and shuffled around. Interestingly, they were the only two secretaries to push back on Treasury and say, 'We need more time; we need to understand how we are going to give effect to the cuts. The ask of the Government is very hard to deliver on within a seven-day time period'. Interestingly, the only two secretaries who questioned the Government and its cuts, questioned the haste at which they were expected to provide details have been moved on.

That does not send a very good message to the public service, does it? It certainly sends a very clear message to me that if a public servant raises questions about this Government, they can face very serious consequences and potentially be moved on from the position that they are in.

The Government have given no clear explanation for why those department secretaries were moved. This right to information document probably sheds the most light on it that we have had to date.

**Time expired.**

[11.21 a.m.]

**Mr GUTWEIN** (Bass - Treasurer) - Madam Deputy Speaker, this is a matter of public importance, not a public whinge fest, to be frank. That is all that you have been able to do for the last seven minutes.

Let us set some facts out in regards to this. First, you have no legitimacy at all in this debate, whatsoever. We can look back at what occurred under previous Labor governments, the government that you were a part of. I have a copy here of the budget saving strategies that you outlined in 2011-12. To provide context for anybody who is watching this debate, this year we are seeking an efficiency dividend of around 0.5 per cent, which is around \$35 million this year, across a budget of around \$6500 billion worth of expenditure. Back in 2011-12, in one year alone, Labor targeted \$177 million worth of cuts. It is no wonder that at the time public commentators such as the Australian Medical Association, and others, said that it would take 10 years, a decade, to recover. That was a savage cut by the Labor Party. That was when they were targeting frontline services, when they let a nurse a day go for nine months, when the then minister for police sacked more than 100 police.

They have no legitimacy whatsoever in this debate. Consider their track record. In terms of what we outlined in the Budget, which when you look around the country at what is occurring with other states and territories and their budgets, we made the very sensible decision on the basis that the national economy is slowing. We do receive significant revenues from the Commonwealth.

It is important that we are cognisant of what is occurring in the national economy. Therefore, our Budget attempted to invest more into our local economy through a record infrastructure spend to ensure that not only could we build the public infrastructure that this state needs in a generational sense, but also that we would seek private investment leverage off that. Importantly, what we would see across the board, are jobs being created and, in doing so, hold up our own state revenues.

What we also did, was outline a very reasonable efficiency dividend at the time of around three-quarters of a per cent, to be offset by government business revenues. I have already announced to this House that we have reduced the 0.75 per cent down to about 0.5 per cent this year as a result of additional revenues from government businesses. That reduces the very modest \$50 million worth of savings, around 0.75 per cent this year, down to \$35 million.

If you look at other states and territories, in the main, they are forcing on to their public services across their expenditures, efficiency dividends of between 2 per cent and 3 per cent. We are looking for 0.5 per cent efficiency dividend. We believe that across government we can be more efficient. I ask the other side of the House: do you believe that government can be efficient?

**Ms Archer** - Silence.

**Mr GUTWEIN** - I think that answers it. They do not have a view as to whether or not the aim of government should attempt to be as efficient as possible so that you can provide efficient and

effective services to the people we are there to serve, which is what we want to do on this side of the House.

The conspiracy theory just beggars belief. I wonder how their minds work on that side. They have an RTI and all of a sudden they are now looking for conspiracies within the senior public service.

I point out that this is the Opposition that not that long ago stood in front of a house they declared was a government-owned property when it was privately owned and had people living in it. They claimed that that was an empty public home that was owned by the Government. Then on Friday, we saw the bizarre circumstance where they announced a press conference and then shut it down in terms of the RTI. I noted that one of the well-known commentators who works for one of the media outlets made a few comments in regards to 'beggars belief'. On one hand, revelations are going to be released and then the next thing they are shutting down their own press conference.

If you cannot manage yourself, you cannot manage the state. They certainly cannot manage themselves. I am going to keep coming back to this point over and over again. If you do not know what you stand for and, importantly, how you are going to pay for it then you do not have a position in this place. All you are doing is whingeing and complaining. Until they commit to bringing down an alternative budget, until they commit to explaining to Tasmanians what they stand for and, importantly, how they are going to pay for it, they have no legitimacy in this debate, none whatsoever.

As the Premier pointed out today, we have a very modest, around a-half-a-per cent efficiency dividend that we are looking to apply across our agencies. I believe the Premier was pointing to an article where Michelle O'Byrne as part of the razor gang where they were looking for a 5 per cent efficiency -

**Time expired.**

[11.28 a.m.]

**Mr O'BYRNE** (Franklin) - Madam Deputy Speaker, essentially this debate is about the integrity and the capability of this Government to be straight with people. That is the fundamental issue that we have to confront. This is a Treasurer, this is a Government, which says one thing in terms of their glossy magazines and their spin and yet do something completely different under the cover of the people who they send out to do their work in the various departments to cut and to diminish services. We have seen through the rhetoric of the Treasurer, the rhetoric of the Premier and through RTI. All of a sudden we know exactly what their agenda is.

In his contribution to this issue on cuts, it is telling that the Treasurer spent the majority of his time talking about us, talking about other people, and then making comparisons to other states with a cherry-picked statistic that means nothing. You cannot compare a percentage change in a Tasmanian budget context to a department in a state with very different environments and very different budget contexts in terms of their ability to respond to challenges that they face. You cannot cherry pick a 2 per cent here and a 2 per cent there. It is not apples with apples.

**Mr Gutwein** - You whacked 5 per cent on to them.

**Madam Deputy SPEAKER** - Order, Mr Gutwein.

**Mr O'BYRNE** - You cannot have it both ways.

Treasurer, you are in a time where the economic conditions are the best for Tasmania we have seen in a generation but it is the Australian dollar. It is nothing you have done. When you track the statistics of the Tasmanian economy in comparison to the exchange rate, which is probably the key determinant in the success of the Tasmanian economy, that is the environment within which we work and it is up to government to respond to that.

You cannot claim that we are in a golden age, that you are maintaining momentum and investing for growth, at a time when the conditions are in our favour and then set out to take Tasmania back to the good old Liberal ways of over \$1 billion of net debt. It took Labor in government six years to pay off the debt of the Liberal government of the 1990s. If we are successful at the next election, given the trajectory of this budget under this Treasurer, it will take us years to pay off the Liberal debt. This is in the DNA. It took a Labor government in the early 1990s to pay off the debt of the Liberals in the 1980s.

**Members** interjecting.

**Mr O'BYRNE** - I hear this parroting. They say 'the alternative budget', and whenever we hear the Government say that we need an alternative budget it means they have nothing to say for themselves. It is like a security blanket.

The shadow treasurer of the time was the only treasurer, arguably, in the country's history to produce - let us not call it an alternative budget because it was not. He banked 95 per cent to 96 per cent of what the government of the day was doing and he pulled together a couple of little notes on consumables and consultants and a couple of changes to make a difference. Did it look anything like his first budget? No, it did not, because his first budget took a \$200 million axe to Tasmanian government services. You cut health services, you cut education, you cut paramedics, and you cut custodial officers. You cut the Department of Infrastructure, Energy and Resources and that is why you cannot get the infrastructure jobs out the door. You cut all the staff and say that you have this great surplus. You do not. You have a deficit. You know you do. You have this great surplus because you are underspending and you cannot get the money out the door. You are underspending on infrastructure.

You are lauding the fact that you have a surplus because you are underspending on the NDIS. People with disabilities need that support, yet you are claiming you are a great Treasurer on the back of not delivering services to the community. Your rhetoric says we are in a golden age, we are building infrastructure, yet you cannot get money out the door. You chronically underfund and underspend. You have nothing. It is wafer thin. When they say they will only talk about issues if there is an alternative budget, it means they have nothing to say and they are out of ideas.

The Treasurer says that we are coming up with conspiracy theories. It is an amazing coincidence that the only two secretaries of departments, who raised questions about the seven working-day target they were given by the Treasurer's people to come up with significant cuts to the front line - which, by inference, the Secretary of Communities Tasmania has referred to as the only way they are going to be able to deliver on the cuts the Treasurer has demanded - the only two secretaries to raise a question were sent, sorry, ta-tas down the road. No, we will not cop that, we will not accept that. You say it is a conspiracy theory when the only two secretaries who raised concerns with your approach in a frank and fearless way have been pushed aside. You say that is a conspiracy theory. They are the facts. You moved on the only two secretaries who raised issues

with the way you conduct yourself, and you dare talk to us about being fiscally responsible. How many more cash payouts are you going to give to your failed staffers who are caught doing the wrong thing?

In terms of your budget management, you are the Christopher Skase of Treasurers: counting a grab from TT-Line and claiming that as revenue; claiming infrastructure investments you cannot deliver as revenue but not putting those into the expenditure column, which is dishonest; and you have gone for the cash grab from all the GBEs. This Government's raid of GBEs is obscene. It is at record levels. The \$100 million taken from MAIB could have delivered lower insurance rates for Tasmanian drivers but, no, it is another tax on the Tasmanian people. You have dragged \$100 million out and propped up your budget that way. You are an absolute disgrace and you know it.

[11.35 a.m.]

**Mrs RYLAH** (Braddon) - Madam Deputy Speaker, this matter of public importance goes to the key point of difference between the Government and the Opposition and it is stark. It highlights the hypocrisy of the Opposition and the Leader of the Opposition, who stand for nothing. Tasmanians expect their government to be responsible, efficient and to spend taxpayers' money wisely, which is why there have been ongoing discussions with department heads since the Budget was delivered. This Government will continue to hire more doctors, nurses, police officers, custodial officers and teachers.

The Hodgman majority Liberal Government has a long-term plan, which is working. It is a plan we took to the Tasmanians and they endorsed it. We have strong budget management and a strong budget record. We have the fastest growing economy in the nation at 3.4 per cent over the year and the fastest growing economy in the quarter. Nationally, we lead in private investment growth. We have the most confident state in the country and businesses invest and create jobs when they are confident; 13 500 jobs have been created.

Let us look at Labor's record. You smashed the forest industry. You smashed regional communities, destroyed confidence and you drove Tasmanians out of the state in droves. You wrecked the mining industry when the whole nation, except Tasmania, was in a massive mining boom. It was a disgrace. You have recorded a record of deficit, debt and job losses. Labor's record is there to see; 10 000 jobs lost in your term. Tasmania's economy went into recession with years of low growth. Tasmanians left in droves. Business conditions collapsed and business confidence fell to the lowest in the country. Two-thirds of businesses thought the government was working against them, not with them. What a disgrace.

Labor has no credibility in fiscal or economic management. When we came to Government in 2014, Tasmania's finances were a mess, with an unsustainable budget position that was a disaster with projected deficits of more than \$1.1 billion. Labor reported net operating deficits of \$289 million in 2011-12, \$426 million in 2012-13 and budgeted for a deficit of \$267 million in 2013-14. The 2014 risk reports showed that, under the Labor Greens governance, the government was on track for a \$1.1 billion operating deficit. That is year after year after year of operating deficits caused by spending on public servants and not investing in infrastructure. In five and a half years, the Government has completely turned that around.

Let us get some facts straight that Ms White quoted in her speech. Treasury gave two weeks to produce the plans. The letter was sent on 25 June. Plans were requested by Monday 8 July. This equals 14 days if you include the day it was sent, two weeks, 10 business days if you include the

day it was sent, nine business days if you do not. When we took Government in 2014, Tasmania's finances were a mess. It was an unsustainable budget position that was on course for disaster, with projected deficits of more than \$1.1 billion. By contrast, the preliminary outcomes report for 2018-19 released last month on our position confirms that the Hodgman majority Liberal Government has delivered another balanced budget. The Government is on track to deliver a modest surplus, its fourth in a row - very much different from Labor.

The secret to this success is the Government's strong business management. Business budget management means carefully considering all expenditure, looking to ensure that resources are directed to the front line, and that fair, reasonable and affordable wages are increases, not handouts to union mates.

**Mr O'Byrne** - If you're so proud of it why don't you tell people who's on the razor gang?

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER** - Order, Mr O'Byrne.

**Mrs RYLAH** - The Treasurer has clearly said that the budget was framed under difficult circumstances; 'national headwinds' I think is what he called it. In acknowledging the difficult circumstances, the Treasurer notes that the Government is facing a revenue writedown of over \$500 million. The Government is sensibly and responsibly managing this issue and we are working through a process to identify savings.

The Government can be more efficient and effective whilst protecting our central frontline services. The Premier and the Treasurer have made this commitment many times before. What is more, the efficiency dividend across all agencies this year will be just \$35 million, or around 0.5 per cent, not 10 times that number as I saw today under your razor gang - a 5 per cent cut. Business owners around the country would welcome such a reasonable efficiency dividend because they know efficiency dividends save jobs and push managers to do better. Budget management is important because the Government's books are in order. The community has confidence that its bills will be paid, its jobs will be safe and that infrastructure projects will proceed as planned. Under this Government, Tasmania is the most confident state in the country. We have some of the best business conditions in the country. Our housing sector is the strongest in the nation and we have booming exports, tourism and retail trade.

**Time expired.**

[11.42 a.m.]

**Dr WOODRUFF** (Franklin) - Madam Deputy Speaker, we have sat in this parliament - those of us who have been here for five-and-a-half years under this Liberal Government - and watched as the Treasurer has practised his dark arts of sneakiness, deception and dishonesty, cruel cuts, and then overlaid with that, amazing spin. We had the argument for this Treasurer to go in hard and cut hundreds of teachers, cut hundreds of millions of dollars from the Health budget, gut the Threatened Species Unit, cut the guts out of the Parks staff and the expertise, and do untold damage to this state, to the basic foundation of everything that is good in this state and the clean, green image that we desperately need to maintain for this century and future centuries.

That was his argument for two cruel budgets in 2014 and 2015. Ever since then, he has been talking about the need to get the budget in balance and once it was in surplus, he has been crowing about being back in the black. But what has he done with that? He is using every opportunity to funnel money into private developers going into our parks and reserves, to put outrageous amounts

of money into infrastructure instead of into the resources Tasmanians need and setting us up for the century ahead of us.

Now that we are so-called 'back in the black', this Premier -

**Mrs Rylah** - Premier?

**Dr WOODRUFF** - Treasurer - yes, he wants to be Premier in the way he is exerting control over the Cabinet and the Budget. Clearly, every single minister who spoke at budget Estimates was told not to answer where the cuts were going to come from in their portfolio areas, not to answer to Tasmanians about how this Treasurer is going to cut even further and deeper into Health, Education, Parks, Environment and Water. Every single important part of this state's functioning government public service has been cut thanks to this Treasurer, and the spin that we now hear is they are still crying poor and unable to act on the things that matter for this century.

This Treasurer is saying, 'We've got an upcoming global crisis so we have to be careful how we spend money.' We do have an upcoming global crisis - it is called the climate crisis. There was a UN Climate Action Summit on Monday and our Prime Minister refused to go. Our Liberal Prime Minister boycotted it, with the support of the Premier in his comments in parliament yesterday, who had the gall, the temerity, to call him a climate leader. Nothing could be further from the truth. He is leading us down the climate sceptic path, holding hands with the Prime Minister, who has a lump of coal whenever he can in his back pocket just as a little talisman to remind him of his donors, where he gets his money from, where this Liberal Party and the Labor Party get their money from, the fossil fuel industry - gas for Labor and coal for the Liberals.

Greta Thunberg spoke to all the children who were at the climate strike and made the incredibly important statement that entire ecosystems are collapsing. She said:

We are in the beginning of a mass extinction and all you can talk about is money and fairy tales of eternal economic growth. How dare you!

Greta Thunberg, the 16-year-old activist, spoke to the hearts of all the children and people who were there. Last Friday in Tasmania tens of thousands of people turned out, but not one Liberal member attended.

**Ms O'Connor** - Shame on them.

**Dr WOODRUFF** - Shame on them. Not one Liberal member attended to listen and hear the stories. I am very concerned this Premier's legacy will be that he will be known as the climate criminal who held back Tasmania's survival. He will be known as 'Bolsonaro Will'. I certainly hope he will not be the Premier who is known for logging our carbon-rich forests and cutting down the security we need as a planet and as a state for this century and centuries to come. We do not have 356 000 hectares of forests that are spare to hold carbon. We need every single tree, every single regenerative agriculture technique and every single opportunity we can take to cut our emissions and to increase our carbon stores.

The Treasurer is yawning. It is tedious to hear yet again from the Greens about climate because we are the only people who hold them to account. I wonder how the Premier sleeps at night. I wonder what he really thinks about those children who are deeply concerned about their future. What is the legacy that this Government really wants to have? Budgets are about values. They are

about what you prioritise and what we have to prioritise, whether we like it or not, whether it fits the economic education that you did when you were at high school or university. Did you do economic education? I do not know, but you have values education, Treasurer. You have a heart and so does every person in your Cabinet.

Like Greta Thunberg, I do not believe you are evil people. I believe you are ignorant, deaf, uneducated and fearful. I think you are fearful of assessing your own state of being. You want to think somehow everything is going to wander on into the future that you have in your mind of retirement but that is not the way it is. Every adult in this place should confront what children today are confronting, because they are clear-sighted and they listen to the science - the knowledge that things are changing fast. We have just a short time, as the UN Secretary-General told the whole planet the other day. Antonio Guterras made it very clear that we have just eight-and-a-half years. The Greens will be here to keep talking about this every day.

**Time expired.**

**Matter noted.**

## **GENETICALLY MODIFIED ORGANISMS CONTROL AMENDMENT BILL 2019 (No. 33)**

### **Second Reading**

**Resumed from 24 September 2019 (page 94)**

**Ms O'CONNOR** (Clark - Leader of the Greens) - Madam Deputy Speaker, as I was detailing yesterday, the Greens are proposing an amendment to this bill that would extend the moratorium into a permanent prohibition on genetically modified organisms in Tasmania.

Following Dr Broad's learned contribution on this issue, I went to *New Scientist* which has a report on how badly GM experimentation can go wrong. There was a field experiment in Brazil that deployed genetically modified mosquitoes to control wild populations of the pest and it may be having unintended consequences. According to a genetic analysis of mosquitoes in the area, it appears the engineered stock has bred with wild mosquitoes and created viable, hybrid insects. A quote from *Scientific Reports* from 10 September -

'The claim was that genes from the release strain would not get into the general population because offspring would die', co-author Geoffrey Powell, a Professor of Ecology and Evolutionary Biology at Yale University says in a press release. 'That obviously was not what happened.'

The Biotech company Oxitec began releasing hundreds of thousands of genetically engineered mosquitoes in the city of Jacobina between 2013 and 2015. The idea is that genetically modified (GM) males would mate with wild type females and pass on a gene that kills their offspring before they themselves can breed, ultimately knocking down Jacobina's mosquito population.

The study's author began sampling mosquitoes in Jacobina before, during and after the deployment of the GM insects. They created a genetic panel that distinguished the wild type

mosquitos from the introduced ones and found that insects analysed more than two years after the release stopped, were progeny of both wild type and mutant lineages.

'The degree of introgression is not trivial', the authors write in their report.

'Depending on sample and criterion used to define unambiguous introgression, from about 10% to 60% of all individuals, have some OX513A genome.'

The point I am making is that we do have to be wary of new technologies and experimentation that is unregulated. When we talk about CRISPR technology and the decision by the federal government not to regulate CRISPR technology and Site-Directed Nuclease 1 - SDN-1 - there are potential consequences of this decision for Tasmania's GM-free status. It is that straightforward. That is why we asked those questions on this issue in the last sitting. As I said yesterday, in July 2018, the EU's top court ruled that new GM techniques, such as CRISPR, posed similar risks to the older GM techniques and need to be assessed for safety in the same way. This ruling is consistent with the findings of reviews commissioned by the Austrian and Norwegian governments. These concluded there is insufficient knowledge regarding the risks posed by these techniques and products derived from them so they require a comprehensive case-by-case risk assessment.

Because of these risks, over 60 international scientists have signed a statement calling for these GM processes to be strictly regulated. These GM processes will be unregulated in Australia as a result of the decision of the Morrison government. This has implications not only for our GM-free status, but also for Tasmania's hard-won clean, green, GM-free brand. In the feedback to DPIIWE's consultation on the moratorium, it was the concern for the protection of the brand that drove the beef industry, the honey industry and other primary producers, to strongly support an extension of the moratorium on GM products in Tasmania. We must protect the brand.

We argue strongly that in order to do that and to provide that certainty to our primary producers, Tasmania's GM moratorium should be enacted as a permanent ban on GM products in Tasmania. Of course, you institute a review process in the legislation so we can take into account new developments in these technologies and make sure we are responding to those new developments in a scientific, strategic way that regulates where we have to.

I am very interested to hear the minister's response to concerns about SDN-1 technologies being unregulated in Australia and the implications that this may have for Tasmania's GM-free status. These organisms are notoriously hard to control. We will be going into committee on this legislation so that we can move our amendment to repeal section 36 of Tasmania's Genetically Modified Organisms Control Act. We believe this is what primary producers in Tasmania overwhelmingly want to see and we do not want to be in a situation where, for example, the upper House could move to either remove Tasmania's moratorium as a result of the review process coming up or some other mechanism for playing on the fact that we do not have a permanent ban on GMOs in Tasmania to protect our GM-free status and to protect our brand.

While I am talking about the brand, I wanted to raise a concern that the Greens have about the new Brand Tasmania board and the new branding that is being put out by the board. It is extraordinarily dispiriting and disrespectful to all those who fought hard to protect Tasmania's clean, green brand that our new brand apparently does not mention wilderness. We have a brand in Tasmania that has been rewritten following the statutory enactment of the Brand Tasmania board that does not talk about natural Tasmania. It is downplayed, it is dismissed. Therefore we regard it as a false brand. The Brand Tasmania brand that is defined and described on the Brand Tasmania

website does not reflect Tasmania's clean, green brand. It does not mention Tasmania's wilderness areas, the fact that there is no place on Earth like Tasmania, and that our character as a people is shaped by the fact that we are an island people with the wilderness on our doorstep.

We are very concerned about what has happened to Brand Tasmania. Following our good-faith support for the Brand Tasmania Bill, our working with the agency and people in the Department of Premier and Cabinet to get amendments into the Brand Tasmania Bill, we thought that those amendments, which tried to place a lens and more of a focus on people with experience in environmental and heritage fields would be on the Brand Tasmania board. But the Brand Tasmania board is not reflective of those changes that we sought to have to make sure that there is a strong voice for natural Tasmania, for wild Tasmania, for Tasmania's heritage on the Brand Tasmania Board.

It is deeply disappointing. We believe that all that money that went into making Brand Tasmania a statutory body is being wasted because the brand is not reflective of who we are. We had a meeting with the new director of Brand Tasmania and raised these concerns about the identification of a brand that does not include natural Tasmania, clean and green, wild Tasmania. There is no apparent mention of it in anything that we can find on the website. The answers that came back to us were far from satisfactory, so we are raising these concerns now. We regard the brand that is being defined by Brand Tasmania as it currently stands as being incomplete and downgrading.

What makes Tasmania's brand so special, so prized by primary producers, is that we are a wild island. We are a little green, heart-shaped island at the bottom of the world. The reason that companies and markets all over the world want Tasmanian produce is because they identify it with a clean, green Tasmania and our environmental attributes. That is the foundation of the export markets that are so lucrative to primary producers and on which primary producers depend. They depend on our clean, green brand. That is what markets in Japan, China, the EU and in the United States are after. They are after clean and green, and they are after GM-free.

We are very disappointed in what a lame brand has now been defined by Brand Tasmania. Unfortunately, we believe it is brand framing that has been dictated by the politics of the day where you have a government that wants to log 356 000 hectares of high-conservation-value, independently assessed carbon-bank forests. This is a government that would log some of the most significant carbon-dense forests on the planet. From the Styx to the Florentine to Bruny, the Tasman Peninsula, Wielangta, the North-East Tiers, Ben Lomond, the Great Western Tiers and takayna/Tarkine, these forests are wild, beautiful, carbon rich and independently assessed as being of high conservation value. Yet we know that the forest industry, which took tens of millions of dollars from the taxpayer to get out of those forests, is now lining up outside the Resources minister's door to get into those forests. It is a disgrace. It is a crime against nature, a crime against future generations, and a crime against our brand.

To be honest, we do not care what the new statutory Brand Tasmania board decides is the brand within the political context of the day, we know that the brand is dependent on forest protection, wilderness protection and looking after our environment. I need to place that on the record because the last time I went, which was only last week, and had a look at the newly described brand for Brand Tasmania I felt frustrated and disillusioned about the process that led to such a weakening of the brand identity that Tasmania has and that our primary producers rely on. If you have a brand that you have redefined to downplay the natural environment and our forests and wilderness, it is not a brand that describes Tasmania. It is not descriptive of the brand we know primary producers

rely on to get the prices they do in export markets. It is extremely disappointing. We place on the record that we regard the new Brand Tasmania's identification of Tasmania's brand as underwhelming, inaccurate and, unfortunately, highly political.

[12.03 p.m.]

**Mr HODGMAN** (Franklin - Premier) - Madam Deputy Speaker, I will respond to those observations shortly.

I support the introduction and passage of this bill and acknowledge the extraordinary amount of work that has been done by successive governments and certainly continued under this Government to ensure that Tasmania's brand is well protected. The status is one that is secured with some cost, perhaps, or with some counter-effect but in our view, through this legislation, which I commend the minister for introducing and his agency for not only progressing this bill but also conducting an extensive and effective consultation, we have reached a point where I believe we have very much arrived at the right balance.

