



Debates

WEEKLY HANSARD

Legislative Assembly for the ACT

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9 MAY 2017

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Tuesday, 9 May 2017

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Tuesday, 9 May 2017

MADAM SPEAKER (Ms Burch) took the chair at 10 am, made a formal recognition that the Assembly was meeting on the lands of the traditional custodians, and asked members to stand in silence and pray or reflect on their responsibilities to the people of the Australian Capital Territory.

Mr Jayson Hinder
Motion of condolence

MR BARR (Kurrajong—Chief Minister, Treasurer, Minister for Economic Development and Minister for Tourism and Major Events) (10.01): I move:

That this Assembly express its deep regret at the death of Mr Jayson Hinder, our friend, former colleague as Member for Ginninderra, and a lifelong Canberran who was committed to social justice and serving his community, and tenders its profound sympathy to his family, friends and colleagues in their bereavement.

Madam Speaker, today we mourn the loss of a friend and a colleague. Jayson Hinder was a lifelong Canberran, a community builder, a Labor Party stalwart and the former member for Ginninderra. Jayson's passing has been met with shock and with grief by our community. The outpouring of public sympathy we have seen for his family and for his friends is testament to the mark that he left on our city and the way that he impacted on our lives. His story is one of resilience, of drive and of passion for this community.

Jayson was born in Canberra in September 1965. His parents, Richard and Colleen, were the second family to move into the Woden Valley. Jayson grew up in Canberra and he proudly called this city his home. He was, by any standards, a true Canberran.

To his colleagues it was clear that he loved this city. Jayson saw the values of inclusivity and equality that we cherish in Canberra as Labor values. The Labor cause was one that he championed throughout his life. Starting his political career as a Country Labor campaign organiser in Yass, he had since served the Labor Party as part of numerous federal, state and territory campaigns in local sub-branches and on policy committees.

He was immensely proud to have been elected as an MLA and he saw territory politics as the best way to achieve outcomes for his community. During his time in this place Jayson championed many causes. He wanted to see an interconnected, vibrant and prosperous city. He fought for his constituents and he wanted to ensure that our laws made the lives of Canberrans easier and more satisfying.

Jayson was motivated by a fundamental commitment to fairness. Speaking to a group of young scouts from Amaroo before last year's election, Jayson expressed his view of the purpose of government and the role of the politician. He told the group:

The job of government is to decide how to distribute resources, but it's also to make sure that everything is fair as much as possible. It doesn't matter whether it's police or about sport or any of those things, you try and make it even, so that everybody has the same opportunities.

In his first speech to this place he expressed his view that politics is about compromise and working together for the greater good. It was his view that we all here—Labor, Liberal and Greens—find ourselves in this place because we share a commitment to making Canberra as good as it can be. That is the kind of man Jayson was: open to diversity of opinion and willing to work across the political divide to get a good outcome.

The Labor Party was, of course, not the only conduit Jayson used to contribute to his community. His time as chairman of the Bendigo Community Bank saw the donation of hundreds of thousands of dollars to charity and to sporting groups. He served as a board member for the Police and Citizens Youth Club, the Physical Activity Foundation, Canberra stadium and the Labor Club Group. His record of contribution outside of politics was remarkable and it shows that politics is not the only way that we can effect change for those around us.

Jayson's accomplishments were based on his significant real-life experience. The path from mechanic to lawyer to politician is perhaps not such a well-trodden one these days. Jayson walked this path with his wife, Lisa, whilst raising his three children, Madeleine, Nigel and Oliver. He was a family man who loved to share his children's achievements with those around him.

There were two great recreational passions that Jayson pursued. First and foremost, and perhaps most visible to all of us during the 2016 election, was his love of cars and motorbikes. Jayson spent much of his time with wheels on the road and wind in his hair.

Jayson's other great passion was his love of sport. He championed the beloved ACT Veterans Rugby Union team that he played for and he coached numerous local sporting teams. He was, as we are all aware, an avid fan of the Brumbies and the Raiders and was never—and I mean never—short of an opinion about their fluctuating fortunes through the footy season.

Many of us sitting in this place worked alongside Jayson. He was our friend, our colleague, but he was our mate, Madam Speaker. I know he would want to be remembered as a good bloke who worked hard and fought hard for what he cared about.

The death of anybody before their time is a tragedy that forces us to reflect on our own mortality. Jayson was a larger than life figure, the kind of person you would have thought was indestructible. Jayson's life and his untimely death are reminders that we should be kind to one another in all areas of life and in everything that we do. We can never predict when unfortunate events will cut short our time together.

Madam Speaker, whilst we in this place will undoubtedly miss Jayson, the people who suffer most at this difficult time are his family and his close friends. Our thoughts and sympathies are with them during this period of bereavement. We are honoured that many of them are able to be with us today as we pay tribute to Jayson.

MR COE (Yerrabi—Leader of the Opposition) (10.09): Madam Speaker, I too rise to pay tribute to Jayson Hinder. I pass on my condolences and those of my colleagues to Lisa, Madeleine, Nigel and Oliver, as well as to other family and friends. All members knew Jayson pretty well through his community work, the campaign trail and, of course, his time in the ACT Legislative Assembly. He will be missed by those on this side of the chamber too.

Be it the Bendigo Bank, sporting clubs, the Gungahlin Community Council, the Labor Party, the Motor Trades Association or numerous other organisations, active community participation was central to who Jayson was. His tall stature, often supplemented with a motorcycle jacket and helmet in hand—that image would have the potential to be quite imposing. However, that was not the case. Jayson was a gentle and considerate person. He was firm and deliberate, but always respectful and measured.

His journey of working hard as a mechanic, raising kids, studying at night, running businesses, setting up his own legal practice, chairing a community bank and being elected to parliament is surely an Australian story worth celebrating.

Jayson was very well known in Canberra's tight-knit legal fraternity. His Kippax-based law firm was well established and had a broad reach into the Belconnen community and beyond.

Madam Speaker, as you would well know, Jayson was great for a conversation. He could chat sincerely with anyone, from any walk of life. Perhaps because of the diverse range of people he had met doing a wide range of jobs over the years, he had experienced so much and was therefore able to communicate easily with people from all walks of life.

On many occasions I stood alongside Jayson during the 2012 and 2016 election campaigns. In particular, we spent many hours together at Kaleen Plaza and Gungahlin Marketplace. We would often chat about the external side of politics, as well as having a few cryptic chats about the internal side of politics, which we all know too well. Jayson was also very much a hands-on campaigner, and this is something that I very much admired. I would regularly see Jayson driving his truck around with what was, quite literally, a larger than life Jayson on the side. We know that he was very enterprising when it came to bus advertising as well. Jayson was a hands-on person; he was a doer.

I simply could not deliver these remarks without commenting on his love of rugby. His passion for rugby has been remarked on by the Chief Minister. I imagine there are many stories that could be shared by team mates. My favourite rugby story is actually

the one he shared with much of the electorate in Ginninderra and Yerrabi when, in 2012, he produced a shopping list which got distributed to many households in the electorate. In amongst the pre-printed shopping list for the electorate of Ginninderra was “more rugby”. I think that pretty much summed up his jovial approach to life.

In fact, it was in this chamber, when he delivered his maiden speech, that he came in with his nose in a slightly different location than it had been a couple of weeks earlier. That broken nose he attributed to Bill Stefaniak, from an earlier rugby game. I note that Bill is in the chamber with us today. He also reflected on what cosmic message was being sent, just days before delivering his maiden speech, that a Liberal member would be breaking his nose.

I chatted with Jayson on many occasions at the Motorcycle Riders Association toy run and blanket run. He spoke of motorbikes and cars with a passion. I know this Saturday’s MRA blanket run will not be the same without Jayson riding up the front.

Madam Speaker, in his first speech in this place Jayson spoke of the love he had for his wife and children, and his commitment to social justice and hard work. He spoke of the enormous respect he had for his parents, particularly his mother. It is clear to me that the values that he admired in his mother served as a guide for the values that would shape his life too.

The Canberra Liberals thank the Hinder family for sharing Jayson with the Canberra community through public office. The Assembly is a better place because of his service.

MADAM SPEAKER: Before I call Mr Rattenbury, I would just like to acknowledge the presence in the gallery of two former members, Mr Bill Stefaniak and Mr Simon Corbell. We welcome you back to the Assembly.

MR RATTENBURY (Kurrajong) (10.15): Madam Speaker, on behalf of the ACT Greens, I join my Assembly colleagues in expressing my sincere condolences on the death of Jayson Hinder just over a week ago.

Although he was a member of the Assembly for only a short period last year, he was well known to many of us not only as a political candidate, not only as the lawyer with his ad on the back of a bus, but also as someone who was involved in some important community projects.

In his time in the Assembly Jayson did make an impression on me as someone who thought carefully and thoroughly about the issues that came before him. He was a very warm and welcoming person to work with and always had time for a friendly, and often animated, conversation.

As I have already touched on, I would like to particularly acknowledge Jayson’s work for the Canberra community, through his leadership of the Bendigo Bank and support for many other organisations. He was a person who truly worked for our community. As a person with fairly diverse experiences, he was able to contribute to a wide range

of organisations in our community, being on numerous boards for community and sporting organisations over the decades.

In his first speech in this place, Jayson spoke of having been born in Canberra and this very much being his home. His sense of pride in this city was evident to us all, as was his enthusiasm for doing everything he could to make this city a better place.

In the nearly nine years I have been in the Assembly, this is the first time that a former MLA has died. It is a sobering day for us all. Although there are three political parties in here, we are colleagues and we work together to make the ACT the best it can be. On days like today it is a reminder to us all that we must do the best we can with the time we have while we are here.

In a year like this, where we are recovering from two elections last year, I think all MLAs and former MLAs are doing their best to have a well-deserved holiday. I think this is one of those times where we are all reflecting on the fact that we will return from those holidays safely. I was shocked to hear of the terrible news of Jayson's death, and I am very sorry to hear that it was the result of a motorcycle accident so far from home.

Jayson, of course, was a known motorcycle and dirt-biking enthusiast, as has been spoken about today, and also a passionate advocate in that space. Last year he opened and participated in the annual Kowen Forest ride, bragging at the time that he was a significantly better rider than Minister Mick Gentleman. I am not sure, but he certainly made the case that he was. He wanted to see Canberra become the most motorcycle-friendly city in the country and lobbied for more dirt-biking facilities and more motorcycle parking in the city. It was also about this time last year that Jayson was encouraging us all to get involved in the ACT Motorcycle Riders Association's annual charity, the blanket run.

Not only was Jayson a known motorcycle enthusiast, as has been touched on today; he was also an absolute enthusiast for rugby. We have been reminded of the humorous story he told us in his first speech, where he regaled us at some length about how Mr Stefaniak had broken his nose, and the observations he made about that. It was quite a funny story at the time. I think one thing I regret is that I never managed to ask him how somebody on his own team managed to break his nose. I am sure there was a good explanation, but it is lost on me.

Madam Speaker, we will miss Jayson, and his death is a loss to the Canberra community. My sympathies and those of Ms Le Couteur go to Jayson's wife and children, and his mother, as well as other family and friends. Our thoughts are also with our Labor colleagues, who I know will miss Jayson and his contribution to the ACT community.

MS FITZHARRIS (Yerrabi—Minister for Health, Minister for Transport and City Services and Minister for Higher Education, Training and Research) (10.19): I rise today to join my colleagues right across the chamber and throughout our community in expressing our sadness at Jayson's passing and to pay tribute to his contribution to the Assembly and, as others have mentioned, to the wider community. As a fellow

member of the Gungahlin sub-branch of ACT Labor, I would also like to acknowledge his many years of leadership of one of the largest Labor branches in our city, and most of all to pass on our condolences to Jayson's family here with us today.

As others have said, and as his inaugural speech and his contributions to the Assembly attested to, Jayson lived a full life. His story was, of course, his own personal story, but, as he said, it is also a story that reflects why he was a Labor member and why he fought for Labor values in everything he did. He noted that his family had faced real challenges when he was young but overcame them through personal integrity, hard work and family strength; as they will also be doing right now, sadly.

His early training as a mechanic saw Jayson seek more education and go on to earn a law degree, and, after working for some law firms, large and small, to build his own business. This reflected modern Labor values that hard work and building a business mean you can and should give back to your community. His involvement in and commitment to community organisations and to so many causes was second to none. Bendigo Bank alone has supported dozens of organisations to help others and to grow such important social and sporting activities. He was, and should have been, immensely proud of his contribution.

As others have also noted, his love of sport was real and he did not just do it from the sidelines; he was still on the field. As he said himself, his nose was a testament to how many rugby matches he had played in. And, as we all know, he was great company and a great conversationalist.

In this place he did have a unique history. While we all bring different things to the Assembly, Jayson's story really was unique, and he contributed so much in his short time here. He said it like it was and had a simple way of cutting through. He spoke of and to a group of people that he recognised not everyone can reach. He bridged divides and he could not be placed in a box. He proudly knew this and it meant he could make a really original contribution and a real difference.

Last year's election was a tight race, and, for our part, all three Labor members representing Yerrabi know we would not be here if not for the hard work that all five candidates, including Jayson, put in. We all know the Hare-Clark system is challenging, but we all know our hard work contributes to the efforts of our party, our community and the values we stand for. Sadly, we also know that we cannot all get elected. It was a close result and, sadly, Jayson missed out. We know that that hurt, but also that he knew our collective result in Yerrabi was due to the collective hard work and reach of our Labor team and what we stood for.

Jayson was, and I think will always be, the longest serving president of Gungahlin sub-branch, a branch established when Gungahlin was a small community on the northern outskirts of Canberra. Could I also recognise members of the Gungahlin sub-branch here today, especially long-serving members who I know gathered last week to pay tribute to Jayson.

His leadership of this small sub-branch that has now become one of the largest and, can I say, loveliest and most active sub-branches in the ACT was outstanding. Its general welcoming and inclusive outlook and discussion of all manner of local, national and international issues of importance was a reflection of Jayson's lifelong commitment to equality and fairness, the importance of politics, the law and debate. There was always a beer after, and sometimes a beer before.

He reached all members of our community and all members of our party. He crossed political divides. We will miss him. Again we pay deepest condolences to his family.

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) (10.23): As we have heard today, everybody shares a memory of a moment, a time or a story that they had of Jayson in this place or within our community.

It is always surreal when you see someone so recently and then, a couple of weeks later, you find that they have passed away. It does not seem real. I ran into Jayson at one of the orthodontists at Jamison, and we had a bit of a chuckle about the cost of dental repair for both him and my children and how we were funding the very fine vehicles of that particular orthodontist. He noted the very fine vehicles—of course he did, being Jayson. He talked quite enthusiastically about this trip that was coming up. It had been quite some time since I had seen Jayson, so it was great to see him there and have a chat, just as if we had seen each other the week before. It was really great to have that chuckle.

What I reflect on from that conversation was that Jayson knew where the money was and he knew how to get the money to support a good, worthy cause, and particularly for sport in the community. We have talked about his relationship with the rugby community here in the ACT, but he also had a very deep passion for ending domestic and family violence in our community, which led him to seek out funding and sponsorship for a campaign here in the ACT, the Fearless Comedy Gala. He was able to raise \$40,000 from all of the connections that he had within the community, including the Chief Minister, WIN TV, Bendigo Community Bank, Capital Chemist and various other donors.

The thing about Jayson was that he had connections with all of these different organisations across the community, and he was able to use those connections to make a really big difference on the issues that he was passionate about, particularly making sure that women and children were safe in their homes and in their communities.

Mr Coe has talked about his relationship with the Kippax community, with his firm there. I know that the other leaseholders within that space were truly shocked to hear of his passing. I know that they have posted messages on social media. I am not sure whether the family has received those, but he will be missed by the Kippax community as well.

He was a big guy but he had a very big heart, and he will be deeply missed in this place and within our community. Our thoughts and our deepest condolences go to his family right now.

MS CHEYNE (Ginninderra) (10.26): I also rise today to pay tribute to Jayson Hinder and to offer my deep condolences, sympathy and support to his family and friends. Jayson was so many things to so many people: a member for Ginninderra; a proud resident of Canberra, including, as I understand it, Florey, Latham and Giralang in Belconnen; a community leader; a small businessman; a lover of motorbikes and rugby; a defender and promoter of this city and our community; a family man; and, as has oft been repeated already, larger than life.

Jayson was never without a grin, a cheeky joke or a nudge and a wink. He was generous with his time and with his spirit. I think it is safe to say that he liked testing the rules, and, as the opposition leader said, he was quite enterprising. He usually had a scheme or two underway that he was happy to tell you about over a pint of beer—something that spoke to his vision and to his ability to come up with solutions even in the toughest times. Nothing was too hard or too much effort for anybody; there was no problem that could not be solved.

Jayson was a deeply proud Labor man through and through. He was so proud to have followed in Mary Porter's footsteps, filling the vacancy as the member for Ginninderra when she retired early last year. Knowing his commitment to Labor and the Labor movement and his deeply held Labor values, I expect it was one of the greatest honours for him in a life that was already full of remarkable achievements.

He was a supportive friend to me and greatly encouraged me to follow in his footsteps to become a member for Ginninderra while he contested the seat of Yerrabi. Even on election day last year, while many of us were stressed and thinking only of ourselves, he took a moment to send a text message expressing his confidence in the result, urging me to relax and enjoy the day and wishing me luck in the count.

Jayson's love for and his commitment to the city of Canberra was legendary. This is the Jayson that I know and will remember. However, it is in seeking comfort over the past week, in reading the tributes online and bearing in mind the sheer number of people who have approached me and told me that they knew Jayson, that they counted him as a good friend and as a mate, that I have come to truly appreciate the extraordinary reach and extraordinary impact he had on so many people and on so many community organisations in Canberra.

Jayson said in his inaugural speech that he had a dogged refusal to accept the unacceptable. That Jayson's life has ended prematurely is something I know that I and many others will have a difficult time accepting for a long time to come. There is a passage from the French writer Edouard Leve which gives me a lot of comfort, and it especially has over the past week. It is about how people we have lost continue to be with us and will continue to be with us for future generations, so long as we have stories to tell and we tell the stories about them, share the stories through generation

after generation, living on through our words. Madam Speaker, as we have heard, and as we will continue to hear, there is so much to say and there are so many stories to tell about Jayson Hinder.

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) (10.30): I too rise today to commemorate the life of Jayson Hinder. Firstly, I would like to read into *Hansard* a message from the Motorcycle Riders Association, from Jenny Carlin:

The Committee members of the Motorcycle Riders Association of the ACT are greatly saddened by the news of Jayson's untimely passing. Jayson offered assistance and support to the MRA ACT, demonstrated his commitment to riding and other riders in the ACT, was keen to help and was always approachable. He keenly accepted the invitation to participate in the MRA ACT Annual Motorcyclists Blanket Run last year and spoke passionately about riding and the benefit of such events to the community, in particular those who may be doing it tough. Jayson was one of the lead riders last year and we'll all be remembering his great contribution as we ride again this Saturday on the 2017 event.

Madam Speaker, Jayson and I shared a common path in automotive pursuits. He was an apprentice mechanic while I was working at Commonwealth Motors as a mechanic. He later went on, as you have heard, to start his own workshop. While running his small business and raising three kids, Jayson took night courses at university to work towards his law degree. He went on to practise law in firms around the ACT and founded his own law firm, Jayson Hinder and Associates, which well served the people of Belconnen and Gungahlin.

We also shared a common interest in the Bendigo Community Bank, which actively fundraises for and supports local community causes. We were both, alongside Annette Ellis, involved in the capital raising for the Calwell and Wanniasa branches and, on board with the Tuggeranong community, \$900,000 was raised to start the branches. I later passed my shares over to Jayson.

In addition to being a member of multiple community and sporting organisations, he was a Labor member for decades. We shared not only a love of Labor values such as social justice and equity but a love of cars and motorcycles. The Renault Alpine and the Ducati Monster were favourites, and Jayson would use any opportunity he could to get out and about with the boys' toys. He was a regular at both the MRA toy ride and the blanket ride to help our most vulnerable people across Canberra. As I mentioned, the blanket ride is on this Saturday, supporting the Salvation Army winter appeal, and we will miss him riding up at the front.

Jayson had an enduring quality and was easily liked. He would often bring some comedy into difficult circumstances and used that wry smile that I am sure we will all remember fondly. It was usually brought on just before a comment like, "Don't worry, mate; those Libs have got nothing." My condolences go out to Lisa, the three children and his mother. Jayson will be sorely missed in the Canberra community.

MR STEEL (Murrumbidgee) (10.34): I too rise to give my condolences and support to Jayson Hinder's family. We have lost in Jayson a leader and contributor to our Canberra community. A former Hughes local turned champion of the north, where he lived for most of his life, Jayson served our community in his capacity as an officer of the court, as Chair of the Bendigo Bank, through his involvement in a variety of community groups, including the rugby community, and also as a member of this place, the Legislative Assembly.

I will remember Jayson mostly for his utmost kindness at the time of my own brother's death, also in a road accident in the desert of a faraway place. The kindness that Jayson showed during that time was something that my family and I appreciated greatly, and we have been reflecting on that this week.

I know that when someone passes away overseas it can be particularly difficult, but the kindness of strangers often makes such a difference. I was touched to hear from ACT Veterans Rugby Union that a local resident of Ludlow, California, upon hearing the tragic story of Jayson's accident in the desert on the local news, and worrying that he was alone without family nearby to say goodbye, travelled to the scene and placed some flowers where Jayson had passed away.

I will fondly remember Jayson for his sense of humour and camaraderie, particularly as a fellow Labor candidate at the election last year, where I would often bump into him quite late at night on the campaign trail.

Jayson's family can be proud of his achievements in this place. He will also be remembered here for his commitment to social justice, which he brought to his role as an MLA last term. As members of his party, we will continue to mourn deeply the loss of one of our own and continue to progress work on social justice issues. My thoughts will continue to be with Jayson's family during this most difficult time.

MR RAMSAY (Ginninderra—Attorney-General, Minister for Regulatory Services, Minister for the Arts and Community Events and Minister for Veterans and Seniors) (10.36): Madam Speaker, alongside my Assembly colleagues today, I rise to pay tribute to Jayson Hinder. Jayson's contribution to the Assembly and to ACT Labor has been, and will be, spoken of by others. As central as it was to who Jayson is for each of us, it is not the particular area of Jayson's contribution to the Canberra community that I intend to concentrate on, though I do wish to note that his early death has had a particularly significant impact on those who worked with him in this place and throughout the party: his colleagues, his staff and his co-workers. To each and every one of them I offer my deepest concern and my support.

Jayson Hinder was strongly and deeply committed to making this community a better place. It was in this regard that I first met him, as he volunteered his time for a community project in west Belconnen. It was a project known as the Mower Shed, where people who do not have access to gardening equipment and who could not afford to purchase it could borrow some and could potentially access other forms of support as well.

Jayson volunteered his time on the organising committee. He was very generous in his time and in providing the legal skills that were necessary to draw that project together. That particular project continues to grow and develop, supporting vulnerable households in west Belconnen. There are people's homes which are now more liveable, there are relationships between neighbours that are more cordial and there are connections between landlords and tenants that are more positive as a result of the work that Jayson contributed.

I can imagine him with his wry smile reminding us that we should never underestimate the importance of getting matters of law addressed well and in a way that is practical and understandable. As an extension of that volunteer work, Jayson then offered pro bono legal support for a number of people who were dealing with difficult family matters: separations, divorce, custody and wills. When I spoke this week to one of the people that he had supported, that person simply mentioned to me, "He helped me free of charge. He was a great man."

Continuing to draw on the perspective of others beyond this place so that their voices can be heard in this motion as well, I bring the response from the ACT Law Society:

Jayson completed his Bachelor of Laws at the ANU in 2001 and was admitted to practise in 2002, becoming a member of the Law Society in that same year. He worked primarily in property and wills and estates, first for local firm Macphillamy's and then going on into practice in his own account in 2005 with Jayson Hinder and Associates.

He served on the society's Property Law Committee for eight years. He also volunteered at the Legal Advice Bureau, a Law Society service which gives free legal advice to members of the public. Jayson was a valued member of the community and the legal profession and our thoughts are with him and his family and friends.

As we know, Madam Speaker, Jayson's contributions to this city and this community extended well beyond involvements in matters of law. He spoke with me regularly and fondly of his role with Bendigo Bank, especially the ways that it gave young people opportunities to grow in their skills and in their participation in community life. He also regularly and fondly spoke with me of his work with Menslink. So, again, drawing on the words of others, I pass on this tribute from the CEO of Menslink:

Jayson was a keen supporter of Menslink for many years, both in a professional capacity representing their major supporters, the ACT Veterans' Rugby Club and Bendigo Bank, and personally asking for donations at the Multicultural Festival or at footy games. Jayson was always one of the first volunteers to arrive and one of the last to leave, always going the extra mile to help raise money or to promote the cause. He will be sadly missed by everyone in the Menslink community and all others that he served so well.

An early and unexpected death by its very nature encourages each of us to consider the ways that we live our own lives, the contributions that we are each making. It is right, it is fitting and it is appropriate that we take time to do that as part of this condolence motion today. But primarily today I echo the words of others. I offer my

deep concern and sadness to those who are closest to Jayson Hinder—his family and his close friends. My hope is that the words of us all today can be of some comfort to them.

MR PETTERSSON (Yerrabi) (10.41): It is with great sadness that I rise today to speak to this condolence motion. As all those who live here know, Canberra is indeed a small place. It seems like everyone knows everyone. That is why, when tragedy strikes, it affects us all. I, like the rest of Canberra, was shocked to learn of Jayson's accident last Monday. Jayson had the great honour and privilege to be a member of this chamber and to be a member of the ACT Labor caucus.

It is a small club, those who have sat in this chamber. The members of this chamber have universally experienced the stress and expectations of representing their community. It is not easy work. Across partisan lines, you come to respect the burden each member carries, which is why it is so saddening to see the passing of a former member, one who understands the trials and tribulations of this place, someone who understands the burden. Jayson's passing is all too early. My heart breaks and my condolences go to his wife, Lisa, and their three children in this time of tragedy.

MS ORR (Yerrabi) (10.42): I rise today to pay my respects to my comrade Jayson Hinder. I first met Jayson a few years ago when I moved to Franklin and joined the Gungahlin sub-branch of the ACT Labor Party. Jayson was the president of the sub-branch. Before the first meeting I attended started, he said hello to me and introduced himself. Then with a slight cheekiness in his tone he let me know that all new members to Gungahlin sub-branch got to stand and introduce themselves towards the end of the meeting. "So," he said, "be ready."

At that point in time I was not as seasoned at walking into a room full of strangers and talking about myself as I am now. So I spent that first meeting sitting stone still with a million thoughts racing around my head, trying to figure out what I was going to say. When I got up to talk, I think everyone could tell I felt nervous at being put on the spot, but Jayson called out a few questions from the chair and suddenly it felt like everyone was just having a good old chat.

Over the years, as I got to know Jayson, I came to realise that he said many things with a slight cheekiness in his tone. It was part of his humour, a humour that brought many a laugh over beers after sub-branch meetings. It is something I am sure all of us at Gungahlin sub-branch will miss.

Throughout the 2016 election campaign we would often rock up to the Kaleen Plaza at the same time to do a stall. In Hare-Clark, you are in competition with everybody on the ballot paper, even those in your own party. Yet Jayson would always say hi and have a good old chat. If he went to grab a coffee he would always grab one for me too. It was those small actions of kindness that gave you an idea of what Jayson was like.

But it was learning about his background that, for me, revealed the person that Jayson truly was. When I first heard he had lost his father at a young age and was raised by his mother under very difficult circumstances; that he had become a mechanic after finishing school but, while running a business and raising a young family, went to uni

to become a lawyer and spent countless hours working for his community as a member of the Bendigo Bank board and the Gungahlin Community Council, I thought to myself: here is a man who, despite some pretty tough blows, has worked hard to achieve his goals and give back to his community.

I think that is something we can all respect and that is the Jayson that I, and I am sure many others, will always remember.

Question resolved in the affirmative, members standing in their places.

