



QUESTION TIME
OF THE
LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
FOR THE
AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

HANSARD

Edited proof transcript

Thursday, 21 February 2019

This is an **EDITED PROOF TRANSCRIPT** of question time proceedings that is subject to further checking. Members' suggested corrections for the official Weekly Hansard should be lodged with the Hansard office (facsimile 02 6205 0025) as soon as possible. Answers to questions on notice will appear in the *Weekly Hansard*.

Thursday, 21 February 2019

Questions without notice:

Schools—violence	1
Schools—safe and supportive schools program	1
Planning—housing choices	2
Schools—safe and supportive schools program	3
Roads—upgrades	3
Schools—violence	5
Schools—violence	5
Environment—threatened species	6
Schools—violence	8
Schools—violence	8
City Renewal Authority—city centre improvements	9
ACT Health—SPIRE project.....	10
Sport—basketball	13

Questions without notice
Schools—violence

MR COE: My question is to the Minister for Education and Early Childhood Development. Minister, why is data relating to school-based violence kept only at a school level and not collated and monitored by the directorate?

MS BERRY: It is not kept only at the school level. There is a lot of data that is collected at the school level and also within the Education Directorate. Some of that is paper based; some of that is via Riskman. Bringing that all together is the challenge for circumstances around violence in schools.

MR COE: Minister, what data types are collected, collated and/or monitored centrally?

MS BERRY: I have just referenced two: Riskman and data at paper base level for individual students' circumstances at school.

MR WALL: Minister, what steps are in place to ensure compliance with reporting in schools?

MS BERRY: Recording in schools for what?

MR WALL: Sorry, I asked: what steps—policies—are in place to ensure compliance with reporting in schools into those management systems?

MS BERRY: We are just transitioning, as I spoke about in detail, to a new system in our schools, the SAS system. That will gather all of the information that we need in one place. That is in a transition period now. It has been transitioning since 2017. Once that process is complete, we will have all of the data that is being currently—

Mr Wall: Point of order, Madam Speaker.

MADAM SPEAKER: Resume you seat. Point of order?

Mr Wall: It is a point of order on relevance. The question was specifically: what policies or procedures are in place. I am aware that there are systems there but certainly part of the issue that has been raised is that there is a lack of reporting of these statistics.

MADAM SPEAKER: To that point in the remaining time that you have, minister.

MS BERRY: Madam Speaker, I said that we are going through a transition period now of moving data collection on to a new system.

Schools—safe and supportive schools program

MR WALL: My question is to the Minister for Education and Early Childhood

Development. Minister, children at a Tuggeranong primary school received a survey recently as part of the safe and supportive schools program. The survey describes itself as being “delivered annually in the first half of term 3 to all students in years 3-6 (and a small selection of students from the junior school)”. Minister, why isn’t the survey anonymous? And why does it expect children as young as eight and even younger to complete it and to name names?

MS BERRY: I will take some of the substance of that question on notice. Student agency is an important thing to the ACT government. We have heard that young people want to be part of having a say in what happens in their school communities. We have heard that loud and clear. We want to make sure that that is the case across all our school system.

MR WALL: Minister, are parents informed ahead of time about the survey taking place, and what privacy provisions are in place to ensure the individual’s privacy?

MS BERRY: Again, I will take the detail of that question on notice, specifically around how parents are notified, and with regard to privacy and how that is notified to individuals.

MR PARTON: Minister, who approved the use of this survey and who designed its questions?

MS BERRY: I will take that question on notice.

Planning—housing choices

MS LE COUTEUR: My question is to the Minister for Planning and Land Management and relates to the housing choices review of planning rules for Canberra’s residential areas. This time last year the community was busy writing housing choices submissions to government. When will communities see action on their issues and suggestions?

MR GENTLEMAN: I thank Ms Le Couteur for the question. It was a very good process, I think—the housing choices process and the collaboration hub—and of course government has responded and agreed to the recommendations from that. Work has already begun within EPSDD on the proposed changes from those recommendations and I will come back with the detail on the time line for changes to the Territory Plan.

MS LE COUTEUR: Minister, can you reassure the community that progress will not be delayed because of the Territory Plan review, which could take years to finish?