Since 2001 our great competitive advantage brought about by the moratorium on the commercial release of genetically modified organisms is something where there is shared agreement. I acknowledge that not every sector or potential adopter of GMOs would agree, but as the Minister for Trade and for Brand Tasmania it is a very important strong advantage for many producers, exporters and businesses that utilise our brand and capitalise on its value and our position allows us to promote our state as a place and area that is free of GMOs. It has genuine appeal in domestic and international markets and is an attribute that adds value to marketing and branding our products and our state. We are the only state in the country that can now make this claim.

While the review undertaken into our GMO-free status has confirmed that it is potentially limiting advances in other businesses that would like to the option to use gene technology, it is certainly an immense value for our businesses to capitalise on and benefit from our GMO-free status for our products. In our view this strikes the right balance. I note the review also identifies the view of government that we must take full advantage of the GMO moratorium. We must benefit from our exclusive status and further work is required to capitalise on opportunities of being GMO-free, including for instance in product labelling and further development of the Tasmanian brand. It is indeed a subject I have spoken to Brand Tasmania about and as per our intentions, I am establishing a new place-based brand authority to amp up our brand. That is part of our mission and a key brand attribute. It is a foundation on which our brand and reputation sits within the market.

I note the observations of the member for Clark and am disappointed and more than happy to speak further with the member directly. I hope the member has spoken to Brand Tasmania.

**Ms O'Connor** - The conservation movement doesn't support that brand. Have a look at it.

**Mr HODGMAN** - I anticipated it would not be long before the Greens, for their own political reasons, would want to separate themselves from Brand Tasmania, which is only in its infancy. It has only been in existence for some months. I credit the CEO and the board which is comprised of exceptionally qualified individuals -

**Ms O'Connor** - Why didn't you accept Christine Milne's application to be on the board if you are serious about protecting the brand?

**Mr HODGMAN** - and to suggest that none of them have any interest or capacity to contribute to the promotion and the championing of our natural environment as part of that brand is entirely disrespectful to them. They are people who understand the value of our environment, our wilderness and our reputation and I have every confidence that they will continue to develop -

**Ms O'Connor** - Log on to their website. You have no idea about Tasmania's environment or the forest or wilderness, none at all.

**Mr HODGMAN** - and evolve a brand which will no doubt properly and accurately -

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER** - Order, Ms O'Connor. The Premier listened with respect to you and I ask the same of you.

**Mr HODGMAN** - reflect all the attributes that make Tasmania such a great place. That includes being a state that is now more confident socially, culturally and economically and a place where people want to live and invest. More people want to be part of our state and live here. There are a number of reasons why they want to live and be part of our community and we welcome and celebrate that and I know that will be adequately reflected in Brand Tasmania's operations and materials and the message they send. They are doing that independently of government, so any suggestion that their efforts are being politically influenced I reject entirely.

Our state and its brand and the GMO status to which we speak today and which this bill addresses are a foundation on which our reputation sits in many markets that are identified in the work that has been done by the department and are well understood by Tasmanian producers, many of whom I have spoken to about this very issue. A full or partial removal of the moratorium is identified as perhaps one option government might have taken up, but as the review concludes, it presents a risk to our brand in the marketplace and the potential for negative interest in our brand could impact significantly on consumer protections and also the views, importantly, of our trading partners.

This was a reality that I experienced firsthand in our last trade mission to Japan earlier this year where their agriculture minister and businesses in Japan that import great Tasmanian products, notably beef, made it clear to me that any change in our policy would negatively impact on our reputation and likely on our trade. That came from high levels within the government of Japan as well as producers. It is reflected in this report. There are other perspectives in other key markets but in each case it is understood that while there may not be an advanced understanding of our GMO status and there can well be better promotion of it in these markets, there is increasing consumer awareness and we should not do anything that will damage the unique opportunity we have and the status that we strongly protect.

The review also concluded that, as a small island economy located a distance from any markets, we are disadvantaged in competing on supply chain efficiencies and lacking a competitive advantage in a commodity market. There is potential for Tasmania to capitalise on products that attract a premium price and to improve marketing efficiencies so that our businesses can attract a higher price for their product and offset some of the challenges and the additional costs that do come from exporting product from our beautiful heart-shaped island in the southern hemisphere. We also accept that we need to do more to promote this status, and Brand Tasmania does that in line with this policy alongside other key agencies and stakeholders, and works with industry to build opportunities for our brand. This includes those who may have preferred an alternative policy

position, which we respect but we will not alter or deviate from, with a firm commitment to continue to work with them.

Continued extensions of the moratorium allow producers, farmers and agribusinesses to expand or invest more in their businesses and market development. This gives them some confidence and security for the environment in which they work and from which they benefit. Many are supported through programs and initiatives offered by this Government. It was the Tasmanian Government's commitment to review the moratorium prior to its expiry, allowing us to continue to monitor developments in gene technology and to listen to the latest industry and community views on the moratorium.

I acknowledge all those who have done so comprehensively, from the feedback I have had from those who have participated and engaged in this process, the excellent work done by DPIPW, supported by the departments of State Growth, Treasury and Finance, Premier and Cabinet, Health and Human Services, as well as Brand Tasmania. They have done a lot of work in examining the potential marketing impacts of extending or amending the moratorium or even allowing it to expire, the potential market advantages and disadvantages of allowing the use of gene technology in Tasmanian primary industries, including food and non-food sectors, reviews of what is occurring in other domestic and international markets and within industry sectors in those markets, and undertaking an assessment of the research and developments of gene technology in primary industries. It was robustly explored to ensure our state is best positioned and that trade and marketing considerations associated with the moratorium and experience in other jurisdictions, which I agree we need to learn from, are part of the decision-making process.

There was strong community engagement. I thank the Brand Tasmania partners who contributed: The Agrarian Kitchen and Eatery, Ashgrove Cheese, Avoland Avocadoes, Eat Well Tasmania, Estuarine Oyster Company, Fruit Growers Tasmania, Gourmania Food Tours, Greenham Tasmania Pty Ltd, Hill Farm, King Island Prime Meats, Stefano Lubiana Wines, Pennicott Wilderness Journeys, Redbank Farm, Reid Fruits, Shene Estate and Distillery, Stillwater, Black Cow, Sullivans Cove Distillery, Australian Honey Products Tasmania, Tasmanian Seafood Industry Council, Tetsuya Wakuda, a great Brand Ambassador, and Wine Tasmania.

Following a five-week advertised consultation period that concluded in April this year, 76 submissions were received. Of those, 83 per cent indicated clear support for the continuation of the moratorium. These included submissions from the broader community, business, peak industry bodies from sectors such as beef, wine, honey, fruit, organics and the salmon industry. Six submissions, including a number from the canola industry, called for the discontinuation of the moratorium, and six others expressed concerns with the restrictions of the present moratorium, noting some benefits of GMO cultivation in Tasmania or proposing specific amendments to the moratorium that would relax restrictions on our use and handling of GMOs. These are acknowledged but we firmly believe we have struck the right balance.

In relation to an assessment, as Minister for Trade through this review and in consultation with our agencies and Austrade, I note that the Department of State Growth commissioned a survey with Austrade in December 2018. This gives you a sense of the length of time this Government has applied to this work to inform ourselves and our community of all the issues in question and to appropriately understand what impacts a decision might have on our trade capacity. That survey looked very closely at attitudes toward GMO of key importers and distributors of our food, including into places like China, Japan and Korea. It was fascinating reading. It also identified some discrepancy in those markets, some more mature than others, but in each case we can

confidently say our GMO status is something that should be appropriately protected, is of value and will become increasingly so.

I have mentioned my own experience in Japan. It was obvious during my discussions in Japan that, for them and in their view of Tasmania, this is perhaps - in addition to the strong relationship we have between our countries - the number one issue for those who consume our products or work with our agricultural sector. The review that was undertaken informing this legislation and our Government's policy position looked very closely at perceptions of retailers and importers in Japan toward GMO. The summary of the report is that our GMO-free status is an invaluable asset ensuring premium and unique market positioning of our products, providing a distinct competitive advantage over countries and regions, and includes every other state in our country now, which do not have this status.

Japanese retailers and importers stated that Australian food products are produced in a clean environment, rating Tasmania extremely highly in that regard. The respondents said their consumers recognise the value of non-GMO food products, with five out of six stating that GMO-free products have a market advantage. Companies that import Tasmanian products said very clearly that they would only source non-GMO products. One company went further, saying that maintaining the moratorium was critical and it would significantly impact their sales if it were lifted; a beef business to which many Japanese consumers look to Tasmania as the best beef in the world, and this comes from a country that is synonymous with producing excellent quality beef. That is no mean feat.

While GMO-free labelling and promotion may not be as strong as it should be and may not have the desired impact we would like in other markets at present, it is important that we continue to increase our efforts. The report also collectively found that there is a market advantage to continuing the moratorium and promoting our GMO-free status as a unique selling point for the state.

The report also - I am sure all members have read it and I know many have a great interest in these matters in the broader community - went to consumer views, the views of our wholesalers and distributors, beverage producers and distributors, food service suppliers and operators. The retail channel is very important and retailers were also surveyed and are aware of the Government's moratorium. There are varying levels of awareness. The retail managers who are responsible for managing their brands indicated a high level of awareness, which is great. The likelihood of this being a part of any discussions about what is contained in food these days will become greater still.

The common response described in the report was that any lapse in our moratorium would have an opportunity cost because it is a unique part of our brand. Once it has gone, that is it; it cannot be reinstated. There are other ways in which GMO technologies can interact in our community, but once that status is lost, we will never get it back.

The report also identified the risk that ending the moratorium will impact on our entire brand and also the perception of Tasmanian food, which is something we must treat very carefully.

I also note the observations of non-government organisations. Being involved in this review was a fascinating insight into their minds. They are very involved and very influential in the GM debate. They have the ability to generate high levels of interest in communities across the world and are very adept and competent at obtaining media exposure.

A number of NGOs actively campaign against GMO foods, including in Australia - organisations such as Greenpeace and Fair Trade. Fair Trade standards prohibit the use of GMOs by all producers including small farm organisations and work organisations. While these bodies can often very stridently campaign in areas of concern to them, and often without broader community support or in a way that is not advantageous to our state, in this instance, I acknowledge the impact that non-government organisations with strong views on these matters can play in impacting on our brand and our reputation. We have seen what happened in our forest industry where markets were sabotaged by green groups over a number of years. I would hate to see the same thing happen in Tasmania.

The actions of this Government are to protect, in legislation, our GMO-free status, or else heaven forbid, green groups would again use it as an opportunity to damage our reputation and our brand. It is not only about international trade, but domestically the outcomes of the study also published in the report some key findings. The domestic market stakeholders survey considered our food and beverage products to be clean and green, based on a range of factors -

**Ms O'Connor** - Clean and green, yes, that is right. It is not on the Brand Tasmania website.

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

**Mr HODGMAN** - including low pollution levels, abundant natural resources and effective food standards. These perceptions are enhanced by the geographic advantage of being produced on our beautiful heart-shaped island.

There is an increased level of awareness in the moratorium in the domestic market, particularly amongst industry participants and peak bodies. I read that GM free is generally not a key consideration in purchasing decisions of industry participants or consumers. This remains largely influenced by product labelling conventions that only acknowledge the inclusion of GM ingredients. That is another important element of the debate and an opportunity but there are some limitations in how far we can promote our status.

I was pleased to read that there was consensus from the majority of industry participants and peak bodies surveyed that a full or partial removal of the moratorium presents risk to our brand and the potential for a change to fuel new media exposure and create a negative consumer perception would occur, so we will prevent that from happening.

In strongly supporting the efforts and the leadership of Mr Barnett and his team, I do, as the Minister for Trade and also for Brand Tasmania, strongly support this bill. We believe in our brand. It is why we have established Brand Tasmania and entrusted them and their independent board, through the independent statutory authority, to promote and protect our brand.

My experience and interactions with the CEO of Brand Tasmania who is an international expert and very highly regarded, an exceptional board which is full of eminent brand ambassadors from business community, artistic education and industry sectors, all with a great love for our wilderness, our natural environment. They all have a great understanding of the full context of our brand, not only pieces selected for their own political purposes but an understanding of all those attributes that make our brand so strong.

Brand Tasmania's strategic plan is still being finalised as we speak. The CEO and staff have been delivering numerous workshops and engaging with communities across the state. They have

been presenting at events but also connecting with Tasmanians in government industry, non-government sectors and the community more broadly. It is about bringing us together. I am disappointed to hear - I was not sure how long it would take but I thought at some point, notwithstanding the protections that are in place under the legislation which was supported by the Greens, that they would choose to separate -

**Ms O'Connor** - We tried with the legislation and we tried in our consultation with the new CEO and the Chair of the Board and were still ignored.

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

**Mr HODGMAN** - How can they be critical of this Government and future governments without trying to find and make some distance from Brand Tasmania, which should always be independent and free from that political attack. I fear it will not be.

I acknowledge the work that has been done by Brand Tasmania. They are working very closely with key stakeholders. I know they will continue to do so, notwithstanding the description that their efforts to date have been lame; that is unduly critical and unhelpful.

In conclusion, I look forward to the work that Brand Tasmania will do and enlist their support in our efforts to better promote our GMO status; brand is very important and our GMO status is very important. As part of our brand it offers distinct marketing advantage for our high-quality, high-value primary industries.

The GMO Control Amendment Bill 2019 underpins our commitment to grow our agriculture sector to \$10 billion by 2050 to support primary industries and agri-food sectors to gain access to high value and overseas markets. The continuation of the GMO moratorium is backed up by our strengthening of Brand Tasmania, by our first trade strategy which is all about positioning Tasmania to be globally competitive, to help our businesses to expand their presence in world markets, to attract more investment to create even more jobs. The Government has committed \$12.5 million in this budget to implementing the trade strategy and increasing our exports to \$10 billion by 2050. The Trade Strategy will provide impetus to increase our exports and identify opportunities by leveraging off our GMO status, for example, but also through other strategies to maximise export opportunities and key markets, especially those that seek GMO-free foods and beverages.

As minister for Tourism, I note that a number of businesses within our broad visitor economy but also in the tourism sector, agri-business and agri-tourism ventures are also very supportive of maintaining the moratorium. It has been a long-standing position of that sector as the report states. It is another key point of difference for us and it enhances the visitor experience when they come to Tasmania for culinary tourism. They visit our great agri-businesses and agri-tourism businesses to get very high-quality, high-premium, valued and clean food and beverages. Our state is now the only state that is now truly GMO-free. That is a very important attribute of our selling point that is Tasmania's tourism industry today.

Unlike other states, we do not depend on larger-scale commodity crops. Rather we are a place that is about quality and the things that separate us from the rest of the world and not mass-production. Tasmania continues to produce high-quality niche products to leverage a premium price through our GMO-free status. Some of our valuable export markets actively seek to purchase those products with many commanding a price premium. The review notes that Greenham Tasmania Pty Ltd abattoirs is estimated to receive an additional \$125 per animal over and above

conventional market prices with our GMO-free status being a significant factor in achieving this. I saw that in Japan as well.

In acknowledging our success, we will back in the glory of our honey industry and its status as the best in the country and the recent awards at the Australian Fine Food Awards where Australian Honey Products were awarded the gold medal in the Champion Australian Produce Award for Cradle Mountain GMO-free Australian honey. I acknowledge that and send our best wishes to them and the broader industry and our thanks for what they do to promote our brand.

An extension of this moratorium provides certainty for businesses. Providing certainty and stability in a business environment that is rated the best in the country requires tough decisions in achieving the right balance. That is what this bill does as well. It should, we expect, provide additional confidence to our businesses who want to expand their operations and invest here to maximise opportunities across the rest of the world.

As our reputation cannot be linked to single claims or one particular facet of all that makes our state such a special place, our GMO-free status sits alongside those other attributes which we have discussed. For example, hand in glove with other brand qualities like organic or hormone growth promotant-free; this is another important element for brand credibility and traditional markets seek that as well.

In conclusion, and noting more needs to be done to better promote our brand and reflect our GMO-free status looking to all of those who want to be part of sending a positive message about our state and all that we do, I acknowledge decisions made by previous governments and certainly acknowledge the mechanisms that are also put in place that are future-looking that provide a greater deal of certainty and security - I thank the minister and the agency for that - and through which we will be able to even better amp up our brand and GMO-free status to the rest of the world into new markets and support local businesses to create even more jobs.

[12.32 p.m.]

**Mrs RYLAH** (Braddon) - Madam Deputy Speaker, I support this bill and endorse everything the Premier has just said. This bill is about Tasmania's premium export brand and provenance. It backs conventional agriculture and Tasmania taking us to a level of excellence not seen anywhere else in the world, in my view. Tasmania's GMO-free status remains an important component of the Tasmanian brand and assures agricultural products have open access and premium prices that prohibit GMO products. It is a significant boost for local producers and exporters as it will extend Tasmania's moratorium on GMOs for another 10 years. This bill will enable farmers, agribusinesses and food businesses that rely on the state's GMO-free status to confidently invest to further develop markets and products to sell to buyers who value GMO-free products.

Since 2001 Tasmania has regulated a moratorium on GMOs for marketing purposes. Other aspects of gene technology, I note for the House, are regulated by the Commonwealth. They include human health, safety and environmental impacts. Tasmania's GMO-free status is an important part of the Tasmanian brand, offering a marketing advantage for our high-value, high-quality primary industries. It is a key component in our goal to grow the annual value of our agricultural sector to \$10 billion by 2050. Extending the moratorium for a decade provides certainty for the producers and businesses that rely on the state's GMO-free status to continue to invest, employ staff and further develop markets.

Given the clear benefits of the moratorium for marketing purposes, the longer extension period will provide businesses with the confidence to create strong, multi-year marketing strategies to take full advantage of our GMO-free status. It will also strengthen our Tasmanian brand and will provide our trading partners with assurance on the ongoing stability of Tasmania's GMO-free provenance. The Tasmanian gene technology policy and associated gene technology guidelines will provide the necessary detail on how the moratorium will be implemented and have also been updated and are publicly available. I quote:

DPIPWE will implement evidence-based GMO monitoring and review to continuously assess developments in gene technology during the period of the moratorium, including emerging technologies, policy changes, consumer sentiment and market and branding implications.

At least every three years DPIPWE will provide a report to the Minister on developments in gene technology and market changes. Specific matters reported include:

- consumer sentiment in important current and potential future markets;
- new gene technologies that provide positive benefits to primary industry sectors and Tasmania as a whole;
- and development of new generation GMOs that provide health or other benefits.

DPIPWE will advise the minister if, based on the evidence, there is significant developments in these areas that warrant triggering an early review of this Policy before the maximum 10 years.

The minister can also direct a full review of the Policy at any stage during the period of the moratorium if developments warrant it.

There are a number of important perspectives that we need to consider in the GMO debate. GMOs provide opportunities to enhance the competitiveness of Tasmania's agricultural sector. However, the potential use of GMOs requires careful consideration to ensure that there are no negative impacts on markets or on the state's brand.

The Government wants to encourage biotechnology research innovation in Tasmania and supports research into other GMOs in Tasmania in physical containment facilities, provided all statutory requirements are met. After all, we endorse clever, innovative, evidence-based and science-based developments.

The Tasmanian Government recognises the importance of research to primary industries in the state and acknowledges the tremendous capacity for innovation amongst local scientists, technical service providers and primary producers. The Government is committed to better aligning research and development activities to improve productivity and industry competitiveness. Companies such as Tasglobal Seeds is a principally research and development company working with new and novel germ plasm to produce pasture and fodder plants that are producing productive and resilient plants. It works in conjunction with DPIPWE and TIA to undertake breeding and a selection program to produce some amazing things, and I would like to include some from their website.

They have produced an exceptionally drought-tolerant *Hispanica* cocksfoot adapted to semi-arid Mediterranean-style climates and alkaline soil. This cultivar is targeted to the Victorian Mallee. They have also produced a cold-tolerant form of *Digitaria eriantha*, a subtropical summer active perennial grass targeted to southern New South Wales; a high-yielding annual ryegrass; a winter active tall fescue based on north African germplasm; a hybrid cocksfoot; a crimson clover; a hybrid *Phalaris*; a Sheep's fescue with drought tolerance adapted to a cool Mediterranean climate; a grazing perennial Brassica, which many dairy farmers will be interested in; a highly productive long-lived Red Clover; and a cold-tolerant *Vicia villosa*, and the list goes on.

Tasmania has the potential to be the best in the world at not only research and production but also in conventional agricultural production. Accordingly, the Government will actively promote investment in non-GM research and development in primary industries, including non-GM crops and pastures. There will continue to be regular reviews of development in gene technology and markets and consumer sentiment, which can trigger a review of the policy earlier should developments warrant it.

The decision to extend the moratorium follows a comprehensive review carried out by the Department of Primary Industries, Water and Environment and which received 76 submissions, with an overwhelming number of respondents in favour of extending the moratorium. They found the benefits of maintaining the GMO moratorium in Tasmania still greatly outweigh the risk or any benefit from ending the moratorium.

The Tasmanian Government is committed to promoting and operating an environment and policy settings that support our primary industries to grow. This includes protecting Tasmania's widely-recognised brand attributes and unique biosecurity status. The moratorium affords agrifood and agri-tourism businesses the opportunity, free of charge, to market Tasmanian grown products as GMO-free by virtue of its Tasmanian provenance. The moratorium removes the need for these businesses to continuously demonstrate proof of freedom from GMO contamination. This is important, particularly for the honey industry, who I have received representations from.

Removal of the moratorium would reverse the onus of proof so that businesses wishing to market GMO-free products will need to establish systems and bear the cost of demonstrating the product's freedom from GMO contamination. Conversely, the benefits of ending the moratorium would accrue to GM producers, suppliers of GMOs and related agricultural inputs and businesses utilising GM products. In reviewing that list, you can see that there is little benefit to Tasmanian producers or Tasmanian businesses from that list.

Extending the moratorium on GMOs for a further 10 years enables farmers, agribusinesses and food businesses to confidently invest in their own marketing and market development activities to sell their products and to demonstrate the value of Tasmania's GMO-free status. The Government will work with agrifood sectors to identify how our competitive advantages can play a greater role in Tasmania's premium brand attributes. This may include taking appropriate action to support Tasmanian industry and exporters with branding, market access and supply chain assurances to segregate and differentiate our GMO-free products in the marketplace.

In looking at a complementary and comprehensive approach to supporting our GMO moratorium, I will turn to the state's Trade Strategy. The Tasmanian Trade Strategy 2019-25 and Action Plan contain a number of initiatives that support the GMO moratorium, including: promotional materials; targeted countries and sector-specific promotional material such as videos, brochures, online content and presentation for businesses and governments to use during trade

activities; development of an online portal for Tasmanian businesses to submit market access behind the border and trade logistics concerns, which will be managed by the Department of State Growth to facilitate responses and support from across government with assistance from industry experts; and the appointment of a market access coordinator to coordinate advocacy to relevant Australian government agencies, for Tasmanian market access priorities and provide solutions to technical issues that affect Tasmanian exporters.

Exporters routinely and regularly request certificates of assurance. These certificates are signed by the Premier. They refer to certain product and quality market values that, according to the relevant exporters, appeal to their overseas buyers and assist them in promoting Tasmanian products. Certificates are issued once the department has received reports and/or verification from accredited auditors or suppliers, details of purchase to verify the product. Audit costs are borne by the relevant exporter. We will also appoint trade advocates to champion our state and work with us to help promote Tasmania's capability and our strong reputation for quality to the world. It also includes sector-specific trade events and inward buyer delegation visits.

Tasmania has an enviable reputation for producing high-quality agricultural products that we can be proud of in this well-established marketing advantage. Tasmania's agricultural exports are in excess of 75 per cent of what we grow and is increasing every year. Tasmania produces many commodities such as dairy and red meat, as well as having highly sought after niche product markets. This places Tasmania in a prime marketing position. Our valuable export markets actively seek to purchase products certified as GMO-free, with some of these products commanding a price premium and, for some of those, a significant price premium.

While it is important to acknowledge that there is a diversity of opinion across businesses within each agricultural sector, representatives of the beef, honey, salmon, fruit, wine and organics industries showed overwhelming support for the continuation of the moratorium in their submissions to the latest GMO review. Major producers of the \$337 million Tasmanian beef industry, such as Greenham Tasmania and Tasmania Feedlot, have provided tangible evidence of the marketing benefits of the GMO moratorium. As an example, some Tasmanian beef producers who supply Greenham are estimated to receive an additional \$125 per animal over and above conventional market prices, with their GMO-free status being a significant factor in achieving this.

Greenham has a number of brands. Looking at their website, I have taken some information and it is interesting to note that under the Greenham Natural Beef label, which is the top four of 18 MSA grades, it is guaranteed to be tender and at the highest eating quality, a true Tasmanian taste sensation. Further down it notes what is so significant about this Greenham brand. It says it is hormone-free, antibiotic-free and GMO-free. British beef, yearling or yearling-growth beef only, and those like Mr Tucker understands what that means, is tasty beef. It is fed on our cleanest natural grasses, is carefully selected by Greenham and MSA-graded. It is natural food for healthy minds and bodies. Under their Cape Grim Beef brand, it says -

Raised on rich pastures with nothing else added, Cape Grim Beef is hand-selected and rigorously graded, rewarding you with pure beef flavour - made by nature.

Robbins Island Wagyu is one of their brands. We heard from the Premier how significant it is to be GMO-free for the Japanese market.

Members of the \$8 million honey industry actively promote the GMO-free provenance of Tasmanian honey in both domestic and international markets. Blue Hills Honey, in my electorate,

is an outstanding example of that. They are located on a lovely farm at Mawbanna, where I have been recently, right on the edge of the Tarkine wilderness, as they say, a temperate rainforest in northern Tasmania. Blue Hills Honey has produced uniquely Tasmanian premium honey since 1955. Their honey is made from the nectars of flowering native plants found in the Tarkine wilderness and the nearby fields and meadows of northern Tasmania. All Blue Hills honeys are cold-pressed, giving you the very best of honey coming from a green Tasmania. They recognise the GMO-free status as very significant in the work I have done with them.

