



# Debates

WEEKLY HANSARD

Legislative Assembly for the ACT

**NINTH ASSEMBLY**

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## **Thursday, 15 December 2016**

**MADAM SPEAKER** (Ms Burch) took the chair at 10 am and asked members to stand in silence and pray or reflect on their responsibilities to the people of the Australian Capital Territory.

### **Portfolio priorities Ministerial statement**

**MS BERRY** (Ginninderra—Deputy Chief Minister, Minister for Education and Early Childhood Development, Minister for Housing and Suburban Development, Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence, Minister for Women and Minister for Sport and Recreation) (10.02): I present the following paper:

Portfolio priorities—Minister Berry—Ministerial statement, 15 December 2016.

I am pleased today to speak in this newly elected Assembly to outline some of my own and the government's key priorities for the next four years. Our ministerial team will talk today about the fundamental principles and goals we are all working on in this term, all grounded in our belief in a happy, fair and safe community. The government's policy platform reflects the hundreds of thousands of conversations we have had with Canberrans before, during and since the election campaign. And critically, we will keep having these conversations as we go about our work as ministers and members.

I have been both excited and humbled in taking on the education portfolio. It is an area I have been passionate about for many years and I have welcomed the chance to meet with some of our great local teachers, educators and school leaders in recent weeks.

I also want to emphasise the importance of the decision of the Chief Minister and me to include early childhood development in this portfolio. I have worked within this sector for much of my working life. Together, we identified the value in building an early childhood strategy for the ACT, a promise I proudly took to the election.

The great potential for our entire education system is to broaden the horizons of our community. It offers equity and a chance for a great crack at a happy and fulfilling life, wherever you come from and whatever your ability. Regardless of culture, gender, class, race or place, our schools need to be there for every child, and my fundamental priority is to help them in this aim.

Labor's commitments will provide sustained, system-wide investment and innovative policies across the education system, in addition to key commitments for equity and inclusion, both new and continuing: full implementation of the schools for all program, including 20 new school psychologists; electronic devices for every public high school student; and continued progress on and advocacy for a truly needs-based funding approach under the Gonski agreement.

Aligned with a focus on broadening horizons is my priority to improve our education system, together with each school and community. ACT Labor has committed to a major policy consultation and development process, and I will make announcements on our plans for this early in the new year. As I have spoken to our school leaders, I have been really encouraged by their enthusiasm for this process. And recent national and international test results show that on some measures, while our schools remain at the top nationally, we can push forward again as one of the world's best school systems.

I have already had the opportunity to visit some of our great schools, and through this process I will visit many more. This will give me the opportunity to ensure that in developing our future education strategy, we are hearing firsthand about what is important to our students, teachers, parents and the broader school community. This process will lead improvements in our education system, with reforms owned by school leaders, teachers, students, parents, unions and administrators alike. Again, this agenda lines up with the key commitments I will deliver as education minister: record school facility funding of \$100 million; new opportunities for excellence in science, technology, engineering and maths subjects; and ongoing support for teacher development.

Another key priority for me is that we continue to support our community's embrace of true gender equity. More and more, in different parts of the community, people are seeing the value of women and girls in being seen, treated and promoted as equals. We are, after all, the first Australian parliament with a majority of women, something I am pleased and proud to be a part of.

We have made some important progress and have seen the benefits that flow from that work, but there is still much more to do to forge a truly equal Canberra. Canberra is a small, educated and progressive city. We have the opportunity to show the nation that as a community, we can embrace our women, our girls, and our trans and intersex members as true equals, whether in our laws, our workplaces, our homes or on our sporting fields.

The government's new women's plan lays out a blueprint for much of this change to occur, and our response to domestic and family violence is tackling one of the greatest points of inequality. Maintaining the momentum in these areas remains a key goal for me because true equity takes sustained campaigns that work on behaviour change and lead by example.

Our priority will be to enhance the economic status, social inclusion, safety, health and wellbeing of ACT women, and we will work to improve the outcomes for those who experience discrimination.

Many will know that I have pursued gender equity in sport and recreation as a central part of this agenda. Just last week there was national agreement to the importance of this goal. And there is clear endorsement of the far-reaching commitments which we will deliver in this term of government: greater gender equity in the funding of elite sporting teams; infrastructure improvements for women and girls in community sport;

and cultural change led by champions in board and administrative positions.

I want to see greater access to sport and recreation opportunities for women and girls through innovative programs and improved facilities. Already this agenda is being embraced by many in our sports community, and I know that together we can make great strides in the next four years.

My vision is for Canberra to be a truly inclusive community that embraces gender equity. However, I do not believe that people can have the same opportunities if they do not feel safe, which brings me to the continuation of a program of major investment in family safety.

The last two years have demonstrated more than ever before that, despite our community's relevant advantages, there are many who remain disadvantaged and are not safe, even in their own homes. This is not something that government can fix alone. The government has asked the Canberra community to collectively own and respond to this problem. Awareness, acceptance and reporting continue to grow, and we must all respond, in immediate support for those affected and in prevention which can spare our community the great future costs of this problem if it continues to go unchallenged.

As an Assembly, we have the ability to lead the cultural and social change we all know is greatly needed. I will be seeking continued support from the Assembly for the implementation of the safer families program. My ministerial colleagues and I will also pursue this response across all arms of government.

The government has articulated its commitment to this issue through new funding, with a dedicated funding stream and a new portfolio to lead this work, one I am pleased to hold. There is high service demand and there are high expectations. My priority is to lead the full implementation of the safer families program, achieving long-term systemic change and showing the early signs of permanent cultural change in our community.

The final priority I want to outline today reflects another key plank of our election platform and also the parliamentary agreement—the need for new approaches to housing so that more Canberra families can secure a home that meets their needs. Canberrans have shown for a long time that they support the use of community resources to provide social housing to those who most need it. The government has committed to developing a new housing strategy that builds on our achievements so far and prioritises where we need to head to make homes more accessible and more affordable.

The government will continue to phase out stamp duty and will restructure the Land Development Agency to focus on affordable and efficient greenfield land release. We will work with key stakeholders in the housing, homelessness and property sectors to make ongoing improvements to support Canberra families under housing stress.

We know that there needs to be growth and renewal of the community housing sector in Canberra to ensure not only that people feel safe in their home but that they have a

home. This is important because we all know of all the vital things which flow from a stable home: safety, security, health, confidence, employment, happiness. This agenda will mean challenging some conventional wisdom and looking at innovative ideas in developing our strategy. It will also mean continued advocacy to the national government for policies and tax settings which work in line with the efforts of the territory government.

I look forward to continuing my work with the Canberra community and my colleagues over the next four years on these priorities.

I move:

That the Assembly take note of the paper.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

## **Justice and Community Safety—Standing Committee Scrutiny report 1**

**MRS JONES** (Murrumbidgee) (10.11): I present the following report:

Justice and Community Safety—Standing Committee (Legislative Scrutiny Role)—Scrutiny Report 1, dated 14 December 2016, together with the relevant minutes of proceedings.

I seek leave to make a brief statement.

Leave granted.

**MRS JONES:** Scrutiny report No 1 contains the committee's comments on 26 pieces of subordinate legislation, two national regulations, and three regulatory impact statements. In particular, the committee was pleased to see an improvement in government preparations for reports to the scrutiny committee, which involved better explanations, particularly of the national laws. I thank the government for that work and I commend the report to the Assembly.

## **Ministerial priorities Ministerial statement**

**MS FITZHARRIS** (Yerrabi—Minister for Health, Minister for Transport and City Services and Minister for Higher Education, Training and Research) (10.12): It is a great honour to stand here today, elected as a member for Yerrabi and appointed to a Labor cabinet with responsibility as the Minister for Health, the Minister for Transport and City Services and the Minister for Higher Education, Training and Research. It is a great honour to be part of this re-elected Labor government, part of a team and a cabinet that will deliver clearly on the commitments we took to the community, informed by previous achievements of consecutive Labor governments and by the thousands of conversations my colleagues and I have had with stakeholder organisations, community groups and private sector partners and Canberrans from all walks of life.

Canberra is a growing city. We are growing by 5,000 people every year and soon we will be a city of around 500,000 people. This means we need to plan now for a future that includes more people and more families in our wonderful territory. My priorities across my portfolios will focus on this challenge and the multiple opportunities it opens up.

In each of my portfolios I will support the government's broader agenda to ensure Canberra is a prosperous, dynamic and sustainable city that supports every member of the community to reach their potential. The outcomes for each of my portfolios will support the government's broader agenda, deliver on election commitments and parliamentary agreement items and deliver the organisational and service reform necessary to provide a high quality, responsive, and sustainable level of service to the community.

In each portfolio there is considerable opportunity to innovate and partner with private and community organisations to provide improved services and greater value for taxpayers as well as use data to drive reform and improve service delivery. I have asked directors-general to ensure these are central to achieving strategic outcomes in each portfolio.

I have also asked my directors-general to ensure a community-focused approach to each portfolio, notably in Health and Transport and City Services. In simple terms, health services will be focused on patients, and Transport and City Services will be focused on our passengers and customers. I will also be seeking to improve the community's access to information in a number of ways, including through the development of citizen apps and the use of geospatial data.

Health provides vital services to our community and our region, especially as it grows and as our community ages. We have highly skilled, dedicated staff and strong partnerships across the private and community health sectors. It is my intention to strengthen these partnerships and to make new ones, and we will deliver more services as we continue to make sure Canberrans live long and healthy lives.

Transport Canberra and City Services is a new organisation but with a long and important history in delivering essential services across our city. Canberrans rely upon these services every day. No other arm of government touches so many people's lives on a daily basis than the work of TCCS. Its asset base is a testament to its impact on the infrastructure and amenity of the city. I have asked TCCS to develop an approach to preventative maintenance of its living and built asset base to ensure the future sustainability of Canberra's essential city infrastructure and minimise the future burden on the ACT budget.

The higher education, research and training portfolio is exciting, and the alignment of training with the higher education sector will provide enormous economic and social opportunities. The government can play an important enabling role with the sector, combining its strengths to benefit the institutions and help them to attract staff, students and investment to the ACT. The ACT government also makes large investments in research. This needs to be better understood to maximise its value for the government, for the sector and for the community.



I would like to speak about the government's priorities in health. Over the last 15 years the ACT Labor government has invested significantly in our health system. Our investment demonstrates the importance we place on ensuring that the people of Canberra have access to high quality healthcare services when and where they need them. Our government has a 10-year health plan that provides the foundation for us to continue to build an innovative and world-class health system for the ACT.

Our 10-year health plan has five key planks: preventative health—empowering people to understand their own health and investing in prevention to reduce the burden of ill health and disease on our community; access—access to the highest quality health services, in particular the delivery of services where and when people need them; infrastructure—building essential health infrastructure to support health services across our community; our workforce—investing in a highly skilled workforce; and research—harnessing our research capabilities to deliver health outcomes and support Canberra's higher education institutions. This plan will also be supported by ongoing priorities in the Health portfolio, notably the clinical services framework that will inform the strategic direction for healthcare delivery over this period.

With the appointment of Shane Rattenbury as Minister for Mental Health, I also welcome a strong focus on mental health services, and in particular the upcoming establishment of the office of mental health.

As minister, I will have a strong focus on prevention because, put simply, prevention is always better than the cure. As I said in my inaugural speech in this place, we must continue to invest in and use world-class services, but it makes sense that we find innovative ways to spend more on prevention.

We will appoint a preventative health coordinator responsible for developing a comprehensive preventative health strategy to build on the work of the nation-leading towards zero growth policy that promotes healthy choices and behaviours; our alcohol, tobacco and drug policies; and our active travel policies. This will ensure we reduce the growing incidence of chronic health conditions such as heart disease and diabetes.

This work is generally regarded as a marathon, not a sprint, but we need to make inroads across many policy areas to reduce the incidence of preventable disease and ill health in our community and we need to build strong evidence to support continued investments in preventative health. I look forward to holding a stakeholder workshop in early 2017 to engage with the existing and new stakeholders on ideas and suggestions for this strategy.

Access to the right health service at the right time in the right place is vital to the health and wellbeing of Canberrans. Under the clinical services framework our health system will be more streamlined, with strong links between all of our services, both acute and community based, to ensure that the patient journey is smooth and continuity of care is enhanced.

The health system and each patient's journey will be focused on the needs of the patient. Patients should not need to understand what is a complex system, and our

system should be responsive to them. We are also bringing health care closer to home by expanding the capacity of the hospital in the home service, employing more doctors and nurses and delivering the services via our community health centres. This will allow approximately 3,000 additional patients to receive hospital-level care outside the acute care environment.

To build on the success of existing community health services, the government has committed to open an additional three nurse-led walk-in centres, and we will also develop a new family assistance fund to provide financial support for parents to be with their child when accessing interstate tertiary children's hospitals and services.

This government has worked hard to encourage bulk-billing practices into the ACT and we will improve access to bulk-billing in all areas and particularly in Tuggeranong and Molonglo Valley. I have asked ACT Health to commence the design work for a capital grants program that will support greater bulk-billing by general practitioners in Tuggeranong and Molonglo valley.

The government is, of course, aware of the need to invest in health infrastructure to ensure we can meet the increasing demand on our services and to seize the opportunities that new technology and innovation provide. Consecutive Labor governments have invested in world-class health facilities: the Canberra Region Cancer Centre; new community health centres in Gungahlin, Belconnen and Tuggeranong; the adult mental health unit; the Centenary Hospital for Women and Children; we have our two popular and successful walk-in centres in Tuggeranong and Belconnen; and last month Mr Rattenbury opened the Dhulwa Mental Health Unit, which provides a safe clinical and therapeutic environment for adults with complex mental health needs.

This year we have seen the opening of key areas within the expanded emergency department at Canberra Hospital, and I look forward to that work being completed next week. I would like to make special mention here of the ED staff and contractors undertaking this work. Undertaking a \$24 million upgrade of an existing ED is a significant challenge, exceptionally well handled by all involved. It has been wonderful to see the new paediatric area, meaning children and their families now have a dedicated waiting area; the new discharge area, meaning people with less acute conditions can be seen more quickly; the additional ambulance bays; and the transformed general waiting area.

The Canberra Hospital ED continues to be busy. Indeed it is the ninth busiest emergency department in Australia. At the same time, our waiting times are improving and there has been a significant reduction in the number of patients waiting for imaging and ultrasound services at the Canberra Hospital.

The construction of the new University of Canberra public hospital is also well underway and when opened in 2018 will be Canberra's third public hospital. This will transform our health system, most notably for those patients needing rehabilitation services. A purpose-built, state-of-the-art hospital will take the pressure off Canberra Hospital and provide dedicated rehabilitative care for patients.

Our strategic focus for this term of government will be to continue to build a contemporary, world-class health infrastructure across the ACT in a sustainable and innovative way to ensure our future healthcare needs are met. We will expand the Centenary Hospital for Women and Children. The expansion will incorporate an adolescent mental health unit, an adolescent gynaecology service, a paediatric high dependency unit and paediatric intensive care beds.

Our most significant investment will be the construction of the Surgical Procedures, Interventional Radiology and Emergency—or SPIRE—Centre. SPIRE will accommodate surgical procedures, interventional radiology, critical care units and an emergency department in one facility. SPIRE will see an expansion of the number of operating theatres from 13 to 20 and will have separate theatres for emergency and elective surgery to allow for elective surgeries to be scheduled with minimal impact on the capacity to perform emergency surgery.

SPIRE will also include two inpatient wards, new critical care and imaging facilities, a high-level coronary care unit, an intensive care unit including for paediatric care, and a new day surgery centre. A new ED will be built next to SPIRE, allowing the existing ED to be dedicated to women and children. We will commence scoping study, forward design and business case preparation for our infrastructure investments early in 2017.

We have a highly skilled and capable health workforce here in Canberra and I would like to take the opportunity to thank the ACT health workforce for their tireless efforts in doing what they do best—providing high quality patient care and excellent health services to the people in our region. Our dedicated doctors, nurses, midwives, allied health and other professionals who keep our health services and hospitals running 24 hours a day, seven days a week are highly valued by this government, and our services would not be what they are without them. We are committed to further investment in our health workforce, through the employment of additional nurses and further training opportunities.

A boost to our nursing workforce numbers will commence in 2017-18 and will involve further training opportunities, with a new nurse practitioner course developed with the University of Canberra and more nurse scholarships. We will see the establishment of the new nursing, allied health and midwifery clinical school at UC. The school will train nurses and allied health professionals with teaching facilities at the Canberra Hospital and the new UCPH. We will also undertake a nurse safety strategy.

The challenges we face in public health care are significant, and we cannot meet them alone. Strong and effective strategic partnerships are critical to successful health service delivery. We need to leverage our enduring relationships and partnerships and we need to build new ones with a range of stakeholders, including the non-government sector, universities and research organisations, consumer and peak bodies as well as other healthcare providers and innovators. The government will focus on forging even stronger partnerships with organisations such as the University of Canberra, Calvary Hospital, Winnunga Nimmityjah Aboriginal Health Service and smaller NGOs and peak bodies.

We have committed to building a new centre to provide health care for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people living in the ACT and region, through the design and build of a modern, fit-for-purpose health clinic for Winnunga. We will also provide in this financial year a one-off capital grant for the establishment of a neuromoves program in the ACT, and we have committed to providing funding support to the Stroke Foundation to employ a coordinator to support stroke survivors in the ACT.

We have a long and enduring partnership with Calvary Public Hospital, and the government will work with Calvary to conduct the scoping study for longer term, new and expanded north side hospital facilities. The government has also committed to providing additional funding to support health research. This will be in addition to funds already committed in the last budget to establish a new clinical genomic service.

With the range of initiatives I have just described, I am confident that the healthcare needs of the Canberra community and the surrounding region will be met.

Transport Canberra and City Services provides essential services that Canberrans rely upon every day. We have exciting plans to continue the delivery of important services and projects and embark on new ones essential to the amenity and functioning of our city as it grows. Firstly there is our plan for a more integrated public transport network. My priority is for more people to walk or cycle or use public transport to get around our city. We will expand and improve services, provide better access to real-time information; we will partner for innovation and find new ways for people to have more choice in using transport. The new city loop and Nightrider services show how it can be done.

Light rail stage 1 is now well underway. As part of a fully integrated public transport system, this will mean customers will have one ticket, one fare and be able to transfer between light rail and buses, as well as a growing cycling and walking network. Canberra has voted for light rail, for a city-wide light rail network, and we will deliver it. Construction is already underway and progressing well.

We have also begun preliminary project definition work for light rail stage 2 from Civic to Woden, which will see a contract signed in this term of government for construction. Stage 2 of light rail will deliver a 23-kilometre north-south spine of light rail as the start of this city-wide network. This is a significant city-shaping project that delivers economic, social, transport and environmental benefits for our city. It is absolutely clear that light rail is part of our city's future.

I welcome scrutiny and debate on the project but, for those that seek to continue to oppose the project, I encourage you to reflect on the national debate about the implications of short-term thinking on infrastructure. Residents, visitors and businesses in cities across Australia are suffering because previous governments did not have the vision or courage to deliver infrastructure

In addition, new rapid bus routes will be added next year, from Woden to the city via Manuka and Barton, and from Belconnen to Gungahlin. To encourage patronage the first two months of these services will be free. From January next year, Transport

Canberra will also begin a trial for seniors cardholders to travel for free during off-peak times every day of the week on our buses. This is to encourage our older residents to access public transport and to get out and about safely and efficiently. We also look forward to engaging with north side community organisations to identify those in need of the flexible bus service.

Work to deliver new bus depots in Woden and north Canberra has begun. Around 300 new and existing staff will be located at the new Woden depot once it is operational.

Walking and cycling are also high on my agenda and we will work hard to deliver a number of new initiatives to see our community getting out and getting active through day-to-day travel. Getting our children to and from school safely is a key objective for me, and a further 50 schools will be added to the government's active streets for schools program. School crossing supervisors as well as bigger and better signage, coupled with dedicated crossings, traffic islands and improved parking options will improve the safety of our school children as they travel, walk or cycle to and from school.

We will build the Belconnen bikeway, providing a showpiece of walking and cycling infrastructure within and to the Belconnen town centre, and we will extend the age-friendly suburbs program, providing improvements for older people who can comfortably and safely travel around their suburbs.

We will innovate. Already Canberrans are using new and exciting ways to move around our city, the first city in the world to regulate for ride sharing, car sharing, working with partners to deliver an autonomous vehicle trial, the new city loop and most recently the partnership with Uber to deliver improved Nightrider services—each proving very successful.

It is vital we give Canberrans a great opportunity to walk, cycle, use public transport or try a new way of getting to work or going out. Increasing these opportunities will be an important strategic priority for me and the government.

Canberrans love our city and rightly want to be proud of the way it is maintained and presented. We will invest in those essential services that keep our city beautiful: mowing, weeding and graffiti management. We will plant more trees. We will deliver new micro parks, lively green spaces in areas undergoing urban renewal. We will partner with the community at a grassroots level with a new and innovative adopt-a-park scheme.

We will also ensure the government has the legislative and regulatory powers it needs to ensure the amenity of our city, which includes that vacant blocks are kept clean and safe and that public spaces are remediated following any impacts from construction activities. I will be bringing forward the necessary amendments as soon as possible in 2017.

Waste in our city will also continue to be tackled head on. Additional recycling bins around the city will be installed and greens bins will be rolled out across all of

Canberra by mid-2020. A free annual bulky waste collection service will also be implemented allowing Canberrans to more easily dispose of bulky items each year—a particular initiative I know this chamber is very much looking forward to. A container deposit scheme will be implemented to encourage recycling and keep our suburbs clean and tidy.

With the range of transport and city services initiatives I have outlined I am confident the essential services, infrastructure and transport needs of our community will be welcomed by all.

Finally, I would like to touch on my responsibilities as Minister for Higher Education, Training and Research. This portfolio provides an opportunity to significantly influence our goal to grow and diversify Canberra's economy and recognises the enormous value and opportunity this sector has to contribute to our future as a smart-knowledge economy. It is central to the government's ambition for growing economic opportunity for all Canberrans.

Few cities of comparable size to Canberra have a higher education, training and research sector of the scale and quality of ours. Our connections with this sector are extensive, and education is Canberra's largest export. As minister I will look to grow and strengthen the sector as a whole. We have particular opportunities to strengthen sectors of our economy where there are exceptional skills and knowledge, notably the defence, cyber security and space sectors.

Earlier this year the Chief Minister launched the international education strategy which was developed in close consultation with education and research institutions. While the education institutions retain responsibility for attracting students directly, the ACT government will work closely with them to promote Canberra as an education destination and ensure that students enjoy the experience of living, studying and working in Canberra. We will continue the successful studyCanberra initiative and refocus it in partnership with the institutions including the student experience and providing opportunities for students to pursue internship placements with local organisations.

Of course economic diversification also requires skills development, and bringing the two together in one portfolio provides a great opportunity to ensure that we deliver the skills that our growing economy needs and the jobs our future workforce needs. The VET sector is an important part of addressing skills need and as the minister I am keen to ensure that the sector, and in particular CIT, plays a leadership role in addressing emerging skills. We are undertaking continued reform in the ACT VET sector to drive improvements in quality outcomes and industry responsiveness.

CIT has a wonderful reputation, and the ACT government is working closely with CIT to ensure the benefits of increased autonomy, including through the introduction of a governing board, are realised. The ACT Labor government will ensure CIT remains the properly funded, primary provider of high quality vocational education in Canberra. We are committed to providing secure funding for CIT, maintaining a minimum of 70 per cent of total ACT government funding for

VET. As the minister responsible for skills development I will continue to ensure that our framework meets the needs of emerging industries and, in particular, emphasises the importance of STEM skills and re-skilling for women and mature age workers.

It is a privilege to outline my priorities for these portfolios today. As minister I will continue my open and collaborative style. I will seek out new partners and encourage new ideas. I will work with people to find smart ways for government, the community and business to work together to deliver for Canberrans. I look forward to working with my dedicated colleagues. We are all humbled by the faith and trust the community has put in us and the stakeholders across my portfolios and the talented and hardworking staff of the ACT public service. Above all I look forward to continuing to work with the Canberra community and, in particular, those people who put their trust in us to represent them here.

I present the following paper:

Ministerial priorities—Minister Fitzharris—Ministerial statement, 15 December 2016.

I move:

That the Assembly take note of the paper.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

## **Portfolio priorities Ministerial statement**

**MR GENTLEMAN** (Brindabella—Minister for Police and Emergency Services, Minister for the Environment and Heritage, Minister for Planning and Land Management and Minister for Urban Renewal) (10.34): I rise today to speak on the priorities that I will be focusing on within my portfolios for this term of government.

Firstly, I would like to discuss planning and urban renewal. Holding the role of minister for planning from the start of a parliamentary term gives me an opportunity to establish a strong direction, and one that recognises that the needs of our city are changing. I want to bring people back into planning. We do not undertake city planning simply for the sake of creating artistic street layouts. We plan ahead so that we have the best chance of meeting the future needs of the people who will live, work and play in our city.

In developing my statement of planning intent I spent a lot of time attending community meetings, in workshops with groups of all demographics, including our young professionals, and listening to the aspirations that Canberrans have for our city. I would like that approach to become the default for talking about planning in Canberra. I support the Chief Minister's ambitions to develop more meaningful ways to engage with our community and to hear community views. I will ensure that, as Minister for Planning and Land Management and Minister for Urban Renewal, the Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate and the Land

Development Agency take a clear role in planning the future of our suburbs and renewing our suburbs and town centres.

I will ensure broad consultation strategies are implemented for major projects and proposals, including exploring deliberative democracy tools and seeking input from as wide a range of people as possible, to ensure the voices of the many and varied communities across Canberra are heard. I will also endeavour to make it easier for the public to understand and have input into planning processes.

As our city continues to grow and develop, it is vital that we continue to pursue the highest possible standards in our built environment. It is also vital that we pursue quality urban renewal outcomes so that our city can continue to grow, but at the same time ensure that what we love about Canberra is preserved. We need to ensure that building and infrastructure assets in our city are well designed, well built and well maintained and that urban areas are revitalised so that they continue to offer attractive places to live, work and play.

In private housing, we know there are gaps in the housing choices people have in our existing suburbs. Freestanding suburban houses and apartments close to our group and town centres suit many people but not all. I will make this a major priority for this parliamentary term. We will engage with the community to talk about housing choices—the types of housing, the best locations and potential changes to our planning system to encourage responses that meet the needs of the community. I will also pursue improvements in the availability of universal housing—housing that meets the needs of Canberrans at all levels of ability and of all ages.

I would also like to touch on my commitment to provide Canberrans with healthy waterways. Canberrans are lucky to enjoy an array of natural rivers and creeks and man-made lakes and ponds. But the health of our waterways is not as good as it could be. Over the next four years we will be constructing projects under the healthy waterways project, also known as the basin priority project. This will include new wetlands and bio-retention systems built across Canberra and the restoration of some of our older urban stormwater drains back into more naturalised creek environments. These projects will improve the quality of our water as well as improve amenity for nearby residents and contribute to the health of the broader environment. There will also be opportunities for each and every Canberra resident to contribute to the increased health of our waterways.

Touching on the subject of our “bush capital”, I will lead a new focus on our environmental assets, building on the best of our natural environment to develop a modern bush capital. This will encompass work at every level, from our mountains to the Canberra Nature Park, the urban forest and our community gardens. The opportunities to showcase our city as a modern bush capital are immense. We will work on micro parks in our inner city areas, ensuring that city workers and residents have access to generous green spaces that are well designed, well built and well maintained. I will also ask my directorate to increase its efforts to ensure that living assets such as trees, waterways and parklands are carefully integrated into the way we approach planning and development in our city.



I now turn to the topic of our territory's proud heritage. For tens of thousands of years the Ngunnawal people have known this region as their country, their homeland. We are now into the second century of also recognising this place as our home and our national capital. This history means we have many unique stories to share and many places and objects to protect for future generations to enjoy. We should make sure that locals and visitors alike have the ability to understand this place, to understand that our story is more than just the past 100 years and that it runs back tens of thousands of years, and to understand that we are creating future heritage, future stories, right here and now, each and every day.

The ACT government will finalise a five-year heritage strategy. The preparation and implementation of the strategy will determine a range of strategic priorities and actions that will further recognise, protect, conserve and promote our heritage assets, building on the framework of the existing legislation and initiatives such as Canberra tracks, the Canberra and Region Heritage Festival and the heritage grants.

Turning to my other portfolio responsibilities of police and emergency services, Labor is committed to building a safe and resilient community. All Canberrans should be safe, and feel safe, from crime. One of the highest priorities of any government should be caring for the safety and security of its residents and visitors. As minister, my intent is to continue to support police and the justice system to provide a safe community that encourages people to live, work and enjoy a vibrant lifestyle in Canberra.

Criminals should also be sent a strong message. I want to support police to discourage criminal activity and groups that seek to introduce harm to our community through drugs, firearms, fortified premises and other forms of criminal intent.

As minister, I will work with police and emergency services personnel to continue to support them through investment in infrastructure, personnel and equipment. This includes a continued focus on preventing and responding to bushfires, responding to alcohol-related violence, ensuring our public spaces are safe and attractive places to visit, continuing to implement the Emergency Services Agency's strategic reform agenda, and investing in new infrastructure and equipment, including enhanced mental health services for emergency services personnel, and significant commitments around new Fire & Rescue and paramedic crews.

We will continue work to prevent and respond to family violence. ACT Policing are ensuring that front-line responses to incidents are timely, consistent and comprehensive, and are working collaboratively across government to ensure a joined-up response to addressing this important community issue.

The issues I have raised in this place today will comprise my key priorities in my portfolios in this term of government, to help make Canberra an even better place to work, live and play for all.

I present the following paper:

Portfolio priorities—Minister Gentleman—Ministerial statement, 15 December 2016.

I move:

That the Assembly take note of the paper.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

## **Portfolio priorities Ministerial statement**

**MR RAMSAY** (Ginninderra—Attorney-General, Minister for Regulatory Services, Minister for the Arts and Community Events and Minister for Veterans and Seniors) (10.42): As I indicated to the Assembly on Tuesday, with the privilege of appointment to the ministry comes the responsibility for ensuring that those who are marginalised are fully included in our society. When we have relationships and connections that are just and healthy, marked by equality, respect, care and dignity, we will be able to build a society where everyone belongs, everyone is valued and everyone can participate

I am committed to building a Canberra community that is safe, strong and connected, and I am working towards establishing Canberra as a restorative city. This begins with having a strong relational understanding of our fellow human beings, of who we are and what we need from one another.

One of the ways that I will be getting down to business in this area will be to work collaboratively with judges, magistrates and other parts of the justice and health systems to lay the foundations for a drug and alcohol court. The evidence is strong that if we provide the right support services to people with drug and alcohol problems at the right point in their contact with the judicial system, we can address these dependencies and, in turn, build more resilient people, families and communities.

Justice is true justice only when it is accessible, transparent and timely. So we are working towards more modern and efficient courts, demonstrated by a best practice court service framework, integrated case management and a new Supreme Court building, all of which bring a stronger capacity to accommodate the ACT's justice needs to ensure people's rights are protected.

