



Debates

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Thursday, 11 November 2021

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Thursday, 11 November 2021

MADAM SPEAKER (Ms Burch) (10.01): Members:

Dhawura nguna, dhawura Ngunnawal.
Yanggu ngalawiri, dhunimanyin Ngunnawalwari dhawurawari.
Nginggada Dindi dhawura Ngunnaawalbun yindjumaralidjinyin.

The words I have just spoken are in the language of the traditional custodians and translate to:

This is Ngunnawal country.
Today we are gathering on Ngunnawal country.
We always pay respect to Elders, female and male, and Ngunnawal country.

Members, I ask you to stand in silence and pray or reflect on our responsibilities to the people of the Australian Capital Territory.

Petition

The following petition was lodged for presentation:

ACT Policing—Coombs and Wright—petition 45-21

By Mrs Jones, from 179 residents:

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

This petition of certain residents of the Australian Capital Territory draws to the attention of, and requests that the Assembly:

Notes that:

- a) Ajijo Grocery and Convenience Store is a valued local business serving the suburb of Coombs and Wright.
- b) That since opening Ajijo has experienced crime targeted at the business, including violence and theft.
- c) That recently it has taken police more than 8 hours to attend the crime scene when the premises was attacked during the day while staff were present.

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

- a) That the ACT Government make police presence in the vicinity of the shop visible and regular.
- b) That the ACT Government make sure there are sufficient police for a much faster response time.

The Clerk having announced that the terms of the petition would be recorded in Hansard and a copy referred to the appropriate minister for response pursuant to standing order 100, the petition was received.

MRS JONES (Murrumbidgee) (10.03): Ajit and Jyotsna run their own little supermarket serving the southern suburbs of Molonglo Valley. It might be a small supermarket but it has a big impact because it is the only shop that many people in that area can walk to. For mums who are at home without a car and for people who do not own a car, which the government encourages so much, this supermarket is all that they have had for some time. These heroes of commerce have provided that service. However, this petition notes that recently, prior to the lockdown, it took police more than eight hours to attend a crime scene when the premises were attacked during the day while staff were present.

This outcome is not good enough for these people trying to run their little supermarket and for the staff who serve in there all day, who can find themselves quite afraid at times, given the history of break-ins at this shop. The break-ins do not always occur at night time; sometimes they occur while the staff are there during the day. The petitioners therefore ask that the government make a police presence in the vicinity of the shops regular and visible and that the ACT government make sure that there are sufficient police for a much faster response time than the eight hours it took.

Ajit put his experiences in running this community supermarket into these words: “We had a perception that Canberra was a safer place than other states in Australia when we moved from Melbourne to Canberra years ago. It leaves mental scars and fear when we get broken into. We always feel under pressure and left alone when we see some unsocial elements near the store, as there is no police presence. Apart from being broken into, we have had several instances where unsocial people entered the store and threatened us that they would destroy the shop.”

People working in retail take home little enough as it is. I know well, having been a union rep for those workers at an earlier stage in my life. They should not have to live with the additional trauma of break-ins and a very slow police response. Is this how we want our business owners to live? Is this how someone brave enough to open the only little supermarket supplying bread and milk and sweets and supplies to the community in that area is to feel?

I have been to this supermarket several times since they have been broken into. It is another in the long list of failings of this government in relation to the suburb of Coombs and Wright. There is a lack of community facilities. There was the complete bungle of forcing the developer to build a 1,000 square metre supermarket rather than a 1,500 square metre supermarket. That was not allowed, but it is now allowed everywhere else in Canberra for IGA-type stores.

The housing units have in some cases been very poorly designed, with too many tenants together, creating something of a ghetto. And they are trying to build on the last piece of natural environment in the suburb, the nature reserve, on the Coombs Peninsula. The least that the government can do is ensure that there is sufficient police protection and assistance for this little business in an otherwise entirely empty shopping centre that is trying to serve the community with the basic supplies that they need.

I look forward to the government's response. We well know the government does not provide the community with sufficient police personnel. However, at the very least, some sincere effort could be made in having a conversation between the police minister and the chief of police to keep a close eye on this business and for some genuine community policing to get to the bottom of who is harassing, causing damage and committing threats and violence on this business so it can peacefully get on with the job of providing a shop for this community. That is the very least that government must do.