I now turn to other advocates of the recent review. The Organic Dairy Farmers of Australia cooperative and Tasmania's largest milk processor, Fonterra Australia, advocated the extension of the moratorium for marketing reasons. As more Tasmanian dairy farms transition to organic certification and processes developing branded Tasmanian organic dairy milk lines, extension of the GMO moratorium will help to develop an environment in which high value industries can expand and thrive. Recently, in *Tasmania Country*, Karolin MacGregor wrote, 'Tasmania is now the country's second-biggest producer of organic dairy and demand continues to grow.'. She quoted the Tasmanian organic market report, which she said shows an increase in the number of certified dairy farms means that 12 per cent of the country's organic dairying producers call Tasmania home, second only to Victoria. Overall, the report says the number of certified organic operations in Tasmania has jumped by 19 per cent since 2018 and there are now 157 certifiable organic producers across the state, a significant increase.

Another one I would like to go to, and I was captured by the play on letters, is the new organisation or the owners of the new organisation, Gary Watson and Simon Elphinstone, with their OMG, which is the opposite to GMO, and are expanding as we speak. I know they are in the middle of calving because Simon told me that the other night. The OMG milk, which I think is a clever and catchy brand, is milk that is not only organic but is not homogenised and has no cream taken out, so each bottle contains a thick layer of cream on top. The OMG fans have been telling them what they think of the creamy texture via Facebook. Some of the comments are that 'it tastes like milk used to taste'. 'We have not had any bad feedback', Mr Elphinstone said.

Between their 550 cows - Mr Watson has 350 at Lileah and Mr Elphinstone has over 200 now at Flowerdale - they produce a few million litres of milk per year but it is growing and it is done through robotic dairies on Mr Elphinstone's property. He goes on to say:

If we have cows that need treatment we will isolate them and their milk is not used in OMG, but we are not having any health issues we have had before so we are not having to treat as many cows as we had previously.

That is an amazing outcome for OMG.

Further in my electorate of Braddon, there are many other world-class premium brands of products in agriculture. The poppy industry is a major financial contributor to Tasmania's economy. The area zoned to poppies is in excess of 20 000 hectares of land. Each hectare produces around 2.4 to 2.5 tonnes of poppy heads. It provides 40 per cent of the US market for legal opiates, supplied in the form of codeine, thebaine - also known as paramorphine - and other variants. Other pharmaceutical chemicals are derived and sent to other countries such as the United Kingdom.

Pyrethrum is an important crop on the north-west coast and is grown under contract to Botanical Resources Australia (BRA), to supply the natural insecticide market. BRA has a processing plant at Ulverstone where pyrethrum oil from the daisy crop is processed into pellets for

export, primarily to the United States. There are currently over 3000 hectares of pyrethrum grown in Tasmania, mostly on the north-west coast in close proximity to the processing facility and where the soils and growing conditions are well suited to the crop. Seven thousand million tonnes of flowers were produced in 2017, powering pest control worldwide.

From their website, they say:

Our specialist plant breeders use only natural methods to continuously improve our pyrethrum plant material - we never genetically modify our plants. Our breeders screen hundreds of varieties each year and select only the hardiest, disease resistant, high assay yielding pyrethrum plants to introduce into commercial production.

In the field, we benefit from thirty-plus years trial research which helps us continuously refine the way we, and our grower partners, sustainably maximise productivity using the minimum of inputs. ...

Adhering to our 'naturally effective' philosophy, 100% of the green waste by-product is used either as a nutrient-rich soil amendment or converted into energy dense bio-fuel to power our own operations and those of other environmentally aware Australian agri-businesses.

Greenhams is one of those businesses.

Tasmania's temperate climate and fertile soils, reliable rainfall and sunshine, all account for excellent growing conditions for lush pastures, vegetable and horticulture, needed for the production of premium quality dairy and other products.

There are many award-winning premium producers of our world-class products in the north-west. We have Lion and King Island cheeses, Greenham, Anvers, VDL Dairy, OMG, Red Cow Dairy, Blue Hills Honey, Tarkine Fresh Oysters, Robbins Island Wagyu and McCain's and it goes on. We have so many factories and producers.

Let us not forget the humble spud. From kipfler to Simplot, we produce quality GMO-free potatoes, sought by discerning buyers in Sydney and Melbourne. I went back to have a look at the history of our spud industry, because it is important. In the early 1900s growers faced soil decline and diseases such as scab, bacterial rot, earworm and the worst of all, Irish blight, which devastated crops in 1909. Redskins were especially susceptible and were largely replaced by Bismarck and Brownells. The Potato Act 1909 required growers to eradicate and prevent the spread of disease mainly by spraying. The sprays consisted of bluestone or copper sulphate, quicklime and water. Favourable weather conditions enabled the potato industry to survive. It goes on to say:

Growers started to sell immature or new potatoes to the Sydney market in 1914 and production was increased by -

and this is the important part -

better cultivation, more courageous manuring and seed selection.

Seed selection was the important part there.

In the 1920s the Department of Agricultural officers worked on breeding new varieties, disease control and manuring.

We can see that conventional agriculture has been a strong part of Tasmania's brand for a very long time. Potato production declined in 1945 due to a drop in demand. Problems eased when American-owned Simplot established a processing plant in Ulverstone in 1962 and Edgells produced French fries, which encouraged the growth in suitable varieties, notably Kennebec and Russet Burbank. Our potato industry has been a significant one in conventional agriculture and continues today to be part of the natural larder that is the north-west coast.

Tasmania is a natural larder with clean air, unpolluted water and rich soils which give rise to the production of over 100 varieties of specialty cheeses, as well as milk powders, butter and other dairy products. Tasmania also produces beef, wool, premium beers, leatherwood honey among many other varieties, mineral waters, fine chocolates, fresh berries and stone fruits, apples, vegetables, award-winning cool-climate wines and much more. All of these products benefit from our unique brand of naturally bred and grown products.

Our brand is one of Tasmania's greatest assets. Brand Tasmania will have a strategic role in brand positioning and communication with key markets. Our GMO-free status is a key attribute of our brand, along with attributes like clean and natural, safe food, hormone growth promotant-free, biosecurity and so on.

Growing trade is a fundamental driver for long-term economic growth in all regions of Tasmania. It is our regional development and subsequent jobs that drives my commitment to our GMO-free bill. We have plans to increase exports to \$10 billion by 2050. Growing trade is a fundamental driver of long-term economic growth in all our regions. Tasmania has what the world wants. In 2018-19 our exports hit a new high of \$3.8 billion.

In conclusion, I wish to highlight the significance of agricultural production. Tasmanian agricultural production was worth \$1.604 billion in 2017-18, an increase of 9.1 per cent over the previous 12 months. Overseas food exports were worth \$740 million in 2017-18, a record high for the state, beating the previous high of \$686 million in 2015-16. Dairy was once again Tasmania's highest value commodity in 2017-18, with the ABS reporting an agricultural production value of \$429 million, an increase of 32 per cent or \$103 million over the 2016-17, driven by higher farmgate prices. The next most valuable commodities were beef, potatoes and wool. Beef production increased in value by \$42 million or 14 per cent, to be worth \$337 million, as the volume of meat processes in Tasmania increased.

Tasmania's GMO-free status remains an important component of the Tasmanian brand and assure agricultural products have open access and premium prices that prohibit GMO products.

**Debate adjourned.**

## **RECOGNITION OF VISITOR**

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER** - Honourable members, I acknowledge that Father Michael Tate has joined us today. Welcome.

**Members** - Hear, hear.

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

## **RECOGNITION OF VISITORS**

**Madam SPEAKER** - Honourable members, before we start, I acknowledge the Legal Studies class from Rosny College. Welcome to parliament.

**Members** - Hear, hear.

## **MOTION**

### **Education - Extension School Program**

[2.31 p.m.]

**Mr TUCKER** (Lyons - Motion) - Madam Speaker, I move -

That the House -

- (1) Supports the Hodgman majority Liberal Government's extension school program, which enables greater options for every young Tasmanian to continue to senior secondary education, regardless of their geographical location or personal circumstances.
- (2) Notes that since the introduction of the program in 2015, it has been embraced by the school communities across Tasmania including district and high schools at Campbell Town, St Marys, St Helens, Oatlands, Sorell and the Tasman District School.
- (3) Commends Extension School staff, students and communities for working collaboratively to drive change in retention and improve attainment.
- (4) Acknowledges that extension schools and colleges work in partnerships to support and ensure senior secondary education is tailored to each student's individual needs and learning is at the heart of the extension school initiative.
- (5) Further commends the 43 schools across the State now offering Years 11 and 12, which far exceeds the initial target.

The Hodgman Majority Liberal Government is continuing to deliver on a long-term plan to provide young Tasmanians with every opportunity to complete their senior secondary education by extending more of our schools through to year 12. Again, the Tasmanian community expressed their strong support for this policy at the 2018 election. We now have an even clearer mandate to push on and extend every government secondary school by 2022.

It is no wonder because the policy is clearly working with retention and attainment rates up, which means more students are staying at school longer and achieving more while they are there.

Forty-three schools have now extended to years 11 and 12 with a further four schools preparing for delivery in 2020.

Research by the Mitchell Institute released in 2017 found each student who leaves school without completing year 12 costs tax payers approximately \$1 million over their lifetime. Quite simply, we cannot afford not to ensure more students complete year 12.

We know our Government's plan to extend high schools to year 12 is already working with more students continuing into years 11 and 12. More importantly, for the first time students have choice as to where they undertake senior secondary education. This is a sensible education reform that is working all around the state. It has been embraced by school communities, students and parents.

Under Labor, Tasmania's years 10 to 12 apparent retention rates were the lowest of any state and were going backwards - 70.4 per cent in 2011 and 67.1 per cent in 2012. At the same time, we had the lowest year 12 or equivalent completion rates of any state in Australia, with only 43.4 per cent of young Tasmanians completing year 12 in 2011 under Labor.

Under a Liberal government, the Tasmanian Certificate of Education attainment is now up by more than 10 per cent. In 2018, 58.5 per cent of young people across Tasmania achieved their TCE. Our policy to extend schools to year 11 and 12 ensures more students can stay in school longer and achieve better results. Extending schools to year 12 is about ensuring students are able to access life opportunities. Research by the Mitchell Institute found early school leavers were less likely to participate in the workforce, more likely to have enduring health issues and more likely to participate in crime and to receive welfare.

The reality is that we need to ensure all students have easy access to quality education as education is the key to securing a good job and be an active participant in society. Our Government's Years 11 and 12 Extensions Schools policy is very popular amongst everyday Tasmanians who want the best for their children and also amongst those who understand the benefits of increasing year 12 completion to the Tasmanian economy more generally. For example, Saul Eslake is a strong supporter of the reform into every high school.

Labor's scaremongering has continually tried to undermine the value of the years 11 and 12 extension programs by claiming that colleges will close. This is so far from the truth that it is laughable. Our Government's clear objective is to provide more diverse learning options for students to complete year 12. This could be at high school or college. It could be through a mixture of vocational or academic courses.

We have continually reiterated that our policy is not about closing colleges and the college system. Rather it is a necessary component in senior secondary provision in Tasmania. Colleges will retain their place in the senior secondary landscape by being more responsive to students' needs, providing contemporary teaching practices like blended learning, engaging at-risk students who would not have attended colleges previously. The extension program encourages schools and colleges to collaborate and share access to specialist facilities and resources through specialist teachers.

A great example of a college and extension school collaboration is teganna Collective, a collective that is part of my electorate. The teganna Collective is a partnership between local secondary schools such as Triabunna District School and Rosny College. Another example of

colleges and secondary schools working together is the Hellyer Regional Collective, which was launched in May. The collective concept focuses on colleges and secondary schools, working together to maximise options for years 11 and 12 students with a focus on retention. We will not be closing colleges under a Hodgman Liberal government. There will be no forced school closures. The only people in the room who have tried to force schools to close are those sitting opposite us. They tried to close 20 schools. Our policy sees schools working in partnership with colleges across the state. We want to encourage this as much as possible.

There is an abundance of evidence that supports how successful our extension schools' policy is. In 2018, 58.5 per cent of young Tasmanians achieved the TCE. The latest publicly available apparent retention rate for Tasmania 2018 now stands at 76.5 per cent, up almost 8 per cent since we came into office, significantly higher than under the Labor-Greens government when it was as low as 67 per cent. Our goal is to lift it even further to the national average which is around 80 per cent. Further, the direct retention rate of students which tracks individual students from year 10 to year 12 across government schools is 72.2 per cent based on census 2 2017 to census 1 2019. This is the highest on record.

Schools such as the Ulverstone Secondary College demonstrate that improvements in student outcomes by supporting attainment of the TCE. In 2017, 64 per cent of year 12 students at Ulverstone High attained their TCE and 14 per cent achieved an ATAR. Ulverstone Secondary College stated in its newsletter:

One pleasing aspect of our move to Year 11 and 12 is the increase in our retention post Year-10 data. In 2015 when we decided to explore the option of Year 11 and 12 our retention to Year 12 sat at 55.3% which was 7% below the state average. This year's Year 12 retention has grown to 74.6% which is 9% above the state average. While we are committed to working with other schools to continue to increase the number of students completing Year 12, we are proud of our results so far.

The school has developed relationships with other providers to deliver a wide range of courses. For example, students have choice of studying level 3 subjects, either through the school or the offerings provided by the new Virtual Learning Tasmania courses. In addition, students are accessing programs such as the Certificate II in Animal Studies through the Yolla District High School. Ulverstone is offering VET courses in construction, furniture making and community services to Sheffield students.

VLT has been launched this year with a suite of 14 online courses, many of which have been synonymous course delivery. These courses support the personalised learning needs of students across all extension schools and colleges and include pre-tertiary pathways with a choice of four TASC level 3 courses, vocational pathways with a VET qualification in community services and access to a range of level 2 TASC courses.

We came to Government with a clear plan to keep more young people engaged in education longer and to create a job-ready generation for the future. Our Government's extension program drives engagement and learning through flexible and personalised approaches to maximise opportunities for year 12 or equivalent completion, regardless of geographic location or personal circumstances. We are getting on with our plan to extend every Tasmanian High School to year 12 by 2022. It should be noted we have far exceeded our original commitment to have 21 schools extended to years 11 and 12 by 2018. This accelerated extension was in response to community

demand. Our investment in the past four years has been significant, with 43 schools extending to years 11 and 12.

Our Government secured the reintroduction of school nurses, 221 more teachers and over 64 support staff, including psychologists, social workers and speech pathologists. The Hodgman majority Liberal Government knows that a good education provides the best chance to pursue a happy and fulfilling life and we want to ensure that every Tasmanian student has the best possible opportunities, no matter where they live.

[2.42 p.m.]

**Ms WHITE** (Lyons - Leader of the Opposition) - Madam Speaker, I am happy to speak to this motion today. I note that this is Government private members' time and the member took only a little over 10 minutes when he had an allocation of 30 to 40 minutes, so not a lot to say about education and that is a bit disappointing.

**Mr Tucker** - You complained too much last time I spoke.

**Ms WHITE** - Sorry? I note that he is not particularly committed to the discussion for the House.

I will talk about what is going on in Tasmania at the moment, and I had a look back. We share an electorate, Mr Tucker. Sorell School, which is where I went to school, has offered a VET program since I was there in 1998. Opportunities for kids to continue their education at that school have been available for a very long time. St Helens, a local school in your neck of the woods and where you spend most of your time, has offered courses for years 11 and 12 vocational educational training for well over 20 years. It is not new. It was happening under former governments.

I took a look at a publication delivered by the Department of Education and published in June 2012. It is Your Guide to 2013 Education and Training in Years 11 and 12 Across the State. Interestingly, on page 12, if you care to have a look, Mr Tucker, it says that -

Some regional and rural schools provide Year 11 and 12 education and training within their local communities. Full-time study at these schools are a combination of the school and other education providers maybe available to ensure that you can complete your studies without having to leave home. Regional and rural schools currently offering Year 11 and 12 programs include, in the north -

- City Campus Inveresk
- Deloraine High School
- Lilydale District School
- Port Dalrymple School
- Scottsdale High School
- St Helens District High School
- St Marys District High School
- Winnaleah District High School

The north-west -

- King Island District High School

- Mountain Heights School
- Rosebery District High School
- Sheffield School
- Smithton High School

In the south -

- Dover District High School
- Glenora District High School
- Huonville High School
- Jordan River Learning Federation Senior School Campus
- Sorell School, and
- The Tasman School.

Provision of year 11 and 12 services at schools in rural and regional areas and VET training opportunities has not been an initiative provided by the Hodgman minority Liberal Government. It has been in place for years. I encourage you to take a look at the work that is available online. Perhaps you might like to have a little look at your Guide to 2013 Education and Training in Years 11 and 12 Across the State. I read out all the schools that were offering courses and many of them have been doing so for years and years.

What did this Government do when they first came into office? One of the first things was to inflict very savage budget cuts across the Department of Education. There was a \$148.4 million cut in the 2014-15 Budget; two teachers out of every single school for every public provider in this state. You say you are providing greater access to education. Tell me how it is better for kids to be in a class when their class size ballooned out. We had an opportunity. Class sizes had been reduced to very sustainable levels for teachers to provide quality education. This Government ripped two teachers out of every school and class sizes grew again. That diminishes quality learning opportunities for children and it makes the task of teachers harder.

They scrapped pathway planners. People had been in the schools working with these young people through high school, helping them identify what they wanted to do with their life, go on to study at college, go on to do further education at that school, year 11 and 12, a VET program, go to TAFE, or choose a future career that might require them to go to university. Pathway planners helped them. They might have helped them set up an apprenticeship opportunity. What did the Hodgman Government do? They ripped them out as part of their budget savings. They scrapped pathway planners and put in a website. That is a pathway planning opportunity for kids at school now. They can jump online and do it themselves but there is no-one to support them to make decisions about what training they might need to do, what courses they might need to elect and what opportunities exist within industry and business in their community for them to pick up work or an apprenticeship or a traineeship.

Consequently, we have seen 2000 fewer apprenticeships offered in Tasmania over the last five years. The TAFE system has been decimated and you only need to look at the National Centre for Vocational Education Research, which published a report in the March quarter this year that shows there has been a decline for completions of vocational education in Tasmania every year. If you look at the comparison of commencements each year from 2015 to 2019, they declined by 11.5 per cent over that period. Completions for vocational training at TAFE for that same period, from 2015 to 2019, declined by 27.3 per cent. That is enormous. It is no wonder we have lost 2000 apprenticeships. Your failure to invest in TAFE, coupled with the federal Liberal Government

ripping \$3 billion out of the TAFE and VET sector, has meant that fewer Tasmanians have been able to access further education to get the qualifications they need to get a job in our state. Do not lecture us about your commitment to education when you and your federal colleagues have completely undermined TAFE. The very first budget that was delivered by the Hodgman minority Liberal Government was to rip millions of dollars out of Health.

**Ms O'Connor** - And Gonski.

**Ms WHITE** - The interjection from the member for Clark reminds me about needs-based funding - Gonski. I remember Tony Abbott standing beside a billboard saying that he would not do exactly what he ended up doing and that he was not going to back away from needs-based funding. What did he do? He did not commit to Gonski. He did not commit to needs-based funding, which means that children across Tasmania, irrespective of which school they are at, are worse off. This is the Liberal legacy for education in the nation. What do we have now? We have a document that has been released under right to information that shows there are more cuts coming.

I have before me a letter sent to the head of the Education department. It was written by the head of Treasury and was sent on 25 June, and it says:

The 2019 Budget included the requirement to implement savings totalling \$450 million over the budget forward Estimates period. Achievement of these savings is essential to the delivery of the Government's stated budget outcomes. The Government has now considered the allocation of the 2019-20 budget savings for agencies and determined that your agency's budget appropriation expenditure shall be reduced by the following amounts -

Not increased - reduced. It is going to be reduced. This is on top of the \$148.4 million that you ripped out when you were first elected - two teachers out of every school, and now there are more cuts coming.

We know that if you hypothecate the savings asked of Education from the \$450 million, it is equivalent to about \$100 million that the Department of Education is going to be required to find. Do you reckon they have the capacity for that? I mean, the savings have been redacted, but we also know that the Treasurer stated that at the end of the first quarter of the financial year - and the clock is ticking because that is Monday - the blacked-out bits in this document will become public.

I am very interested to know what that means for school budgets. Schools always get their budget in October from government. I know the school principals are very nervous about what this means for their ability to properly staff classes and provide quality education for students and there has not been a peep from the other side about what this might mean for students and their education. But what we do know is what we have seen happening at the eSchool, where enrolments have increased by 100 students in just one year and yet four staff have lost their jobs. What could be more front line than a teaching job? The Premier today still could not define what a frontline service was. We know department secretaries do not know what it is but we know that the eSchool has lost four teachers, despite the fact enrolments have gone up by 100 students in just 12 months.

What are the budgets going to look like for schools? What cuts will they be required to make? We know the department secretary has said that they will have their expenditure reduced, not increased. What will that mean for class sizes? What will that mean for quality teaching? It worries me because that is our future. The Government can come in here and spout rhetoric, as Mr Tucker,

the member for Lyons, did about investing in the future, but if you are actually cutting that investment it is pretty hollow stuff, Mr Tucker.

The Government said they took to the election a commitment that they would roll out years 11 and 12 to all high schools, not just rural and regional high schools, by 2022 and that they would continue to fund colleges and not undermine the college system. We are very interested to see how you do that. The very clear commitment that I gave during the election campaign and we maintain as a position is that we will not roll back years 11 and 12, because, as I have quite clearly demonstrated, a number of schools have had years 11 and 12 offerings and VET offerings for decades. I read those schools out for you and that was extensive then; we offered it then. We are not going to be rolling it back. How this Government expects to provide quality education and course offerings that are not diminished when it is cutting money out of the budget and running a college system at the same time, has not been explained. You will have to explain that.

I want a guarantee from this Government that it will guarantee the quality of the course offerings and that teacher support will not be diminished because of your budget cuts and because you are running a dual system of colleges and high schools to years 11 and 12.

I know very well how the teganna Collective is operating; that is in my patch. I see what is happening there and I support it. That is in a rural and regional area and it is terrific. I know myself; I grew up at Nugent, and people would know and are probably sick of hearing about it, but that gave me a firsthand insight into what it was like travelling 25 kilometres to go to my local high school and then another 20 kilometres to go to college when I went to Rosny. I did that every day, five days a week. I know that distance can be a real challenge if you have to travel and then work on top of that. Making it easier for kids to access extra opportunities for education is something that we support and always have. When I was at Sorell in 1998 the then government had just started to roll out VET courses in years 11 and 12. It has been done for decades. It is not a new initiative.

This Government has some very serious questions to face up to and answer. Where are those cuts coming from? How do you expect students to get a better quality education when teachers are going to have to face reduced expenditure and resourcing because of budget cuts imposed by your Government because of your budget mismanagement? You are leading Tasmanians into a \$1.1 billion debt at a time of an apparent golden age and yet you are inflicting that amount of debt burden on the Tasmanian community and making children pay for it by reducing expenditure to schools. How are you going to do that? How are you going to guarantee quality of course offerings for kids who enrol in years 11 and 12 in rural and regional schools? Will all the high schools, when they are rolled out by 2022, have the same quality of course offerings as they would had they gone to college or to TAFE?

I want to know there is a guarantee that there will not be streaming occurring, that the bright are not told, 'You go off and do your course at college and the less bright kids will stay here'. I want all kids to be treated equally and have equal opportunity. Education is the greatest equaliser, but the problem I see right now is the Government has set up a system that could be used to stream students. There is no guarantee from the Government that you will maintain the same level of support to colleges at the same time you are rolling out years 11 and 12 and the quality of course offerings will be maintained, the quality of teaching will be maintained and the support for teachers will be maintained. There is no detail.

I am concerned that at the same time this policy initiative is being rolled out by the Government, they are cutting funding to the Department of Education. The Government has not been very

transparent about that. They have known the magnitude of those cuts since 25 June but we will know about that soon enough. You will have to answer for that soon enough and explain your decisions. You will have to be responsible for those cuts. You will have to tell those kids and those teachers what it means for them, what it means for local schools. Already we have seen the impact on the eSchool.

The motion before the House is not a problem for Labor and we are happy to support it because, as I have already said, years 11 and 12 have been offered in a number of rural and regional schools for decades. We want our young people to have the best quality education. We want our teachers to be supported so they can provide a quality education. Cutting the budget for Education will not help that and that is something the Government has inflicted upon the Education department now for the second time in five years. Remember it was \$148.4 million in 2014-15 and is now an unknown figure, but if you hypothecate it will be approximately \$100 million for the Department of Education to find, because you cannot manage a budget and the Treasurer is out of control with his spending.

I will sum up by saying that this Government still has a lot of explaining to do. I am quite interested to see the Auditor-General's report that will be undertaken very soon. I believe part of the schedule for the Auditor-General in this financial year is looking at the completion rates and what is going on in our schools regarding higher education and years 11 and 12. This Government has never provided the raw data. The member for Lyons, Mr Tucker, did it again just then. He gave percentage figures, but never the raw data about how many young people are staying on to do years 11 and 12 at their local school and how many are completing those courses. We have never got the raw data and I hope the Auditor-General can get to the bottom of that. This Government has been secretive and has not shared the information. Percentages can mean not a lot if you are starting from a low base, but if you are looking at raw data in some cases it is just one or two students. That would be more enlightening than anything you have heard from Mr Tucker or the minister today. I look forward to seeing that because then we will finally have some transparency from this Government. It will be dragged out of them by the Auditor-General because they are not sharing it, but it will be important for us to understand.