MADAM SPEAKER: I understand that it is the wish of the Assembly, as a mark of respect to Mr Hinder, to suspend. That being the case, the chair will be resumed at the ringing of the bells.

At 10.46 am the sitting was suspended until the ringing of the bells.

The bells having been rung, Madam Speaker resumed the chair at 11.04 am.

Petitions

The following petition and e-petition were lodged for presentation:

Arts funding—petition 7-17

By Ms Cheyne, from 510 residents:

To the Speaker and Members of the Legislative Assembly for the Australian Capital Territory

The following residents of the ACT draw to the attention of the Assembly that Arts Funding needs to be directed to provide the best possible return on investment for ACT artists, organisations, and the community. Recent announcements in Arts Project Funding highlight the need for funding and policy to be expanded and administered in consultation with arts practitioners so that it addresses the needs of the ACT Arts sector.

Your petitioners therefore request the Assembly to call on the Government to:

1. Honour its election commitment to increase annual Project Funding by \$500K so that each year recurrent Project Funding is budgeted at a minimum of \$1.25 million, commencing in the 2017-18 budget year.
2. Ensure that this increase in Project Funding be funded through an increase in the Arts Fund, and not taken from other parts of the Arts Fund.
3. Set up an Arts Ministerial Advisory Board by 1 September 2017, reporting directly to the minister. This board will be established to provide principled and transparent advice around arts funding and policy, and made up of arts practitioners nominated by the Arts community.

4. Ensure that the minister works with the Arts community to create the best possible funding model for the Arts Fund that will best service ACT artists, organisations, and the community, for implementation in 2018 and going forward.
5. Increase the overall Arts Fund by a minimum of \$1.25 million beginning in the 20017-18 budget.

Arts funding—petition 4-17

By Ms Cheyne, from 532 residents:

TO: The Speaker and Members of the Legislative Assembly for the Australian Capital Territory

The following residents of the ACT draw to the attention of the Assembly that Arts Funding needs to be directed to provide the best possible return on investment for ACT artists, organisations, and the community.

Recent announcements in Arts Project Funding highlight the need for funding and policy to be expanded and administered in consultation with arts practitioners so that it addresses the needs of the ACT Arts sector.

Your petitioners therefore request the Assembly to call on the Government to:

1. Honour its election commitment to increase annual Project Funding by \$500K so that each year recurrent Project Funding is budgeted at a minimum of \$1.25 million, commencing in the 2017-18 budget year.
2. Ensure that this increase in Project Funding be funded through an increase in the Arts Fund, and not taken from other parts of the Arts Fund.
3. Set up an Arts Ministerial Advisory Board by 1 September 2017, reporting directly to the minister. This board will be established to provide principled and transparent advice around arts funding and policy, and made up of arts practitioners nominated by the Arts community.
4. Ensure that the minister works with the Arts community to create the best possible funding model for the Arts Fund that will best service ACT artists, organisations, and the community, for implementation in 2018 and going forward.
5. Increase the overall Arts Fund by a minimum of \$1.25 million beginning in the 2017-18 budget.

The Clerk having announced that the terms of the petitions would be recorded in Hansard and referred to the appropriate ministers for response pursuant to standing order 100, the petitions were received.

Pursuant to standing order 99A, the petitions, having more than 500 signatories, were referred to the Standing Committee on Economic Development and Tourism.

Petition—ministerial response

The following response to a petition has been lodged:

Traffic control measures for Ginninderra Drive—petition 2-17

By **Ms Fitzharris**, Minister for Transport and City Services, dated 27 March 2017, in response to a petition lodged by Mrs Kikkert on 14 February 2017 concerning traffic control lights at the intersection of Tillyard Drive and Ginninderra Drive.

The response read as follows:

Dear Mr Duncan

I refer to your letter of 14 February 2016 regarding petition No 2-17 lodged by Mrs Elizabeth Kikkert MLA regarding traffic control lights being placed at the intersection of Tillyard Drive and Ginninderra Drive.

The ACT Government knows how important it is to ensure we have a safe and effective roads system, and that is why we are continuing to invest in building better roads for Canberra. This investment is part of the ACT Government's plan to build an integrated transport network, focusing on roads, public transport and active travel—so we can better connect people to transport hubs, town centres and other communities.

Transport Canberra and City Services have commissioned a feasibility study and preliminary sketch plan for the intersection of Tillyard Drive and Ginninderra Drive. The study will investigate remediation options for improving traffic management, including the provision of signals at the intersection of Tillyard Drive and Ginninderra Drive. The study also investigates the impact and possible ancillary remediation works on the adjacent intersection of Tillyard Drive and Lhotsky Street. The outcomes of the feasibility study will be used to inform further work.

Thank you for raising this matter with me. I trust this information is of assistance.

Arts funding—petitions 7-17 and 4-17

MS CHEYNE (Ginninderra) (11.05), by leave: Madam Speaker, I am pleased to sponsor this petition being tabled today. Before I speak more on it I also seek leave to table a document that is out of order that contains more signatures.

Leave granted.

MS CHEYNE: I table the following paper:

Petition which does not conform with the standing orders—Arts funding—Ms Cheyne (147 signatures).

It further shows the broad community support both within and outside the ACT for the principles of this petition. The arts play a critical role in our social and cultural

development. The arts can reflect and critique our lived experiences and promote change in our communities. They can improve health and education outcomes, promote imagination and innovation, and strengthen our economy.

In bringing this petition to the Assembly today, I wish to note the work of Minister Ramsay, who, as minister for the arts, is cognisant of the importance of the arts in our community. Minister Ramsay has actively engaged with the arts community, listened to Canberra artists and acted on their input and feedback.

I commend the arts community for drawing attention to their cause and making their voices heard in ways that have been respectful, peaceful and creative. The importance of this issue to the arts community and, of course, to the broader Canberra community is reflected in the very high number of signatories to this petition. I support the principles of this petition and commend it to the Assembly.

Papers

Health data issues

The Clerk presented the following papers, which had been circulated to members on 12 April 2017 pursuant to standing order 213A, together with the transmittal letter from the Minister for Health to the Clerk, dated 11 April 2017:

Health data issues—Copy of—

Schedule of returned documents.

Letter from the Director-General, ACT Health to the Auditor-General, dated 8 September 2016 (Folio 1)—

Process and Controls Review—

Draft Status of the ACT Health Quarterly Performance Report, dated 22 August 2016 (Folio 4).

Generation of metrics for the Annual Report, dated 26 August 2016 (Folio 2).

Status of the ACT Health Quarterly Performance Report, dated 26 September 2016 (Folio 5).

Source System to Data Warehouse Validation: Scoping phase Report, dated 31 August 2016 (Folio 3).

Consultant Engagement: PricewaterhouseCoopers—Draft Reports on Data Assurance and Data Integrity Services—Ministerial brief from the Director-General, ACT Health to the Minister for Health, dated 31 August 2016—

Process and Controls Review—

Draft Status of the ACT Health Quarterly Performance Report, dated 22 August 2016 (Folio 7).

Generation of metrics for the Annual Report, dated 26 August 2016 (Folio 8).

Data Assurance review of the *ACT Public Health Services Quarterly Performance Report*—Letter from PricewaterhouseCoopers to the Minister for Health, dated 26 August 2016 (Folio 10).

Source System to Data Warehouse Validation: Scoping phase Report, dated 31 August 2016 (Folio 9).

Justice and Community Safety—Standing Committee Scrutiny report 5

MRS JONES (Murrumbidgee) (11.07): I present the following report:

Justice and Community Safety—Standing Committee (Legislative Scrutiny Role)—Scrutiny Report 5, dated 27 April 2017, together with the relevant minutes of proceedings.

I seek leave to make a brief statement.

Leave granted.

MRS JONES: Scrutiny report 5 contains the committee's comments on nine bills, 12 pieces of subordinate legislation and two government responses. The report was circulated to members when the Assembly was not sitting. I commend the report to the Assembly.

Environment and Transport and City Services—Standing Committee Statement by chair

MS ORR (Yerrabi) (11.08): Pursuant to standing order 246A, I wish to make a statement on behalf of the Standing Committee on Environment and Transport and City Services. At a private meeting on 15 March 2017, the committee resolved to conduct an inquiry into road maintenance in the ACT under the following terms of reference:

The Committee, noting the importance the condition of roads has in terms of road user safety, the distribution of essential goods and services and the facilitation of efficient commuter activities and emergency services, resolved to inquire into and report on the planning, management and delivery of road maintenance in the ACT, including:

- 1) The role of all levels of government in facilitating, and the regulations governing, road maintenance in the ACT;
- 2) The procedures for identification, prioritisation and scheduling of road maintenance in the ACT;
- 3) The need for, and frequency of, road maintenance in the ACT, including:
 - a) The impact of the level and type of road usage,

- b) The impact of road accidents, fuel and chemical spills, and extreme weather events,
 - c) The impact of design and structural deficiencies,
 - d) The impact of vegetation, animal activity, topography and surrounding land use,
 - e) The role and adequacy of traffic signals, signage and road markings;
- 4) The level of responsiveness to road maintenance issues in the ACT and the extent of maintenance backlogs;
 - 5) Technical and structural considerations including the role, and type of materials used in road maintenance in the ACT, with a focus on cost effectiveness, sustainability and their impact on road users;
 - 6) The adequacy of traffic management during road maintenance in the ACT;
 - 7) Administrative, budgetary, planning and procurement practices, including reporting structures, funding sources, investment and expenditure, oversight and accountability mechanisms, work health and safety compliance and the implementation of related territory and national specifications and standards;
 - 8) The level and adequacy of engagement and communication with key stakeholders, with particular reference to road users; and
 - 9) Any other relevant matter.

The committee will report by the last sitting day in November 2017.

Justice and Community Safety—Standing Committee Reporting date

MRS JONES (Murrumbidgee) (11.10): I seek leave to move a motion relating to the reporting date for the Standing Committee on Justice and Community Safety’s inquiry into annual and financial reports for 2015-16.

Leave granted.

MRS JONES: I move:

That the resolution of the Assembly of 16 February 2017, which referred specified annual and financial reports for the calendar years 2015 and 2016 and the financial year 2015-2016 to standing committees be amended at paragraph (4) after “standing committees are to report to the Assembly on financial year reports by the last sitting day in May 2017, on calendar year reports for 2015 by the last sitting day in May 2017” by inserting “except the Standing Committee on Justice and Community Safety which is to report to the Assembly by the last sitting day in June 2017.

Madam Speaker, the Assembly resolution referring to the 2015-16 annual reports for inquiry by the Assembly standing committees sets a reporting date of “by the last sitting day in May 2017”. Due to the unavailability of some members of the committee to attend deliberative meetings at short notice, the committee has not been in a position to report by the date requested. Accordingly, the Standing Committee on Justice and Community Safety seeks to amend its reporting date to “by the last sitting day in June 2017”.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

Planning and Urban Renewal—Standing Committee Reporting date

MS LE COUTEUR (Murrumbidgee) (11.12): I seek leave to move a motion relating to the reporting date for the Standing Committee on Planning and Urban Renewal’s inquiry into annual and financial reports for 2015-16.

Leave granted.

MS LE COUTEUR: I move:

That the resolution of the Assembly of 16 February 2017, which referred specified annual and financial reports for the calendar years 2015 and 2016 and the financial year 2015-2016 to standing committees be amended at paragraph (4) after “standing committees are to report to the Assembly on financial year reports by the last sitting day in May 2017, on calendar year reports for 2015 by the last sitting day in May 2017” by inserting “except the Standing Committee on Planning and Urban Renewal”.

The planning committee is well advanced in its consideration of the annual reports, but we have not quite reached the finishing line, so I seek the Assembly’s indulgence in giving us a bit more time to finish our report.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

Leave of absence

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

That leave of absence be granted to Mr Doszpot for 9 and 10 May 2017 for medical reasons.

Public housing renewal program 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) (11.14): Madam Speaker, on 29 March this year the Assembly called on the government to provide an update on the progress of the public housing renewal program during the May 2017 sittings. I am happy to respond to that motion now.

I have spoken before in this place about the vital importance of the government's public housing renewal program. This is a program that, at its core, reflects the government's commitment to being Australia's most inclusive city. We have a shared responsibility to ensure that everyone, regardless of age, culture or socioeconomic background, can access housing that meets their needs and can take part in community life.

This is why this government is delivering on a commitment to replace and provide new homes for 1,288 households across this city, a commitment that is reflected in the current parliamentary agreement. This government, through Housing ACT and the Public Housing Renewal Taskforce, is working to deliver replacement housing that is spread more evenly across Canberra.

For many years the government has worked towards ensuring that public housing exists in every suburb across Canberra. This has been the case for a long time, even before our renewal program began. In some places it is highly visible, like the Owen flats along Northbourne and the ABC flats in Reid, but in most cases public housing is indistinguishable from any other property.

Here in Canberra we do not have anything like the concentrations of public housing seen in cities like Melbourne and Sydney, because as a community we made a deliberate decision not to have big concentrations of disadvantage. It is in everyone's interests to avoid concentrations of disadvantage. I know most Canberrans value communities where people from different social, cultural and economic situations live side by side, being educated in the same schools, shopping at the same shops and mixing together. The reality is that more than seven in 10 Canberrans, 72.5 per cent, are in favour of the continued inclusion of public housing in their suburb, with a further 11.4 per cent unsure.

So far, 388 homes have been delivered to Housing ACT through this program. These have been located in suburbs such as Chisholm, Monash, Coombs, Moncrieff, Denman Prospect and Amaroo, and include a mix of detached houses, townhouses and small apartment complexes. The Public Housing Renewal Taskforce is continuing to construct a further 141 dwellings in suburbs including Holt, Denman Prospect, Nicholls and Throsby.

To support the construction of replacement homes, the taskforce is also purchasing suitable properties from the private market. More than 350 homes have been purchased this way. It should be noted that of those dwellings procured so far, nearly 180 replacement homes are in suburbs close to Northbourne Avenue, including Dickson, Lyneham, Turner, O'Connor and Braddon.

Proposals for public housing developments on six community facility zoned land sites in Chapman, Holder, Mawson, Monash and Wright were announced in March this

year. The Public Housing Renewal Taskforce is taking the time to consider and analyse feedback from the local community to ensure that this information positively influences the design outcomes of these developments.

In the first four months of this year, representatives from the Public Housing Renewal Taskforce have attended two community council meetings and hosted four consultation sessions. There have been numerous other informal meetings with local residents and interest groups where residents have met with members of the taskforce to communicate their concerns in depth.

In recent weeks I have attended and have hosted some of these meetings with local community groups, and they have informed much of the current decision-making. In the recent round of community conversations, the taskforce have met with almost 300 residents from across a number of suburbs. Between the taskforce and my office, the government has responded to over 100 written inquiries.

To date, the government has secured nearly 70 per cent of the 1,288 replacement dwellings that we are providing. Through our wide-ranging conversations across the community we are continuing to reflect on and talk about the locations for the remaining dwellings, in both new and established areas. We have also had many discussions concerning the design of the homes themselves. This supports the government's goal of distributing public housing more evenly throughout our city and echoes the community's own values of inclusiveness.

The construction and purchasing programs being undertaken through the renewal program are also supporting the building industry and our local economy. Based on ABS data used by the HIA and other industry groups, the program should result in the creation of an additional 1,435 jobs in direct construction, 1,115 in the wider construction industry and 3,340 across the ACT economy over that period.

The government will continue to work with the community to achieve the best outcomes for all involved and to deliver on our objectives of providing public housing all across Canberra. The new public housing will be available for all eligible tenants. It is primarily intended for the tenants moving from the current multi-unit properties but will not be limited to these tenants, as some may choose to stay in their current community or to move to an area which better matches their needs and preferences. The government is working with a range of community organisations to ensure that tenants are supported before, during and after their move. We are also providing financial assistance to cover relocation costs.

Almost half of the 1,288 properties being replaced have been vacated, and I have been happy to hear from some of those tenants who are happy with their new homes. Public housing tenants moving into these new homes have no less rights or responsibilities than private renters. They have the same goals and aspirations for themselves and their families for the chance of a good life, just like the rest of us do.

We are an inclusive and welcoming community that has never supported policies that segregate and discriminate. It is something we are proud of. I am happy to update the

Assembly on the public housing renewal program and our progress in improving outcomes for the individuals and families who reside in public housing.

I present the following paper:

Public housing renewal progress—Ministerial statement, 9 May 2017.

I move:

That the Assembly take note of the paper.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

Canberra Hospital—electrical switchboard incident Ministerial statement

MS FITZHARRIS (Yerrabi—Minister for Health, Minister for Transport and City Services and Minister for Higher Education, Training and Research) (11.20): Today I am providing a detailed statement on the incident that occurred at the Canberra Hospital in April 2017. In the interests of openness and transparency, I would like to provide a full and factual account. Above all I would like to reassure the Assembly and the community that the safety and wellbeing of patients and their families and all the staff at Canberra Hospital is our number one priority.

I would also like to update the Assembly on the work that was already underway to upgrade electrical infrastructure, remedial work to address the immediate aftermath of the switchboard fire and subsequent power outage, as well as the steps the ACT government is taking to make sure we have the infrastructure we need to keep providing the high level of care patients and the Canberra community expect from their hospital.

The incident was serious and warranted the full attention of ACT Health. The incident was responded to with speed, professionalism and care. I would again like to reiterate my sincere thanks to all staff of ACT Health, the ACT Emergency Services Agency, ACT Policing, Transport Canberra and City Services and other staff and contractors from across the ACT government for their hard work, dedication and professionalism throughout the incident and since. I would also like to thank staff from Calvary hospital Bruce and National Capital Private Hospital for their assistance on the night and since. To all the patients and their families affected, I would also like to extend my thanks for their patience and understanding during the incident and since.

As members are aware, at approximately 5.30 pm on Wednesday, 5 April 2017 there was a small fire in the main electrical switchboard room in building 2 of the Canberra Hospital. The fire occurred when a fault arose during a planned electrical shut down associated with lift upgrade works. While the exact cause of the fire is the subject of an ongoing investigation, it appears that an electrical switch had a mechanical failure during operation, causing a section of the switchboard to ignite and catch fire. Two electrical contractors were in the main electrical switchboard room at the time of the incident. They did not sustain any injuries.

The initial impact of this event was an interruption of electrical supply to lifts in building 1, the tower block; the reception foyer, building 2; clinical and administrative areas, building 3; and the residences, building 5. The lifts were initially impacted because of the electrical switchboard involved. The affected lifts were all empty at the time of the incident.

ACT Fire & Rescue were contacted immediately and quickly arrived on site to deal with the incident. A forward command centre was established at 6.30 pm and, following assessment by ACT Fire & Rescue and hospital authorities, a decision was made to isolate mains power to the main electrical switchboard which enabled the fire to be safely and completely extinguished.

As a result of this, power to the electrical switchboards in the main electrical switchboard room was shut off, which impacted temporarily on a number of clinical and non-clinical buildings across the campus including: building 1, the tower block; building 2, the reception foyer; building 3, clinical and administrative areas; building 4, the ANU Medical School; building 5, the residences; building 6, the medihotel and administrative areas; building 7, drug and alcohol inpatient area; building 8, pain management unit; building 9, doctors' residences; and buildings 23 and 24, administrative areas. Emergency lighting was triggered in all affected areas.

The temporary loss of power from the building 2 electrical main switchboard lasted from 7 pm that night to 2 am the following morning. Emergency lighting remained on throughout this period in most parts of the hospital, with the exception of on two floors of the tower block. Battery backup for all critical machines activated at the time of the power loss. During this time, the Canberra Hospital emergency department continued to treat major trauma, obstetric emergencies and severe paediatric cases, with all other local cases directed to Calvary hospital.

The hospital emergency operations centre was activated at 7.30 pm. The decision to activate the HEOC was based on the scale of the incident and the available information on the emergency. The HEOC focused on collecting information to inform decision-making. At 9 pm, Dr Andrew Pengilley as the health controller established an incident management team and activated the ACT emergency coordination centre, the ECC, at ESA headquarters in Fairbairn.

The health controller liaised with the HEOC to provide government resources, forward planning and regular updates to the security and emergency management senior officials group, or SEMSOG. The Director-General of ACT Health attended SEMSOG along with other senior ACT government directorate officials throughout the incident. The ECC was staffed by liaison officers from ACT government directorates to provide support as required.

To support activities at the Canberra Hospital during the incident approximately 112 staff were recalled to the Canberra Hospital, and two nurses from each ward were asked to remain for an extra two hours. Patients were advised of the status throughout the incident by staff on duty at TCH in consultation with the HEOC.

As minister, I was kept regularly updated by phone and email of the incident and whole-of-government actions taken throughout the evening. As it turned out, I attended the nearby Woden Valley Community Council that evening from 7.30 to approximately 10 pm. I was also briefed early the following morning and attended a media conference at ESA headquarters at Fairbairn the following noon to discuss the event with the media, alongside the incident controller, and heads of ESA, Fire & Rescue and ACT Ambulance Service.

Canberra Hospital deployed a paediatric nurse to Calvary emergency department to assist with the management of children at Calvary. In addition, a paediatrician attended Calvary emergency department and reviewed all children who were potentially in need of transfer to Canberra Hospital. They deemed all children who presented safe to remain at Calvary with the support of the paediatric nurse. All of these children were discharged from Calvary the following day on Thursday, 6 April 2017.

The ACT Health team worked closely with the Calvary hospital and National Capital Private Hospital's on-call team members who attended the Canberra Hospital assisting throughout the evening in liaising between the two facilities to ease patient transfer and admission.

Under the direction of the hospital emergency operations centre, staff implemented well-established emergency management protocols. This ensured that the safety of patients and staff was maintained during the period of temporary power loss, specifically, a three phase plan, initiated by the operations centre, was used to manage the possible requirement of evacuation from affected buildings. This included: phase 1, identification and discharge of patients medically appropriate for discharge from affected areas; phase 2, transfer of patients from buildings 1 and 3 to unaffected areas of the Canberra Hospital campus; and phase 3, forward planning for the low likelihood of a wider evacuation of all remaining patients. Phase 2 was only partially implemented with the transfer of some patients to National Capital Private Hospital, and phase 3 was not required.

During the temporary power loss, approximately 60 patients were deemed to be clinically appropriate for discharge and were subsequently discharged. Six patients were transferred to National Capital Private Hospital, four patients were transferred to the Centenary Hospital for Women and Children, and 50 residents from building 5 were relocated to hotels as a precautionary measure, with support from Transport Canberra and the Community Services Directorate.

The operation was well managed with the emphasis being on the safety of all patients, visitors and staff. Patients being discharged and visitors who were onsite in inpatient areas when the incident started were accompanied by ACT Health staff to safe egress points. Food services, pharmacy and pathology services remained uninterrupted throughout the incident. Affected buildings were without normal lighting at intermittent periods throughout the night. When this occurred, emergency lighting came on immediately and, in addition, backup lighting sources, including lighting supplied by generator power and torches, were supplied to all affected areas.

As part of the response, ACT Health of course also needed to consider the implications for patients and staff the following day. At 9 pm on 5 April 2017 ACT Health hospital commander, Chris Bone, made the decision to postpone all elective surgeries scheduled for Thursday, 6 April 2017, with the exception of one category 1 urology list and one category 1 neurosurgery list. All outpatient appointments were also postponed.

This decision was made as reinstatement of full service power supplies was not guaranteed and patients were all contacted as soon as possible on the morning of Thursday, 6 April 2017. As of 7 April 2017 all patients have had their appointments rescheduled and elective procedures rebooked. As I have mentioned, the Canberra Hospital emergency department remained operational for major trauma, obstetric emergencies and significant paediatric cases, with all other local cases directed to Calvary.

In the cardiac catheterisation laboratory, business continuity processes were put in place to manage emergency procedures for STEMI, or heart attack, patients at the National Capital Private Hospital. Media messaging strongly encouraged the public in need of medical care to present to Calvary hospital emergency department or the walk-in centres in Tuggeranong and Belconnen.

By the end of the day on Thursday, 6 April 2017 the Canberra Hospital emergency department had resumed normal operations and all inpatients who had been transferred to other areas within the hospital were returned to their original wards. Elective surgery and outpatient clinics were reinstated on Friday, 7 April 2017 and all postponed elective surgeries and outpatient clinic appointments had been rebooked by 12 April 2017.

Business continuity processes for the delivery of cardiac catheterisation at National Capital Private Hospital continued until 19 April 2017. Immediately following the incident, the cardiac catheter lab at Canberra Hospital had a reduced service on 7 April 2017. However, a subsequent incident with the cardiac catheter lab backup power arrangements on 9 April 2017 impacted services up until 14 April 2017. Thereafter 50 per cent of the cardiac catheter lab capacity was in place until 19 April, and full service normal operations resumed from 20 April 2017.

Madam Speaker, I will now outline the work undertaken by infrastructure and facilities staff. Immediately preceding the initial fault within the switch room, health infrastructure services facilities management staff, working in parallel with the emergency operations centre patient response, activated contingency plans to reinstate electrical services to the impacted buildings.

At the time the fire was extinguished, which was approximately 7:30 pm, ACT Fire & Rescue advised that health infrastructure services staff could access the switchboard room safely to assess the damage. The preliminary damage assessment by facilities management staff indicated that the fire damage was limited to a very small segment—less than a third—of a single switchboard primarily servicing lift operations.

For the information of members and to provide context, the main electrical switchboard room is in the basement of Canberra Hospital building 2 adjacent to the tower block, and it houses nine switchboards. Only one switchboard was directly impacted by this incident. It was found that generator power supplies had also been adversely impacted due to localised fire damage within the affected switchboard section.

Following the initial assessment of the affected area, works immediately commenced to install a backup switchboard. The switchboard was already available on site as a contingency in the event of failure of power supply services arising from a damaged switchboard section, as was experienced on the night of the incident.

On the completion of a full safety inspection, all unaffected electrical switchboard sections within the main electrical switchboard room were incrementally re-energised to restore electrical supply to the affected buildings. Power was restored at around 2 am to most areas however work continued throughout the night to restore power to lifts in buildings 1, 3 and 5.

By 10:30 am the following morning, Thursday, 6 April 2017, the onsite contingency backup switchboard had been energised, ensuring adequate lifts were operational to facilitate the transportation of patients, staff and goods throughout the hospital campus.

Further remediation work has been undertaken since the incident to reinstate full pre-incident functionality to the building 2 electrical main switchboard facility. This remediation work has involved further electrical isolations in specific areas of the hospital, primarily in buildings 1 and 3. To ensure patient safety is not compromised and to minimise disruption, each shutdown has been conducted overnight and extensively planned by ACT Health staff. Each piece of work has run according to plan, with minimal disruption to patients and clinical areas.

This remediation work has been implemented by the recently appointed head contractor team of Shaw Building Group and Shepherd Electrical as a variation to their contracted scope to deliver new electrical main switchboard facilities for building 2 and building 12 at Canberra Hospital. The head contractor team to replace the electrical main switchboard facilities in buildings 2 and 12 was appointed on 7 April 2017. The tender closed in September 2016 and was subject to contract negotiations. Prior to this, preliminary works commenced as part of the longer term upgrade of the buildings, which is part of the long-term electrical distribution upgrade strategy for Canberra Hospital.

The replacement of electrical main switchboard facilities in buildings 2 and 12 is a major part of the ACT government's 2016-17 budget initiative upgrading and maintaining ACT Health assets, a program of work which comprises a variety of building infrastructure projects budgeted at over \$90 million over a three-year time frame.

In addition to the electrical main switchboard replacement works, the upgrading and maintaining ACT Health assets agenda includes a variety of infrastructure and building services projects including facade upgrades, hydraulic upgrades, heating ventilation and air-conditioning upgrades and lift upgrades.

Initial planning for the electrical main switchboard replacement project commenced in the first quarter of 2016, with the appointment of a design consultant to develop a comprehensive replacement solution for the existing buildings 2 and 12 electrical main switchboard facilities and to provide business continuity advice for the management of the two main electrical switchboard facilities.