MR GENTLEMAN: As I said, the work has already begun, so I do not expect that there will be a delay. Of course, we have to work through the planning process and the changes to the Territory Plan from those recommendations, and we will do that as speedily as we can.

MR PARTON: Minister, when is the Territory Plan review due to be completed?

MR GENTLEMAN: I understand that it will be probably by the end of next year.

Schools—safe and supportive schools program

MS LAWDER: My question is to the Minister for Education and Early Childhood Development regarding the safe and supportive schools survey distributed in some primary schools. How long has this survey been used in ACT schools, has it been delivered annually and, if so, for how long?

MS BERRY: There are three parts to that question, and I will take them on notice.

MS LAWDER: Minister, who receives the information elicited by the survey, and is it passed on to the directorate to be compiled centrally?

MS BERRY: The survey is collected at the school level, of course, in delivering the survey. I will take the rest of that question on notice.

MR WALL: Minister, what briefings have you had on the outcomes of surveys conducted as part of the safe and supportive schools program? If you have not been briefed, why not?

MS BERRY: I have been briefed on the safe and supportive schools program.

Roads—upgrades

MS CHEYNE: My question is to the Minister for Roads. Can the minister update the Assembly on recent improvements to ACT roads?

MR STEEL: I thank Ms Cheyne for her interest in roads in the ACT. Since October 2016 the ACT government has invested over \$206 million in road projects to ease congestion for commuters and for Canberra residents in surrounding areas. One of the major focuses of the ACT government is to invest in and upgrade Canberra's major arterial roads. The government has been delivering on these critical road infrastructure projects, which include the \$28.9 million Cotter Road duplication, demonstrating our continued support for the growing Weston Creek and Molonglo region.

The ACT government has identified roads that currently experience high levels of traffic, as well as working to anticipate areas that are expected to increase in volume and transport demand in the future. The 2018-19 budget included funding for planning to begin on duplicating William Slim Drive to a dual carriageway between Ginninderra Drive and the Barton Highway. The duplication will cater for the 20,000 vehicles on the road each day, with two lanes in each direction between Ginninderra Drive and the Barton Highway and a new signalised intersection at Dumas Street and William Slim Drive.

It was interesting to see the full page ads in the *Canberra Times* and the *City News* today celebrating the federal Liberal government regarding Canberra roads. Stuningly, this taxpayer-funded propaganda in the lead-up to the next federal election has a very prominent photo of William Slim Drive, yet there has been no federal government funding for this road, despite the federal government's plans to

develop the massive 701 hectare CSIRO site directly adjacent to the road, which could accommodate up to three suburbs. Our government has called on the federal government to support the duplication to deal with the expected congestion caused by the development, yet ACT ratepayers are set to foot the bill alone. I table the advertisement in the Assembly.

MS CHEYNE: Can the minister update the Assembly on the Tillyard Drive, Ginninderra Drive and Lhotsky Street intersection upgrade?

MR STEEL: I thank Ms Cheyne for her interest in and advocacy for this particular intersection. As one of the oldest major arterial roads in Canberra, Ginninderra Drive, at the intersection of Tillyard Drive and Lhotsky Street, needed upgrading to ensure the safety of pedestrians, cyclists and road users. I am pleased to say that works will begin soon on the vital improvements to the intersection, which is a main public transport and active travel connection to Charnwood, local shops, local schools and community facilities.

The intersection upgrade will link the Ginninderra Drive and Tillyard Drive intersection with the Lhotsky Street and Tillyard Drive intersection, ensuring that there is one movement for motorists, pedestrians and cyclists. This will improve safety and see a reduction in the number of crashes that occur at the intersection. Design and construction tender documentation has been finalised. The construction tender was advertised in December last year, with works scheduled to commence in the first quarter of this year, and it will be completed around midyear.

MS CODY: Can the minister advise the Assembly on the progress of Horse Park Drive?

MR STEEL: I thank Ms Cody for her supplementary. The Gungahlin region is one of the fastest growing regions in Australia, and Horse Park Drive is a key access road for the region, with around 18,000 vehicles travelling along it each day. The duplication of this important road has been underway for some time and I am pleased to advise that work is on schedule for completion by around mid-2019.