[3.00 p.m.]

**Ms O'CONNOR** (Clark - Leader of the Greens) - Madam Speaker, I always have great faith in our young people, in their capacity to learn and to grow and to be active in our community and to drive change. That faith was reinforced last Friday on the lawns of Parliament House when at least 15 000 people gathered on the lawns. There were students there with their uniforms on from schools all over southern Tasmania; public, private and Catholic schools. Those young people deserve our wholehearted support. This afternoon at 5 p.m. the House will be given an opportunity to express their support for those young Tasmanians who are standing up to fight for their future.

We do not have a problem with the wording of this motion. We are not going to vote against it. It is galling to have a conservative government pat itself on the back over its record on public education and public education funding. No one will forget the double whammy of the first Abbott budget and the first Hodgman budget that came within two years of each other and gutted public education funding.

I remember going to school assemblies at the end of 2014 and seeing students in tears because they were having to say goodbye to their arts teacher or their music teacher. Every school that I went to was losing at least one teacher, much loved and valued within that school community. Some of the schools that I went to at that end-of-year school celebration were losing two teachers. That

is the record of this Government. In that same year, from memory, an efficiency dividend was placed on public school funding. There was a freeze on school resource package funding at the same time as there was an increase in funding given to private and independent schools in Tasmania. I remember having debates with the minister for Education over that flawed approach to funding.

We have seen the funding for public education consistently eroded since John Howard was prime minister. Graphs are publicly available which show that since John Howard became prime minister the level of public education funding has declined or the level of public funding for private education has increased over the same period. There is a school of thought that it suits conservative governments to under-invest in public education. The last thing they want are highly informed and engaged young people coming out of our public education system who will turn around and have a look at a conservative government and exercise their critical thinking and their rights in a democratic system and vote them out. It is the standard *modus operandi* of conservative governments to undermine public education around the country and in Tasmania.

What Ms White said is true. The extension of years 11 and 12 to rural and regional schools was when the now senator Nick McKim was the minister for education. The hub-and-spoke model was in place. It allowed for the extension of years 11 and 12 courses to students living in rural and regional areas. This is not new.

**Mrs Rylah** - But you didn't fund it.

**Ms O'CONNOR** - Mrs Rylah, you were not here. Senator McKim was a highly respected minister for education. There was funding available to schools to teach the extension courses in rural and regional areas like Huonville High, for example.

There is a legitimate concern about the future of our outstanding college system under a model which applies a one-size fits all to schools in Tasmania.

I am the proud parent of four young Tasmanians, three of whom went through the public education system and attended Tarooma High and Hobart College. The richness of the educational offering at Hobart College is second to none. The culture, the inclusion, the creativity that flourishes at Hobart College is outstanding. Hobart College's academic results, each year they come in, in the top five or six schools in the state, are second to none. It is an outstanding college.

It has produced, for example, some of the great scientists. Stas Shabala is a Hobart College alumnus. He is the scientist who investigated black holes and contributed towards GPS technology right around the world. He has come back home to Tasmania after studying and working in the United Kingdom and is at the University of Tasmania.

We need to look after our colleges that are established, that are highly regarded, deeply valued by students and parents and that attract a quality of teacher that we should be working towards. It is a concern to the Greens that the Government is pretending you can have it both ways: that you can say you are going roll out years 11 and 12 to every high school in Tasmania and there will be no impact on the college system. It is not possible within the current funding envelope for public education.

We asked the minister for Education during Estimates this year, that if years 11 and 12 are rolled out to Tarooma High, what happens to Hobart College? No clear answer; no spoken commitment to Hobart College's future.

Over the river, Rosny College, another great college which has a media and arts school is producing some of our best and brightest content producers: again, a rich diversity of subject offering, high quality teachers and it should be supported.

I have spoken to educators on the north-west coast at the end of the assessment time when Don College could not find enough markers for their assessments because there were four students at Ulverstone High School who were doing extension 11 and 12 courses, 20 minutes down the road, who had already booked the assessment team. There is a problem here with the foundational underpinnings of a blasé commitment to roll out years 11 and 12 to every high school in Tasmania. You cannot have it both ways.

It would be rare, precious and probably not going to happen, to have the Government be really honest with parents about their plan for the future of the college system in Tasmania. Ms White is right. We have not seen the raw data. In the past five-and-a-half years, we have not heard a single word from this Government or the Education minister that sticks by the colleges that we have in major centres.

There is a compelling argument to make sure that you have years 11 and 12 in rural and regional schools so that students who are far from centres have access to that educational opportunity but we cannot see any justification for doing away with colleges. When you look at the ACT, for example, they have a college system like ours and some of the best academic results and NAPLAN results in the country.

**Dr Woodruff** - Thanks. I went through it, along with thousands of other ACT students who loved it.

**Ms O'CONNOR** - Did you? Well done, Dr Woodruff, and well noted. Yes, and that is the thing about the colleges that we have. The students love it because it is an opportunity to not have to wear a uniform, to experience a rich diversity within the school community, to have an outstanding subject choice and you are not going to be able to have that in every high school that extends to years 11 and 12 in Tasmania.

We have not heard any meaningful response from Government to the issues that have been raised by the Australian Education Union about the unsustainable and unfair workloads that have been placed on teachers.

We have not heard anything meaningful from this Government about how you skill your young people for a future in which robots will be able to perform most tasks. The workplace is increasingly automated. Industries like the salmon farming industry in Tasmania and around the world are increasingly being automated. I saw a short documentary about all the things robots can do. Robots can write journalistic text. There are very few jobs we know of that cannot be dealt with through automation in some way or another. We are probably one of the protected species because, if you have robots making decisions about legislation and policy and people's lives, we are ruined.

It is about priorities. The massive cuts to public education in the 2014-15 Budget left public schools, primary schools, high schools and colleges reeling. I believe they have not recovered from those cuts, yet we have a budget that allocates \$1.4 billion toward roads and bridges. Imagine if we invested even a fraction of that back into our public education system and back into making sure that we retain young people in public education.

We should also recognise that young people are increasingly afflicted with depression, anxiety and a deep worry about the world that they are growing up into. We need to have climate resilient education. We need to make sure there are the psychologists and social workers in place in our schools to support students who are worried about their future.

We are not seeing any acknowledgement from the Education minister or any of his colleagues that this generation of young people has it harder, I would argue, than any generation in modern times. We grew up with the threat of the Cold War. I, as a young person, thought that we were going to be nuked to oblivion by the Russians but the existential challenges facing our kids are inconceivable by the standards we grew up under and circumstances we grew up in. We need to make sure that, right from the beginning of a child's education, we are teaching them about it, we are giving them psychological resilience tools, we are making sure they feel connected to their communities, they feel valued and that they are ready for their future. A hard century faces our young people and we can help them prepare for that in our education system. I am agnostic as to whether it is in our public or private education system, independent or Catholic schools. Every school community has a responsibility to make sure this stressed generation of young people is supported and they know the adults are standing with them.

We will not be voting against this motion. There is nothing obnoxious in it except for the vague self-congratulatory tone but we are used to that in here. In our alternative budget we acknowledge that every young Tasmanian deserves a high-quality public education that nourishes their potential and they deserve clear training and career pathways in an age of increasing automation in which there are jobs coming down the line that we have never even countenanced before. We need to teach our young people skills for rewilding, reforestation, social enterprise, new ways of working and new business models. We need a strong investment in public education to ensure that Tasmania's social and economic wellbeing is protected to the greatest extent possible in future.

In our alternative budget that we prepare each year, as members know, we commit to developing a quality guarantee for Tasmanian schools, setting annual minimum standards for all schools and holding government to account for lifting standards. We will resource the quality guarantee through investing \$32 million for 90 additional teachers and 80 support staff to ease pressure on educators and to lift educational outcomes. We will also allocate an additional \$30 million towards quality school infrastructure.

We recognise that some students need extra support to reach their potential and we would provide funding for 30 hours of tutoring for each student who falls below the national standard for each standard they fall behind in. There is also a pressing need for extra speech pathologists within our school system. We would invest in 50 full-time equivalent speech pathologists, doubling the current number in the public system. This will ensure each speech pathologist works with two schools on average, ensuring they have adequate time to work with all the students who need them.

Young people are experiencing depression and anxiety in increasing numbers. As research that was released last week tells us, the increase in depression and anxiety is not confined to young people. GPs are reporting an increasing number of adults presenting to them with depression and anxiety, which is related to a world that seems less stable, more chaotic and more threatened than it has ever before. We recognise that a quality education is not solely about academic performance. It is also very much about student wellbeing. Our alternative budget invests \$8 million into extra school psychologists, \$6 million for social workers and establishes a climate-resilience program across the public education system.

We want young Tasmanians to be ready for the future in every possible way. We allocate resources toward introducing comprehensive civics education to the school curriculum to ensure young people are engaged and aware of this nation's democratic foundations. We need to recognise that Tasmania's schools are fostering the leaders of tomorrow and we see civics education across the school curriculum as a fundamental reform.

The Greens also recognise something this Liberal Government, particularly the federal Liberal National Party Coalition, has a poor track record on, which is the need to invest in skills and training through TAFE. We recognise the vital role TasTAFE plays in preparing young people for the jobs of today and tomorrow. Our alternative budget revitalises an under-funded TAFE system and establishes a centre of excellence in aged and disability care, an area of rapid and increasing jobs growth. When you speak to people who work in the aged and disability care sector they will tell you there is a chronic skills and staffing shortage in that sector and it is projected that around 10 000 jobs in aged and disability care will be needed over the next 10 years.

I was lucky enough a few weeks ago to attend the Disability Expo out at the Derwent Entertainment Centre. I walked around the stalls and spoke to old friends and associates. There is a persistent theme that the NDIS has been undermined by the federal government and that there is a skill shortage in disability care. I cannot let this moment go past without noting this federal government is crowing about a surplus that is built off the back of a \$4.6 billion underspend on the NDIS. That is immoral, it is criminal and it is harming people who place their faith in the National Disability Insurance Scheme to provide them with that choice, control and access to quality services that enable inclusion and participation in all those areas of life that able-bodied people take for granted. A \$4.6 billion underspend on the NDIS is criminal and immoral and tells you everything you need to know about the Morrison Government's disregard for vulnerable and marginalised people.

Madam Speaker, we will not be voting against the motion. We recognise it has been written somewhere in or around the eleventh floor in order to try to reach, I would assume, Labor, because every time it is government members' time, the motion is all about the wedge; 'Wedge Wednesday', as Ms White says. We should be having good constructive dialogue about how we can improve our public education system and improve public education outcomes, but this is not an ideal way to do that because it is written in a self-congratulatory way and does not acknowledge our outstanding college system and the teachers and staff who work in that system to deliver the best possible public education to young Tasmanians and prepare them for the future and a century which will be, on the evidence, the hardest in human history.

[3.21 p.m.]

**Mrs RYLAH** (Braddon) - Madam Speaker, despite the success of our years 11 and 12 extension program, Labor continues to prioritise politics over and above student outcomes, as we have heard today. They do not support our years 11 and 12 extension program that is making such a difference to young people in regional areas. They want to prioritise colleges over high schools. This is not about colleges versus high schools. On this side of the House we have a strong record in investing in education. It is Labor that has no plan for education and is scaremongering as a poor substitute for policy.

The Hodgman majority Liberal Government is continuing to deliver on our long-term plan to provide young Tasmanians with every opportunity to complete their senior secondary education by extending more of our schools through to year 12. Our model of higher education is colleges and senior secondary in every high school.

The Hellyer collective is an outstanding example of that success. I was there two weeks ago. We are talking joint enrolments, shared resources, colleges and high schools working together, specialising like the Yolla District High School, Mountain Heights, Wynyard High School, Burnie, Parklands and Penguin. They are all specialising in subject areas and subject choices and working together to allow students to work across what is available on the north-west coast for higher education. It is an outstanding example.

As I just mentioned Yolla, I want to talk about specialising and revitalising in school farms. Under the umbrella of the Primary Schools to Primary Industries initiative, school farms provide unique and authentic opportunities for students to learn about primary industries and the science behind food and fibre production. Yolla was totally underfunded and the infrastructure was appalling when we came to government. Quality teachers in school farms are key to providing students interested in a career in agriculture the knowledge and hands-on practical experience and the skills to help them reach their career goals. We know that applies not only in the primary years but in the senior secondary years. The roles within the revitalising school farm model have been filled with strong candidates and include a statewide coordinator as one full-time FTE and three network leaders, which are based at Jordan Learning Sheffield and at Hagley Primary School. The remaining staff allocation will be based on 15 identified school farms across the state that were underfunded by Labor. These positions are now in place.

In addition to staffing, we have committed funding of \$200 000 per annum to support the operations of school farms across the state. The funding will be allocated on a needs basis with consideration given to the size, educational complexity and the nature of the enterprise of each of the identified 15 school farms. We are delivering on our school farms and we are delivering on education. As I said, our model is colleges and senior secondary. It is no wonder the Opposition is weak in this area because I can see you are really concerned about how well our policy is working with retention and attainment rates, which means more students are staying at school for longer and achieving more while they are there.

I go now to the facts behind the schools in the collective. The collective works collaboratively with Hellyer College, supporting all participating extension schools in the collective through providing a tracking coordinator and extension school liaison. Hellyer College and the participating extension schools work in partnership to enable shared enrolments to provide students with more options. For example, students at Hellyer College are enrolled in VET sport and recreation at Penguin High. Students at Yolla are studying VET agriculture at Hellyer College, and the Rosebery District High School students are accessing VET programs in automotive vocational preparation and construction pathways at Hellyer College. In addition, year 10 students at Penguin High are able to study maths methods III with support from Hellyer College.

The purpose of a collective is to collectively ensure every student successfully completes years 11 and 12 or its equivalent. Specifically, a collective will achieve a balance of flexible and responsible learning and training programs, ensuring all students have opportunities to be partners in their own learning; equip every student to be a creative, connected and engaged learner in a rapidly changing world; and improve educational access to our years 9 to 12 students, enabling them to benefit from adaptive, innovative and continuously improving learning opportunities across the collective. The Hellyer Collective consists of Burnie High, Hellyer College, King Island District School, Mountain Heights, Parklands, Penguin, Rosebery, Smithton, Wynyard and Yolla. It is significant and is working incredibly well.

Let us go now to the schools that are progressing to extension. Starting from next year, the new schools that will be coming into the extension criteria are New Town High, Ogilvie, Kingston and Dover District High School. They will begin delivery in 2020. Those that commenced this year are Kings Meadows High, Parklands, Prospect, Penguin and Winnaleah. I have had very positive feedback from Penguin High. Those that commenced in 2018 were Deloraine, Flinders Island District High, Launceston Big Picture School, Northern Support School, School of Special Education North-West, Southern Support School, Tasmanian eSchool and Wynyard High. Those that commenced in 2017 were Bayview Secondary School, Burnie High, Campania, Clarence, Cressy, Devonport, Jordan River Learning Centre, Latrobe, Lilydale, Oatlands, Port Dalrymple, Reece High, Rose Bay, Sheffield, Sorell, Triabunna, Ulverstone and Yolla District High, and the list goes on.

I should mention them all. Those that commenced in 2016 were Campbell Town, Glenora, Mountain Heights School New Norfolk High, Rosebery High and Tasman District School. In 2015 there was Dover High School in partnership with Huonville High School, Scottsdale, Smithton, St Helens District High School and St Marys District School.

Our Government's plan to extend high schools to years 11 and 12 is working, with more students continuing to years 11 and 12. More importantly, for the first time students have choice as to where they take their senior secondary education, and choice is important in these vulnerable teenage years.

Under Labor, Tasmania's years 10 to 12 apparent retention rates were the lowest of any state and were going backwards - 70.4 per cent in 2011a and 67.1 per cent in 2012. At the same time, we had the lowest year 12 or equivalent completion rates of any state in Australia, with only 43.4 per cent of young Tasmanians completing year 12 in 2011 under Labor. Under the Liberal Government the TCE attainment is now up by more than 10 per cent, 58.5 per cent of young people across Tasmania in 2018 achieve their TCE.

**Time expired.**

**Motion agreed to.**

## **MOTION**

### **Hydrogen Strategy**

[3.31 p.m.]

**Mr O'BYRNE** (Franklin) - Madam Speaker, I move -

That the House -

- (1) Notes the potential of the creation of hundreds of jobs in the establishment of a hydrogen industry in Tasmania.
- (2) Recognises that a number of Asian countries, in particular Japan and South Korea, are looking to Australia to provide hydrogen energy to support them in their transition to hydrogen.

- (3) Acknowledges the work being done nationally, led by Chief Scientist, Alan Finkel in chairing the National Hydrogen Strategy Group in the establishment of a National Hydrogen Strategy, due to be released by the end of 2019.
- (4) Further recognises the local community and industry leadership in the Tamar Valley advocating for the creation of this industry in Tasmania.
- (5) Notes that the states of Queensland, Victoria, South Australia and Western Australia all have well-established standalone state-based strategies to maximise the economic opportunity for hydrogen in their respective states.
- (6) Further notes that it is estimated that a hydrogen plant, converting renewable energy into hydrogen for export, would support the creation of 500 jobs in northern Tasmania.
- (7) Condemns the lack of action by the Hodgman Government on this opportunity and their failure to produce a strategy that would allow Tasmania to support the development of this new industry with the hundreds of jobs it would create. These are renewable and skilled jobs that are being squandered by the Hodgman Government because it does not have the vision or passion to make this potential billion-dollar industry a reality for Tasmania.

This is a wonderful opportunity for Tasmania. Much has happened in the hydrogen energy space, in terms of the opportunity presented at Bell Bay. Particularly at a time when hundreds of jobs are under threat by the closure of a large facility, we see the local advocacy by NCDC and the work done nationally on hydrogen is a unique opportunity to replace those jobs.

Just for the science buffs, hydrogen is the most abundant element in the universe and has promising potential as a clean fuel. Hydrogen is not naturally found in its pure form, H<sub>2</sub>, and the process of extracting or producing hydrogen from other sources has historically been both costly and energy intensive. Currently most hydrogen is produced from fossil fuels. It is used in a wide range of manufacturing and industrial uses, including to make ammonia for fertilisers, refining metals, petroleum refining and methanol for making artificial material such as plastics.

Renewable hydrogen is the opportunity here. Renewable hydrogen can be produced using electricity from renewable energy sources such as solar, wind or hydroelectricity, something Tasmania has in spades. Technological advances and market forces, coupled with the global drive to decarbonise the global economy are forecast to continue lowering the cost of renewable hydrogen. Renewable hydrogen may be used as a direct replacement for fossil-fuel-produced hydrogen. Advances in technology, coupled with demand-driven innovation and global momentum for low emissions energy are forecast to bring renewable hydrogen production costs down and lead to opportunities for the commercial scale export of renewable hydrogen.

With the increasing demand for hydrogen driven by global momentum to decarbonise the energy market and remove sulphur from petroleum products, hydrogen generation is predicted to grow. The global industry has been buoyed by the formation of a new global advisory body, the Hydrogen Council in 2017. The group consists of leading energy, transport and industrial

companies including Toyota, Audi, Engi, Shell and Lind. Global demand for hydrogen is increasing and the hydrogen market is expected to reach US \$155 billion by 2022.

The Asia-Pacific region on our doorstep is the largest hydrogen market in the world driven by demand from Japan, China, Singapore and South Korea. The growing global market for hydrogen fuel cell passenger vehicles and the broader energy generation provides an opportunity for many states in Australia to adopt this technology and become a major exporter.

South Korea, Japan, United States, Europe and the United Kingdom have all made significant commitments towards a successful hydrogen energy industry. These countries have established programs to support the rapid scaling up of the commercial hydrogen energy industry. This includes supporting uptake of hydrogen fuel cell passenger vehicles, subsidising or building hydrogen refuelling stations, the development and deployment of hydrogen for electricity generation, trialling or introducing hydrogen-powered buses into their public transport systems and supporting industrial uses of hydrogen energy.

CSIRO released the national hydrogen roadmap in 2018. The objective of the roadmap is to provide a blueprint for the development of an Australian hydrogen industry. It is designed to inform the investment decisions of stakeholder groups that will enable the industry to continue its growth in a sustainable and coordinated manner. The national hydrogen roadmap has identified a number of potential uses for hydrogen including hydrogen fuel transport, remote-area power systems, industrial feedstocks, exports, electricity grid firming, heat and synthetic fuels.

The establishment of a sustainable hydrogen industry in Australia has strong support among researchers and key stakeholders, notably Australia's chief scientist Dr Alan Finkel AO. In mentioning Dr Finkel, I acknowledge his amazing leadership in this area and the work that he is doing interstate predominantly, sadly, to ensure that the opportunity he is presented globally by the move to decarbonisation of many economies. The opportunity that hydrogen presents for Australia is inspiring. I acknowledge his work today.

He has proposed, for example, a hydrogen city to be established where the gas supply of an entire Australian city would be converted to clean hydrogen. The hydrogen strategy group established under the Council of Australian Government's Energy Council has recently prepared a paper titled *Hydrogen for Australia's Future* which reviews the opportunity for Australia to capture the hydrogen export market and associated benefits in the domestic economy. The report concludes that with the right policy settings, Australian hydrogen exports could contribute \$1.7 billion and thousands of jobs by the year 2030.

As recently as yesterday, Australia signed a letter of intent with South Korea to develop a hydrogen action plan by the end of the year. This has bipartisan support in the federal parliament. The announcement comes at the same time that the federal minister for resources Senator Matt Canavan has released a report from Geoscience Australia identifying the regions in Australia with high potential for hydrogen production. The report says coastal areas that have potential for hydrogen production while inland hydrogen production may be difficult for some regions due to water supplies. The report models five scenarios with two of those focused on CCS hydrogen production. It says that Australia needs infrastructure and technological development to unlock their potential of hydrogen.

With the Australian National Hydrogen Strategy, Chief Scientist Finkel who, as I said is to report at the end of the year, has reconfirmed that hydrogen was a big piece of the transition to a

zero emissions economy but it is not by itself the solution. In the dream future where all of our energy comes from solar, wind and hydro - I will pick the Chief Scientist up as clearly hydro is the other renewable energy source that will power our future as a primary source. Around 15 or 20 per cent of that energy will have to be delivered as a high density transportable fuel and hydrogen is the candidate.

The Geoscience Report identifies that Tasmania, both in terms of its renewable energies and its potential infrastructure, particularly at Bell Bay with its deep port and the infrastructure that is already in place, has a wonderful opportunity to take advantage of this moment in time, to establish a new industry in Tasmania. We rarely have the opportunity to see such a global opportunity rearing its head for a state government. We say to the state Government, and the motion makes it clear, that we condemn the state Government for their lack of action. This is a magnificent opportunity for Tasmania and it is one that should be capitalised on.

They are hosting delegations across the country. The Queensland government has already hosted delegations from Korea and Japan and are talking about this opportunity. We are worried that this opportunity will be let slip. We commend the local industry leadership in Launceston in supporting it, led by John Pitt from the Northern Tasmanian Development Corporation. For 12 to 18 months, Mr Pitt has been arguing that Bell Bay and the northern community are primed to work with all tiers of government and industry. There are a number of proponents that are already keen on Tasmania as a location to establish hydrogen energy generation. They are working closely with industry and it is incumbent on government to assist local industry and local business leadership to see this opportunity fulfilled and, with that, the creation of hundreds of jobs in the northern economy.

In March this year, the Government was clearly called upon to get their skates on. In a report from March in the *Examiner*, the NTDC was advocating for action from the Government. It said -

A hydrogen export industry needs to be established 'quickly' in Northern Tasmania to avoid the state missing out as other countries look to tap into the predicted \$215 billion global market in three years, business leaders say.

Bell Bay has been identified as the likely location to set up a hydrogen production facility where over 1000 people could be employed, making use of the deep port with access to high voltage power, water and labour.

Japan and South Korea have developed a shortfall of hydrogen as they attempt to decarbonise their economies, opening up new export opportunities for Australia.

Northern Tasmania Development Corporation chairperson John Pitt said hydrogen has been earmarked as providing one quarter of Northern Tasmania's export growth over the next 10 years.

'The world market is developing at a much faster rate, so the demand for export hydrogen is now establishing itself, and over the next 10 years it could become very large, and eventually as large as our natural gas LNG exports,' he said.

'Even at the low end of the scale, we could deliver Tasmania's fifth or sixth largest export industry from a standing start.'

These are respected business people. Mr Pitt is a retired engineer from a consulting firm that was highly regarded for its work in renewables, working with governments of all persuasions to build economic opportunities for Tasmania. With such a highly respected figure to both sides of the Chamber calling for action back in March, we would have expected the Government to have been heavily focused on this. Instead, we see inaction and obfuscation from this Government. The Finkel Review has been seeking submissions and we are not aware if the Tasmanian Government has made a submission. The minister may be able to respond to that.

A number of states have already established significant pieces of work. For example, the Queensland government produced a document called *Advancing Queensland's hydrogen industry* in the second half of 2018, which identified the opportunity for Queensland. We have to remember that this is a moment in time. If we do not put our skates on, if we do not get into the position where we are able to create the opportunity and support it early in phase of development of an Australian hydrogen industry, we miss the opportunity. The market will be taken by other states along with other opportunities and if we miss out it will cost jobs, it will cost economic development in the north of the state and we will rue the day. The people who follow us will look back and think, what the hell were you thinking? Why did you not take this opportunity? All the markers are very clear; green lights all over the deck for this opportunity being presented.