MR HANSON (Murrumbidgee) (10.07): I thank Mrs Jones for making sure that this matter came before us. She has outlined the problem in great detail. I just want to add, as the shadow police minister, that this is where the rubber hits the road. We have very clearly laid out the concerns that we have about the police resources on the ground. We echo the AFPA's call for more police to bring us up to parity with the rest of Australia. This has been exacerbated by so many police being taken off their normal duties to be put on COVID special duties. A 102-member police task force has meant that a whole bunch of matters that would otherwise have been dealt with are not being dealt with.

There is a human face to this. There is a human face to the lack of police resources and the failure of this government to develop a police station in the Molonglo Valley to deal with that growing population. I thank Mrs Jones for bringing this forward. We will continue to try to get a better deal for the people of Molonglo, not just on the broader nature of more infrastructure but specifically to make sure that the community is safe. We have just heard from Mrs Jones that the shopkeepers there, who are struggling with all sorts of adversity, do not need to be threatened or harassed. This government can respond. It can respond by heeding our calls and those of the AFPA to make sure that our police force is properly resourced and that Molonglo has a dedicated police station.

Motion to take note of petitions

Motion (by **MADAM SPEAKER**), pursuant to standing order 98A, agreed to:

That the petitions so lodged be noted.

Paper

Mrs Jones, pursuant to the resolution of the Assembly of 7 October 2021, presented the following paper:

COVID-19 pandemic—Social and economic recovery—Notification of Resolution of the ACT Legislative Assembly—Copy of letter to the Prime Minister from the Leader of the Opposition, dated 22 October 2021.

Health services—workplace culture Ministerial statement

MS STEPHEN-SMITH (Kurrajong—Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs, Minister for Families and Community Services and Minister for

Health) (10.10): The statement that I am making today in relation to the biannual update on the implementation of the recommendations of the final report on the independent review into the workplace culture within ACT public health services responds to the commitment made to provide the Assembly with a biannual update.

Significant effort continues to implement the recommendations of the independent review completed in March 2019, at a system-wide level, and in each arm of the ACT public health system—the ACT Health Directorate, Canberra Health Services and Calvary Public Hospital Bruce. The strong governance framework continues to ensure that culture reform is being implemented in the ACT public health system.

The culture reform oversight group, which I chair, is future focused and continually discusses the commitment to deliver real and sustainable improvement in culture across the ACT health system. This is reflected in the vision—building a better health system through organisational reform that respects our workforce, our patients and the community. The culture review implementation steering group, chaired by the Director-General of the ACT Health Directorate, facilitates the implementation of the recommendations of the review.

As part of the culture review implementation, three working groups have been established to focus on agreed key areas of the culture reform process. The system-wide human resources matters working group is focusing on the findings of the HR functions review and investing early on the system-wide industrial relations issues. The early intervention working group is responsible for identifying system-wide issues that have or are likely to have an impact on culture across the ACT public health system and recommending strategies to address or mitigate the issues. Lastly, the professionals transition to work working group is aimed at investing in our early career professionals—specifically, the transition from a student through to the first two years of being a professional in the health system.

Membership of these working groups includes members of the oversight group, staff from each of the organisations, consumer representatives and other key stakeholders, including officials from the Chief Minister, Treasury and Economic Development Directorate. All working groups report back to the oversight group and are progressing initiatives that will support our current and future workforce. The aim of the working groups is to take a collaborative approach to examine the underlying issues and deliver initiatives that will support sustainable culture change.

Further, engagement with key stakeholders across the health system continues through a range of forums, including the ACT Health and Wellbeing Partnership Board; the NGO leadership group; the clinical leadership forum; and the professional colleges advisory committee. Over the last six months, effort on a range of initiatives has progressed and will continue over the coming months.

The rollout of the internationally recognised Speaking Up for Safety program continues at both Calvary Public Hospital Bruce and Canberra Health Services. More than 74 per cent of staff at Calvary Public Hospital have been trained in the program to date. This is an ongoing investment to provide staff with an evidence-based approach to communication by teaching and reinforcing skills to enable a

“speaking up” culture. All remaining staff will be trained over coming months. Evaluation of the program at Calvary Public Hospital has commenced, and a report is expected shortly. Initial feedback indicates that the program has made a significant impact on participants, with more than 88 per cent of workshop participants agreeing that they plan to always speak up when they observe behaviour that may compromise safety.

The rollout of the Speaking Up for Safety program has been a priority in CHS, with more than 4,500 staff trained in the program, including 374 medical practitioners and 51 visiting medical officers. The ACT government recognises the importance of a culture that not only encourages people to speak up but also an organisation that actively listens to staff concerns. We are seeking to foster an environment where everyone is supportive and encouraging when a staff member speaks up about safety. We know that this will not be achieved overnight, but it is vital that we remain focused on this objective.