Subject to vital design and technical input as well as planning to ensure minimal service disruption, the building 2 electrical main switchboard replacement project is due for completion by June 2018, and the building 12 switchboard replacement project is due to be completed in February 2019. ACT Health's replacement project team are working closely with the appointed contractor's electrical technical experts to ensure active risk mitigation is in place to provide effective and safe continuity of service during all replacement works.

In parallel with the process to appoint a head contractor to undertake the replacement main electrical switchboard works, health infrastructure's facilities management team have continuously monitored the performance of buildings 2 and 12 main electrical switchboard facilities. As a direct consequence of this monitoring, contingency plans, improved documentation and backup switchboards and equipment were available to the facilities team to quickly address the issues that arose as a result of the building 2 electrical main switchboard fire.

Madam Speaker, as health minister, the safety and quality of care is my top priority. I acknowledge that it may be unsettling to be an inpatient within a hospital during an incident such as this, and all necessary care was taken by staff to minimise disruption to patients and to provide continuity of care in accordance with clinical care needs and in accordance with the expectations of the ACT community.

I want to assure members of this Assembly and the community that the integrity of our infrastructure is a priority for this government. I wish to correct recent reporting about ACT Health's work to upgrade infrastructure at Canberra Hospital. An article in the *Canberra Times* on 25 April 2017 stated incorrectly that funds to upgrade the main electrical switchboard were allocated in the 2014-15 ACT budget and that this work had been "delayed".

In the 2014-15 budget, \$5.64 million was allocated to the Canberra Hospital essential works, infrastructure and engineering project. This project was established to replace and prepare essential infrastructure to support health infrastructure program works. The scope of this project included upgrades to fire safety systems, lift services, mechanical services and electrical distribution boards. The electrical component of this project related specifically to compliance and safety upgrades to electrical distribution boards only. These are localised switchboards that divide the power

supply into subsidiary circuits and are not associated with the main electrical switch board. All upgrade works as part of this project were completed by May 2015 in close consultation with the relevant authorities, including WorkSafe ACT and the building regulator.

Prior to the upgrading and maintaining ACT Health assets appropriation in this year's budget, the ACT government has invested over \$900 million in health infrastructure facilities for the benefit of the community. Whilst much of this investment is in new facilities, ACT Health has maintained a continuous focus on building upgrades across its property portfolio to ensure compliance and optimised life cycle through investment in capital maintenance and upgrades.

The injection of funding through the upgrading and maintaining ACT Health assets program of work ensures that critical pieces of infrastructure are replaced in a timely manner whilst adhering to best practice strategic asset management and alignment to the clinical services plan.

ACT Health has confidence that the emergency management response to the incident was robust and effective. Lessons learnt from this incident have also been captured to improve our emergency management procedures and to improve development of our evolving risk mitigation strategies. Our focus now and always is to ensure that our health facilities are available to the public to deliver the standard of care expected by the community.

I would like to take this opportunity to again thank all ACT Health staff involved in the emergency response. They worked tirelessly to ensure all patients potentially affected by the incident were well cared for and that electrical supply was reinstated without delay. I would also like to thank ACT Fire & Rescue, ACT Ambulance Service, ACT State Emergency Services and ACT government liaison officers who provided support to ACT Health during the incident. We are fortunate in the ACT to have such a dedicated, caring and enthusiastic workforce who can handle these incidents quickly, professionally and with a minimum of disruption. I would also like to thank the community for their patience and understanding around emergency and follow-up repairs.

Today I have provided a clear outline on the details of this incident. I have outlined the steps that have been taken to upgrade infrastructure at Canberra Hospital. This includes the building 2 electrical main switchboard replacement project, which is underway and will conclude in 2018. I would like to reiterate to members that remediation work undertaken at Canberra Hospital since this incident has restored full pre-incident functionality to the building 2 electrical main switchboard facility.

The 2014-15 budget allocation for Canberra Hospital essential works, infrastructure and engineering project to replace or prepare essential infrastructure to support health infrastructure program electrical works related specifically to compliance and safety upgrades to electrical distribution boards only and not to the main switchboard. Patient safety is our absolute priority, and Canberrans can continue to have confidence in the health care and services provided by Canberra Hospital to so many in our community.

Madam Speaker, the community can also be confident in the response that was provided by all ACT government directorates involved in this particular issue. I will continue to keep the Assembly updated on progress regarding our infrastructure upgrades at Canberra Hospital, as well as other ongoing and planned investments in our health infrastructure portfolio.

I present a copy of the statement:

The Canberra Hospital—Switchboard incident and replacement of electrical switchboards—Ministerial statement, 9 May 2017.

I move:

That the Assembly take note of the paper.

MRS DUNNE (Ginninderra) (11.41): I move the following amendment to Ms Fitzharris's motion:

Add: "and that the Assembly calls on the Minister for Health, by the end of the current sitting period, to:

"(1) provide the Assembly with a full chronology of events, starting with the time when problems with the main switchboard were identified initially and concluding with the signing of the contract on 7 April 2017 with Shaw Building Services to replace the main electrical switchboard; and

(2) table the AECOM risk assessment report on the performance of infrastructure at The Canberra Hospital, referred to in the hearings of the Select Committee on Estimates 2016-2017 on 29 June 2016."

I thank Minister Fitzharris for the update but it still leaves many questions unanswered. It was a serious fire, and I am concerned about the extent to which—for instance, in briefings that I have received and also in the tone of this paper today—the seriousness of the fire has been downplayed. "Don't worry, Mrs Dunne, it was less than a third of one of the nine switchboards involved." It has been characterised to me as "a small electrical fire". Although it was a small fire in the amount of physical damage that it created in a very small space, the implications and ramifications of that fire were serious.

There has been a long litany of discussions in this Assembly, through the annual reports hearings and through the estimates hearings, about the problems that have been identified in relation to infrastructure at the hospital, and particularly electrical infrastructure. It is time that the government became, in the words of the minister, "fully open and accountable", and gave a full accounting of the concerns that have been highlighted as far back as September 2015, when there was a code yellow in the same area of the switchboards in building 2, and about what the government have learned about the problems in relation to the switchboards from the very first time they knew they had a problem with those switchboards, through until the signing of a

contract, significantly or ironically—I do not know which, Madam Speaker—two days after this switchboard fire.

This motion calls for that chronology to be provided by the end of this sitting period, and also calls on the government to table the AECOM risk assessment report on the performance of infrastructure at the Canberra Hospital. It is a document that has been referred to regularly and was used in the Select Committee on Estimates hearing on 29 June 2016 to point to the problems that we had with the switchboard and to point to the work that needed to be done.

There is a long process that has been gone through, some of which has been outlined by the minister here, so filling out that time frame should not be a large piece of work for the Health bureaucrats to do. They probably have it to hand. But the people of the ACT, and this Assembly, which has approved considerable expenditure for infrastructure work, need to have a full accounting of what has been done, and whether there have been any undue delays. I am open to persuasion that it does require a long time to do some of these works, but with some of these works the delays do not pass the pub test. It certainly does not pass the pub test that two days after the fire we suddenly got around to signing a contract.

This amendment to the motion that the Assembly take note of the paper calls for a full accounting, a full chronology and the tabling of the vital report on risk assessment and infrastructure at the Canberra Hospital, for the information of the Assembly and, through the Assembly, to the people of the ACT. I commend the amendment to the Assembly.

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) (11.45): I thank Mrs Dunne for her amendment. The government needs some time to contemplate the resources necessary to fulfil the request in the amendment within the time line requested, so I request that the debate be adjourned.

Debate (on motion by **Mr Wall**) adjourned to a later hour.

Blueprint for youth justice 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) (11.47): I am pleased to have this opportunity to update the Assembly on the blueprint for youth justice in the ACT and to acknowledge the success that has been achieved for young people in our community. The blueprint is a 10-year strategy that provides a framework for significant youth justice reforms. It responds to the 2011 Human Rights Commission report into the ACT youth justice system, and was developed by a task force consisting of broad representation from the government and community sectors.

The blueprint for youth justice is focused on improving outcomes for young people at risk of and in contact with the youth justice system. It recognises that, by reducing risk factors and strengthening protective factors, the ACT community will be better equipped to keep young people safe, strong and connected. In the long term the blueprint seeks to achieve a community where fewer children and young people are at risk of or engaged in offending, and the ACT is safer for everyone.

As highlighted in reports tabled in the Assembly by my predecessors, over recent years we have seen a significant reduction in the number of young people engaged with the youth justice system. Between the commencement of the blueprint for youth justice and 2014-15 we saw a 34 per cent reduction in the number of young people under youth justice supervision, a 33 per cent reduction in the number of young people in detention, a 40 per cent reduction in the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people in detention, and a 60 per cent reduction in the number of nights young people spent in detention in the ACT.

The 2017 report on government services shows sustained progress, with a continued reduction in the number of nights young people spent in custody, and an increase in the rate of successfully completed community-based orders.

The ACT is recognised as a national leader in the provision of youth justice services and received a gold award in the 2016 Australian Crime and Violence Prevention Awards for its innovative approach to achieving a community where fewer children and young people are engaged in, or at risk of, offending. This award is a testament to the work of the specialists in child and adolescent psychology, trauma, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander engagement, youth justice, education and health who were involved in the development and implementation of the blueprint.

I would also like to acknowledge Mr Alan Tongue, the 2017 ACT Australian of the Year. This recognition was received in part for the aspire program that Mr Tongue developed to assist and rehabilitate young people in Bimberi Youth Justice Centre by equipping them with life skills to make positive choices.

These successes have been achieved in what is one of the most challenging yet rewarding areas of government responsibility. The rehabilitation of young people being supervised in the community, or while they are detained at Bimberi, is difficult but important work.

The ACT youth justice blueprint was launched in August 2012 and is nearing the half-way mark. The government made a commitment to report to the Assembly every two years on progress, but my predecessors have in fact reported on progress every year since the blueprint commenced. At the time of the last report in April 2016, of the 45 actions first agreed under the blueprint, 41 were complete, one was substantially complete and three had work underway. I am pleased to advise the Assembly that all 45 have now been completed.

As we near the halfway mark it is important to take stock, celebrate our achievements and focus on the next five years. Therefore, in the next few months I will establish a

new task force of key youth justice stakeholders to take stock of how far we have come, and to establish the directions we need to take in the second five years of the strategy.

The Bimberi Youth Justice Centre is a critical part of the youth justice system in the ACT. Young people are detained at Bimberi, as a measure of last resort, only when they have been sentenced or remanded by the ACT judicial system. As members would be aware, there has been recent interest from the Assembly and the media in Bimberi and the quality of service provision at the centre. As Minister for Disability, Children and Youth, I take very seriously the duty of care entrusted in the directorate for the most vulnerable young people in our community. Today I wish to outline for the Assembly the quality assurance mechanisms that are in place at Bimberi, the way staff are supported in ensuring high quality standards and the training and support they receive in undertaking their important roles. I will also outline how these quality assurance mechanisms have been embedded since the blueprint for youth justice reforms.

Bimberi was the first youth justice facility in Australia to comply with human rights legislation. Bimberi is a highly regulated environment with strict protocols and procedures in place to ensure the safety and wellbeing of the young people. As part of its response to recommendations of the ACT Human Rights Commission report into youth justice in 2011, the government undertook a review of all policies, procedures and practice guides and established these within a quality assurance framework. The outcomes of this review are articulated in the Bimberi integrated management system. The Bimberi integrated management system is available in real time on the intranet to all staff at Bimberi and guides all operational practice and compliance. The process of developing, piloting and implementing the system included thorough consultation with staff and stakeholders.

A key outcome of the reforms stemming from the Human Rights report has been the development of new governance structures for Bimberi. The new governance structure articulates how policies and procedures are reviewed regularly, and on an ongoing basis, and how staff are included in the review of policies and procedures. In addition to being a single point of truth for staff on practice and compliance, the Bimberi integrated management system facilitates an ongoing consultation method for staff to provide real-time feedback on all policies and procedures. Staff can suggest changes on the portal as they are actively using it to undertake day-to-day activities.

Formal governance mechanisms are built into the structure of Bimberi and include the Bimberi workplace consultative committee and the Bimberi integrated management system governance group. Both mechanisms support staff engagement in ongoing quality practice improvements. Staff also participate in the daily briefing to ensure any concerns or ideas for appropriate management of young people can be captured.

I am sure that members appreciate the skills required by staff to undertake this important work, and I note the issues raised by the opposition in the most recent sitting period regarding training at Bimberi. As part of the quality improvements after the Human Rights Commission report, all staff were provided with certificate-level formal training through the Canberra Institute of Technology. A training, learning and

development plan is now formalised each year in consultation with staff and informed by the integrated management system.

In addition all staff commencing at Bimberi are required to participate in a seven-week induction program and complete mandated refresher training. All Bimberi policies and procedures, including trauma informed practice and cultural awareness, are covered during this training, as well as the Bimberi emergency operating procedures and responding to critical situations.

Mandatory refresher training is provided to staff to ensure fundamental skills are maintained and that best practice standards are implemented at Bimberi. Refresher training includes responding to critical situations, emergency operating procedures, fire safety and first aid-CPR training. Responding to critical situations training includes elements such as de-escalation skills, the use of force and post-incident management.

As of 1 May 2017 over 90 per cent of available Bimberi staff had undertaken the responding to critical situations refresher training within the past 10 months. This refresher training and other skills maintenance sessions will continue to be offered consistent with the Bimberi training, learning and development plan, and I am assured that Bimberi will meet its goal of everyone receiving refresher training within each 12-month period.

Bimberi has strongly invested in developing a professional workforce. Overwhelmingly, staff have, as a minimum, a certificate IV in youth work. Collaboration between Bimberi, the Canberra Institute of Technology and other vocational registered training organisations has enabled new and existing staff to acquire tertiary skills and knowledge in youth justice and youth work. Through flexible learning delivery, staff are able to combine theory and on-the-job training to achieve nationally recognised qualifications.

In 2014, 14 Bimberi staff completed a certificate IV in youth justice through the CIT. In 2015 a further 19 Bimberi staff completed a certificate IV in youth work through Train4Life. With current recruitment underway, new youth workers and current staff who do not hold relevant qualifications will be supported through the certificate IV in youth work training later this year.

Indeed many current staff have gone on to higher level qualifications, including university study and other professional development. In recent years Bimberi has supported staff to complete tertiary qualifications and external training in social work, community services and leadership, trauma informed practice, public administration, horticulture, nutrition, hospitality and sports medicine. Currently, five Bimberi staff are completing undergraduate degrees in social work or social welfare and one staff member is completing a diploma in mental health.

There has been recent attention focused on a particular incident that occurred at Bimberi in May 2016 and on other matters relating to staff behaviour. While it is not appropriate for me to comment in detail about specific incidents at Bimberi, I can assure the Assembly that the safety of young people and staff at Bimberi is always the

directorates' highest priority. When allegations are raised in relation to the behaviour of any employee working in this setting, these are taken very seriously and investigated appropriately while affording all parties appropriate procedural fairness. Of course, such investigations can be stressful for staff and can impact on morale. However, the CSD executive is committed to fully investigating allegations and maintaining the highest possible standard in the quality of care provided to young people.

I would like to assure the Assembly that all matters raised in recent weeks are being appropriately responded to by the Human Rights Commission, which has the statutory authority to investigate these matters. The Human Rights Commission has a strong record of leading and supporting reform in youth justice and providing oversight, and I thank the commission for the strong and effective role it has played and continues to play. Notwithstanding the investigations undertaken by independent bodies or the Human Rights Commission, all allegations as a matter of course have also been referred to ACT Policing.

In all critical incidents there are opportunities to learn, and the directorate values the role unions can play as one avenue for communication with and participation of staff. For example, in February this year the CPSU co-sponsored, with management at Bimberi, a number of workshops to explore quality improvement. From this, a specific subcommittee of the workplace consultative committee has been established to ensure ongoing staff engagement in quality practice improvement at Bimberi, and this committee recently held its first meeting.

In addition to the quality assurance mechanisms I have outlined today, members will also be aware of the external oversight mechanisms that exist. The Human Rights Commission, Public Advocate and official visitors play a vital role in this respect. Each year the minister tables the independent report for the official visitors, and I would like to acknowledge their commitment to developing strong relationships with the young people at Bimberi. Recent reports from official visitors also make abundantly clear the high quality of relationships that exist between staff and young people at Bimberi.

I would also like to inform the Assembly of additional measures that are in development to strengthen this oversight in coming years. The Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment is an international agreement aimed at preventing torture and cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.

Under the OPCAT, states parties agree to international inspections of places of detention by the United Nations Subcommittee on the Prevention of Torture. States parties are also required to establish an independent national preventive mechanism to conduct inspections of all places of detention. This includes prisons, youth detention centres, local and offshore immigration detention facilities and other places where people are deprived of their liberty.

The Assembly will be aware that the government has recently committed to a new model of oversight for the corrections system in the ACT. As announced by my

colleague the Minister for Corrections, we will be establishing a dedicated inspectorate of custodial services that will have oversight powers in regard to Bimberi. The Community Services Directorate is working closely with the Justice and Community Safety Directorate to establish this office.

The Community Services Directorate has also worked with the Human Rights Commission to develop a draft charter of rights for young people in Bimberi Youth Justice Centre. This will provide an easy guide for young people while at Bimberi, setting out how they should expect to be treated, and how they should treat others while at the Bimberi Youth Justice Centre, similar to the existing ACT charter of rights for children and young people in out-of-home care. The development of the draft charter to date has involved consultation with stakeholders, including young people at Bimberi. I look forward to being able to release the charter following a final round of consultation.

Bimberi is the most open and transparent youth justice centre in Australia. Current and planned oversight mechanisms will maintain the ACT as a leader in transparency of services to young people who are detained. The Community Services Directorate recognises that it cannot deliver great outcomes for young people alone. Our oversight bodies are an important partner, but I would also like to thank the teachers at Murrumbidgee Education and Training Centre, the youth workers from Gugan Gulwan and Winnunga Nimmityjah, the nurses and doctors, the psychologists and drug and alcohol workers, the YMCA workers, and all those who work in Bimberi to keep vulnerable young people safe, strong and connected to the community every day of the week.

When young people are detained at Bimberi there is a need to balance the rehabilitation needs of the young person and the safety and security of other young people, staff and visitors at the centre. Achieving this balance is not easy. The consequences of not getting this balance right might be missed opportunities to engage young people in activities that lead to productive lives, or it might be that young people and staff are put at serious risk.

As I conclude my statement I would like to reiterate that the staff who work as part of our youth justice system are committed employees who support some of the most vulnerable young people in our community and are proud to do so. These employees have a challenging yet rewarding job. Each day they are making a real difference in working towards better outcomes for vulnerable young people, and in turn making our community a safer place for everyone.

Not many careers result in the sort of scrutiny from the media, the Assembly, and the independent oversight that youth justice involves. But the commitment to transparency and dedication to better care and improved service is based on an understanding of the importance of ensuring that young people in our youth justice system are given better choices and a new start.

While we have made progress in the implementation of the blueprint for youth justice, this commitment to our young people and those who care for them has not lessened. The new task force I mentioned earlier will provide an opportunity to acknowledge

our achievements, to assess contemporary practice in the five years since the launch of the blueprint and to ensure that we continue to meet our responsibilities to some of Canberra's most vulnerable young people and the wider community.

I look forward to being able to announce further detail of this work in due course and to providing updates to the Assembly on a regular basis. I present a copy of the statement:

Youth Justice in the ACT—Blueprint—Ministerial statement, 9 May 2017

I move:

That the Assembly take note of the paper.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

City Renewal Authority and Suburban Land Agency Bill 2017

Debate resumed from 30 March 2017, on motion by **Mr Barr**:

That this bill be agreed to in principle.

MR COE (Yerrabi—Leader of the Opposition) (12.02): The opposition will not be supporting the City Renewal Authority and Suburban Land Agency Bill 2017. We have serious concerns with this proposed piece of legislation. Specifically, it does not address the issues that plagued the Land Development Agency during its operation. Furthermore, the establishment of two separate agencies we think is unnecessary, overly bureaucratic and, quite frankly, will lead to wastage with regard to government resources.

The bill we are being asked to support is only a superficial attempt to address the problems surrounding land management, which have been the subject of various inquiries and reports undertaken by the Auditor-General and other entities. The Minister for Housing and Suburban Development, Ms Yvette Berry, stated in the government response to *Auditor-General's report No 7 of 2016: Certain Land Development Agency Acquisitions*:

It is 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. Their governance frameworks play a critical role in ensuring that the people of the ACT can be assured those entities do operate in the public interest, and to the highest standards of probity and accountability.

Despite this statement, Madam Speaker, there has been no substantial attempt to ensure transparency or accountability in the governance frameworks of either entity proposed within the legislation. None of the Auditor-General's recommendations which the government has agreed upon have been included in this bill.

There is no section within the legislation that requires the City Renewal Authority or the Suburban Land Agency to identify the purpose of land acquisitions and document

the process. There is no section which says that they need to rely on formal independent valuations. There is no section that provides the boards of the authority and the agency with information prior to acquisitions. And there is no section that documents the reasons and rationale for the price paid for acquisitions.

These go to the very heart of transparency and public confidence, and none of these measures are included in the bill. They very easily could have been included in the bill. If this government actually was responding to the many issues that were documented in the Auditor-General's report, surely it would have included some of these in legislation.

Madam Speaker, the potential for fraudulent and corrupt behaviour in this area remains high, while the assurance of transparency and accountability remains low. The wording of the bill provides that the City Renewal Authority may create an audit and risk committee, not that it must. Considering the issues surrounding the Land Development Agency, the establishment of such a committee should be essential. It should be a legislative requirement.

This bill should be filled with legislative procedures, requirements, checks and balances, but this is simply not the case. This bill is not a fix. It is simply a rebranding of the Land Development Agency into two problems that will be repackaged for the future. Why replace the LDA with two similarly opaque entities? What actions is the government taking to ensure that the CRA and SLA conduct their business openly, instead of behind closed doors, where backroom deals are rife?

These entities should have the highest requirements for transparency, yet this legislation does nothing to put this in place. There are no provisions relating to consultation requirements. Where is the community building and engagement? We have seen the impact on communities where meaningful consultation has not been a priority. You only have to look at the petitions presented today or those being presented later in the week to understand that community engagement is vital. Again, we are seeing the current government put their own interests ahead of those of the community's.

Some of these provisions in the bill lower notification requirements, thus limiting the scrutiny of the two bodies. There are significantly more provisions for the City Renewal Authority than for the Suburban Land Agency. Part 3 of the bill relating to the Suburban Land Agency does not even contain provisions regarding the establishment of committees, nor others relating to the good conduct of board members.

A genuine attempt to address the issues surrounding integrity and transparency would include board members publicly declaring any conflicts of interests. Where in the bill has the government responded to the myriad of problems uncovered in the investigations into the Land Development Agency?

There are major inconsistencies in the reporting and oversight requirements between the CRA and the SLA. Why is a ministerial statement of expectations only required of

the CRA and not the SLA? And there are few expectations on the SLA, despite the agency having broader scope and power.

Alternatively, is the government anticipating that the CRA has the potential to be more corrupt and therefore it needs tighter measures? Or is it a purposeful choice to include fewer accountability measures for the SLA so that the government has plausible deniability? Why is there less scrutiny over the land management of the greater territory area compared to Northbourne Avenue, the city and the lakefront?

The division of the functions between the two entities under this bill is also questionable. The creation of two separate agencies to do the work that was being done by one body I think is very problematic. The CRA's primary and narrow focus is urban renewal in declared urban renewal precincts. However, the bill provides the Suburban Land Agency, in practice, with the exact same urban renewal powers across other parts of the territory. Why, then, do we need a separate City Renewal Authority?

Why are the board members and CEO of the City Renewal Authority being paid more than those in the Suburban Land Agency, where the board members and the CEO of the agency have additional responsibilities? Why is the government placing greater emphasis on the development of Northbourne Avenue instead of addressing the real problems of housing affordability and land release facing our suburbs? Is this another example of the government focusing its attention on the city at the expense of our suburban areas? Unfortunately, this simply exemplifies once again that the government's priority is the inner city, at the expense of suburbia.

The bill is poorly conceived and the Labor Party is already, of course, putting forward amendments. This demonstrates that the Labor government have not adequately thought through what they are proposing. Despite the fact that this was announced before the election, it took until late March of 2017 for the government to actually present this legislation. Then for it to come on on the first sitting day following that presentation I think shows that this is a rushed job.

The Canberra Liberals will be opposing the bill. The Land Development Agency was shown to be flawed time and again. We have yet to see an outline of the frameworks and processes that will govern these two new entities. In reality, the government's framework, as stipulated in the legislation for the LDA, is pretty much the same legislative governance arrangements that will exist for these two agencies. I have no confidence, no confidence whatsoever, that anything will actually change.

The opposition has seen the implications of poor processes in the various LDA inquiries and reports. We have seen the cost financially and the loss of public confidence when governance, accountability and transparency are not built into the legislative framework. As we have consistently said, the Canberra Liberals support transparency and accountability and, above all, integrity in government decision-making. This bill in its present form and the City Renewal Authority and the Suburban Land Agency do not encompass those values. Therefore, the Canberra Liberals will be opposing the bill today.

MS LE COUTEUR (Murrumbidgee) (12.12): Madam Speaker, the Greens' vision for Canberra is that it will be a sustainable city in which urban design, construction, land management and development will be guided by long-term sustainability principles which include environmental, social and financial. Socially this implies good community consultation, affordable housing and good governance of the territory.

The Greens welcome the ACT government's decision to split the Land Development Agency, the LDA, into the City Renewal Authority, the CRA, and the Suburban Land Agency, the SLA, through this bill. The Greens hope that this legislation will enable each authority to focus on the very different role of suburban development, compared to infill development in the city and the light rail corridor. It does, however, leave open the question as to where other urban renewal precincts, such as the Kingston arts precinct, fit within these two structures—or somewhere else—so I echo some of the concerns of Mr Coe about this structural lack of clarity, at least.

Last year, as I doorknocked in Murrumbidgee, I found there was huge discontent about how Canberra was being developed and the role of the LDA in this. If someone said to me, "I don't have any issues with this election," I could just say to them, "What about developers?" or "What about the LDA?" Almost always they would open up about what they saw was an overreach of power and disrespect to the ACT community.

Despite these issues, the Greens strongly believe that government land organisations have a key role to play in urban development. They can address market failure by providing leading edge developments that showcase housing affordability, energy efficiency and design excellence.

In the past, in Canberra, they have done that. The planning and design of Kingston foreshore and Gungahlin town centre were innovative at the time they commenced, in the 1990s. They brought in, well ahead of most other parts of Australia, street-focused, walkable medium-rise development. But, since then, best practice has moved on. For example, across Europe, government developers are delivering high quality, attractive new developments that are profitable while being environmentally sustainable and innovative and delivering substantial supplies of affordable housing.

Unfortunately, the LDA has not kept up. The best projects that the community always talks about here in Canberra, New Acton and Crace, were not LDA led projects. There needs to be a step change in quality. With the right government development agencies in place, the right expertise and incentives, the Greens think that Canberra can and should lead the world in quality of development.

Looking at it more negatively, poor planning and development carry serious risks, as they can lock in decades of energy inefficiency through poorly designed buildings; they can expose us to avoidable health and environmental damage from streetscapes that have not been designed to accommodate extreme temperatures and that contribute to urban heat islands; they can aggravate the housing affordability crisis by increasing

housing prices while the public and community housing supply remains inadequate; and they can reduce community participation by the removal of community spaces and public amenity.

Worldwide, cities are home to over half of the world's population and produce around 75 per cent of the world's carbon emissions. The ACT has started its journey towards zero net carbon emissions: we are purchasing 100 per cent renewable electricity. We must make sure that we build a city that continues this journey by building energy efficient buildings; by preserving green spaces; by seriously reducing and eventually eliminating waste; and by creating a transport system that is not based on fossil fuels.

This legislation presents an unmissable opportunity to get Canberra's planning and development system on the right track. The Greens will be amending this bill to help provide for legal infrastructure to help the ACT be a world leader in socially and environmentally sustainable urban development.