This project involves the duplication of Horse Park Drive between the Federal Highway interchange and Amaroo playing fields. The upgrade will see the duplication of four kilometres of road and includes the installation of traffic lights on Francis Forde Boulevard, Katherine Avenue south and Mulligans Flat Road intersections. There will be a number of safety features included in the road which will improve safety for children travelling to and from school, including indented bus bays, signalised pedestrian crossings and the installation of fencing for median strips, and a reduction of the speed limit from 90 kilometres an hour to 60 kilometres an hour. Work is well underway on the final part of the duplication between Well Station Drive and the Federal Highway. This work is expected to be completed soon.

The last section of work will include a duplication of the road, a new three-metre wide shared path along the southern side of Horse Park Drive, a new road and footpath bridge over Sullivans Creek and better parking access to the Goorooyarroo nature park. I am looking forward to delivering better roads to the residents of Gungahlin and the ACT.

Schools—violence

MR PARTON: My question is to the Minister for Education and Early Childhood Development. Minister, yesterday in this chamber when I outlined some of the stories of violence in schools you said that it was the first you had heard of those stories of violence and fear. Why did it take my comments to draw your attention to stories which had either been mentioned in the *Canberra Times* or about which the parents had written directly to your office?

MS BERRY: The stories I was referring to that I heard referred to yesterday I had not heard before in my office. Some of those stories I had not. The ones in the paper had been referred to my office; I was aware of those. But there were a couple of references yesterday, and visitors here yesterday, about which I had not heard before.

MR PARTON: Minister, are your staff or staff within the directorate hiding these stories from you?

MS BERRY: Maybe Mr Parton is trying to be a little bit too tricky here. Specifically with regard to those stories that were referred to yesterday, those people have not been in touch with my office. So I had not heard from those individuals. That was what I was referring to yesterday. I have since, as Mr Parton is aware, spoken to a number of those families that were here yesterday. I have now heard their stories and I am working with them and the directorate and the schools to make sure that they are being supported and that their issues are addressed.

MRS DUNNE: Minister, what are you doing to ensure that you are properly briefed in future about the violence in ACT government schools?

MS BERRY: I am briefed properly by the education directorate but I have sought for further—

Mrs Dunne: It does not seem to be sticking, then.

MS BERRY: You asked the question, Mrs Dunne; I am trying to answer it for you. I have asked the directorate to pay further careful attention to ensuring that I am briefed more regularly and in more detail. When my office is contacted by individuals, I respond to those individuals.

Schools—violence

MR HANSON: My question is to the Minister for Education and Early Childhood Development. Minister, in answer to a number of questions in the Assembly last week about incidents at Theodore Primary School, you said you had received daily briefings from the Education Directorate and that you would continue to be personally involved in how that school recovers. Some parents that opposition MLAs have met with who wrote to you have advised that they have heard nothing from you. Minister, why have you not yet responded to all parents who have written to you?

MS BERRY: I refer members to my answers to questions last week on this issue. I

did say that there were some people that I had not responded to yet, because of more work that was happening within the school. I wanted to assure myself that the Education Directorate, the school and the community were being supported. Those families will be responded to. I will make sure that they are responded to in time. But I did say that I wanted to make sure that the responses I provided had all the up-to-date information in them.

MR HANSON: Minister, when can those parents expect to hear from you and what direction have you given to the school with regard to those parents who are yet to hear from you?

MS BERRY: I have signed a letter today to one of those families. Sorry, did you say what direction have I given to the school?

Mr Hanson: Yes. You said that you were waiting to hear from the directorate and the school and you were waiting before you wrote because you were waiting for information. Have you been in contact with the school and have you given them any direction?

MADAM SPEAKER: You have asked the question. There is not an exchange across the floor.

Mr Hanson: She asked for a point of clarification. I am just trying to provide that clarity, Madam Speaker.

MADAM SPEAKER: I think you have provided it, Mr Hanson.

MS BERRY: I feel like I am being verbally a bit here. I have said that I was waiting to make sure I had the correct information and the up-to-date information. I was carefully considering my response to those families.

MR PARTON: Minister, given the Assembly's unified concern about violence at Theodore, will you agree to jointly visit the school with Ms Lee and Minister Rattenbury and if not, why not?