I will protect and enhance access to justice by all members of the community, no matter how disadvantaged or vulnerable, by ensuring that community legal centres are adequately funded. I am disappointed that the commonwealth government has ignored calls from state and territory governments and the community sector to maintain core funding to community legal centres.

In contrast, the ACT government funds a number of important services in the ACT legal assistance sector, and I will ensure that funding is maintained, and that funding for the Environmental Defenders Office is reinstated for at least two years. I

note that the ACT government is also the only state or territory government to supplement commonwealth funding to the Aboriginal Legal Service. Going further, to help future-proof the community legal centres in the face of the current tight fiscal environment, the ACT government will continue to assist them with service planning to support and improve service delivery.

As Attorney-General in a proudly progressive government, I will lead a progressive and inclusive law reform agenda. I will enhance electoral integrity and democratic participation by banning political donations from developers and by changing enrolment time limits.

Here in Canberra we know about and value the privilege of democratic participation and strong democratic institutions. Through the Select Committee on 2016 ACT election and Electoral Act, we will consider lowering the voting age, improving donation rules and reporting time frames, and encouraging more people to enrol, vote and participate more widely in political activity.

I am honoured to be working closely with such a strong team in this government, and I am dedicated to a collaborative, whole-of-government approach to the way in which Canberrans can fully participate. So, working with the Deputy Chief Minister, I will be further progressing reforms for the ACT in responding to domestic, family and sexual violence in our community.

Building on a range of recent initiatives, we will streamline processes and better support victims of family violence who are seeking protection. I believe firmly that the measure of a community is how it treats and supports its most vulnerable members. My priorities are intended to make sure that our community measures up.

I will lead the government's ongoing work to progress liquor, racing and gaming reforms to support a safe community, a vibrant night-life and viable liquor, hospitality and gaming and racing industries. The government's commitment to liquor reforms includes changes around licensing and education, as well as extra police to ensure that our city maintains its vibrant night-life and minimises the incidence of late-night, alcohol-related violence.

The government has also committed to a range of initiatives which will address harm minimisation and support the contribution of clubs to the ACT community. It is great to see that over the past 16 months 441 poker machines have been removed from active use here in the ACT. I will continue and accelerate this important action, further reducing the numbers to a maximum of 4,000 by 2020. I will be working collaboratively with the clubs sector to implement this more ambitious target and to assist clubs to diversify their business models as electronic gaming machine numbers are reduced.

We will also be seeking to work collaboratively with the racing industry to implement the parliamentary agreement's commitment to end government funding to greyhound racing after 30 June 2017. This includes a commitment to take steps towards ending the industry in the ACT. I am strongly mindful that this will affect members of the community involved in the industry and it is my intention to work with them on appropriate transition steps both for the people and for the animals affected.

This government understands how important it is to be able to do business in Canberra easily. Businesses are a key driver of our economy and through my portfolio I will continue to develop a smarter regulatory regime that works hard to reduce administrative burdens and helps the ACT to create greater economic diversity.

Continuing to live out the Access Canberra motto of “easier, simpler, faster” means that event organisers, community groups and business owners can navigate approval processes more simply. One of my first actions in this portfolio was to approve and launch the new Access Canberra website, and I will continue to move more services online so that people can transact with government anytime, anywhere and at their own convenience. However, I know that, despite the ease, efficiency and convenience of online service, it is vital that the services are truly accessible to everyone. So I will work to ensure that those who either do not or cannot access digital solutions are not excluded.

Another core part of a vibrant, progressive Canberra is our arts and community events scene, which brings life, colour and vitality to the Canberra region, helping to define our community’s identity and express our values. A strong and vibrant arts and community events sector is essential to the cultural, social and economic fabric of Canberra. Local artists have played an important role in the growth of our signature major events, and I am keen to see that contribution develop further.

The government recognises that providing support for something because it is beautiful, makes us laugh, challenges us or speaks to us creates the space and freedom needed for creativity and innovation to flourish in and enrich our community. It is essential, therefore, that we better understand how public investment in the arts creates community value and inclusion, not just from an economic perspective but socially and culturally. There is strength and power in the arts—in their role in expressing and exploring the uniqueness of other cultures, in demonstrating the value of creativity of people of all abilities, as well as their key role with health and wholeness, and caring for and nurturing those with conditions such as Alzheimer’s, dementia, Parkinson’s and others.

Participation is a critical component of making our arts and community events a success. So I bring a strong focus on inclusivity and accessibility, embracing Canberra’s diversity of cultures, heritage, sexualities, age, income, gender, ability and location. Upgrades to a range of community arts facilities will support community access to the arts and arts development. I will ensure that Canberra has an events calendar that maximises social, cultural and economic benefits for the Canberra region.

Finally for today, I wish to note my strong commitment to enhancing the wellbeing and social inclusion here in Canberra for our veterans and seniors. We are healthier and we are living longer. We know we have, and will continue to have, more ageing Canberrans than ever. This is a great gift and asset for our city and our community. So I will be leading work to further enhance Canberra as an age-friendly city. I am acutely aware of the substantial reforms to aged care occurring at the national level. As part of the way that I am already getting down to the business of government, I

have arranged for work to be done to ensure our preparation for this major disruptive impact. There will be profound changes, with impacts across all areas of government and society.

I will ensure that we are well positioned to be able to move through this time in a way which values and supports older Canberrans. This will include areas such as affordable and accessible health care, housing and homelessness services, public and community transport services and recreational activities. Drawing from the wisdom and the experience in the ministerial advisory councils and beyond in the community, I will ensure that we have the right people-centred, wraparound services for veterans and their families, paying particular attention to the needs of young veterans who are leaving the Australian Defence Force and requiring support to transition to the next phase of their life.

Across each of my portfolios and in the ways in which I work with my colleagues, I will be progressive, inclusive and people centred. I am delighted at the level of energy across each of my portfolio responsibilities as we get down to the business of government. Together I know that this government and our community recognise the great strengths of this wonderful city. I am committed to the work of making it even better.

I present the following paper:

Portfolio priorities—Minister Ramsay—Ministerial statement, 15 December 2016.

I move:

That the Assembly take note of the paper.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

## **Portfolio priorities Ministerial statement**

**MR RATTENBURY** (Kurrajong—Minister for Climate Change and Sustainability, Minister for Justice and Consumer Affairs, Minister for Corrections and Minister for Mental Health) (10.54): I rise today to outline some of the key areas I intend to progress in this term of the Ninth Assembly. I am pleased to have a diverse range of portfolios that each has some challenges—for the government, but also for our community. These are all areas where the government can support the community by improving our services and by setting policy frameworks to enable change.

Let me start with climate change and sustainability. As the government's new Minister for Climate Change and Sustainability, I am determined to advance these critical environmental issues. Climate change and sustainability are central issues to the future of the ACT, just as they are to Australia more broadly and, indeed, to the whole planet. Unfortunately, we know that climate change is already underway. We are seeing the impacts even here in Canberra.

We have new records in our weather patterns on an alarmingly regular basis—for example, the wettest winter months on record. In fact we have now broken records three years in a row for the wettest winter. This year we had the warmest July night on record; a number of hottest days on record this year, in winter and in spring; and as wet winters followed by hot dry summers exacerbate our bushfire seasons, their threats are increasing. Heat stress is also becoming one of the biggest killers in Australia.

Our level of success in mitigating and adapting to climate change impacts will affect our future way of life in almost every way, including our health, our economy and our environment. It is vital that we do what we can as a jurisdiction to reduce global warming and mitigate its impacts.

The science is now showing that the door is closing on our chance to limit global warming to 1.5 degrees or less, a crucial threshold. But I do believe that with the right targets and the right efforts we can still take action that is critical to the ongoing future of humans and the planet. Our targets are in line with the targets set out in the Paris climate agreement to limit warming to well below two degrees by the end of the century.

As a small jurisdiction we are punching far above our weight. We are inspiring others by showing how 100 per cent renewables can be implemented. Our targets are attracting some \$500 million of investment to the ACT's local economy and putting the ACT on the national and international stage. In the absence of national action on climate change we are also working with other states and territories through the climate action roundtable on ambitious climate action.

But more needs to be done. I have two key goals for the ACT in relation to climate action: establishing a clear pathway for zero net emissions by 2050 at the latest and achieving carbon neutral government by 2020. Here in the ACT we are doing some great work when it comes to renewable energy in particular. We are a world-leading jurisdiction with our target of 100 per cent renewable electricity by 2020, a target that we are on track to achieve.

While this is a significant achievement, we cannot just stop at electricity reform. The next challenge is moving to zero net carbon emissions by 2050 at the latest. Members will have seen this target set out in the 2016 parliamentary agreement. I note also that the Liberal Party agreed during the election that they support this target. It is fantastic to have support for this goal because it will undoubtedly require considerable work and present many challenges.

One of my key priorities during the course of this Assembly is to establish our pathway to zero net emissions and to take clear action towards its implementation, including setting firm interim emissions targets to 2050. We need to work on the sectors that are our major sources of greenhouse gas emissions beyond electricity. When emissions from electricity reduce to zero in 2020, it will leave the transport sector as by far the largest source of greenhouse gas emissions in the ACT.

We will also need to rethink how the ACT uses gas and our built environment, that is, how we build and plan the city. Emissions generated from waste will also be a target area. Achieving this goal will require government plans and decisions to be consistent with our zero net carbon pollution target right across the board. It will mean working with the community and working with business. While it is challenging, the good news is that it is both achievable and allows us to keep our high quality of life. It means solutions such as electric vehicles running on renewable energy, comfortable zero emission buildings—solutions that other jurisdictions are already progressing and are perfectly compatible with a high quality of life.

A second and related priority is for the ACT to achieve a carbon neutral government by 2020. This challenge means that we, the government, show the Canberra community that zero net emissions is genuinely achievable. This too will require a commitment across all ACT government directorates and agencies to reduce the government's emissions to achieve the target. Some of our directorates are already showing great leadership but further action is needed.

One good example is switching from gas to high efficiency electrical appliances across the government to make the most of the ACT moving to 100 per cent renewable electricity by 2020. The goal will need to be reflected at all levels of decision-making on government operations—from building and design of government facilities, to government transport, to procurement practices.

I have asked my directorate to lead on this and they will be undertaking activities such as developing a regular reporting framework, holding government and business innovation workshops and increasing uptake of the loan fund that allows directorates to undertake activities that will reduce their emissions and also save on costs.

As the Minister for Justice and Consumer Affairs I also have responsibility for road safety. This is an area of priority for me. Road safety is a key area of the ACT government's responsibilities but it is one that sometimes does not attract a lot of attention. Too often there is an attitude that deaths and injuries are an inevitable part of our road traffic system. I do not believe that this is the case. This is what is emphasised by the vision zero road safety approach that we have adopted in the ACT government.

One of my key priorities is to ensure that vision zero is not only well understood in the community but that its requirements are fully integrated across government. As part of the vision zero goal, I will continue to implement elements of the 2016-2020 road safety action plan. The plan requires a whole-of-system approach, including commitments in the way we plan and build infrastructure to achieve our vision of zero deaths, such as the way we set speed limits, the way we communicate with the public and our attitudes to vulnerable road users. This comprehensive integration of the vision zero philosophy, together with a safe system approach, is one of the priorities the government will pursue during this term of the Assembly.

Madam Speaker, I am proud to be the Minister of Corrections for a second term. Although it is a difficult area of public policy and government service delivery, I

believe it is vital work that, despite its challenges, holds many rewards. It can be seen as deceptively simple. But, in fact, ACT Corrective Services is a highly complex organisation encompassing custodial and community corrections with dual roles to support a safer and more secure Canberra and maintain a commitment to rehabilitating criminal behaviours wherever possible.

Jails are, by definition, tough places and the AMC is no exception. I do not shy away from the fact that the prison has been the focus of strong criticism in recent times. Nor can I discount the need to redouble our efforts to ensure that we have a truly functional, modern prison.

Through the course of last term I was pleased to secure the funding not just to expand the centre but to develop greater separation of detainees and create dedicated therapeutic areas. This project was completed on time and significantly under budget. Corrections staff can now better manage detainees and provide more opportunities for rehabilitation. The funds saved have been allocated to build prison industries at the AMC. This project will be completed shortly.

This will add significantly to rehabilitation opportunities and provide more structured opportunities for detainees. These significant additions to the centre, not included in the original build, will go a long way to delivering a modern, world-class correctional facility which is able to support a focus on giving detainees the best chance at putting their lives back on track. I am confident that we are currently in the process of genuine transformation and progress towards the realisation of the type of prison that the ACT community was promised and rightly expects.

With my expanded responsibilities as minister for justice I will be working to develop a more holistic and integrated criminal justice system in partnership with the attorney, one that can be bolder in its aspirations to reduce recidivism, as outlined in the parliamentary agreement.

By using justice reinvestment approaches and investing in smarter crime prevention, the ACT government aims to effectively improve life outcomes and reduce the ongoing cost burdens associated with the criminal justice system. If properly implemented, by addressing root causes, justice reinvestment can reduce crime and imprisonment, reduce recidivism, improve community safety and strengthen our most disadvantaged communities, all without breaking the budget.

A justice reinvestment approach includes increased support to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families of detainees, innovative new support programs to enhance bail compliance, and develop real and achievable recidivism targets. We will also ensure that victims are never forgotten in this process by continuing the essential work of the highly-regarded Restorative Justice Unit and through new initiatives such as the development of a victims' rights charter. By working together and with enhanced collaboration between government agencies and our community sector partners, I am confident that the ACT government can continue to provide a safe and inclusive society for all Canberrans.



Mental health issues are a serious concern in this country. The impacts on Canberrans are no different. The statistics are deeply disturbing. Suicide is the leading cause of death for men under the age of 54, significantly exceeding the national road toll. It is estimated that almost half of Australians will experience a common mental disorder in their lifetime, and almost one in seven young people aged four to 17 were assessed as having mental health disorders in the previous 12 months.

This is something that all jurisdictions are struggling with. The ACT, small as we are, is not immune. Locally and nationally, governments are calling for better coordination of services, for an end to the avoidable silos and gaps and, above all, for innovation in policy design and service delivery. We need to better harness the data that guides truly evidence-based responses to what is driving these tragic statistics and we need to be relentless in challenging the stigma associated with mental health.

It is a high priority for me and for this government to work to prevent and reduce rates of mental illness, suicide and self-harm across the territory. In recognition of this, the ACT government has, for the first time, created a unique stand-alone portfolio position. I am privileged to be the ACT government's first Minister for Mental Health. I now have the responsibility of delivering on the parliamentary agreement items that Labor and the Greens have prioritised to progress improvements in mental health, including the establishment of an ACT office of mental health.

I want to see the office of mental health empowered to provide independent reports and advice to the community and government on what is working and what is not working in the delivery of mental health services and to have a hands-on role in commissioning, partnering and monitoring the delivery of programs.

The office of mental health will also have a role in coordinating the range of existing support services provided by both government and the community sector that are available to Canberrans to ensure that nobody falls through the gaps. We need to ensure a continuum of support for patients through the full range of these services, including residential, outpatient and supported accommodation options.

This new office will be based on the best practice examples of the West Australian and New South Wales mental health commissions, shaped to the ACT needs and will be people-focused at its heart. We can and must do better. That is why I will also develop whole-of-government targets to reduce suicide and work with the experts, advocates, families and funded services to reduce the impacts of mental health issues.

I am looking forward to these challenges for the next term of the Assembly. With these goals, I believe that I can work with government and with our community to progress improvements in setting and achieving our climate change goals, improving road safety and reducing road deaths, reducing recidivism, improving community safety, establishing an office of mental health, and reducing suicide and self-harm in our community.

I present the following paper:

Portfolio priorities—Minister Rattenbury—Ministerial statement, 15 December 2016.

I move:

That the Assembly take note of the paper.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

## **Strategic outcomes and priorities**

### **Ministerial statement**

**MS STEPHEN-SMITH** (Kurrajong—Minister for Community Services and Social Inclusion, Minister for Disability, Children and Youth, Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs, Minister for Multicultural Affairs and Minister for Workplace Safety and Industrial Relations) (11.08): Through my portfolios I have an opportunity to work with individuals, families, businesses, unions and the community sector to build a fairer, safer and more inclusive city. Achieving our goals will require us to do our own work well and to work constructively with local organisations and the people of Canberra.

Nowhere is this more important than in our response to family and domestic violence. While the Deputy Chief Minister and Minister Ramsay have spoken in detail about the government's commitment to and strategy for addressing this crisis in our community, it is important for me to note that it drives and is driven by challenges that cut across many portfolios, including my own.

Similarly, the implementation of the ACT Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander agreement will require many players to take responsibility if we are to deliver the outcomes identified by the community, and deliver those outcomes we must if we are ever to achieve true equality and true reconciliation.

My portfolios support Canberra's children and families through universal services, early intervention and statutory services. As a community, we should be proud of our recent reforms in these areas, particularly in youth justice, where we have seen a dramatic fall in the number of young people engaged with the justice system.

I have already met with many of our committed partners in the community, including the ACT Council for Social Service, representatives of the United Ngunnawal Elders Council, the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elected Body, Women with Disabilities ACT, the Youth Coalition, and a number of advocacy, advisory and service delivery organisations.

I have also had the great pleasure of meeting with a number of leaders in Canberra's vibrant multicultural community and attending fabulous events, such as the recent Diwali celebrations. And I have spent time listening to stakeholders about the issues and priorities in workplace safety and industrial relations.

My intention with this statement is to outline six strategic goals, share some observations and flag priorities for the future. The outcomes I will be pursuing for our community are: an inclusive and accessible community where people with disability exercise genuine choice and control in their own lives; coordinated prevention, early intervention and support that ensures all children, young people and families have the opportunity to thrive; Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families and community are strong, safe and connected; a community that celebrates our multicultural diversity and welcomes people from all parts of the world; a coherent, effective and efficient community services system that promotes social inclusion for all Canberrans; and safer, fairer workplaces supported by an efficient and collaborative workplace safety and industrial relations framework.

The ACT was the first jurisdiction to sign up to the national disability insurance scheme in 2012 and has led the way in the transition to the full scheme. The NDIS is a massive reform. There have been and will continue to be challenges along the way. While the ACT has transitioned out of the roles of provider and direct funder of disability services, we have an ongoing responsibility to ensure Canberrans are getting what they need from the NDIS, and that their experiences are understood and continue to inform the national NDIS rollout.

ACT Labor committed to creating an Office for Disability to provide a focus for our policy expertise and engagement, and I was pleased to formally launch the office at the Chief Minister's inclusion awards. The office will continue to support the involve initiative, the ACT's response to the national disability strategy. A new grants program will support community groups to become more inclusive of people with a disability.

The establishment of a disability reference group will provide an avenue for people with disability, carers and service providers to advise the ACT government on key policy issues and barriers to inclusion. One of the first things on which I will seek the reference group's advice is the development of a disability justice strategy. This is a large piece of work, and prioritising focus areas will be critical.

I am committed to genuinely engaging people with disability in conversations about how to make Canberra more liveable for all, and ensuring they are represented in broader discussions about the future of our great city. Over this term of government I will seek to develop and use a range of innovative approaches to ensure these voices are heard.

Canberra has some exceptional services for children, young people and families. The first service I visited as minister was the West Belconnen Child and Family Centre. I will get to Tuggeranong and Gungahlin soon. Child and family centres work with families to positively influence children's development and life trajectory, build the capacity and resilience of families to support their children, and strengthen families' links and connections to supportive communities. The centres show what can be done when we have an opportunity to work with children, young people and their families early, locally and in a coordinated way.

Over the last 18 months, the government has been rolling out a comprehensive out of home care strategy, A step up for our kids. The strategy aims to create a therapeutic, trauma-informed system that: reduces the number of children and young people in out of home care by strengthening high-risk families; delivers positive life outcomes for children and young people who cannot live at home by creating a coordinated continuum of care that empowers children and young people, enables permanency when appropriate and in the child's best interests, and supports the transition to adulthood; and importantly, A step up includes strong oversight and accountability.

I commend my predecessors, including Minister Gentleman, for the work they have done in this area. We have much to build on. Despite the great progress we have made, however, Child and Youth Protection Services are experiencing a projected increase in demand that will equate to more than 16,000 child concern reports in 2016. Drivers include family violence, drug and alcohol abuse and mental illness.

My key priority is to ensure that the step up strategy can be delivered effectively in the face of increasing demand across the system. The government will continue to be supported in this by the Children and Young People Ministerial Advisory Council, and I thank them for their work. The Youth Advisory Council will also continue to advocate on behalf of young people in areas such as transport, employment and social inclusion. The advice of both councils highlights the critical role of services such as health, housing and education in meeting the needs of vulnerable Canberrans, in supporting young people and in reducing the draw into child protection.

The ACT Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander agreement 2015-18 sets out the commitment of the ACT government and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elected Body to recognise and respond to the needs of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people living in the ACT and surrounding region and to work together to strengthen families and communities. The agreement focuses on strong families as the platform for supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people. As I said earlier, much of the work in this portfolio is premised on cooperation across government, our partnerships with the non-government sector and our willingness to engage with the community.

The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elected Body will hold elections in 2017. We are working with the elected body and the wider Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community to ensure as many people as possible are engaged in the election process, while also finalising a number of reforms. It is important that the government continues to support the elected body in its work. In 2017 this will include planning the celebrations of the 50th anniversary of the 1967 referendum and the 25th anniversary of the Mabo decision, as well as implementing actions identified in the agreement.

Delivering improved life outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families relies on effective prevention and early intervention strategies and programs. In the ACT around one in four children in out of home care identify as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander. We are actively seeking to address this over-representation through A step up for our kids. However, a concerted effort is

required across government to address the ongoing disadvantage experienced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people in comparison to their non-Indigenous peers. I note that a number of my ministerial colleagues have commented on this in their own portfolios.

Election commitments and ongoing work in the areas of justice, health, housing and education will be critical to delivering the key outcome of strong, safe and connected families and communities.

The government is committed to valuing and celebrating the diversity we are so fortunate to enjoy in our community. The annual National Multicultural Festival is the showcase for Canberra's multicultural diversity. The festival continues to grow, and attendance in 2017 is expected to exceed 280,000 participants, including more than 45,000 interstate and overseas visitors.

The ACT government's commitment to Canberra's diversity, however, is year round and focused on engaging the whole Canberra community. Almost a quarter of Canberra's residents were born overseas, and many families speak a language other than English at home.

In order to better understand the day-to-day issues facing people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, I will soon call for expressions of interest for a new multicultural advisory board. The board will support the delivery of the ACT multicultural framework. I will also work with the advisory board to convene a multicultural summit in this term of government to consider how we can further strengthen the bonds of cultural understanding and inclusion across our community.

In 2015 the ACT became a refugee welcome zone and we are currently negotiating the details of our status as a safe haven enterprise visa zone. As part of our commitment to ensuring that refugees, asylum seekers and other migrants are able to engage fully with life in Canberra, ACT Labor committed \$1.2 million for a jobs support package for refugees and asylum seekers and \$208,000 for English language programs. These investments will build on our existing work, including multicultural grants, language and training programs.

The government's social inclusion agenda aims to ensure all voices are heard and all Canberrans are empowered to participate. The ACT government acknowledges the significant contribution of the 50,000 carers in our community—those people who support family members and friends who are frail or who live with a disability, mental illness or chronic or degenerative disease. The government has committed to delivering a carers strategy and will work closely with Carers ACT and other community sector partners in its development. I will announce the time line and process for developing the strategy in the first 100 days of this government.

The new 10-year ACT community services industry strategy recognises that the community sector makes a significant contribution to the economy and plays a central role in fostering social inclusion across Canberra. The first three-year action plan under the strategy is currently being developed, and will focus on workforce development. The government will work constructively with Canberra's community

organisations, their staff and volunteers, as well as community members to finalise and implement the action plan. In doing so, we acknowledge that many in the sector do not think of themselves as an industry and that change has happened fast on a number of fronts. The last thing we want to do is lose the very essence of the sector and its workers—their commitment to improving people’s lives.

An ongoing priority in partnership with the WorkSafe commissioner is to raise employers’ ethical standards and commitment to workplace safety. The government will work collaboratively with unions, employers and other stakeholders, including the Work Safety Council, to reduce the health, social and economic consequences of work injury. This includes measuring and improving the territory’s safety culture, strengthening the territory’s work safety laws as required and ensuring timely and effective enforcement.

While protecting the rights and safety of workers is a priority, the regulatory system must also be efficient and effective. A key priority will be to legislate a local jobs code for government procurement, making transparent our expectation that the companies we purchase from will be ethical employers.

The government will also seek to modernise the territory’s workers compensation arrangements to achieve significantly better recovery and return-to-work results and to take pressure off premiums. We will work to promote job security for territory workers by examining the growth in and consequences of insecure work in the ACT and ensuring the territory’s regulatory framework protects vulnerable workers.

Recently the Deputy Chief Minister and I wrote to the Fair Work Commission to support the inclusion of domestic violence leave in the national employment standards. The government will continue to advocate for fairness and equity in the industrial relations system through our engagement with the Fair Work Commission and relevant ministerial councils.

My portfolios provide a lens into vulnerability in the Canberra community. I will use the information available through my portfolios, through my interactions with services, workers and volunteers as well as the experiences of everyday Canberrans to help the government identify where and how our community can work together to promote social inclusion, because, ultimately, a fairer, more inclusive society is a better one for us all.

I present the following paper:

Strategic outcomes and priorities—Minister Stephen-Smith—Ministerial statement, 15 December 2016.

I move:

That the Assembly take note of the paper.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

## **22nd Conference of the Parties (COP22)—Marrakech Ministerial statement**

**MR RATTENBURY** (Kurrajong—Minister for Climate Change and Sustainability, Minister for Justice and Consumer Affairs, Minister for Corrections and Minister for Mental Health) (11.22): I am pleased to make this ministerial statement on the Conference of the Parties, COP22, meeting that I attended in Marrakech, Morocco in November this year. In 2015 COP21 in Paris led to the Paris climate change agreement and global recognition of the need to limit global warming to less than two degrees Celsius. COP22 had a focus on the actions needed to achieve the Paris agreement, including actions in relation to mitigation, technology transfer, adaptation and capacity building. Over 25,000 participants from governments, civil society and international organisations attended COP22, creating a positive and action-driven event.

At COP22, the ACT was lauded by numerous delegates, jurisdictions and country representatives for its leadership on climate action and its target of 100 per cent renewable electricity by 2020. The ACT has established itself as a world-leading jurisdiction in renewable electricity and greenhouse gas reduction targets. I was proud to represent the government and our city on the international stage. The ACT had the opportunity to present at a number of events to promote the work of the ACT government and share the lessons learnt with representatives from all over the world. As a smaller jurisdiction we are punching far above our weight. We are inspiring others by showing not only how 100 per cent renewables can be a target but how it can actually be implemented.

Just last month the ACT won another national award for its leadership on climate change, the Carbon Disclosure Project's award for the best renewable energy target by a capital city in Australia, beating Sydney and Melbourne. Our targets are consistent with the targets set out in the Paris climate agreement to limit warming to less than two degrees by the end of the century. This is critical to give the planet a decent chance at avoiding the worst impacts of climate change.

Unfortunately, we are working in an environment where our federal government is letting us down. Its actions are inconsistent with the Paris climate agreement and inconsistent with the science that shows we need to stop burning fossil fuels to avoid dangerous climate change. The government is supporting projects like the Adani Carmichael coalmine. This is a mine that is as big as the entire geographical area of Canberra. It will produce over 4.7 billion tonnes of greenhouse gases if it becomes operational. It is a project that flies in the face of the clear climate science that says that we cannot burn any of the world's fossil fuel reserves if we want to prevent dangerous global warming.

In the absence of appropriate national action, smaller jurisdictions—cities, states and regions—are stepping up to the plate. Not only are cities and regions the stage for many of the actions that we need to take, such as building sustainable, zero emission cities, but subnational governments have become the key protagonists as our national governments fail to take the action required.

During the week in Marrakech I was proud to tell the world how Canberra is one of these leading cities. It was also inspiring to meet with other cities and regional leaders at COP22 who are taking real action on global warming. The ACT's 2020 renewable electricity plan is one way we are leading, and other jurisdictions around the world are following suit.

But there is much more to do than meet our 2020 renewable electricity target. Once our electricity is being generated without burning carbon, the next biggest sources of pollution in our city will be gas, transport and waste. To progress critical action, the ACT government will create a pathway to net zero emissions, with firm interim targets and clear steps. We intend to reach net zero emissions in the ACT by 2050 at the latest.

I am very pleased to see that in this Assembly all three political parties have agreed to support the targets of 100 per cent renewable electricity by 2020 and zero net emissions by 2050. This is a valuable moment of political accord, and I look forward to us working together, and showing what we can achieve in the ACT when we work for the same vision. We need to take this strong action now. I am optimistic that we can actually transition to the zero net emissions earlier than 2050. I will be leading a process to talk with the community, with business, with our research community and with the best and brightest in Australia about this pathway to zero emissions, and I expect we can start implementing this plan quickly. The successful path to zero net emissions will need to be a partnership between the community, the business sector and all parts of government.

In becoming a more sustainable and energy-efficient city, Canberra is demonstrating what cities in Australia, and globally, can achieve through progressive and innovative policy and programs. We are providing a model to other governments and cities in harnessing technological advances and proving what additional economic and social benefits can be realised. We are attracting some \$500 million of investment and jobs to the local economy as well as creating export opportunities. This is consistent with the Chief Minister's statement of ambition to create more opportunities for private investment in the capital, turning Canberra into a renewable energy industry hub and putting the ACT on the international stage.

I hope that by sharing the lessons I learned from attending COP22 we can further promote the ACT as a global leader and continue to play a strong role on emission reduction targets and 100 per cent renewable electricity.

I present the following paper:

Conference of Parties (COP22) in Marrakech—Ministerial statement,  
15 December 2016.

I move:

That the Assembly take note of the paper.

Question resolved in the affirmative.



## Revenue Legislation Amendment Bill 2016 (No 2)

**Mr Barr**, pursuant to notice, presented the bill, its explanatory statement and a Human Rights Act compatibility statement.

Title read by Clerk.

**MR BARR** (Kurrajong—Chief Minister, Treasurer, Minister for Economic Development and Minister for Tourism and Major Events) (11.29): I move:

That this bill be agreed to in principle.

Today I am very pleased to introduce a bill to implement reforms to the territory's revenue collection system. The ACT Revenue Office is responsible for collecting over \$1.3 billion annually in taxes and levies, which go to fund vital health, education and other community services for Canberrans.

As part of the digital Canberra action plan, the government invested \$30 million in the revenue collection transformation program. This program has been revamping the ACT Revenue Office to deliver better, faster and smarter services. The Revenue Office will deliver improved services supported by a robust IT platform. The bill I am introducing today contains a significant reform to achieve that future: the "barrier free" model for collecting conveyance duty.

Mr Assistant Speaker, this gives me an opportunity to talk about the long history of stamp duty. In its original form, stamp duty was a tax on a written document. A physical stamp was affixed to a document when the tax was paid. This was, at the time, a revenue protection measure. It meant that the liability to pay stamp duty on a conveyance arose on the date that the contracts for sale were exchanged; that is, at the start of the transaction. The stamp would be evidence of payment to anyone who sighted the document.