Canberra is growing by 5,000 people a year. In the past six years, it has grown by almost 38,000, which is more than the population of Woden Valley. How we respond to the challenge of planning and developing our city and its suburbs to accommodate this growth will determine whether Canberra realises its vision of becoming one of the world's most livable green cities. The alternative is that we start to resemble the traffic-choked metropolis of Sydney, with its huge social inequity, air pollution, property development assisted corruption and towering high-rise apartments.

We need to start a conversation about how we can develop in a way that respects the fact we have only one planet with finite resources. Australia, I understand, has the biggest new houses in the world, which is simply not sustainable. The 2016 *ACT state of the environment report* shows that Canberrans are Australia's biggest consumers, each of us having a global footprint of 8.9 hectares required to support our lifestyles. This is 3½ times the world average. This clearly cannot continue, and the Greens believe that one of the important jobs of the government Land Development Agency is to demonstrate new developments that are affordable both to the people of Canberra and to our planet.

As well as ensuring that sustainability is prioritised, in line with our commitment to put the community first, the Greens want to see the CRA and the SLA undertake genuine and meaningful community consultation for all new urban renewable and suburban land development. This means consulting with community members at the earliest opportunity and incorporating community concerns into all development proposals. It can be seen as more expensive, but the Greens understand that if you invest in working with the community at the onset you have a better quality outcome which the community will back.

The Greens' view is that this legislation, while helpful, does not do enough to address the substantive issues with the directions of the two agencies, or governance, which is where I would say the Greens would agree with some of the concerns identified by Mr Coe. There needs to be more. For that reason, we have worked with ACT Labor to agree on some relevant amendments as well as moving additional amendments on

issues that will be important to the Greens. And I anticipate that we will be supporting some of the amendments that the Liberal Party will be moving.

Our amendments fall into a number of categories: the need for commercial returns; environmental sustainability; affordable and social housing; and governance, as mentioned by Mr Coe. I will briefly give an overview of these issues, noting that we are going to discuss these in more detail at the detail stage, which I understand will be on Thursday.

Let me go to the need for commercial returns. The Greens support the need for government to raise revenue. We also recognise that ACT land is a finite resource and thus should be sold for an appropriate value. However, as I mentioned, there is a perception in the community that the Land Development Agency was driven largely by financial interests and did not operate within a rigorous and community-endorsed planning framework. The current proposed legislation says that one of the three objects for both authorities is “to operate commercially, in accordance with sound risk management principles”. The Greens believe very strongly that this must be balanced with other responsibilities for the new bodies so that we do not end up with, in effect, two new LDAs that prioritise commercial returns and new developments that fail to apply the ACT’s existing policies on carbon neutrality, housing affordability and community engagement.

I go to environmental sustainability. I know it has been said before, but there is no planet B. Without drastic changes in the world’s resource use, the future does not look good for humans and many other species. The Greens feel that, because the SLA and the CRA will have major roles in determining the future built environment for the ACT, it is important that their guiding legislation puts the onus on them to deliver good environmental outcomes—in particular, policies such as carbon neutrality.

Although the government has many whole-of-government policies, it is not always clear which of them are the most important for the government to deliver. Although, like all government authorities, these new authorities should certainly follow government policies, because of the importance of these environmental and social policies to the CRA’s and SLA’s mandate we think it is important to underline this in the legislation. Affordable housing, designing future suburbs with ageing and the safety of women in mind and, of course, environmental sustainability are all policies which need to be front and centre in planning and development.

Let me go to affordable and social housing. The Labor-Greens parliamentary agreement commits the government to “set affordable housing targets across greenfield and urban renewal development projects”. Of course, the Greens see this bill as the perfect opportunity to ensure that this happens. We have proposed that they should become part of the ministerial directions to both the City Renewal Authority and the Suburban Land Agency. Setting concrete targets for both social housing and affordable housing will help Canberra secure affordable housing, community-owned housing and public housing stock as part of any major development of land. I understand that the Labor Party has taken up part of these proposals, which will be discussed in detail on Thursday.

Without clear targets, we believe there is a risk that affordable housing will be considered as an afterthought, not as an integral starting point for the design of infill and greenfield developments. That is why the parliamentary agreement also includes the development of an affordable housing strategy. The work of both the City Renewal Agency and the Suburban Land Agency must take the affordable housing strategy, once developed, into account. And there need to be structures to prevent resale windfall profits and ensure that both these authorities can make sure this does not happen.

In a city as affluent as Canberra, we have a responsibility to ensure that low income earners can find affordable, sustainable and secure tenancies, and that first home buyers are able to enter the housing market. There are an ever-increasing number of people in our community who are living in housing stress, and we have a responsibility to ensure that opportunities are there for people in the lowest income quintiles to find suitable places to live. This bill provides an opportunity for us to get this right.

I move to governance. Mr Coe has spoken about this at some length. The Greens feel that this legislation addresses some of the governance issues. For instance, there are now clear conflict of interest provisions for the CEO and board members, and a requirement that the City Renewal Authority details how it will implement ministerial directions for the city renewal precincts. This provision should help avoid a repeat of the city to the lake controversy which was criticised in the Auditor-General's 2016 report into the LDA land acquisitions. We have discussed the issue of the board composition and directions with the Labor Party, and I understand that they will be moving amendments in line with our suggestions. This will include increasing the number of board members so that there is a better spread of expertise, and having a duty of good conduct for both boards.

This is why the parliamentary agreement also requires the boards to include independent members with skills from the social and affordable housing sector. We want to see that the new agencies deliver best practice sustainable development, not just commercial returns to the government. The bill proposes boards of five members for each agency, but the Greens believe that an increase to seven would provide more opportunity for the board to cover all the needed skills. This fits in with the Australian Institute of Company Directors' recommendations on the size of boards. We also think it is important to increase the size of the board given the real potential for conflicts of interest to occur within the board, given that Canberra is only a small city. We are looking and will continue to look carefully at the Liberals' amendments along these lines and will have more to say about those at the detail stage.

One of the other issues with the LDA in the past which we hope will not be replicated with the new agencies is this: it has appeared that the LDA have taken on policy functions that go well beyond their mandate. They have basically been taking on planning functions, or it would appear that they have taken these on. I believe that some of this was cultural. The reasons this was cultural included that the LDA put land release and government profit at the forefront of policy decision-making, and other directorates were drawn into this vortex. This meant that decisions were not

necessarily made with the broader strategic planning focus that is needed for the best outcomes for our community. We are concerned that this problem of the LDA taking on a policy and planning function outside the guidance of the Planning and Land Authority is not clearly addressed in the legislation.

We do think that a large part of this is cultural. We are very hopeful that, with two new boards and new authorities, the culture will be different. But we would have to say that it is important to ensure that the new structure maintains an independent role for the Planning and Land Authority's planning assessors, the Conservator for Flora and Fauna, and heritage assessments, and that they are separate from the development arm of government. It is also important that there is greater accountability to deliver strategic planning, and that it overarches all government development to ensure that the new bodies do not improperly influence planning policy to serve commercial imperatives at the expense of good planning.

The Auditor-General's report on certain land acquisitions in 2016 uncovered a lack of probity and rigour in the way the LDA had conducted several land acquisitions, including what are called strategic acquisitions. In one set of strategic acquisitions, the LDA spent almost \$25 million buying development land to the west of Canberra for potentially over 15,000 homes, despite this not being part of the government's growth plan in the ACT planning strategy. There was no community consultation and, despite the expenditure, we still have no idea what the environmental or transport impacts of developing these areas would or could be.

In conclusion, the Greens will be working with the government—and the Liberal Party, hopefully—to ensure that these principles are included in the legislation and that Canberra gets the world-class planning and development system it deserves, one that prioritises long-term wellbeing and sustainability for the community.

While we welcome the government's reforms to public sector land development in the ACT, it remains to be seen how successful these reforms will be in addressing a number of the problems of the LDA. The Greens are hopeful that the government will take this as the opportunity it needs to set up Canberra as a world-class centre for urban design, planning and development. We will be waiting to hear in the future from the community about how these two bodies operate in practice, and we will revisit the issues if there are issues in the future.

Debate interrupted in accordance with standing order 74 and the resumption of the debate made an order of the day for a later hour.

Sitting suspended from 12.30 to 2.30 pm.

Questions without notice

Aboriginals and Torres Strait Islanders—government policy

MR COE: Madam Speaker, my question is for the Chief Minister. Today every member of the Assembly received an email containing a stinging rebuke of your government from the CEO of Winnunga expressing her “frustration and deep disappointment” with your government. She further states: “I expect transparency in

my dealings with governments and your officials however I don't see any signs of that at all and I am becoming more cynical by the day." Given that Julie Tongs is the leading advocate for Indigenous people in Canberra, her rebuke is a damning indictment of this government's management of Indigenous affairs. Chief Minister, how is the government going to restore confidence in the Indigenous community?

MR BARR: I, along with other members in this place, have received that email from Ms Tongs. Suffice to say that there are some issues that have been raised in that email that the government will respond to. I do not think that the characterisation from the Leader of the Opposition is a fair one in relation to the range of issues that the government is responding to. On each of the areas of concern to Ms Tongs, the government is responding.

MR COE: Chief Minister, why have successive ministers for Indigenous affairs failed to deliver on the bush healing farm, Boomanulla Oval and adequate accommodation for health and community services across Canberra?

MR BARR: Again, I do not accept the premise of the Leader of the Opposition's question. There is a range of complex issues being addressed by a range of ministers, not just the minister who has responsibility for Indigenous affairs. The range of issues crosses into a number of other portfolios, and those ministers, together with the minister for Indigenous affairs, are responding to the concerns that have been outlined. Some of those issues are not quickly or easily resolvable.

MR MILLIGAN: Chief Minister, what is the status of the bush healing farm and will it actually be an alcohol and other drug rehabilitation facility?

MR BARR: I am advised that ACT Health hosted a workshop on 8 May with key stakeholders to refine the model of care to ensure that the service meets the needs of residents and is compliant with land use rules. ACT Health acknowledges that there has been some confusion in the community about the role and purpose of the farm and its zoning. There are some differences within the local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community about what services should be delivered at the bush healing farm. Some stakeholders want a medical model of rehabilitation delivered on the site but the government is committed to delivering the vision of the United Ngunnawal Elders Council to deliver a healing service that works to rebuild a fractured community where recurring drug and alcohol addictions are a barrier to better life.

Mr Hanson: On a point of order, Madam Speaker, the question from Mr Milligan was quite clear as to whether it would actually be an alcohol and other drug rehab facility. I would ask that the Chief Minister be directly relevant in answer to that question.

MADAM SPEAKER: Chief Minister, do you have anything else to add?

MR BARR: I have completed my answer.

Aboriginals and Torres Strait Islanders—Gugan Gulwan

MR MILLIGAN: My question is to the minister for Indigenous affairs. Minister, the offices of Gugan Gulwan are in desperate need of repair, but it turns out that Gugan is required to foot much of the bill for repairs themselves. This includes paying the first \$500 for any maintenance carried out by property group—sometimes up to twice a week with ongoing problems with the building; paying the cost of wiring to replace the lighting because of ongoing issues—a bill in excess of \$6,000; and the cost for graffiti removal as well. There are many additional costs that need to be met by Gugan due to the age and disrepair of the buildings, repairs that should be carried out by property group or that could be remedied by providing them with a new building. These are issues that are not new but which have been going on for some time. Minister, why is it that Gugan is required to pay these additional repair costs, costs traditionally covered by a landlord?

MS STEPHEN-SMITH: I thank Mr Milligan for his question and for his strong interest in Gugan. I know that he was out there this weekend. I hope he had a good meeting with the community out there. Mr Milligan is correct in stating that Gugan is required to pay the first \$500 of any maintenance costs. The reason for that is that it is part of their lease agreement. They are on a peppercorn lease. While it would normally be the case if you are paying full rent that the landlord would pay for maintenance, the peppercorn lease agreement with Gugan is that they pay the first \$500 of each maintenance cost.

Currently the average yearly maintenance and utility costs for the centre are about \$35,000 of which, as Mr Milligan correctly noted, Gugan pays about \$6,000 and the ACT government pays the remaining \$29,000. Recent work in this area includes a kitchen upgrade, replacement of lighting with energy efficient LED lighting and tree trimming. An electrical and security audit has also been undertaken.

Community Services met again in April as part of a routine service visit. As Mr Milligan has noted, there has been an ongoing discussion with Gugan in an attempt to find new premises for them. I understand that ACT Property Group will be showing Gugan Gulwan a property in Greenway in the coming weeks. The Community Services Directorate has been working in an ongoing way with Gugan Gulwan to ensure that they understand the requirements of property group in this process.

MR MILLIGAN: Minister, why has it taken so long for the property group to get on top of the many repairs and issues at the Gugan Gulwan premises?

MS STEPHEN-SMITH: I thank Mr Milligan for his supplementary question. I have asked the same question myself. I met with Gugan in December last year and I have had an ongoing conversation with the Office of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs. The office met with ACT Property Group on 6 March to discuss maintenance and accommodation issues on the current site. It was noted at that meeting that ACT Property Group regularly meets with Gugan staff and that all maintenance issues

highlighted in the letter that this meeting responded to—they are historical—have already been addressed.

I have sought from property group a detailed breakdown of when issues were raised and the response time to those. I am happy to share some of that information when I receive it. My understanding is that as issues are raised they are addressed.

MR WALL: Minister, if the Greenway property that will be displayed for Gugan is not fit for purpose and fails to meet their requirements, what steps will you and the department be taking to prioritise adequate accommodation for Gugan?

MS STEPHEN-SMITH: Thank you for the supplementary question. I hope that the Greenway property will be appropriate. There have been a number of discussions between Gugan and the property group over the past few years about different properties that did not meet Gugan's needs, unfortunately. We will, obviously, continue to make this a priority and continue to have those conversations if the Greenway property is not suitable.

Economy—performance

MS ORR: My question is to the Chief Minister. The most important factor for creating and maintaining good, secure jobs is a strong economy. What does the recent data show about the ACT's economic performance?

MR BARR: I thank Ms Orr for the question. I am pleased to be able to advise the Assembly that recent data shows that the territory economy continues to gather strength, at a time when other state and territory economies around the country are slowing or even going backwards. State final demand in the territory grew by 7.3 per cent over the course of 2016. That was the second strongest growth rate of any jurisdiction in the country. I am pleased that unemployment is low, at 3.7 per cent, the second lowest rate of any jurisdiction in the country and well below the national average of 5.9 per cent.

Jobs growth was 1.9 per cent in the year to March, well above the national average, meaning that an additional 4,100 fellow Canberrans were employed through jobs growth creation in that period. Jobs are, of course, a key indicator, and the strength of the labour market is a key indicator, of how our economy is performing. But there are other indicators, such as business confidence. The latest figures show that territory businesses were the most confident in the country, with the share of businesses with a positive outlook leaping from 40 per cent to 64 percent over the year to March.

Commencements of new dwellings have more than doubled over the course of 2016, obviously contributing to economic activity, but also increasing supply to assist with housing affordability. Much of the strengthening of the economy has been visible in the private sector, including our rapidly expanding university sector, construction and retail trade—retail trade figures, again, very positive today—strongly supported, of course, by the territory government's record \$2.9 billion investment in infrastructure.

Our focus will remain on creating and maintaining good jobs for Canberrans. It is at the heart of the government's agenda, and it is why we will continue to work to strengthen and diversify the economy. *(Time expired.)*

MS ORR: Are there any risks to the ACT's strong economic performance?

MR BARR: Certainly there is reason to be concerned about some elements of the federal budget that will be delivered tonight, particularly the National Party's decentralisation agenda, which has been passively supported by the Prime Minister, who is not in a strong enough position, it would seem, within the joint party room to respond to the outrageous pork-barrelling demands of the National Party.

There are approximately 58,000 Canberrans currently working in Australian public service agencies across the territory. This represents more than a quarter of all employment in this city. If you were to start relocating entire agencies from Canberra, obviously those jobs would be directly lost to Canberra. That is to say nothing of the near \$37 billion that the commonwealth contributes to the territory economy. Taking even a fraction of that spending out of Canberra would, of course, be a major blow to the near 26,000 businesses in this city and put their profitability at risk. That would jeopardise local jobs.

Tonight's commonwealth budget is a major source of risk. We already know that it will include big cuts to the higher education sector, the ACT's strongest export, which contributes over \$2.6 billion annually to our local economy and supports 16,000 jobs in our city.

What else lies in store will be revealed tonight, but we have seen a very worrying trend. At budget time each year, the decisions that are taken by the federal government, particularly decisions to relocate agencies out of Canberra, have a very significant impact on the territory economy.

MS CODY: Chief Minister, how has the ACT government worked to insulate the territory's economy from external shocks and risks in the past to protect local jobs; and how can the government continue to do so in the future?

MR BARR: We have taken a very active approach to utilising fiscal policy in the territory's balance sheet to support our economy through difficult times. We understand that the number one priority for Canberrans is to keep them in work. It is the only way to avoid a deeper downturn. That is why the fact that our unemployment rate is as low as it is now is testimony to a number years of extreme focus on jobs, jobs being the number one priority for the government. This is critical to the territory's population because there is a very strong correlation between the strength of our labour market and how our city grows.

My government will always put jobs first. That is why we will continue to grow the ACT public sector in our budget next month and why we will continue to invest in transformative infrastructure for our city, utilising the territory budget to support good projects that deliver better outcomes for Canberrans and create jobs. That will be our

focus in this term of government and you will see a first down payment on that in the territory budget next month.

Transport—light rail

MS LE COUTEUR: My question is to the Minister for Transport and City Services and relates to the current consultation on route options and stops for stage 2, light rail, city to Woden. Minister, how would the stage 2 option to terminate at the hospital impact on future stages to Mawson and Tuggeranong, given that the network planned for Woden town centre to Tuggeranong settled on Athllon Drive alignment via Mawson?

MS FITZHARRIS: I thank Ms Le Couteur for her question and her ongoing support for an integrated transport system, notably, of course, a light rail network. Certainly it was very pleasing to start the work of consulting with the community on stage 2 of light rail with stage 1 so well underway. It was very pleasing that on the back of last year's decisive election win and decisive support for light rail in Canberra that we have been able to go out to the community with some proposed future routes.

There is, as Ms Le Couteur notes, within the two options an option to also extend from the Woden town centre to Canberra Hospital. There is an ongoing and long period of time with a number of pieces of work that involve community consultation, technical advice and technical expertise. That is well underway also through Transport Canberra and City Services. Before we determine the final route we will continue to talk with the community about the stage 2 route as well as implement over the longer term the full light rail network plan.

Some of the questions which are being asked today are, of course, questions worth asking, but we are not able to answer all questions related not only to stage 2 but also to the entire light rail network right now, but we will continue to have discussions with the community.

MS LE COUTEUR: How much longer will it take the light rail service to get from the city to Woden, or vice versa, if the Barton option—National Circuit, Barton—goes ahead?

MS FITZHARRIS: In relation to the package of works that was announced in the context of the midyear review—the \$7 million which was allocated earlier this year—there are nine packages of work underway. All nine of those tenderers have been appointed. Work is underway to determine patronage and travel time, in addition to other work as part of that \$7 million package which will include engineering advice, community consultation and engagement advice, as well as costing models and some preliminary procurement advice, all of which will be part of the input into the business case that the government develops.

MR STEEL: Minister, what has the response been from the community in relation to consultation on stage 2?

MS FITZHARRIS: I thank Mr Steel for the supplementary. The response has been extraordinary and very supportive. We were very pleased to launch this consultation last week. We are very pleased with the feedback from the community and very pleased with the very high level of engagement, not only from those people who live along the stage 2 route but also from those people who work along the stage 2 route, because we know how many people in the future will live, work and study along the stage 2 route from Civic right through to Woden.

The range of community engagement activities is extensive. It involves multiple market stalls and multiple visits to community council meetings right across the Woden, Molonglo Valley and Weston Creek communities and also a stall at the Canberra Hospital. Of course, this is about an integrated transport network for the whole city; so the Transport Canberra team will also be talking to residents and workers in Tuggeranong, in Belconnen, in Gungahlin and also in the city.

There are lots of ways that people can have their say on their views of basically two proposed alternative routes. There are lots of ways that the community can get involved. They can attend a meeting. They can attend a shopping centre and talk to Transport Canberra staff. They can post online. They can take a video. They can map online locations of interest for them along the route and give us lots of feedback in lots of different ways about their preferred model for the route.

We are really pleased to get this consultation underway. There has been considerable input already and we look forward to continuing this conversation with the community.

Canberra Hospital—electrical systems

MRS DUNNE: My question is to the Minister for Health. I refer to a statement by Mr Mick Koppie of the Electrical Trades Union in the *Canberra Times* of 25 April 2017. Mr Koppie was quoted as saying:

There's certainly been improvements or work that could have been done over the last ten years, that if it had been completed, I believe the switchboard would not have had this problem.

Minister, why hasn't ACT Health made improvements or carried out necessary works on the Canberra Hospital electrical system until recently when the problem has been known about for at least 10 years?

MS FITZHARRIS: I thank Mrs Dunne for the question. I recall the article and those quotes in that *Canberra Times* article. I do not know what particular works were being referred to but what I can tell the Assembly, as I outlined in my statement this morning, is that there has been funding for infrastructure upgrades at Canberra Hospital and across ACT Health facilities in all budgets that I am aware of. That includes electrical work. There was some work on electrical distribution boards. As I also outlined this morning, it was funded through the 2014-15 budget.

There was also a significant infrastructure upgrade across ACT Health assets of \$90 million in last year's budget, \$23 million of which was to upgrade electrical networks throughout the hospital, notably of course the electrical switchboard. Some of that work got underway. Further work will continue until mid 2018 for one of the buildings and, beyond the main electrical switchboard, for another building till early 2019. If that work had not got underway we would have seen a potentially more serious incident at the Canberra Hospital than the one we had in April, as I also outlined in my statement this morning.

There has been considerable investment in upgrading infrastructure not only at Canberra Hospital but across all ACT Health facilities—in last year's budget alone, \$23 million.

MRS DUNNE: Minister, why hadn't the switchboard in building 2 at the hospital been replaced between 1973 and 2017?

MS FITZHARRIS: It is being upgraded as we speak; some of the work will be completed in mid-2018 and subsequent to that further work will be undertaken to be completed in early 2019.

Mr Coe: Point of order.

MADAM SPEAKER: A point of order, Mr Coe.

Mr Coe: Madam Speaker, with regard to the relevance of the minister's answer, the question was specifically about why it hadn't been replaced between 1973 and 2017, as opposed to the work that is now underway.

MADAM SPEAKER: Thank you. Minister, you can continue.

MS FITZHARRIS: I cannot comment on all the work undertaken since 1975, but what I can tell you is that work is underway now to replace that main switchboard.

MRS JONES: Minister, why has the series of faults in the Canberra Hospital electrical system not been fixed until recently?

MS FITZHARRIS: Faults have been fixed as ACT Health has been made aware of them.

Canberra Hospital—electrical systems

MS LEE: Madam Speaker, my question is to the Minister for Health. I refer to the estimates committee *Hansard* of 29 June 2016, where a senior official from ACT Health said:

The key issues in terms of the extreme and the high risk largely relate to the electrical systems and the main switchboard of the hospital.

How long has ACT Health known that there were extreme and high risks associated with the electrical systems and the main switchboard at the Canberra Hospital?

MS FITZHARRIS: I thank Ms Lee for the question. The particular commentary in last year's estimates hearings relate to a piece of work that was undertaken, I believe, in late 2015, which was an assessment of infrastructure at Canberra Hospital. That work then informed the subsequent budget initiative in last year's budget to upgrade and replace the main electrical switchboard at Canberra Hospital, the \$23 million project which I outlined this morning and was referenced in my previous answer. That work has subsequently gotten underway and will continue until mid-2019.

MS LEE: Minister, were you and/or your predecessor, Mr Corbell, briefed about the extreme and high risks associated with the electrical systems and the main switchboard at the Canberra Hospital?

MS FITZHARRIS: I cannot speak for former Minister Corbell other than to note, of course, that he was the minister responsible for bringing forward and announcing the \$23 million upgrade to electrical systems at the hospital, which was part of a broader \$90 million health infrastructure upgrade that was funded in last year's budget.

Subsequent to that there has been ongoing work to implement that \$90 million initiative and the \$23 million for upgrading the electrical switchboard system. That work initially went out to tender in September last year. The tender was then subsequently signed in April this year. There have also been a design consultant and a head contractor appointed in April this year.

MRS DUNNE: Minister, why did ACT Health take so long to act on the problems with the Canberra Hospital's electrical system and switchboard?

MS FITZHARRIS: I do not believe they did take that long.

Education—vocational

MS CODY: My question is to the Minister for Higher Education, Research and Training.

Members interjecting—

MADAM SPEAKER: Wait a minute. Can members please be quiet so the minister can hear Ms Cody.

MS CODY: Can the minister outline the steps the government is taking to improve access to the vocational education and training sector?

MS FITZHARRIS: I thank Ms Cody very much for her question and for her deep and longstanding interest in the vocational education and training sector. The government is proud of the quality of our vocational education and training sector

here in Canberra. We recognise in particular the central role played by the Canberra Institute of Technology and the reform program currently underway at the CIT.

There are a number of steps the government is taking to strengthen our VET sector and improve access to the quality courses on offer. We are committed to keeping CIT in public hands and to maintaining a level of public funding for the institute to ensure that it continues to offer the range of courses that our city needs now and into the future.

Members will note that in other jurisdictions a combination of deregulation and privatisation in the VET sector led to many students being left with high debts for courses that were never delivered. This government has taken steps to improve access to VET for some of the most vulnerable members of our community.

I have previously outlined measures that the government has taken to attract students from a wider range of refugee and asylum-seeker backgrounds. Permanent humanitarian visa holders have been able to access apprenticeships, traineeships and Skilled Capital courses since January last year. From 1 January this year, eligibility has been extended to refugees and asylum seekers who hold temporary and bridging visas that also grant working rights. Studies have shown that a majority of refugees quickly become productive members of the community. Giving these people more training opportunities is also good for our economy.

The government is also taking steps to get more women into trades traditionally dominated by men. At the last election we committed \$1 million over four years and we are also committed to assisting mature-aged workers to re-skill and adapt to changing labour market conditions.

This Labor government will always support a properly funded VET sector that supports a wide range of students. Whether it is refugees looking to contribute to our community, women looking to get into trades or mature-aged students looking to re-skill, we will support them through our VET sector.

MS CODY: Can the minister outline what action is being taken to encourage women to take up a career in the trades?

MS FITZHARRIS: In recent years there has been a significant increase in women's participation in vocational education and training. The ACT benefits from the skills many young women bring to our community and our economy when they graduate. But this strong participation rate masks a serious under-representation of women in traditional trade apprenticeships. In 2015 the proportion of women who commenced a traditional trade apprenticeship was just three per cent. Promoting women's participation in traditionally male-dominated trades will improve workplace equity and strengthen different industries through greater female representation.

Of course, if we want to grow our economy, improve productivity and keep people in jobs, we need to attract more women into traditional trades. The building and construction industry presents one of the best opportunities to attract and retain more

women looking for a career in the trades. In particular, trades such as carpentry, painting and decorating, wall and floor tiling, electrical, horticulture and cabinet making all present great opportunities for women who wish to pursue a career in the industry.

Our challenge, though, is to raise awareness of these opportunities and help break down community perceptions that women are not suited to these roles. That is why, during the last campaign, Labor committed \$1 million in new funding over four years to support outreach programs to get more women into male-dominated trades. The government will work with industry, unions and other training experts to design these programs. I was thrilled yesterday to meet Lucy Costa, a 21-year-old third-year apprentice cabinetmaker at Designcraft, with Ms Cody, to announce that these will be funded in next month's budget.

I should also point out that the building and construction industry has already made a start in attracting more women to take up a trade in their industry. The Building and Construction Industry Training Fund Authority provides additional support to employers to encourage the employment of women in the trades. The authority has a website dedicated to tradeswomen in the industry, with a wide range of resource materials available. We are excited about continuing to build on and support this work.

MR STEEL: Minister, what measures are being taken to improve access to training for mature age workers?