MS BERRY: Since I took that question on notice last week I have reflected on an answer, and my response to that is no. The reason for my saying no to a joint visit is because schools, particularly Theodore primary at the moment, are not places for a bunch of politicians to go in there and ogle at them like it is some weird science experiment. I am not interested in that at a moment in time when the school is going through a period of recovery, which we agree is going to be a difficult time given the stories that have been made public over recent times. That school deserves and is entitled to a chance to recover to get the expert advice from the Education Directorate and others to work on a strong, inclusive and safe school community. That is what I am interested in for Theodore Primary School.

Environment—threatened species

MS ORR: My question is to the Minister for the Environment and Heritage. What update does the minister have about striped legless lizards at Palmer Nature Reserve?

MR GENTLEMAN: I thank Ms Orr for her question and also for her interest in the environment. The future is brighter for the threatened striped legless lizard at the Palmer Nature Reserve. This is because we are establishing a new population of the species at the reserve. I am advised that there are only about half a dozen healthy populations remaining in the territory.

Striped legless lizards were declared vulnerable in the ACT in 1996 and have a special protection status. The lizards moved to the reserve have survived. My advice is that we may be at the beginning of a self-sustaining population, although this could be some years away.

Palmer Nature Reserve plays an important role in the conservation of natural grassy ecosystems favoured by the striped legless lizard. The government is committed to protecting our threatened species. Our 37 reserves within the Canberra Nature Park are essential to this task.

MS ORR: Minister, how is the government protecting other threatened species across the territory?

MR GENTLEMAN: Last year the government launched an updated aquatic and riparian conservation strategy, along with seven associated action plans for threatened species. The strategy outlines how the government can continue to partner with the community, given that the community volunteers are essential to aquatic and riparian management and rehabilitation programs. The action plans to further protect threatened species in these ecosystems include the Macquarie perch, two-spined blackfish, trout cod, Murray crayfish, silver perch, Murrumbidgee bossiaea and Tuggeranong lignum. The strategy builds on the successful protection and management of aquatic and riparian areas achieved since the original 2007 aquatic species and riparian zone strategy and will be integral to the upcoming ACT water resource plan, the urban lakes and ponds land management plan and the environmental flow guidelines.

MR PETTERSSON: Minister, has the government provided support to local groups to support environmental protection?

MR GENTLEMAN: I thank Mr Pettersson for his interest in these local volunteer groups. Protecting the environment is a shared effort; we rely on the volunteers and local groups to help with many of our efforts and it is pleasing to be able to recognise their efforts.

Eleven grants have been awarded through the 2018-19 environmental grants program. The grant recipients have a broad range of objectives, from landscape restoration to biodiversity and native habitat enhancement, threatened species research and education on our Indigenous heritage. The 11 projects to receive funding prove that they will have a lasting legacy and provide strong value for money.

This is the 21st year of our environmental grants program, and each year we have seen the number of applicants rise as the community becomes more environmentally minded.

Schools—violence

MR MILLIGAN: My question is to the Minister for Education and Early Childhood Development. Minister, a Tuggeranong parent has removed her child from a primary school at the centre of current behavioural incidents because of the frequency of lockdowns. How frequent are lockdowns due to student violence in ACT schools and how is the determination to call a lockdown made?

MS BERRY: I will take the detail of that question on notice, if it is available. Lockdowns occur to keep safe either a student who might have an escalation of behaviour or other students in the area or in the classroom. They are an important part of managing issues that might arise in our schools. It also speaks to the inclusive nature of our schools, which means that some students will have behaviours that are challenging. It is about making sure that the right supports are in place so that that child also gets the opportunity to have a great education. Keeping other children safe is a priority for schools in the ACT and the ACT government. As to the detail of the actual numbers, I will take that on notice. I am not aware of the actual school that Mr Milligan is referring to. Rather than talk about it in this place, if it is not a school that is known to me, perhaps he could email my office.

MR MILLIGAN: Minister, are you alerted when an ACT school goes into lockdown due to student violence?

MS BERRY: I am advised when a school community is locked down due to managing challenging behaviour amongst some of our students.

MR WALL: Minister, what is the procedure for a school to follow when a lockdown occurs?

MS BERRY: It depends on the circumstances when a lockdown might occur and what the description of the lockdown might be: whether it is the entire school or just a classroom. Individual circumstances will require a different response on each occasion.

Schools—violence

MISS C BURCH: My question is to the Minister for Education and Early Childhood Development. Minister, a number of parents at Theodore Primary School have requested that their children transfer from that school because they fear for their safety. How many transfer requests have been made, and have these requests for transfer been granted for student safety?