Work is progressing to integrate the values in action framework at Calvary Public Hospital to embed the values in the culture, particularly in areas of performance development and planning processes.

Both CHS and Calvary Public Hospital are piloting the Safewards program, another internationally recognised evidence-based model to reduce conflict in health services. Safewards encourages staff and patients to work together to make the environment safer for everyone. The program includes important principles such as using positive words and building empathy through getting to know and understand each other. These interventions not only improve interactions between staff and patients but also staff-to-staff interactions. We all know the power of a kind word and the positive impact of building relationships with others. It is through these interventions that Safewards promotes a safe and respectful environment for everyone.

CHS is piloting the SCORE civility program. SCORE stands for “strengthening a culture of respect and engagement”. The aim of the program is to transform a culture of disrespect by addressing long-term issues, facilitating safe and honest discussions and teaching new skills to cultivate an improved, safe and respectful workplace culture.

CHS has recently launched Green Buddies, a new program to support the wellbeing of nursing and midwifery staff in the women, youth and children division. Developed by clinical staff, the initiative has trained 12 inaugural volunteer buddies to support the wellbeing of their colleagues. Buddies are identified on the wards by a green badge and are available to help with emotional and professional concerns, from how to fill out a timesheet correctly to managing issues in people’s personal lives that may be impacting on their work. Buddies are trained and provided with the tools to guide and connect staff with relevant information and appropriate support, resources and services.

A mentor program aimed at supporting junior medical officers has also been rolled out across CHS. Blue Buddies are informal near-to-peer mentors who help JMOs with advice and guidance. Blue Buddies may provide debriefing after a difficult event, information on managing work-life balance or broader strategies that may be directly

applied to their ongoing medical training program. The Blue Buddies mentors are all medical officers, drawing on their own experience to provide trusted advice and support. They are found on the ward by their distinctive blue coloured name badge.

CHS is ensuring that there is a strong focus on the implementation of improving medical engagement and culture strategy. The purpose is to deliberately invest in opportunities for medical engagement to make a positive impact on workplace culture. The strategy includes four priority areas that were drawn from medical officer feedback—promote a safe and collegiate workplace, improve communication with medical officers, promote a medical voice in organisational decision-making and high-level committees, and ensure equitable workloads.

A total of eight recommendations from the culture review have been completed to date, with significant progress having been made on the other recommendations. There is an incredible amount of work within a total of 92 discrete actions to implement the recommendations. At the 27 October 2021 oversight group meeting, 60 actions had been completed, with 26 on track and six actions being actively managed to ensure that all recommendations are addressed by 30 June 2022.

The eight recommendations completed to date are: recommendation 5, review better mechanisms to better integrate clinical streams of the community health services within the clinical divisional structures in CHS; recommendation 8, memorandum of understanding for improved collaboration between the ACT and New South Wales public health systems for joint ministerial consideration—this recommendation has been transitioned to another program—recommendation 10, a clear requirement for senior clinicians to collaboratively participate in clinical governance activities; recommendation 11, the choosing wisely program; recommendation 12, clinically qualified divisional directors across each clinical division with business manager support within CHS; recommendation 17, public commitment; recommendation 18, culture review oversight group; and recommendation 20, change management and communication strategy.

There has been a deliberate goal to deliver culture reform through applying evidence-based thinking in the workplace culture framework. The framework was developed in partnership with the Australian National University's Research School of Management and is our road map for culture reform. It is designed to act as a guide to develop and implement evidence-based practices that foster respect, inclusion and trust. It guides each organisation's approach to key cultural changes, through supporting the people and the system that deliver high quality health care to our community and to be an employer of choice, both now and into the future.

Madam Speaker, there has been a significant focus on understanding the critical learning gaps across the ACT public health system. We have made significant progress with the manager-leader development training, with the first pilot training course taking place in the coming weeks. This program will see a significant investment in our manager and leader capability across the ACT public health system and builds on local manager and leadership training already taking place across the ACT public health system. On communications, there has and continues to be

significant effort focusing on communicating across the ACT public health system about the culture review.

This communication includes ensuring frontline staff are aware of and able to participate in the considerable work and broad range of initiatives that are directly linked to culture reform. The communications and engagement strategy supports ongoing discussions about effectively communicating and engaging with the workforce. We want to make sure that the changes that staff are seeing on the ground and the whole-of-system changes that are occurring as part of the culture review are communicated and that staff have opportunities to tell us what is happening for them.