We are seeing a massive opportunity for the state. The Queensland Government's 2018 *Advancing Queensland's hydrogen industry* is a speculative document that talks about all of the issues they seek to work on. They followed that up in May of this year with the Queensland Hydrogen Industry Strategy 2019-24, a comprehensive strategy working with their coordinator-general working on workforce development, infrastructure, freight and logistics issues. States across the country are taking advantage of this and are working hard to take up the opportunity.

The Liberal Government in South Australia released its Hydrogen Action Plan, and said the state could leverage its wind, sun, land, infrastructure and skills to be a world-class renewable hydrogen supplier. The Government wants to facilitate hydrogen infrastructure and integrate hydrogen into the energy system to develop a world-class regulatory framework, establish trade relationships with partners like South Korea, Japan, China, Singapore and develop its workforce. These priorities align closely with those within the National Hydrogen Strategy. The Premier, Steven Marshall said, 'South Australia is drafting key chapters of that strategy and the state's plan will help South Australia be a supplier of choice for green hydrogen in Australia. Now is the time to step up to the development of a hydrogen economy'. That is an interesting message from the Liberals in South Australia. South Australia is not alone in setting its sights on developing a hydrogen economy. The state has a first-mover advantage; well, so do we but we do not even have a strategy.

We asked a question of the Premier a number of weeks ago about this state Government's work on their hydrogen strategy. The best he could do was mention that when he joined a trade delegation in Japan, someone raised it with him and they had a good chat and it seems like an opportunity. We have to do better than that. That is pathetic. We do not have many opportunities to create an industry in Tasmania that could be world-leading, create hundreds of jobs and add close to \$1 billion to our export economy. This is a unique opportunity and the Government has been asleep at the wheel. It is all a bit too tough.

The Hydro has made a submission to the Finkel Report and it is lukewarm at best. If the Hydro is not interested as a GBE, the Government needs to put its shoulder to the wheel to take advantage of the opportunity.

The state Government's work on this, *Restoring Tasmania's energy advantage*, was released by former minister, Mr Groom, who plunged Tasmania into the biggest energy crisis we have had since the 1960s. He decommissioned the gas power station, there was a drought, Basslink went out and the redundancy asset in the Tamar Valley that was crucial to energy security in Tasmania was already on the market. It cost Tasmanians in excess of \$140 million to \$150 million to pay for diesel generators. The architect of that crisis, Mr Groom, released *Restoring Tasmania's energy advantage* as part of the Tasmanian Energy Strategy. If you do a word search on the document it is mentioned once. It talks about the opportunity for hydrogen in cars and some loose mention that it might be an opportunity but probably not for us, which was disappointing.

There are a further few mentions of that in the progress report but there is effectively no mention of hydrogen in the progress report on restoring Tasmania's energy advantage. We look at the Office of the Coordinator-General. Under, 'Many reasons to invest in renewable energy', in the *Tasmania Delivers ...* document, there are four paragraphs talking about renewable energy. It gives an overview of the electricity system, Hydro Tasmania, TasNetworks, Aurora, Basslink, the opportunities in data, it talks about smelters, biomass, wind, geothermal, retail opportunities in a contestable market and eventually gets to the opportunity to develop a hydrogen production facility to service emerging global demand and gives three or four paragraphs to that. What a pathetic attempt to identify this as a potential jobs bonanza for northern Tasmania. When you contrast and compare to states such as Queensland, they have significant documents, a scoping strategy in the second half of last year and a significant four-year Queensland hydrogen industry strategy 2019-24, a significant document.

Western Australia has done this, Victoria is doing this, Queensland has done it, and the Liberals in South Australia have done it. Yet, here in Tasmania, we have a state government that is asleep at the wheel. There is no discernible strategy apart from passing references and comments being made in a report called *Tasmania Delivers ...*, which is like a small prospectus to invest in renewable energy in Tasmania. It is not even a standalone strategy.

This is an abrogation of your responsibility in government and it is not as if you had been blindsided by this. This is an opportunity that has been raised by business leaders in the northern part of Tasmania and in the member for Bass and the Minister for State Growth, Mr Ferguson's, own seat. This is something that at the last federal election was debated and there is form between the state and federal Liberals, because the federal Labor Party provided a commitment that if they were elected they would support the work that could be done to ensure that the business case stacked up and the opportunity could take a step further towards being realised. Federal Labor recognised it in the federal election, but what did we hear from the federal Liberal Party? Exactly the same as the state Liberal Party - fumbling.

**Mr Gutwein** - Federal Labor got so much right at the federal election.

**Mr O'BYRNE** - At least we committed money in the election campaign to support jobs in the Bell Bay area. You know very well, Treasurer, by interjection, that that area is very nervous at the moment and very concerned about the future of jobs.

**Mr Gutwein** - And not helped by you lot.

**Madam SPEAKER** - Order.

**Mr O'BYRNE** - Madam Speaker, if the Treasurer is so concerned about jobs and the economy, why is the Government not taking this opportunity with both hands? It is a moment-in-time opportunity. It is not like a resource where it is sitting in the ground and at any stage, if the Australian dollar, or the metals prices, or if something stacks up, you can take advantage of it then. This is a moment-in-time opportunity for a new industry in Tasmania -

**Mr Ferguson** - We've heard you say this, you're just on repeat now.

**Mr O'BYRNE** - Not at all. I can understand why the minister is getting sensitive about this. The very clear *Prospective hydrogen production regions of Australia* report that has been produced identifies Tasmania as a high opportunity to take advantage of what is needed in terms of establishing a hydrogen industry in Tasmania. This is a unique opportunity that has been presented.

I can understand why he has his head down and he feels a bit sensitive about this because they fumbled the ball and they know it. You have an opportunity though, and in question time after question time, we have been calling for action from this Government on this issue for months. The advocacy from the Northern Tasmania Development Corporation has been loud and clear for a long time. Now we are hearing in the most recent meetings in the last week or two that some action is being taken, and we are shaming the Government into action because they have fumbled the ball on this. You have an opportunity but the time is running out.

We are hitting October and the Finkel report will be produced by the end of the year. We already have mainland states ahead of us in terms of their well established and produced documents. They are already having discussions with potential markets, they are already talking to equity partners about the opportunity that will be provided by this and, in their frustration - and they are not politically aligned to either party - they have been calling for action from all parties now for over 12 months.

The Labor Party presented an opportunity at the federal election to provide some funding to support the next step and the federal Liberal Party, no doubt with support from the state Liberal Party, failed to lift a finger to support that initiative. We think that was a shame and a missed opportunity. You now have time before the end of the year to put something more substantial into the fill. You have time to potentially take advantage of this, but the clock is ticking. This is a moment in time. As I said, all other states are ahead of us. We have to play a lot of catch-up.

This motion is very clear. It condemns your lack of action on this. We could have already had a number of proponents sitting in the Bell Bay area in George Town talking about this opportunity. Unfortunately, it is only a recent thing where there seems to be some flicker of light from the Office of the Coordinator-General and some flicker of interest from the minister. We acknowledge the work done by the Chief Scientist, Alan Finkel. We acknowledge the leadership through COAG and the Energy minister, Guy Barnett, has signed on to this. We have to wonder, was this signed by the minister? Was it the meeting he did not front in December of last year when the New South Wales Liberal minister moved that motion to effectively support the Tasmanian renewable energy industry and the opportunity and the market that provides? Was that the meeting where in the Estimates committee he forgot he had not attended, or is this another meeting he has not reported?

We know that a federal energy ministers' COAG meeting has finally been called. They are due to have them twice every year and the last one was in December of last year. They have finally

scheduled one for late November. Obviously, with the National Energy Guarantee and the politics of the federal Liberal Caucus in the way here, you have to speculate that maybe the Energy minister, Mr Barnett, was caught up in that political realm and missed what was glaringly in front of him as a unique opportunity for Tasmania.

The Labor Party is resolute and strong in support of the opportunity. We are willing to work in a constructive way to realise this potentially billion-dollar industry for Tasmania and the hundreds of jobs it will create. It will take a lot of work for the Government to catch up to the other states. It has been made clear that if we miss this moment in time it will be very difficult for us to establish this industry in a meaningful way, particularly at a time in the northern region where unemployment is so high, and the kinds of jobs that can be created by the creation of this industry will be of great support to that community.

[3.58 p.m.]

**Mr FERGUSON** (Bass - Minister for State Growth) - Madam Speaker, I will address the motion raised by the member for Franklin, Mr O'Byrne. I do so as Minister for State Growth responsible for working closely with the Office of the Coordinator-General to attract investment into Tasmania. I will say more on that later. My colleague, Guy Barnett, is the minister with responsibility for energy policy. I will be speaking in my response to Mr O'Byrne on behalf of Government looking across both of those portfolios.

That 27 minutes was like a bloke who has woken up in the night with no underwear fumbling around through all the drawers looking everywhere but never quite landing on the clean set of underwear. It was meandering around and around. I think I heard the same speech given eight times. The poor fellow totally ran out of puff.

**Members** interjecting.

**Madam SPEAKER** - Order, could we all regroup please?

**Mr FERGUSON** - That is before we even start looking for socks. Mr O'Byrne wanted to make a few points and he made his few points. Thank you, Mr O'Byrne, for your few points. You have our attention.

I endorse some of what you shared with the parliament this afternoon, particularly your great enthusiasm for a hydrogen industry in Tasmania. We agree - and good on you for bringing it forward - that a hydrogen industry for our country and for Tasmania is a unique and special opportunity that sits before us, but Mr O'Byrne meandered between saying the Government is doing nothing to saying the Government is doing something. He meanders between saying that the Government has been caught asleep at the wheel and then comes back to the point that the Labor Party has somehow shamed the Government into action. Even in Mr O'Byrne's own words, he is not able to settle on whether or not the Government is acting.

I am pleased to advise the House that we really do see this as an exciting opportunity not just for a clean energy future for the globe but a unique opportunity for jobs in Tasmania. I endorse and agree that northern Tasmania is best positioned for industry investment attraction in this emerging and future industry. It is true to say as well that the domestic demand for this product at this point in time does not exist. It is part of an emerging market that we need to embrace.

I agree with Mr O'Byrne that it is great that Labor are supporting this industry. While Mr O'Byrne was economic development minister he did not embrace industry.

**Mr O'Byrne** - Did you not listen to the Leader's speech about the development?

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

**Mr FERGUSON** - Dear, oh dear, Mr O'Byrne. I know he does not like ancient history but this is recent history. When Mr O'Byrne was the economic development minister, he put up the middle finger to industry. He told industry to rack off. 'We are not supporting you'. On the very day that Mr O'Byrne released his economic development plan, which is in the rare book section of the library downstairs, it was the same day that the Giddings Labor-Greens government signed the death warrant with the Gillard Labor-Greens government for the forest industry in our state.

**Mr O'Byrne** - So, for all those people advocating for hydrogen in Launceston this is your contribution?

**Madam SPEAKER** - Mr O'Byrne, manners.

**Mr FERGUSON** - I was there. The member who has just resumed his seat was the minister for jobs. That was a sad time for our state. It happened because Mr O'Byrne's party had dealt with the Greens and formed an agreement to shut down jobs in the Tasmanian forest industry.

They will say that is not true because they say it all the time. Damage was caused in George Town and Triabunna and in Scottsdale and the Derwent Valley.

**Mr O'Byrne** - This is a great contribution. We will send around what you are saying.

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

**Mr FERGUSON** - The incredible pain that was caused to families. The loss of jobs.

**Mr Tucker** - Minister for unemployment, we call him.

**Madam SPEAKER** - Warning number one, Mr Tucker.

**Mr FERGUSON** - Destruction of wealth occurred under Mr O'Byrne's period as minister for economic development. the minister for jobs. They today try to tell Tasmanians, 'It is all a fairy tale. You have us wrong; you have misunderstood our history'. That is your history. You cooked our economy, took us into recession and took the budget into deficit. You did your deal with the Greens, you found a way to shut down jobs in the private and the public forestry sectors and you locked up half a million hectares of Tasmanian forest to keep these people happy. That is what you did.

I say to members opposite who ask, 'Why are you saying this?' You were not here to see the damage that your party did. Even when the Hodgman Government was elected in 2014 with a pledge to tear up that deal, you opposed the repeal legislation. You fought it hard because you still believe in what you had done, which was quite wrong.

We are a huge supporter of the hydrogen industry opportunity. I may be able to say that we all in this Chamber are on the record supporting this new vibrant industry. My colleague, Mr Barnett, has been assiduously and closely working through the process. I can tell you that in time to come you will see fruit for those efforts. The Government has been doing the hard work of developing the policy area to support this industry because we support jobs. We support all of our industries. We are not selective like some. We see that this is a great opportunity for northern Tasmania.

This Government can be trusted to deliver the prosperous and job-creating future, because that is what we have been doing for these five years. We have been very clear on our hydrogen strategy, which Mr O'Byrne wishes to see, that he wishes to know is occurring. The Premier has been asked a number of questions about this by you, Mr O'Byrne, as well as your current Leader. The Premier has been asked to confirm and he has confirmed, as has Mr Barnett, that the hydrogen strategy is well advanced. It will facilitate us as a key player in the future hydrogen market. That should come as good news to Mr O'Byrne or any other member who might have been wondering or if you have had difficulty listening to the Premier's previous answers. You should take him at his word.

I will further outline exactly what that engagement looks like and what we hope it will lead to. I am particularly pleased there has been significant interest in Australia, both at the national level and in Tasmania to develop the hydrogen production industry. In August last year, the Chief Scientist, Dr Finkel, prepared a briefing paper for the COAG Energy Council, of which we are a member, outlining a road map for hydrogen. Hydrogen has the potential to be a significant source of export revenue for Australia in future years. It could establish Australia as a leader in low-emission fuel production.

The Tasmanian Government is working actively on both the opportunities and challenges of creating a hydrogen industry. The Tasmanian Government's Tasmania First Energy Policy sets the vision and strategy for large-scale energy developments including, but not exclusively, hydrogen. As the renewable energy powerhouse of our country we have the renewable resources to be a leader in the production of emissions-free hydrogen. No other state, can match Tasmania's opportunity in this area, which is exactly why we are pursuing this element of what is special about Tasmania as a hydrogen producer. Other states may well in the future seek to produce hydrogen for export, but they will not be able to brand it as renewable hydrogen as we will.

That is because we are one step away from reaching 100 per cent self-sufficiency in renewables. We are proud of that. We are pursuing it aggressively. Further, our state has a distinct competitive advantage with firm, dispatchable hydroelectric generation, which supports the efficient production of hydrogen.

Our hydrogen credentials are recognised globally and nationally and are outlined in key documents such as CSIRO's National Hydrogen Road Map, which indicates that:

Tasmania is a somewhat unique locality as it offers the potential to combine a high-grade wind resource with hydroelectric generation, which would lead to a high capacity factor.

It is good to see the Labor Opposition, and I would expect and believe the Greens will as well, acknowledge the work being done nationally by Dr Finkel. We are part of that. The Hodgman Government is working closely with Dr Finkel and his team in the development of the National Hydrogen Strategy. We were delighted that in his recent visit Dr Finkel acknowledged Tasmania's unique and world-leading credentials that I have outlined.

The national road map also noted the augmentation of Tasmania's hydro capacity, a key Liberal policy, and the addition of pumped storage capacity as outlined in Hydro Tasmania's and the Government's Battery of the Nation initiative and how it can enhance these benefits. This, combined with our existing transmission and port infrastructure at Bell Bay in northern Tasmania, means that we are exquisitely well placed to support facilities at the scale required to supply an international export market. There may also be significant opportunities for domestic use of hydrogen. We are working through those possibilities.

Using hydrogen produced from Tasmanian renewable energy could in the future reduce global dependence on imported fossil fuels and further reduce our greenhouse gas emissions. I believe that we ought to all be able to agree on that.

My colleague, Mr Barnett, met with federal ministers in Canberra only last week to advocate for Tasmania. I am aware he received positive support and acknowledgement of a unique position and positive opportunities. Speaking for myself, I have been engaged with colleague ministers at the federal level and am getting an excellent reception. I am not in a position to outline some detail other than to say the reception is very favourable. Our federal government colleagues totally get it in terms of Tasmania's unique ability to be a renewable hydrogen producer, unlike other states.

Our state is open for business as a prime location for investment in large-scale renewable hydrogen production from Tasmanian renewable energy generation, with the capacity to service both emerging export, and I hope as well, domestic markets, which remain immature at this time. The National Hydrogen Strategy is currently at draft stage. We would love to say more but it is going through that process and is expected to be presented to the COAG Energy Council at its meeting later this year.

There were questions or statements made earlier and there has been a fundamental misunderstanding by the Opposition in relation to Tasmania's role in the development of the National Hydrogen Strategy. The Tasmanian Government is a participant member of that process. We are not a submitter to it. We do not send submissions to a process that we are helping to run. We are on that process and through it, there have been discussion papers released, issues papers and, importantly, industry forums. The Tasmanian Government, including Hydro Tasmania, has been actively participating in these processes with membership and engagement across multiple committees and groups.

For the benefit of Mr O'Byrne, who asked me if we have made a submission to it, no, we have not made a submission to it. Why? Because we are it. We are on it and we are collecting and engaging with industry in order to gather the best industry knowledge that we can and then contribute to the findings and outcomes from that. These engagements include representation on the overarching National Hydrogen Strategy Steering Committee, top-level staff representation on the National Hydrogen Task Force and industry representation on the stakeholder advisory panel.

I believe that will reassure members. This is a good thing. We are at the top table and being not only listened to and knocking on the door and hoping somebody will answer, we are there and, in some respects, we are considered the spoilt child. We are the state with the most to offer and the best place, particularly with niche markets overseas, particularly South East Asia, that are looking for renewable sources of hydrogen energy. They are looking at and working with us.

Our Coordinator-General has been working and I will share what I am able to to allay Mr O'Byrne's falsely made concerns. The strategy for our state as a standalone strategy is well

advanced. I reject any suggestion that it is a late-breaking idea we are cobbling together. Mr O'Byrne says these things but has no reason to say them; there is no foundation for it and the Premier has been clear, as has been the minister before. It is led by our broader Energy Strategy, which I will not repeat, and this Government is leading the way with billions of dollars of investment, thousands of jobs, not only in northern Tasmania but around the state, and particularly in our regional areas which always get forgotten by the Opposition, and long-term economic development for our state.

We have been promoting our credentials as a strategically significant location for hydrogen production and export for which we are recognised nationally and we are not ashamed of the role we have been playing, nor are we embarrassed by this generally okay motion but with the silly line at the end which plays pure and dishonest politics on the part of the member opposite. Most of what you have said in the motion is good but at the finish, you ruined your good work. It gets spoiled when you make claims that are demonstrably not correct. You always do this. You start well but you finish badly.

Generally, the Government is very okay with the first six parts of your motion but not point seven, because that is just silly and not right. I hope I have set you straight on that. I know you may not feel dissuaded because you need a political point to hit today but this motion might have the opportunity to bring us together. We ought to agree. There is a lot to offer for our beautiful state and the people of our state are what make us very special. We have very skilled entrepreneurial and really committed people who want to stand up not just for the hydrogen industry but a range of advanced technologies for our state.

At lunchtime, I was joined by the Premier and the federal Minister for Industry, Karen Andrews, and this afternoon we signed a memorandum of understanding between the Tasmanian Government and the Australian Space Agency - just fantastic. Recently the Morrison Government committed \$140 million to support the mission and projects that will lead to the United States NASA-led mission to the Moon and onward to Mars. That money is not going to the USA; that money is not going to the Moon; that money is not going to Mars. What it will do is -

**Dr Woodruff** - What a big, male ego-centred PR exercise that was. How disgraceful, propping up Donald Trump - the climate denier. That was disgusting.

**Mr FERGUSON** - Laying aside those silly criticisms, that is not helpful. Hear this out.

**Dr Woodruff** - The Prime Minister who loves coal wants to go to the Moon. He does not live on this planet.

**Mr FERGUSON** - The Greens talk a big game when it comes to new technology and advanced manufacturing but that Morrison Government commitment of \$140 million is actually for Australia. That money is for our country and in Tasmania this afternoon we have announced that we are going to be part of that. It is fantastic for our state. Let me tell you why, in summary. One, our hyperbaric facility at the new Royal Hobart Hospital is going to be part of research and development for technology that will go into orbit and into space. Two, we are the place in this country that supports Antarctica and remote and maritime medicine in faraway places from a nearby hospital. NASA wants to benefit from this knowledge, these skills and this technology. They are looking at us. They are looking at Tasmania. This is more jobs and more research positions for Tasmania and in this particular case it is in Hobart, with an upgrade of \$1.2 million for the University of Tasmania's fantastic small but very impressive array of optical and radio telescopes, which is a little-known

fact of our state by our own people. There is also our advanced manufacturing sector. We have so much to offer for a state of our size and we are being noticed.

Back to the point on the role of the Coordinator-General which I promised to do, we understand this opportunity. I wish I was able to say more but ministers often are not always able to say everything we are aware of for commercial reasons. What I can share I will because we are open for business, unlike members opposite, who occasionally but not consistently support the Office of the Coordinator-General. Remember, they promised to abolish that office and the role and then changed their mind when the Launceston chamber asked them to reconsider. Our Office of the Coordinator-General has been the anchor role for attracting hydrogen investment to Tasmania.

Let me tell you what we have. We have emerging industries in Japan, South Korea and China and we have received significant interest from a range of proponents. I am giving you quite a good heads-up there. OCG is working closely with Hydro Tasmania.

**Mr O'Byrne** - That's in the public domain.

**Mr FERGUSON** - Are you happy with that or not?

**Mr O'Byrne** - Yes, of course I am, but it's in the public domain. Don't treat it as something special.

**Mr FERGUSON** - I have told you that we have significant interest from those locations. We are working closely with Hydro Tasmania in a number of areas to promote Tasmania as a location for renewable hydrogen production, not just hydrogen production but renewable. The Coordinator-General is currently in discussions regarding five, not one, separate projects and multiple commercial proponents who are investigating Tasmania as a potential location for their respective projects. The only further information I will provide is that, in some cases, these are only as a direct result of the trade missions that our Government has led into those locations. These proponents see the advantages of Tasmania's ability to produce power directly from the Tasmanian electricity grid with traceability to renewable generation, particularly at times of low market price and with much higher plant utilisation than production specifically linked to new renewables elsewhere.

The projects are all commercial-in-confidence at this time. The concepts and proposals being discussed by the respective proponents are at different stages of development, from conceptual through to early due diligence. None of those proponents are waiting for a document to emanate from the office of the Minister for Energy. They are all working with our state on opportunities that sit before us today. We regard this as an incredibly exciting time. We have been on the front foot. There have been no idle hands. There has been no fumbling of the rhetorical, as Mr O'Byrne has suggested. I understand that while Opposition cannot always know all of these details because they are internal to Government and they are commercial-in-confidence, you should not then allege that they do not exist.

We have put forward our proposition through Austrade in respect to an Asian company that is considering establishing a demonstration plant in Australia. We have made contact. We have put forward a proposition through Austrade for the proponent to come to our state to look at what we have on offer, to meet with key stakeholders and to visit Bell Bay. We want them to have a good look at that as a likely location for a project. By the way, northern Tasmania is fantastic but it is about the whole state. The whole state will benefit. It needs to be understood, with all the excitement or attempt to whip up a frenzy by the mover of the motion, it is laughable for Labor to

suggest there is a lack of action. It is disappointing to see petty politics potentially tarnishing our state's reputation and what others will be observing or hearing coming out of this place. I would be concerned if they hear any of that because it is damaging for a state government and a community that wants to send a positive message, which is that we are advanced, we are receptive and we have an appetite for investment. I do not want to see that being undermined. Hence, my strong arguments about the work that is quite advanced already.

I will be moving an amendment. I will be asking members of the House to support the amendment. It is a reasonable amendment. We could have voted down a motion that is intended to be made for political gain but I am endorsing points 1 through 6. I move a motion and seek to have that made available to Madam Speaker and other colleagues. Madam Speaker, I move -

That the motion be amended -

- (1) In clause (6) by leaving out the words 'would support the creation of 500 jobs' and inserting instead the words, 'could create significant economic activity and employment'.
- (2) By leaving out clause (7) and inserting instead '(7) Notes that the Tasmanian Government is well advanced in developing a Tasmanian Hydrogen Industry Strategy that will facilitate us as a key player in the future hydrogen market'.

The reason for the first part of the amendment is to reflect that we do not know whether the 500 jobs is precise. I am not sure whether Mr O'Byrne would be able to lay claim to a particular number. We would like it to be more. We want to endorse moving on with the strategy and investment attraction. Second, I am seeking to replace the political point 7 with one that reflects the truth of what is occurring and notes that it does facilitate us becoming a key player in the future hydrogen market, as Mr O'Byrne said he wanted us to be.

I commend the amendment. If the amendment is agreed to, I will support the motion overall. Maybe Mr O'Byrne and I are both as guilty as each other of making some political points along the way. That is the parliament. This motion shows that the Labor Party wants to see a hydrogen industry in Tasmania. That is terrific. This Liberal Government also wants to see a successful, renewable hydrogen industry succeed in Tasmania. We see it as a great export product based on the credentials of a state that is proud of its renewable achievements, looking abroad for export opportunities and domestic consumption.

There is a purpose to all of this. Mr O'Byrne has articulated it and I will repeat it. When you stand up a new industry, you are standing up for jobs and we want to create more job opportunities so that people, young and old, low-skilled, unskilled and highly-skilled can take their next opportunity on the ladder of success, which can only come through worthwhile employment. I commend the motion and thank members for their contributions so far.