MS FITZHARRIS: The 2016 Australian Human Rights Commission report entitled *Willing to Work*—a national inquiry into employment discrimination—noted that older Australians faced difficulties in accessing the training system. The ACT government recognises the employment challenges mature age workers often face. That is why our active ageing plan supports mature age workers by ensuring they enjoy the same opportunities for recruitment, employment and training as their younger colleagues.

I have already outlined new measures that the government will take to encourage more women in trades, but we are also committed to supporting mature age workers who often need assistance in accessing training places as well. Providing the ACT community with access to training places helps them re-skill for new opportunities and adjust to changing labour market conditions. This is good for employees and employers and is an important driver of productivity in our economy.

Part of the \$1 million funding commitment that the government has made to getting more women into traditional trades will be allocated also to help raise awareness among mature age workers of the training opportunities on offer here in the ACT. The funding will give us the ability to conduct outreach to this part of our community and support older workers who wish to re-skill into new careers or to up-skill into new jobs.

In addition to this new funding to be delivered in next month's budget, the government is taking action now to improve training opportunities for mature age

workers. Last month Minister Ramsay and I announced the removal of the restriction on the number of funded training courses a person can complete over their lifetime.

We took this action to provide better employment and careers prospects for all Canberrans, but particularly for mature age workers. For example, these changes will allow a tradesperson with two apprenticeship qualifications at certificate III and IV level to upskill through a funded traineeship to a diploma level qualification.

This change, along with new funds to support outreach, meets the ACT government's 2016 election commitment to support mature age workers as they prepare for a new job or plan for a new career.

Canberra Hospital—electrical systems

MRS KIKKERT: My question is to the Minister for Health. I refer to the fire in an electrical switchboard at the Canberra Hospital on 5 April 2017 that resulted in the cancellation of elective surgery the following day, the discharge of 60 patients and cancellation of outpatient clinics the following day. Were there any adverse clinical outcomes as a result of the cancellation of elective surgery on 6 April?

MS FITZHARRIS: Certainly not to my knowledge. Although it was regrettable that certain procedures had to be cancelled, it was for one day. All patients have since been contacted to reschedule their previous appointment.

MRS KIKKERT: Were there any adverse clinical outcomes as a result of the discharge of 60 patients?

MS FITZHARRIS: Not that I am aware of, no.

MRS DUNNE: Minister, has there been or will there be a clinical review of all the cancellations and discharges?

MS FITZHARRIS: I will take that question on notice.

Canberra Hospital—electrical systems

MR WALL: My question is to the Minister for Health. Minister, when were you first briefed about the electrical systems at the Canberra Hospital being at high and extreme risk?

MS FITZHARRIS: In terms of the specific date, I will have to take that question on notice and get back to Mr Wall. But as I outlined, I was obviously in the Assembly during last year's budget and noted that there was a \$23 million investment in upgrading electrical systems at the Canberra Hospital. Therefore, that work has been underway since last year's budget.

MR WALL: Minister, did your incoming minister's brief contain information about the electrical system at the Canberra Hospital being at high and extreme risk; and, for the purposes of this question, ministerial briefs as both assistant minister and minister?

MS FITZHARRIS: Certainly to my knowledge, I do not recall. As Assistant Minister for Health I was not responsible for the Canberra Hospital. With reference to the incoming minister's brief, I was certainly given briefings on the ongoing implementation of budget initiatives which included a \$23 million upgrade to the electrical systems at Canberra Hospital. But I will take on notice the specifics of the question.

MRS DUNNE: Minister, were your predecessors, Mr Corbell and Ms Gallagher, warned about the electrical systems at the Canberra Hospital being at high and extreme risk?

MS FITZHARRIS: I cannot speak for what previous ministers were briefed on.

Education—policy

MR STEEL: My question is to the Minister for Education and Early Childhood Development. Can the minister please update members on work towards a strategy for the future of education in the ACT?

MS BERRY: I thank Mr Steel for his question on education in the ACT. As members know, in February this year I outlined in a ministerial statement the start of work on a strategy for the future of education in the ACT. Equity is at the core of the work in developing that strategy. Members might like to take a moment to reflect on what equity means.

We all know about equality: the idea that everybody gets the same. By contrast, equity is about fairness and justice. It is about recognising that, no matter what we do, everyone will not always get the same and, more importantly, everybody does not need the same. Differences in background, circumstance and characteristics should not limit the opportunity each of us has in life; and our schools must recognise and support diversity in our community to make sure that this is the case.

So in kicking off work on the strategy I have established a core group of community partners to help the government stay true to this value. I am grateful to have Susan Helyar, the Director of the ACT Council of Social Service, Dr John Hattie, Professor of Education at the University of Melbourne, Dr Chris Sarra, founder and Chairman of the Stronger Smarter Institute and Professor of Education at the University of Canberra—and a highly recognised education leader focused on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students—Cathy Hudson, a board member of the Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority, and Dr John Falzon, the national CEO of the St Vincent de Paul Society—one of Australia's most respected voices on social justice and equity. I was happy to convene the first meeting on the future of education with these community partners a few weeks ago.

MR STEEL: Minister, how can education stakeholders get involved in this conversation?

MS BERRY: I value the knowledge and experience of people with a particular interest in education as part of this conversation. The education symposium a few weeks ago involved a broad invitation to groups, which included the Association of Independent Schools of the ACT, the Catholic Education Office, Board of Senior Secondary Studies, ACT Teacher Quality Institute, ACT Council of Parents and Citizens Associations, Association of Parents and Friends of ACT Schools, ACT Principals Association, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Consultative Group, Australian Education Union, Independent Education Union, United Voice, Canberra Business Chamber, ACT Council of Social Service, Families ACT, Youth Coalition of the ACT, Health Care Consumers Association and Australian Research Alliance for Children and Youth. As members can see, this is an extensive list, but it is not exhaustive, and I welcome the views of others who have an interest.

The Education Directorate has already kicked off their work in the ACT government schools with a discussion with school principals and leaders. I enjoyed being part of the leaders' forum and hearing from teachers about how they would engage with their schools and what their needs will be. I look forward to a similar process occurring in the Catholic system and throughout independent schools. I am looking forward to taking part in that when I can.

MR PETTERSSON: Minister, how are children and parents being involved in this conversation?

MS BERRY: As I have said, I am keen to hear from students and parents about the future of our system as we continue to improve on equity. Representative bodies like the parents and citizens association have important roles in discussing the issues with their members and providing feedback to the government. But I also want to hear firsthand from students and parents.

Last Friday I attended a student congress meeting—I know that you have attended a number yourself, Madam Speaker—with student representatives from ACT government schools. We had some really great conversations about the importance of equity and shared some ideas about how diversity can be acknowledged and supported so that kids get a great education and the chance of a good life which flows from it.

The congress workshopped some initial ideas and was tasked with some of the out-of-session work to go back to their local school or college and involve their peers in a conversation. I look forward to the congress reporting back on their findings in the coming months.

The government will also give parents the chance to share their views. I know it is hard for parents to juggle work, family and the rest of life; so the education directorate is looking for different ways that parents can get involved without too much of an

effort. Many parents are very keen in school networks on social media because of how easy it is to check in, get information and provide views late in the evening after the kids have had dinner and gone to bed.

The government is going to be using some of these methods to bring the conversation to parents to make it easier for them to be involved. I am keen to see if social media can give parents easier interaction with some stimulus materials, including different formats that can capture their reactions and comments. I was excited to get help from the student congress with this task. At their meeting last week they presented me with the hash tag for our social media activity, education for the next generation, which will soon start emerging online.

Planning—public housing

MR PARTON: My question is directed to the Minister for Planning and Land Management and is in relation to the public housing developments announced on 15 March. Minister, section 87 of the Planning and Development Act 2007 outlines that a technical amendment is allowed if it is a variation to clarify the language in the territory plan if it does not change the substance of the plan. Minister, given that the public housing renewal task force knew they could not put public housing on community facility zoned land without amending the territory plan, what advice did you receive in relation to section 87 of the Planning and Development Act?

MR GENTLEMAN: I thank Mr Parton for his question. Technical amendments have two functions. One is for administration; the other one is to make changes to the territory plan which supports changes in this regard to the technical amendment for supportive housing.

The inclusion of social housing under some common terminology for supportive housing was put forward in December 2015. It originated in March 2008 when that part of the territory plan came into operation containing supportive housing as permitted use in CFZ areas. The technical amendment to clarify social housing as a common term was notified on the legislation register, as I mentioned, in December 2015. The technical amendment underwent public notification for 20 days.

In this case the inclusion of social housing under some common terminology for supportive housing means the use of land for residential accommodation for persons in need of support, which is—

Ms Lawder: On a point of order as to relevance, Madam Speaker, the question specifically asked what advice the minister received relating to section 87.

MADAM SPEAKER: The minister, I think, is getting to use and the technical amendment, which was also a key part of the question.

Mrs Dunne: On the point of order, there was stuff in the preamble but the question was direct. It said, “What advice did the minister receive?” The standing orders require him to be directly relevant.

MADAM SPEAKER: The minister has some time to come to the end of the answer.

MR GENTLEMAN: Thank you, Madam Speaker. At the time, of course, when the amendment was going through in an omnibus bill there was an explanation clearly setting out the process for that technical amendment. The question here today is about advice that I received from the directorate in regard to that, and that was that we needed to clarify the supportive housing terminology for the territory plan.

As I said, supportive housing means the use of land for residential accommodation for persons in need of support. It is managed by a territory approved organisation that provides a range of supported services such as counselling, domestic assistance or personal care for residents as required. Although all those services must be able to be delivered on site, management preparation may be carried out off site. *(Time expired.)*

MR PARTON: Minister, would you agree that the inclusion of public housing, or initially social housing, in the definition of supportive housing is something far more substantial than a “variation to change the language”?

MR GENTLEMAN: It was put forward to clarify the situation for supportive housing, as I mentioned earlier. Some of the common terminology for that would be aged-persons units, community housing—and this is specified in the change—older persons units, a rooming house or a university college. So inclusion of the term “social housing” in the common terminology for supportive housing is in recognition that the term “social housing” is an umbrella term encompassing generally low cost housing provided by either a public or a community provider for people on low or moderate incomes.

MS LAWDER: Minister, did you receive any advice that this change may not be consistent with the definition or that the change may be problematic or high risk?

MR GENTLEMAN: I cannot recall in the advice whether it was problematic or high risk, but, as I mentioned, it was to clarify the term for supportive housing, and that is why it was put forward.

Planning—public housing

MS LAWDER: My question is directed to the Minister for Housing and Suburban Development, in relation to the public housing developments announced on 15 March. Minister, in April 2015 the Public Housing Renewal Steering Committee noted that the use of community facility zoned land for public housing would require the planning directorate to support a Territory Plan variation and, if this strategy were supported, then construction could commence. Minister, when did you or your office become aware of the need to change the Territory Plan before public housing developments could proceed on land zoned for community facilities?

MS BERRY: I will take the question on notice.

MS LAWDER: Minister, what directions or guidance did you or your office or your directorate give in relation to the need to change the Territory Plan before you could proceed with the public housing developments?

MS BERRY: I will take the question on notice.

MR HANSON: I am guessing what the answer is going to be, but, minister, what discussions did you or your office or your directorate have with the minister for planning or his office or directorate in relation to the need to change the Territory Plan, and what was the time frame of those discussions?

MS BERRY: I will take the question on notice.

Public housing—Wright

MR HANSON: My question is to the Minister for Housing and Suburban Development. Minister, I refer to documents obtained under FOI that show that sites for Holder, Chapman, Mawson and Wright were under active consideration for redevelopment as public housing from 6 November 2014. It is noted that in the suburb of Wright there was community land of 9,191 square metres and that “half would be required for public housing”. Minister, why did you not inform the residents of Wright who were purchasing land in that location in 2014, 2015 and 2016 that half of the community land adjacent to their respective properties would be required for public housing?

MS BERRY: As Mr Hanson has identified in his question, those sites were being considered at that time and there had been no decision made at that time about whether or not they would be suitable for public housing as part of the public housing renewal program.

MR HANSON: Minister, why didn't you tell the residents in Holder, Chapman, Mawson or Monash equally that public housing was being planned for their suburbs as early as 2014?

MS BERRY: Public housing is planned for every suburb in this city, as part of the ACT government's salt-and-pepper approach to making sure that we have public housing across every suburb in the ACT. It has been part of the government's conversation for some time now. Particularly, since the most recent election, in October last year, the ACT Labor Party, along with the Greens, came up with an agreement which also has public housing renewal mentioned in it. It is very important to the Labor Party, with the support of the Greens, to ensure that our public housing tenants get the best possible housing so that they can live decent and happy lives and have the same goals and aspirations as the rest of us.

Members interjecting—

MADAM SPEAKER: Gentlemen, the minister is answering—

Mr Hanson interjecting—

Mr Barr interjecting—

MADAM SPEAKER: Mr Hanson, Chief Minister, can we allow the minister to answer.

MS BERRY: What a shame that we had comments from Mr Hanson in the paper recently saying, “Not in our suburb. Bugger off, we’re full.” It sounds—

Mrs Dunne: A point of order.

MADAM SPEAKER: Mrs Dunne, I expect I know what the point of order is.

Mrs Dunne: I draw your attention to unparliamentary language and ask the minister to withdraw.

MADAM SPEAKER: Yes. Can you please withdraw.

MS BERRY: I withdraw, Madam Speaker.

Mr Hanson: Tell the truth, Yvette.

Mr Parton: A supplementary.

MADAM SPEAKER: I am considering Mr Hanson’s interjection. I ask people to be very mindful of language, whether you are on your feet or sitting on your rear end, not to impugn the reputation of members in this place. You were very close to it then, Mr Hanson.

Mr Hanson: Well, she should tell the truth, Madam Speaker.

Ms Berry: Madam Speaker, a point of order. You might not have heard, because of all the interjections, but Mr Hanson did accuse me of lying previously. I know you have drawn attention to it, but now he is also saying that I should tell the truth. I said “things like”. I did not quote him verbatim, and that is not lying.

Mr Hanson: Madam Speaker, I am sorry—

MADAM SPEAKER: On the point of order, Mr Hanson?

Mr Hanson: On the point of order, Madam Speaker, saying in this place that Mr Hanson has been saying “Bugger off, we don’t want you in Chapman” is clearly not true, Madam Speaker—

MADAM SPEAKER: Mr Hanson, can you resume your seat.

Mr Hanson: and you called it as such.

MADAM SPEAKER: Can you sit down. If you used the word “lie”, you will withdraw; unconditionally you will withdraw.

Mr Hanson: I withdraw. Am I withdrawing “lie” or “untruth”, though?

MADAM SPEAKER: You can put both on the table to withdraw, and you can sit yourself down now.

MR PARTON: Minister, is a four-week discussion period after the election sufficient consultation when you have known about this redevelopment for two years before the election?

MS BERRY: The conversation about public housing renewal has been going on for many years now. Leading up to the October election, we were absolutely firm on our commitment to ensure that those people in our community who need additional support, who need decent housing, are not in high density housing which provides them with fewer opportunities and chances than the rest of us have. That is why we have a public housing policy where we are renewing over 11 per cent of our public housing. That is the biggest renewal program that this city has ever seen. It is something that every single one of us should be proud of, not just those on this side of the chamber. Every single one of us in this chamber should be proud of the fact that we are trying to give a hand up to those people who most need it, and not to further—

Members interjecting—

MS BERRY: It is a shame it has got to this. I encourage members opposite not to say things that are going to inflame this conversation, which they have. And they do not deny it. We have seen it on Facebook and we have seen it in the *Canberra Times*. It sends a very clear message to the public housing tenants in this town that they are not welcome. From the Labor Party’s point of view and from the Greens party’s point of view, they absolutely are welcome in every single—

Members interjecting—

MS BERRY: We have an agreement that commits to public housing renewal and commits to a salt and pepper approach to public housing in every suburb across this city.

Community sector—government relationships

MR PETTERSSON: My question is to the Minister for Community Services and Social Inclusion. Minister, what is this government doing to support the ACT community sector to deliver programs and services more effectively and efficiently?

MS STEPHEN-SMITH: I thank Mr Pettersson for his question. We all know, in this chamber, that the community sector is very important to the lives of many

Canberrans. The sector provides services that range from emergency financial relief and food aid to Canberrans dealing with hardship in their lives, to support services for newly arrived Canberrans and those from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, to young Canberrans, to older Canberrans and to everyone in between.

This government has a strong record of red tape reduction for the community services sector, streamlining funding arrangements including transferring service funding agreements to grants and, as appropriate, extending a number of contracts from three to five years, as well as providing access to a new on-line business tool, breaking new ground, to support compliance and reduce reporting costs.

Just recently, the government's community support and infrastructure grants program opened. It enables community organisations to apply for a total of \$220,000 in funding to fulfil some of the administrative, capital and program needs that every organisation has. This is an increase of \$20,000 on the previous year's funding.

Community organisations may apply for a grant under four project categories: community support and capacity, such as partnerships or training; non-fixed infrastructure and equipment including furniture, storage, work safety equipment; minor capital works and fixed infrastructure; and community support for those in care including cultural, social or sporting opportunities for children and young people in care.

Applications for these grants close at midnight on 28 May and I look forward to announcing the successful applicants at a later date. I encourage all members of the Assembly to get the word out there about these grants and to encourage the community organisations in their own electorates to apply for these grants.

MR PETTERSSON: Minister, what is the government doing to support organisations to engage more broadly with the community?

MS STEPHEN-SMITH: I thank Mr Pettersson for his supplementary. The ACT government understands, of course, that for many community organisations, new forms of outreach and engagement have their own particular costs and challenges. That is why we also have a participation (digital communities) grants program, offering community organisations the opportunity to apply for a grant of up to \$5,000 to build their expertise or capacity in using digital technology. The total amount of funding available under this grants program is \$125,000. Again, the program recently opened for funding applications. Funds under this program can be used to establish or enhance an organisation's online presence, to purchase software or hardware, to promote digital literacy among the Canberra community or to translate and provide online information for members of an organisation; or, indeed, for volunteers.

Yesterday, we saw some of the great use of online applications. Just last night, Orange Sky Laundry was recognised as the ACT innovation award winner in the volunteers of the year awards, recognised in part for its innovative approach to both management and engagement with donors and supporters through its appropriate, which logs all

washes that Orange Sky's homeless friends use. Once a shift is finished, it emails donors to let them know that they have just paid for a wash for a friend. This is the kind of innovation that we want to see across our community sector, but it requires support for organisations to understand, and volunteers to be able to use, digital technologies better.

I recognise the importance of ensuring that our diverse and sometimes disadvantaged communities can be empowered through their online voice and assisted to speak up and speak out on the issues which affect them, and that the volunteers who support them can be supported to understand better how to use online technology. (*Time expired.*)

MS LAWDER: Minister, how much of the money collected under the community sector reform levy has been spent? What data do you have as to return on the investment or the effectiveness of the expenditure of that money?

MS STEPHEN-SMITH: I thank Ms Lawder for her supplementary question. Of course, we know that the community co-contribution levy, which was equal to 0.34 per cent of total funding from 2012, has supported a range of community sector reforms. Some of the red tape reductions that I referred to in my earlier answer are among those activities.

I have recently submitted responses to a number of questions on notice through the annual report hearings process that go specifically to the return on those things. As I have said, the levy has been largely returned to the sector through the sector development program.

Our current estimate is that there is about \$740,000 in funding available in 2016-17. It will be used to support priorities identified under the community sector industry strategy, which is being developed by the joint community-government sector industry reference group. That community-industry strategy was released last year.

There is currently work going on to develop priorities for how the sector levy should be spent under that funding. But the priority will be on workforce development. That is the priority that has been identified by the community sector through that strategy. Of course, the levy will end on the 30 June 2017.

Public housing—Holder

MRS JONES: My question is to the Minister for Housing and Suburban Development. Minister, I refer to documents obtained under FOI that show that the redevelopment of the site that was occupied by the Post and Antenatal Depression Support and Information group was being considered strongly from 6 November 2014. The document states, "Building on part of the preferred site is currently occupied by PANDSI. Property group are able to find an alternative location. However, consultation has not yet occurred." Minister, I wrote to the government on 17 March 2016, after surveyors had been to the site, and received letters from the government on 13 May 2016 and again on 6 September 2016 stating that "the

government has no intention to redevelop at this time.” Minister, why were those letters sent in 2016 when the site had clearly been planned for development since at least 2014?

MS BERRY: I am not the minister responsible for property group. With regard to the consideration of sites in the ACT for public housing renewal, there were some questions earlier which I have taken on notice. In addition to that, the decision on these sites was part of the cabinet process as well. That was an ongoing process within cabinet which could not have been identified to the community at the time.

MRS JONES: Minister, were there surveyors on that site prior to the letters being sent to me?

MS BERRY: I would have to take that question on notice.

MR HANSON: Minister, why wasn’t PANDSI consulted earlier when documents obtained through FOI and other sources show that planning had been occurring since 2014?

MS BERRY: There was no intention to mislead anybody. Of course, when the government gives consideration to all sorts of different planning across the city—development, where they are going to put speed humps or any other sort of work that the government does across the city—not all of it is identified straightaway, because it is under consideration. They are going through a process, and once they have completed that process then we can start the conversation.

It is important that we continue this conversation right now. I know that everybody is trying to find every excuse under the sun to try to stop this renewal program; but it is not the case that I am hearing the same kinds of things, particularly from residents of Holder, who are keen to find ways to get this renewal program working, so that people who are now residing in public housing that is unsuitable can be welcomed into a new community amongst the Holder residents; they can be supported there and the space that is there can be used by everybody, and we can build a really strong, inclusive community.

Access Canberra—service delivery

MS CHEYNE: My question is to the Minister for Regulatory Services. What does the recent survey on Access Canberra show about how satisfied Canberrans are with the services provided by Access Canberra?

MR RAMSAY: I thank Ms Cheyne for her question and for her ongoing interest in the quality of services that are provided to the people of Canberra, both residential and business services. Access Canberra recently ran a survey about Canberrans’ awareness of and interaction with the agency. I am happy to report that not only is community awareness and use of Access Canberra’s client services on the increase but so too is satisfaction with each of its services.

This shows the hard work of the staff at Access Canberra to promote their services as well as the work that is being done to make these services more accessible and easy to deal with. This hard work is reflected in the survey findings, with 77 per cent of Canberrans surveyed in 2017 reporting that they knew about Access Canberra and its services, compared to 51 per cent in 2016.

Customer satisfaction statistics show that the community is happy with the service they get from Access Canberra. Ninety-seven per cent of people who visited a service centre in 2017 said that they were satisfied with their experience. That is an increase from 94 per cent in 2016.

Satisfaction with the contact centre is also up, with 91 per cent of people satisfied with their experience, which is up from 87 per cent in the previous year. Continual improvements to Access Canberra's website have also paid off, with the satisfaction of users increasing to 83 per cent in 2017 from 77 per cent in 2016.

Access Canberra has been working hard to improve its services, including expanding the number of services that can be lodged online, improving web content and design, and even redesigning the layout of our new service centres to ensure that the government is delivering its services in a way that is easy and convenient to access.

MS CHEYNE: Minister, how did we go about gathering these results, and were there any noticeable changes in the types of inquiries Canberrans are seeking answers to?

MR RAMSAY: I thank Ms Cheyne for the supplementary. People were selected for the survey from randomly selected landlines and also from mobile numbers that were collected via in-person approaches in public spaces. This allows the broadest possible community views to be heard and captures younger people who tend to be excluded in landline-only surveys. As in previous years, the survey responses were then weighted to reflect the census profile of Canberra and to ensure that the survey results are truly representative of the Canberra community.

As for changes to the types of inquiries that Access Canberra are receiving, the survey showed that there has been a statistically significant increase in the number of calls that have been related to businesses as opposed to personal interactions. These calls are much more complex to deal with but, despite the increasing complexity of the inquiries they receive, satisfaction with call centres also rose. It is no doubt a reflection of the breadth of knowledge and the level of hard work that our Access Canberra employees put in day to day to help our citizens from all corners of the ACT on a huge range of issues.

MS ORR: Minister, what do Canberrans see as the most important contributor to a positive interaction with Access Canberra?

MR RAMSAY: I thank Ms Orr for her supplementary. When it comes to what drives people's satisfaction with phone and in-person services of Access Canberra, the survey shows overwhelmingly that there are two main factors that have the largest impact on an interaction.

The first of these was how polite and willing to help the staff were during the interaction, including how thorough and fair the staff were in engaging with the customer. The second factor was the quality of the information being conveyed, such as how clear and concise the explanation was, and how easy it was to understand. Interestingly, the length of time they spent initially waiting to speak to someone was the least important indicator regarding customer satisfaction for those calling the contract centre and the second least important for those coming into a service centre.

Given the high levels of satisfaction with our contact and service centres, it is clear that the staff of Access Canberra are providing a high value, thorough and knowledgeable service to the community in Canberra. Access Canberra will continue to look at ways it can improve services so it can continue to improve for our citizens.

The survey provides some useful insights into what is working well and where it could improve. Using the information gathered, we can improve our services and provide easy to access options for those seeking to interact with government. I look forward to releasing the full survey report in the near future.

Mr Barr: I ask that all further questions be placed on the notice paper.

Papers

Madam Speaker presented the following papers:

Auditor-General Act, pursuant to subsection 17(5)—Auditor-General’s Report No 3/2017—2015-16 Financial Audits—Computer Information Systems, dated 5 May 2017.

Ombudsman Act, pursuant to section 21—Ombudsman complaint statistics—Quarterly report for the period 1 January to 31 March 2017, dated 26 April 2017.

Standing order 191—Amendments to:

Commercial Arbitration Bill 2016, dated 3 April 2017.

Crimes Legislation Amendment Bill 2016, dated 3 April 2017.

Ms Fitzharris presented the following papers:

Health Practitioner Regulation National Law—Health Practitioner Regulation National Law Amendment (Midwife Insurance Exemption) Regulation 2016 (No 126/2016)—Explanatory statement.

Annual Reports (Government Agencies) Act, pursuant to section 13—Annual report 2016—Canberra Institute of Technology, dated 28 March 2016.

University of Canberra Act, pursuant to section 36—Annual report 2016—University of Canberra (2 volumes), dated April 2017.

Mr Gentleman presented the following papers:

Planning and Development Act, pursuant to subsection 242(2)—Schedule—
Leases granted for the period 1 January to 31 March 2017.

Subordinate legislation (including explanatory statements unless otherwise stated)

Legislation Act, pursuant to section 64—

Public Place Names Act—Public Place Names (Taylor) Determination 2017—
Disallowable Instrument DI2017-34 (LR, 2 May 2017).

Race and Sports Bookmaking Act—Race and Sports Bookmaking (Sports
Bookmaking Venues) Determination 2017 (No 1)—Disallowable Instrument
DI2017-31 (LR, 18 April 2017).

Road Transport (General) Act—Road Transport (General) Application of Road
Transport Legislation Declaration 2017 (No 3)—Disallowable Instrument
DI2017-29 (LR, 3 April 2017).

Road Transport (Safety and Traffic Management) Regulation 2000—Road
Transport (Safety and Traffic Management) Parking Authority Declaration
2017 (No 1)—Disallowable Instrument DI2017-30 (LR, 13 April 2017).

Volunteering

Discussion of matter of public importance

MADAM ASSISTANT SPEAKER (Ms Lee): Madam Speaker has received letters from Ms Cheyne, Ms Cody, Mr Coe, Mrs Dunne, Mrs Jones, Mrs Kikkert, Ms Lawder, Ms Lee, Ms Orr, Mr Parton, Mr Pettersson and Mr Steel proposing that matters of public importance be submitted to the Assembly for discussion. In accordance with standing order 79, the Speaker has determined that the matter proposed by Mr Coe be submitted to the Assembly, namely:

The important contribution volunteers make in delivering community services in Canberra.

MR COE (Yerrabi—Leader of the Opposition) (3.42): This week, as you would be well aware, Madam Assistant Speaker, is National Volunteer Week. In the matter of public importance that I put forward today I think is it important to recognise the important contribution that volunteers make in delivering community services here in the capital and, of course, to thank the volunteers that make such a huge impact on our community.