I am pleased to say that this bill goes back to basics. It introduces a new model of collecting conveyance duty which takes advantage of our unique characteristics in the territory to reduce red tape for the community. It amends the Duties Act 1999 to move the point of taxation to the end of the transaction: that is, after settlement.

The barrier free model creates a single point of lodgement at Access Canberra when a title is registered after settlement. Access Canberra will collect information on behalf of the ACT Revenue Office so that assessments can be issued without further delay. Customers will be given 14 days after registration to pay.

The barrier free model has many advantages over the traditional process. For the customer, the model greatly reduces red tape. The Revenue Office is no longer a barrier in the conveyance process. Waiting periods are shorter, and transactions are turned around much faster. But there is also a significant cash flow advantage for purchasers, especially for those buying off the plan. Stamp duty will only be payable after registration, as opposed to several years before moving into the property, as is

the case under the current system. The model saves administrative and IT system build costs. This means that taxpayer dollars can be focused where they are needed most.

The bill I introduce today removes the ACT Revenue Office out of the middle of transactions, reducing the staff-intensive task of issuing assessments for each transaction before it is complete. The single point of lodgement also simplifies the process for applying for concessions and exemptions. Anyone who considers themselves eligible, such as a first homebuyer under the homebuyer concession scheme, will simply claim the concession at registration.

As the proportional revenue on stamp duty declines in the future with the government's progressive taxation reforms, it is logical to simplify the administration of this tax. Merely copying the current model to a digital platform, a system that was designed for paper documents, would not achieve the same community benefits. The bill makes a number of other amendments to the Duties Act which will enable the full potential of the barrier free model.

Firstly, the bill converts all nominal duty concessions to full exemptions. Nominal duty concessions currently require a token payment of \$20 or \$200 to the ACT Revenue Office. These small payments are just another barrier to a transaction. The bill removes the requirement to pay any nominal duty, making the process to claim an exemption faster.

Secondly, the bill consolidates several other exemptions which are duplicated across the Duties Act. Simplifying these will speed up the conveyancing process and make it easier for customers to determine their eligibility, yet another example of my government's continuous improvement of taxation legislation and government administration.

Thirdly, the bill repeals all requirements for physical or electronic stamping before registering a transaction at the Land Titles Office. Because of the changes in the way we are administering stamp duty, stamping will become obsolete under the barrier free model. I am sure that members of the Assembly would agree that these changes are smart and practical ways to reduce red tape on our community.

Finally, to effect these changes, an amendment to the Land Titles Act 1925 will require the registration of a transaction if it is liable for duty. This is necessary to guarantee the ACT Revenue Office's visibility of all transactions for verification purposes.

Mr Assistant Speaker, this morning I am going to go so far as to say that the barrier free model is a revolutionary reform to the collection of stamp duty. It supports both the territory's taxation reform and our digital reform agendas, but most importantly, for everyone out there, it makes buying houses easier and it makes it faster. The bill transforms the way the territory collects revenue and is just one of many service improvements from the ACT Revenue Office. And the bill provides another example of how my government is understanding customer needs, reducing red tape and delivering faster, better and smarter digital services to the community.

I commend this revolution in the collection of stamp duty to the Assembly.

Debate (on motion by **Mr Coe**) adjourned to the next sitting.

## **Planning, Building and Environment Legislation Amendment Bill 2016 (No 2)**

**Mr Gentleman**, pursuant to notice, presented the bill, its explanatory statement and a Human Rights Act compatibility statement.

Title read by Clerk.

**MR GENTLEMAN** (Brindabella—Minister for Police and Emergency Services, Minister for the Environment and Heritage, Minister for Planning and Land Management and Minister for Urban Renewal) (11.36): I move:

That this bill be agreed to in principle.

The government is presenting the Planning, Building and Environment Legislation Amendment Bill 2016 (No 2), which I will refer to as the “PABELAB”. This bill makes minor policy, technical and editorial amendments to legislation administered by the Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate. This is the 11th PABELAB. I am told this bill is not as sexy as Minister Ramsay’s bills to come, but the PABELAB process is an important mechanism for ensuring that environment, planning and building legislation is effective and up to date.

It consolidates a number of minor amendments into a single bill and allows the government to be responsive and agile to changing circumstances. The bill makes minor amendments to planning and land management portfolio legislation, including the Planning and Development Act 2007 and the Planning and Development Regulation 2008. The bill also makes minor amendments to legislation in the environment and heritage portfolio, including the Environment Protection Act 1997, the Nature Conservation Act 2014 and the Nature Conservation Regulation 2015. Finally, the bill makes minor amendments to climate change and sustainability portfolio legislation, including the Climate Change and Greenhouse Gas Reduction Act 2010 and the Utilities (Technical Regulation) Act 2014.

The bill consists of a number of technical and editorial amendments as well as three minor policy amendments, so I would like to spend some time talking about the minor policy amendments. Perhaps the most significant of these amendments is the removal of red tape and regulatory duplication by altering the definition of “small or medium scale generation” in the Utilities (Technical Regulation) Act 2014.

The definition determines whether a generator is considered to be a regulated utility service and captured by the act. The current definition refers to upper and lower limits of generation capacity in order to determine whether a generator falls within this definition. If a generator meets the definition of “regulated utility service”, then it must comply with the regulatory scheme in the Utilities (Technical Regulation) Act.

This requires, for example, an operating certificate to be obtained by the utility service. The regulatory scheme is necessary to ensure that electricity generators are operating a safe, reliable and effective service that has long-term serviceability and functionality.

As solar generation becomes more prevalent, an increasing number of businesses are choosing to install rooftop solar systems. In the ACT approximately 30 of these commercial systems are above the lower limit of generation capacity. This means that they fall within the current definition of “small or medium scale generation” and, therefore, must comply with the requirements of being a regulated utility service.

This level of regulation is considered to be unnecessary, as the purpose of the Utilities (Technical Regulation) Act is to regulate larger utility services, not smaller commercial systems. The risk elements of smaller commercial systems are more appropriately regulated by the Electricity Safety Act 1971, which requires the systems to be installed by a licensed electrician and checked by an electrical inspector.

Given the fast pace of technological advancement and the commitment of this government to supporting clean energy projects, we need to ensure that regulation is appropriate and targeted to the necessary levels. Our legalisation must be responsive to an electricity network that increasingly features clean energy such as rooftop solar.

Clause 25 of the bill amends the definition of “small or medium scale generation” so the limits will be prescribed by regulation. This makes the definition more easily changeable in the future so it can respond to this rapidly evolving sector. Clauses 28 and 29 of the bill create a new regulation that increases the lower limit in the definition from 30 kilowatts to 200 kilowatts. This will mean that smaller commercial solar systems will no longer fall within the definition and, therefore, will not be subject to the additional regulation imposed by the Utilities (Technical Regulation) Act. By removing unnecessary regulatory obstacles, this government will continue to facilitate the generation of clean energy.

The second minor policy amendment I would like to mention is to community consultation requirements in the Planning and Development Act 2007. Pre-development application community consultation is mandated for certain types of development listed in the Planning and Development Regulation 2008. This is to ensure that the community is informed about and has an opportunity to comment on major development proposals in the territory.

Pre-DA community consultation is currently required for a development proposal for a building that has a gross floor area larger than 5,000 square metres. Currently, if a development consists of multiple buildings, none of which are individually above 5,000 square metres in that threshold, then community consultation is not required regardless of the accumulative size of the development. This means that some major developments are not required to undertake pre-DA community consultation, and this is not an ideal outcome.

This amendment in clause 17 of the bill will require pre-DA community consultation for developments with multiple buildings of a combined total gross floor area of more than 7,000 square metres. Clause 17 inserts this type of development into section 20A of the Planning and Development Regulation.

Developments with multiple buildings totalling over 7,000 square metres are significant developments. Therefore, it is appropriate that the community is engaged in the planning and development process at the earliest stage. To ensure well-supported and high quality development outcomes, it is important that there is community participation in the planning system. Good developers already seek community views on their development proposals and involve them at each step of the planning process.

While this imposes a minor regulatory impact on some developers of major developments, it will affect less than five per cent of all development proposals. On the other hand, the government is committed to improving community consultation processes and seeking input from a greater cross-section of the community. The benefit to the community in being engaged in the planning process is an important consideration that offsets the minor regulatory impact imposed here.

I would now like to introduce the third and final minor policy amendment contained in the bill. This amendment removes the requirement for the responsible minister to determine an energy efficiency target from the Climate Change and Greenhouse Gas Reduction Act 2010. The act predates the Energy Efficiency (Cost of Living) Improvement Act 2012, which has since established the energy efficiency improvement scheme and comprehensively provides for energy efficiency objectives and targets.

The energy efficiency act includes the energy savings target, which determines an amount of greenhouse gas emissions to be reduced through energy efficiency. The target is integrated into the improvement scheme. As a result of the enactment of the new energy efficiency act, it is no longer necessary for the Climate Change and Greenhouse Gas Reduction Act to also contain a target for energy efficiency. This simply creates a duplicated requirement and does not improve energy efficiency outcomes.

Section 10 of the Climate Change and Greenhouse Gas Reduction Act is removed by clause 4 of the bill. It is important to note that this is not a reduction of the government's energy efficiency and sustainability goals; it is merely a removal of a redundant provision in the interests of ensuring that legislative requirements are located in the most appropriate acts and are not unnecessarily duplicated.

The government remains highly committed to energy efficiency as an important means of reducing both greenhouse gas pollution and household energy costs. The energy efficiency improvement scheme is continuing to achieve important outcomes in this area.

I would also like to briefly mention some of the technical amendments contained in the bill. These amendments improve the legislative drafting to provide greater clarity around the intent of provisions and to improve the operation of the legislation.

Clause 11 of the bill contains an amendment to the Planning and Development Act 2007, which is silent on when a development approval takes effect if there is an

ACAT challenge that is subsequently withdrawn, dismissed or struck out. The amendment provides that the development approval commences on the day after the day that the ACAT challenge is withdrawn, dismissed or struck out.

Clause 9 of the bill amends the Nature Conservation Regulation 2015 by replacing the map of the Woodstock and Woodstock West Special Purpose Reserve. Part of the area of the special purpose reserve has now become a nature reserve through a territory plan variation. As a consequence, a new map is provided to reflect the change in boundaries between the nature reserve and the remaining special purpose reserve.

Clause 26 contains an amendment to the Utilities (Technical Regulation) Act 2014 to allow regulated utilities to report notifiable instruments by email in addition to the current requirement to report incidents by telephone. This will allow greater flexibility and simpler incident-reporting requirements for utilities while still requiring incidents to be reported to the technical regulator within a short time period after the incident has occurred.

There are also a number of editorial amendments made by this bill. These amendments correct minor drafting issues such as incorrect section references, and the bill makes editorial amendments to the Environment Protection Act 1997, the Nature Conservation Act 2014, the Planning and Development Act 2007 and the Planning and Development Regulation 2008.

In summary, the bill contains a number of amendments that are non-controversial and will continue the process of ensuring the effectiveness of planning, building and environment laws. I commend the bill to the Assembly.

Debate (on motion by **Mr Coe**) adjourned to the next sitting.

## **Transport Canberra and City Services Legislation Amendment Bill 2016**

**Ms Fitzharris**, pursuant to notice, presented the bill, its explanatory statement and a Human Rights Act compatibility statement.

Title read by Clerk.

**MS FITZHARRIS** (Yerrabi—Minister for Health, Minister for Transport and City Services and Minister for Higher Education, Training and Research) (11.48): I move:

That this bill be agreed to in principle.

Today I am presenting a bill to make minor and technical amendments to clarify and improve several pieces of legislation within the Transport Canberra and City Services portfolio. The Transport Canberra and City Services Legislation Amendment Bill 2016 will improve the effectiveness of a range of ACT laws through amendments which will improve operational efficiency and clarify minor aspects of policy. Specifically, this bill amends the Domestic Animals Act 2000, the Domestic Animals Regulation 2001, and the Public Unleased Land Act 2013.

The bill inserts a new item into the schedule of reviewable decisions in the Domestic Animal Regulation 2000 to make it clear that a person who has been attacked or harassed by a dog or a person whose animal has been attacked or harassed by a dog is able to seek review of the registrar's decision to issue a dangerous dog licence in the ACT Civil and Administrative Tribunal. This will improve the administrative efficiency of tribunal matters, as the issue of whether the victim of a dog attack is able to request a review of the registrar's decision to grant a licence to keep a dangerous dog will no longer need to be debated in the tribunal.

In the previous financial year the Domestic Animals Services unit investigated 360 dog attacks and seized 124 dogs. The legislative change reflects contemporary views that victims of attacks should be able to appeal decisions relating to the declaration of a dog as dangerous and its release on conditions.

The proposed amendment allows the victims of dog attacks to ensure that their concerns are taken into consideration and that dog owners' rights are not put ahead of community safety. This is in line with the overarching purpose of the domestic animals legislation, which is to secure the safety of the public.

This bill also makes small technical amendments to the Domestic Animal Act 2000 to clarify the registrar's ability to issue a dangerous dog licence in a situation where the dog was declared dangerous after it was seized. This change legitimises the registrar's decision to declare a dog dangerous after it is seized.

The final act the bill amends is the Public Unleased Act 2013. Currently section 28 of the Public Unleased Land Act provides an offence for placing a moveable sign, such as an election campaign sign, on public unleased land if it fails to comply with the moveable signs code of practice. However, it does not enable a police officer or authorised person to remove a sign that is in breach of the act. The proposed amendment corrects this administrative oversight by inserting a new section 28A to enable an authorised person or police officer to take to a retention area a moveable sign on public unleased land that does not comply with the moveable signs code of practice.

As we have recently seen, Mr Assistant Speaker, the placement of signs, particularly during an election, can be a source of frustration for members of the public. By allowing an authorised person or police officer to remove a sign that does not comply with the code of practice, we will be able to reduce potential hazards on roadsides and ensure the code of practice is upheld. The amendment further improves the laws that govern the use of public land and is in line with the ACT government's commitment to providing quality urban open space for the community.

The Transport Canberra and City Services Legislation Amendment Bill 2016 puts forward technical amendments that do not reflect major changes in government policies. However, the proposed amendments provide greater clarity to better administer the law. I commend the bill to the Assembly

Debate (on motion by **Mr Doszpot**) adjourned to the next sitting.

## Commercial Arbitration Bill 2016

**Mr Ramsay**, pursuant to notice, presented the bill, its explanatory statement and a Human Rights Act compatibility statement.

Title read by Clerk.

**MR RAMSAY** (Ginninderra—Attorney-General, Minister for Regulatory Services, Minister for the Arts and Community Events and Minister for Veterans and Seniors) (11.53): I move:

That this bill be agreed to in principle.

I am pleased to present the Commercial Arbitration Bill 2016. It is the first of four bills that I am introducing today, and I understand that Minister Gentleman has pre-empted the level of excitement with which each bill will be received. Each of the pieces is an important piece of legislation.

This bill will replace the Commercial Arbitration Act 1986 and adopt the provisions of a model uniform bill which all other states and the Northern Territory have adopted. The bill will modernise the ACT's commercial arbitration law in line with national and international best practice. Arbitration is intended to provide parties with a private, enforceable, cost-effective and expedient means of resolving disputes. It is an attractive option for parties to large commercial disputes who also wish to maintain their corporate confidentiality throughout the process.

This bill, like the Commercial Arbitration Act 1986, does not impose arbitration on anyone. The new act will only apply to parties to a commercial dispute who have freely and expressly agreed from the outset that they wish their disputes to be settled by arbitration. By replicating the model bill, the ACT's domestic commercial arbitration law will align with the states and the Northern Territory. The ACT law will also be aligned with the commonwealth's International Arbitration Act 1974. The state and territory laws regulate domestic commercial arbitrations while the commonwealth act deals with international commercial arbitrations.

This bill is based on the UN Commission on International Trade Law model law on international commercial arbitration. The UN model law has been adopted by a number of other common law jurisdictions, including New Zealand and Singapore, for the regulation of commercial arbitration.

The object of the bill is to facilitate the fair and final resolution of commercial disputes by impartial tribunals without unnecessary delay or expense. The bill provides that if a dispute comes before a court and there is an arbitration agreement in relation to it, the court must refer the matter to arbitration if asked to by either party to the agreement.

Under the bill the parties have flexibility and autonomy in deciding the make-up of the arbitral tribunal. An arbitral tribunal may put in place interim measures—for



example, to preserve assets and evidence while a matter is decided by the tribunal. Parties to an arbitration must be treated with equality and each must be given a reasonable opportunity to present their case. The parties are free to agree on the procedure to be followed by the tribunal, or if there is no agreement, the tribunal must conduct the arbitration as it considers appropriate.

The bill includes provisions intended to reduce delay and expense. They include a requirement on parties, without undue delay, to comply with any order or direction and take any necessary steps to obtain a decision of the court where necessary. A party must not wilfully delay or prevent an award from being made. The tribunal may also choose to conduct a “stop-clock” arbitration where time is allocated to each party and strictly enforced to assist in reducing time and cost. This can assist the tribunal to conduct the proceedings in a way that is appropriate to the amount of money involved and the complexity of the issues involved.

Arbitrations are confidential unless the parties have agreed to disclosure, or disclosure is otherwise permitted in the bill or by a court order. The bill recognises that confidentiality is a key feature of the arbitration process, as it protects commercial interests and potential reputational harm. An appeal against an arbitral award may only be made with all parties’ consent and with the court’s leave.

Applications to set aside awards are restricted to specific grounds, including incapacity, invalidity, breaches of procedural fairness, the arbitral tribunal’s composition not being in accordance with the agreement or public policy. An arbitral award is binding and enforceable as a court award and there are limited grounds for refusing recognition or enforcement of an award.

The Commercial Arbitration Bill 2016 will align the ACT’s domestic arbitration law with the rest of the country. It reflects international best practice for a modern commercial arbitration regulation. It is part of the way that the government is getting down to business, building a best practice court service framework. I commend this bill to the Assembly.

Debate (on motion by **Mr Hanson**) adjourned to the next sitting.

## **Justice and Community Safety Legislation Amendment Bill 2016 (No 3)**

**Mr Ramsay**, pursuant to notice, presented the bill, its explanatory statement and a Human Rights Act compatibility statement.

Title read by Clerk.

**MR RAMSAY** (Ginninderra—Attorney-General, Minister for Regulatory Services, Minister for the Arts and Community Events and Minister for Veterans and Seniors) (11.58): I move:

That this bill be agreed to in principle.

I am pleased today to present the Justice and Community Safety Legislation Amendment Bill 2016 (No 3). The bill I present today makes changes to nine different acts. These amendments fall broadly into two categories. There are amendments that improve the administration of government, and there are amendments that make positive social and regulatory changes for the ACT community.

This is the third justice and community safety bill this year, and the first introduced in the Ninth Assembly. This series of bills represents the government's continual improvement of its legislation and regulations. Each of the bills in this series is the product of ideas from the community, the public service and other service providers. This bill provides a regular, efficient avenue for the government to be responsive to those ideas. The administrative improvements in this bill cover information technology, coronial reports and changes to ministerial portfolios.

The amendments to the Information Privacy Act 2014 will allow the ACT government to take full advantage of accessing new information technology, such as cloud computing. They will do this by allowing for companies that have ACT contracts to comply with the privacy laws of their own jurisdictions. The current legislation requires service providers, even those based in other states, to abide by ACT legislation even when they are already subject to other privacy laws. The amendments in this bill will make it easier to contract across borders for IT services.

There is one amendment to the Coroners Act 1997 in this bill. Currently, all reports of the coroner must be tabled. The amendment changes this to require tabling only if there is a public safety recommendation in the report. Additionally, the amendment gives the minister the power to redact personal information contained in a coroner's report before tabling. These changes help the government balance the public interest in the coronial process with the privacy of individuals and families.

Amendments to the Human Rights Act 2004, the Human Rights Commission Act 2005 and the Terrorism (Extraordinary Temporary Powers) Act 2006 reflect changed portfolio arrangements for human rights. Under previous legislation the Attorney-General was named the minister responsible for functions under these acts. The changes reflect the new division of responsibilities between portfolios following the election.

In addition to improving government process this bill responds to a wide range of community issues. Canberra's laws for civil unions, protection orders, guardianship matters and juries will be improved.

The amendments to the Civil Unions Act in this bill strengthen the government's commitment to recognising same-sex relationships. Relationships that are registered overseas or in other states and territories will now be recognised automatically if they meet the criteria for a civil union in the ACT. Currently, the ACT only provides for the recognition of relationships where a regulation names a corresponding law. The approach of automatically recognising overseas and interstate relationships will ensure that the broadest number of ACT residents who enter into one of the growing number of same-sex civil union and civil partnership schemes available around the

world have their relationships recognised in the ACT. We are, and we will clearly remain, committed to enhancing equality for all Canberrans, and recognising the strength of love.

The amendments to the Residential Tenancies Act 1997 in this bill include a clarification to build on previous legislation. The Residential Tenancies Legislation Amendment Act 2016, passed earlier this year, introduced changes to help people who seek a protection order to end a lease. The amendments in this bill clarify that the ACT Civil and Administrative Tribunal can terminate a residential lease in cases where a person seeks a protection order. The purpose is to make sure that obligations under a lease do not cause hardship to victims of violence.

The amendments to the Guardianship and Management of Property Act 1996 help deal with the management of enduring powers of attorney. The ACT Civil and Administrative Tribunal will sometimes appoint the Public Trustee and Guardian to represent an incapacitated person. If that person already has an enduring power of attorney in place ACAT only has the option of revoking it. In fact the appointment might only be done on an emergency basis to review whether the power of attorney should continue in force. This amendment will allow the ACAT to suspend the enduring power of attorney for the duration of the Public Trustee and Guardian's appointment. This amendment provides a practical option for the ACAT in the context of its guardianship jurisdiction, particularly when making emergency orders.

The last amendment I will detail today helps airline crews. The amendment to the Juries Act 1967 allows airline operating staff to claim an exemption from jury duties. This exemption was formerly available under the commonwealth's Air Navigation Regulations 1947. Those regulations have been repealed. This amendment replaces the exemption that was in the commonwealth regulation. Introducing the amendment allows airline crew the continued opportunity to receive an exemption from serving as a juror as the nature of their work often makes jury service impractical.

All of the amendments in this bill improve government administration and respond to community needs. I look forward to introducing further justice and community safety bills throughout the term of this government. These bills help ensure that our statute book continues to serve the community as intended. As is demonstrated in this bill the government will continue to listen to the community and present efficient solutions to legal and regulatory issues. I commend this bill to the Assembly.

Debate (on motion by **Mr Hanson**) adjourned to the next sitting.

## **Statute Law Amendment Bill 2016**

**Mr Ramsay**, pursuant to notice, presented the bill, its explanatory statement and a Human Rights Act compatibility statement.

Title read by Clerk.

**MR RAMSAY** (Ginninderra—Attorney-General, Minister for Regulatory Services, Minister for the Arts and Community Events and Minister for Veterans and Seniors) (12.05): I move:

That this bill be agreed to in principle.

The Statute Law Amendment Bill 2016 makes statute law revision amendments to ACT legislation under guidelines for the technical amendments program approved by the government. The program provides for amendments that are minor or technical and non-controversial. They are generally insufficiently important to justify the presentation of separate legislation in each case and are inappropriate to make as editorial amendments in the process of republishing legislation under the Legislation Act 2001.

Statute law amendment bills serve the important purpose of improving the overall quality of the ACT statute book so that our laws are kept up to date and are easier to find, read and understand. A well-maintained statute book greatly enhances access to ACT legislation and is a very practical measure to give effect to the principle that members of the community have a right to know the laws that affect them.

This Statute Law Amendment Bill deals with three kinds of matters. Schedule 1 provides for minor, non-controversial amendments proposed by a government agency that require approval from the Chief Minister. Schedule 2 contains amendments to the Legislation Act 2001 proposed by the parliamentary counsel to ensure that the overall structure of the statute book is cohesive and consistent and is developed to reflect best practice. Schedule 3 contains technical amendments proposed by the parliamentary counsel to correct minor typographical or clerical errors, improve language, omit redundant provisions, include explanatory notes or otherwise update or improve the form of legislation.

The bill contains a large number of minor amendments with detailed explanatory notes, so, to the pleasure of others in the chamber, I am sure, it is not useful for me to go through each of them at this stage.

In addition to the explanatory notes in the bill the parliamentary counsel is also available to provide any further explanation or information that members would like about any of the amendments. The bill, while minor and technical in nature, is another important building block in the development of a modern and accessible ACT statute book that is at the forefront in Australia. I commend the bill to the Assembly.

Debate (on motion by **Mr Hanson**) adjourned to the next sitting.

## **Crimes Legislation Amendment Bill 2016**

**Mr Ramsay**, pursuant to notice, presented the bill, its explanatory statement and a Human Rights Act compatibility statement.

Title read by Clerk.

**MR RAMSAY** (Ginninderra—Attorney-General, Minister for Regulatory Services, Minister for the Arts and Community Events and Minister for Veterans and Seniors) (12.09): I move:

That this bill be agreed to in principle.

I introduce the Crimes Legislation Amendment Bill 2016. The Crimes Legislation Amendment Bill contains a series of amendments that will improve ACT Policing's ability to manage the child sex offenders register, respond to technical issues with robbery and burglary prosecutions, and clarify rules for licensed firearms dealers to support their business activities while preserving the ACT's strict firearms regulations.

As I go through each of the amendments in detail and explain how they improve the ACT's criminal regulatory legislation, I will note that they are part of the way the government is already hard at work enhancing the safety and the livability of Canberra.

Firstly, this bill amends the Crimes (Child Sex Offenders) Act 2005 to facilitate urgent investigations. Under the current legislation, police can seek a warrant through an expedited process only to check an offender's personal details. The amendments in this bill would allow for that process to be used for warrants to investigate an offender's breach of a prohibition order. For example, an offender who is suspected of visiting schools in breach of a court order could be quickly investigated using this kind of warrant. This amendment aims to help police to protect children from harm.

The second set of amendments in this bill is to the Criminal Code 2002, to provide alternative verdicts for aggravated burglary and aggravated robbery cases. A burglary or a robbery is aggravated when it is carried out by more than one person working together, or involves the use of an offensive weapon. The amendments mean that if a court finds that the offence of aggravated burglary or aggravated robbery has not been proven, but a burglary or robbery has been proven, the court can find the defendant guilty of the lesser offence.

An example of where this would help is where there is doubt about whether the offender committed the offence alone. As all the elements of the offences of burglary and robbery are contained in the aggravated offences, the prosecution must still prove all elements of robbery and burglary beyond reasonable doubt before the defendant can be convicted of the alternative offences.

The third set of amendments in this bill deals with serious organised crime. The bill expands the range of offences for which a non-association and place restriction order, a NAPRO, may be granted under part 3.4 of the Crimes (Sentencing) Act 2005. A non-association order prohibits an offender from being with a named person or communicating with that person. A place restriction order prohibits an offender from being in a named place or area. Currently the court can order a NAPRO for a person convicted of serious personal violence, drug, property, or administration of justice offences.

These amendments will add convictions for serious firearm offences—those punishable by imprisonment for 20 years or more—and money laundering to the list. This recognises that these offences are often associated with serious organised crime. The new measures promote community safety: they enhance ACT Policing’s ability to disrupt organised crime; they protect certain victims from convicted offenders; and they give convicted offenders the best chance for rehabilitation.

The fourth set of amendments in this bill deals with firearms regulation. The bill clarifies that the offence of possessing a firearm while under the influence of alcohol or drugs will only apply if a person physically possesses a firearm, as opposed to it being in a locked cupboard in their house. This avoids, for example, any suggestion that a legal firearms owner is committing a crime by having wine with dinner.

The rules for dealers to undertake testing of firearms by a dealer would be clarified. The amendments would clearly state that a licensed dealer can undertake firearms testing on property other than their registered premises. This is necessary, for example, where firearms manufacturers need to test firearms in a number of environmental conditions to ensure that they work. Some testing, such as testing a firearm in rain or after being dropped in mud, may not be able to take place on registered premises.

The amendments will also allow for the disposal of a firearm seized or surrendered under any territory law. Currently a court can only order disposal of a seized firearm if it has been seized or surrendered under the Firearms Act. There is no policy basis for preventing a court from ordering the disposal of any seized firearm.

Finally, the bill includes an amendment to deal with breaches of parole orders. Under the Crimes (Sentence Administration) Act 2005, parole is automatically cancelled if a person is convicted of an ACT offence. The amendment in this bill clarifies that the offence itself, and not just the conviction, has to occur during the parole period. This change gives effect to the government’s commitment to implement recommendation No 39 of the 2015 inquiry into sentencing. The inquiry was conducted by the Standing Committee on Justice and Community Safety.

I commend this bill to the Assembly. It will clarify the operation of criminal law legislation, support officers across the criminal justice system to carry out their roles more effectively, and improve the territory’s firearms regulations.

Debate (on motion by **Mr Hanson**) adjourned to the next sitting.

## **Legislative Assembly**

### **Sitting pattern 2017**

**MR GENTLEMAN** (Brindabella—Minister for Police and Emergency Services, Minister for the Environment and Heritage, Minister for Planning and Land Management and Minister for Urban Renewal) (12.15): I move:

That, unless the Speaker fixes an alternative day or hour of meeting on receipt of a request in writing from an absolute majority of Members, or the Assembly otherwise orders, the Assembly shall meet as follows for 2017:

<b>February</b>	14	15	16
<b>March</b>	21	22	23
	28	29	30
<b>May</b>	9	10	11
<b>June</b>	6	7	8
<b>August</b>	1	2	3
	15	16	17
	22	23	24
<b>September</b>	12	13	14
	19	20	21
<b>October</b>	24	25	26
	31		
<b>November</b>		1	2
	28	29	30

It looks to be an exciting year for 2017, and the government is confident that this sitting pattern will allow for the debate of due business of the Assembly with an increased focus on the budget debate.

**MR COE** (Yerrabi—Leader of the Opposition) (12.15): Madam Speaker, the opposition will be supporting this motion but we note that the Assembly sitting does seem to be particularly heavy in the back half of the year rather than the front half. If the minister would like to shed some light as to why that is, that would be good. But we can do that offline.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

## **Standing orders**

### **Amendment**

**MR GENTLEMAN** (Brindabella—Minister for Police and Emergency Services, Minister for the Environment and Heritage, Minister for Planning and Land Management and Minister for Urban Renewal) (12.16): I move:

That standing order 254A be amended as follows: Omit paragraphs (a) and (b), substitute:

“(a) tabled within four months of the presentation of the report; or

(b) provided to the Speaker for out of session circulation to Members within four months of the presentation of the report and tabled by the Minister on the next day of sitting”.

In April 2016 the Assembly agreed to amend standing order 254 to require that government responses to committee reports in response to an Assembly committee inquiry into the Auditor-General’s reports would be provided within four months or

provided to the Speaker for out of session circulation to members within four months of the presentation of the report and tabled on the next day of sitting. Currently, a government response to all other committee reports is required within three months and there is no provision for providing them out of session to the Speaker for distribution to members and tabling on the next sitting day.