[4.26 p.m.]

**Dr WOODRUFF** (Franklin) - Madam Speaker, I have a lot to say to this motion. We support the bulk of this motion. We support where it is coming from, which is looking ahead, planning for the future, thinking about renewable energy futures for Tasmania and jobs that will be needed, in this case in the north, because of the changing requirements we have in industry in Tasmania, particularly to phase out fossil fuels rapidly and altogether.

We agree in principle with the Government's amendment and what the minister was trying to do, which is to remove a certain amount of hyperbole and grandstanding the Labor Party has at the end of their motion, and we understand that. Unfortunately, the minister has done exactly the same himself. It is very disappointing to see that he is proposing an amendment that says, 'that the Tasmanian Government is well advanced in developing a Tasmanian Hydrogen Industry Strategy', when he has made it clear that the minister has not provided us with the evidence of where they are up to in the development of this strategy. How would we be able to investigate the truth of that statement? We have to take it on face value, on the minister's word, that the Government is well advanced in this area. I am sorry to say that, given the recent performance of this Government and ministers, we find it difficult to do that on the matter of energy and the relationship between this Tasmanian Liberal Government and federal Liberal Party colleagues.

This is a highly contested space. It is the most contested space on the planet. What we do with energy into the future is the most important decision we can make as a Tasmanian Parliament, as the federal parliament must make, because Australia is the greatest miner and exporter of coal on the planet. We play a huge role in the amount of coal-fired emissions produced planet-wide, which continues to increase the global greenhouse gas emissions and the heating of the planet year on year. It is incredibly important to understand exactly where state and federal governments are up to in negotiations toward a hydrogen industry strategy as well as the Battery of the Nation, which as far as we can tell from the Greens, is just one big puff PR announcement after another, wasting, we believe, \$56 million on a feasibility study when we do not even know who are the major players in this race. Who has responsibility, who is taking carriage of the Battery of the Nation? Is it Hydro? Is it TasNetworks? Who is actually in charge here? You know, \$56 million is a lot of money to throw at a state government to go off and do a feasibility study when we do not even know what stage of the project we are up to.

This is a multibillion-dollar project, \$3 billion or possibly \$5 billion, depending on how many interconnectors are part of the story. These are huge decisions for Tasmania to make. We have already had a federal report. Warwick Smith did not recommend a detailed business case be prepared for a second interconnector because, after his research, he concluded that there was no business case that suggested it was worth the money investigating. Nonetheless, in their wisdom, the federal and state Liberal governments decided to throw \$56 million behind it. There is a lot of money at stake here but, more importantly, it is the future of the planet to get the settings right.

On the amendment, Madam Deputy Speaker, I am not inclined to support something which purports to be removing the hyperbole of the Labor Party but replacing it with their own. If the minister would like to remove the words 'well advanced', the Greens would be happy to support that amendment and I put that back to him for his consideration.

Moving to the motion, it is important that we investigate hydrogen as a future technology source. I note that the first hydrogen test station in Australia opened in December last year; I am not aware of another one opening. Evoenergy was opened in Fyshwick, a suburb of Canberra. It is interesting that this happened under the watch of a Greens energy minister. I am not surprised to see that these technologies, which ought to be based on renewable energy, are being developed early under a Greens government.

In relation to hydrogen, the point is that it is not just possible to be based on renewable energy. Hydrogen can also be developed from carbon capture storage technology, a technology which has never got beyond its infancy because it is very fraught. It purports to be the solution for having your cake and eating it on coal. It was peddled by the coal industry 20 years ago, when we were

coming to an awareness as a country about the dire impacts of greenhouse gas emission increases. The coal industry could see the writing on the wall and was trying to find a way to secure the industry without having to change its practices. Carbon capture and storage was presented as a so-called 'green' alternative for the coal industry as a way of capturing the emissions from power stations and sinking them underground into storage wells situated in rock.

As you can imagine, that is a very fraught industry to establish and technically incredibly difficult. The problem with carbon capture and storage is it has hardly been achieved on a scale in any substantial amount, but it also has, more importantly from the planet's point of view, a large number of emissions that escape and these are called 'fugitive emissions'. It is the fugitive emissions around carbon capture and storage which makes it so dangerous to push as a future energy alternative. We cannot go down that path of using fossil fuels at all, in any form, in the future. The Greens do not support the use of carbon capturing storage techniques for the creation of hydrogen as a fuel, but we do support and encourage the development of renewable energy hydrogen fuels.

The motion before us acknowledges the work of Alan Finkel in chairing the National Hydrogen Strategy Group and their preliminary report proposal was in December last year. They are due to have the final report produced late this year. The report has a number of concerning elements to it, the main one being that Mr Finkel outlines a number of principles to underline a national hydrogen strategy. There are eight principles.

The first principle to underline the terms of reference in the development of the national hydrogen strategy is ambition, with other principles being to be a commercial focus and technology-neutral. The last principle is to be consistent with sustainable environmental management. Mr Finkel writes:

Policies and measures should include consideration of domestic and global environmental impacts and Australia's international obligation. There should be no substantial negative impact on Australia's greenhouse gas emissions ... or the environment.

Well, ho, ho, ho. To hear those words put down at the end of a list of principles written by Mr Finkel for the Australian Government to consider, clearly he knows the political environment he is working within. Clearly he knows the constraints within which he must write a report, because no credible scientist could actually put last on the list of principles that we include consideration of our global environmental impacts.

Hydrogen development must put first our commitment to Australia's international obligations, the most important one being the United Nations framework convention on climate change which seeks to have the whole planet keep our global emissions to below 1.5 degrees. We cannot have as a principle no substantial negative impact on greenhouse gas emissions. We must have as a principle no impact on greenhouse gas emissions.

In this report when Mr Finkel talks about governments he proposes the establishment of a working group that would have an advisory panel with senior representatives from a large number of areas of industry but no-one representing the environmental movement with responsibility for assessing the impacts of damage to the climate. It is all about gas pipelines, distributions, producers and export and safety. They are all worthy things but meaningless unless they are situated in the context of making sure that any export industry established by the Australian Government commits

to keeping us within our greenhouse gas emission targets that we signed up to under the Paris Agreement.

The principles underlying the Finkel review show this move by the Australian Government for what it principally is, which is to throw a lifeline to the coal industry. The coal and gas industries, which both the Labor and Liberal parties still accept massive donations from and essentially are beholden to the interests of, are killing us because we have the highest emissions. We are the greatest exporter of coal on the planet and we are responsible, whether we like it or not, for the emissions that come from the coal that we export from our land. We can do something about that. We can stop doing it and we have to. We do not have a choice about it.

There is another way. The Australian Greens have detailed the other way in yet another policy we have produced. I will let the Government know because I know they take an interest in the work we do in this area. It does look at a lot of the detail and it costs how we can move away from giant multi-national coal and gas companies that extract our resources for free, polluting the local environment, paying no tax to Australia and how instead we can replace those with clean energy exports which would include renewable energy transformed into hydrogen or ammonia and exported to Asia through underground cables.

This is a great opportunity for Australia. We are in great danger of ruining our reputation even more than we already have by continuing on with the madness of opening up the Adani Coal Mine. I am sure that people would be interested to know that the Bob Brown Foundation is having the inaugural launching of the film, *The Adani Convoy*, which will be shown at the State Theatre on Thursday week if people would like to look at the success of the convoy in raising people's awareness.

**Mr O'Byrne** - And getting a Senate seat in Queensland for the Greens and polarising Queenslanders and delivering a conservative government. Hooray and well done.

**Dr WOODRUFF** - I am raising people's attitudes in regional Australia, being a voice for people, being a voice for people in local communities in outback Australia who are in a wilderness of seats, like Barnaby Joyce's.

**Mr O'Byrne** - So you go and polarise that community. You poke them in the eye.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER** - Order.

**Dr WOODRUFF** - Do you call the global strike for climate polarising?

**Mr O'BYRNE** - No, I do not. Could you take that back? You are verballing me. A point of order, I take offence to that. I was not referring to the global climate strike. I am supportive of that action. For you to infer otherwise is offensive.

**Dr WOODRUFF** - No, I said would you call that polarising.

**Mr O'Byrne** - No, that is not what you said.

**Dr WOODRUFF** - My intention was to use the word 'would'. Would you call that polarising?

**Mr O'Byrne** - No.

**Dr WOODRUFF** - No, there you go.

**Mr O'Byrne** - But that is not what you did.

**Dr WOODRUFF** - Bob Brown and all the people who were involved in that convoy, all the people involved standing in communities -

**Mr O'Byrne** - Delivered you a Senate spot in Queensland. Well done, you got one senator in Queensland.

**Dr WOODRUFF** - It provided a voice just like the global strike for climate has provided a voice for young people who care about their future, provided a voice for regional communities in Queensland and New South Wales who were deeply concerned that they had people running for parliament who support the Adani Coal Mine. That is the bottom line. Someone has to speak for those people because it will not be the Labor Party and it will not be the Liberal Party. It is all the same issue. This is the point.

**Mr O'Byrne** - This superiority is obscene.

**Dr WOODRUFF** - It is not about superiority. It is facts. It is science and reality. There is no just transition on a dead planet.

**Mr O'Byrne** - No, we are talking about your political strategy, not the content.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER** - Order, Mr O'Byrne, you have made your contribution. I ask that you let the member make a contribution.

**Dr WOODRUFF** - It is an interesting lens that Mr O'Byrne looks through; a lens that looks through the pure politics of retaining a seat. How fascinating. How instructive. That is how the Labor Party thinks and that is why we are here where we are today. The Greens are interested in the future and looking at the impact of climate change, which is catastrophic. We are on the brink of a precipice.

It is clear that a fuel like hydrogen is a beneficial fuel for the future as long as it is based on renewable energy, as long as it is not based on carbon capture and storage emissions. The work that has been undertaken at the international level recognises what I have been talking about.

The International Renewable Energy Agency - IRENA - produced a report in September 2018 called Hydrogen from Renewable Power, Technology Outlook for the Energy Transition. That report also makes the point that to achieve the targets in the Paris Agreement, the global energy system must undergo a profound transformation from one largely based on fossil fuels to an efficient and renewable low-carbon energy system. At the moment, the report says over 95 per cent of current hydrogen production is fossil-fuel based. Only around 4 per cent of global hydrogen supply is produced by electrolysis. We need to dramatically change that balance so that we are no longer reliant on fossil fuel-based hydrogen production but we look instead to renewable energy as the basis for that production.

One of the things we need to do in tandem with a national hydrogen strategy - and I have little faith that it is going to do the things that it needs to do, given the proposal that Alan Finkel has prepared - is to put more funds into the Australia Renewable Energy Agency which has been working in partnership between government and industry now since Christine Milne, the Leader of

the Australian Greens at the time, established the agency as part of the conditions of our role when we were in the balance of power.

Although Tony Abbott, when he was the prime minister did his very best to kill IRENA and every good part of the renewable energy strategy that the Greens had successfully brought in, he could not do it because it is such a successful body. It has produced amazing outcomes, far outstripping the dreams of people in the early days about what could be achieved.

The Renewable Energy Agency has paid huge dividends to the amount of money that was invested into it. Unfortunately, it was cut. At the beginning of the last term of parliament, the Liberal and Labor parties teamed up and stripped half a billion dollars from IRENA's budget. Shame on them because that is money that has been so well invested for Australia's future.

**Ms O'Connor** - Parliamentary friends of coal, anyone?

**Dr WOODRUFF** - That is right, thank you for reminding me. Parliamentary friends of coal, another opportunity for the Labor and Liberal Party members to stand together and speak for a fossil-fuel future against the interests of young people who are striking for a climate action.

The Greens have a policy commitment to reinstating the IRENA funding and investing a further \$500 million into it. We also have a commitment to a rolling \$300 million annual budget and an allocation of an extra \$10 million into funding the Clean Energy Finance Corporation. It is that level of commitment that we need to make, that the Greens are prepared to make, to a renewable future that will provide the jobs that have been talked about by the fossil fuel industry. That is where the jobs of the future need to be. We need to talk about what a just transition means.

It does not mean keeping coal-fired stations open. It does not mean keeping thermal coal mining going after 2030. No, it means ending those things and finding renewable industries which are already there for workers to go to. Workers in Queensland, New South Wales and Tasmania, we need a plan. Like it or not, the end of fossil fuels is coming and bring it on.

We have an amendment we would like to propose to cement what I believe is underlying the intention of the Labor Party's motion. It is not stated clearly enough. The intention is to rule out the possibility that carbon capture and storage could be used to derive hydrogen in production in Tasmania. It is not likely but we want to make it very clear. A report was released by the Australian Government, Geoscience Australia has produced maps, and the minister may be aware of these, of prospective hydrogen production regions in Australia. It does include Tasmania as a place that has prospective potential for hydrogen production in all of these maps.

They have five scenarios and each of these scenarios provides different options for the production of hydrogen. The first scenario is renewable wind, solar and hydropower resource potential. The second is renewable hydrogen from future coastal production. The third scenario is renewable hydrogen, coastal or inland generation. The fourth is carbon capture and storage hydrogen, which is in an advanced development stage. The fifth is carbon capture storage hydrogen, greenfield areas. Three of these scenarios are based on renewable energy as the underlying resource for the production of hydrogen and two of them are based on carbon capture and storage, hydrogen as the underlying source. We have a motion here that would come after point 6.

Madam Deputy Speaker, I move -

That the motion be amended by inserting new clauses after clause (6) -

- (a) Notes that Geoscience Australia mapping shows that Tasmania has a high potential for hydrogen production through electrolysis, and supports the production of hydrogen through electrolysis in Tasmania.
- (b) Calls on the Government to rule out production of hydrogen in Tasmania from fossil fuel-derived hydrogen coupled with carbon capture and storage as proposed in scenarios 4 and 5 in the Geoscience Australia Prospective hydrogen production regions of Australia.

This cements what I believe is the basis for the probability of hydrogen production in Tasmania, which is that it would be based primarily from wind energy and possibly from hydro energy and solar. In all probability, it would not be based on fossil fuels coupled with carbon capture and storage. That is unlikely but, given the trajectory of where we are in making strong statements about the need for new industries to not be based on fossil fuels, we would be comfortable with this amendment because it makes that very clear. I am happy to circulate the maps from Geoscience Australia. The positioning of the different areas that are suitable is not really important. The relevant thing is that scenarios 4 and 5 in the Geoscience Australia report, which the amendment refers to, simply say that scenario 4 is carbon capture and storage hydrogen and scenario 5 is carbon capture and storage hydrogen, greenfield areas. Both scenarios refer to carbon capture and storage.

[4.55 p.m.]

**Ms OGILVIE** (Clark) - Madam Deputy Speaker, I will make a brief contribution, not being an expert in hydrogen production. I thank the member for Franklin for bringing on what has, perhaps, been the best debate in all of the three days since I have been back. It does seem to be the sort of thing we ought to be debating in this House. Industry development is a very difficult thing to do. It requires vision, guts and energy and a degree of cooperation and we are seeing that in the House today.

I thank the minister. He mentioned today's event of the signing of the agreement between the Australian Space Agency and the Liberal Government to assist in developing industry to tap into what is a \$350 billion industry. It is based, particularly in the south of the state, around our physics department, R&D Commercialisation capacity and our telecommunications expertise. I love engineers. I have said that in this House before. I love them so much I married one and I am very excited about science and engineering and what we can do for our future in that regard.

I am very pleased to see that the Labor Party is pushing hard for new, clean industry development, the space industry also being clean industry development. The debate so far has gone into the detail of how best to create hydrogen fuel, the power and how to set up that industry. I understand through my discussions with the minister that, and I will take this on faith, the plans and the discussions are well advanced and that those conversations that have been emanating from the north of the state, particularly with key industry stakeholder involvement, have found a receptive environment within parliament on all sides of the House, so this is a good thing.

A couple of amendments are being discussed around the Chamber. My personal view, although I have yet to hear the discussion on the amendments, is that it is probably appropriate to tone the language down a little. I understand where you are coming from, Mr O'Byrne, and the motion -

**Mr O'Byrne** - I am trying to prod them into action.

**Ms OGILVIE** - A call to action is excellent and they will love your sales ability with this, so keep going, it is really good. Before you know it, you will land the project and that is what we want to see. Language matters so I am in favour of toning that part down.

As far as my response to the Greens proposal, I am yet to hear what the other sides of the House think. Perhaps it is premature to dictate what the scientists might develop and propose and an open mind at this stage, not being an expert in this matter, is where I would land on that. I say that by way of assisting thinking in the Chamber.

It is important that we, as a parliament, are seen to show confidence in Tasmania, confidence in our ability to identify niche markets, to develop industry, to work together as a council of elders in this place to land those major projects that cut across parliamentary terms and governments. If we are able to get everybody on board for these sorts of projects and major seismic shifts in industry development, particularly around energy that requires a lot of investment, and show that confidence and stability we have a state to deliver jobs, jobs, jobs, and to address cost of living with not just for industry but residential as well, and we know it really bites in winter. My bill has been terrible because I have been at home so we have had the heaters on. We are living with that stuff. We want the residential pricing as good as we can possibly get it and we want good energy pricing to be able to attract major allied industry to the state. That has been a model that has worked for us for a long time and I hope it will continue.

[5.00 p.m.]

**Mr FERGUSON** (Bass - Minister for State Growth) - Madam Speaker, in 15 seconds I can simply say that I do not have a brief on the proposed amendment from the Greens. I am happy to look at it and discuss it with my colleague minister but, at this point in time of the debate the Government would not be able to support it as worded.

[5.00 p.m.]

**Mr O'BYRNE** (Franklin) - Madam Speaker, on indulgence, I can indicate that the Labor Party will support the first Government amendment as related to the changes to creating significant economic activity. We do not support the second Greens amendment but would support the first amendment. The second one we believe is redundant because we refer to renewable energy and it is not the intent of the motion not to use conversion of renewable energy into hydrogen, so we believe we are only talking about renewables.

**Madam SPEAKER** - Dr Woodruff, do you want to make any alterations before the vote is put? No? They are very tough, the time has expired and I have to put it as it is.

**Amendment to amendment negatived.**

**Amendment agreed to.**

**Motion, as amended, agreed to.**

## **MOTION**

### **Global Climate Strike**

[5.03 p.m.]

**Ms O'CONNOR** (Clark - Leader of the Greens - Motion) - Madam Speaker, I move -

That the House -

- (1) Acknowledges on 20 September 2019 as part of a Global Climate Strike, more than 15 000 people gathered on Parliament House Lawns in Hobart, with others striking around the state in Launceston, Devonport, Burnie, Wynyard, Zeehan, Currie and St Helens.
- (2) Recognises there is widespread and growing public demand for climate action in the form of mass mobilisation and protest around the state, country and the global community, with an estimated 150 million people taking part in the global climate strikes.
- (3) Commits to standing by young people and the wider community in their fight for climate action and for their futures.
- (4) Supports the global climate strike movement.

We brought this motion forward to give every member of the House an opportunity to tell young Tasmanians that they stand with them in their fight for a safe climate. Madam Speaker, I note that you were there at the climate strike on Friday, but for those of us who were there on Friday, the strength of the feeling of young people, their mums, dads, aunts, uncles and friends, and their fear for their future is very real and as a parliament we must respond to that. We have to let young people know that we take their concerns seriously and that we are committed to climate action.

My colleague, Dr Rosalie Woodruff, stood up on the adjournment last night and took the House through some of the science, and I will just restate some of that now. Since 1850, global temperatures have risen by 1.1 degrees and when you look at the science, right now we are heading to 4 degrees of warming by the end of the century. Carbon dioxide levels have risen 2 per cent in 2018, so in just a single year, when we need to be bringing our carbon dioxide, CO<sub>2</sub> equivalent and our methane levels down, they are still rising. In the past four years emissions have risen by 20 per cent on the previous five years. No wonder young people are fearful. No wonder they are taking to the streets in their tens and hundreds of thousands. What they are demanding of us, of every parliament and every level of government, is leadership.

This motion is an opportunity for every person in this place to send a very simple message to young Tasmanians that while we might disagree on the approach - and Dr Woodruff and I will always stand with the science - we recognise the concerns of young people. We are committed to them and we will stand with them in their fight for a safe climate.

Overnight the Prime Minister, Scott Morrison, who highly regrettably made a decision not to attend the UN Climate Summit, has made a statement that he wants children to feel positive about their future. I do not know which young people the Prime Minister speaks to apart from his own children, but I suggest that if he had attended a climate strike or had gone to the UN Climate Summit and spoken to Greta Thunberg and her colleagues there, he would understand that is a glib and offensive statement to young people. It dismisses their reality and, unlike the Prime Minister, the young people who took to the streets have a pretty clear understanding of the future that faces them. They know this is going to be a hard century for humanity and because they have a clear understanding of the science and the potential impacts of global heating, many of them are not feeling positive about the future.

There is a growing trend of young couples making a decision not to have children because they do not feel it can be justified in a time of climate emergency. There is an exponentially growing trend amongst young people to go vegetarian or vegan because they know the impact that industrial farming and deforestation for beef production is having on the planet. About 17 per cent to 20 per cent of total global emissions come from deforestation and much of that deforestation is as a result of human beings' apparently insatiable appetite for meat. Young people are making decisions not to fly, not to travel internationally. They see Greta Thunberg in that yacht sailing to New York to the climate summit and they understand that was a symbolic and powerful gesture and a protest against the volcano of emissions that comes out of domestic and international air travel.

We are dealing with a younger generation here which is going to make seismic and sudden shifts to our social and economic structures. As Greta Thunberg said, those grownups in the room - and I am paraphrasing her here - who do not take the science seriously, who pay lip service to young people demanding climate action, will never be forgiven by younger generations today, and nor should they be. As Greta said at the UN, for 30 years the science has been clear, for 30 years political leaders, national leaders have known about global heating. For at least that long the major energy companies like BHP and Exxon have known that their business model is based on poisoning the atmosphere, harming humanity, driving species to extinction and desertifying large tracks of planet Earth. Young people will rightly not forgive leaders who ignore the science, leaders who play deaf to the science, deaf to the concerns of informed people, the Greens, over a very long time and kept on truckin' down that 'business as usual' pathway, which is all about endless growth the and making of money. That model is being rejected by young people the world over, and rightly so.

We have, in the course of parliament this week, made a very clear, strategic decision that we will focus on climate, the response to global heating, Tasmania's preparedness for rapidly accelerating climate shifts. We will do that in every parliamentary week and out in the public domain. As far as we are concerned, it is the single most important, most urgent issue, that this parliament and every parliament in the world, has to deal with. If we do not get this right, humanity is going to hell in a hand basket.

We have 10 years, that is what the science is telling us. We are at a critical point in the planet's history. This is a moment that demands courage and strength. Those of us in privileged positions of leadership, elected to parliaments to lead, to make decisions in the public interest, we must lead.

When students are striking in record-breaking numbers and cities are being locked down by the protesters, when the Arctic is on fire and the Amazon is ablaze and Pacific Island nations are pleading for action, leaders cannot continue to ignore and dismiss the evidence of the climate emergency around us.

Only a few weeks ago, Hurricane Dorian slammed into the Bahamas, a storm the likes of which has never been seen before. This hurricane stalled over the Bahamas for about 48 hours and pulverised island communities. We still do not know what the human toll was from Dorian but there is one thing we do know: it will not be the last super-storm the Bahamas sees. That is the compounded tragedy of this. It is poor people, people who are marginalised and dispossessed, who will suffer the worst consequences of global heating. The excesses of the western world and the wealthy world, the blind business-as-usual model of western world leaders is harming people in poor countries the most. That places the most enormous moral responsibility on those of us who are in positions of leadership.

For too long, humanity has known about the risks of inaction on climate change and put it into the too-inconvenient basket. These excuses, and the denialism that goes with them, have been deliberately perpetrated by vested interests who continue to profit from climate destruction. Those vested interests right now, are propping up their toxic business model, in part by making significant donations to the major parties. That is a very significant part of the reason why we cannot get a commitment to real action at the national level, and that is a tragedy.

We urgently need to get the dark and dirty money out of politics. We urgently need electoral reform. As a result of this dark money, the inertia in the economic system, we have done nowhere near enough as a society to address our emissions or prepare for the consequences of global heating. They are coming at us fast. Things have to change; there is no choice.

The School Strike for Climate Movement has consistently made three demands of our governments and of our leaders: no new coal, oil and gas projects and that includes the Adani Mine; 100 per cent renewable energy generation and exports by 2030; and to fund a just transition and job creation for all fossil fuel workers and communities. Action on these demands is a necessary minimum. Those who criticise the movement for being too radical or unrealistic are simply demonstrating a failure to understand the reality of the present situation. The truly unrealistic scenario would be to perpetuate the status quo and expect there will be no consequences.

Every decision we make must be to preserve as much of the habitability of our planet as possible and that has to happen on a national and international stage, and also on our beautiful little green heart-shaped island.

In addition to the Schools Strike for Climate's three universal demands, it is critical that in Tasmania we do everything possible to protect, preserve and restore our forests. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change has repeatedly stated that forests are an essential part of climate mitigation. We have to protect the forests that we have and we have to re-wild degraded landscapes, reforest large tracts of the Earth in order to draw down carbon and methane from the atmosphere to give our kids half a chance for a habitable planet.

A Greens minister commissioned and undertook the Forest Carbon Study to show they currently store the equivalent of more than 3000 megatonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>. We simply cannot afford to lose those forests and to release the carbon that they are storing into the atmosphere as we know it will be in the atmosphere for generations. It is immoral and a crime against nature to log them. That is why it is so dispiriting as Greens members in this place to get up and ask questions of ministers about action on climate and about the 356 000 hectares of high-conservation-value forests that were set aside for protection.