National Volunteer Week is an annual celebration that acknowledges the generous contribution our volunteers make. This week, from 8 to 14 May 2017, events across the country are being held to recognise and to say thank you to the nearly six million Australians who volunteer their time and skills to help others. The week also provides

an opportunity for volunteering issues to be discussed and, hopefully, for solutions to be found.

Volunteering touches every aspect of Australian society, including education, emergency services, sport and recreation, arts and heritage, as well as social services. The wide-ranging contribution that volunteers make helps to build strong and resilient communities. As a nation we have a strong commitment to volunteering as a way of life, but indeed here in Canberra, in the capital, I believe our commitment to volunteering across a whole range of areas sets an example for the rest of the nation. Quite frankly, Madam Assistant Speaker, I believe Canberra punches above its weight when it comes to volunteering.

It is difficult to formally value the contribution that volunteers make, but there are figures available—they are about a decade old now—that suggest that volunteers provided \$14.6 billion in unpaid labour across Australia. In 2010 the formal value of volunteering to the economy was more than \$25 billion. That certainly gives an idea of the enormity of the contribution that volunteers make across Australia.

Canberra is a city of volunteers. In every suburb, every age group and every ethnic group we have dedicated volunteers. These are volunteers who give their time not for themselves but for the pursuit of helping others. Volunteers and Contact ACT have a membership of more than 200 organisations that are in some way involved in volunteering in Canberra. They range from organisations like the ACT Equestrian Association and the ACT Fencing Association to the Young Neighbourhood Centre and St John Ambulance.

In Canberra we have volunteering organisations that can accommodate just about every skill put forward, every interest and every cause that needs assistance. We are a volunteering rich community. I also note that the political parties also operate on volunteer labour, by and large, whether it be election campaigns or the organisations and their administration. So much work is done by volunteers and so much of our democracy is due to the work that volunteers put in.

Being National Volunteer Week, the annual volunteering awards were held last night. I know Ms Lawder will be saying a little bit more about this event shortly, but I want to especially congratulate and thank the volunteer of the year, Jayanti Gupta, for her wonderful contribution to Canberra. I would like to recognise all the winners and nominees that won awards last night and were recognised.

I also want to thank the many people that are not recognised, the many people that fly under the radar. In many instances they have been volunteering for decades and have never received any recognition whatsoever. Of course, they volunteer not for the recognition, not for awards or for accolades, but for the noble pursuit of helping their community.

In my electorate of Yerrabi there are numerous organisations that help our community, especially through volunteering. There are, of course, several Rotary clubs based in the region, including Aurora Gungahlin, Gungahlin and Hall. There is also the

Gungahlin Lions Club, the Gungahlin and Hall brigades of the ACT Rural Fire Service and the Gungahlin unit of the ACT SES.

There are countless sporting and recreational clubs, health and personal development organisations, environment groups and charity branches helping those less fortunate. There are organisations such as St Vincent de Paul and the Salvation Army. There is no shortage of organisations that are punching above their weight.

I would like to encourage Canberrans to consider volunteering for a cause to help others in our community. If you have not made the step towards volunteering before, I am sure there are many that would encourage you to do so. It is, of course, a wonderful and rewarding experience. It is important to acknowledge the important contribution that volunteers make and that is why the Canberra Liberals are very proud to put forward this matter of public importance today.

MS CODY (Murrumbidgee) (3.47): I truly would like to thank Mr Coe for bringing this matter of public importance forward. I could not agree with him more, which is surprising, I am sure, on many fronts.

Mr Coe: Battle stations.

MS CODY: I know; look out. Volunteers make an amazing contribution to our community. It is wonderful that Mr Coe has risen today and thanked all of the volunteers. I heard him say Ms Lawder will also be referencing the volunteer awards last night. I believe Ms Cheyne is also going to talk a little bit about that, so I have decided not to. I would like to talk about some of the volunteering that happens in our community. We could not manage all that we do without their help.

As we know, volunteers perform a vital role in Canberra. I know myself; I volunteer on a regular basis. However, volunteers can only do the vital work they do knowing they have secure employment. The matter of secure employment is often discussed on our side of the chamber. It is important that people know that when volunteering they do so without jeopardising that employment.

The direct effects of insecure work are well known. The effects on the broader community also need to be addressed. Secure work with stable hours does not just provide for the individual and their family; it also underpins our society by allowing people to volunteer on a regular basis. People with a stable income and predictable work patterns are able to volunteer more readily. They are able to coach their kids' footy or netball teams—from the Woden Blues Football Club to Easts and Royals rugby, right through to the Bullants netball team.

Without secure employment we would see fewer volunteers out there every day, working and helping to make sure that their children, their friends and their family are able to participate in these local sporting activities. They also participate, as Mr Coe said, in organisations like Rotary or the Lions Club. I was lucky enough to attend the Kambah Lions presentation of the Frank Brown Memorial Award for Community Service late last year or earlier this year. It was an honour to stand there and watch

ordinary people doing what they believe are ordinary deeds out there every day, working in their community, volunteering and supporting others that may not be able to support themselves.

Another great opportunity is to do something you enjoy, follow a passion that you may have, like being involved in a local choir like Mixtape Chorus. This is a choir for lovers of pop and indie pop. They meet regularly in Canberra to sing choral arrangements of their favourite songs. There are no auditions. You just have to share a love of singing and enjoy the genre of music. Although there are many excellent choirs in Canberra, Mixtape Chorus is so popular because it is a group of like-minded people getting together to support each other and give harmonious joy to members of their community.

As we have spoken about already, sporting is a big thing, where people volunteer every day, all the time. I do triathlons. Mr Rattenbury is not here, but he does as well. We have been talking about them over the course of this last week. Without the volunteers that get out there—they get up at ungodly hours of the morning, usually two and three in the morning—to support the wonderful events then we would not have triathlon in the ACT. It is great that these volunteers continuously get out there and do these great deeds.

This weekend celebrates Mother's Day. We all know that Mother's Day is an opportunity to thank our mothers for doing the wonderful things they have always done. Some would say they volunteer. Some would say they do not have a choice. They just get in, muck in, and do what they do.

This weekend also celebrates the 20th anniversary of the Mother's Day Classic event, which is run primarily by volunteers. There are some paid employees, like there have to be in every well-run organisation or activity, but the vast majority of the Mother's Day Classic event is run and managed by volunteers that give up their day-to-day jobs and their day-to-day hours with their families to help raise funds, awareness and much-needed support for people suffering breast cancer. I encourage all members of the chamber and those listening to get involved in the Mother's Day Classic on Sunday. All you have to do is show up, walk five kilometres or run 10—whatever takes your fancy.

Obviously there are other forms of volunteering that we see every day, such as amateur theatre performances and amateur musicals, which we all love to go and watch—like those performed at the Q and sometimes even here at our own Canberra Theatre and the Street Theatre. Erindale Theatre also has amateur productions that are performed on a regular basis. I encourage people to go along and support their local theatre or musical performance.

As Minister Gentleman has already mentioned this morning, this weekend we have our annual MRA blanket run, which offers support to those needy Canberrans during the winter months. That is another organisation that is fabulous and is run primarily by volunteers. It is put on every year by volunteers. These volunteers muck in; they do their jobs and they get stuff done. These volunteers, as Mr Coe has already mentioned,

do this out of the sincerity of their heart; they want to make Canberra a better, more inclusive, more accepting city. They do this not because they believe they are extraordinary but because they believe they are ordinary, everyday people that just want to help.

I too call on people to get in, muck in, get involved and volunteer on every occasion they can. You can volunteer by going down to your local school and reading books to children. You can volunteer at a national level, or you can volunteer at a local level by knocking on your neighbour's door and just saying hi. It is not that hard to do. I encourage everyone to try their very best to get up, to volunteer, to be involved and to try to help their community to become more inclusive and more conciliatory.

I again thank Mr Coe for bringing this important matter forward. It has been a great opportunity for us to stand here today and reflect on the important work volunteers do in our community, in our society and at a national level. I thank Mr Coe and I thank everyone else who will speak on this matter of public importance today.

MS CHEYNE (Ginninderra) (3.54): I also thank Mr Coe for bringing this discussion to the chamber and praise the tireless work and generosity of volunteers in the ACT. Volunteers in our community give their time and skills for free to support organisations and causes which could not otherwise exist. Volunteers are absolutely critical to the delivery of community services in Canberra, from supporting vulnerable and disadvantaged community members to raising money to fund research and raising awareness about public health issues. I extend my wholehearted thanks and admiration to those people who contribute to building our connected and caring community through volunteering.

I echo the congratulations of my colleagues to the winners of the 2017 Canberra region volunteering awards, which were announced last night. I am in awe of the amazing work of each and every one of the volunteers who were nominated for an award. These people see a gap in our community and mobilise to fill that gap of their own volition. I would like to make special mention of Orange Sky Laundry—Minister Stephen-Smith also mentioned this during question time—which received the ACT innovation award last night. I am a keen supporter of Orange Sky Laundry, and I am so pleased to see that they continue to be recognised, including being recognised within the ACT, for their very hard work.

Orange Sky Laundry started with an ingenious idea between two friends to fit a van with two washing machines and two dryers and travel around the streets of Brisbane offering a free laundry service to the homeless. But what Orange Sky Laundry is actually about is the conversations that can be had while the laundry is completed. Steeped in notions of dignity and respect, Orange Sky Laundry is the first of its kind in the world and now has services in 11 Australian cities, including Canberra. Orange Sky Laundry is a testament to what can be achieved with a generous spirit and a good idea.

I would also like to make special mention of Juliet Moody, the founder of the Fearless Initiative and winner last night of the thought and leadership award. The Fearless

Initiative unites comedians against family violence through charity comedy events. Its work has encouraged people to speak out about their own experiences of family violence and has united people to make a difference. On a day where we are remembering the life of Jayson Hinder, it is important to note that the *Fearless Comedy Gala* was something he helped to get off the ground.

Also last night, the volunteers in policing program won the Canberra's choice award. This was an award voted for by the community. There are 49 police volunteers in Canberra and the program has contributed over 200,000 volunteer hours since the program first commenced in 2001. These volunteers provide front office assistance, fingerprinting and role playing, as well as catering for members who might be involved in a missing persons search, for example.

Volunteers come in many forms, and all deserve our recognition. Volunteers may doorknock to raise money, help out at a local school or a charity shop, work on the board of a local community group or provide professional skills on a pro bono basis, to name just a few examples.

In my electorate of Ginninderra the not-for-profit charitable organisation Pegasus relies on the efforts of volunteers to bring joy and excitement to the lives of young Canberrans with a disability. Rather than focusing on disability, Pegasus aims to extend participants' abilities by creating a welcoming and accessible environment in which they can learn to interact with ponies and horses. Pegasus relies on volunteers and donations to keep putting huge smiles on kids' faces as they build confidence and strength and improve mobility with their new equine friends. Their open day each year is a highlight on many people's calendars. I was sorry to miss it this past weekend, but I understand that you, Madam Assistant Speaker, had a very good time there.

I would also like to take a moment to mention the hard work of the board members of the Belconnen Arts Centre and Belconnen Community Service and the committee of the Belconnen Community Council. I know each of these organisations very well. They support a huge range of community services in Belconnen and inject life into our local arts scene. The board and committee members offer their time and skills for free to ensure that these community organisations continue to meet the needs of Belconnen residents and enhance our broader community.

It is widely recognised that not only does volunteering deliver invaluable services to the community but volunteers can also benefit from their altruism. Volunteering provides opportunities to gain new skills and knowledge, connect to the community, build self-esteem and develop personal relationships with a wide range of people. Ninety-six per cent of people say that volunteering makes them happy, and I can testify to this, having experienced these benefits for myself. One example is that since early 2009 I have volunteered for Radio 1RPH, or radio for the print handicapped. I know other members too, like Mrs Dunne, have a very long association with the organisation.

Each fortnight, on Sunday evening, I read the newspapers over the air so that those who are not able to read the newspapers themselves do not miss out; or they can read along with me to enhance their reading skills. It feels great to help out my community, but I have also benefitted. I have developed radio and speaking skills, which I would not have done otherwise, I have learnt how to pronounce many difficult words and I have had the pleasure of meeting so many interesting people at the station over the years. Again, like my other colleagues, I would encourage anyone who is able to reach out to their local community organisations and experience how inspiring and gratifying volunteering can be.

Volunteering and Contact ACT is funded by the ACT government and is the peak body for volunteering in the ACT. It is the key source in the ACT for volunteering information and referral to Canberra's volunteering services and programs. ACT government employees are also entitled to three days of paid community service leave in a 12-month period. The contribution volunteers make in delivering community services in Canberra cannot be overstated. Again I thank the opposition leader for bringing forward the discussion today. The commitment and creativity of volunteers in Canberra is a testament to their humanity and generosity, and it makes me so proud of my city.

MS LE COUTEUR (Murrumbidgee) (4.01): Last night I had the pleasure of joining some of my Assembly colleagues at the Volunteering and Contact ACT volunteering awards. We were sitting in a room with over 300 of the most inspiring, committed and heartfelt people I have met: people who care, people who give and people who want a better world and are prepared to work for it.

The ACT is reliant on volunteering and the free labour that volunteers provide, especially in bush regeneration, which is largely undertaken by volunteers through the dozens of ParkCare and Landcare groups. Canberrans are very proud of the fact that we live in the bush capital, but it is quite likely that the majority of people do not realise just how many people volunteer their time to help regenerate their local bushlands, often by regularly volunteering with their local ParkCare group. I know no government can afford to pay for the amount of work that is done by our volunteer conservationists, not only through regeneration work but also through citizen science volunteer work; for example, Frogwatch, Waterwatch and the Canberra Ornithologists Group. The hundreds of people who collect data on our natural environment each year contribute to a better understanding of the health of our local ecosystems.

I also want to talk about something which is possibly not uniquely Canberran but still very much Canberran. Our city is blessed with a large number of articulate, highly skilled, highly educated people. Particularly as my generation moves on from the workforce, we are seeing baby boomers retiring from the APS and full-time management jobs; they are retiring from demanding management roles. After having spent a life in the service of the public, they often spend their retirement providing indispensable support to community organisations, on their boards and management committees.

Volunteer board members are a classic example of the unsexy hidden volunteering that thousands of Australians dedicate their time to. Board work is not glamorous; it mostly involves reading piles of documents and thousands of pages of baffling laws—some of which possibly were passed by this Assembly—regulations and procedures, followed by the exciting prospect of sitting in a boardroom for a monthly meeting, trawling through financial data.

In the early 2000s changes to insurance and the massive increase in the cost of insuring organisations' activities made it very difficult for many small volunteer organisations to afford to hire venues. I was very pleased in 2008 that in the parliamentary agreement we were able to ensure that the ACT government was able to cover insurance for organisations wanting to hire ACT government venues, such as Albert Hall and the Yarralumla Woolshed. While I was in the Assembly the previous time I helped to prompt the government to organise group insurance for all the community councils, which has made it possible for them to organise public events.

My colleague Mr Rattenbury, when he was minister for TAMS, worked to ensure that the volunteer insurance that covers groups like ParkCare was extended to other volunteer organisations wishing to undertake specific activities on ACT government land, such as friends of the Curtin shops and the Lyneham Commons gardeners. These are the kinds of practical supports the government can put into place to support our wonderful and valued volunteers in the ACT.

Going back to last night, a few things jumped out at me. First was the wonderful statistic that four out of 10 Canberrans volunteer. That is really huge; it is well above the Australian average of 35 per cent and well above the OECD averages. In fact, the Charities Aid Foundation's world giving index has some interesting stats from 2015 about Australian volunteering: 40 per cent of Australians have formally volunteered with an organisation and 68 per cent of Australians have helped out a stranger or someone they did not know.

That second one might sound a little bit odd, but the Charities Aid Foundation's methodology provides an interesting insight into our perceptions of volunteering. They measure what they call "giving" in three ways: giving money, giving time to an organisation and giving time to people you do not know. The International Labour Organisation decided in 2016 to redefine volunteer work as any "unpaid, non-compulsory activity to produce goods or services for people outside of your family".

Think about that and think about what you picture as volunteering. When you talk about volunteering, most think of the local scout volunteer taking kids out for a hike or many of the other examples that my colleagues have already talked about. But that is the visible volunteering, the formal volunteering. Like the way we think about work and we ignore the inconvenient truth of emotional labour and domestic work, we often do not think about the hidden volunteering of caring for friends, family and neighbours.

A 2010 study by Volunteering Australia found that one in five Australians provide essential care services to someone with a disability, someone with a long-term illness or someone dealing with the life changes that accompany ageing. Half of all Australians—that is, one in two—provide support services to someone who does not live in the same household: a friend's child whose parents have to work longer and longer hours but cannot afford child care or a neighbour who cannot navigate the murky waters of domestic childcare services to get the support they need to maintain their house and life.

These carers have a lower workforce participation rate than the national average, and many of the 37 per cent of carers have a disability themselves. There are only so many hours in the day, and it is very hard to balance the high time demands of caring for another person with balancing the ability to earn a living wage and to look after your own health. By far and away, of course, women make up the majority of carers. Women represent 68 per cent of primary carers and 55 per cent of all carers.

More people are volunteering more often, while at the same time some people are working longer and longer hours. Despite many people working longer hours and having multiple jobs and caring for their own families, Australians are contributing more and more time to supporting their communities formally and informally.

One of the things that means is that the government has categorically failed many Australians. They are working more and they are paying more and they are contributing more, but when things go wrong and they need help, our federal government is telling us that social services are being cut and that that is life because they are running out of money. While I do not doubt the sincerity of the Canberra Liberals and all the people sitting here in front of me, it is sometimes unfortunate that people talk about how great it is for other people to volunteer but do not deal with the reasons why we need to do so much volunteering.

People volunteer because they want to live in a society that cares about people; they want the most vulnerable people to be able to eat without begging, to live in a comfortable house that is not falling to pieces, to have some sense of fulfilment in their house and to see that their local park is not full of weeds and rubbish et cetera. We also know that the federal government, unfortunately, is providing less and less for our vulnerable people. While I very much thank Mr Coe for suggesting this matter of public importance—and I totally agree with him that it is important that volunteers deliver community service to Canberra—we need to look more broadly at the reasons for some of the volunteering efforts of our community.

I absolutely support volunteering, but we need to look at building up a community in Australia where everyone is cared for, where communities are supported and uplifted, an Australia where we reward people for the labour they give, and a society where we look after our community and respect our volunteers but where the government provides at least the basics so that we all can have happy, fulfilled, dignified lives without having to relying on the kindness of strangers.

MRS KIKKERT (Ginninderra) (4.11): I thank those who have already spoken on this important topic this afternoon. It nearly goes without saying that the delivery of community services in the ACT is helped along tremendously by the contributions made by hundreds of dedicated, selfless volunteers. It has been estimated, in fact, that volunteers contribute over \$1.5 billion to the territory's economy annually. This means that almost every facet of the community sector benefits from the tens of thousands of hours that these volunteers freely give because they feel they are a part of the Canberra community and wish to contribute to and strengthen that community. I am personally so grateful to all of them.

Today's matter of public importance is especially fitting because this is National Volunteer Week. National Volunteer Week is an annual celebration to acknowledge the generous contribution of Australia's many volunteers. It is good to celebrate volunteers because, as we have already noted here today, they play a huge role in delivering community services here in the territory and across the whole nation. It is also good to celebrate volunteers because the act of volunteering itself is an important part of forming strong, resilient communities.

I would like to take a moment to elaborate on that last point. First, volunteering is strongly linked to physical and mental wellbeing, both of which are crucial elements of strong communities. A 2011 report prepared by the *International Journal of Person-Centred Medicine* notes that 96 per cent of volunteers say that volunteering "makes people happier". On a local level, a 2013 report by Volunteering ACT found that 95 per cent of volunteers in the ACT say that volunteering is related to feelings of wellbeing. Research findings back up this subjective assessment. Just a few hours of volunteer work can measurably improve a person's mood and are also positively correlated with increased health and longevity.

In fact the evidence on this point is overwhelming. Serving as a volunteer is linked to all of the following: it increases self-confidence, esteem and self-reliance; it helps counteract the effects of stress, anger and anxiety; it provides people with a sense of purpose; it strengthens homes and family bonds; it combats loneliness, social isolation and depression; it provides opportunities for people to discover and explore their interests, talents and passions; it helps with recovery from both physical and mental health issues; and it improves life satisfaction.

In short, volunteering not only helps deliver community services in Canberra but it essentially helps bring those same benefits into the lives of the volunteers themselves, strengthening all involved.

The benefits do not stop there. Volunteering also allows people to connect with their community, make new friends, expand friendship networks and boost social skills. At the same time volunteering in the community sector educates people about the variety of community services that are available. Those who contribute to the work it takes to run these services learn to be able to trust them and are in a better position to refer their friends to needed services and to do so with confidence.

The benefits of volunteering cut across all ages and social groups. For example, research has shown that adults with disabilities or health conditions ranging from hearing and vision loss to heart disease, diabetes and digestive disorders all show improvement after volunteering. People with limited mobility can access all the benefits of volunteering by offering their time and services via phone or the internet.

Volunteering has been found to be an important dimension of productive ageing and keeping good mental and physical health as people age. Volunteering gives people who are retired opportunities to serve and engage with the community, as well as activities to occupy spare time.

Children and youth who volunteer learn from an early age many important principles and attributes that build good habits and character, such as work, including teamwork, service, compassion, selflessness, the importance of giving back to the community and so forth. I have personally seen this happen as youth that I know have taken the opportunity to clean graffiti from the Lyneham shops and nearby fences, prepare food for the homeless and other such activities. Young people who engage in these activities become strong and resilient.

Finally, with the recent observance of Anzac Day, I wish to thank our veterans, those who have volunteered to give so much in defence of our freedom. I encourage all to contribute to Canberra's community life by getting involved in volunteering and thank all those across the territory who do.

MS LAWDER (Brindabella) (4.16): National Volunteer Week began here in Australia quite some time ago, in 1989, as a way to recognise and celebrate the efforts of our volunteers. Voluntary work is a valuable part of life in Australia, contributing to community participation and building our social connections. This week represents 28 years that we have acknowledged the members of our community who represent the spirit of our city and are the true unsung heroes of the territory.

Volunteering can take place in so many different areas of our community. It could be at the local fire unit, delivering meals, revegetating wetlands or cleaning up our lakes and waterways, tutoring young people, business people who donate their time and services to volunteer-involving organisations, helping sick children or their families, organising and running heritage tours, our community councils run by volunteers, community radio stations, board members of community groups and P&Cs at our schools, school canteens, netball clubs, football clubs and so many other sporting organisations, and our scouts, guides and all the other different age groups encapsulating those groups.

Some of the organisations with which we are familiar that work in this area every day include Ronald McDonald House, Vinnies, the Salvation Army, Soldier On and RSL, the YMCA and YWCA, Lifeline, Communities@Work, Zonta, Rotary and Lions clubs, just to give a very small snapshot of volunteer organisations and volunteer-involving organisations.

Last night I attended the Volunteering and Contact ACT annual volunteer of the year awards, along with some of my colleagues. I think Ms Le Couteur, Mr Steel, Mr Gentleman and Minister Stephen-Smith were there. I would like to read out the names, for the benefit of everyone here. The volunteer of the year was awarded to Jayanti Gupta for her work with multicultural and women's organisations. Last year, of course, the winner was Jeanette Purkis, an autism advocate. For the volunteer team of the year, King & Wood Mallesons were highly commended for their work with Marymead, and the winner was the Hartley Hall markets. Many of us have probably been to the Hall markets.

For the young volunteer of the year, Emily Capper was highly commended for her work with Camp Quality, and the winner was Kate Barton, who volunteers with the St Vincent de Paul Canberra-Goulburn area. For the senior volunteer of the year, John Williams was highly commended. He has been volunteering with the Boys Brigade for 50 years. The winner was Linda Barry of St Vincent de Paul.

For the profound influence award, Buried in Treasure, which works with people with hoarding issues, was highly commended. The winner was Rosemary Drabsch of the ACT Cancer Council for her work raising money and organising the Relay for Life, another event that we are probably all very familiar with.

For the innovation award, Chris Fitzgerald was highly commended, and the winner was Orange Sky Laundry. For the thought and leadership award, the Zonta Club of Canberra Breakfast was highly commended, and the winner was Juliet Moody of the Fearless Initiative. Canberra's choice went to the ACT volunteers in policing program, and the go beyond award went to Mark Bell for his work with his earthmoving machine in re-landscaping the entire Tuggeranong BMX facility.

Many other volunteers were nominated, and a nomination in this area demonstrates the huge contribution these people give to our community each and every day, without any expectation of being acknowledged. I noted last night that Volunteering and Contact ACT use the term "award recipients". Their CEO explained to me that everyone who volunteers is a winner. Just because you win an award on the night does not mean that you are the winner; everyone is a winner. I thought that was a really nice way of explaining it.

I will quickly run through the list of volunteers: the achievement centre of Canberra high; ACT Policing volunteers in policing program; ACT Rural Fire Service training team; ACT wildlife wombat mange program; ACT Wildlife Inc; Aranda Primary School Greening Australia group; Australian Breastfeeding Association ACT-Southern New South Wales Region; Blue Door Drop-in Centre; Brian Rhyneheart; Building Buddies; Buried in Treasure volunteers; Campbell High School; Chris Fitzgerald; Claire Rooks; Communities@Work's community pantry; Country to Canberra; Danny Ryding; Dianne Donaldson; Emily Capper; Gillian Helyar and Jeff Ibbotson of Cycling Without Age; Hartley Hall markets volunteer team; Intensive Care volunteer team; Jayanti Gupta; John Riley; John Williams; Juliet Moody; Kate Barton; King & Wood Mallesons; Kippax Christmas Appeal "Let's Give Everyone a

Christmas”; Lai-Chiu Dawson; Lesley Harris; Linda Barry; Margaret Porter; Mark Bell; Mark Warren; Matthew Martin; mentoring team at Palliative Care ACT; Noreen Vu; Orange Sky Laundry, Canberra; OzHarvest Canberra volunteer team; PANDSI board; Rob Stanier; Ronald McDonald House Canberra; Rosemary Drabsch; Soroptimist International of Canberra Inc; St Vincent de Paul Canberra-Goulburn Calwell conference team; St Vincent de Paul Canberra-Goulburn Kaleen conference team; Technical Aid to the Disabled ACT cycle solutions team; Tennis ACT volunteer team; Tony Cory; Wellways Australia—Helpline ACT; William Kukkonen-Shortt; working bee teams—National Arboretum Canberra; Yvonne Farr; and the Zonta Club of Canberra Breakfast Inc.

These were all winners, as were many volunteers in our community who were not nominated. They are still doing their part to make our community stronger. I would also like to acknowledge Volunteering and Contact ACT for the work that they undertake to support our volunteers here in Canberra year round, plus the enormous amount of work it takes to put on their annual event to recognise and acknowledge our volunteers and keep our volunteering spirit alive and well. They include Mat Franklin, the Chair of Volunteering and Contact ACT, and all the other board members, Glenda Stevens, the CEO of Volunteering and Contact ACT, and the rest of the wonderful staff.

This week please take time out of your busy day to recognise volunteers in any area and let them know how much we appreciate the work that they do in their chosen area.

MS LEE (Kurrajong) (4.23): I welcome the opportunity to speak on this matter of public importance today and thank the Leader of the Opposition for submitting this to the Assembly. We are especially blessed in Canberra to have so many volunteers in so many capacities and in so many areas. As previous members who have spoken before me have stated, the ACT has the highest volunteering rate nationally and it would be no exaggeration to say that without volunteers this city would struggle to put on many of our sporting, community and school initiatives.

I refer to the Weetbix tryathlon for juniors, the more serious Sri Chinmoy duathlon, the Royal Canberra Show, the Connect and Participate Expo, the school volunteer program to help students with literacy, numeracy, craft and cooking, the countless volunteers who provide their time and expertise to customise mobility aids for TADACT, and the countless volunteers of organisations like Bosom Buddies, Diabetes ACT and Pegasus Riding for the Disabled who stuff bags, bake cakes, man stalls and sell raffle tickets to raise funds for the most vulnerable members of our community.