We are using a range of communication channels to engage with our workforce on the culture journey, including the “Culture Connect” newsletter, the communique provided after oversight group meetings, as well as frequent internal and external messaging. Further communications channels are also being trialled. For example, CHS is shining a spotlight on the highly valued people working in the organisation and the organisation values and culture through social media platforms such as Instagram, Facebook and LinkedIn.

Innovative ideas are being trialled to support proactive communication amongst our professionals to improve two-way channels for messaging and feedback with staff. One such innovative program that is underway at CHS is Project Chatterbox. The objective of the program is to more effectively communicate information that will impact nurses and midwives in the workplace, and how our people can actively engage with initiatives. This is an example of working with staff to ensure that they are better informed about what is going on in an organisation and can be part of influencing the direction of future programs.

The next priority for the culture program is to use the range of communications channels more comprehensively to make the culture reform journey even more accessible to our workforce and the community.

Madam Speaker, Ms Renee Leon was engaged to undertake the second annual independent review of the culture review implementation. Ms Leon met with a range of key stakeholders and conducted focus groups with staff from across the public health system. Ms Leon presented her report to me late last month and I committed to tabling the second annual review report in the Assembly, as I did with Mr Reid’s inaugural annual review report in 2020.

Ms Leon’s key findings include that foundational work has progressed, with some strong messages about areas where we have made progress and improvements. The report also talks to areas where we need to focus our attention, including: continuing to embed the values in each organisation and that these need to be seen by staff to be lived at all levels; that we have more work to do to establish expectations of positive workplace behaviour and to build leadership and management capability to uphold those expectations in practice; that we need to continue to progress the development of clinical leadership capability and a willingness to listen and respond to frontline clinical staff to ensure that clinician engagement improves at all levels; that our work to establish a research strategy is a positive start but needs more focus and momentum; that the approach to research needs to be based in open and positive

relationships between health services and the universities, with genuine opportunity for clinicians to engage in research; that there is an opportunity and a need for improved collaboration and coordination across the health system, and that good platforms have been developed but there is more to do to improve; that work needs to continue to progress system-wide measures of performance, on both strategy and culture, to be developed and adopted for transparent reporting of progress; and that we need to ensure that there is a sustainable investment into organisation and system-wide culture to ensure that it is at the heart of what we do.

In summary, we have made progress and are building on the work that has been completed. However, there is more for us to do. There are more investments to be made and an understanding that consumers, carers and the community all benefit from ensuring a safe and positive workplace culture for our frontline workers.

I am pleased to say that further progress has already been made since Ms Leon undertook her consultations, particularly on system-wide measures of performance and work to ensure that clinicians have more opportunity to engage in research.

Madam Speaker, I am also responding to the Assembly resolution on workplace culture in the ACT health system that was passed in May this year. I committed to providing the Assembly with information on a range of matters relating to the management of inappropriate behaviour in the workplace.

In relation to inappropriate behaviours, bullying and harassment, all three organisations have processes and procedures for managing allegations of inappropriate behaviour. All of the processes and procedures comply with whole-of-government misconduct processes. In the ACT Health Directorate this process encourages managers, through support, to resolve issues early and promptly within teams. This reduces the need to escalate matters into formal processes unless necessary. Systems are being put in place that will provide opportunities to proactively resolve matters in potentially problematic work areas.

With regard to procedures and processes, including complaints handling, each organisation has mapped and has been reviewing processes and procedures, including complaints handling, with action plans developed. More recently, the culture review implementation steering group undertook a review of data across the system related to complaints handling, as well as other workforce-related data, to determine how this data can be developed into a system-wide dashboard that provides consistent information presented in a transparent way. This will allow the review and ongoing monitoring of identified indicators to manage trends and consider the impact and relationship of evolving data of individual indicators over time.

With regard to training and dealing with inappropriate workplace practices, all three organisations have developed training courses to improve the quality of interpersonal communications between staff, through information and practical training to reduce instances of bullying and harassment. Preliminary assessment training courses are being delivered in CHS and will be commencing shortly in Calvary Public Hospital Bruce. This training is designed to equip managers with the knowledge to effectively deal with inappropriate workplace practices with a focus on early intervention.

With regard to timely decision-making, all three organisations' processes for complaints and grievance management were reviewed in 2020 by an external consultant. This review confirmed that there were robust processes in place to respond to allegations of inappropriate workplace practices. However, we will continue to invest in opportunities to enhance current processes throughout 2021 and 2022.