Further amendments to standing order 254A would simplify the provision for out of session circulation to the Speaker to allow for responses to be provided within the four-month time frame outside the sitting pattern. The suggested amendment would provide consistent and streamlined government reporting time frames for responses to both the Auditor-General's and committee reports.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

### **Independent Integrity Commission—Select Committee Establishment**

**MR GENTLEMAN** (Brindabella—Minister for Police and Emergency Services, Minister for the Environment and Heritage, Minister for Planning and Land Management and Minister for Urban Renewal) (12.17): I move:

That:

- (1) a select committee be established to inquire into the most effective and efficient model of an independent integrity commission for the ACT and that the committee make recommendations on the appropriateness of adapting models operating in other similarly-sized jurisdictions, as well as:
  - (a) the personnel structure of the commission to ensure the appropriate carriage of workload;
  - (b) governance and funding that delivers independence;
  - (c) the powers available to a commission;
  - (d) the educative functions of a commission;
  - (e) issues regarding retrospectivity, including human rights, and the timeframes around which former actions can be assessed;
  - (f) the relationship between any commission and existing accountability and transparency mechanisms and bodies in the ACT; and
  - (g) any other relevant matter;
- (2) the select committee shall consist of the following number of members, composed of:
  - (a) two Members to be nominated by the Government;
  - (b) two Members to be nominated by the Opposition;



- (c) one Member to be nominated by the Crossbench; and
- (d) the Chair shall be a Crossbench member;
- (3) the select committee be provided with necessary staff, facilities and resources;
- (4) the select committee to report by the end of August 2017;
- (5) if the Assembly is not sitting when the committee has completed its inquiry, the committee may send its report to the Speaker or, in the absence of the Speaker, to the Deputy Speaker, who is authorised to give directions for its printing, publishing and circulation;
- (6) the foregoing provisions of this resolution, so far as they are inconsistent with the standing orders, have effect notwithstanding anything contained in the standing orders; and
- (7) nominations for membership of the committee be notified in writing to the Speaker within two hours following conclusion of the debate on the matter.

Over the course of the past three Assemblies, consecutive Labor governments have established and enshrined robust integrity mechanisms to ensure that public trust in government is maintained to a very high standard. These mechanisms have included the introduction of a ministerial code of conduct; the Assembly standards commissioner; the Assembly ethics and integrity commissioner; and the ministerial staff codes of conduct. In addition, this government has introduced significant changes in regard to the release of information which have resulted in the unparalleled delivery of openness and transparency in government.

The Labor Party went to the 2016 election with a promise to the people of Canberra to further reinforce the core principles of integrity in government by establishing an independent integrity commission. It is very encouraging to note that the opposition and the ACT Greens also took pledges to establish an integrity commission for the ACT to the 2016 election. To this end, it is a pleasant change in the cut-and-thrust nature of Assembly processes for there to be not only bipartisan but tripartisan support for the establishment of the independent integrity commission. I look forward to support for the motion.

**MR RATTENBURY** (Kurrajong) (12.19): This is the select committee into the most effective and efficient model for an independent integrity commission for the ACT. I am very pleased to see the establishment of this committee. The Greens took this to the election as an important policy, having the right mechanism in the ACT—where community concerns were raised—having the right body to be able to investigate them. We think that having a committee is a valuable way for Assembly members to work together to ensure that we have the right model for this jurisdiction.

There is a range of quite detailed technical issues to sort out. A committee is an effective way to start on that so that there can be, ideally, a tripartisan approach to

establishing this commission. I was pleased to see, through the course of the election campaign, that both the Labor Party and the Liberal Party also adopted this policy position, so I think there is fertile ground here to achieve a good outcome. We think that looking at other jurisdictions and how they have done it is a very valuable thing that we can do, because there will be both positive and negative lessons out of what other jurisdictions have experienced that the ACT will be fortunate to be able to draw on.

I intend to nominate as the chair of this committee, given that the notice of motion indicates a crossbench chair. I will, on behalf of the Greens, nominate for that position. I look forward to working with colleagues to get on with this and strike the right balance between looking at the very detailed work that needs to be done and getting it done in as timely a manner as possible so that we can move to drafting legislation and putting the commission in place in as timely a manner as possible.

I know there is significant interest in this in the community. I imagine that in the course of recent times all members have had somebody come to them and say that they feel they need to have an opportunity to look at some issues in a forensic way. For me, that is an important part of this story. As individual members, most of us would not have, perhaps, the forensic skills to examine the very detailed matters that might warrant examination. Having some experts that can do that on our behalf and outside of that immediate political discourse is a valuable thing.

I do not want to say too much today; it is for the committee to examine these matters in detail. I look forward to working with colleagues to get this done, as I said, in an effective and timely matter.

**MR COE** (Yerrabi—Leader of the Opposition) (12.21): Madam Speaker, the opposition supports the establishment of the select committee.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

## **2016 ACT Election and Electoral Act—Select Committee Establishment**

**MR GENTLEMAN** (Brindabella—Minister for Police and Emergency Services, Minister for the Environment and Heritage, Minister for Planning and Land Management and Minister for Urban Renewal) (12.22): I move:

That:

(1) a select committee be established to review the operation of the 2016 ACT election and the Electoral Act and other relevant legislation and policies in regards to election-related matters, and make recommendations on:

(a) lowering the voting age;

(b) improving donation rules and donation reporting timeframes;

- (c) increasing voter participation in elections and encouraging political activity; and
  - (d) any other relevant matter;
- (2) the select committee shall consist of the following number of members, composed of:
- (a) two Members to be nominated by the Government;
  - (b) two Members to be nominated by the Opposition;
  - (c) one Member to be nominated by the Crossbench; and
  - (d) the Chair shall be a Government Member;
- (3) the select committee be provided with necessary staff, facilities and resources;
- (4) the select committee is to report by the last sitting day in 2017;
- (5) if the Assembly is not sitting when the committee has completed its inquiry, the committee may send its report to the Speaker or, in the absence of the Speaker, to the Deputy Speaker, who is authorised to give directions for its printing, publishing and circulation;
- (6) the foregoing provisions of this resolution, so far as they are inconsistent with the standing orders, have effect notwithstanding anything contained in the standing orders; and
- (7) nominations for membership of the committee be notified in writing to the Speaker within two hours following conclusion of the debate on the matter.

In the parliamentary agreement of the Ninth Assembly, ACT Labor and the ACT Greens agreed to establish a select committee to review the operation of the 2016 ACT election and Electoral Act.

Further, it was agreed that a select committee would make recommendations on lowering the voting age, improving donation rules and reporting time frames, and encouraging more people to enrol, vote, and participate more widely in political activity. This motion gives effect to that commitment in the parliamentary agreement.

**MS LE COUTEUR** (Murrumbidgee) (12.23): I am sure this is a committee that every member here will be interested in—very personally interested in. I guess that one of my personal interests is that in 2012 when I was previously in the Assembly we passed some very robust laws about political donations. Unfortunately, in the previous Assembly those laws were largely repealed. I believe the situation was that my colleague Mr Rattenbury was the only person who voted against these repeals.

The Greens are very concerned that we have a strong, robust political system. Part of

that is around political donations and their transparency. The parliamentary agreement makes the commitment to ban direct political donations from developers and we are very pleased about that. However, the Greens policy has always been clearer than this.

We would like to see donations come only from people who are registered to vote in the ACT and capped at \$5,000. We would also like to see monthly public disclosure of political donations and also the funding disclosure on a public website, with monthly disclosure on non-election periods and weekly disclosure in election periods.

The other thing that we would be very interested in pursuing is legislation around truth in political advertising. Members would probably be aware that if we were commercial companies there would be some regulations around truth in advertising. But political parties are exempt from that. That really does not seem reasonable.

I am also, of course, looking forward to re-prosecuting the corflute wars and seeing if we can think of some better way of managing that incredible logistical feat that we all went through to a greater or lesser extent.

The other thing, of course, that would be looked at is the voting age. I note that the Youth Coalition were very clear that they thought their membership had as much right to vote, if they chose to, as older Canberra residents. All in all, I think it is going to be a very interesting committee. I look forward hopefully to playing my part in it.

**MR COE** (Yerrabi—Leader of the Opposition) (12.25): Madam Speaker, the opposition supports the establishment of this select committee.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

## **Health, Ageing and Community Services—Standing Committee Referral**

**MR STEEL** (Murrumbidgee) (12.26): I move:

That this Assembly:

(1) notes:

- (a) that the employment rate of people with disability in the ACT Public Service is 2.2 percent as at June 2016; and
- (b) that the Australian Human Rights Commission report, *Willing to Work: National Inquiry into Employment Discrimination Against Older Australians and Australians with Disability* found the ACT to be the only jurisdiction with an increase in the employment of people with disability over the 2013-15 period;

(2) further notes that the ACT Government's new Office for Disability and Disability Reference Group has been established to provide strategic policy advice on disability issues; and

- (3) resolves that the Standing Committee on Health, Ageing and Community Services shall conduct an inquiry into the employment of people with a disability in the ACT, to report back to the Assembly by the end of 2017 with reference to:
- (a) the implementation of the ACT Public Service Disability Employment Strategy;
  - (b) the effectiveness of current attraction and retention programs in the ACT Public Service and private enterprise;
  - (c) data collection, monitoring and reporting mechanisms;
  - (d) relevant experiences and learnings from Australian State, Commonwealth and international jurisdictions;
  - (e) the applicability to the ACT Public Service, of recommendations and findings from the report *Employing people with disability in the APS* published by the University of Canberra; and
  - (f) any other relevant matter.

Since my election I have been meeting with many community organisations, including those with a focus on disability services and advocacy. They would like us to consider how we can improve the ACT government's employment of people with a disability. This comes after a similar inquiry was conducted on the employment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in the public service.

There is still a significant barrier for those with a disability when accessing the workforce, often based on misconceptions about perceived cost and effort as well as a lack of awareness and confidence regarding how to integrate people with a disability into the workforce. However, studies have shown that there are no differences in performance and productivity from people with a disability. So initiatives such as this will seek to eliminate this stigma and also to create a better and more diverse workforce in the ACT.

The employment rate of people with a disability in the ACT public service was 2.2 per cent as of June 2016. A recent report by the Australian Human Rights Commission found that the ACT was the only jurisdiction with an increase in the employment of people with a disability over the 2013-2015 period, but there is clearly still more work to do to improve diversity in ACT workplaces and in the ACT public service. I was pleased to see the announcement of the ACT government to establish the office for disability and a disability reference group which will provide policy advice on disability issues.

The ACT government recognises that wider representation allows the public service to respond in a much better capacity to the needs of those in the community. Australians with a disability represent a considerable proportion of our community. We must ensure that their representation and engagement with the workforce reflects this, though there may still be things that we can learn from other jurisdictions.

I would like us to look into the applicability of recommendations and findings in the report *Employment of people with disability in the APS* published by the University of Canberra recently. It was a report that looked into the barriers faced by employees with a disability in the Australian public service.

Madam Speaker, a city that has an active and diverse workforce builds not only social cohesion but economic prosperity. That is why ensuring people with a disability have employment opportunities in the ACT is important. This is something the community has put forward and something that I hope the Standing Committee on Health, Aging, and Community Services can consider.

**MR RATTENBURY** (Kurrajong) (12.28): I thank Mr Steel for his motion today, but I indicate that the Greens will actually be moving to adjourn this debate and the subsequent referral to committee. The merits of the case that Mr Steel has just put are I think quite self-evident. He makes some interesting points and some very important points around consideration of issues. But I think there is an important matter of principle here about how these committees are established at the start of the new term of the Assembly.

Most of these committees have not yet met. Therefore, these committees have not had a chance to discuss their respective work plans. We have formed a view that it is probably better that the committees actually meet and they actually discuss with all of the members what the work plans should be and what a range of members have an interest in.

There may well be a lot of common ground. Given the points that Mr Steel has just made, the committee may well agree that this is a matter worth looking into. But we do think that it is better that the committees work collaboratively, that opposition members and, in some of the cases, crossbench members, be consulted on the work plans of the committees. We will be seeking to adjourn this motion and the ensuing four motions so that the committees have a chance to have their first meetings and so that committee members may collaborate to establish the issues they wish to look to.

That is not to say that there should not be a time when this Assembly might seek to establish a committee directly. But I think it is quite different to consider things at the start of the term, before the committees have even met, rather than later in the term when there is a particular issue that the Assembly wishes to look into.

Equally, with two-and-two committees, if a committee cannot agree together to self-refer a matter—which, of course, exists for committees; they can meet tomorrow or next week and self-refer matters and get on with work if that is what they want to do—then, yes, the Assembly will have to resolve it and the balance of power numbers will have to be brought into that discussion.

But our view is that the committees should take the time to sit down and have those initial discussions. Ideally, we look forward to hearing the outcome of some self-referrals from those committees in the first instance.

**MR COE** (Yerrabi—Leader of the Opposition) (12.31): Madam Speaker, the opposition also has concerns with the referral of inquiries in effect before the first day of business for a number of these committees. We think that, whilst there is an interesting relationship between the operation of the Assembly and the committees, we do think that the committees should be afforded a level of autonomy as to what their priorities are.

We also think it is very important that the committees meet and actually have a discussion about their workflow and what their agenda can and should be. To that end, as Mr Rattenbury has already said, whilst there is merit in each of the proposed referrals that are on the table today, we think that they, amongst other issues, are probably best to go informally to the relevant committees for their deliberation. Then I think they will be able to better judge the best line of inquiry to commence.

Debate (on motion by **Mr Hanson**) adjourned to the next sitting.

**Sitting suspended from 12.32 to 2.30 pm.**

## **Ministerial arrangements**

**MR BARR** (Kurrajong—Chief Minister, Treasurer, Minister for Economic Development and Minister for Tourism and Major Events) (2.31): Madam Speaker, the Deputy Chief Minister will be absent from question time today, travelling to a ministerial council. I will take questions in the Deputy Chief Minister's portfolio.

## **Standing orders**

### **Statement by Speaker**

**MADAM SPEAKER:** Before I call the Leader of the Opposition, I want to remind members, and perhaps especially the new MLAs, of standing order 117, which relates to rules for all questions that are asked in questions without notice. It may be useful for some members to reflect on that for future sittings.

## **Questions without notice**

### **ACT Land Development Agency—FOI request**

**MR COE:** Madam Speaker, I have a question to the Minister for Economic Development. Chief Minister, when did the CEO and board of the Land Development Agency first discover that the agency had supplied a manipulated document in response to my November 2015 FOI request? Further to this, when did you find out about it?

**MR BARR:** I will need to inquire of the board and the chief executive of the LDA in relation to the first part of the question. In relation to the second part, from memory: when the Auditor-General tabled her report.

**MR COE:** Chief Minister, who first brought this manipulation to your attention, and, following that, what has been the explanation that has been given to you, assuming that you have actually sought one?

**MR BARR:** My recollection of this matter is that, in the context of the Auditor-General's report, when the draft was made available, I was advised at that time. Exactly which official of ACT government it was, I cannot be certain. I do not recall which official it was, but it was in that context. As the Leader of the Opposition would be aware, ministers have no involvement whatsoever in the FOI process. Sometimes ministers are the last to know when FOIs are even released. We find out from the website. So those who actually submit the FOIs find out before ministers do, in many instances. Obviously I am concerned that anyone who is charged with responsibilities under the FOI Act would not discharge their responsibilities in accordance with the act.

**MS LEE:** Chief Minister, when was that draft report provided to you and, further, why has the LDA not corrected the record?

**MR BARR:** I do not recall the exact date. The Auditor-General has a process around the public release of her reports. In relation to a correction of the record, as I understand it from reading the Auditor-General's report and from the subsequent briefing, one word was changed. That is not to say that any word should be changed because that would be entirely inappropriate. But one word was changed. Given that it is a matter of such import to the Leader of the Opposition in particular—that one word, as it would be—it would be appropriate, given the line of questioning that we have received in this place, that the LDA may wish to consider providing the original document if they have not already.

### **Canberra Airport**

**MR PETTERSSON:** My question is to the Chief Minister. Chief Minister, can you update the Assembly on the success of the government and the Canberra Airport in attracting additional airlines to fly directly to the ACT?

**MR BARR:** I thank Mr Pettersson for the question. There is no doubt we can say that international aviation into Canberra is really taking off. When Singapore Airlines announced the first services between Canberra and Wellington and Canberra and Singapore in January of this year there was obviously a huge amount of excitement in Canberra as we had been working on this in partnership with the airport group for some years.

Since the announcement of Singapore Airlines' services we have continued to undertake research and develop business cases in conjunction with the airport group to attract further domestic and international airlines to the city. I am pleased to say that feedback from Singapore Airlines, the airport group and overwhelmingly from the Canberra community is that these flights are very popular with both inbound and outbound passengers.

Members may be aware that Tigerair has recently started new low cost daily services between Canberra and Melbourne with incredibly strong bookings over the summer period. Tigerair has advised us that the route is proving to be incredibly popular. We continue to work with them on targeted campaigns to attract Melbourne visitors to



Canberra and we want to continue to work with them to broaden their network of routes serving Canberra, not just to Melbourne but to other major Australian cities.

In late November, Qatar Airways announced their intention to commence direct services between Canberra and Doha in the 2017-18 financial year. This demonstrates the success of the partnership between the ACT government and the Canberra airport group around building awareness of the infrastructure and possibilities that the new international airport terminal offers.

We knew that attracting the first flight—(*Time expired.*)

**MR PETTERSSON:** Chief Minister, what benefits do direct international lights bring to Canberra?

**MR BARR:** They bring a range of benefits, and we certainly knew when we attracted the first flight—the first airline—that that would raise awareness and see other airlines wanting to enter into the market. We have also seen the benefits of growth in low cost carriers and in regional airlines flying to Canberra. Whilst a lot of attention has been focused on the international and new capital city services, it is also worth acknowledging and thanking FlyPelican for their work in connecting Canberra to Newcastle and now to Dubbo.

The benefits are significant for our economy. Independent Economics have undertaken research for the ACT government that shows that the Singapore-Canberra route generates \$88 million per annum in gross regional product for the Canberra catchment and around 690 full-time jobs are created. We also see that group undertaking similar analysis of services between Canberra and the Middle East, and their estimation is that that will generate a further \$101 million per annum in gross regional product and support the creation of nearly 800 additional full-time jobs. The research shows that new daily low cost domestic carrier services generate an extra \$17 million in GRP for the Canberra region and an additional 124 full-time jobs.

Beyond those economic benefits, clearly the opportunities for enhancing trade and service delivery through these new transport connections are very significant, and we look forward to additional airlines flying to Canberra and additional routes being serviced over the next four years.

**MS CHEYNE:** Chief Minister, how do additional low-cost and regional flights align with the ACT government's priorities for Canberra?

**MR BARR:** The statement of ambition that we outlined earlier this year and our international engagement strategy go to the importance of transport connections for this city into the region, nationally and internationally. It also goes to a fundamental point about how attracting and retaining talented people is central to Canberra's future. The range of opportunities that these improved transport connections offer us in terms of people being able to base themselves in Canberra and access national and international markets is very important.

Equally, from an inbound tourism perspective, making Canberra an easier destination and a more affordable destination to reach will significantly assist us to grow our now already all-time record levels of domestic and international tourism. As part of our tourism 2020 strategy and the strategic priorities we have outlined around economic growth and diversification, these flights provide significant benefits to the territory to secure our long-term future both as a regional hub and as an important city in South-East Asia. We want to grow tourism to \$2.5 billion by 2020. We welcomed over 200,000 international visitors in the year ending June 2016. That was a 13½ per cent increase on the year before.

### **Territory plan—technical amendment TA2016-17**

**MS LE COUTEUR:** My question is to the Minister for Planning and Land Management and relates to the technical amendment to the territory plan TA2016-17, city zone adjustment to address minor encroachments. The technical amendment gives the property owner an additional 84.6 square metres of developable area four storeys above the footpath on London Circuit, which is of course a prime area in the city. How much will the proponent be paying the government for the rights to the additional developable air space?

**MR GENTLEMAN:** I thank Ms Le Couteur for her question. The detail of that, of course, is with the development application and the technical amendment is with ACTPLA at the moment to determine whether or not the development application would be approved and also whether the technical amendment would be approved. That will depend on either of them being approved, and either approval does not have contingency on the other approval. One can be approved without the other, if you like.

I do not have the actual figure about the amount of air space taken up and the value of the air space but I will certainly take that on notice and look at the amount that is currently under technical amendment for that particular area. But I can say that a licence for a balcony can be applied for and has a fee that is assessed. It depends on the value of the property as well as the amount space that we have discussed. And that is done through the leasing area. If a balcony is removable and not substantially enclosed and not subject to unit title, it can also be leased under a licence for the specific term.

**MS LE COUTEUR:** Minister, do you know whether the government has sold development rights like this at any other time? It clearly will not be a removable balcony under the proponents' description.

**MR GENTLEMAN:** I understand that it has occurred on one other occasion, on the edge of Cooyong Street in the new development across from the ATO office. I will get further details on that for you.

**MR STEEL:** Minister, if the development approval is granted, does that mean that the technical amendment is automatically granted?

**MR GENTLEMAN:** I thank Mr Steel for the supplementary question. No, it does not. You can have a technical amendment and development approvals relating to the same project. They can be out for community consultation at the same time, but it does not automatically imply that approval of the development application or the technical amendment is in place if the other one is approved. So either way can occur. The development application process and the technical amendment process are determined independently.

### **Environment—water quality**

**MS CHEYNE:** My question is to the Minister for the Environment and Heritage. Minister, can you update the Assembly on the progress of the healthy waterways project?

**MR GENTLEMAN:** I thank Ms Cheyne for her question. The ACT healthy waterways project, also known as the basin priority project, is, I am pleased to report, progressing very well. Healthy waterways is a \$93.5 million joint initiative of the commonwealth government and the ACT government to protect and improve long-term water quality in the ACT and the Murrumbidgee river system.

The project will reduce the level of sediment and nutrients entering ACT lakes and waterways that, in turn, have a significant impact on the Murrumbidgee River and the broader Murray-Darling Basin. The project was endorsed by government in November 2015, and the commonwealth approved funding for stage 2 implementation, including construction of 25 priority water quality infrastructure projects, in May this year. The project is now in the implementation phase, I am pleased to say.

From the original list of over 500 sites, 188 projects were tested with the community in July 2015. In prioritising options, criteria such as water quality, performance, cost, amenity value, feasibility, and environmental and heritage values were taken into account and, finally, 25 sites were chosen. The sites chosen for stormwater quality improvement works are generally located in open spaces that in many cases include a range of existing uses: green space, which forms a stormwater drainage corridor, including if necessary to accommodate overland flow during a heavier rain event; a cycle-walking corridor; a utilities service corridor; green space separating residential precincts; and also open space for informal recreation activities.

**MS CHEYNE:** Minister, can you provide further detail to the Assembly on types of water quality improvement works that will be undertaken as part of the healthy waterways project?

**MR GENTLEMAN:** Yes, the final priority list of water quality treatments includes a mix of new wetlands, ponds, rain gardens, creek restoration, swales, cross-pollutant traps and the use of stormwater for irrigation. Twenty-five priority water quality projects will be constructed across the six catchments.

The number of projects and funding allocated to each catchment is: for the Tuggeranong catchment, nine projects at \$27 million allocated; the Fyshwick catchment, six projects at \$15.9 million allocated; Yarralumla Creek, five projects and \$16.3 million allocated; west Belconnen catchment, two projects and \$6.5 million allocated; the upper Molonglo, two projects at \$3.4 million; and the lower Molonglo catchment, one project at \$9.6 million.

**MR STEEL:** Minister, can you outline how the community has been consulted on the healthy waterways project?

**MR GENTLEMAN:** Yes. Consultation with the community has been vital at all stages of this project since it commenced in early 2014. Most recently a six-week consultation process between 22 August and 30 September was held. Outcomes from community consultation have been incorporated into the sketch plans to be submitted for development approval. The development approval process will provide another opportunity for the community to give feedback on the project.

The community was extensively consulted on the options residents in each of the catchments would like to see implemented in their local area. Consultation was via open house sessions, online feedback, a survey, and the formation of technical and community advisory groups. The open house sessions in particular were very well attended. They informed the community about their local catchment and its water quality issues and allowed people to give their views on which options would work for their catchment and community. The results of the initial community consultation were used to inform the final proposals that were submitted to the Australian government for funding approval.

The technical advisory group was set up to help identify priority catchment planning issues and provide specialist technical advice and feedback on studies, reports and recommendations produced by or for the project management group. That included scoping tender documents, infrastructure concepts and development of business cases.

The community advisory group with representatives from key stakeholder organisations was set up to guide the project and has helped to identify priority issues and environmental values for each of those key areas; contribute local knowledge about the lakes and waterways and water quality issues; provide feedback on infrastructure options and other documents and reports prepared for the project; and share information about the project with their networks and/or members of their own organisations and seek their input where appropriate. The healthy waterways project is about practical solutions but has involved the community all the way through. *(Time expired.)*

### **Trade unions—government contracting**

**MR HANSON:** Madam Speaker, my question is to the Chief Minister. Chief Minister, what influence does UnionsACT or specific unions have on the signing of government contracts in the territory?

**MR BARR:** That is an interesting question. No greater influence than any other organisation in the territory.

**MR HANSON:** Chief Minister, does your government respond to union requests to influence government contracts?

**MR BARR:** I do not think the government receives many union requests to influence government contracts, and the government adheres to the law.

**MR DOSZPOT:** Chief Minister, has UnionsACT ever sought to influence government contracts?

**MR BARR:** Not that I am aware of.

### **Sport—Cricket Australia**

**MR MILLIGAN:** My question is to the Chief Minister in the absence of the Minister for Sport and Recreation. Chief Minister, what is the nature of the deal between the ACT government and Cricket Australia regarding international cricket matches being played in Canberra? Further to this, has the ACT government paid any money or agreed to pay any money for the hosting of matches?

**MR BARR:** Yes, the ACT government has a contract with Cricket Australia that goes to seeing a number of international games played at Manuka Oval over the contracted period. This includes both men's and women's cricket involving the respective Australian teams against a variety of international opponents.

Cricket Australia have advised that due to challenges with the international schedule for the forthcoming season they will be unable to meet their contracted obligations and are seeking to vary that contract. I will have those discussions with Cricket Australia in the coming weeks.

As the minister responsible for major events in the territory and minister responsible for Manuka Oval, I take carriage of negotiations with major sports in relation to major international events in the territory and I will seek to resolve these matters to the mutual satisfaction of the territory and Cricket Australia so that we do have a continuation of international cricket in Canberra.

I was very pleased, of course, that we were able to secure Canberra's first test match against Sri Lanka in the 2018-19 season as part of this arrangement with Cricket Australia.

**MR MILLIGAN:** Have the contractual terms been breached or did the contract not actually specify that games must be played in Canberra?

**MR BARR:** The contract allows for variation by mutual agreement with the two parties, but we understand the challenges of the international cricket schedule, particularly in the context of next season and the tour of India as well as an Ashes tour.

What is important to us in the long term is ensuring that Canberrans and those from the broader region get to see the Australian cricket team play at Manuka on a regular basis.

I would remind those opposite that prior to the centenary year in 2013, when I secured the Australian team to play in their first game ever in Canberra, we had never had the Australian cricket team, in 100 years, play in this city. Since I secured that agreement, we have had them here on a number of occasions, and we will have our first test match in 2018-19.

**MR PARTON:** You say that the agreement can be changed by mutual agreement. Did Cricket Australia simply tell you that there were no international matches here, or did you agree to it, for the summer ahead of this one?

**MR BARR:** The CEO, Mr Sutherland, rang me in advance of the release of Cricket Australia's schedule for next year, advised me of the challenges and indicated that we would need to have a discussion around options. I indicated that I was interested in the long-term relationship with Cricket Australia and looked forward to what options Cricket Australia could bring forward for the territory. I think it is to our long-term benefit to have an ongoing and long-term relationship. If this line of questioning suggests that those opposite would adopt a different approach that would seek to trash our relationship with Cricket Australia then that is very disappointing.

### **Hospitals—discharge policy**

**MS LEE:** My question is to the Minister for Health. Minister, on Tuesday, 13 December, in question time, you said:

... patients are not discharged from Canberra hospitals unless it is safe to do so, and that will be done on the clinical advice of doctors and nurses caring for patients in our hospitals.

Given this, do doctors and nurses caring for patients in Canberra hospitals ever receive text messages informing them of overcapacity in the hospital, notifying them of beds needed for ED patients and asking them to expedite discharges?

**MS FITZHARRIS:** I thank Ms Lee for the question. I am certainly aware that there is a range of communication within the hospital, as I mentioned in my answer to that question. There is constant communication between clinical teams right across the hospital about the importance of providing the highest quality of service.

On many occasions it is in the interest of patients who are waiting to be discharged at a certain time at which they would like to leave. But I do reiterate that, even if there are messages and communications within the hospital—because there may be patients in the emergency department seeking a bed in the hospital and other patients waiting in the emergency department waiting room to be seen by doctors in the emergency department—discharges will only be made if it is clinically sound. That is the decision of the clinicians in the hospital.

It is certainly important for the health of a patient that they be discharged when it is clinically safe to do so but it is also important for that patient and their friends or family who may have come to pick them up that they can be discharged when it is safe and when they expect to be discharged as well. So it is important to the overall functioning of the hospital that discharges are able to be made at the right time, to the benefit of the hospital as a whole, but I do reiterate that patients will only be discharged on clinical advice of clinicians.

**MS LEE:** Minister, is there any pressure put on the staff at the hospital to expedite discharges?

**MS FITZHARRIS:** Thank you for the supplementary. I am not sure what Ms Lee means by “pressure”, but I refer her to my previous answer.

**MRS JONES:** Minister, what assessment has made of risk to patients of early discharge from hospital as a result of the pressure being put on doctors by these messages? Is this not just shifting the blame for overloaded hospitals on to doctors?

**MS FITZHARRIS:** No, it is not. I reiterate: it is a clinical decision to discharge a patient from hospital. As you will be aware, clinicians take their—

*Opposition members interjecting—*

**MS FITZHARRIS:** If the opposition had listened to my previous answer, they would know—and I am certain I recall them asking questions in this chamber of the previous Minister for Health—about the overall functioning of the hospital system. Clinicians have that very much in mind—to make sure that the hospital as a whole functions well, that the emergency department is able to see new patients and that patients who need to be admitted to wards in the hospital are able to have beds. I refer Mrs Jones to my previous answers on the functioning of the hospital as a whole and the clinical decisions that are made to discharge patients.

### **Government—construction and development policy**

**MR DOSZPOT:** My question is to the Attorney-General. Attorney, what options are available to the ACT government for following the money trail raised by construction or development activities in the ACT? What powers does the ACT government have in this space or is it simply regarded as a commonwealth power?

**MR RAMSAY:** I thank Mr Doszpot for the question. I am happy to take it on notice and come back. Certainly, the ACT government takes seriously the investigation of any matters. In terms of following matters through, we do everything in terms of the powers that we have. We do not move things on to the commonwealth. But I will get back to you with more detail in relation to the rest of the question.

**MR DOSZPOT:** Attorney, does the ACT government have a definition for what or who is a property developer?

**MR RAMSAY:** Thank you for the supplementary. The ACT government is certainly determined to make sure that as we move forward and look at the electoral reforms and funding under that matter. We will be continuing to consult and to work with the relevant committees. As part of that, we will be developing that definition of what it is that falls within property development.