MS BERRY: I will take that question on notice.

MISS C BURCH: Minister, are these requests as frequent as in other schools in the ACT?

MS BERRY: I will take that question on notice.

MS LAWDER: Minister, how many times must a child be bullied or physically assaulted in a school before you will take action?

MS BERRY: The Education Directorate and schools take action. Violence or bullying in schools is not acceptable. Violence or bullying in our community is not acceptable. It is a serious issue that has been around for a long time, and it will continue. The government is working to make sure that our schools have the right systems in place and the support for teachers and parents and families to ensure that our schools are safe communities.

City Renewal Authority—city centre improvements

MR PETTERSSON: My question is to the Chief Minister. Could the Chief Minister please update the Assembly on how the government is improving Canberra's CBD through the work of the City Renewal Authority?

MR BARR: I thank Mr Pettersson for the question. The City Renewal Authority has been very busy since its establishment. I am sure that members would have noticed the significant footpath and pavement upgrades that have been occurring throughout the city.

Just last week the new Northbourne plaza was opened and the verges adjacent to the Sydney and Melbourne buildings have been significantly enhanced. The government is also completing upgrades on London Circuit and Akuna Street, complete with new street trees and street furniture. This is all about improving city presentation for residents and visitors alike.

The CRA has been active in supporting community organisations as well as providing grants and undertaking activities of their own through, for example, new street furniture, art installations to activate spaces as well as, as I have mentioned, supporting community organisations to make the city a more colourful and active place. Not all the space in our CBD is publicly owned so the CRA works with private developers to see that the areas that are privately owned are completed to a quality standard. With better quality public spaces and quality private development, we are seeing a significant renewal of our city centre.

When light rail opens in the not too distant future and the work is complete in that precinct, together with the billions of dollars of investment along the light rail corridor leading into the city, we will have witnessed the most significant transformation of our city centre in living memory.

MR PETTERSSON: Chief Minister, what is the City Renewal Authority doing outside the city centre to improve Canberra's north?

MR BARR: The City Renewal Authority precinct extends along the light rail stage 1 corridor. The authority has been focused on a number of different precincts in this area. Haig Park is one such example, a much underutilised part of our city for far too long. There is no doubt that Canberrans want Haig Park to be improved and better utilised.

The authority has already delivered upgrades on the Braddon side of Haig Park, which has included more lighting, better footpaths and street furniture, in a way that respects the park's heritage value. An exciting mix of events will also help to activate the park. We will continue to focus on improvements in Haig Park as outlined in the authority's place plan. The authority has also published place plans for Dickson and Braddon that outline a shared vision for the precincts that are inviting and pleasant, whilst maintaining, and indeed enhancing, the unique characteristics of each area.

Future CRA projects and investment will prioritise high quality spaces for people to enjoy. These plans have been created through extensive community consultation. The authority has been busy working with local residents, workers and traders to enhance these precincts.

MS CHEYNE: Chief Minister, why is it so important that Canberra has a CBD that makes people want to live in, work in and visit the city centre?

MR BARR: It is important that our CBD reflects the best that our city has to offer. Many of us who have lived nearly all of our lives in the city might have heard all too frequently that Canberra was a hundred suburbs in search of a city, a sentiment that I have always found quite frustrating. We live in a vibrant, progressive and inclusive city, one that deserves a CBD that showcases the best of this city and highlights the great potential that Canberra has.

A thriving city centre is crucial to our territory's economy. It allows businesses to flourish and helps our city to attract more people from other cities and countries. Many small businesses in the city rely on local customers, and having more residents and better quality spaces will help many existing businesses in the CBD and also support the establishment of new businesses.

Canberra cannot continue to sprawl endlessly, and having a city centre with more residents and better quality developments means that a wider part of the Australian Capital Territory can remain protected. This delivers greater housing choices for Canberrans and also ensures that we strike the balance between a vibrant city heart and our more than 100 leafy suburbs.

A strong city centre helps Canberra's culture and arts scene to develop. We want to see a CBD that supports live music and events, and we are taking further steps to support the nation-leading growth in our night-time economy. Restaurants, bars, theatres and galleries will be successful when we deliver a better CBD, and we are well advanced. You can see all around us, from the vantage point of this building, just how much change, development, renewal and enhancement are occurring in Canberra's CBD.