In my own professional background of law, a profession which it is fair to say usually gets a pretty bad rap from society, I do not think that I have come across a single lawyer who has not provided some type of volunteer or pro bono work. As a lecturer, I used to teach a subject on lawyers’ professional responsibility. One of the concepts that I would talk about was how being a “legal professional” sets us apart from a job or a trade, and one of the factors that does this is the notion of “service”.

Lawyers are in a position of privilege. We have been given the opportunity to learn the law and gain knowledge in areas that not everyone has had the opportunity to do. This instils in us a duty to serve our community, to identify and acknowledge injustices and to use our knowledge to right those injustices. Australian lawyers, on average, undertake approximately 35 hours of pro bono work each year. This pro bono work ranges from legal advice to drafting legal documents through to advocacy in courts and tribunals.

Within a year of being admitted as a lawyer, I signed up to volunteer for the ACT Law Society's Legal Advice Bureau—LAB for short. This is a service that provides free legal advice to the Canberra community, ranging from traffic infringements to tenancy matters, personal protection orders and bankruptcy. The clients that I saw while volunteering at LAB came from all walks of life, but mostly people from a socially disadvantaged background who had, for some reason or another, found themselves in need of a little help.

In my role as a lecturer for ANU Legal Workshop, I was fortunate to be an instructor in their legal aid clinic program—LAC—where I would supervise law students and give free legal advice to members of the public who may not be in a position to pay for the services of a lawyer.

I know that I am in a privileged position to be able to make a difference to the lives of those who find themselves in need of legal assistance. I know that I am in a privileged position to be able to make a difference to the lives of law students, who learn a lot from seeing a real client with real legal issues and to hear real legal advice being given by a real lawyer.

For me it may be an hour of my time, but for one client it may mean that they are not being bullied into paying tens of thousands of dollars to a landlord taking advantage of a tenant who cannot speak English. For me it may be an hour of my time but for one client it may mean they are not signing away rights to legal action under pressure from an overzealous insurer seeking to take advantage of someone who wants their legal problem to “just go away”.

But I was in a pretty comfortable job, whilst in practice and as a lecturer, and had the luxury of providing some time to provide these volunteer legal services. There are, however, other lawyers who devote their entire professional lives to community law. To all the lawyers that I know who had the option but sacrificed the higher income, the parking spot or the swish coffee machine to work the long hours and take on the emotional burden of assisting Canberra's most disadvantaged, I say thank you.

I truly believe that most—maybe I cannot go as far as to say all—lawyers do serve their profession and their community in a way that benefits our most disadvantaged. But to the lawyers who work at ACT Legal Aid, Aboriginal Legal Service, Women's Legal Centre, the EDO and Canberra Community Law, encompassing services in housing, social security, homelessness and socio-legal support, particularly in times of uncertainty about their future, I say thank you.

Anyone who has worked in these areas of law will know that they are not there just providing pure legal assistance by way of books and legislation. The level of confidence and comfort that lawyers provide to those who find themselves in need is something that cannot be replicated.

In my current role as shadow minister for disability and shadow minister for the environment, I can say with great pride that I have had the great pleasure of meeting many volunteers contributing countless hours and doing so much for our community. As you may have noticed yourself, Madam Deputy Speaker, I do try to acknowledge their contributions at various times when I have had the opportunity to speak during adjournment debates. But there are so many more volunteers who receive no public acknowledgement or thanks.

This week is just one week in the year when we are reminded of the importance of the work that volunteers do for our community, and it is just one week in the year that we are reminded to say thank you. To everyone who has contributed their time, knowledge, skills and energy for the good of our community, I again say thank you.

Discussion concluded.

City Renewal Authority and Suburban Land Agency Bill 2017

Debate resumed.

MS CHEYNE (Ginninderra) (4.29): I rise today to speak in support of this bill. The ACT is evolving. Our population is growing, demographics are changing and residents expect the best from one of the world's most liveable cities. Gone are the adjectives "boring" and "dull" from our detractors' lexicon. We are charging forward as a hotspot of good food, arts and the great outdoors. But we are also mindful that we are living in the age of climate change and must ensure our energy and food security into the future.

In such a transformative period, urban renewal and effective suburban development are key to building a sustainable, dynamic and vibrant city. We will welcome 25,000 new residents to the ACT over the next three years. As well as attracting people from interstate and overseas, a large portion of these new residents, 62 per cent, will be the result of natural population increases. It is no longer the case that people come to Canberra for a few years to build their resume and then leave. Now, people are staying in the ACT to build houses, to build families and to build communities.

As well as an increasing population, our demographics are changing. The 20 to 34-year-old age group will represent the largest proportion of our population in 2020, and the representation of 65s and over is also increasing. We are also seeing changes in how and where people want to live. Demand for housing options is high, including new greenfield developments. Meanwhile, a different cohort of Canberrans is moving to the inner city and staying there, happy to raise a family in high density areas.

Across the board, proximity to employment and services is important, and so is the preservation of our bushland and moving towards renewable energy sources. With so many variables in play, strategic and effective urban renewal and suburban development are critical to achieving a sustainable ACT, building strong communities and delivering housing options to our residents.

The ACT government is committed to building thriving communities. There are so many examples of exciting urban renewal that are planned or already underway in our city. Light rail will connect our city with zero emissions transport. It will also encourage residential and commercial development along its route, enlivening our communities. We are already seeing this happen along the Northbourne corridor.

City to the lake will see approximately 15,000 new residents living in the city centre. This project will bring the West Basin of Lake Burley Griffin to life. It will also increase our urban density, which is an effective way to reduce our environmental footprint. The same can be said for suburban development. Our town centres are the focus of a range of projects to revamp local assets, create active travel corridors and communal spaces, and provide housing options.

Urban renewal and thoughtful suburban development deliver social, environmental and economic benefits to our community. With so much change happening in the ACT, it is important that the entities managing our development projects are of the highest calibre.

The City Renewal Authority and Suburban Land Agency Bill sets out to achieve just that. The bill creates two new development bodies: the City Renewal Authority and the Suburban Land Agency. These new entities will deliver urban renewal and suburban development projects around our city. Their specialist mandates and tailored organisational structures will promote effective, sustainable and community-focused development in the territory.

The City Renewal Authority will be a statutory authority with expertise in design, engineering, sustainability and community building. It will take responsibility for leading urban renewal projects in declared urban renewal precincts. We have seen these precinct-focused bodies deliver outstanding results in other cities. For example, the development of Southbank in Brisbane and Elizabeth Quay in Perth were both managed by specialist authorities. The results were impressive, with both Southbank and Elizabeth Quay evolving into highly activated and community-focused destinations.

The City Renewal Authority will take the same precinct-based approach in the ACT. It will lead major projects and associated land acquisitions and sales. It will actively engage with the community and run design competitions to ensure our public areas reflect our people. The authority's first responsibilities will include the renewal of the Northbourne Avenue, Civic and West Basin precinct. In the future, the authority will also be responsible for the delivery of the Haig Park master plan. The

City Renewal Authority will work closely with the National Capital Authority and the ACT Planning and Land Authority, which will retain responsibility for approving development applications throughout the territory.

The Suburban Land Agency will deliver new greenfield residential estates and non-precinct urban renewal projects. The new agency, under the governance of a new board, will deliver land releases, affordable housing and better suburbs. The Suburban Land Agency will have as its driving force the aims of promoting inclusive communities, affordable living, a safe and healthy population, urban renewal outside of urban precincts, and the growth and diversification of the territory's economy.

The agency will be able to buy and sell leases of land to carry out developments. One of its key objectives will be to increase the supply of affordable housing. It must ensure a mixture of public and private housing in new suburbs. The agency will have strong governance structures as its bedrock and will at all times be answerable to the minister.

Cohesive development and active engagement are built into this bill. The Suburban Land Agency must work with any entity that has an interest in land that the agency intends to buy, sell, improve or develop. Similarly, the City Renewal Authority must work with any entity that has an interest in land in an urban renewal precinct.

The bill establishes two new development entities characterised by strong governance and community focus. As Canberra's population grows, it is critical that our urban renewal and suburban development projects are managed effectively, with development revolving and evolving around the growth of a connected, sustainable, affordable and healthy city. With this in mind, I commend this bill to the Assembly.

MR STEEL (Murrumbidgee) (4.37): Today I would like to outline my support for the City Renewal Authority and Suburban Land Agency Bill. This bill brings forward a new and improved focus for land development in Canberra. The bill outlines this government's commitment to improved governance and delivery for residential, commercial and industrial development, and provides for a clearer vision for Canberra's future.

The legislation introduced by the Chief Minister seeks to deliver reform through the establishment of two new agencies, the City Renewal Authority and the Suburban Land Agency. The creation of these new agencies marks an important milestone for the development of our city and I am pleased to support it today in the Assembly.

Through the proposed establishment of the new agencies, land development will undergo significant reform in a number of ways. The legislation will provide for clearer roles and responsibilities for our land agency bodies. It will broaden and create new opportunities within the community for consultation, engagement and cooperation, and it will deliver a more robust level of governance to land development. These important reforms will renew and build our city's future.

First, I would like to turn the chamber's attention to the second part of the bill, which permits the creation of a City Renewal Authority. Part 2 clause 8 of the bill brings forward a new and exciting charter for land development in the city by outlining the objects of the authority. This section includes a focus on the support of a lively and energetic city through fostering and permitting a "design-led and people-focused urban renewal". Indeed, as Jane Jacobs, one of the world's most influential urban thinkers, claimed in her seminal piece, "downtown is for people".

The objects of the authority also speak to the importance of social and ecological sustainability, reflecting the changing face and priorities of our city. In terms of residential, commercial and industrial buildings, it will support development that reflects that change, and I am pleased that this bill addresses these issues.

Part 2 clause 19 provides for the membership of the authority. I am pleased to say that the authority's governing board will be made up of a diverse group of experts. The authority's governance will seek a wide variety of opinions with voices being heard from experts in fields such as community building, social inclusion, civil engineering, environmental sustainability, architecture and design.

In the immediate term, we will begin to see a new approach to land development in the city by July of this year. The authority will be focusing on the renewal of the central business district and Dickson, along with the creation of the lakeside precinct in West Basin.

Building a thriving CBD benefits all Canberrans, whether you live in Weston Creek or Gungahlin, work in the city, want to go to a world-class show or want your children to have a broader range of employment enlivened by a growing city centre. Building a living city centre is critical for Canberra's economic and business development, supporting knowledge exchange and connecting with our major institutions like the Australian National University. And it is critical for our tourism to make the city a destination to visit in its own right, along with our famous national attractions.

The creation of a new waterfront precinct called the West Basin is an important activation of one of our city's greatest assets, Lake Burley Griffin. This will be a major project that the authority will focus on with the intention to connect the city to the lake to the benefit of our whole community. It will take the same precinct-based approach that we have seen in projects like the Elizabeth Quay in Perth or Southbank in Brisbane.

The space will be transformed into a vibrant precinct with restaurants, bars, cafes and community facilities. It will be a place where Canberrans come together to celebrate with family and friends. It has already been projected to be the place of festivals and large community events. The West Basin boardwalk has already commenced construction as of February of this year. It is great to see that progress has already been made with the federal government's project.

The first precinct will focus on the urban renewal along the Northbourne corridor where light rail is being built, a project that will help to reduce congestion and provide a mass transit system for our growing city. It has been positive to see that the government has started work on our city-wide rollout of light rail, particularly by the commitment to invest in the southside with stage two of light rail to Woden. This will create a north-south transport spine integrated with our local and rapid bus services, with connections to active transport.

The master plan and the draft variations to the Territory Plan for Woden town centre and Mawson group centre have already considered the future route of light rail to Woden and have reflected these in changes to our core planning policies, including changes to zoning and precinct codes. This will help to generate urban renewal and investment along these transport routes, as it already has done along Northbourne Avenue. It will mean more people living in Woden town centre, mixed with the existing commercial and community service uses.

In this bill, further urban renewal precincts can be declared by the minister under division 2.8 and may include land in a precinct which facilitates integrated commercial and residential development, the integration of development with public transport, and to benefit the community, the environment and the territory economy.

Madam Deputy Speaker, this bill shows that the government has taken into consideration the fact that Canberra is growing. The territory is projected to accommodate 25,000 more people just over the next four years. It is an opportunity to breathe new life into our town centres, suburbs and cities, facilitated by the two newly proposed agencies.

In addition to the creation of the City Renewal Authority, part 3 of the bill permits for the establishment of a Suburban Land Agency. The new agency will be responsible for looking after our suburbs and making sure they remain supportive, creative and safe. The agency will see to it that we still have the Canberra that we love, but making it even better. Part 3 clause 36 of the bill also outlines how the agency will deliver this by prioritising a number of important objects.

The Suburban Land Agency will seek to encourage communities that are inclusive of all people and place attention on neighbourhoods that are, at their core, people focused. A priority will be working towards keeping our suburbs safe and with a healthy population. The authority will place an emphasis on ensuring that the new suburban developments being built seek to support and provide for affordable housing and housing choice in our communities.

In conclusion, Canberra is undergoing a change in land development. It is important that the proposed agencies reflect our population's changing aspirations and needs. The creation of the two new agencies will allow Canberra to continue to be one of the most liveable cities in the world. By giving specific attention to land development for the city and other urban renewal precincts and also to our growing suburbs and greenfield developments, the proposed bill delivers on the government's plan to renew and build Canberra's future. I commend the bill to the Assembly.

MS LAWDER (Brindabella) (4.45): I rise today to speak about the City Renewal Authority and Suburban Land Agency Bill 2017. The bill is designed to split up the roles of the Land Development Agency. The City Renewal Authority will be in charge of revitalising present areas of Canberra that the Chief Minister deems worthy of revitalisation.

A month out from the 2016 election, the government announced that it would divide the work of the LDA between two ACT public sector delivery entities, one focusing on leading and facilitating the redevelopment of Civic and the Northbourne Avenue corridor, called the City Renewal Authority, and the other dedicated to developing new suburbs, the Suburban Land Agency.

The government made this announcement after many issues had arisen from the LDA, such as the Glebe Park deal and the CFMEU/Tradies Club. There was a lot of media coverage about the LDA not acting transparently; about them not following their own procedures, not going to the board for approvals and with payments for land that went well beyond the valued amount; and about manipulated valuation advice. We saw an Auditor-General's report into the practice of the LDA which begins with:

Transparency, accountability and rigour have been lacking in the processes used by the Land Development Agency.

What we see now is the government using this split-up as an opportunity to make it seem as though they are trying to resolve the issues surrounding the LDA. However, the bill we are debating here today will not do that. The LDA is an agency that has grown beyond its original mandate. I hesitate to use the word "bloated", because it is quite an ugly word, but that is exactly the word that has been used by other people to describe it to me. They say it has strayed into the activities of the private sector, well beyond its remit. This bill sees the LDA split up into two organisations, the City Renewal Agency and the Suburban Land Authority.

The City Renewal Agency will be responsible for leading and managing urban renewal works in declared urban renewal precincts. The first precinct to be declared will encompass Civic, the Northbourne Avenue corridor and West Basin. The City Renewal Agency will be responsible, within declared urban renewal precincts, for facilitating significant development projects, including related land acquisitions and sales; collaborating with the National Capital Authority and the Planning and Land Authority about precinct planning and design standards; undertaking work on sequencing and site selection for particular classes of development identified by the government for inclusion in an urban renewal precinct; conducting design competitions; engaging with potential investors and developers at a national and international as well as local level; conducting community engagement processes; coordinating with other ACT public sector bodies, including directorates; undertaking site preparation and infrastructure works; and undertaking public realm improvements and place activation activities.

The question has to be asked as to why the government feels it has to be so involved in this area. Most people who have worked out in the real world know that the best way to get development is for the government to step back and allow the private sector to plan, invest and deliver. Two of our best activated precincts here in Canberra, Braddon and New Acton, are exactly examples of that. They are two of the liveliest parts of inner Canberra. They have been developed not upstairs in the Chief Minister's office or across the road in the department building, but through the hands of the private sector. We have all been the beneficiary of those lively activated precincts here in the ACT. What it needs is for the best policy levers to be in place, leaving the actual work up to the private sector to deliver in the best way possible.

I also have questions around the boundaries for the precinct put forward by the Chief Minister in this bill. They are well up north, well past Haig Park, which may well be a better boundary, and well down to the lake, past the city, around West Basin. What is the government's intent? It is a bit of an overreach. It changes nothing that the LDA could not already do. They are taking over these policy functions beyond their mandate—I think I am quoting Ms Le Couteur from her earlier speech—and inserting themselves into areas which may be better serviced by the private sector. There are many areas that are already slated for sale along the Northbourne Avenue corridor; I do not understand why the government feels the need to reinsert itself into that particular area.

With regard to the Suburban Land Agency, this agency will be responsible for delivering new greenfield residential estates and non-precinct urban renewal. It will be responsible for conducting all government land sales and strategic acquisitions, undertaking civil works for government estate developments, serving as the vehicle through which the government will enter into joint venture or other commercial arrangements to deliver land development projects, providing community information for operational elements of government development projects, and conducting place-making activities and establishment of new communities.

In theory, people working in the area say to me that a lean agency about one-third of the size of the current LDA could deliver the land release program. The government have not released the size of these organisations, except that the Chief Minister has publicly stated that no-one currently in the LDA will lose their positions. There is no clarity here about the size of the organisations and, of course, there will be a subsequent cost to ACT ratepayers with respect to that.

In summary, I feel that the Chief Minister announced this planned split well ahead of the Auditor-General's report. Post election, the discussion about the bill has been a bit of a sham designed to deliver the outcome that the Chief Minister had already announced and predetermined. It does not address the matters raised in the Auditor-General's report and therefore it begs the question as to why it is necessary at all.

I am not sure that anyone involved in previous work with and around the LDA believes that this proposal is the right outcome. It in no way addresses those

A-G issues and it reeks of political subterfuge. The concerns about the LDA are not addressed in this bill. They have a high probability of continuing into the future if this bill does not make significant changes to the accountability framework for these two agencies.

With that in mind, the opposition will put forward a number of amendments on Thursday that go to the heart of these matters, so that the people of Canberra can be assured that the bodies that represent them have their best interests absolutely in mind. I also wonder whether a committee inquiry to look at these matters will provide better consideration, deliberation and transparency on the splitting up of the LDA.

In conclusion, I feel there is no clarity in this bill. There is certainly no understanding of the budget and budget impacts. The concerns about the LDA raised by the Auditor-General are not addressed in this split. It is an overreach that the LDA works in additional policy areas. That could be a cultural issue. Again, I am quoting Ms Le Couteur in her earlier speech: she believes it is a cultural issue. How is that going to change in these two new agencies with the same staff? The government should be focusing on improving the accountability of its agencies, not hiding from scrutiny by splitting them up.

It is in stark contrast to the calls in this Assembly over a number of years for the establishment of a single nature conservation agency, something that all sides of the Assembly agreed was necessary, good, worthwhile and valuable. Everyone was clamouring for it, and it took years to achieve. This is like the polar opposite of that. It has been done with undue haste, it has an undeclared need or benefit and it has been rushed through without suitable and adequate scrutiny.

In conclusion, the Canberra Liberals have always said that we support transparency, accountability and, above all, integrity in every area of government. In its current form, this bill does not encompass those values. Therefore, the Canberra Liberals cannot support this bill without amendment.

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) (4.55): The government is committed to delivering an expanded and contemporary city renewal and suburban land development program, which I believe will make significant and transformational changes to our beautiful city to meet our needs now and which will prepare us for the future.

The City Renewal Authority and the Suburban Land Agency Bill 2017 establishes two new entities, the City Renewal Authority, the CRA, and the Suburban Land Agency, the SLA. The bill includes robust governance arrangements and clear roles for both entities, with significant government oversight and direction.

The bill encourages greater public and private sector investment for our city, and, importantly, will ensure that social policy around inclusion and building better neighbourhoods is reflected in our ongoing development. The bill supports the

government's priorities, including social inclusion, affordable housing, real engagement and consultation with the community, and diversifying Canberra's economy. As Canberra's population grows towards half a million, it is vital that the delivery of coordinated development in both the city and our suburbs is pursued. This bill provides the framework to enable government, business and the community to work together to build Canberra's future in a strategic and focused manner, and in a way that the community wants.

I note that the Chief Minister will move further government amendments to this bill during the detail stage of debate. I am also aware that there are several other amendments that will be proposed from other parties.

In addition to establishing the CRA and the SLA, the bill's objects clearly articulate the government's development policies and include the right balance to ensure that Canberrans benefit from our growing city. The bill's objects are to: promote and facilitate the orderly and efficient delivery of residential, commercial and industrial development in the public interest, including urban renewal; promote development that is environmentally sustainable and applies innovative environmental building and public domain design; and support, encourage and facilitate public and private sector investment and participation in the development of the city.

These objects detail what the government wishes to achieve through this bill: orderly and efficient delivery of development in the ACT. The underlying principles of development that the government wishes to promote include environmental sustainability and good design, and that all development in the ACT is the shared responsibility of both the public and private sectors.

The bill includes promoting urban renewal in the ACT. It is important to detail what that term means, as it is a key element of the bill, and what the CRA and the SLA will deliver for Canberrans. The bill defines urban renewal as supporting, promoting, encouraging, facilitating or delivering development, including residential, commercial, industrial, capital works, public infrastructure and land improvements. Urban renewal includes carrying out work on public land, and reviewing and giving advice about work and development proposed to be carried out on private land. It is important to note that the CRA and the SLA will deliver urban renewal, the CRA within urban renewal precincts declared by the minister and the SLA in areas outside those declared precincts.

Part 2 of the bill establishes and governs the operation of the CRA. Section 8 of the bill lists the CRA's objects, which include encouraging and promoting a vibrant city through the delivery of design-led, people-focused urban renewal; encouraging and promoting social and environmental sustainability; and operating commercially in accordance with sound risk management practices.

Section 34 of the bill provides that the minister may determine an area to be an urban renewal precinct. Precinct-based approaches have been successful in projects like South Bank in Brisbane and Elizabeth Quay in Perth.

Section 35 of the bill provides the criteria that must be met before declaring a new urban renewal precinct. When this bill was presented to the Legislative Assembly, the Chief Minister released an indicative map identifying the first potential urban renewal precinct, focusing on the gateway to our city from where Flemington Road meets the Federal Highway, along the Northbourne Avenue corridor and in the CBD and West Basin, to realise the government's city to the lake project.

It will be within these declared precincts that the CRA will exercise its functions: urban renewal, buying and selling land, making arrangements for the carrying out of development, supporting investment, participation and cooperation in urban renewal, and supporting high quality design, planning and delivery of urban renewal.

Most Canberrans live, work and play outside the city centre. We know that they love and are committed to protecting and enhancing their local communities. I know this because it is certainly how I feel about my own local community, and I hear it from others around me all the time. The government's priorities are to ensure that the suburbs and areas outside urban renewal precincts also receive ongoing attention in order to build new planned greenfield suburbs or to reinvigorate and revitalise our established suburbs.

This bill establishes the Suburban Land Agency to deliver people-focused neighbourhoods; to encourage and promote suburban development that supports affordable living, safe and active and healthy populations, social inclusion and housing choice; urban renewal where we need it; and growth and diversification of the territory's economy. Of course, the SLA will operate commercially and in accordance with sound risk management practice, but it will also take its lead from the government priorities and expectations.

Section 38 of the bill provides the functions of the SLA: to buy and sell land, to ensure a mixture of public and private housing in new suburbs, to increase the supply of affordable and community housing, and to carry out the development of land. These functions may be exercised only in a way consistent with the statement of intent under the Financial Management Act 1996, the FMA, and with the minister's approval. This provides the minister with the appropriate controls over the work of the SLA and ensures that their work will be carried out for the benefit of our community.

The SLA will be tasked by the government to deliver new and improved established suburbs, creating communities and better neighbourhoods. The SLA may exercise its functions by itself or with the approval of the minister and the Treasurer through subsidiaries, joint ventures or trusts or holding shares in corporations. This provides flexibility to get the best outcome for the territory.

Both the CRA and the SLA will be territory authorities as defined in the Financial Management Act. Both boards will comprise experts in city renewal and suburban development. Section 19 of the bill places duties on members of the CRA board in addition to those found in the Financial Management Act, including owing a duty to the minister when acting as a board member to act in good faith, not to pursue

personal interests at the expense of the authority's interests, not to use board membership to gain personal advantage and not to cause detriment to the authority or undermine the reputation of the authority.

These are important duties. As the Chief Minister has noted in his presentation speech:

Territory land is the ACT's most valuable physical asset. The government and the community need to be sure that these entities exercise their functions in an open, accountable and transparent way, always acting in the public interest.

Both the CRA and SLA boards will appoint CEOs to manage the day-to-day operations and give administrative support to their respective boards. CEOs will be public servants and be subject to the ACT public service values and code of conduct and the Public Sector Management Act 1994.

In addition, the bill provides that the CRA and the SLA CEOs must exercise the degree of honesty, care and diligence required to be exercised by a director of a corporation. The CEOs will also have a duty to their respective boards to act in good faith, not pursue personal interests at the expense of the CRA's or SLA's interests, not to use the office to gain personal advantage, and not to cause detriment to the CRA or the SLA or undermine their reputations. Importantly, both entities must also be subject to ministerial directions. The directions may be about the exercise of their functions or a request for them to exercise a function in relation to their respective financial arrangements.

The government, through this bill, is establishing the City Renewal Authority and the Suburban Land Agency to encourage, facilitate and promote city renewal and better suburbs to better meet the community's needs. I commend the bill to the Assembly.

MR PETTERSSON (Yerrabi) (5.04): The Land Development Agency is responsible for both greenfield development and renewable projects of the government across the ACT. This important city building work has only increased in recent times as the population of the ACT and our economy surge. Our growing population, our booming economy, our limited land supply and the changing expectations of our community require government to be innovative and responsive in managing land development.

This is why we took to the last election a commitment to reform the LDA. We will create two new authorities that better serve the needs of our community. By dividing the responsibilities and creating agencies that specialise in either urban or suburban development we will be providing Canberrans with the efficient and effective service they deserve.

We have a huge pipeline of investment in the ACT and, with projects of that size, it is increasingly important that all projects get the attention they need. The City Renewal Authority with their specialisation urban renewal precincts can ensure this far better than any agency whose concern with urban projects is one of many. It is also

imperative that, with the amount of investment and development currently occurring in this city centre, our outer suburban projects like Gungahlin's town centre are not neglected.

Suburban development is a growing issue in the ACT and, as such, needs to be the sole focus of a specific agency. Canberra's development projects deserve to be done efficiently and to be done right. As such, agencies with the resources and the sole purpose of achieving their goal in urban and suburban projects respectively are a necessity for the ACT.

The bill notes that the Suburban Land Agency will undertake its functions with the approval of the minister. The minister may declare an area of land to be an urban renewal precinct and thus make the City Renewal Authority the responsible body overseeing its development.

While functions of the City Renewable Authority are not subject to the approval of the minister, the agency is required to act in accordance with a statement of expectations and make its own reports on operational intent to the public. These functions extend the coordination between the bodies responsible for public development and renewal and the ACT government.

Cooperation and coordination are emphasised greatly by these reforms and can only serve to allow members of the general public by allowing them to have a greater input in what happens in our city. Beyond this, all the means of coordination between the agencies responsible for development and the ACT public sector will serve as the checks and balances to ensure that the spending and decisions of the agencies are in the best interests of Canberrans.

Canberrans need the infrastructure projects in their community to be given the attention they deserve. There needs to be a body that can take clear responsibility for projects so that they receive the appropriate resources. A body that can be held accountable for their outputs and their plans is one that Canberrans can trust. These two new agencies will work with our community to create a future for Canberra that is in everyone's best interests.

The agencies themselves will be able to operate with greater efficiency and attentiveness due to the narrowing down of their concerns. The ACT government will be able to coordinate better and hold greater influence in the operations of the development agencies. The ACT public will be provided with greater insight into the functioning of the agencies as well as being able to hold the appropriate bodies responsible for their outputs. This is a bill that acts for a growing ACT.