**MR COE:** Attorney, under existing policies, rules, regulations or legislation, does the ACT government have a definition of what is a property developer.

**MR RAMSAY:** Thank you for the question. I will take that on notice and come back to you with that.

### **Transport—ticketing system**

**MR STEEL:** My question is to the Minister for Transport and City Services. Can the minister update the Assembly on progress being made to improve public transport ticketing and new fare structures designed to increase patronage?

**MS FITZHARRIS:** I thank Mr Steel for his question. As many members of the Assembly know, in the last ACT budget \$3 million was provided to Transport Canberra to progress an integrated bus and light rail ticketing system. Work to consider future ticketing arrangements is underway, including developing options to implement a single ticketing system across multiple modes of public transport. This work will also consider new forms of payment, including contactless and mobile phone payments. Options for the future ticketing system will be provided to me early in 2017. This new system will be implemented in time for the commencement of light rail stage 1 in late 2018.

While we plan for the future, we are taking steps now to offer new fare structures and incentives for greater public transport use. The government has committed to introducing free bus travel for the first two months of new rapid bus services. The first two new rapids, the green and black rapids, will commence next year.

The government will continue to explore innovative ways to increase public transport patronage. On this I would like to single out in particular the new partnership between Transport Canberra and Uber. Transport Canberra, in partnership with Uber, is trialling a new transport model during this month over eight nights, including on New Year's Eve. This new partnership facilitates the suburban link for passengers between the bus stations where the rapid services start and finish, and to their homes.

This new Nightrider-Uber late-night transport model commenced on Friday, 2 December. The new service will see the extension of the red and blue rapid services running between the city and major bus stations, with the last service terminating at 2 am. Over the past two weekends around 1,500 passengers used the Nightrider service, a significant increase on last year.

While I am on the topic of new bus services, I would like to note that it appears that the free city bus loop service has attracted the attention of former Indonesian foreign



minister, Dr Marty Natalegawa. Just this week my office received an email from the ANU, which I will—*(Time expired.)*

**MR STEEL:** Minister, can you elaborate on the government's recent announcement to trial free off-peak travel on buses for seniors and concession cardholders as well as the free city loop?

**MS FITZHARRIS:** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I am getting used to two minutes to reply rather than four. Certainly during the election campaign Labor committed to a number of measures designed to encourage Canberrans to make greater use of public transport. A centrepiece commitment was to trial free off-peak travel on buses for seniors and concession cardholders. This morning I was very pleased to announce that this one-year trial will commence on 14 January next year.

We are delivering on this commitment within the first 100 days of the new Barr Labor government. Free travel will be available in all off-peak periods, including all day Saturday and Sunday and on all public holidays. Free travel will also be available during the working week between 9 am and 4.30 pm and after 6 pm.

In order to ensure that only passengers with a valid senior or concession entitlement are able to take advantage of this trial, free travel will only be available to customers who use a MyWay card. This will enable the directorate to more accurately attract patronage and assist with the review of the trial.

I am not sure that having an honorary doctorate at the ANU would give Marty Natalegawa a concession card. But to comment further on this email from the ANU, it states, "I had Dr Marty Natalegawa, former Indonesian foreign minister on campus for his honorary doctorate and he told me how much he and his wife enjoyed using the city loop bus service around Canberra yesterday." I am sure that the opposition will be very pleased to hear that and also to hear that the city loop service has just carried its 40,000th passenger.

**MS ORR:** Minister, can you advise what progress the government is making to ensure that seniors who live in the ACT are able to benefit from public transport concessions in New South Wales?

**MS FITZHARRIS:** I certainly can, and I am pleased to confirm that last month my directorate, in partnership with Transport for NSW, has developed a new process that automatically validates ACT seniors' eligibility for concession travel in New South Wales. This new process will enable ACT seniors to obtain a gold senior or pensioner Opal card that does not expire as long as they remain eligible. Transport for NSW is removing the 60-day expiry period on around 880 existing eligible ACT seniors gold Opal cards. If you are over 60, a permanent resident of the ACT and working 20 hours or fewer each week, you are eligible for an ACT seniors card.

Let me take this opportunity to remind existing ACT seniors who already have a gold or pensioner Opal card of the benefits of registering their card. These benefits include that the balance can be protected if the card is lost, stolen or damaged; customers can request a replacement Opal card for free and transfer the balance to the replacement card; and customers can check their travel history.

For those wishing to apply for a gold senior or pensioner Opal card, they can do so on the Transport for NSW website. I was really pleased to be able to make this announcement last month. I know that many seniors in Canberra who travel frequently and use public transport both in Canberra and around New South Wales have been thrilled with this announcement.

### **Canberra Hospital—bullying**

**MRS KIKKERT:** My question is to the minister for Health. Doctors and nursing organisations have reported longstanding problems with bullying at the Canberra Hospital. What proportion of staff at the Canberra Hospital have experienced bullying?

**MS FITZHARRIS:** I thank Mrs Kikkert for the question. This was an issue canvassed in the last Assembly, and my predecessor minister for health expressed his concern at reports of bullying at the Canberra Hospital and instigated a number of processes within ACT Health, particularly at the hospital, to make sure that we understood the extent of bullying and to make sure that we had recommendations to the department to make sure that they were addressed.

In terms of specific numbers, I do not have them to hand. I can take that question on notice.

**MRS KIKKERT:** Can the minister confirm that the most recent staff survey found that over 70 per cent of staff have experienced bullying?

**MS FITZHARRIS:** I have not seen the most recent survey. It has not been in the time that I have been Minister for Health. If it is 70 per cent then that is of concern. But I can say also that aspects of bullying in hospitals are not unique, sadly, to Canberra. But I will certainly look at those particular details. I certainly know that there are a number of processes in place within ACT Health around culture and specific areas within the hospital where specific instances of bullying have been identified.

**MR MILLIGAN:** Minister, will you release the most recent Canberra Hospital staff survey?

**MS FITZHARRIS:** Thank you for the question. I am not sure. I will come back to the Assembly as to whether that is a responsibility of the director-general or if it is mine as the minister.

*Members interjecting—*

**MADAM SPEAKER:** Members, are there further questions without notice?

*Mrs Jones interjecting—*

**MADAM SPEAKER:** Mrs Jones! Have the respect to allow Ms Orr to ask her question.

**Arts—community events**

**MS ORR:** My question is to the Minister for Arts and Community Events. Can the minister outline the government's commitment to investing in building a vibrant, inclusive, innovative arts and events scene in Canberra?

**MR RAMSAY:** I thank Ms Orr for her question. The government recognises that having a vibrant and sustainable arts and community events sector is essential to the cultural, social and economic fabric of Canberra. It is through the arts that we can explore the human soul and through community events that we connect with our fellow human beings.

ACT Labor will deliver the largest single increase in arts funding since self-government, reflecting the importance of art and artists to our community and building a more creative and livable Canberra through the funding of a wide variety of existing, expanded and new programs, festivals and events.

We will fund a program of grants to support arts participation, arts festivals and access to the arts in Canberra. This will include \$110,000 next year and \$130,000 in subsequent financial years to fund the Art, Not Apart festival and \$100,000 per year over four years to support the annual Design Canberra festival. We will commence work towards stage 2 of the Belconnen Arts Centre as well as upgrades to a range of other community arts facilities.

New events, including the Canberra arts biennial and an innovation festival based on the South by Southwest festival will play a crucial role in raising our profile as a destination city and region, providing compelling new reasons to visit and providing a platform to showcase local content and talent in fields such as coding, gaming, film and music, as well as the visual and performing arts.

Building on the success of Canberra's existing events, including Floriade, Enlighten, Canberra Day, SpringOUT, the Canberra Arise festival and Windows to the World, we will ensure that the nation's capital continues to grow its reputation as an exciting, diverse innovative arts and festivals destination.

**MS ORR:** Can the minister outline how arts funding contributes to a healthier, more cohesive and inclusive society?

**MR RAMSAY:** Arts and community events help shape our community's identity and they give expression to our values. It is important to recognise that participation is a critical component in making our arts and community events a success. Inclusivity and accessibility must be to the fore. Canberra's diversity—of cultures, heritage, sexualities, age, income, gender, abilities and geography—is represented and celebrated in our arts and our events. There is strength and power in the arts and in their role in expressing the uniqueness of each person, exploring the distinctiveness of other cultures and demonstrating the value of creativity of people of all abilities and social backgrounds.

We will see a greater investment in arts and events in the suburbs beyond the existing arts centres, bringing community arts festivals to Woden and Gungahlin in innovative pop-up spaces with a focus on new and emerging local artists in diverse art forms.

We have committed to upgrade a range of community arts facilities that will support community access to the arts and to art development. I will ensure that Canberra has an annual events calendar that maximises the social and cultural benefits for Canberra and the region as well as the economic benefits.

This goes to the heart of ACT Labor's goal to ensure that Canberra remains among the world's most liveable cities by supporting vibrant, diverse, multicultural and inclusive communities. We are committed to ensuring that Canberra remains a place where everyone belongs, where everyone is valued and where everyone participates.

**MS CODY:** Minister, can you outline how investing in the arts and community events makes an economic contribution to the ACT?

**MR RAMSAY:** I thank Ms Cody for her question. By supplementing innovative events and fostering a bold and diverse arts scene, the government is building Canberra's reputation as a progressive, creative capital, as well as an attractive destination. Visitors attracted to the capital for our arts and events also stay in our hotels, eat at our restaurants and enjoy our other attractions, injecting significant expenditure into the ACT and the region.

The ACT government will continue to develop new signature events for Canberra, while also enhancing the city's existing major events. We will look to support events that enhance local, national and international recognition of Canberra's vibrancy, livability and sense of place.

We will also ensure, through a range of initiatives associated with event delivery, event funding, event attraction and ongoing event development, that Canberra maintains its profile as an event-friendly city. By creating a cohesive annual calendar of arts and community events, we will ensure that there is a year-round program of activity that keeps people visiting Canberra throughout all seasons, as well as offering entertainment, creativity and community engagement for locals.

As one example, the Canberra arts biennale will take place during the traditional quieter months of winter and will build on the contribution Canberra's arts community made to making Canberra's centenary celebrations such a success for locals and visitors alike. We will continue to invest in our signature events, Enlighten and Floriade, with additional funding to grow the reach, depth and vibrancy of these key showpieces for both Canberra and the visitor communities. This will include adding a fringe festival to Floriade, to further capitalise on this significant tourism and economic driver for our city and for our region.

**Planning—west Greenway**

**MRS JONES:** My question is to the Minister for Planning and Land Management. On Tuesday, 5 December, while attending a meeting of the Tuggeranong Community Council, you were asked about plans for west Greenway. You advised the Community Council that a report from the community advisory panel was due on your desk on Friday, 9 December. Minister, could you please advise the Assembly if you have indeed received that report. And if so, will development of west Greenway go ahead in this term despite the community panel advising against it?

**MR GENTLEMAN:** I thank Mrs Jones for her question. Yes, I have received the report, just yesterday. I have considered the detail of the report and I have asked my directorate, EPSD, to come back to me with some discussions about responding to that report in a community manner to ensure that the messages that are coming from government are consistent with the report and what the committee wants to see for the future of Tuggeranong.

As members would be aware, there was quite a bit of interest in the report and quite a bit of interest in west Tuggeranong. The first round of community feedback highlighted protecting the Murrumbidgee corridor and preserving existing recreational uses, the two most important issues in that local community. From that first round of community feedback, I convened the community panel, as you have heard, to examine these matters. The panel drew on community expertise to ensure that the right questions were asked about any potential development there and that the answers to these questions are made publicly available.

As I said, it has been received. I have asked my directorate now to talk to me in the next few days about the community response to the report.

**MRS JONES:** Minister, what consultation will be conducted with the archery club about their car park and learning facilities in the area?

**MR GENTLEMAN:** I have been consulting with the archery club for just under 12 months about their car park. The issue with the car park is that there is water run-off from the oval to the east of the car park, and in inclement times the water runs down through the access or easement to the car park and causes some disruption for cars wanting to enter that area. We have had some discussions with both the environment and planning directorate and Access Canberra about what we can do to allow easement and access to the car park. Those discussions are still ongoing, but I am sure we will reach a position where we will be able to satisfy the needs of the archery club.

**MR PARTON:** Minister, is public housing proposed for the west Greenway area?

**MR GENTLEMAN:** I have not had any proposals put forward for public housing in that area. There is, of course, a need for more public housing right across Tuggeranong. We have been doing some fantastic work with the Deputy Chief Minister and her portfolio in providing extra public housing in Tuggeranong.

I think you have been along to some of those openings. They have been a great success in the way that we can provide more up-to-date public housing and better accessibility for public housing across Tuggeranong. But we certainly need to do a lot more work.

### **Greyhound racing—government policy**

**MR PARTON:** My question is to the Minister for Regulatory Services. Minister, this morning in your ministerial statement you referred to the greyhound racing industry and stated that this includes a commitment to take steps toward ending the industry in the ACT. Do you stand by that comment this morning that you have “a commitment to take steps toward ending the industry in the ACT”?

**MR RAMSAY:** I thank Mr Parton for his question. The position of this government was made clear before the election and it is, indeed, embodied in the parliamentary agreement. The parliamentary agreement includes the cessation of funding at the end of June next year and taking steps towards the ending of the industry and having a transition process.

This government is not in the business of breaking its election promises, which were made very clear before the election—and I note that the election turned out the way that it did. With the backing of the government and the return of the government we will stand by our election promises.

**MR PARTON:** Minister, how are you planning to end greyhound racing in the ACT?

**MR RAMSAY:** We are engaging in a time of open conversation, and we will be meeting with the industry soon. The time frames and mechanisms by which we will live out the parliamentary agreement will be worked out in good open conversation.

**MRS KIKKERT:** Minister, what are the specific processes required to undertake to ban a racing code in the ACT?

**MR RAMSAY:** I note that the question presumes banning the industry. We have not said that we will be banning the industry. We will be working towards a transition process and towards the ending of the industry. We will do that through open conversation.

### **Multicultural affairs—National Multicultural Festival**

**MS CODY:** My question is to the Minister for Multicultural Affairs. Minister, can you tell the Assembly why the Canberra community should be excited by the 2017 Multicultural Festival?

**MS STEPHEN-SMITH:** I thank Ms Cody for her question. I certainly can tell the Assembly why we should all be excited about the Multicultural Festival.

*Members interjecting—*

**MADAM SPEAKER:** Members, it is the first sitting week. Mr Hanson, Mr Doszpot and Chief Minister. Minister, please continue.

**MS STEPHEN-SMITH:** Over 20 years the Multicultural Festival has grown from a small celebration of multiculturalism to one of the largest multicultural events in Australia. While Canberrans experience the benefits and success of multiculturalism all year round, the festival is certainly a high point in showcasing our people's talents and celebrating our diversity.

Next year the Multicultural Festival turns 21. It will be particularly special, with terrific performances from international and home-grown acts as part of the street parade and cultural showcases. These include a Chinese showcase, a Pacific Islander showcase and an African showcase, to name just a few. Of course, Kate Ceberano was recently announced as the headline act for the festival, returning after the success of her participation in the centenary festival in 2013. The 2017 festival will also be special because the food and wine expo will be fully integrated into the event.

Surveys of last year's attendees found that 99 per cent would recommend the festival to a friend—including all of us, apparently—marking it out as one of the most enjoyable and successful events in Canberra.

Festival organisers continue to strive to make the 2017 festival better, a significant task as the festival continues to become larger and more complex, and I thank them for their work. They are particularly focused on ensuring that next year's event is inclusive for all and are considering initiatives for children, seniors and people with a disability.

**MS CODY:** Minister, as someone who is very interested in this subject, how has the planning for the 2017 festival considered the needs of people with a disability who want to participate?

**MS STEPHEN-SMITH:** I thank Ms Cody for her supplementary question. I could not be more pleased that disability inclusion is front and centre of planning the Multicultural Festival. Key disability organisations have been consulted to design and deliver improvements to make the 2017 festival more accessible and user-friendly for people with disabilities.

For example, an issue raised in the annual review of the 2016 festival was the use of cable covers and how they affected movement around the festival for people with mobility issues. The 2017 festival organisers are working with the electricity supply contractor and the ACT Emergency Services Agency to examine options to address this issue without compromising safety.

Organisers are also looking at solutions for other issues that were raised including the allocation of disability parking within the festival footprint; identifying and promoting performances that could be accompanied by sign language; getting more people with disabilities involved as volunteers; and updating the festival map to ensure that accessibility information is highlighted, including specialised parking spaces, bathrooms and seating.

Festival organisers are also in contact with stallholders regarding other accessibility concerns, particularly around stall height and the positioning of stalls near pavement gutters to improve the overall experience of people in wheelchairs.

We will continue to work with peak disability organisations, stallholders and volunteer organisations to make the 2017 festival and future festivals accessible and inclusive for all.

**MR PETTERSSON:** Minister, how many people are expected to attend the 2017 festival, and what is the festival expected to generate for the ACT economy?

**MS STEPHEN-SMITH:** I thank Mr Pettersson for the supplementary question. Figures from previous years are used to estimate attendance and, on this basis, the benefits to the ACT economy. Estimates of attendance at this year's festival ranged from 238,000 to more than 280,000, with about a quarter coming from interstate and overseas. If the growth seen over previous festivals is any indication, it is looking to be a very busy three days in the heart of Civic. A key focus for event organisers is to ensure that the expected large numbers of attendees can be accommodated safely.

As for the effect that the festival will have on the ACT economy, I will again point to the economic boost that has been seen in previous years. The impact on the economy is, of course, related to the number of visitors attending the festival, the money they spend on the wonderful food at the festival and what they spend elsewhere in the ACT. Based on the number of people who reported staying in paid accommodation overnight, the 2016 festival is estimated to have brought more than \$2 million to the ACT economy through accommodation alone. After accounting for the tourism multiplier, the 2016 festival was estimated to have added \$12 million to the ACT economy.

According to the website, the 2017 festival will kick off in 63 days, eight hours, 33 minutes and eight seconds. I would encourage all members to spend some time at the festival, to promote the festival in your electorates and networks, and to encourage family and friends to get involved.

**Mr Barr:** On that happy note, Madam Speaker, I ask that all further questions be placed on the notice paper.

### **Supplementary answers to questions without notice**

#### **Trade unions—workplace health and safety funding**

**MS STEPHEN-SMITH:** Madam Speaker, during question time yesterday Mr Hanson and Mr Coe asked me questions related to the ACT government's deed of grant with UnionsACT to support a work health and safety liaison officer. Mr Hanson asked whether the recommendations of the 2014 review of the WHS officer liaison funding had been implemented. I can assure him that they have.

A key recommendation of the review was that a formal funding agreement be put in place. As I noted yesterday, a new deed of grant commenced on 1 July 2016, and its purpose is to meet the objectives I outlined in my answer yesterday. The deed requires



UnionsACT to report annually on the funded activities undertaken, and the first annual report is due to the government by 31 August 2017.

Mr Coe also asked what value for money is being received from the \$121,000 a year indexed that has been committed under the deed of grant. As I noted yesterday, the 2014 review, in line with the previous review, found that the activities and performance of the WHS liaison officer are meeting the objectives and outcomes expected by the ACT government. The review provides significant detail on the support provided to smaller unions and public and private sector employers, which clearly demonstrates that the ACT government is receiving value for money. The review identified some areas for improvement in terms of the focus of the WHS liaison officer's work, and these have been addressed in the current deed of grant.

Mr Coe specifically asked about the publication of research undertaken by the WHS liaison officer, and I took that question on notice. I am advised that the research contemplated in the deed of grant is the kind of research undertaken in support of UnionsACT's work health and safety awareness-raising activities, such as participation in advisory bodies, the development of course materials, and the provision of advice to unions and employers, not necessarily as a product in its own right.

Finally, Mr Hanson and Mr Coe also asked when the next review will take place. As they are no doubt aware, the 2014 review recommended that the next review take place before June 2018. At this time, I have no reason to believe that this time frame will not be met.

For the further information of members, Madam Speaker, I table copies of the 2014 review and the deed of grant in the versions as previously released to Mr Coe under FOI:

Unions ACT—

Review of WHS Liaison Officer Funding.

Deed of Grant between the Australian Capital Territory and the Trades and Labour Council of ACT Incorporated (Trading as Unions ACT), dated 12 May 2016.

### **Cycle paths—signage**

**MS FITZHARRIS:** In response to questions asked by Mr Doszpot in question time yesterday about the status of the installation of behavioural signs on the shared paths around Lake Tuggeranong and Emu Inlet as recommended by the estimates committee last year, I advise the Assembly that behavioural signage around Lake Tuggeranong was installed in October this year. Behavioural signage is installed on shared paths around the ACT to encourage positive behaviour. These signs are advisory and are used as guidance for the community. Behavioural signage on Lake Ginninderra was initially installed in 2009 and has subsequently been extended to include Emu Inlet.

Mr Doszpot also asked about the number and locations of the signs. There were 12 back-to-back bladed signs installed and two single-bladed signs installed at various locations around Lake Tuggeranong. Thirty-five back-to-back signs have also been installed around Lake Ginninderra and Emu Inlet.

Mr Doszpot also asked what powers a ranger has to control behaviour on shared paths and how often rangers patrol shared paths. While the Transport Canberra and City Services Directorate works with Pedal Power, the RSPCA ACT and other recreational groups to encourage good behaviour in areas of open space, including cycle paths, depending on the type of behaviour, the matter should be referred to ACT Policing. However, officers from Transport Canberra and City Services regularly patrol paths to inspect for maintenance issues.

### **2010-2020 National disability strategy—second implementation plan—driving action 2015-2018 Paper and statement by minister**

**MS STEPHEN-SMITH** (Kurrajong—Minister for Community Services and Social Inclusion, Minister for Disability, Children and Youth, Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs, Minister for Multicultural Affairs and Minister for Workplace Safety and Industrial Relations) (3.31): For the information of members, I present the following paper:

2010 2020 National Disability Strategy—Second Implementation Plan—Driving Action 2015-2018.

I ask leave to make a statement in relation to the paper.

Leave granted.

**MS STEPHEN-SMITH:** I am pleased to present to the Assembly the *National Disability Strategy 2010-2020: Second Implementation Plan, Driving Action 2015-2018*. Since the national disability strategy launched in 2011, we have seen fundamental changes and significant achievements across Australia towards a unified national approach to disability policy and service delivery. Members may be aware of the recent announcement by the federal Minister for Social Services, the Honourable Christian Porter MP, launching the national disability strategy second implementation plan.

The plan provides an overarching framework for policy action and areas of national cooperation and reaffirms the commitment of the commonwealth, states and territories to improving outcomes for people with disability. The second implementation plan contains four key areas that focus on the NDIS transition to full scheme, activities to promote the intent of the strategy, improving employment outcomes for all Australians with disability, and improving outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability.

To give a quick example of this last key focus area, the report contains the example of the Gugan Gulwan Youth Aboriginal Corporation, which has been contracted to provide an NDIS outreach service to members of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community. This service promotes understanding about and preparation for the NDIS among Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people across the ACT community. In my understanding it has supported well over a hundred and possibly up to 200 people to link to the NDIA. It is one of our great success stories in our transition.

The second implementation plan will serve as a significant driver to inform our future commitment towards improving the lives, employment opportunities and pathways for people with disability now and into the future. I am confident that the ACT will continue to lead and achieve in terms of driving positive change for people with disability.

I commend the *National Disability Strategy 2010-2020: Second Implementation Plan, Driving Action 2015-2018*, to the chamber.

## **ACT greenhouse gas inventory 2015-16**

### **Paper and statement by minister**

**MR RATTENBURY** (Kurrajong—Minister for Climate Change and Sustainability, Minister for Justice and Consumer Affairs, Minister for Corrections and Minister for Mental Health): For the information of members, I present the following paper (3.34):

Climate Change and Greenhouse Gas Reduction Act, pursuant to subsection 12(4)—Annual report by independent entity—ACT Greenhouse Gas Inventory for 2015-16: with recalculations for 2014-15, dated 9 November 2016, prepared by pitt&sherry.

I ask leave to make a statement in relation to the paper.

Leave granted.

**MR RATTENBURY:** I bring to the Assembly today the ACT government's greenhouse gas inventory for the 2015-16 reporting period. This is the second consecutive time the ACT has been provided with an inventory that reflects greenhouse gas emissions from the most recent financial year. In previous periods these inventories have been prepared two years in arrears due to delays in gathering data and a reliance on greenhouse gas reporting prepared by the Australian government through the national inventory report.

By doing this we are ensuring greater transparency and accountability in emissions reporting, and we will have a substantially better understanding of the immediate effects of mitigation actions on the territory's emissions and on our progress towards the first interim target in 2020.

This latest inventory includes the methodology approved for 2015. It is based on international best practice through adherence to the 2006 IPCC guidelines for national greenhouse gas inventories. The inventory is also consistent with the internationally recognised global protocol for community-scale greenhouse gas emission inventories released in 2014. The methodology was revised in July 2016 with technical amendments for waste and industrial emission calculations

Before I present the results of this year's inventory, I would like to note an important change. This inventory takes into consideration changes made in the national greenhouse and energy reporting system run by the commonwealth in the calculations and reported emissions from the land use, land use change and forestry sector. Improvements were made in May 2016 to the scale of satellite imagery in carbon uptake modelling, known as FullCAM, used to determine the carbon uptake of vegetation.

When these improvements were applied to the data for the ACT, our net sink of emissions or carbon uptake from the land sector had changed considerably across all years, including our 1990 base year. In the greenhouse gas inventory I present today, the 1990 base year emissions have been recalculated, incorporating the commonwealth's changes to ensure consistency in comparison across all years.

This change has a minor impact on 1990 levels, increasing the base year by just over 11 kilotonnes of carbon emissions. However, it has a notable impact on the 2014-15 inventory. Land sector emissions have changed from a net sink of minus 69.8 to just minus 7.9 kilotonnes of carbon dioxide equivalents. The figures present in the last year's inventory, including those from 2012 to 2015, have been revised upwards accordingly. All numbers presented here today reflect or refer to the new historic figures as calculated in this year's report.

I am pleased to inform the Assembly that this year greenhouse gas emissions in the territory have stabilised. This shows a decoupling of our emissions from both population and economic growth. The current greenhouse gas inventory estimates emissions from the territory in the 2015-16 reporting period as 4,016 kilotonnes of carbon dioxide equivalents, including emissions reductions from land use, land use change and forestry. This is less than 0.5 per cent above emissions from the 2014-15 reporting period. It is also less than two per cent above 2012 levels.

Additionally, per capita emissions fell from 10.31 to 10.22 tonnes per person. This reinforces the continual achievement of the legislated target of peaking per capita emissions by June 2013, which was at 10.45 tonnes. Importantly, we are now well below our per capita emissions from 1990 levels, which peaked at 11.45 tonnes of carbon emissions.

The defining achievement in this stabilisation of emissions comes from our renewable energy policy. Renewable electricity generation grew from 18.8 to 21 per cent. This year, electricity emissions fell one per cent, despite almost a one per cent increase in through-the-meter supply to consumers.

Two of the large-scale renewable projects from our award-winning reverse auction process were producing electricity this year. Royalla Solar Farm increased production on last year, producing 38 gigawatt hours, and Coonooer Bridge wind farm began producing for the first time with 19 gigawatt hours. Additionally, ACT rooftop solar generation has increased remarkably, with output increasing from 66 to 89 gigawatt hours. This increase in renewables offset the slight increase in demand of electricity between years and demonstrates the importance of this policy in reducing the ACT's emissions.

Electricity continues to be the largest single source of emissions in the ACT, accounting for 55 per cent of emissions. From next year, another large portion of ACT-procured clean energy generation will come online, helping commence the dramatic decrease in ACT emissions.

Total gas emissions also decreased by a considerable five per cent, which almost completely reverses the rise seen between 2013-14 and 2014-15. This decrease may reflect the shift from gas to electricity on the part of residential consumers, but more time will be needed before this trend can be confirmed.

Transport emissions increased by around four per cent on 2014-15 models and show a continuing upward trend. Transport emissions are 8.5 per cent higher than 2012 levels and now account for 27 per cent of total ACT emissions, increasing from 26 per cent previously. While the consumption of unleaded fuels appears to remain static, diesel fuel sales have shown an upward trend across fuel retailers in the ACT, reflecting a trend towards the increased fuel efficiency these vehicles offer.

Additional sources of transport fuel data have been included for the second time, beyond those collected under the Environment Protection (Fuel Sales Data) Amendment Act 2007. This act includes only fuel sold from retail service stations in the ACT, but does not account for bulk storage facilities. This accounts for an initial accelerated increase in transport emissions since 2013. However, an upward trend in diesel consumption continues between recent consecutive reporting years.

Waste emissions increased the largest of the reported sectors by 15 per cent between 2014-15 and 2015-16, albeit from a relatively small base. Waste emissions comprise only three per cent of the ACT's emissions profile. This increase is a tribute to the ongoing emissions from legacy waste that has accumulated and continues to decompose from previous years; it is not from an absolute increase in waste to landfill between years.

Also, waste emissions are partially offset by the amount of landfill gas captured and used for electricity. This figure decreased slightly this year, adding to the increase in net emissions. Various factors can affect capture volumes, including accumulation of groundwater in the lower levels of the landfill, possibly accelerated by above average rainfall.

The final sectors contributing to ACT emissions are industry and agriculture. Agriculture emissions make up less than one per cent of the emission profile. Industry

emissions entirely comprise synthetic gases used in refrigerants which, like land use, are taken from the national greenhouse and energy reporting system. Emissions have increased steadily as projected through linear regression modelling and are five per cent of total emissions.

These emissions are attributed proportionally to the ACT from an aggregate New South Wales supply, and whilst they may not truly reflect emissions from this source in the ACT, it is the most reputable estimate that can be provided. National legislation targeting synthetic gasses from refrigerants should assist in seeing this figure reduced in coming years.

While I am pleased to see our emissions stabilising, I am excited to see our renewable energy begin to impact our electricity grid emissions. I am certain territory emissions will now begin to steeply decline as more renewable energy becomes available from next year. I commend the report to the Assembly.

## **ACT wind auction II review—summary report and government response**

### **Papers and statement by minister**

**MR RATTENBURY** (Kurrajong—Minister for Climate Change and Sustainability, Minister for Justice and Consumer Affairs, Minister for Corrections and Minister for Mental Health) (3.43): For the information of members I present the following papers:

Electricity Feed-in (Large-scale Renewable Energy Generation) Act, pursuant to subsection 22 (5)—ACT Wind Auction II Review—

Summary report, dated 27 May 2016, prepared for the Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate by AECOM Australia Pty Ltd.  
Government response to recommendations.

I ask leave to make a statement in relation to the papers.

Leave granted.

**MR RATTENBURY:** I am pleased today to table a review of the 200 megawatt wind electricity capacity release made on 6 August 2015 under the Electricity Feed-in (Large-scale Renewable Energy Generation) Act 2011, as required under section 22 of the act. This is the capacity release that allowed the ACT government to conduct its second wind auction in 2015.