ACT Health—SPIRE project

MRS DUNNE: My question is to the Minister for Health and Wellbeing. Minister, I refer to the concept brief regarding the SPIRE project dated 15 October 2018, which was prepared for you. I seek leave to table a copy of the concept brief, which I received under the Freedom of Information Act.

Leave granted.

MRS DUNNE: Minister, in relation to this concept brief prepared in relation to SPIRE dated 15 October, it says, “The earliest the project would now deliver functional clinical areas would be 2025-26.” Minister, when will the SPIRE project deliver functional clinical areas?

MS FITZHARRIS: As previously stated, it will be in the 2023-24 financial year, subject to ongoing planning. But I can confirm the date, which has previously been set at 2023-24.

MRS DUNNE: Minister, what level of confidence do you have that the project will be completed by the time you state, as opposed to that stated in the concept brief that was prepared for you on 5 October last year?

MS FITZHARRIS: As members will know, large infrastructure projects are subject to detailed planning. That is well underway. Based on the planning to date, I have a high level of confidence that it will be delivered in that financial year.

MISS C BURCH: Minister, why should the Canberra community have confidence in your ability to deliver this project on time given your failure to deliver other projects on time?

MS FITZHARRIS: I am not sure what Miss Burch is referring to, but I note that in the past two years we have delivered the University of Canberra Hospital, we have also delivered the Gungahlin walk-in centre and we have updated and upgraded the acute aged-care ward at Canberra Hospital in addition to a range of other projects. I think the Canberra community can have confidence that this project is progressing well. Indeed, clinician workshops were held just last week to further inform the service planning for SPIRE. I very much look forward to construction commencing by next year.

Mrs Kikkert rising—

MADAM SPEAKER: Mrs Kikkert, before I give you the call for your question, you would be aware that I made a statement this morning in relation to your comments in the adjournment debate last night. You are aware of the statement I made this morning in relation to your comments in the adjournment debate? Do you want me to read them again for you?

Mrs Kikkert: I understood that question time is the first priority and then we do that later?

MADAM SPEAKER: No, I think this is the priority.

Mrs Kikkert: We are all learning here.

MADAM SPEAKER: Mrs Kikkert, let me read the last of this:

Having considered Mrs Kikkert’s statement in the Assembly last night, I am of

the view that it implies that I acted under pressure and that I did not give Mrs Kikkert a fair hearing. Both of those accusations reflect on the impartiality of the chair.”

I ask, you, Mrs Kikkert, to withdraw any reflection on the impartiality of the chair.

Mrs Dunne: On the issue before us, I am not speaking for Mrs Kikkert as to whether she intends to withdraw. My understanding is that at 2 o'clock question time takes precedence over all other things and therefore other matters, such as statements that members might need to make, would happen after question time.

MADAM SPEAKER: I have considered that but I have also sought advice, and that advice said that I could ask Mrs Kikkert to withdraw her comments.

Mrs Kikkert: I feel very privileged that you have brought up this matter in the middle of question time.

MADAM SPEAKER: You just withdraw, Mrs Kikkert.

Mrs Kikkert: Thank you very much. I understand that the Speaker is disturbed—

MADAM SPEAKER: Mrs Kikkert—

Mrs Kikkert: through her own interpretation of my words yesterday.

MADAM SPEAKER: Mrs Kikkert, sit down.

Mrs Kikkert: I would like to reassure the Speaker that that was not my intention and—

MADAM SPEAKER: Mrs Kikkert, you are now named.

Mrs Kikkert: I withdraw.

MADAM SPEAKER: You were given an opportunity to withdraw. It was not a debate.

Mrs Kikkert: It was not a debate; it was an explanation.

MADAM SPEAKER: Withdraw: that is all you needed to do.

Mr Coe: On a point of order, Madam Speaker, has Mrs Kikkert been named?

MADAM SPEAKER: Yes.

Motion (by **Madam Speaker**) put:

That Mrs Kikkert be suspended from the service of the Assembly.