Those forests are not a wood bank; they are a carbon bank. They are a carbon bank and a gift to the world. It is our moral responsibility to protect those forests. I do not know how the Premier and his ministers can justify, or can look at kids, and countenance logging those forests. I cannot understand what kind of mental space you have to be in to countenance that.

It is also important to recognise the significant and direct impact the changing climate is already having in Tasmania. Every member knows about this. In the last few years we have lived through biblical floods and devastating bushfires: the fires of last summer, threatening communities, doing unreparable damage to the Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage areas. Six per cent of the TWWHA burned in the last fires. As members in this place well know the landscapes that burned are Gondwanan landscapes. They are not fire adaptive. Rain forests are not fire adaptive. Much of the damage from last summer will never, ever be repaired.

Droughts are also inflicting communities and farmers. We know that the east coast is tinder dry. The experts tell us that these threats will only increase in both frequency and severity. What was once considered extreme is now the new abnormal. We must be implementing adaptation plans that fully recognise and confront the challenges we face. We need to acknowledge the emergency that we are in. Around the world 1020 local governments and jurisdictions have declared a climate emergency.

Although the last time we moved to have this parliament recognise the science and declare a climate emergency, both parties voted against it. We will be bringing that back. We will give this parliament an opportunity to do the right thing to declare a climate emergency and commit to meaningful and direct action, because if there is one thing that gives young people hope, it is action.

We are concerned about the regrettable lack of adaptation planning for Tasmania. We cannot see any evidence of strategic adaptation planning across the three levels of government and, unfortunately, there is no transparency about the information that is already at hand. A news report in today's *Advocate* is headlined 'Coastal erosion report secrecy', and says:

Progress on the Burnie to Wynyard leg of the Coastal Pathway has stalled as the state Government refuses to publicly release a report on erosion.

For the record, that coastal erosion mapping was started when I was the climate minister and it was always intended to be made public. You equip and prepare communities for the future. We did coastal erosion mapping and sea level rise mapping and the sea level rise mapping we made public. The coastal erosion mapping we were working on. There is no excuse for not telling people the truth because if you do not tell people the truth they are not prepared for the reality. It is the least government can do. If it cannot commit to meaningful, direct climate action, the very least it can do it make available the science to communities to help them prepare and be ready for the future.

Hundreds of communities, cities, states and countries have accepted the truth on the dire state of our warming world and have declared a climate emergency. The language of a climate emergency is spreading across the planet as the need for action exponentially escalates. We know that the declaration of a climate emergency is not a solution but it is the beginning of one. It is a declaration of leadership and a commitment to future generations.

**Government members** interjecting.

**Madam SPEAKER** - Excuse me, Ms O'Connor. Could I ask the gentlemen to get seated closer together so that they can whisper more quietly, instead of that loud whispering? Thank you, please proceed.

**Ms O'CONNOR** - It is regrettable that the minister, Mr Jaensch is not listening to this. This is the same Mr Jaensch who, when he was working in the north-west at a local government level, was on the climate action council. Shame on you.

**Mr Jaensch** - Shame on you for misrepresenting a climate report that -

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

**Ms O'CONNOR** - You can make your contribution when you get up.

**Mr Jaensch** - Shame on you. You are the one who is misleading.

**Madam SPEAKER** - Order, Mr Jaensch, thank you.

**Ms O'CONNOR** - Declaring a climate emergency provides the necessary framework for all of our decision-making and planning. We have already seen this process begin in earnest with the Hobart, Launceston and Kingborough councils and, as we know, the Glenorchy City Council will debate a climate emergency motion on 30 September. Those who accuse us of causing unnecessary alarm and not cosseting children so they feel positive about their future, are dangerously foolish. Alarm is both a necessary and logical response to the circumstances we face. Hiding from the truth now will only serve to make things worse for everyone as we move into the future. As political leaders, we have an obligation to act. It is a pressing moral obligation. We must recognise the truth of the climate emergency and do everything in our power to both mitigate its development and adapt to its challenges. Political parties in this place have many differences but we are all made up of people who chose this path of political life to make positive change. We hope that the community's voice on this issue will help those in power to rediscover this sense of purpose.

Global heating is the greatest threat to this island and the greatest threat to our children's future. Tackling it will take all of us working together. That is why we have brought this motion on today in the language it is written. We have had to have a whack on the way through just so that we are telling the truth in this place, but I urge speakers who come next to go back to the substance of the motion, have a look at the wording and ask yourself this: if you do not vote for this, how will you look at your kids tonight?

[5.25 p.m.]

**Mr GUTWEIN** (Bass - Treasurer) - Madam Speaker, I thank the member for Clark for bringing this motion forward.

**Ms O'Connor** - Leader of the Greens, thanks.

**Mr GUTWEIN** - Even when I am thanking you, you cannot be gracious. That is a matter for you and it says more about you than it does about me, to be frank.

**Dr Woodruff** - If she didn't say it, I would have. It's just a mark of respect.

**Madam SPEAKER** - Order.

**Mr GUTWEIN** - In terms of the motion before us, I believe in her opening remarks the member said that its intention is to recognise the concerns of young people. I accept that may be the way that it is framed but, to be honest, as a government there are parts of it that I will be seeking to amend, but at the end of the day I hope that you can see that -

**Ms O'Connor** - Well, thanks for showing us your amendments in such a respectful way - not.

**Mr GUTWEIN** - I will circulate those in a moment, but I believe that the amendments I want to move will acknowledge very much the concerns of young people.

**Ms O'Connor** - And then you'll have a bit on the back end congratulating yourselves so that we can't support it.

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

**Mr GUTWEIN** - There are a couple of matters I want to speak about and touch on. It is interesting that the rally on Friday -

**Ms O'Connor** - Where were you?

**Mr GUTWEIN** - Just excuse me for one moment. I have a daughter who is vegan and has a range of concerns about where the planet is at and where industry is at. She spoke to me over previous weeks and indicated that she wanted to attend the rally. As a father I took the view that she should, but what I wanted to do was have the opportunity to sit down with her and talk about some of the very real changes that have occurred here in Tasmania and the things that not just this Government but previous governments have done in terms of investment in renewable energy and there have been steps taken in terms of what has occurred in our forests.

**Ms O'Connor** - Did you tell her your Government wants to log those forests?

**Mr GUTWEIN** - I believe I provided the member with the courtesy of not interjecting whilst she was speaking. I ask that she provides that same courtesy to me.

One of the things that really surprises me chatting with young people since I have become the Environment minister is that very few of them understand that Tasmania is a global leader and is globally recognised in terms of where we stand regarding our emissions and the actions that have been taken. When you consider where we stand regarding our position in this country but also in the world, it really is a story we should be very proud of and one we should be prepared to tell our young people. I suggest that many people at the rallies on Friday around the state are largely unaware of the very strong story we have to tell about where we stand in terms of our position both in the country and around the world.

We have the lowest per capita emissions of all of the states and territories, and emissions per person decreased 40.3 tonnes to 1.7 tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent per person between 1990 and 2017. That is a reduction of 96 per cent.

**Dr Woodruff** - It has been going up in the last year.

**Mr GUTWEIN** - Our net emissions as a state were 0.87 megatonnes, which is a 95 per cent decrease from the 1990 figure of 18.61 megatonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent.

For the sixth year in a row, we have achieved our legislative emissions reduction target. We are so far in front of it, there is daylight and then the rest. If you exclude emissions from the land use, land-change and forestry sector, LULUCF, whilst the annual emissions across the rest of the Tasmanian economy increased, when you set aside land use and our forestry sector they increased by only 4.9 per cent between 1990 and 2017. This occurred at a time when our population increased by 14 per cent and our economy has grown by 74 per cent. What we are seeing with emissions per capita is a significant reduction; around 40 per cent per person. We are one of the lowest net emitters of carbon dioxide on the planet.

There is always more to be done. We will be in line with our target to become 100 per cent renewable in terms of electricity generation by 2022. No other state will come close to this and we are well ahead of the 2050 target we currently have for zero net emissions. If you look at one of the key aims the climate strikers have, which is to be 100 per cent renewable by 2030, we are so far in front of the game it is not funny. We benefit from the decisions and investments that have been made by successive governments over a long period and the very strong investment we have in our hydro system. We will benefit again from the strong investment we are going to make in the Battery of the Nation and the role we will play in national energy production.

We are investing in projects like Battery of the Nation, with \$30 million for the first stage of that project, \$56 million with the federal government to move the Marinus Link, \$3.25 million into our Climate Change Action Plan, which includes the rolling out of electric vehicle charging stations. We are providing assistance to small and medium businesses to ensure we work with them to reduce their operating costs, support resource efficiency initiatives, build industry capacity and assist them to reduce, through these initiatives, their emissions.

There are energy audits supporting businesses and households to improve their energy efficiency, reduce costs and reduce emissions. There has been significant support for low-income households to reduce energy costs, improve efficiency and reduce emissions. This Government recognises that climate change is real and is a serious issue that requires local, national and international action.

**Ms O'Connor** - How did you feel when the Prime Minister took a lump of coal into parliament when he was treasurer?

**Madam SPEAKER** - Order, Ms O'Connor. I have to ask you to refrain from interjecting. I know this is a really important subject for you and I urge you to stay in the room.

**Ms O'Connor** - Thank you, Madam Speaker.

**Mr GUTWEIN** - Madam Speaker, by interjection, the member is looking for a fight and there is not a fight in this place this afternoon. It is interesting, with the comments the member made on the weekend about this being a great opportunity to grow the base of the Greens. I did look at that through a very cynical prism.

**Ms O'Connor** - I said our movement is growing and it will grow.

**Mr GUTWEIN** - It is an attempt to capitalise politically. Based on the member's interjections today, anybody who is watching this debate would understand this is about politics for the Greens.

I have set out some of the key actions the Government is taking and some of the key outcomes Tasmania is achieving. They are outcomes we should be very proud about and that we should be talking to our kids about. They should be aware that Tasmania is a global leader in our net emissions. We have significantly reduced emissions per capita at a time our economy and population have been growing rapidly.

**Ms O'Connor** - When did it start?

**Madam SPEAKER** - Order, Ms O'Connor. I am trying to be fair. Please, this is a very important motion.

**Ms O'Connor** - Thank you, Madam Speaker, he is inciting interjections but I will -

**Madam SPEAKER** - I urge you not to bite.

**Ms O'Connor** - It is so dishonest.

**Mr GUTWEIN** - Any reading of this *Hansard* in terms of what I was saying before that last interjection would indicate that there was no inciting of interjections. I was simply laying out a statement of fact of where the state stands. I ask the Greens to refrain and control themselves as part of the debate.

I mentioned that it was my intention to amend the motion. Madam Speaker, I move the following amendments -

- (1) By inserting the following new clause after clause (2): '(3) Notes the Tasmanian Government acknowledges that the impact of climate change is a serious issue that require local, national and international action.'
- (2) In clause (3) by inserting the following words after the word 'futures': 'noting that Tasmania is one of the lowest net emitters of carbon dioxide on the planet.'
- (3) By inserting the following new clauses after clause (3):
  - ( ) 'Notes that Tasmania has the lowest per capita emissions out of all states and territories.'
  - ( ) 'Acknowledges that Tasmania will be 100% renewable in terms of electricity generation by 2022, well in advance of the 2030 target being called for.'
  - ( ) 'Notes Tasmania's Climate Change Action Plan 2017-2021 sets our agenda for reducing emissions and taking action on climate change through to 2021.'
  - ( ) 'Encourages all Tasmanians to engage and fully understand Tasmania's global leading position on climate change.'
- (4) In clause (4) by leaving out the word 'support' and inserting instead the following words 'Acknowledges the concerns that have led to'.

I will run through the changes. There is no issue with point 1. The claim to 15 000 people may be right but we are not going to quibble about how many were gathered on the Parliament House Lawns. Point 2: there is widespread and growing public demand for climate action. It was demonstrated in the global strikes that people are concerned in this country and around the world.

**Ms O'CONNOR** - Point of order, Madam Speaker, because I do not know if I will be tossed out for interjecting. Through you, Madam Speaker, I ask the Treasurer why there is no mention of forest protection in his self-congratulatory amendment.

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

**Ms O'Connor** - I know.

**Madam SPEAKER** - That is very cheeky, Ms O'Connor. Please proceed, Treasurer.

**Mr GUTWEIN** - I have inserted a new point 3. It is important that the Tasmanian Government acknowledges that the impact of climate change is a serious issue that requires local, national and international action. We simply expanded on the original point 3 of the Greens motion. It is now point 4 and reads -

4. Commits to standing by young people in the wider community and their fight for climate action and for their futures, noting that Tasmania is one of the lowest net emitters of carbon dioxide on the planet.

It simply adds a statement of fact. I have inserted a new point 5. It notes that, 'Tasmania has the lowest per capita emissions out of all states and territories.'. New point 6 -

6. Acknowledges that Tasmania will be 100 per cent renewable in terms of electricity generation by 2022, well in advance of the 2030 target being called for.

The new point 7 notes that -

7. Tasmania's Climate Change Action Plan 2017-21 sets our agenda for reducing emissions and taking action on climate change through to 2021.
8. Encourages all Tasmanians to engage and fully understand Tasmania's global leading position on climate change.

**Dr Woodruff** - But you are logging forests, so that isn't actually factually correct.

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

**Dr WOODRUFF** - Point of order, Madam Speaker, I am struggling to understand the amendments, which are quite substantial and have just been put in front of us. I would like the Treasurer to explain how it is possible to talk about having a global position of a leader on climate change when the Government is committed to logging 356 000 hectares of forest.

**Madam SPEAKER** - That is extremely cheeky. It is not a point of order, it is a debate. You will have an opportunity as well to talk on the amendment.

**Mr GUTWEIN** - Madam Speaker, by interjection of the erroneous point of order that was just raised, the member has asked me just to outline why Tasmania is a global leader. I thought that I had.

**Dr Woodruff** - No, that's not what I asked.

**Madam SPEAKER** - Order, please.

**Mr GUTWEIN** - Tasmania has the lowest per capita emissions out of all states and territories. Our emissions per person decreased from 40.3 tonnes to 1.7 tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent per person between 1990 and 2017, which is a reduction of 96 per cent. Our net emissions as a state were 0.87 megatonnes, a 95 per cent decrease from the 1990 figure of 18.61 megatonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent. For the sixth year in a row we have achieved our legislative emissions reduction target.

I mentioned that if we exclude emissions from the Land Use, Land Use Change and Forestry sector, the LULUCF sector, the annual emissions across the rest of the Tasmanian economy increased by only 4.9 per cent at a time when our population increased by 14 per cent and the size of our economy grew by 74 per cent. We are one of the lowest net emitters of carbon dioxide on the planet. It is a story that we should tell and shout as loudly as we can to the rest of the world.

As I said, there will always be more to be done. For the last 70 years, through the fantastic investments that successive governments have made into our hydro system, we are in a position with the investments that we will be making into wind to be 100 per cent renewable in terms of electricity generation by 2022 - a long way in front of any other jurisdiction in this country and significantly in front of the vast majority of jurisdictions in the world. We are a global leader and it is something that we should be very proud of.

I touched on numbers 7 and 8 of the amended motion. They encourage all Tasmanians to engage and fully understand Tasmania's global leading position on climate change. I encourage people to access the information that is on the DPAC website to understand our position. The fact that as Tasmanians they can be proud of the position that we hold as a state -

**Dr Woodruff** - You are being deeply dishonest.

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

**Mr GUTWEIN** - It will not matter what I say. I am certain I will not convince the Greens or garner their support.

**Dr Woodruff** - You are a master of the dark arts. You are very good at this.

**Madam SPEAKER** - Dr Woodruff, warning number one.

**Mr GUTWEIN** - I have said that if the member's motives were pure in bringing a motion before this place that recognises the concerns of young people, she would acknowledge that the amended motion that I am putting does exactly that. It acknowledges the concerns -

**Ms O'CONNOR** - Point of order, Madam Speaker. Under standing order 2 we are bound in this place to tell the truth and abide by a set of ethical standards. The Treasurer, the alleged minister for climate change, is trying to put it out there that we are a global leader when his Government wants to log 356 000 hectares of high conservation-value forests. That is not globally leading.

**Madam SPEAKER** - And that is not a point of order.

**Mr GUTWEIN** - Madam Speaker, the member is looking for a fight that is not in this Chamber this afternoon.

The member outlined her reasons for bringing this to this House and that was to recognise the concerns of young people and she wanted to put a motion before the House. I believe that the amended motion I have brought before this House does exactly what she was hoping it would do but it also does what is very important and that is to ensure that young Tasmanians understand clearly where we stand.

We are one of the global leaders in terms of our net emissions. We are the leading jurisdiction in this country in terms of our net emissions. It is important that Tasmanians more broadly understand that. I hope the amended motion that I have moved would have the support from across the Chamber to ensure the member's motives are pure, and that is to have a motion passed by this House that recognises the concerns of young people. I believe that this amended motion does exactly that.

[5.46 p.m.]

**Ms STANDEN** (Franklin) - Madam Speaker, I want to put on the record that I was one of those many thousands of people in attendance last Friday. I attended the one before that as well. It was one of the largest demonstrations of civil action that I have ever participated in. It was heart-warming to see not just young people, but this year many older people, parents, grandparents, workers, unionists, coming out in support of young people in this global action on climate change.

Labor believes that the science on climate change is clear. It is abundantly clear that there is climate emergency. Global temperatures are rising at an alarming rate. There are significant levels of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere that are effectively locking in further warming of this planet. Carbon emissions continue to grow and sea levels are rising. We have already seen the tragic consequences of global warming around the world with environmental, economic and social consequences, with rising sea levels, climate disruption, including intense tropical storms, catastrophic bushfires and so on, often, unfortunately, impacting those most vulnerable on the planet.

Evidence from surveys indicates that Australian voters are alarmed by the lack of policy action on climate change. The issue rates consistently high, along with concerns about cost of living and health services, certainly amongst my constituents. I think that would be a national experience. I am utterly convinced that public opinion is in favour of action that is broad, deep and growing.

There is a significant risk that climate change will become even more polarised in Australia as citizens become more frustrated and angrier with the lack of policy action. People are losing faith in politicians and in political institutions, on the one hand seen as climate deniers and on the other, moralising about climate action.

In relation to the global climate strike itself, I place on record my congratulations to young people and people of all ages who organised and participated in the global climate strikes across Tasmania on 20 September 2019.

As for the Hodgman Government's response to climate change, I believe that the Prime Minister has a lump of coal in one hand and Will Hodgman's hand in the other. That is about as political as it gets. The Liberals at the state and national level are hopelessly divided on climate action with emissions continuing to rise. Climate Action 21 unfortunately, I think, reflects that sad reality. It is a policy document that lacks ambition, it is limited in its vision to 2021 only, and having achieved zero net emissions, it fails to show leadership, innovation, provide business confidence or seize opportunities for job creation in our state.

I note that the Hodgman Liberal Government's goal in their second-year agenda, quarter two, ending 29 September - and I think it is the only reference to climate change in that document - states:

The Government will progress amendments to the Climate Change (State Action) Act 2008 to provide a strong framework for leadership and action on climate change.

I am yet to see evidence of that. I am aware that Climate Tasmania has released a document calling not just for amendment of the act but, in fact, redrafting the act in its entirety. I also note that this Government abolished the climate change council and the former minister failed to outline in Estimates of this year what briefings she had had from climate scientists. Tasmania has a significant number of climate scientists and the credibility of the Government and its policy actions rests on ensuring that there is a strong input from that sector.

I note that Toby Thorpe, one of my constituents from Huonville High School, as part of a Tasmanian Youth Climate Council following the global climate strike last time, convened a series of regional climate summits. There were three key requests that arose from that, two fairly modest in scope and focused on the education sector, but a third around establishing a Tasmanian youth climate council. I am unaware that the Government has moved on that, despite the Deputy Premier, no less, being present in the room when he received that presentation. The Hodgman Government's response to climate change is less than inspiring.

**Ms O'Connor** - They want to log old-growth forests.

**Ms STANDEN** - Look, I am sick of this moralising, claiming the high ground -

**Ms O'Connor** - Well, we are sick of your cynicism, hand-wringing and inaction and love of coal.

**Ms STANDEN** - The so-called climate emergency and call for action was nothing more than a stunt. Far from failing to support that motion, Labor moved a series of amendments on that climate emergency motion -

**Ms O'Connor** - Which made it impossible to be supported.

**Ms STANDEN** - and the Greens failed to support those amendments. The hypocrisy of the Greens is on show when it comes to the UPC Robbins Island wind farm, despite the fact that they say they are committed to renewable energy. Their former leader, supported and cheered on by the Tasmanian Greens, is standing in the way of sensible renewable energy development in this state.

At the last federal election, the Adani protest in Queensland effectively delivered a national conservative government. You have to wonder what this Greens movement is trying to achieve in so doing. The challenge is clear. Federal Labor remains committed to the core principle in the area of climate change. It is clear and unshakeable - to implement the Paris Agreement, to look at the policies that will keep warming to a minimum, to move to net zero emissions by 2050 and set medium-term emissions reduction targets that are consistent with these principles and guided by the best available scientific and economic advice. We need to keep the agenda moving forward and build a constituency for change. It is possible that Prime Minister Scott Morrison, conservative though he is, will shift on climate change during this coming term particularly if the Australian

community remains vocal on the issue and business also continues to demand policy certainty to allow it to deal with carbon risk.

The last decade was supposed to be the critical decade; the next decade is now being described as the critical decade. I do not know what 'beyond critical' is. Bipartisanship remains the holy grail in climate change and if we get to 2030 with the level of inertia we have had over the last decade, then we will have profoundly let down our children and future generations.

On the Government amendment, Labor seeks to move an amendment to the amendment to clause (4). Madam Speaker, I move -

That in clause (4) omit the words 'Acknowledges the concerns that have led to' and insert instead 'Supports'.

That will now read 'Supports the global climate strike movement'.

**Ms O'Connor** - So you are amending the amendment?

**Ms STANDEN** - Yes. Unlike Scott Morrison's response to Greta Thunberg, who said -

I don't want our children to have anxieties about these issues and we have to let the kids be kids. We can't have them growing up as mushrooms. We have to give them a bit of context.

I assert that as a parent and as a leader in this place, much more can be done around climate change. I commit as a civic leader to make my contribution, and a positive one at that, in this place and I urge the House to support the amended amendment.

[5.56 p.m.]

**Dr WOODRUFF** (Franklin) - Madam Deputy Speaker, they do not usually give us the grace of giving us time to respond, even in our own private member's time. We support that amendment. It returns point 9 back to the original point 4 in our motion and there is a fundamental difference of principle behind the words 'support' and 'acknowledge'. You can acknowledge the concerns that anyone can have on something and you can totally disagree with their actions and their motivations, but supporting it is totally different. Supporting it means that you are with them, you are listening to them, hearing them and you will act on their behalf. That is what support means. We support that amendment and we reject the hand-wringing and faux concern that the Government pretends to have on this issue.

We reject the attempt to spin what was a very unpolitical, clear statement of support for the global climate strike movement, their fundamental understanding of what is happening on the planet and their drive to have action. We reject the Government's attempt to spin this motion we have here today by adding point 8, which is a lie to say that Tasmanians should fully understand Tasmania's global leading position on climate change. That is a lie and we cannot support that. We will not support that and we will not be party to papering over the reality of what this Government is doing to continue with business as usual.

We cannot have a policy of opening the doors to 356 000 hectares of carbon-rich forests, a carbon sink which is a place that we must maintain on behalf of not only Tasmanians but the whole planet for our collective futures. You cannot have a policy to let the loggers in and have the door

open to the Forestry Industry Association, as this Government did only days ago, and call yourself a global climate leader.

You cannot have a premier, as he did in parliament yesterday, being a champion flag-waver for our coal climate sceptic Prime Minister, Scott Morrison, who went to the United States not to attend the UN Climate Summit on Australia's behalf, but to have a PR stunt with the world's leading climate denier and climate criminal, Donald Trump, and to continue the love affair with coal and the fossil fuel industry that they both collectively had in the southern states of Ohio with one of the Liberal's biggest donors, a man who has made his money through many nefarious means. We cannot support that because it is not true. The Premier should be condemning the actions of the Prime Minister, condemning the actions of his own Liberal Party that is pushing the Adani mine.

We cannot support the Liberals' amendment to our motion but we do support the Labor Party's amendment.

**Time expired.**

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

**The House divided -**

AYES 11

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

NOES 11

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

PAIR

Ms O'Byrne

Mr Jaensch

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER** - The result of the division is 11 Ayes and 11 Noes. Therefore I cast my vote with the Noes.

**Amendment to amendment negatived.**

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

**The House divided -**

AYES 20

NOES 3

Ms Archer  
Mr Barnett  
Dr Broad  
Ms Butler  
Ms Courtney  
Ms Dow  
Mr Ferguson  
Mr Gutwein  
Ms Haddad  
Ms Hickey  
Mr Hodgman  
Ms Houston  
Mr Jaensch  
Mr O'Byrne  
Mr Rockliff  
Mrs Rylah (Teller)  
Mr Shelton  
Ms Standen  
Mr Tucker  
Ms White

Ms O'Connor  
Ms Ogilvie  
Dr Woodruff (Teller)

**Amendment agreed to.**

**Question - That the motion, as amended, be agreed to.**

**The House divided -**

AYES 20

NOES 3

Ms Archer  
Mr Barnett  
Dr Broad  
Ms Butler  
Ms Courtney  
Ms Dow  
Mr Ferguson  
Mr Gutwein  
Ms Haddad  
Mr Hodgman  
Ms Houston  
Mr Jaensch  
Mr O'Byrne  
Mrs Petrusma  
Mr Rockliff  
Mrs Rylah (Teller)  
Mr Shelton

Ms O'Connor  
Ms Ogilvie  
Dr Woodruff (Teller)

Ms Standen  
Mr Tucker  
Ms White

**Motion, as amended, agreed to.**

## **ADJOURNMENT**

### **George Town Airport - Sale**

[6.17 p.m.]