Wind auction II represents a major down-payment on the government's nation-leading 100 per cent by 2020 renewable electricity target, as well as its commitment to reduce the territory's greenhouse gas emissions by 40 per cent on 1990 levels by 2020. When generating, the successful wind auction II projects will generate around 850,000 megawatt hours per year of clean, sustainable, renewable electricity, enough to power 103,000 Canberra homes.

The intent of the large-scale renewable energy generation act is to provide feed-in tariff support for large-scale renewable electricity generators with a minimum

generating capacity of 200 kilowatts. The act, originally passed in December 2011, has four objectives: to promote the establishment of large-scale renewable electricity generators from a range of sources in the Australian capital region and elsewhere; to promote the development of the renewable electricity generation industry in the ACT and Australia; to reduce the ACT's greenhouse gas emissions and assist in reaching its emission reduction targets; and to reduce the ACT's reliance on non-renewable electricity sources while minimising the cost to electricity consumers.

Wind auction II opened for proposals on 10 August 2015 and closed on 14 October 2015. Fifteen proposals were received from 14 proponents. The total capacity of all the proposals was 1,158 megawatts, around six times the capacity for which feed-in tariff entitlements could be granted.

On 21 December 2015 the former government announced the 100 megawatt project from stage 2 of the Hornsdale wind farm as the first successful wind auction II proposal. The Hornsdale wind farm stage 2, located south-east of Port Augusta in South Australia, is the second stage of the Hornsdale wind farm stage 1 that was a winner in the first wind auction conducted by the ACT government in 2014. When announced, its feed-in tariff price of \$77 per megawatt hour was the lowest publicly known wind support price in Australia.

The 100 megawatt Sapphire wind farm project was the second successful proposal in wind auction II, also announced on 21 December 2015. The Sapphire wind farm, located near Glen Innes in north-eastern New South Wales, delivered exceptional local investment benefits for the ACT that included establishment of a new Asia-Pacific microgrid export facility in Canberra and the relocation of the asset and operations management centre of CWP Renewables to the territory.

Both proposals represented exceptional value for money for the ACT government as assessed through the competitive auction process. This has been supported by the review's findings. I am also pleased to report that both projects are making excellent progress, with the Sapphire wind farm on track to reach financial close this month and begin construction shortly after, and stage 2 of the Hornsdale wind farm currently under construction.

The act requires that a review of each capacity release be undertaken within six months of its last grant of feed-in tariff entitlement. The act also requires that the responsible minister present a copy of the review to the Assembly no later than six months after the end of the period in which the review is undertaken.

On 21 March 2015 the Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate engaged AECOM Australia to undertake the review. Its final report was delivered to the directorate on 27 May 2016, within six months of the last grant of feed-in tariff entitlement under the capacity release which was made on 16 February 2016.

The review included wide consultation with both successful and unsuccessful auction proponents, members of the wind auction II advisory panel, renewable electricity industry participants and members of the government. The review includes a number of key findings and highlights the overall success of wind auction II.

In summary, the review found that wind auction II was successful in contributing to each of the objectives of the act. In particular, it found that wind auction II “will provide exceptional economic development investments into the ACT”. The auction’s winning proposals “exceeded expectations” and strong value-for-money outcomes were achieved. Wind auction II was efficient and effective, stimulating a high degree of industry participation and competition. Auction proponents had confidence in a known and well-administered process. The wind auction II process gave financiers and proponents confidence in the process, with industry generally finding the wind auction II process smoother than that of the first wind auction. An appropriate balance was struck in the risk allocation between auction proponents and the ACT government. Finally, there was a higher degree of consistency in local economic development proposals than in the first wind auction.

As well as tabling the review document, I have also tabled the government’s response to its key recommendations. Both this document and the review itself will be published on the website of the Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate. This information is relevant to any of the many governments across Australia and the world following the ACT government’s leadership in this space.

The review made eight recommendations, and the government fully agrees with the following: maintain a regular dialogue between the auction secretariat and relevant stakeholders to ensure that appropriate external resources are available; improve the efficiency of the auction evaluation process by further definition of the terms of reference for external evaluators; review the auction feedback process to proponents and consider if more detailed feedback can be given to proponents; provide more information on metering and grid connections in ActewAGL’s Distributions settlement procedure document; minimise the time period between the submission date and the announcement of winners to limit foreign exchange risk; and continue the discussion with financiers to minimise any auction bankability risks.

The government considers that responding to these recommendations will contribute to ensuring effective best-practice auction processes. In fact a number of these recommendations were directly incorporated into the next generation renewables auction held earlier this year.

The government agrees in part with the remaining two recommendations: to promote the level of community engagement with the territory, including through pro formas in future auctions; and to share the responsibility for monitoring EV3—local investment—initiatives across multiple directorates.

The government has led the development of improved community engagement practises across the wind industry nationally and supports publicising more examples of best practice. With regard to providing community engagement pro formas in future auctions, the government considers this must be balanced with the need to encourage innovation and retain flexibility. With regard to monitoring local investment initiatives, the Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate will remain responsible for local investment commitment monitoring and compliance. This will be carried out in close consultation with the Chief Minister, Treasury and Economic Development Directorate as well as the Education Directorate.

In summary, the review found that wind auction II was successful in incentivising the uptake of large-scale wind electricity at highly competitive prices which ultimately



will result in renewable electricity being delivered at low cost to ACT electricity consumers. Wind auction II built on the experience of the solar auctions held in 2012 and 2013 and the first wind auction held in 2014 to deliver two high quality wind projects that will not only deliver competitively priced renewable electricity but will also produce major local investment benefits for the ACT.

This includes an agreement with the ANU to deliver world-class research into distributed electricity storage systems, development of a new microgrid system at the CIT, establishment of a new Asia-Pacific microgrid export facility in the ACT, the relocation of the asset and operations management centre of CWP Renewables to the Territory, the establishment of renewable electricity and battery storage training in the territory, and further expansion of the renewable energy innovation precinct in New Acton.

The local economic benefits of wind auction II to the ACT have been valued in excess of \$100 million over 20 years. This is a great win for Canberra that will support the government's vision of the ACT as an export-oriented hub for renewable energy investment and innovation.

The success of wind auction II continues to move the ACT towards meeting its 100 per cent by 2020 renewable electricity target and demonstrates the territory's continued leadership on climate change and renewable energy. I commend the review to the Assembly.

### **Independent Integrity Commission—Select Committee Membership**

**MADAM SPEAKER:** I have been notified in writing of the following nominations for membership of the Select Committee to establish an Independent Integrity Commission: Ms Cody, Mrs Jones, Ms Lee, Mr Rattenbury and Mr Steel.

Motion (by **Mr Gentleman**) agreed to:

That the Members so nominated be appointed as members of the Select Committee on an Independent Integrity Commission.

### **2016 ACT Election and Electoral Act—Select Committee Membership**

**MADAM SPEAKER:** I have also been notified in writing of the following nominations for membership of the Select Committee on 2016 election and Electoral Act: Ms Cheyne, Ms Cody, Ms Le Couteur, Mr Milligan and Mr Wall.

Motion (by **Mr Gentleman**) agreed to:

That the Members so nominated be appointed as members of the Select Committee on the 2016 ACT Election and Electoral Act.

## Education, Employment and Youth Affairs—Standing Committee Reference

MR STEEL (Murrumbidgee) (3.54): I move:

That this Assembly:

- (1) notes the Mitchell Institute Report *Preschool—Two Years are Better Than One—Developing a universal preschool program for Australian 3 year olds—evidence, policy and implementation*; and
- (2) resolves that the Standing Committee on Education, Employment and Youth Affairs conducts an inquiry into the value of universal access to early childhood education, including evidence around the benefits to children of starting preschool at age three.

Members will already know that I have a particular interest in the first five years of children's lives because of the lifelong impact during that particularly important and sensitive period of brain development. That is why today I am moving to refer, in the motion circulated, those issues to the standing committee on education.

In 2009 the federal Labor government provided top-up funding under the national partnership agreement for early childhood education to provide universal access to 15 hours of preschool delivered by a degree-qualified teacher in the year before formal schooling. This saw enrolment in preschool by children the year before school increase from 70 per cent in 2008 to 98 per cent in 2013 nationally and 100 per cent here in the ACT.

Ireland actually introduced universal access to preschool for children in the year before school at around the same time as Australia, but this year they took the additional step of extending access to three-year-olds. This brings Ireland into line with many OECD countries, including England, which for some time has offered 15 hours per week free preschool for all children aged three to four and 40 per cent of two-year-olds. The conservative government there is now extending access to 30 hours free per week for these age cohorts.

The reason they are doing this is because of the compelling research showing that, for the years before full-time schooling, the duration attended by children is related to better intellectual outcomes. The Australian Institute for Health and Welfare found that all children benefit from attending an early learning program from age three if it is a quality program. The effective provision of preschool, primary and secondary education study looked at the school results of children aged 16, finding that the positive associations of early learning from age three lasted well into high school. Importantly, children who attended quality early learning for two to three years had much better results than average.

We have seen the results released from the program for international student assessment, or PISA, over the past few weeks. An analysis by PISA also shows the

relationship between early learning and performance tends to be stronger in school systems with longer duration pre-primary education, lower child to staff ratios in pre-primary education and higher public expenditure per child at the pre-primary level.

Policymakers here are starting to realise that the best way to improve later educational performance is to start earlier with quality early learning, and particularly preschool. However, no universal program exists for three-year-olds in Australia. Here in the ACT we offer the Koori preschool program for three and four-year-old Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children at six sites. We also have some playschools. New South Wales and Victoria provide access to preschool for some disadvantaged three-year-olds.

Unfortunately, while Australia now has strong participation rates in early childhood education in the year before full-time schooling, our participation rate in early childhood education at age three in 2015 was only 66 per cent nationally and 71 per cent here in the ACT.

Earlier this year I had the privilege of reviewing the Mitchell Institute's seminal report *Preschool—two years are better than one—developing a universal preschool program for Australian 3 year olds—evidence, policy and implementation*. I would like to acknowledge the authors of the report, Dr Stacey Fox and Myra Geddes, for this important piece of work. This report not only analyses the available evidence but also provides recommendations on how governments in Australia can extend access to preschool. This compelling report and research provides a cogent reason for the new Assembly's Standing Committee on Education, Employment and Youth Affairs to inquire into universal preschool for three-year-olds. I commend this motion to the Assembly.

Debate (on motion by **Mr Rattenbury**) adjourned to the next sitting.

## **Education, Employment and Youth Affairs—Standing Committee Reference**

**MR PETTERSSON** (Yerrabi) (3.59): I move:

That the matter of enrolments and capacity in Canberra public schools, including Priority Enrolment Areas and other factors affecting demand on schools, and any related matters, be referred to the Standing Committee on Education, Employment and Youth Affairs for inquiry and report.

Canberra benefits from great public schools. The most recent enrolment data from the education directorate speaks to that popularity. Canberra families are increasingly choosing great local public schools for their children. My community of Yerrabi has seen this first hand. The population growth in Yerrabi, in Gungahlin, in particular, has been some of the fastest in all of Australia and this growth has flowed through to our schools.

During the campaign Yerrabi parents asked me what the government was doing to accommodate this growth. The government has responded to this growth by investing in the community. In the 2016 budget \$20 million was allocated to expanding schools in Gungahlin and a further \$50 million was committed in the election to build new schools and expand existing schools. This investment is vital to meet the existing needs of the ACT's growing areas such as Gungahlin, Molonglo and west Belconnen.

All schools are designed and built to accommodate local needs, based around priority enrolment areas. These areas are formed on the basis that every child is entitled to a world-class education in their local area. As an Assembly we need to acknowledge community behaviour regarding education changing. Some parents drive large distances every day to take their kids to popular schools. This impacts capacity and it impacts government planning. When combined with population fluctuations this can reduce school enrolments to below an optimal level.

These challenges were made clear in the February 2016 census enrolments and the 2017 and 2018 enrolment options for Canberra public schools presented by then education Minister Rattenbury. The government currently undertakes a review of each school's capacity every two years. However the empirical and anecdotal evidence shows there are times when the priority enrolment areas and other policy settings are not keeping pace with community demand.

The inquiry would offer the Assembly a far deeper look at the use of public facilities across the territory and look at ways to support long-term planning and school performance. The parents of Yerrabi asked me for this in the campaign and I am pleased to raise it on their behalf today.

Debate (on motion by **Ms Le Couteur**) adjourned to the next sitting.

## **Planning and Urban Renewal—Standing Committee Referral**

**MS ORR** (Yerrabi) (4.02): I move:

That the matter of the interaction of housing types, market settings and land release with changes in consumer behaviour and the goal of achieving greater housing affordability be referred to the Standing Committee on Planning and Urban Renewal for inquiry and report.

The government understands how fundamental, stable and affordable housing is to so many parts of our life. One of the key issues for the ACT government and governments across the country is the provision of housing and housing affordability. Improving housing affordability for all Canberrans has been a key objective of the government for many years and has been reaffirmed as a priority going forward by the Barr government.

Young and vulnerable people continue to be locked out of the housing market and the ACT government is committed to removing the inequalities that are blocking young

homebuyers from getting ahead. Increasing land supply for housing stock has been an effective way to improve housing affordability across the board but now it is time to bolster this strategy with new opportunities and initiatives to drive greater reform in this area.

Housing reports on housing affordability, the labour market in the ACT and housing demand show that the ACT has the highest proportion of social housing in Australia. However, many households are still paying unaffordable rents in the private rental market, amounting to more than 30 per cent of household incomes.

The ACT government has worked hard to address the issue of housing affordability through successive housing affordability action plans. Much has been achieved, such as an accelerated land release program and hard-set affordable housing targets. Since 2007 the government has targeted both supply and demand measures and has been broadly successful through accelerated land supply, the 20 per cent greenfield affordable housing target and land tax and stamp duty reductions, particularly for properties at the low end of the market. Equally our social housing system and investment in housing and homelessness services are among the best in Australia, again, a record we should be proud of.

We have done well in this area but there is more that we can do. The government must support the growth of the community housing sector in Canberra and work with higher education partners to increase the supply of student accommodation.

Land release also plays a key role in creating a fairer and more affordable market. The LDA is currently undertaking greenfield land release development activities across the ACT, with about 4,500 dwelling releases scheduled for 2016-17.

But it is not enough just to release land and hope for the best. We need to be making sure we know what the community wants in terms of housing type and how they want to live. In short, the property market and its current settings are not adequately catering to the needs of all people who are seeking housing.

The government's work in delivering affordable housing is of critical importance and the standing committee must urgently begin to investigate ways to deliver these priorities for the benefit of all Canberrans.

Debate (on motion by **Mr Rattenbury**) adjourned to the next sitting.

## **Justice and Community Safety—Standing Committee Referral**

**MS CODY** (Murrumbidgee) (4.05): I move:

That the matter of evidence and best practice around prevention and early intervention programs in the prevention of domestic and family violence and any other related matters be referred to the Standing Committee on Justice and Community Safety for inquiry and report.

I am honoured to refer this important issue to the Standing Committee on Justice and Community Safety and commend this motion of referral to my colleagues here today. I note that Mr Rattenbury and Mr Coe argue that referrals should not be made to committees that have not met. I ask them to note that the justice and community safety committee has met and therefore if they wish to defer this motion to protect vulnerable families they will need to find another excuse.

Domestic and family violence occurs, usually in the home behind closed doors. As a community we are realising that domestic and family violence is an issue that is far more common than many choose to admit. Thanks to the leadership of people like 2015 Australian of the Year, Rosie Batty, and strong governments like ours, domestic and family violence is no longer something we should allow to hide in the shadows. A group of strong women have shone a light on domestic violence and our community has started to face this scourge on society head-on. It is a problem that we must solve as a whole community. We know that governments cannot do it alone. In the ACT over the last few years we have seen a number of women die at the hands of a partner or the person who was supposed to love and protect them.

It is estimated that 1½ million women nationally, and almost half a million men, have experienced violence by a cohabiting partner. Those who say they do not know a victim of domestic and family violence are more likely to be turning a blind eye rather than living in a pure society. Those who turn a blind eye to domestic violence and community leaders who ignore the welfare of families subjected to this horror are the enablers. They are the ones who give the violent and the cruel permission to abuse, to torture and to kill.

I am proud to be a member of a government that has made an important commitment to prioritise a targeted response to domestic and family violence in the ACT. This government has made an unprecedented pledge to address family violence through the creation of a new funding stream which will enable us to fund the \$21.42 million safer families package. We are the first government to establish a dedicated Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence and have appointed Minister Berry to that position. The minister has made it very clear that our government will work to ensure that we are providing quality support to women who need a crisis response while at the same time working on the prevention and post-crisis programs that will help us bring an end to violence.

This effort is being led by the Coordinator-General for Family Safety. They will be working closely across the whole ACT government as well as the Canberra community to progress key priorities in the coming year. This position has been established to drive cultural change within the public sector, establish partnerships with the community sector and promote collaboration and integration across systems. We are doing more than we have ever done to try to support victims better but there is more we can do to eliminate the violence before it happens.

One of the biggest issues we face here, and perhaps one of the hardest to resolve for not only our community but those around the world, is working to change the culture of our society to make domestic and family violence a thing of the past. At a recent

event attended by the minister, a well-known community leader suggested that we build a movement or a campaign like those against smoking and littering. Making domestic violence illegal has not been enough. Making domestic violence unfashionable has not been enough. Domestic violence needs to be the sort of thing people will not walk past: a standard no member of our community will accept.

This motion is the start of that. This motion asks the Standing Committee on Justice and Community Safety to conduct an inquiry, to look at evidence, to look at models of best practice and to seek out information about programs and approaches that have produced great outcomes.

We have a lot to do on this issue. As policymakers, it has to be our priority to continue to find solutions at both ends. We need to find support for those experiencing violence by way of post-crisis responses but more importantly intervention and prevention.

We must always be looking for new ways of changing the story. The only way to do this is to look for new ways to make that change happen across our whole community. I commend this motion to the Assembly.

**MR RATTENBURY** (Kurrajong) (4.10): I note Ms Cody's comments about this committee, and I absolutely agree with her that tackling domestic violence in our community, taking whatever steps we can to eliminate it, is incredibly important. The government did present, I think, three reviews last year on domestic violence. There has been considerable focus in this place, and I think it is fair to say it has been one of the topics where there has been tripartisan support for measures in this place, and that is something I think we are all very grateful for.

I do not dispute the importance of the topic but I reiterate my comments earlier today that the Greens' view is that in making referrals to committees, particularly right at the start of the term, it is best for the committee members to perhaps meet and discuss the likely referrals and to actually work collaboratively together to agree on a work program.

I did note Ms Cody's comments that the JACS committee has already met, which seems to make it even worse in that the committee has not discussed this possible referral and this matter has not been canvassed with her committee colleagues. We will also be supporting an adjournment of this motion today.

Debate (on motion by **Ms Le Couteur**) adjourned to the next sitting.

## **Executive members' business—precedence**

*Ordered that executive members' business be called on.*

## **Carmichael coal mine—proposed construction and impact on climate change**

**MR RATTENBURY** (Kurrajong) (4.12): I move:

That this Assembly:

(1) notes:

- (a) climate change impacts will have serious environmental, health and economic consequences for the ACT;
- (b) the Australian Government has signed and ratified the Paris Agreement on climate change, which requires it to try and limit the increase in the global average temperature to well below 2°C;
- (c) the Australian Government has approved the construction of the massive Carmichael coal mine and is considering providing financial support for the project through the Northern Australia Infrastructure Facility; and
- (d) facilitating the construction and operation of the Carmichael coal mine is radically contrary to the Government's commitment to the Paris Agreement and the imperatives to mitigate climate change; and

(2) opposes the construction of the proposed Carmichael coal mine, and opposes the contribution of any Federal Government support to the proposed Carmichael coal mine and related infrastructure.

In 2014, the then federal environment minister Greg Hunt gave approval for mining company Adani to construct the giant Carmichael open-cut coal mine in the Galilee Basin in Queensland. Recently, the federal government's northern Australia infrastructure facility has commenced consideration of a \$1 billion loan to help pay for infrastructure associated with the mine. The motion that I am presenting today calls on—

*Mr Hanson interjecting—*

**MR RATTENBURY:** The motion I am presenting today calls on this Assembly to formally record its opposition to the proposed Carmichael coal mine—

*Mr Hanson interjecting—*

**MR RATTENBURY:** and to the use of federal funding, taxpayers' money, to support the mine.

*Mr Hanson interjecting—*

**MR RATTENBURY:** This is a project that will negatively impact all of us, including the people here in Canberra. It is important that we record our opposition to the mine—



*Mr Hanson interjecting—*

**MR RATTENBURY:** that we tell the federal government and other jurisdictions—

**MADAM SPEAKER:** Mr Hanson, that is three interjections in the first 45 seconds. Can you let the minister continue?

**MR RATTENBURY:** It is important that we record our opposition to the mine, that we tell the federal government and other jurisdictions that the ACT does not support this major decision that will have such a significant and detrimental impact on climate change in this country.

If built, Carmichael will be one of the biggest coal mines in the world and the biggest in Australia. It will be 28,000 hectares, seven times the area of Sydney Harbour. To put this in a local perspective, the mine is so large it would cover Canberra entirely, from north to south.

If it becomes operational, the mine will send 60 million tonnes of black coal every year to the appropriately-named Abbot Point coal terminal, which is located right on the edge of the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park. From there the coal will ship to India to be burnt in coal-fired power plants.

With all that we know about climate change and the devastating impacts it will have on the planet, on Australia and on us here in Canberra, it is irresponsible and unconscionable to support the Carmichael coal mine project. The science is clear about the path we need to take to mitigate the looming, harmful impacts of climate change.

*Mr Hanson interjecting—*

**Mr Gentleman:** Point of order, Madam Speaker.

**MADAM SPEAKER:** Mr Gentleman on a point of order.

**Mr Gentleman:** Madam Speaker, you have warned Mr Hanson. He continues to interject during the minister's speech. I ask you to bring him to order.

**MADAM SPEAKER:** He does, indeed. He does have a habit of that. Mr Hanson, please let the minister continue and finish in silence.

**MR RATTENBURY:** I am sorry it is so distressing for Mr Hanson to talk about these issues that impact on all of us. But perhaps if he listens he might learn something about the very real impacts this mine will have on the global ecosystem.

The world has agreed on an upper limit of global warming that is two degrees Celsius on pre-industrial temperatures. Since the industrial revolution we have already raised the global temperature by close to one degree.

Two degrees of warming is not actually a good or safe amount; far from it. It is still very dangerous. It still risks, for example, the complete disappearance of some atoll nations due to sea level rise. The two degrees target reflects the damage that has already been done, the warming that is already locked into the system through rampant polluting and the lack of action, and the difficulties in getting recalcitrant nations to cooperate.

Two degrees is the upper limit. But in fact we need to strive to keep global warming well below two degrees. The Paris climate change agreement is a global agreement that commits nations to take action to keep global warming well below two degrees, preferably to 1.5 degrees. Again, 1.5 degrees is by no means a good outcome for the planet. It still comes with significant problems and dangers. But we have progressed so far along the path of dangerous climate change already that these are the types of targets we must accept.

The science can tell us quite accurately what kinds of actions are compatible with meeting these targets. It can tell us how many tonnes—or gigatonnes—of greenhouse gases we can emit before we are likely to cause certain levels of global warming. What this calculation tells us is that any expansion of fossil fuel production—for example, by building a new coal mine—is incompatible with our goal of preventing catastrophic global warming.

Author and environmentalist Bill McKibben summed it up in his recent article on the stark mathematics of climate change. He said:

We're done expanding the fossil fuel frontier. Our only hope is a swift, managed decline in the production of all carbon-based energy from the fields we've already put in production.

The massive, long-lived, extremely high-polluting Carmichael coal mine is the absolute opposite of this approach. In fact, burning the coal from the Carmichael coal mine alone will use 0.5 per cent of the entire global carbon budget that can be emitted for warming to stay under two degrees Celsius. A single mine in Australia, with the endorsement of the Australian government, will use 0.5 per cent of the entire world's pollution budget to prevent that rise in temperature.

This single mine in Australia, with the endorsement of the Australian government, will produce more annual emissions than Sri Lanka or Bangladesh with their population of 160 million people and more annual emissions than all of New York City. It will produce double the emissions of Tokyo, six times the emissions of Amsterdam and four times the emissions of New Zealand.

The Carmichael coal mine is a massive, overt slap in the face to climate science and a total rejection of the Australian government's apparent commitment to the Paris climate change targets. If we believe in taking action on climate change, we simply cannot support the Carmichael mine project. The two things are simply incompatible.

Here in the ACT we are proud of our climate change targets and the actions we are taking to achieve them. We now have tripartisan support for these targets, apparently. We are on track to have 100 per cent renewable electricity by 2020. We are on track to have reduced our greenhouse gas emissions by 40 per cent on 1990 levels by 2020. And we have commenced a pathway to zero net emissions by 2050 at the latest.

We are taking these actions as a responsible national and global citizen. But we are also taking these actions because we owe it to Canberrans, who we represent, to do all we can to prevent the catastrophic impacts of climate that will happen here in our region and impact on all of lives. So it is also our responsibility, on behalf of Canberrans, to call on our federal counterparts to cease actions that are detrimental to all of us. They cannot claim to support climate change action and at the same time endorse the Carmichael coal mine, and even worse is to offer government funding to support it.

I do hope that every member in this Assembly, given that they have expressed commitment to our own local emissions reduction targets, will agree to this motion and oppose the Carmichael coal mine. If you support the climate change targets and the reasons we are striving for them, you cannot support the Carmichael coal mine. It is totally incompatible with the pathway we are striving to achieve and the commitments we have undertaken.

This formal statement from the ACT Assembly has a useful and practical effect. As a jurisdiction we will have formally put on the record our opposition to the Carmichael project. We are asking our colleagues and neighbours not to damage our efforts at climate change mitigation and not to condemn our citizens and our environment to harmful climate change impacts. Those impacts affect all of us. Despite the mockery on the other side of the chamber, they do impact all of us, wherever we are located.

I am also the ACT's climate change minister, and I attended the national COAG meetings, including yesterday, with state and federal ministers. I would like to be able to present an ACT position at those meetings that we do not support the mine or federal funding contributions to the mine and I would like to say that that is a tripartisan position from all ACT political parties.

The impacts of Carmichael, if it goes ahead, will be serious and long term. It will literally change the climate of the world we live in. Obviously, a project of this type and of this scale also has an immediate destructive impact on the local environment, on the flora and fauna. Twenty thousand hectares of native bushland will be cleared for the mine including threatened Brigalow woodlands and the habitat of the endangered black throated finch.

The mine will use 12 billion litres of water from local rivers and aquifers. The Carmichael mine project involves the expansion of the Abbot Point coal terminal on the edge of the Great Barrier Reef. This involves dredging 1.1 million cubic metres of spoil.

This proposal prompted over 200 scientists to sign a letter opposing the expansion. They said that the best available science makes it very clear that expansion of the port at Abbot Point will have detrimental effects on the Great Barrier Reef, such as sediment from the dredging smothering corals and seagrasses and exposing them to poisons and elevated nutrients.

In this way the project is a two-pronged attack on our precious Barrier Reef. The coal terminal is right on its fringe and scientists believe its expansion will cause serious damage. Of course, the massive pollution from the mine—annually as much as is produced by whole countries and major world cities—will have a major climate change impact. It will lock in catastrophic climate change impacts faster and with more certainty.

One of the terrible climate change impacts for our country is of course the destruction of the Great Barrier Reef. The Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority earlier this year estimated that 22 per cent of coral has died across the length of the reef due to heat stress. In some parts of the reef, such as the northern parts near Lizard Island, the amount of live coral covering the reef has fallen from around 40 per cent in March to under five per cent in October this year.

This follows the warmest year on record leading to particularly warm ocean temperatures. This is what the reef scientists tell us. There is, of course, an alternative view put forward by one of our federal Senate colleagues who recently verified that the reef is totally fine by taking a swim 1,000 kilometres away from the location where the coral bleaching is occurring. Personally, I will take the advice of the scientists.

To conclude, I simply reiterate how important it is that this Assembly supports my motion today. We have all expressed a commitment to mitigating climate change and to supporting the emission reduction targets that are compatible with climate change mitigation. The federal government's support and potential funding for the massive, polluting Carmichael coal mine sharply conflicts with these commitments and it will impact all of us. It is contrary to our local targets, contrary to the Paris agreement on climate change, and as a parliament we should put our opposition on the record. I commend my motion to the Assembly.

**MS LEE** (Kurrajong) (4.23): I do not oppose nor do I take any issue with Minister Rattenbury's assertions about the importance of climate change and its impact on the territory. In fact, Mr Rattenbury himself only just now and this morning reminded the Assembly of the tripartisan agreement in relation to the commitment for the 100 per cent renewable energy target. As the Leader of the Opposition himself stated yesterday in the chamber, issues relating to the environment are important ones for the ACT that warrant proper, substantive and meaningful discussion.

This motion, however, is clearly not about the substantive issue of climate change. It seems to me to be an attempt by Minister Rattenbury to push some type of national Greens agenda which clearly has no place here. I do draw Minister Rattenbury's attention to the fact that the Carmichael mine is wholly located within the state of

Queensland. The main source of support that has been committed to it comes from the Queensland Labor government. Whatever contribution is being sought by the Queensland Labor government from the federal government is a matter between the Queensland and commonwealth parliaments, not a subject for debate in this chamber.

I am sure that we would not like other states and territories lecturing the ACT on decisions made here. In fact, yesterday we actually had a discussion mostly from the other side of the chamber in relation to the importance of our autonomy in relation to the euthanasia laws. We do not see that it is our place to do this. This is not a discussion about whether we oppose or support the Carmichael mine. Let me repeat that again. It is not our place to say so, Madam Speaker. Therefore the opposition will not be supporting Minister Rattenbury's motion.

**MR GENTLEMAN** (Brindabella—Minister for Police and Emergency Services, Minister for the Environment and Heritage, Minister for Planning and Land Management and Minister for Urban Renewal) (4.25): I am pleased to address the Assembly in support of the Minister for Climate Change and Sustainability's motion today. I am excited about how progressive the ACT has been in addressing challenges in climate change, and I am pleased to see that we continue to be recognised as a national and international leader in the transition to a clean and sustainable economy. Today I would like to discuss the impacts of climate change and what effect they are having on the ACT; the work that we are doing to combat climate change, including our 100 per cent renewable electricity target; and our call for the federal government to do more on national climate policy.

A recent Climate Council report on the bushfire threat to the ACT highlights the impact of climate change—

*Opposition members interjecting—*

**MR GENTLEMAN:** I know those opposite are not interested in the impacts of climate change on the ACT but they are very important.

This report in particular tells about the challenges that we face. This 2016 report shows that recent severe fires in New South Wales and the ACT have been influenced by record hot dry conditions and that the total economic cost of these fires in the ACT and New South Wales is estimated to be approximately \$100 million a year. By around the middle of the century, these costs will more than double.

Through ongoing and overwhelming support from the Canberra community, the ACT has achieved some of the most ambitious carbon emissions reduction policies of any state or region. By the year 2020, the ACT will have reduced its total emissions by 40 per cent on 1990 levels and will be powered by 100 per cent renewable electricity. As spelt out in the parliamentary agreement signed between ACT Labor and the Greens, the ACT is committed to achieving net zero emissions by 2050 at the latest and setting a firm interim target to get us there.