The Assembly voted—

Ayes 12

Noes 9

Mr Barr	Ms Orr	Miss C Burch	Mr Milligan
Ms Berry	Mr Pettersson	Mr Coe	Mr Parton
Ms J Burch	Mr Ramsay	Mrs Dunne	Mr Wall
Ms Fitzharris	Mr Rattenbury	Mr Hanson	
Mr Gentleman	Mr Steel	Mrs Kikkert	
Ms Le Couteur	Ms Stephen-Smith	Ms Lawder	

Question resolved in the affirmative.

Mrs Kikkert was suspended at 2.38 pm for three sitting hours in accordance with standing order 204, and she withdrew from the chamber.

Mr Hanson: Madam Speaker, on your previous ruling, would you do us the courtesy of providing the advice you received that it was appropriate to do what just occurred?

MADAM SPEAKER: It is not written advice, Mr Hanson.

Mr Hanson: You are not going to table it?

MADAM SPEAKER: There was not written advice. I cannot table advice that has not been—

Mr Hanson: Could you seek written advice to confirm that what you did was appropriate and in the spirit of the standing orders?

MADAM SPEAKER: No, Mr Hanson. It was a straightforward matter. Mrs Kikkert was given the opportunity to come down during the morning hours when it was first raised at 10. She did not. She sought to ask a question. She had the opportunity to withdraw and she could have had her question. So there is no further detail on that.

Sport—basketball

MS CODY: My question is to the Minister for Sport and Recreation: can you outline to the Assembly the importance of the Canberra Capitals' WNBL championship win and its likely impact on local basketball and community sport in general?

MS BERRY: What a great victory the University of Canberra Capitals completed on Saturday. Canberra's most successful national sporting team built on their amazing record with their eighth title after a great finals series against Adelaide Lightning. All season we have been watching as this team got better and better: their grit, their skill, their power and teamwork.

It had been a while between titles for the University of Canberra Capitals, but to see the way the Canberra fans got behind this exceptional team of athletes on Saturday was great, and there is a dividend that will flow from this victory. What I want to see now is more people shooting hoops with their friends and families, more young people taking up basketball and more people supporting elite women's sport.

I also want to make a point about the great spirit the University of Canberra Caps

players showed all season in engaging with their fans. It is often this personal connection that motivates children to have a go at sport for themselves. It was great to see all of the signs posted around the AIS stadium supporting individual players, and there was a real connection between the Canberra community and some of the individual players of the University of Canberra Capitals.

As is so often the case in women's sport, the Caps players are typically not motivated by big money or fame but a desire to contribute to a great team and to a win, and to be great role models. That is why the ACT government stuck with the Caps through a few lean years and was happy to support them in their victory.

MS CODY: Minister, how has the ACT government supported the Capitals in this great achievement?

MS BERRY: We are not a bandwagon government. We never stopped believing. In the election campaign in 2016, ACT Labor made an important commitment to this team, that we would provide a four-year, \$1 million funding agreement for them to bring them more in line with government-funded elite men's sport. This funding certainty matters for staffing, player signings, facilities, sponsors and ultimately for results.

The ACT government has also supported the Caps in their move to their new home court at the National Convention Centre. Through the ACT Academy of Sport, we have also provided gym and fitness equipment for the Caps to use during the season.

The government is always conscious of the fact that it is public money that we direct to elite sports like the Caps. We ask the community to make this contribution because the gains on offer are so great. I hope members agree that it has been a worthwhile investment.

MS ORR: Minister, why is it important for governments to keep driving towards gender equality in elite sport and sports administration?

MS BERRY: I thank Ms Orr for the question. It is because we are not there yet. As with political representation and board representation, the ACT government's view, and the Labor Party's view, is that gender equity in sport will not happen by itself. The sports community has brought this cause forward a long way in recent years, and we congratulate them on it.

But there remain areas in which there is more work to do, which is why the ACT government's policy platform works on numerous fronts: \$400,000 into leadership and participation programs in women's sport this term; \$500,000 into more inclusive sports infrastructure—and we reckon we will exceed that; and a policy for at least 40 per cent representation of women on the boards of ACT sporting bodies.

What is heartening is that there is general national agreement to these principles. The New Zealand government has also released a similar strategy and has shown strong interest in learning more about what the ACT is doing. Clearly, there is an important role for governments here, and we look forward to making further gains off the back of the Caps' success.

Mr Barr: Further questions may be placed on the notice paper.