**Ms O'CONNOR** (Clark - Leader of the Greens) - Madam Deputy Speaker, the George Town Council has decided to sell George Town Airport. There are reports in the Fairfax papers today and the George Town Transport Association spokesperson was on Leon Compton's program this morning: Eugene Reid, Airport Manager and President of the George Town Airport Association. Now we understand that one of the potential buyers is a Chinese company which was established, according to ASIC, on 6 April this year. The company which has its director and secretary, Jin Jiang Hua, is based in Wonga Park, Victoria, but it has a shop front, as I understand it, in George Town.

These purchases of infrastructure such as airports and ports are becoming something of a trend. We have a proposal that is before the Tasmanian Government which the Greens raised last year where a Chinese airline is negotiating to set up a flight school at Devonport Airport. Now we have a Chinese company that wants to buy George Town Airport. There is also a massive airport proposal for the former Tamworth Military Base between Virgin Airlines which is 42 per cent Chinese owned and other partners which have only been revealed as a result of the investigative journalism of Anthony Klan.

The reason I raise this matter is because we are concerned about Chinese companies operating in Tasmania that are subject to Article 7 of the Chinese Intelligence Law. Before Dr Broad gets up here and does what he does, I want to point out to the House that between 2018 and 2019, the Tasmanian Government's Office of the Coordinator-General hosted four meetings from Chinese aviation officials - all of which are deemed commercial-in-confidence. We have had, for example, on 27 April this year - in fact only three weeks after the company which wants to buy George Town Airport was formed - two in a delegation. There were five in a delegation from China on 18 March through to 20 March. Another five in a delegation from 13 December last year. Another four on 29 November last year. All of these delegations and meetings were related to aviation and all were organised by the Office of the Coordinator-General.

For members in this place who choose not to educate themselves about some of the national security issues that arise, I go now to the National Intelligence Law of the People's Republic of China. It was adopted on 27 June 2017 and it came into force the next day. Article 7 has received much attention particularly in relation to Telecom Huawei, which operates in many countries, including Australia. Article 7 of the Chinese government's national intelligence law reads thus -

Any organization or citizen shall support, assist and cooperate with the state intelligence work in accordance with the law, and keep the secrets of the national intelligence work known to the public.

The State protects individuals and organizations that support, assist and cooperate with national intelligence work.

The National Intelligence Law has extraterritorial ramifications. It binds every Chinese company and every Chinese citizen, no matter where they are in the world, to abide by article 7 of the National Intelligence Law, which requires them to provide information and to work with the Chinese Government on intelligence-related matters. A Chinese Government spokesperson has argued that the western analysis of article 7 of that law is flawed because it ignores article 8, which reads -

National intelligence work shall be carried out in accordance with the law, respecting and safeguarding human rights, and safeguarding the legitimate rights and interests of individuals and organizations.

This provides little comfort. The Constitution of the People's Republic of China provides for a number of human rights on which it has demonstrably failed to deliver and breaches every single day. The constitution includes such protections as -

Article 4. All nationalities in the People's Republic of China are equal.

The people of all nationalities have the freedom to ... preserve or reform their own ways and customs.

I am sure the people of Uyghur faith, the Tibetans and people of Hong Kong would believe that the Chinese Government is not abiding by that provision. Article 36 of the Chinese constitution that, by the way, describes China as a democratic dictatorship, says -

Citizens of the People's Republic of China enjoy freedom of religious belief. No state organ, public organization or individual may compel citizens to believe in, or not to believe in, any religion; nor may they discriminate against citizens who believe in, or do not believe in, any religion.

As we speak, there are people - Uyghur Muslims, Hui Muslims, Christians, Falun Gong practitioners - being locked up, persecuted and punished by the Chinese Government.

We raise these matters in this place because it is time the Tasmanian Parliament, the major parties in this parliament woke up to what is happening here. We have the Dan Andrews Government signing up to the Belt and Road Initiative, which is Xi Jinping's landmark colonial attempt, basically, to take over the world. The Port of Melbourne is now part of the Belt and Road Initiative.

We need to understand, when we have the Office of the Coordinator-General running numerous trips to China, inviting numerous Chinese companies to invest here, that those Chinese companies are bound by article 7 of the national intelligence law. Foreign investment is very important to Tasmania but we must accept it with open eyes. We would argue that any company that is wholly or partially owned by the Government of China should be treated very warily by the Tasmanian Government and all its agencies, including the Office of the Coordinator-General.

**Time expired.**

## **Apology to Minister for Corrections**

### **Tech Girls are Superheroes**

[6.24 p.m.]

**Dr BROAD** (Braddon) - Madam Deputy Speaker, I understand from media comments that the Minister for Corrections has not accepted my apology for my comments during yesterday's MPI debate. To be clear, in attempting to link a media release from Ms Archer about a true crime show being filmed in Tasmania to the successful escape of a prisoner from Risdon Prison, I have inadvertently offended Ms Archer. For that, I apologise unreservedly.

I would like to talk about a wonderful program my daughter and her school have participated in called Tech Girls are Superheroes. This is a program that is run Australia-wide. It is designed to empower and educate girls, especially young girls, about their options in the tech sector, which is going to be an important sector for the world in future. There will be some amazing careers in it. Each team of three is matched with a female technical mentor who meets with the team over a period of 12 weeks. The teams identify a problem in their local community and attempt to solve it by developing an application. The team does their research and they document a solution. They develop a business plan. They build a working app prototype and they pitch it in a public presentation that is put on YouTube.

My daughter, Maisie, who is 10, and her classmates, Isabella and Imogen, formed a team which they called TechStars. They had a problem with some students, especially young girls, their classmates, who had issues with a lack of confidence. They decided to develop an app called Confidence Coach. The app was developed to have tools and strategies to improve the confidence of school kids. I am proud to say they ended up being the Tasmanian winners.

Their school, Sacred Heart Primary School in Ulverstone, was a great supporter of this. I thank Mrs Katerina Hingston, the teacher who took charge of this program. The girls were very keen. They stayed in during their recess and lunch periods and sometimes they even stayed after school. They were very engaged by this program. The program was amazing and I am a proud father that they have taken part and were fortunate enough to be the Tasmanian winners.

### **Bushfire Risk**

[6.27 p.m.]

**Dr WOODRUFF** (Franklin) - Madam Deputy Speaker, I rise to raise some concerns shared with us by Margaretta Pos, a resident of the east coast who lives in the Falmouth area. She has written to us and to the Minister for Environment, Parks and Heritage about her concerns about the bushfire risk in the Falmouth area and the whole of the east coast. She points to the reports from the *Examiner* and the *Mercury*, which have highlighted the great fire risk on the east coast; how dire that fire risk still is. Her concern is about the tinder-dry and flammable detritus in her area and the real concerns that, when a fire occurs, it would be a conflagration that would engulf her house and many others. I know these are concerns many people in rural areas have.

The Lord Mayor of Hobart, Anna Reynolds, made an important statement on the back of the comments by Mike Brown, the previous chief officer of the Tasmanian Fire Service, and many other experts and people who have served in the fire service, about the high risk of extreme fire in the dense, forested bushland areas around Hobart, spreading into Hobart and the possibility for 1967-level fires here again. It is not a case, she said, of if, but when.

People across Tasmania understand that last year's extreme, huge bushfires in the south-west, the Central Highlands area and in the north-west were not exceptional. They are part of a new, substantially changed climate system. It is a taste of the future for all of us, unfortunately, as the climate breaks down. We support Ms Pos' concerns. On behalf of her and other people in Tasmania, we will continue to raise the failure of the Government to put the resources into bushfire prevention.

The real concern we have is that the minister has not accepted the recommendations from the AFAC review into last year's bushfires. They have only been accepted in principle. There has been no indication of the level of budget resourcing put into those recommendations or even which ones are going to be carried out.

All of this has to be framed in the context of the global strike for climate. It is not good enough for the Liberal and Labor Parties to acknowledge the concern of those students who marched. Acknowledging the concern is simply recognising from looking outside the window upstairs in parliament that they are there. That is not enough.

Labor stood with the Government on this.

**Ms Butler** - No, I was there. I went to the climate strike.

**Dr WOODRUFF** - No, they stood here in the House and voted to acknowledge the concern and not to support them. We must support young people who understand the science. We must be the voice in this place of reason and of science. That is the only way forward in the future. We cannot continue to sit in a business-as-usual mode. It is comfortable, it is what we know, it is what we think we can scrape through on, but it is very wrong to continue to think that way. It is not only wrong, it is dangerous if we knowingly continue down this path of lies and deceit.

We are responsible. We will ultimately be held to be climate criminals as governments, like the Australian Government ought to be called, governments are being held to task by their citizens and taken to court for their failure to act. We too, run that risk and it is not the risk of going to court that should drive us. It is the risk of the future that will unfold if we do not do everything we can to bring down emissions and help people adapt to the changing climate.

### **Burnie High School - *Hansel and Gretel***

[6.32 p.m.]

**Mr ROCKLIFF** (Braddon - Minister for Education and Training) - Madam Deputy Speaker, I congratulate Burnie High School and the team that were part of the school production *Hansel and Gretel*, which I had the pleasure of attending on Saturday afternoon at the Burnie Arts and Cultural Centre, as did many other people. There was not a single seat left on that rainy Saturday afternoon, to witness what was a terrific performance.

I commend all the cast, the crew and all the crew behind the scenes for the work that went on to put on what was a spectacular performance. I concur with the comments of the member for Braddon, Ms Dow, who raised this on the adjournment last night.

I do not have the program in front of me so I cannot talk about all the names and the people who were involved but it was very relaxing afternoon of entertainment and great music. Not a

traditional *Hansel and Gretel* story line, but it was a far more entertaining one in terms of the music and the theatrics which was fantastic.

One of the great pleasures I have as Minister for Education and Training is to be invited and attend a number of school productions across the state. The last one I attended was the Rosny College production. It really is fantastic to see such talented students and the support of the staff and team of the school or college, behind the students, to give the students some confidence and to bring that talent to the forefront.

I commend Burnie High School. The reviews have been very good. I wanted to add my voice to the Burnie High School production of *Hansel and Gretel* and everyone involved in what was a thoroughly entertaining Saturday afternoon.

### **International Safe Abortion Day**

[6.34 p.m.]

**Ms HADDAD** (Clark) - Madam Deputy Speaker, this Saturday 28 September, marks International Safe Abortion Day, a day for action around women's health, rights and access to safe, affordable terminations. This day has global origins, starting in Latin America and the Caribbean many decades ago, where women's groups have been mobilising around this date for the last two decades to demand their governments decriminalise abortion.

Indeed, 28 September is a day of solidarity with women across the globe who do not have access to fundamental women's health services including pregnancy terminations. This day is about access. It is about enabling freedom of choice and autonomy over one's body. Some might say we are lucky here in Tasmania to have decriminalised abortion. That happened many years ago under my colleague Michelle O'Byrne's leadership when she was Minister for Health. Some might expect that this means that we are a state that respects women's right to have choices over their own bodies, choices over their own health care, and autonomy over their own bodies. That certainly was the case back then; however, sadly, this is simply not the case right now.

Here in Tasmania now we have a health system that is broken. We have a health system that is failing women and their rights to health care and their rights to choose. Since this Liberal Government came to power under the former minister, the current access to women's health care has been slowly and systematically eroded. The three private providers of safe medical terminations closed one by one over a 12-month period. The Government was acutely aware that these services were closing, leaving a massive service gap in our health system. This Government stood by and did nothing. They stood by and effectively welcomed the closure of those services. What we are left with is outrageous.

Yes, women have a choice in Tasmania, but not the kind we advocate for on 28 September. Women in Tasmania have the choice to muddle through the current system, to go to their GP who may or may not know what services are available and may or may not know where to refer their client. That is if the woman happens to have a GP who is not ethically and morally opposed to pregnancy termination who may simply turn them away on moral grounds.

Women have a choice to navigate their way through unclear pathways, misinformation stigma and confusion that still surrounds this issue in Tasmania. Women do have a choice to fly to Melbourne, to remove themselves at great financial and emotional costs from their families, work and community to undergo medical treatment in Victoria. This is simply not good enough.

Women in Tasmania deserve a government that respects their reproductive healthcare rights and provides a clear, accessible and affordable pathway to medical treatment in this state through the public health system. Women in Tasmania deserve to be confident they will not be turned away from clinics or hospitals through lack of funding or lack of local knowledge and understanding. Women in Tasmania deserve to have the choice to make their own healthcare decisions, their own reproductive health decisions. Women in Tasmania deserve to be taken seriously by their Government; to have a government that trusts them to make their own decisions and the right to compassionate health, a focused approach to their reproductive rights and not one dripping in ideology or moral dogma.

Let us use this Saturday, 28 September International Safe Abortion Day, to reflect on the Hodgman Government's commitment or lack of commitment to women's reproductive health rights and their right to choose and demand better.

### **Carbon Monoxide Detectors in Dwellings**

[6.38 p.m.]

**Ms BUTLER** (Lyons) - Madam Deputy Speaker, I rise on the adjournment to bring to the attention of the House an important motion raised by the Lutana branch at the Tasmanian Labor Party conference recently in relation to regulating the safe installation and maintenance of carbon monoxide detectors in privately owned or tenanted dwellings with internal gas appliances.

There is a movement across the country to introduce detectors. We have a lot of work to do in this space. It is very much an unexplored area at the moment in Australia. The motion was raised by a person who had a personal connection to a tragic Victorian case where two siblings, young lads who passed away after their mother had put them to sleep in the lounge room. It was quite a cold winter's night and she put them near the gas heater. She wanted them to be warm. When she went back in the morning, both the boys had passed away during the evening from carbon monoxide poisoning.

The Coroner said it was frustratingly difficult to find out exactly how many people die in Australia from accidental carbon monoxide poisoning but between 2011 and 2016 there were 15 deaths that were clearly attributed to using gas and solid fuel appliances in confined spaces without adequate ventilation. That was Australia-wide.

Last year, in passing down his findings into the death of two Tasmanian men on a boat, Coroner Cooper said it was apparent the deaths were entirely avoidable and he recommended that all boats with enclosed cabins and petrol motors of any type be fitted with a carbon monoxide detector.

We know that CO is a poisonous, colourless and odourless gas that interferes with the blood's ability to carry oxygen, and in Tasmania there are several hospital presentations due to carbon monoxide poisoning every year, with occasional deaths. Doctors say it is difficult to ascertain the real fatality rate. Often people will be subjected to CO poisoning but will attribute it to maybe having hay fever or wooziness or some other ailment because when they leave the place where the poisoning is coming from they suddenly feel a lot better. A lot of the time it goes undetected and without a detection system it can put people in quite a precarious situation.

Under normal operating conditions, well maintained and correctly ventilated gas appliances produce minimal CO, but CO levels can occur if one or more of the following conditions exist - if the appliance is faulty or poorly maintained, a flue is partially or totally blocked, or the appliance

is not installed in an adequately ventilated area. In Europe, for example, all homes must be fitted with CO alarms owing to the prolific use of natural gas burners for heating and cooking across Europe. There is no standard in Australia that covers the design, manufacture, installation or servicing of CO alarms for domestic premises. In Tasmania we know that there are 46 500 homes and businesses which use natural gas.

This is something we would certainly like to work on. I have been contacted by quite a few constituents in relation to this. There is one lady from England who actually brought her own CO detector over with her. Apparently what is on the market here in Australia is unreliable and we do not have any standard or regulation around the actual installation. Where you place the CO detectors is also really important, so it is something we would like push as an initiative. We will explore it and it will have the potential to save lives.

### **Role of Fathers in Raising Children**

[6.42 p.m.]

**Mrs RYLAH** (Braddon) - Madam Deputy Speaker, tonight I rise on the adjournment to make the House aware of some important research that I have become apprised of. This is research that we as a society are not sufficiently mindful of and there is much more that needs to be done in this space.

This subject is about raising children and the important role of fathers. I do not believe we talk about this sufficiently. The research that I raise tonight are the writings of David Cohen. David Cohen is prolific Wellington-based writer and journalist whose work has appeared frequently in publications in New Zealand and abroad. His work has often been promoted or prompted by his personal experiences and his circumstances. David Cohen was one of the boys involved in state care in New Zealand. In his book *Little Criminals* he uses the Epuni Boys' Home as the basis of a study of New Zealand's now scandalous residential juvenile criminal system in the 1950s and the 1980s. Man Booker Prize shortlisted writer Lloyd Jones wrote of *Little Criminals*:

David Cohen has taken an important piece of social history and unpacked it in a highly imaginative way.

Referring to the New Zealand royal commission that is about to get underway and to the 30 years of state care, David Cohen wrote:

As many as 80 000 kids, mostly male, went through those places. Their stories would easily fill a few years of testimony time as much as they easily feel a modest social history I produced on the subject, *Little Criminals*, which also looked back at my experience as a child in that same ramshackle system.

He goes on:

... But still, for all of that, something remains missing from the quest to learn lessons for the future, as the prime minister has put it.

When I wrote my book on the subject, its working title was *The Alumni*, chosen because so many of the country's worst criminals had their childhood roots in the system that is now under official scrutiny. This was something that struck me, particularly when I began researching at the country's major prison in Auckland.

What struck me even more as I delved deeper, however, was the recurrent back story of vanished fathers in the lives - or rather not in the lives - of so many of the erstwhile wards. For me, this seemed to be true 'historical abuse' of the young and criminally restless, and most reliable data and studies appear to bear that out as a general proposition. ...

If a newborn boy were to choose just one factor to predict future success - with available options including wealth, elite education, sporting prowess or skin colour - the smartest choice he could make is for his father to hang around for the duration of his upbringing.

Much scholarly research echoes the point. From the US National Centre for Health Statistics, for example, we learn that children living away from their father are 375 per cent more likely to require professional treatment for emotional or behavioural problems and twice as likely to flunk school grades.

In the US, 70 per cent of boys in juvenile hall were raised in father-absent households, as were around the same percentage (the figures shift slightly depending on the survey) of younger murderers, rapists, drop-outs, suicides and runaways.

A British study called Tomorrow's Men, a project supported by the University of Oxford involving 1500 teenage boys, found that successful can-do kids - those with high self-esteem, happiness and confidence - almost invariably come from backgrounds with a high level of father contact. Those lacking this experience reported the lowest levels of self-esteem and self-confidence. They were most likely to suffer from depression, get in trouble with the law and dislike school.

According to another stateside survey, published in the left-leaning *Village Voice*, a boy raised in a father-absent environment is five times more likely to commit suicide, 10 times more likely to abuse drugs, 14 times more likely to commit rape and 20 times more likely to end up in a correctional facility. One of the major reasons for this is because father-absent boys are statistically less able to delay gratification and show impulse control over anger and sexual activity, leading in turn, almost ineluctably, to a weaker sense of conscience, in the opinion of E.M. Hetherington and B.Martin, contributors to a report on therapeutic interventions for pathological childhood disorders.

I want to make it clear that I empathise greatly and see how hard it is for single parents. I do not support any form of unhappy or abusive households and I see over and over again how incredibly hard many single mums work when they are left alone to raise children, but tonight I think it is really important we recognise the incredible importance of fathers in the lives of children and acknowledge that there is a great deal of work to be done in this space.

### **Dodges Ferry Marine Rescue Base - Tribute**

[6.48 p.m.]

**Mr SHELTON** (Lyons - Minister for Police, Fire and Emergency Management) - Madam Deputy Speaker, I rise this evening to pay tribute to a great group that I had a chat to on Wednesday 11 September, when I visited the Dodges Ferry Marine Rescue base and met the team there. I enjoyed hearing from the new president, Phil, and the rest of the team about what they do for their

community, which is to assist members of the public with safety on the water. This is not just rescuing those who get in trouble on the water. It is also about educating and training members of the public about how to handle their boats more safely.

They conduct boat licence training, run information sessions with the community, train with other agencies and of course conduct search and rescue operations in shore areas around Frederick Henry Bay, Norfolk Bay, Storm Bay and Marion Bay. They work in conjunction with Surf Life Saving Tasmania and Volunteer Marine Rescue Queensland to ensure their volunteers are well trained in the operation of the rescue vessels at sea in a variety of conditions. I was very impressed with the vehicle and the way they keep it in great shape. These volunteers are dedicated to their community and I thank them for having me along on that evening. They always welcome more volunteers to drop in or to drop them a line if they are interested in volunteering.

This evening, in Volunteering Week, I thank all those volunteers of the Dodges Ferry volunteer marine rescue base for their efforts in keeping our community safe, along with all of those other volunteers who put in those many, many thousands of hours to do what they do for our community. I thank them very much for their efforts.

### **Volunteers - Tribute**

#### **Teddy Sheean Memorial Grants**

#### **Lyons Electorate - Activities**

[6.51 p.m.]

**Mr BARNETT** (Lyons - Minister for Primary Industries) - Madam Deputy Speaker, I concur with the remarks of my colleague and friend, Mark Shelton, with respect to recognising the wonderful service of volunteers, 68 million hours expended in the last 12 months in Tasmania, based on the State of Volunteering Report, benefiting the Tasmanian economy to the tune of \$4 billion in the last 12 months. It is fantastic.

A 25-year anniversary was celebrated at Government House, hosted by our Governor, Professor the Honourable Kate Warner, a few days ago. I was so pleased and proud to be there with many of my colleagues, including Mark Shelton, to pay respect and to honour our volunteers. The Premier made a special presentation as the cake was cut and the room was full of such admiration for our volunteers. It was a very special event.

**Mr Shelton** - I got a piece of cake as well.

**Mr BARNETT** - You got a piece of cake as well, very good to hear, Mr Shelton.

I refer to my recent visit to the east coast, Triabunna, Cranbrook, Swansea and Avoca, which was a great opportunity to visit the Spring Bay RSL and the Swansea RSL with my colleague and friend, John Tucker. The Hodgman majority Liberal Government recognises the valuable contribution of our servicemen and women and support our veterans and ex-serving members in Tasmania, particularly in our rural and regional areas. Great credit goes to the Spring Bay RSL sub-branch. We visited on 13 September to see firsthand the new mowing equipment. It had been hard at work and was looking really well looked after. The kitchen appliances were there and the funding of a \$7500 grant from the Teddy Sheean Grants were well used.

They have a Victoria Cross memorial, too, outside the front of the building. It is all there for everyone to see, so I commend it to visitors, tourists and others alike. It is on the highway there as

you turn into Triabunna. A big thank you to Cheryl Arnol, zthe president, and to all their members for the sumptuous morning tea, scones were made and it was a very special day.

We went on to the Swansea RSL who received a \$4400 grant from the Teddy Sheean Memorial Grants funded by our Government. The electrical upgrades have been a big boost to the sub-branch. It helped them ensure the sustainability of the RSL and their ongoing work. We also dropped into the Swansea Heritage Museum, which is with the Tourist Information Centre. They do such a good job. It is a big attraction for tourists and others in the area and they provide the history and heritage of the area. They are so proud of that part of Glamorgan Spring Bay municipality and we are proud of them. I say congratulations and well done on the work that they do.

**Mr Shelton** - You never had a game on the big snooker table while you were there, did you?

**Mr BARNETT** - I did not have a game on the snooker table, no, but in the snooker room where the table is there are lots of veteran memorabilia and photos. There is a book on Albert Dilger. He is a former veteran who died on the Western Front in the First World War. I have done some research on Albert Dilger and they have my presentation and my research in that room at the Heritage Centre.

Later in the day, John Tucker and I visited with some farmers. First, we visited Peter Bresnehan at Ashgrove north of Triabunna, a fine wool producer but doing it very tough. Drought conditions have been tough and he has reduced his numbers substantially and his ewes are starting to lamb. He had 60 ml in the recent rains, which is good, but he certainly needs that follow-up rain. Thanks to Peter for showing us around.

We met with some other farmers at a roundtable hosted by Adam Greenhill at Cranbrook. It is surrounded by four of those wild rivers, private forestry reserves, about 4000 hectares. It is one of the oldest properties in Tasmania at some 200 years. It is a fantastic opportunity. Thanks to Adam for hosting us. It is a diverse property running sheep, growing grapes, the Gala Estate, growing vegetable seed crops, mainly carrot seed. John Tucker and I heard firsthand the tough conditions of our farmers on the east coast. It is not easy. Yes, they had that recent rain but the drought conditions continue. This Government is thinking carefully about what we can do to support our farmers during this difficult time on the east coast, the southern Midlands, north-east and south-east.

In addition to that, congratulations to the Avoca Museum and Information Centre, which Mark Shelton, John Tucker and I visited. The organisation received two separate grants for the heating system, solar panels and electricity costs. Mayor Mary Knowles is so committed and she has wonderful support from the volunteers and the local community. It is a real standout in Avoca. It is worth visiting when you are there. I encourage members of the public, tourists and others alike to drop in and learn more about Avoca, the museum, the history, and heritage of that wonderful community.

It is a great credit to all those volunteers who work in these various organisations and community groups in and around Tasmania, particularly regional Tasmania. The volunteer effort is proportionately higher in our regional areas than in the capital cities. It is great to know that Tasmania has some of the highest volunteer rates in all of Australia. I pay a tribute all our volunteers at this special occasion.

**The House adjourned at 6.57 p.m.**