International consensus on action required to limit global warming was agreed at the United Nations climate conference in Paris and continued at the recent climate

conference at Marrakech. Australia ratified the Paris climate agreement in November this year, joining over 100 nations committed to keep the planet at well below a two degrees Celsius rise in the average temperature.

The ACT government has been, and continues to be, a strong supporter of renewable energy, placing us in the lead both nationally and internationally. But we have an even bigger, broader vision for our territory as an export-orientated hub for renewable energy, innovation and investment, to drive the development of a more diverse, creative and vibrant ACT economy.

Our renewables auction process is delivering renewable electricity to ACT households at the lowest possible price, but it is also delivering much more to Canberrans. It is creating new research opportunities in battery storage and integration at the ANU and a new trades training program related to renewable energy at the Canberra Institute of Technology. It is attracting national and international companies to our territory and it is expanding the commercial horizons for companies already here. An estimated \$500 million is being invested into the local economy.

We are also creating jobs through this investment. Over the past five years, renewable energy related jobs have grown six times faster in the ACT than in any other state or territory in the country and 12 times faster than the national average. Unfortunately, however, our federal government is letting us down. Its actions and inactions are inconsistent with the goals set out in the Paris climate agreement and the need to transition to net zero emissions by 2050. They are also inconsistent with the science that shows that we need to stop burning fossil fuels to avoid dangerous climate change.

The Adani Carmichael coalmine will be twice as big as the entire geographical area of Paris, an interesting but important analogy given the Paris climate agreement. It will produce over 4.7 billion tonnes of greenhouse gases when it becomes operational. It is a project that flies in the face of very clear climate science advice that says that we cannot afford to burn any more of the world's fossil fuel reserves if we want to prevent dangerous global warming. The cumulative emissions related to this mine over its lifetime are amongst the highest in the world for any individual project. Whilst the burning of coal would not fall within Australia's national greenhouse accounts, the magnitude of the annual emissions associated with the burning of coal would be equivalent to approximately three times Australia's annual emissions reduction target of five per cent below 2000 levels by 2020.

While the burning of the coal would not occur within Australia, the effects of these additional emissions into the atmosphere will be felt by all Australians. Climate change does not happen just in another country or just where emissions are made. We are feeling the effects now and here in Canberra and we will feel them into the future. This is why the Carmichael coalmine is also our problem. That is why we oppose any federal government financial support for the Carmichael mine.

In the absence of appropriate national action, smaller jurisdictions—cities, states and regions—are required to do more to address the challenges of global warming. Not only are cities and regions the stage for many of the actions that we need to take, such as building sustainable zero emission cities, but some national governments have

become the key protagonists as national governments fail to take effective climate action.

We will do the work to highlight whether we can transition to net zero emissions in an earlier time frame than 2050. We will conduct an extensive and inclusive consultation process and get the best information and analysis for this work. The successful path to zero net emissions will need to be a partnership between the community, the business sector and all parts of the government. There is also a national climate policy review being undertaken in 2017. The ACT government will work to influence the outcome of this review and ensure that it leads to more ambitious action on climate change and contributes to a more resilient future for us all.

**MS LE COUTEUR** (Murrumbidgee) (4.31): I want to make some brief remarks about this.

Firstly, Mr Hanson interjected to say that this was really just an attempt to deny electricity to the people of India. Nothing could be further from the truth. I happen to have with me an article from the *Guardian* from October. It quotes Tim Buckley, from the Institute of Energy Economics and Financial Analysis. He points out that the Indian energy minister, Piyush Goyal, has vowed that India will cease all coal imports within three years. That is a matter of public record. That is what India is planning to do.

What is the reason why India can be so confident in planning to do this? Tim has given the prices of solar power and coal. The cost of new solar power is less than the cost of new coal. It is 4.5 rupees per kilowatt hour for solar compared to six rupees for imported coal. Coal from Australia is not going to solve energy issues for India. The Indians know that, and it would be great if the Australians worked that one out as well.

As Minister Gentleman said, Ms Lee, there is a reason for the ACT to be concerned about this. We share the same atmosphere. We share the same climate. We do not live in a little bubble by ourselves here in the ACT. This is something that is overall a very bad thing, for the reasons that Mr Rattenbury and Mr Gentleman have discussed. But just from our point of view as taxpayers it is a pretty lousy deal, too. Is there any reason to think that the Adani coalmine will pay the full company tax rate in Australia? First, will they make a profit in Australia? And if they do, will they sell through their other entities in tax havens like the Cayman Islands and Singapore? From a straight economic point of view, if an additional 60 million tonnes a year of subsidised coal comes out from Adani, will this, in fact, from Australia's point of view, just replace other coal exports and so be a no-win game for Australia economically, apart from being clearly a very bad deal from an environmental point of view?

My last point is from an environmental point of view. I had the privilege in 2013 of visiting the parts of Queensland where the mine would be constructed if it is constructed. I thought before I went that they would be clapped out bits of desert. But no, they are not. There is beautiful, fertile agricultural land over much of it. It would be a real shame for Australia and the world if this mine goes ahead.

**MR RATTENBURY** (Kurrajong—Minister for Climate Change and Sustainability, Minister for Justice and Consumer Affairs, Minister for Corrections and Minister for Mental Health) (4.35), in reply: I will briefly close. I would like to thank Ms Le Couteur and Minister Gentleman for their support of the motion. I appreciate that they took it on its merits because this is a very serious environmental issue. Despite the interjections across the chamber, I think this Assembly should have the capability to contemplate a range of issues and that we should be able to think about issues like this that will impact on our quality of life in this country and in this city.

This is a project that is simply not the way of the future. Australia has much better prospects for both exports and producing energy. I thank members who have offered their support today.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

## **Leave of absence**

Motion (by **Mr Gentleman**) agreed to:

That leave of absence be granted to all Members for the period 16 December 2016 to 13 February 2017.

## **Inaugural speeches**

**MR PETTERSSON** (Yerrabi) (4.36), by leave: It is an immense privilege to be here today standing alongside all of you who have been chosen to represent our communities. I would like to start by speaking about my own community, the electorate of Yerrabi. In many ways Yerrabi represents both what is old and new about Canberra. My own suburb of Crace and suburbs like Casey and Forde were still under construction at the last election, and with their development have come new families and new stories. By the time of the next election, we will have the addition of more new suburbs, like Throsby and Moncrief.

The growth we have seen in this region is some of the fastest in all of Australia, a timely reminder that this is a great community that people want to live in. But, of course, Gungahlin has been around much longer than that. Ngunnawal and Palmerston were built over 20 years ago. The Belconnen suburbs of Yerrabi, like Kaleen, Evatt and Giralang, were established in the 1970s, and this is just their recent history.

Australia's first people have lived in the Yerrabi area for thousands of years. Just near my home in Crace is Percival Hill. It is a difficult climb, but when you reach the top there is an amazing view of the Gungahlin area. On this hill and on land like Mulligans Flat, the first Australians held their gatherings. The Ngunnawal people have an ancient connection to this land that must always be honoured. And for that, I would like to pay my respects to the traditional owners of this land and to their elders, past, present and future. I extend that respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people here today.



I am fortunate to be joined today by my mother, Susan, and my father, Ross. My mother was raised in the outer Sydney suburb of Asquith by her mother, Jean, a local tram conductor, and her father, Harry, a Sydney tram driver. You might say a passion for light rail has been in my family for a while now. Susan, like her mother, excelled at school, but lacked the financial support to finish her studies. Looking for new opportunities, she moved to Canberra, finding work in the public service as a nurse and later teaching occupational health and safety at CIT. Her ongoing instruction on the dangers faced by workers and the struggles that scarred her loved ones in the great depression have forever shaped my beliefs.

My father, Ross, was born in Canberra, son to Wallace, a career pilot for the Australian Air Force, and Marjorie, a parliamentary typist. Ross, a forever curious man, grew up in Canberra when it was a much smaller town. He graduated from CIT, an institution which has long served as an educational pathway for the working class. For a time in his youth he travelled widely, servicing Australia's lighthouses for the Maritime Safety Authority. He is to this day a selfless man, always willing to give of himself. He has inspired me through his service and his dedication to local community groups. My parents are ultimately why I stand here today. I thank them both for their love and support.

My brother, David, who is also here today, has always been an incredible source of guidance to me. He has and will always be my biggest believer. I owe him my eternal gratitude. The newest member of the Pettersson family is here as well, David's fiancée, Rachel. We are blessed to welcome you into our small family, and I want to thank you for your support.

My own story is short. I was born in old Canberra Hospital in May 1991. I attended amazing schools that instilled in me an expectation that hard work and study would lead to achievement. These schools gave me a sound education that would see me pursue studies at the Australian National University, studying politics and mathematics. Before my election to the Assembly, I worked as an industrial officer for the CFMEU, assisting workers to be fairly compensated for their work.

I have been elected to represent all of Yerrabi, but I do feel a sense of responsibility also to be a voice for young people. That voice often goes unheard in our nation's parliaments. Many times during the election campaign I was approached by young people who were keen to see a young person representing their interests in the Assembly.

My generation faces challenges more pressing than our forebears. We are the first generation in over a century that will be worse off than our parents. We are being expected to pay more and more for our education while our job opportunities are fewer and fewer. In the current job market, there are four times as many job seekers as there are jobs. Gone are the days of permanent full-time work being the norm.

This reality is not unique to our city, or even to Australia; it is a worldwide problem. Advances in technology and global trade have brought great benefits to some, but they have left and will continue to leave many behind. Government must act, and government must prioritise securing local jobs.

I believe access to quality and affordable education is a right for all Australians. It is more important now than ever before. The educational institutions—institutions that underpinned many of the opportunities enjoyed by previous generations—now face constant attack. State governments across Australia have slashed funding to TAFE, while gifting money to for-profit providers. Some of these operations do little but trade in the exploitation of students.

Similarly, for our universities, the threat of fee deregulation represents a move towards a corporate model of education. This undermines the core tenets of our higher education system: access, quality and affordability. This corporate system will increase inequality and limit the opportunities of young Australians to better their own and their families' lives.

Even more sinister are attacks on student benefits and allowances. The most significant barrier to education is the cost of supporting oneself through study. Welfare benefits make sure that students from all backgrounds get an education. An attack on those payments is an attack on social mobility.

When my generation leaves formal education, things rarely improve in the workplace. The modern Australian workplace is increasingly casual and insecure. Wage theft is all too common. The share of people working part-time jobs has doubled in the last 30 years, with roughly one-third of people now working part time. Casual employees with no access to leave entitlements now make up one-quarter of our workforce, and people previously in full-time, secure work are increasingly pressured to become independent contractors, taking away their rights to sick leave, redundancy and superannuation.

These problems affect people of all ages, but they especially affect young people. Casual employment is draining. It is being on call all the time; it is a life with no sick leave; it is an irregular income; and, of most concern, it is a workplace where it is harder to say no. Casual employment should be a choice, not a way of life. This is how far too many people are living, and it is a disgrace.

The secure, full-time job that many generations have taken for granted is a pipe dream for too many. You know there is a problem when my friends think I have a more secure job than them. These people are not just retail and hospitality workers who have long suffered from casualisation; they are construction workers, teachers, nurses and public servants. For those who have gained employment, they are part of a new workforce that cannot expect growing wages. Wage growth is at record low levels. The cost of living continues to rise. The Australian way of life is being eroded, and we stand here as witnesses.

My generation is the renting generation. Many of us will never own a home or, if we do, it will be because of the help of our parents. Three decades ago the average home was worth five times the average salary. Today, the average home is 10 times the average salary. This is unsustainable and unfair. Housing should not be a financial instrument but a human right. The ownership of housing cannot be seen as a route to prosperity.

Housing affordability has been a problem for some time now. Speaking of the importance of housing in his maiden speech, Andrew Barr got to the heart of the matter, saying:

The provision of secure, affordable and appropriate housing is central to community wellbeing. The recent huge increases in housing prices have created severe problems.

Those words still ring true today. I hope this Assembly will act and advocate for affordable housing.

I have described a very negative outlook for young people today, but I am also optimistic for the future. If you want to be involved in politics, especially on the left side of politics, it is hard not to be an optimist, and in Canberra we have much to be optimistic about.

This city represents what is great about Australia. We have less inequality, our citizens are better educated and healthier; they give more to charities, they are more likely to be involved in sporting groups, and they are more likely to be involved in their community. These things do not happen by accident. They happen because Labor governments make them a priority.

This government has much to be proud of in addressing the problems I outlined earlier. The Labor government's tax reform to remove stamp duty has improved housing affordability. It has also dampened the speculative investment in housing that we have seen in Sydney and Melbourne. A lot of governments talk a big game when it comes to tax reform; few follow through. I am proud to have joined a team that is prepared to make the right decision, even when it is not the easy decision. We must not lose this courage.

The government has also taken steps to ensure that Canberrans will have a secure job. Many in this chamber have spoken about the benefits of light rail to Canberra. Light rail is the cornerstone of a 21st century public transport network. I share this vision, but I want to focus on the other benefits of light rail. This project points the way to a fairer economy that the 21st century demands. Light rail brings jobs and not just any jobs. Light rail will bring secure, long-term jobs, jobs with good pay and jobs with good benefits. The construction industry has experienced casualisation more than most, but the light rail project guarantees long-term secure work for thousands of Canberrans, and it is not just light rail.

This government has taken more steps than any other to diversify and grow the ACT economy. A strong and growing economy is a fundamental ingredient to the supply of good jobs. We are still a public service town, but we are also an education town. We are increasingly becoming a town that people want to visit. Canberra will always be affected by public service job cuts, but they now hit us less severely than they once did.

This government has achieved much in its life, but the work of governing is never done. The work of Labor governments especially is never done. So what should we be

doing? First, I think we need to do something very simple: we need to listen more; not just this government, but all governments. People feel increasingly isolated from their governments and from their communities. This is a problem generally, but it is especially a problem for Labor.

For Labor to be successful, we need people to have faith in our system. We need people to have faith in government's ability to address society's problems. I believe fundamentally that government is a force for good. But it is not about what I believe; it is about what our community believes. My campaign was based on that simple idea: if you want to understand the problems people face in our community, you should listen to them, and if you want people to support you and your ideas, you should talk to them.

In closing, I wish to thank a few more people. Josh, your dedication was unquestionable; Patrick, you understood what this campaign was about when many could not; Luke, your enthusiasm inspired me to keep going; Sam, you were unwavering and tireless. To my colleagues in the CFMEU who understood the challenges I faced and provided many laughs along the way; to Dean and Jason for believing; particularly to Zach, you had faith when many did not; to my good friend, Michael, for enduring alongside me; and to the countless individuals who contributed to the campaign, I want to say thank you. There are too many to list here today but I hope you have seen my appreciation in some way, and I will never forget what you have done.

My campaign was never about me; it was the culmination of a group of passionate people who believed that making politics local and personal again is what would deliver ACT Labor a record-setting fifth term. They did it not for the history books but for a progressive government who will fight for those in the community who cannot fight for themselves. Finally, I wish to thank the people of Yerrabi for placing their faith in me. I won't let you down.

**MS ORR** (Yerrabi) (4.49), by leave: I would like to start by acknowledging that we meet on the land of the Ngunnawal people, and pay my respects to their elders, both past and present. It is an immense honour to be elected, and I would like to thank the people of Yerrabi for placing their confidence in me. I look forward to working with you over the next four years to represent our wonderful part of the ACT.

Madam Speaker, if you had asked me when I was younger if I saw myself as a politician, I would have said no. Because of this, I never planned my life around becoming a politician. I grew up in Giralang playing cricket with my neighbours in our cul-de-sac and going to brownies at the Giralang Primary School hall. My first job was at Sizzler in Belconnen, and it marked the start of a 10-year career in hospitality and tourism. It is an industry I loved being a part of, but it is also where I first realised we have a way to go in making sure that all workers are treated fairly.

As a mature-age student, and much to the delight of my parents, I finally completed university, and along with my cousins I became part of the first generation in my father's family to be university educated. After completing my master's I began a career as an urban planner. I recently bought my first home in Franklin. And after a

lifetime of being a dog person, I took the plunge two years ago and adopted my first-ever cat, Portia Pie, from the RSPCA.

When I was growing up what was a little bit different for me was that my family fostered more than 200 children. We wanted to help kids who needed it most, and this was my family's way of doing that. I learned we can do a lot to help each other, but sometimes we cannot solve all the problems ourselves. Luckily we had social services there to help us when we needed it most. It showed me that the help and support government can give goes a long way towards making a real difference.

Due to my upbringing and my experience in the workforce, being an active member of the Labor Party and the wider labour movement has always been where I feel at home. Our party and our movement bring people together to stand up for each other and make our community a fairer, more inclusive place to live. But apart from a brief stint in Young Labor during my uni years, I had never formally joined the political arm of the labour movement. In 2013, following a change of federal government, the policy area I worked in was dismantled overnight. I figured the only way I could keep making a difference in an area I really cared about was to get involved where the agenda is set. That is when I joined Labor.

All I wanted to do when I joined Labor was to get involved. It turned out that for me this meant joining with 350.org to lead a campaign within the ACT Labor Party calling for an end to the ACT government investing in fossil fuel companies. In the lead-up to our branch conference and with a motion in hand, I spoke to as many Labor members as I could, explaining our goal, the importance of divestment and how what we were asking for was both achievable and beneficial. The ACT government heard our call and has now divested from companies that generated 60 gigatonnes of fossil fuels.

After this success, my friends and colleagues suggested I run for the Legislative Assembly. Having never imagined myself as a politician, I took some time to really think about whether this was for me. At the same time I was telling just about anyone in the Labor Party who would listen, "We really need candidates who are connected to both the Belconnen and Gungahlin parts of Yerrabi." One day it was pointed out to me, not very subtly, that perhaps the person who grew up in the Belco suburbs, now lived in Gungahlin and seemed very keen on making sure all the electorate was represented might be a good option. I took the hint, and while there is never only one reason for running, for me there is one thing that, in the end, persuaded me to throw my hat in the ring. That thing was the chance to work with and represent my family and friends, the people I went to school with, the colleagues I have had the pleasure of working with and the wonderful people who, like me, call the Belco, old Gungahlin, and new Gungahlin parts of Yerrabi home. I am very excited to now have the opportunity to represent Yerrabi and the wonderful people who live there.

When I was 12 years old my dad took me to look at some houses in a street in a place called Palmerston. I was very confused about why we were going to look at houses because mum had made it very clear that she was never moving out of Giralang. But dad explained to me that these were the first houses for a whole new suburb, and eventually a whole new region, and he just wanted to check them out. Those first

houses were all in one street, surrounded by farming paddocks and not really much else. But, soon enough, more streets and more houses joined that first street. Before long Palmerston was built, as well as Nicholls, Ngunnawal and Amaroo. The town centre was established and more suburbs were planned and developed.

Having watched Gungahlin grow from a single street to a home for many, it is perhaps no surprise that, as an adult, I was drawn to a career in urban planning. That is what I was doing before I entered the Assembly. I was working as an urban planner in the federal public service. My professional focus has predominantly been on strategic development, but through my planning networks I have come to gain an insight and appreciation for the many varied facets of the planning task.

A little while ago a fellow planner and friend of mine recounted a conversation she had had while working in a local council. A resident had called wanting to know why the council insisted on setting back her development schedule. My friend was rather confused because there was no requirement on the development application to alter the timing of the development. After a few minutes of going around in circles it became apparent that the setback requirement being discussed referred to the structure being suitably set back from the property boundary. My friend explained this did not equate to a requirement to set back the building schedule.

Whenever I recount this story I get one of two responses. My fellow planners all start an in-depth and passionate discussion on setbacks being different to set backs, and everyone else scratches their head and says, "I don't get it." I appreciate that for a large number of people this story sums up their experience of the planning system and urban planning. But urban planning is more than just the rules we need to comply with if we want to build stuff. Planning is the blueprint for how we go about achieving the best city we possibly can. And achieving the best city we can is vital because our cities are the places that shelter us and provide us with employment, education and health care. They are where we meet with each other and where we come together as a community. Our city is our home.

For this reason we need to have the opportunity to interact with the plans that shape our home long before they turn into circular conversations on setbacks. When we bring people into the conversation early in the piece, take on board a wide range of views, find the points where we can agree and then work through any differences, we provide the conditions to make our city the best it can be for all people who call it home.

As well as being our home, our city is also our habitat, and it needs to sustain us. This means we need to build our city in a way that makes space for all our community and so that we all feel welcome and nurtured. While we may construct our habitat, our built environment and the natural environment surrounding us are not mutually exclusive. We and the cities we live in are still part of the wider planet, and we cannot ignore the reality that the way we build our habitat and the lifestyles we make for ourselves can have a detrimental effect on our surrounding nature. It is important we are both constantly mindful and diligent in minimising the impact of our built environment on our natural environment. After all, it is nature that provides us with food, water and clean air to keep us going. In short, we need to look after our environment, so that our environment can look after us.

As Canberrans we are lucky to live in a city surrounded by nature reserves, grasslands and wildlife. As the bush capital, we are unique. But as a growing city we cannot take for granted that things will always be an easy fit. As we continue to mature, we need to be more and more mindful of balancing our built and natural environments so that our nature is healthy and our city is the best it can be for everyone who lives here.

Finally, as many of us in this place would know, campaigns do not happen without the blood, sweat and occasional tears of many people. I would like to thank my campaign team who were there every day of every week for months on end, brainstorming, fundraising, letterboxing, phone calling and doorknocking. I say to Sarah, Ella, Nick, Anselm, Wade and Michael, the little campaign that thinks it can, did, and that is due in no small part to each of you. I thank you for the time, support and sacrifices you made to support me and the Labor cause.

I would also like to thank all my wonderful friends and comrades who helped in any and many ways during the campaign. Thank you to my comrades at the CPSU, the TWU, the CFMEU and UV. A huge thank you to Matt, Megan and everyone at Labor Party office. To my parents, brothers, sister, nephews and niece, thank you for being my rock. I could not ask for a more wonderful or supportive family. To Julie, thank you for all your guidance and advice.

I also want to take a moment to pay my respects to two men who have been by my side providing unconditional love, advice and occasionally a stern but fair talking to since the day I was born—my pop and my grampy. My pop was the only son of Irish immigrants who came to Australia for a better life. Pop had hoped to be a doctor or a lawyer, something that would give him the opportunity to help people and really make a difference. But during the Great Depression, when aged only 13, he had to leave school to return to the family farm.

He stayed at the farm for the rest of his life, never finishing school or getting the university education he had longed for. But he still contributed to his community as a member of the rural fire service, the agricultural show society and the agricultural bureau. Pop once told me that even though his life did not go the way he might have imagined, he was still able to give back to his community and, along with my nan, raised a loving and caring family; and that, he said, was the most important thing.

My grampy was the only son of two loving parents. During his youth, he fell in love with the girl across the road. Despite the many warnings my grammy received about that larrikin from across the street, she still agreed to wait until he returned from the war to marry him. After a short stint in Tumut, the family settled in Canberra, where they happily went about their lives. When my mum was just a young teenager my grammy was involved in a car accident that left her bedridden for the remainder of her life. My grampy stoically stood by his Shirl, helping with her caring needs and running around after their five young children. When he retired he would go on road trips across Australia, coming back with thousands of photos to show to grammy so that she could also see the country they both loved. It was a dedication and love that extended to his children, his grandchildren and his great-grandchildren.

My pop passed away in April and my grampy passed away in September. To say the elation of being elected was tempered by the absence of two of the biggest supporters in my life is an understatement. But as I approach the next four years, even though they cannot be here with me, I take with me the example of my grandfathers: work hard, value people and leave the world a better place than you inherited. Thank you.

**MR MILLIGAN** (Yerrabi) (5.02), by leave: Madam Assistant Speaker, I am deeply honoured and humbled to be elected a representative of the electorate of Yerrabi, as well as a representative of the Canberra Liberals. I am truly thankful for the trust that the community of Yerrabi has placed in me to represent their views, their passions and their concerns.

Coming into parliament gives you an opportunity to reflect on your history and antecedents. As a sixth generation Australian, a descendant of Irish immigrants, including a convict female forebear, I have strong ties to this country and am passionate about the opportunities to have a go and the nature of the Australian landscape. My values reflect my history, my background and our joint experiences as a nation.

I want to take this opportunity to share a little bit about my history, to thank my family, to elaborate on the values that make this country great and what I will bring to my role as a member of this Legislative Assembly.

I was brought up in a small country town, Yarrawonga, bordering Victoria and New South Wales on the Murray River. My upbringing was typical of many growing up in the country: mates, sports, family and getting up to no good. It was up to us to make our own entertainment as we did not have the cool, hi tech dooverlackies that the kids rely on these days. I have to say, though, the greatest thing to come out of living in the country was the solid friendships I made. We were brothers. This instilled in me the importance of mateship and the significant impact it has on our personal values and characteristics that aid us in finding our pathway through life. At least this is what helped me.

I have very fond memories of mum telling us to get out of the house and go do something. I would head out with mates, go fishing, go bike riding, go swimming in the river, play cricket or golf or just chill on the foreshore. But as with any typical friendship, there were many times that we would not see eye to eye, commonly due to our competitiveness on and off the football field. But due to our protective and respectful nature for one another, mixed with the small country town spirit that was built around respect and support, we would quickly overcome any differences. This is where my willingness to listen and respect for diverse opinions originated.

My relationship with my father, Noel Milligan, who is here today, is a relationship built on mateship born from a mutual love of sport—a strong bond that we share to this day. Through my sporting activities with my father I learned the importance of working as part of a team to achieve a common goal, though I must put on the record that he is a Collingwood fanatic. Dad, it is not too late to join the mighty tiges before our premiership win next season.



My mother was a key influence on my values and introduced me to a strong business ethic. I was able to watch and learn from the level of commitment and dedication she poured into managing her business. This was driven by her passion and love for her family and her community.

Running your own business takes long days and nights. The privilege of working set hours and being able to go home and switch off after the day is not a privilege most business owners experience. I witnessed the long hours it took mum to run her restaurant, starting most days at 10am and working to 10 in the evening. Anyone who has come from a family business knows it is expected they would help out in the business. I can tell you that I have done my fair share of dishes for a lifetime.

At the age of 12 I recall washing dishes in a sink that was the size of a bathtub, so big I needed a wooden crate to stand on. I did this until I got my freedom—or my drivers licence—pretty much. I was taught the values of initiative, perseverance, personal responsibility and reward for hard work. Family is important to me. It is where the values I hold today were born.

Strong values are important to anyone seeking elected office, and I agree with our greatest modern Prime Minister, former PM John Howard, who was always emphasising that navigating a path to political success means sticking to your values. I firmly subscribe to the Liberal Party's central philosophies, specifically the belief in the individual and support for families.

The family is a primary place for fostering values and it is those values that can influence the path we take in life, whether they are social, political, religious or moral values. As parents we want to provide a loving, supportive, safe and secure family environment which all starts with the family home. I was encouraged to make decisions for myself. Sure, there were times when I made the wrong decision, but I made sure I learned from them.

From a young age I stood my ground on matters I felt passionate about, including the core belief that an individual should be able to freely make decisions about their own lives and to pursue their own goals. It is unfortunate that the importance of values and respect for diverse opinions is today overshadowed by the quest for popularity—the sugar hit of social media and the squeaky-wheel views of unrepresentative minorities.

Looking back at my childhood there is nothing I would change. I was one of the lucky ones. I had a great group of mates and a loving family environment and was brought up with the ability to make choices for myself and to explore my own interests.

Madam Assistant Speaker, unfortunately there is one person missing here today, and that is one person who was a big influence on my life. Just a couple of years ago mum was diagnosed with terminal cancer, and sadly lost her battle two days after her 65th birthday in February last year. Mum's passing at such a young age was very sad. She was loved, admired and respected by her family, friends, work colleagues and community. Mum, thank you for all your strength and advice that has helped me become the person I am today.

My brother Bryan is here today as well. Going through the loss of our mum has, in effect, brought us even closer together, and I am grateful for that, not to mention the support I received from my loving wife and our son, Blake, who is here today.

Often it is not until you experience something that you truly get an understanding of it. Seeing what mum went through brought home the importance of a fully functioning healthcare system. It would be fair to say that when we need care we want to have access to the best healthcare services and facilities available. The community expects to see government investment in their healthcare system and that there is adequate support not only for the patients but also the family members affected.

Most people's decisions on what career paths they take are mostly influenced by personal experiences and what they value. Your job reflects your passions and talents, your commitment to the community and your own drive to achieve success. Some of us choose to enter into business, and it is no secret that business is the driving force behind our economy. We want a safe, stable economy to encourage and stimulate investment, to create jobs and growth in our region.

My upbringing was instrumental in inspiring me to go into business. I wrote a series of educational books targeted at early childhood learning and decided to establish my own publishing house to publish these books and market them to all schools across Australia. It is these values of hard work, initiative, dedication and wanting to lead my life the way I want to which led me to start my own business. For me, this means being prepared to have a go, take measured risks and always doing my best. Anyone going into business puts it all on the line, devoting countless hours and enduring sleepless nights, remortgaging their family home and going without a regular income and, once started, having difficulty maintaining cash flow—all with the hope of being successful.

Healthy businesses are essential to our community. Making a profit is crucial to the lifeblood and long-term sustainability of the economy, which in turn creates new jobs and supports the growth of families. Today there seem to be many barriers that hold businesses back, such as the recent commercial rate hikes here in the ACT and the never-ending additions to red tape. The government should not be in a position to force businesses away from their core business, which damages profit and hinders potential economic benefit to the territory. In 2014, the ABS identified 25,400 businesses operating in the ACT. Of those, 96.9 per cent were small businesses, three per cent were medium businesses and just 0.2 per cent were large businesses.

I believe Canberra can be Australia's leading small to medium business hub. We need to create opportunities to attract more businesses to move to or establish in the ACT and to provide an environment that promotes inspiration and opportunity and brings benefits to those who are brave enough to have a go. Funding for start-ups can be sourced from public and private investment. The creation of clear pathways for investors to identify opportunities is key to success. For example, the Turnbull government's creation of greater incentives to invest in start-ups so that small business can survive and thrive is very welcome, although long overdue. Innovation is

more than just developing new digital technology; it is also in manufacturing and areas such as science, engineering and maths.

I firmly believe that the marketplace should determine the success of ideas and that the government should not compete against the private sector in an industry that can be self-sustaining. There is significant scope to broaden what is currently available and to recognise those opportunities.

I am proud to be a member of a party that is farsighted and innovative. There is a very high chance that the employment sector will shortly go through significant changes that will bring along new employment opportunities that do not currently exist. These new jobs will be available within the next decade as technology and innovations grow. We want to show that Australia, and Canberra in particular, is a safe environment for investment and we want jobs to cater for all skill levels.

A recent Anglicare report indicates that a significant proportion of people who genuinely want to work are unable to find suitable employment. The competition is fierce, and many find it impossible to get a foot in the door without assistance. The report goes on to suggest competition for low-skilled, entry-level jobs is increasing, at the same time as jobs at this level are decreasing. 138,000 Australians are competing for nearly 22,000 entry-level jobs nationally. That is only one job advertised for every six low-skilled jobseekers.