MR BARR (Kurrajong—Chief Minister, Treasurer, Minister for Economic Development and Minister for Tourism and Major Events) (5.07), in reply: I thank the majority of members for their support of the City Renewable Authority and Suburban Land Agency Bill. The City Renewal Authority and the Suburban Land Agency will be responsible for delivering a significantly expanded city renewal and suburban land development program. I repeat that: these new authorities will be responsible for

delivering a significantly expanded city renewal and suburban land development program. The program will be bigger. The resources will need to be bigger.

The Assembly has already heard today from both the opposition and the Greens party on a number of matters regarding the bill. Whilst they will, of course, be addressed in the detail stage on Thursday I will take the opportunity this afternoon to respond to some issues that have been raised in the debate so far.

This bill is the legal vehicle by which the government will establish the City Renewal Authority and the Suburban Land Agency as separate territory authorities and, in doing so, articulate their respective roles, statutory responsibilities and functions. To this extent, the bill is a tool for creating a positive, authorised environment in which these entities will operate. By clearly defining and establishing the legislative responsibilities that each entity will be required to discharge, the government has, in effect, also made clear the parameters of the powers that these entities may exercise.

Mr Coe: I thought you said the bill does it.

MR BARR: That is exactly what I said. This bill is the tool for—

Mr Coe interjecting—

MADAM DEPUTY SPEAKER: This is not a conversation. This is a debate.

MR BARR: The outer limits are reinforced by the existing planning and development framework created by the Planning and Development Act 2007 and the framework of accountability, scrutiny and responsibility set out in the Financial Management Act 1996.

As members are aware, the government has already responded to the Auditor-General's report into certain Land Development Agency transactions, and those matters have indeed been canvassed extensively in this place, in public, during the election campaign, and beyond. So it is nonsense to suggest that every aspect of the operation of public sector entities should be subject to the legislative process. It is certainly our job as legislators to set out the framework in which territory authorities are permitted to operate, and parliamentary process provides more than sufficient opportunity for scrutiny of decisions by the boards of statutory authorities, as Australia Post discovered earlier this year. The Financial Management Act already establishes a robust framework against which the boards of the new entities can be held accountable.

This morning and again this afternoon the Leader of the Opposition and the Deputy Leader of the Opposition criticised the need for creating a City Renewal Authority and a Suburban Land Agency. This does appear to be at odds with the planning policy that they took to last year's election which specifically stated:

A Canberra Liberal Government would reform the Land Development Agency.

This bill certainly achieves reform. It is remarkable in an Australian city to have a specialist and dedicated urban renewal authority and a separate statutory authority delivering a blend of suburban development and urban renewal projects. Delivering the vibrant heart of the city that this government has committed to do and the suburban centres that we need is best achieved by dedicated bodies, properly resourced, enabled and focused on those separate, not complementary, functions.

The Leader of the Opposition has made much of the fact that there are additional requirements around the work to be undertaken by the City Renewal Authority. As is set out in the bill, those requirements operate in addition to those within the Financial Management Act and reflect the magnitude of the urban renewal task, as well as the discretion with which the City Renewal Authority board is vested in shaping the future of our city centre. And in this context it is worth bearing in mind that the Suburban Land Agency, unlike the Land Development Agency that it will replace, has all of its functions expressed to be exercisable with the approval of the minister, reflecting the much closer nexus of government control over its functions.

This is evident not just in comparison with the City Renewal Authority but also in relation to the current capacities of the Land Development Agency board. So to this end, the bill delivers on the government's commitment to bring forward robust governance arrangements and clear roles for both entities, with significant government oversight and direction. The bill also very clearly separates the entities from the ACT public service and ensures that both roles and responsibilities and accountability for performance and outcomes are delineated and understood.

This morning the Leader of the Opposition also rather strangely criticised the focus of the City Renewal Authority on revitalising Canberra's city centre, allegedly at the expense of other areas of Canberra. I say it is strange because the Leader of the Opposition's policy that he took to the election last year, not as Leader of the Opposition but in his role as, I think, shadow planning minister, was:

The centre of any city should be a hive of commercial, residential activity. However, at present, the centre of Canberra has been treated as a poor cousin to other parts of the city. As such there is a need to ensure that the centre of Canberra is not neglected.

Let me assure the Leader of the Opposition and the Deputy Leader of the Opposition that in creating a city renewal authority we will absolutely ensure that the centre of Canberra is not neglected. Indeed, the entire purpose of the City Renewal Authority that I outlined extensively in this place in December last year was a real focus on that task of CBD renewal.

It is also simply wrong for the Leader of the Opposition to suggest that the bill is silent on community engagement and participation. The bill creates exclusive duties on both entities to work positively with interested people and organisations in their delivery works. This is in addition to the government's clearly stated broader

initiatives in relation to community engagement and statutory consultation and engagement requirements preserved in the Planning and Development Act which will apply to both entities.

In my ministerial statement in December last year I said:

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 new suburbs can come to life—a truly representative sample of the community.

Not just those who are angry at a particular moment in time and turn up to a public meeting but a truly representative sample of the community. Arguably, the election every four years provides a truly representative sample of community views, and I do note that despite all of the accusations that were hurled at me and the government by those opposite, the government was convincingly re-elected at the election last year. That is the fundamental statement of community values and a representative sample of the community.

Between elections it is important that the government continue to engage and, through this legislation and the range of other measures that we will introduce, we will improve community engagement. In establishing the new entities, the government is focused on fostering genuine and informed engagement with the entire community, not just angry people who turn up to a public meeting. We want to ensure that participation in decision-making about the future shape of our city is shared across all demographics and that all views in this city are represented.

As the Deputy Leader of the Opposition indicated in her speech, prior to the election I clearly foreshadowed the government's intention to pursue this course of action to replace the Land Development Agency with two specialist, dedicated agencies: one focused on leading and facilitating the critical transformation of Civic and the Northbourne Avenue corridor, another 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 were created to signal the government's clear intention to direct effort at the ministerial and official level. In December I advised that work was—

Mr Coe interjecting—

MADAM DEPUTY SPEAKER: Mr Coe, come to order. I warn you.

MR BARR: progressing to create the 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 and in gearing for that task the government will adopt the very best approaches that have been taken elsewhere and add them to our local expertise and our local knowledge. The critical elements of this approach include a clear vision for the city to the lake and Northbourne corridor areas defined by people-focused and 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 its work with the community and partners in developments on planning, designing and then delivering the vision has 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 but also deliver social policy and environmentally sustainable development. I repeat that: to operate commercially with genuine engagement and to deliver on the government's social and environmentally sustainable policy goals. That is what we achieve with this legislation. I thank the majority of members for their support in the in-principle stage, and we look forward to debating the detail stage on Thursday.

Question put:

That this bill be agreed to in principle.

The Assembly voted—

Ayes 13

Noes 10

Mr Barr	Ms Le Couteur	Mr Coe	Mr Milligan
Ms Berry	Ms Orr	Mrs Dunne	Mr Parton
Ms Burch	Mr Pettersson	Mr Hanson	Mr Wall
Ms Cheyne	Mr Ramsay	Mrs Jones	
Ms Cody	Mr Rattenbury	Mrs Kikkert	
Ms Fitzharris	Mr Steel	Ms Lawder	
Mr Gentleman		Ms Lee	

Question resolved in the affirmative.

Bill agreed to in principle.

Detail stage

Clause 1.

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

Adjournment

Motion (by **Mr Gentleman**) proposed:

That the Assembly do now adjourn.

Kambah village

MR STEEL (Murrumbidgee) (5.26): I rise to update the chamber on ACT Labor's commitment to revitalising Kambah village. As residents of Murrumbidgee know, the Kambah village shops have been in need of an upgrade for some time. Since being elected in October last year as a member of the Assembly, one of my priorities has been getting Kambah village upgraded. I am very pleased to be able to provide an update on the improvements that are being made to Kambah's group centre.

A tender for stage 1 of the works has been completed and the construction of work began in the first week of May. Stage 1 involves \$300,000 of government investment to improve safety, access and public amenity in the main courtyard area. This was funded in last year's budget. This work will include replacing old retaining walls, pavements and fences with new materials. Stage 1 is due to be completed by late June this year.

The government is also working with the building owners on minor upgrades to the adjacent facades. Pressure cleaning has also recently taken place to improve the cleanliness of the centre, which has a well-documented pigeon issue.

The bulk of the upgrades will occur in stage 2, which will be funded through Labor's commitment at the election. I note that Labor was the only party to commit to fund upgrades to Kambah village in last year's election. This is subject to the budget process, and I look forward to updating residents when the budget comes down in June.

These upgrades in funding are the result of thousands of residents having their say through a petition that I ran last year in support of the master plan and upgrades to the shops, and our government's commitment to renewing Canberra, particularly in our established suburbs.

I also understand that there is an expected private development application to upgrade and expand the Woolworths building at Kambah village, which will provide Kambah with a full-line supermarket and extra retail space and improved public amenity. This private work, as well as the government's investment in Kambah village, will see substantial upgrades that will renew and change the face of our suburb for the better.

Giralang shops

MS ORR (Yerrabi) (5.29): As residents in the Belconnen suburbs of Yerrabi and many of us in this chamber will be aware, the number one issue in Giralang for many years has been the redevelopment of the local shops. Over the past 11 years the redevelopment of the Giralang shops site has been held up by disputes over whether the proposed redevelopment will include a supermarket and the ongoing legal proceedings that arose out of these disputes.

The legal proceedings were brought by the operators of three supermarkets in the surrounding suburbs of Kaleen and Evatt. At question was the size of the supermarket proposed in the development application for the Giralang redevelopment. As you may

expect with a case that has gone on for so long, the community has many views and opinions on what should happen.

I have heard a range of these views, including, “We need a supermarket and it needs to be 1,500 square metres.” “We need a supermarket and I don’t care what size it is.” “I don’t really mind about a supermarket but I’d love a cafe.” And, “We just need something there that gives the community a place to come together.” But most often I hear, “We just want to know what is going on.”

My reason for rising today is to put on the record for the residents of Giralang an update on where the redevelopment of the shops is up to. In September 2016, and after countless appeal of appeal of appeal, the parties to the legal proceedings, being the owner of the Giralang shops site and the three surrounding supermarket operators who brought the court action, reached an out-of-court settlement. With this settlement, the legal action that has prevented the redevelopment of the site for so long has ceased and the site owner is able to progress with the development.

Given the community’s desire to see the progression of the shops redevelopment, and the fact that the developer is responsible for undertaking this development, I recently sought a meeting with the site owner. I called the meeting to put to the owner all the views the community had shared with me. I told the owner of the site, first and foremost, “Giralang residents want action on this development. Residents want the redevelopment to include a supermarket. If the redevelopment can also include a cafe then that is even better. And residents of Giralang want to be informed and included in what is happening as the development progresses.”

Following my comments the owner assured me that he is, and I quote, “re-energised and committed to seeing the redevelopment progress.” I am glad the owner of the site wants to progress the redevelopment. But, as I pointed out to the owner, while this sentiment is appreciated, it needs to be backed up with actions. I asked him what he is doing to progress the redevelopment. The owner told me he needs to secure a supermarket tenant in order to begin the development. He said he is approaching potential supermarket operators at this point in time and seeking to finalise a tenancy agreement out of those discussions. He also told me a new development application for the redevelopment would have to be submitted and approved and that once these two things were done the building works could begin.

Following these comments I requested that the owner work with the community as the redevelopment progresses, keeping them updated on his efforts to secure a tenant and the finalisation of the development application. At the end of the meeting I reiterated to the owner of the site that the Giralang community wants this development finalised. As one resident put it to me, “When we do get the shops, there is going to be one hell of a party on opening day.”

Have your say website

MR RATTENBURY (Kurrajong) (5.32): Recently the Leader of the Opposition launched a new website, haveyoursay.net.au, a mechanism he stated would provide new opportunities for the Liberal Party to hear community views. Surely this is a good

thing. The Greens certainly believe the community should have the opportunity to be heard about issues that are important to them. We believe in making decisions with the community for the community, which means knowing what the community thinks and feels strongly about. I do not think this a controversial idea, and all members of this place would say they support good genuine community consultation mechanisms.

What is bizarre about the new Liberal Party website is how strikingly similar it is to the government's your say online consultation portal. In fact, haveyoursay.net.au is so similar to yoursay.act.gov.au that it could be easy to confuse the two. What I cannot decide is whether this is designed to be deliberately deceitful and confusing, or whether it simply reflects the fact that the Liberal Party has so little imagination they could not think of a site name of their own.

I am concerned about this as it has the potential to undermine the system that allows people to provide their concerns and feedback to the government. I am concerned that this is a cynical and deceptive attempt by the Canberra Liberals to usurp existing community consultation processes and, on that basis, I think it needs to be called out.

Despite saying that he wants to enhance communication and consultation options for Canberrans, what Mr Coe has actually done is try to poach an existing and well-known name for his own political purposes. This creates a risk that Canberrans who genuinely want to provide feedback to the government about a particular issue will accidentally feed that information to the Liberal Party rather than the consultation process they actually want to participate in.

I also note that the have your say website is apparently, according to the *Canberra Times*, a key plank of the Liberal Party's strategy to win the next election. I would suggest that confusing the Canberra community is not going to be an effective strategy; It did not work with light rail and it will not work on community consultation. The people of Canberra want strong, progressive policies that make the ACT a better place to live, not recycling old ideas and dressing them up as something new.

I will leave it up to the public to decide whether the Canberra Liberals are trying to divert people away from the existing avenues for community consultation or whether they are too lazy to come up with their own slogan and so decided to use someone else's. Regardless of the motivation, this move is deceitful, and the Leader of the Opposition should rename his website to reflect its true purpose.

If the problem is one of creativity, I have taken the liberty of coming up with a few ideas. These may not be exactly what Mr Coe wants, and I confess to spending only a few minutes on them but, in the spirit of overcoming the writer's block that has clearly affected the Liberals' creative team, here they are: we could have "Lay it on the Liberals.net.au", "Talk to the Tories.net.au", "Complain to the Conservatives.net.au", or my personal favourite, "E'Coe Chamber.net.au".

This Assembly has a proud history of being accessible to the community and working for the people of Canberra, and it is important that this continues. The Legislative Assembly is made up of MLAs elected by the Canberra community to serve the

Canberra community. Every member in this place should be looking for new and innovative ways of engaging with members of our community. But Canberrans should not be expected to differentiate between “have your say” and “your say” when trying to provide feedback about government programs and services.

It is our job to make community consultation as easy and as simple to engage with as possible, and I believe the Liberal Party’s latest attempt at community engagement has done exactly the opposite. I raise this issue today because it is important that people know where their information is going and what it is being used for. We should all be doing more to engage with our constituents, but we must do it in a way that is open, transparent and beneficial to our community.

Seniors Week

MS LAWDER (Brindabella) (5.36): I rise today to talk about COTA, which recently coordinated ACT’s Seniors Week in March. COTA is the peak organisation for all issues relating to older Canberrans. They work with government, community organisations and the public to protect and promote the wellbeing, rights and interests of all older people in the ACT.

For more than 20 years COTA has organised the annual Seniors Week, and this year saw hundreds of events across the week, starting with the launch on 17 March. As part of Seniors Week, COTA was the charity recipient of *Music at Midday* on 12 April 2017. This was a great fundraiser for COTA to help fund their valuable work in providing free services to seniors on a range of issues. COTA and I would like to acknowledge the organisers, volunteers, board, staff, the RMC Band, the Australian Rugby Choir and all of the organisations and individuals who participated.

I would also like to commend the work of the president, Ewan Brown, CEO, Jenny Mobbs, and the tireless volunteers including Anne McNamara, Cheryl Overall, Margaret Simmonds, Maria Philpot, Jan Yannopolis, Anne McNeilly and Paul Feldman. I also thank the other staff at COTA for the work they do.

Seniors Week engaged thousands of older Canberrans through the Chief Minister’s concert, the Seniors Expo and the positive ageing awards. With our ageing population, it was great to see the Canberra community come together to recognise the contribution made by and for our older residents. You can get more information and support from COTA at www.cotaact.org.au.

The Forage

MS CHEYNE (Ginninderra) (5.38): On Saturday, 8 April I had the pleasure of participating in a great Canberra event, The Forage. The Forage debuted in Canberra in 2014. It is the brainchild of Belinda and Tim Neame, who are Belconnen residents. Since its inception it has been bringing people and local businesses together to celebrate our local arts and culinary offerings.

I have been consistently attending The Forage since 2014. In my view it just keeps getting better and better. This event represents some of the things I love the most

about our city. The setting for the festival is a humble car park in the midst of commercial buildings in Barton. It may not sound like much, but the creative minds of Belinda, Tim and their team completely transform this car park.

The scene was set by twinkling lights and colourful flags fluttering in the breeze. Beneath this festive halo, vans abounded selling some of Canberra's finest food and beverages. Gourmet kitchens, local breweries, vineyards and distilleries were all represented alongside beautiful crafts and other local wares.

The spirit of Canberra at The Forage is always palpable as people explore the area, sampling the offerings and sharing delicious food. The atmosphere is relaxed and fun, accented by laughter and children playing. Local musicians created a sound track to the festivities gracing The Forage stage throughout the afternoon and into the night.

The crowd gathered around to listen and kids brought out their best moves on the dance floor. As the evening wrapped up, people left with full bellies and big smiles. I assume that they, like me, were utterly content after a night of friends, good food and live music.

This event is symbolic of the Canberra that I have come to know and love, the Canberra that offers world-class food and entertainment in an unassuming, relaxed environment; the Canberra that is festive and friendly; and the Canberra that is home to a burgeoning crowd of entrepreneurs who are taking the plunge to start their own businesses, whether it is a local distillery or a tea company, and bringing their products to an excited audience of locals. I can wholeheartedly say that The Forage was and is a fantastic event. I highly recommend that we all make attending the next event on 1 July a priority.

Namadgi National Park

MS LEE (Kurrajong) (5.41): As anyone who has seen any of my social media posts will know, I have been taking full advantage of my role as shadow minister for the environment to get up close and personal with what Canberra has to offer as our bush capital. Last month I had the pleasure of going on a hike with members of the National Parks Association to Yankee Hat in Namadgi National Park. It was a great opportunity to see both the natural beauty of Namadgi and the Indigenous rock art located at Yankee Hat, all of which is just over an hour from the centre of Canberra right here in the ACT.

Yankee Hat is one of only three sites of Aboriginal rock art in the ACT. There is evidence to suggest that the camp site and art at Yankee Hat is at least 800 years old, but could be as much as 3,700 years old. This is but a short time when we consider that our Indigenous Australians have been living in the Canberra region for as long as 21,000 years.

The paintings are on the side of a large granite boulder which has been weathered by the elements and rounded off by repeated heating and cooling. The paintings depict Australian animals and human figures, together with some figures that are open to

interpretation, as was evident from the good natured discussions by our group as to whether a picture of a turtle was also represented.

It was also not lost on our group that one of our rare Aboriginal rock art sites is at a place named Yankee Hat. I know of at least one submission lobbying for a change of name for this very popular picnic spot. It was important to me to see art and nature whilst also understanding and seeing firsthand the fragility of both. Damage from the natural elements and our changing climate and human contact can cause the paint to crumble and potentially destroy this important example of our early Indigenous culture.

Our hike was led by Kevin McCue, a long-term volunteer with the National Parks Association. He was able to organise a small party of dedicated hikers to show us the area. Isobel Crawford, with her impeccable knowledge of native plants, proved to be a fantastic guide. Through her I learned about the native and introduced species and what has and is being done to maintain the native balance.

Dierk Von Behrens taught us so much about the flora, fauna and history of the area that we are privileged to leave our footprints on. He also was able to identify safe Canberra field mushrooms, which I had no hesitation in taking a bite of—of course, after Dirk's first bite.

John Brickhill and Sonja Lenz were excellent walking companions and friendly lunch companions who also kept us on track in navigating the vast and diverse plains. I have to say particular thanks to Larry O'Loughlin from the Conservation Council for going the extra mile to pick up me and my staff up from the Legislative Assembly and drive us out to Namadgi and back, for providing an inexhaustible supply of puns and dad jokes, and for his unquenchable desire to weed out all the thistle he could see.

I previously had discussions with members of the National Parks Association and other environmental groups, but nothing quite compares to going bush and seeing up close the natural beauty of our great capital. A highlight, I have to say, is getting to meet the staff and rangers who do tireless work to keep our national parks beautiful. You only need to spend a few minutes listening to them to know that, for them, this is not a job; it is a true commitment.

This Saturday the Gudgenby art week kicks off, with numerous arts events, including getting tips from resident artist, Maria Boreham. I encourage all members to take a trip out to Namadgi, if not for art week, at least some time during the term, because it truly is a great example of our proud bush capital name.

Palm Sunday rally Independent and Peaceful Australia Network rally

MS LE COUTEUR (Murrumbidgee) (5.45): I wish to talk about two rallies that I attended and spoke at in April. The first was the Palm Sunday rally, which is an Australia-wide event. Approximately 2,500 Canberrans came in solidarity with other cities around the country. Dr Minns spoke there and said:

We cannot and will not be silent while the Federal Government, supported by the Labor Opposition, continues to imprison people in Australia's immigration detention centres, many for years on end. This is particularly so in light of the forced deportations that the PNG Government has now started, with Australian Government support.

The 250,000 people included a number of groups such as Unions for Refugees, including but not limited to the firies, teachers, nurses, public servants and metal workers, mums and grand-mums for refugees, Rainbow Action, many faith-based groups, including the St Vincent de Paul Society and Muslims for a progressive society, and also cyclists for refugees, Lawyers for Refugees, medicos for refugees, academics for refugees, students for refugees and regional groups from Yass and Queanbeyan.

I was proud to speak at the beginning of the vigil and lead off the rally with Anglican Bishop Stephen Pickard, Catholic Bishop Pat Power, Uniting Church, Canberra region chair, Vanessa Crimmins and Clerk of Canberra Quakers, Kay de Vogel. I commend the Refugee Action Committee for its ongoing work and look forward to the day when it will no longer be necessary.

On 19 April I spoke at the Independent and Peaceful Australia Network rally. They are calling for a diversion of funds from offensive military purposes to urgent social needs. This was part of the Global Day of Action on Military Spending, which in Australia was organised by the Medical Association for Prevention of War, ACT Quakers, the Independent and Peaceful Australian Network—that is, IPAN—and the Australians for Justice and Peace in Palestine. Australia spends \$87 million a day on the military and we have allocated \$67 billion to building submarines and ordering 72 very flawed F35 fighters.

On the morning of the rally, news broke that over 6,000 women a year end up in emergency departments in Australia as a result of domestic violence. That is one of the very real threats we experience in our own homes. We are far less at risk of terrorist attack and we are far less at risk of going to war than we are of experiencing domestic violence; or domestic terrorism, as some call it. Yet we only find \$100 million a year to invest in this issue in the federal budget, whereas we spend billions on warfare.

The federal government's priorities are simply wrong. We need more expenditure on welfare, not warfare. That expenditure needs to include expenditure overseas, foreign aid, so that we reduce the things that cause warfare. We all know that there has been a drought in the Middle East for about the past six years. People who are starving do things that they would not otherwise do. If we wish to reduce the threats of terrorism, if we want to reduce the threat of warfare, then we need to make sure that all human beings are treated equitably and have food and shelter.

That, of course, includes people in Australia as well. We need to spend more money on welfare so that those people who live on the margins, who do not have a roof over their head and who struggle to live from pay cheque to pay cheque, have a better life.

We need more money to go to foreign aid so that people do not end up in situations where they feel they have no alternative.

The Independent and Peaceful Australia Network are working for an independent Australian foreign policy, a cessation of our current disastrous wars and diverting greater resources from war and its preparation to much needed social services: health, housing, climate change, education, NDIS, domestic violence mitigation, child care, Indigenous wellbeing and other urgent social needs.

As I have a second left, I will also comment that the recent changes in American policy, which are going to mean that there will no longer be funding for much planned parenthood, is one of the worst steps in the wrong direction that we have seen in the past few months.

Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies

MR MILLIGAN (Yerrabi) (5.50): Recently I was privileged to receive a guided tour of the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies. The institute is situated near the National Museum of Australia and is a world famous institute for research into Indigenous matters, as well as housing an amazing collection of artefacts, including film, photographs and printed materials.

AIATSIS commenced in 1961 with a conference, attended predominantly by white male academics, which sought to record the Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and cultures before they disappeared for good. An act of parliament in 1964 by Sir Robert Menzies established the Australian Institute of Aboriginal Studies. It was interesting to see that from such humble non-Indigenous beginnings the institute has flourished and continues to grow under the current leadership of

Craig Ritchie, the CEO. It now houses an impressive collection of artefacts, including 13,500 manuscripts, 130,000 items of published materials, including 3,000 rare books, and 6.5 million feet of film.

We were given a tour through the institute by John Paul Janke, the institute's communications and engagements officer. John was passionate and knowledgeable about the collections and was able to relay many interesting stories in relation to the many artefacts the institute houses. A highlight of this tour was viewing one of the rare books from 1801, which includes the only recorded transcript of a letter written by Bennelong, a Wangal man from the south shore of the Parramatta River, to Governor Phillip in 1796.

One of the key functions of the institute, both originally and continuing, is to preserve Indigenous cultures and heritage, which includes the collection and the publication of Indigenous dictionaries.

During our visit we heard from Dr Michael Walsh, senior research fellow with the institute's centre for languages. Michael shared with us an in-depth look at how language was revitalised, using both past and current sources. The process for each

word is extremely complicated and can include as many as 13 to 15 sources, many dating back to the earliest surveyor records.

The institute were a key contributor to the development of an acknowledgement to country for the Ngunawal-speaking people in their language, as has been used by the Prime Minister, Malcolm Turnbull, when speaking on closing the gap in recent times. Whilst this would appear be an easy matter, Michael shared that finding the right words, such as for the word “acknowledge” is not easy, as often there are not equivalent words.

The exciting opportunity of revitalising the languages for the local Canberra Aboriginal people goes beyond the welcome to the country, however. It includes the opportunity for books to be printed in that language, traditional stories to be re-published, and for our local school students, including non-Indigenous students, to learn the language and so to learn more about the First Peoples and the land in which we live.

The institute houses an impressive resource, one which is accessed by many Indigenous and non-Indigenous people who come from across the country, but is a hidden treasure for the people of Canberra. One hopes that, by having the collection open to such display, visitors from across Australia and indeed globally could begin to really understand the rich heritage we have as a nation and which we share with our First Peoples.

International Workers Memorial Day

MR PETTERSSON (Yerrabi) (5.54): On 28 April, just a couple of weeks ago, I was honoured to attend a solemn gathering on the shores of Lake Burley Griffin. The 28th of April, as many of you know, is International Workers Memorial Day. It is a day to remember the dead, those who have died at work or succumbed to the illness of their work; and, most importantly, it is a day to remember that we need to fight like hell for the living.

Canberra is a beautiful, picturesque city. It is also a city in which too many do not return home safely from work. Canberra is the least safe place to work in Australia. Some of the recent stats from the 18th edition of Safe Work’s *Comparative performance monitoring report* make for sombre reading. Injury rates in the private sector are up by 25 per cent since 2011. Canberrans experience 12.3 serious injuries per 1,000 people, far above the 9.3 serious injuries per 1,000 Australia-wide. And ultimately, as a result, Canberrans get killed at work.

It was only a few months ago that Canberra faced the sad news of Riharna Thomson dying in the early hours of her workday at Thoroughbred Park. Late last year, Canberra woke to the devastating news that a construction worker had been killed as he worked through the night to build Canberra’s new hospital. In 2012, we faced the devastating news of Ben Catanzariti. He was crushed at work. He was building new homes. In 2011, Wayne Vickery was struck by a grader. He was building the suburbs that make up our city; more importantly, he was a husband and a father.

I mourn for their families. The 28th of April is the international day to remember those who did not come home safely from work. We remembered them on that sunny April day, and I remember them now.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

The Assembly adjourned at 5.56 pm.