Finding a job without experience or training is tough. More than 37 per cent of Australian jobs now require a bachelor degree or higher qualification. In Canberra the figures are even more confronting: 50 per cent of jobs in the ACT require a degree of sorts and only 11 per cent are suitable for those with little or no qualification. I do not want our city to be known for turning away those who value hard work or the place where it is almost impossible to find a job without first obtaining a degree. I would like to see greater investment in the jobs market to promote growth which in turn will help disadvantaged jobseekers develop the skills and experiences.

Long-term investment and local solutions are needed. Particular emphasis should be placed on servicing international and national tourism, welcoming more international events and the utilisation of an international freight and transport hub for regional produce. Canberra should be a place of excitement, opportunity and innovation. It can be a leader in adapting to changing business environments and circumstances. Canberra needs a broader appeal to attract business and visitation. It is approaching a size where it can attract high-end retail outlets and increased patronage of better sporting facilities to host international events.

The ACT government cannot simply legislate Canberra into a more successful city; there is no silver bullet that can be signed into law that will make our city more vibrant and prosperous, because it is not the government of the ACT, it is the people of the ACT that make our city great, and drive Canberra to be a world-class city to visit and live in. It is their initiative that sees new cafes and restaurants opening up that rival any in Melbourne or Sydney. It is their entrepreneurship that sees new businesses start up and grow, bringing success and new jobs to our local community.

It is vital that we also foster the strong and vibrant communities of our city. Thriving communities bring people together to build great cities, and despite our differences all of us here in this place can agree on the importance of our local community to Canberra's future.

I want to help shape a city that we can be proud of, to show off to our visiting family and friends as well as visitors. I want to see a city that offers endless opportunities. I want Canberra to represent who we are locally and also represent who we are as Australians.

I would also like to pay tribute to our growing ageing community. We must recognise the needs and expectations of those residents and respect the contributions they can continue to make to our community and the local economy. They should never be treated as a burden.

In my own electorate of Yerrabi, the Gungahlin town centre suffers from low patronage caused by locals travelling elsewhere for work. A focus on more local employment opportunities is key to stimulating additional commercial development in the town centre. I welcome Senator Zed Seselja's efforts in securing a federal office block in Gungahlin, thus providing another potential 300 to 600 jobs. In concert with the philosophy of Canberra being comprised of vibrant town centres, Gungahlin needs an updated master plan to give Gungahlin businesses the confidence that government is focused on investing in our local town centres.

Gungahlin needs better infrastructure, better local amenities, better access to our local waterways, more visitor accommodation and aged care facilities. I welcome the recent opening of the new K-Mart centre in Gungahlin. However there is still a need for greater diversification of its retail base. Improved local social amenities are also important, thus the need for indoor sporting facilities, a town or district hall, an entertainment precinct on the Yerrabi pond foreshores and a focus on facilities for the growing youth population.

I am very proud to carry on the fight that Vicki Dunne and Alistair Coe started in standing up for the forgotten suburbs of Belconnen. For too long the suburbs of Kaleen, McKellar, Giralang and Evatt have been waiting at the banquet table of this Labor government for the proverbial scrap of meat to fall their way. For too long, local residents have been ignored by this government. During my service as a member for Yerrabi I will continue the Canberra Liberals' passion and desire to bring government focus back to the forgotten suburbs of the ACT.

I would also like to take this opportunity to acknowledge and thank the many people who helped in my campaign and to all those people in our community for putting their trust and faith in me to represent their passions and interests in this Legislative Assembly. I would like to acknowledge a few of the many friends and supporters in our community who helped me during this election which started well in advance of party pre-selection in April. I received a fantastic level of support from many within our party and our community, for which I am thankful.

I would be nothing without the magnificent support and dedication from my family—my beautiful wife, Katrina, who never stopped supporting my political ambitions, and my son, Blake, who became a keen member of the party and gave up much of his teenage interests to be a persistent and key member of the campaign team. There were times when I thought he was waving election signs on the side of roads, only to learn that the sign he was waving read “I need a formal date”. You will be pleased to know that he eventually found a date for the formal.

I am very proud of my son. 2016 has been a busy year for him. He just successfully completed year 12 whilst holding down a part-time job and helped me in the campaign in his spare time. We want our children to have access to the best education and to have greater opportunities than we had. As parents, we tend to go without to give our children the best possible start in life, and I believe Blake has a bright future ahead.

The extraordinary drive, commitment and support Katrina gave me were truly inspirational. It pushed me in my desire to succeed and to not let her down. I firmly believe in the term “Behind every great man is an even greater woman” and I have a wife that proves it. I love you both and I am deeply indebted to you.

My superb campaign team, many with a wealth of knowledge from past elections, put in a sterling effort to help me get across the line. This involved many months of planning, many meetings, plenty of advice and countless hours on the campaign trail. My team put in many hours doorknocking, letterboxing and holding community stalls. I believe their use of social media made a real difference, and our campaign launch was magnificent.

I owe the success of my campaign to my team: firstly, my wife, Katrina, and our son, Blake; Tony Cole, who is here; Ewan Brown; Sarwat Maqbooll; Chris Horsecroft; Martin Dunn; Karin Oerlemans; Wayne Waryon, who is here also; Ian Barrass as well; Sam Fairall-lee; Chris Inglis; Clinton White; Zach Lombardo; Ben Puckett; and the many other dedicated volunteers and supporters in the community.

I wish I had a dollar for every time I was asked why I decided to enter politics. It is quite an easy question to answer, actually. Mateship is the reason. I was raised to value the difference of opinion. I grew up respecting different points of view, and I am proud to say I continue to hold that same respect and bond of mateship. It is this very skill that will translate well in this chamber but also, more importantly, out in our community.

I am the first to admit I certainly do not know all things. I will be a member of this place who is focused on consulting the individuals in our community, businesses, organisations, charities and groups, on the real issues that matter to them. I have proven my ability to listen and now is the time for me to speak for the people of Yerrabi, to begin the process of building strong relationships and representing the issues here in this place.

My commitment to the journey I have undertaken to be here today I owe to the competitive sporting nature I learned from my father and the lessons I learned from watching my mother run her family restaurant and her tenacity during her final years of life. That same commitment my parents taught me will be the base to serve the people and families of Yerrabi here in the ACT Legislative Assembly. I will endeavour to retain and work on improving the characteristics that define me now. I am approachable and have no limitations in regard to conversing with people from all walks of life.

My values-based beliefs lead me to be compassionate and to have a willingness to listen to people. These are essential features for any good representative. I intend to champion issues of merit and push for good governance, and this is what the ACT population deserves.

I will adopt a forward-thinking position on key issues and will steadily develop and refine my vision for the future. I will be proactive and show a real capacity to think outside the box, to encourage the advancement of ideas that will enhance the reputation and status of Canberra, as well as continue to improve its liveability rating. As an MLA, I hope to pursue my interests in boosting and diversifying the business sector, particularly small business in Canberra, so that they can continue to contribute much more to our economy by creating jobs to continue to support our families and our community.

I am not one for following the crowd, Madam Assistant Speaker. I am one for merit. I want to help provide opportunities so that kids can be as happy as I was growing up. I want the leaders of our future to have the opportunity to demonstrate courage to have a go without judgement, not to have a handout but a hand-up. There are too many people making decisions for other people, which strips this generation of skills for the future. How can we possibly expect future leaders to know how to problem-solve when they have all been taught to be reliant on the government for decisions?

To those that trusted me with their vote and support this election, I can and will represent your interests with the same tenacity and passion I use to approach the issues and desires for my own family. I will continue to serve with the same honesty, integrity and courage that I demonstrated during this election. I am proud to be a true local representative of Yerrabi. Thank you for providing me with this opportunity to speak, Madam Assistant Speaker.

## **Building the future**

### **Ministerial statement**

**MR BARR** (Kurrajong—Chief Minister, Treasurer, Minister for Economic Development and Minister for Tourism and Major Events) (5.26): As 2016 ends, and with the territory election now behind us, it is right that we turn our minds to what sort of city and community we want Canberra to be for the next year, the next four years, and in a generation. The time is right to change how the government leads and delivers the Canberra of the future, building on work that is already underway and work that is transforming Canberra into a modern, confident, vibrant, inclusive and,

importantly, sustainable city. It is essential that government sets the direction for city growth and renewal, which adds to our unique character and demonstrates to the world that we are welcoming, inclusive, and an interesting place to live and work. The time is right for us to also refocus our efforts on making available new and affordable home sites in suburban communities to meet the demands of a growing population. The ABS have again confirmed today that more than 5,000 new people join our city every year.

Celebrating our centenary has helped us focus on what is special about our city and confirmed our exciting future. As a government and as a community, we must build on that feeling, and create that future together. Cities do not succeed by accident or by leaving things to chance; they require good design, good governance, and great collaboration. Cities must internally collaborate to compete in the modern era, and together we can ensure that Canberra wins the global contest for investment and for talent. In that contest, we have key advantages. Today, we are counted as one of the world's most livable cities, a top 10 destination for inward investment and a magnet for high-achieving students. Our city's reputation for openness, inclusiveness, sustainability and climate action is known around the world. I want to add to that reputation a deep commitment to a sustainable model of urban development.

Helping us to shape our future is a type of governance that is unique in Australia. Other cities lack the metropolitan integration, cross-government coordination and proximity between government, business and community which Canberra alone enjoys. We have the clear assets and strengths of a capital city with a global reach. Canberra is truly a city like no other. Our task is to ensure that as Canberra grows and develops, we build on this Canberra advantage while retaining what makes our city special—a place that all Canberrans and the nation can be proud of, with a confident community and a confident economy, that is prepared for the opportunities and challenges ahead.

While all Australian cities are set to grow significantly, no other city has quite our opportunity to get the balance right between a dynamic city centre and flourishing suburbs, preserving the best of what we have now whilst embracing and preparing for necessary change. We must recognise one simple proposition: we shape change or it shapes us. Standing still is simply not an option for Canberra. We need more than a business-as-usual approach to achieve our potential and deliver the successful, equitable and sustainable city that Canberrans seek.

From the strength of our heritage, values and identity, we embrace the future and welcome all to “choose Canberra”, to come and help shape its further success. And while our aim is the urban renewal and economic diversification of Canberra, at the core of our vision is a city that reflects and houses an inclusive, welcoming society open to diverse talents and determined to help everyone reach their fullest potential and to share in the prosperity of our city. In the simplest of possible terms, Canberra is open to change, open to talent, open to business, open to diversity and open to innovation. It is a progressive city for all, shaped by all, with opportunities for all, no matter where they live in the city or where they come from. As an aside, having heard all of the inaugural speeches in this place this week, that statement is very clearly represented in the people who have been elected to this chamber.

Our vision and our focus should be on shaping that progressive city. This afternoon I want to take the opportunity to outline the next steps the government will take in turning the vision for Canberra that has been articulated in this statement of ambition into reality.

Humans shape the cities in which we live, but we are also shaped by them. Our living in our city affects us socially, practically, economically and psychologically, and defines our existence. We must, therefore, pursue this next stage in Canberra's development from a people-focused perspective, founded on principles of good design and place making.

This also means starting by questioning what sort of community we want, what sort of community we need to be and what sort of lifestyles Canberrans wish to lead. Building a great city demands collaborative effort. In Canberra, we are in the fortunate position of having land on which to build and the expertise to create genuinely exciting and productive buildings.

At the outset, though, it is obvious that the continuing transformation of our city at its heart and in new suburbs will be successful and sustainable only if it is achieved through genuine engagement with all Canberrans and where the process is completed with them rather than to them.

The step change I am outlining today will position the ACT public sector to work collaboratively with the community and draw in national and global expertise. It will ensure we harness the unique character that allows Canberra to be a meeting place not just for government and governance but also for the arts and cultural institutions that hold our national identity and our local stories; for education; for science; for research; for industry; for innovation; as the centre of a region of trade, for commerce; and as home to nearly a million people. We will honour the heritage of the bush capital and the spirit of Griffin's vision for the ideal city as we continue this next phase of development and growth.

Our challenge is not to let ourselves become a museum of the early 20th century's conception of city life but, as was the case when Canberra was conceived, to aspire to be a showcase of how the people of this century want to live and want to work.

The parliamentary triangle will always define Canberra as the national capital, just as the national mall defines Washington DC. At the same time, the heart of a city of 400,000 people must be renewed and it must be reinvigorated.

The path to the Canberra of the future is marked out by transformational urban renewal and innovation, underpinned by the light rail network and the city to the lake vision, all founded on design excellence. This cannot be an exercise in the bland and boring building of "boxes"; it has to be about creating buildings that make statements about this city and excite interest in those living and working in them or just walking past them. They should be destinations as well as useful and modern spaces. They should be able to stand the test of time and have people still talking about them in 50 years.



Prior to the election, I foreshadowed the government's intention to replace the Land Development Agency with two specialist dedicated entities: one to focus on leading and facilitating the critical transformation of Civic and the Northbourne Avenue corridor, and one dedicated to the equally important task of developing our vibrant new suburbs to meet continuing demand in our growing city. We are now commencing this task. The urban renewal and suburban development portfolios signal the government's clear intention to direct effort at ministerial and official level. Work is progressing to create these two new public sector entities with clearly articulated roles and responsibilities, each with their own identity, structure and leadership.

The urban transformation task in Canberra is different from those faced in other cities. We are not dealing with uncontrolled or unsustainable population growth. We are not seeking to repurpose industrial infrastructure and areas that have fallen into wanton disrepair. What we are doing is deliberately setting out to transform the heart of our city.

In gearing for that task, the government will adopt the very best of the approaches that others have taken elsewhere and add them to our local expertise and our local knowledge. The critical elements of this approach include a clear vision for city to the lake and the Northbourne corridor, defined by people-focused, design-led development which is properly assessed as economically sensible and sustainable and which starts from a strategic plan for the whole of the city; the creation of a defined precinct over which the new entity will have control so that it is able to work with the community and partners in developments on planning, designing and then delivering this vision; absolute clarity of purpose, role and authority, as well as accountability and responsibility for the results; and an expectation that the entity will operate commercially and deliver social policy and sustainability goals. I will repeat that: to operate commercially and deliver sustainability and social policy goals. They will also include equality and genuine engagement with the community; and a governing board with the powers and accountability arrangements needed to get on, comprising leading thinkers in design, the commercial realities of development, community building and social inclusion, governance of public sector entities and sustainable city building. These are the skills we require on the governing board.

This precinct process has proven successful in places like South Bank in Brisbane, Elizabeth Quay and east Perth; it is being applied with great success in Adelaide, in urban renewal projects at the heart of that city; and in Sydney, at Barangaroo; in Auckland, in our region; and in cities all over the world. The government, not this new entity, will determine when a precinct of this sort should be declared and the shape that it will take. The new entity will prioritise design to support the delivery of quality buildings, places and landscapes. This approach explicitly recognises the importance, the value, that good design adds to the experience of living in the city and the communities that we are creating. It recognises that there must be a mix of housing types and demography if these communities are to be sustainable in the long run, and that appropriate mixed-use areas are created that are safe and vibrant during the day and after hours.

In suburban development, we will also sharpen our focus and our dedication of resources in our efforts for the development of new suburbs. As the city continues to grow, we will need to continue to develop vibrant new suburbs in greenfield locations. In doing so, we need to recognise that the issues of sustainability, engagement and place making are equally relevant, even if they look a little different, in new suburbs. Making new land available in places people want to live, at prices they can afford, will remain both a challenge for and an absolute focus of the government in the future.

There is nothing unique in those challenges for the ACT, though. We will look inside and outside the territory for better ways to sustainably deliver welcoming new developments that offer housing choice at an affordable price to buy and to rent. Whether through englobos sales such as we have seen in Denman Prospect, joint ventures like Crace or Ginninderry, or complete estate development, there is a role for the government in developing land and in providing choices for people who want to build new houses in new areas.

The time is right for us now to create a new entity with absolute clarity of role, of purpose, with appropriate accountabilities and responsibility. This entity will act commercially but again deliver on social, environmental and economic imperatives. It will have its own leadership structure, including a board to direct and guide this critical function, which will be properly held to account for how well the entity performs.

Canberrans, quite rightly, will want to know what this process means for them and how they will be involved and affected. I have talked previously about the importance of having more comprehensive, more inclusive and more meaningful engagement with the community about major projects in our city. We need to bring the community into the conversation early and trust the community with the information about the trade-offs, the commercial realities and, importantly, what is up for discussion and what is not. Here, we are talking genuine engagement with a truly representative sample of the community about how the vision for the city and its new suburbs can come to life—a truly representative sample of the community. That is what we are seeking in this engagement process.

It is absolutely critical to public confidence and trust in the work of ACT public sector agencies that their operations are conducted properly and are open to scrutiny. As I said yesterday, governance frameworks do matter. They are useless if they remain documents in folders that are never opened or become an end in themselves, wrapped in layer upon layer of box ticking. It is through the application of a governance framework every day and in every transaction that the operations of an entity can be reviewed and tested, and the people responsible for its operations can be held properly to account by their minister, by this place, and by the broader community.

Ultimately, in designing a governance framework for a public sector entity, the aim is to set it up so that it can properly do the job assigned to it by the government of the day. This is why the government is creating two entities, focused on two particular tasks, with their own boards and their own leadership structures. We will need absolute clarity of purpose, powers and the functions for the new entities, as well as

sensible engagement with risk, transparency in decision-making, genuine stakeholder engagement, integrity and probity, stewardship of the public interest, efficiency, and a focus on specifying and monitoring performance. Even then, it is the behaviour of the entity, and the individuals that comprise it, that will make the biggest difference. They will be supported by sound governance frameworks and a positive organisational culture.

The government has now commissioned the best advice on the best way to guide and deliver the urban renewal transformation of Canberra, starting with Civic, and to continue to provide a reliable and affordable supply of new houses for housing development. I propose to bring forward the government's preferred structure, the government's preferred governance approach and the necessary legislative amendments in the New Year. We are getting on with the job now so that these new entities will be in place, staffed and operating from 1 July 2017.

In conclusion, we can all agree that Canberra is a great city. But the city that we love can be even better. It can have more of a vibrant urban heart, and it can provide more choices for the people, the families, that choose to live here and choose to stay here. The time is right for the government to provide focus, to provide resources and to provide expertise to lead this necessary transformation of our city. We are not starting from scratch, or with urban wastelands, as other cities have had to do. But the need for transformation and the need for renewal are no less pressing. Doing nothing is not an option. We will not let change shape us. Together Canberrans will shape the change and build the city of the future.

I present the following paper:

Building the Future—Ministerial statement, 15 December 2016.

I move:

That the Assembly take note of the paper.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

## **Retirement of Mr Roger Malot Statement by Assistant Speaker**

**MADAM ASSISTANT SPEAKER** (Ms Lee): Before I call the Chief Minister, I have a statement to make. Members, I would like to say a few words regarding the retirement of a long-serving member of the Assembly staff. This Ninth Assembly will be the first Assembly without Roger Malot. Roger retired on 21 September after 27 years of keeping the Assembly in the public eye.

From when he commenced working at the Assembly on 15 May 1989, Roger reliably and calmly, and with great good humour, ensured that the Assembly's proceedings in print, electronic and audio-visual form were available exactly when they should be.

Roger was responsible for the ACT Assembly being the first Australian legislature to

have all of its *Hansard* records available online and he introduced, and administered for many years, the Assembly's website.

As a colleague, Roger was unflappable, helpful and kind, but never above assisting in some gentle teasing—I say this obviously not having met Roger; I am reading out the Speaker's words. One Christmas he was responsible for a piece of devilry that resulted in Alvin and the Chipmunks singing ditties every time the Manager of Hansard and Communications started his computer. I would have liked to have seen that!

While we will miss Roger, it is pretty certain that after over 27 years of service to the Assembly he deserves a long, restful and happy retirement with Marianna and Tessie the cat. We thank Roger for his amazing service and wish him all the very best.

## Adjournment

Motion (by **Mr Gentleman**) proposed:

That the Assembly do now adjourn.

## Valedictory

**MR BARR** (Kurrajong—Chief Minister, Treasurer, Minister for Economic Development and Minister for Tourism and Major Events) (5.49): I rise briefly in the adjournment debate this evening on behalf of all of my Labor colleagues to extend my best wishes, and our best wishes for the festive season, to you, Madam Assistant Speaker—

**MADAM ASSISTANT SPEAKER:** Thank you.

**MR BARR:** and to all members of this place. I would also like to extend our best wishes to all staff of ministers and MLAs and a very warm thanks to all of the staff of the Assembly for their assistance through the daily business of this place, particularly now with the expansion to 25 members that we have here. It has been another busy and productive year for the Assembly, largely focused around the election in October, of course.

This is a festive occasion; so I will not delve too much into politics at this point, other than to say that it is very good to end the year on this side of the chamber with more colleagues than ever before and that it is encouraging to have so many new faces.

I am also personally delighted not be the youngest member of the government anymore. I am very proud of my Labor colleagues and I am truly honoured to lead such a diverse and energetic team. I am really looking forward to the next four years.

Because of the election and the build-up to it, many of the members, members' staff and Assembly staff have worked long and tirelessly for the ACT. So I say thank you. Without you this place would not work and we as members would not survive.

I would also thank the ACT Labor secretary Matt Byrne and his team at our party office for their support and counsel throughout the year. I hope that the team over in party office takes the opportunity to relax and enjoy the holidays.

I applaud all members and their staff for their efforts to continue to make Canberra the most politically engaged city in the world. You all richly deserve a summer break. You richly deserved the time to re-engage with your families and loved ones, who also deserve our thanks for putting up with what we have all been through this year.

I want to thank the staff at Elections ACT and ACT Electoral Commissioner Phillip Green for a very well-run and efficient election. The access to information online in real time on election night was a very big innovation and his team made it happen. Thank you very much.

To all of the candidates, campaign staff and supporters who ultimately were not successful at the election, thank you for your efforts. Canberra is a better place for your engagement and your input. 2016 has been a massive year for politics here in the ACT and for Canberra itself. This year will be noted as the year that our city joined the world stage in a positive and confident way, a modern city with international flights.

Urban renewal is underway. We are building a light rail network. Importantly, the other big achievement—possibly the biggest one this year—is that we now have the first majority female parliament in Australian political history. It has been a fascinating sitting year in this place. We have debated almost every possible issue with heated, fiery and passionate debates along the way, fortunately, though, always with a sense of humour and nobility at the end of the day to share a joke or a jibe about each other's football teams and their lack of success.

I believe these kinds of debates and this spirit is what ACT politics is all about and I thank all of our past and present colleagues from every political party, even the independents, for debating the policies and the issues.

What I am especially energised about for 2017 is the enthusiasm and ideas shown in this place. I think each and every one of us who has contributed in this sitting week has demonstrated they are listening to their community, they are bringing forward ideas to this place. I can say that our parliamentary team will be delivering a full and exciting agenda in 2017. We have demonstrated that we are ready to go. We will be getting on with the job Canberrans elected us to do.

On a more personal note, I want to thank my staff and all of the election volunteers without whom I would not be here. I especially thank my departed chief of staff, Jamie Driscoll, who is enjoying a round-the-world tour. I thank him for his long-term service.

I thank my partner, Anthony, for all his love and support and, through gritted teeth, commitment to four more years. I also thank Minister Rattenbury, Ms Le Couteur and the staff of the Greens party. I am pleased with the outcome of the parliamentary agreement. It demonstrates the strength of our government and our shared agenda.

Finally, as we go our separate ways for the summer with some respite from this place, I want to thank all those who keep this city functioning throughout the year, especially at Christmas time. I thank all of our hard-working public servants, our gardeners, teachers, nurses, doctors, cleaners, childcare workers and many others—I am channelling Mr Coe's speed reading—for all of the important work that you do for the families of Canberra and a special thank you to those of you who will be away from your families at Christmas serving the city we love. We look forward to working with you and for you in 2017.

Madam Assistant Speaker, to you, and everyone else, on behalf of the ACT Labor Party, have a safe and happy festive season.

### **Valedictory**

**MR COE** (Yerrabi—Leader of the Opposition) (5.55): It is a pleasure to take part in my first adjournment debate for the Ninth Assembly. As Mr Barr has reflected on the satisfaction of being on that side of the chamber, I think it is fair to say there is some dissatisfaction with being on this side of the chamber. However, it is a role we take seriously and we know that the people of Canberra need an effective opposition in order to hold the government to account. We also take our role as an alternative government very seriously. To that end we look forward to continuing to propose new ideas for our city.

Nobody gets into politics to be in opposition, but that is where we are, and we will do the best we possibly can from this side of the chamber as we work towards 2020. Whilst I am sure four years goes very quickly in government, it does not necessarily go too quickly in opposition. However, we will do what we can to expedite it.

I want to extend my thanks to my colleagues. We have been blessed with a wonderful team on this side of the chamber, and we are very much looking forward to the times that we will share together. I also want to thank colleagues from across the chamber and from the crossbench for their contributions to the Assembly.

I particularly want to extend the thanks of the opposition to the families and friends that support us. Whilst Mr Milligan said that behind every great man is a great woman, there are also a lot more, and there are many friends and family members that support us. This really is a team business. It sometimes can seem like an individual pursuit but the reality is that there are many people required to make us operate and to make this place operate collectively.

I want to extend the thanks of the opposition to all the opposition staff, many of whom continued on from the Eighth Assembly. Some are new, and to those who departed at the end of the Eighth Assembly, I want to extend my thanks to you. I also want to extend my thanks to the staff of the Assembly. They do a superb job in making us look good, or at least as good as we can look. Of course, I need always to extend a special thanks to the Hansard department, who do a great job with my adjournment speeches.

I too want to extend my thanks to the staff of Elections ACT and also the casual staff of Elections ACT who participated in the election. You did a wonderful job. I thank all the volunteers and citizens of Canberra that contributed. I also want to extend my thanks to the media for the role that they play. It is a very important role. There is an interesting relationship between political parties and politicians and the media, but I think there is a general acceptance that we both need each other; so there has to be some kind of co-existence.

I say to all the Canberrans who voted for the Liberals: we do not take your support for granted. There were 89,000 people who wanted us to be a government and we did not quite get there. But we will return the confidence that they gave us over the coming years.

On a personal note, I want to extend my love and thanks to my wife, Yasmin, and kids, Angus and Annabel. Over the previous term I gained a wife, two kids and a dog. I am not sure I am going to gain the same in this Ninth Assembly; I am sure we have considerable growth coming but perhaps not in numbers.

Again I would like to thank the Canberra community for giving us this wonderful privilege of serving in this place, and I wish everyone a merry Christmas.

### **Valedictory**

**MR RATTENBURY** (Kurrajong) (5.59): It does seem to be a little strange to be doing end-of-year speeches so soon after having our first sitting of this new term, and also having given end-of-Assembly speeches only 10 weeks ago. But with everyone else here, I imagine, I am certainly looking forward to the Christmas break this year. As I am sure most of us here today will agree, it certainly feels like it has been a long year, especially for politicians in the territory, with a federal election that we locals invariably helped out on; then, of course, we had our own election; and, of course, there was the American election, which we got saturation coverage of, and it has significant implications for us at so many levels.

There has been some commentary in recent months and a widespread belief that we have entered a period of post-truth politics, where debates are framed by partisan hyperbole that serves no-one, and facts are left behind. This has been identified as a key element in both Brexit and the electoral success of Donald Trump. Post-truth politics is the opposite of evidence-based policy. I end the year hopeful that this Assembly will resist such a slide into populism. I think that generally in this place we do a lot better. We have a lot of expertise that informs us, and I think the standard of debate generally is a whole lot higher. I welcome that, and I hope it lasts for a long time in this place. I think our community who, on the whole, are a very well informed and politically astute community, expect that from us, and we should try to live up to those expectations.

While all members of the Assembly, staff and OLA are looking forward to a well-earned rest over the Christmas break, and there will be a lot of festivities, I would like to take this moment to make a serious observation and ask that we spare a

thought for those people who face more dire circumstances. Particularly this week I reflect on the people of Aleppo in Syria. A long-running and bloody civil war seems to be finally coming to an end. It has been a civil war punctuated by attacks on hospitals and the widespread slaughter of non-combatants. It does appear that this war will end with a final series of atrocities. The complex geopolitics that have led to this point cannot be untangled here in the Assembly, but I invite members to take a moment to consider the role of the international community and its complicity through silence regarding the atrocities that are occurring.

Returning to the local scene, the Assembly has expanded significantly in size this year, and I would like to welcome all the new MLAs to this place. It has been fascinating to listen to the inaugural speeches this week. I was disappointed to miss a couple when I had to go away for 24 hours to attend a COAG meeting, but I will be reading them in *Hansard*, because I would hate to miss the complete collection. I am particularly pleased this week, of course, to welcome my colleague Caroline Le Couteur back to the Assembly. She did not get to give an inaugural speech. The tradition is that, when you have had a sabbatical, you do not get another go. But it is great to have Caroline back, with her energy and enthusiasm for both the causes of the Greens and the issues affecting the ACT.

I am pleased that the Greens are able to continue to represent progressive voters here in the Assembly with a strong presence both in the government and on the crossbench. I thank my colleagues for the collaboration over the year on various issues and processes. It is always great to be able to sit and work with people to sort something out. Usually, it means there is a much better outcome for the community. I welcome particularly the presence of my ministerial colleagues, as we have been able to nut things out through the course of the year and get good outcomes.

I would like to thank all of the staff who supported both Caroline and me in the Assembly over the past year. I am mindful of the team that was almost unchanged through the last four-year term. We have had a few join us recently and some who will be taking the end of the Assembly as a point to move on. Many of us face that time; our staff stick it out until the election and then go on to try new things.

I would particularly like to thank Helen Oakey, Ali Jaques, Laura Stuart, Logan McLennan, Sophie Trevitt, Matthew Georgeson, Jarrah Robbins, Leigh Moran, Veronica Wensing, Rob Thorman and, last but far from least, my indefatigable chief of staff, Indra Esguerra.

I would also like to thank the team over at our campaign office: the staff, Maiy Azize, Leila Simpson and Joel Dignam, who have worked incredibly hard this year, ably supported by a huge collection of team leaders and volunteers who worked incredibly hard throughout the campaign—both campaigns, I should say—and who hopefully feel satisfied with their year's efforts. I know they all learned a lot and had a lot of fun. Some of them burnt themselves out but they did an amazing job.

I would like to thank our colleagues in the government, particularly Chief Minister Barr. He has just observed that he was pleased with the parliamentary agreement. I share the same sentiment. I think that it sets a strong foundation for two parties to be



able to work together in government and get good outcomes for the people of the ACT, and also to work together on some key issues that our respective parties believe in.

I would also like to thank the irrepressible staff of the Legislative Assembly for their diligent commitment and efficient running of the Assembly over the past 12 months. I note Madam Assistant Speaker's comments on Roger, and I wish him well in his retirement. Without all of you, of course, the parliament would grind to a halt. We will get a taste of that next year. I have just had a letter from the Speaker telling us there is going to be an exercise in business continuity next year in which the mock exercise will be "the Assembly is unusable". I look forward to seeing how we all deal with that.

I say to everyone in and around this place: have a great break. I look forward to working with you next year and to another year of progressive politics in the territory in 2017.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

**The Assembly adjourned at 6.06 pm until Tuesday, 14 February 2017, at 10 am.**