In relation to leadership and management, at the system-wide level, there is a focus on building our managers' and leaders' skills and knowledge through the management fundamentals training program and the management and leader development program for the workforce. This investment will provide our managers and leaders with the essential capabilities, practices and behaviours required to build high-performing teams.

With regard to human resource practices, including in recruitment, all three organisations in the public health system have or are reviewing human resource policies, processes and systems to ensure that there is alignment with whole-of-government requirements. Relevant training programs have been reviewed and, where necessary, new programs have been implemented to ensure that managers are making decisions that comply with the employment framework and relevant legislation. As noted earlier, the culture review oversight group has also established a human resources matters working group, which is considering the findings of the HR functions review that I have previously tabled in this place.

Lastly, in relation to the May Assembly resolution on evidence-informed decision-making, over the remainder of 2021 and into 2022 there is a focus on bringing the separate organisational data together to be visually represented and reported on through system-wide dashboarding and reporting. This will be an iterative project, where agreed data from each organisation, incorporating workforce and organisation performance data, will demonstrate the impact and effectiveness of the culture reform program.

Madam Speaker, I also committed to respond to another Assembly resolution on healthcare workers. In December 2020, I committed to providing the Assembly with an update on the progress of reducing junior doctor burnout.

The Canberra Region Medical Education Council conducted a site visit to CHS in July 2021 for the purpose of surveying the CHS JMO training program, which is accredited by the CRMEC for the first two years of training for JMOs. While the CRMEC has not yet released its final report, the preliminary summation was positive. CRMEC was impressed with the JMO culture at CHS.

In the preliminary summation, the CRMEC gave the following feedback: the participation of the JMOs, medical officer support unit, and the director of prevocational education and training in the site visit was excellent, and the survey team received open, honest, and balanced answers to their queries. The team culture between the medical officer support unit, the director of prevocational education and training, and JMOs was impressive, and the surveyors were glad to hear the word "team" used often.

It was acknowledged that CHS had self-identified some issues of concern and are on a quality improvement pathway. So, while things are not perfect, they should be proud and pleased with the JMO training program and culture they are building. The training and education program is of a such a high standard that the CRMEC said CHS should consider modelling the program more broadly. The issues which CHS are already aware of and working on include access to training facilities, supervisor engagement and JMO workload and staffing levels. CHS is working to improve the engagement of senior specialist supervisors from all specialities across the organisation, in preparation for changes to intern training coming in 2023. CHS has undertaken several recruitment rounds in 2021 to fill all positions in the JMO workforce. As a result, a number of UK-trained JMOs will commence at CHS later this year. New models of employment are being considered to improve the sustainability of the workforce, going forward. CHS closely monitors JMO leave to ensure that first- and second-year JMOs are having appropriate breaks and time away from work to rest and recharge.

In closing, I would like to thank everyone across the ACT public health system for their hard work and support for positive culture change. It has been a particularly demanding time for our incredible health workforce in the ACT. They have shown commitment to each other, and to the Canberra community throughout the pandemic and this outbreak. Despite the challenges of the Delta variant of COVID-19, the staff from across the ACT public health system have continued to smile, to laugh with each other and the community and to provide essential care. Our focus in the next seven months will be on sustaining the changes that have occurred, maintaining the momentum, and embedding further positive culture reform into our health system. We all recognise that cultural change will benefit not only the entire workforce of the three organisations but also our consumers, carers and whole community. I present the following papers:

Culture in the ACT Public Health System: Second annual review, dated November 2021.

Workplace Culture within ACT Public Health Services—Biannual update on the implementation of the recommendations of the Final Report of the Independent Review, Update on resolution of the Assembly 13 May 2021—Workplace culture in the ACT health system, and update on resolution of the Assembly 2 December 2020—Health workers—Ministerial statement, 11 November 2021.

I move:

That the Assembly take note of the ministerial statement.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

Bradyn Dillon—coronial inquest

Ministerial statement

MS STEPHEN-SMITH (Kurrajong—Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs, Minister for Families and Community Services and Minister for Health) (10.30): On 29 April ACT Coroner Margaret Hunter OAM released findings

and recommendations from the inquest into the death of Bradyn Dillon. Today I table the government's response to the coroner's report.

The death of Bradyn Dillon in 2016 was a tragedy that continues to be deeply felt by his family and many in our community. My thoughts today are with Bradyn's mother, his sister, his wider family and all those who knew him. As a community, we mourn any death that is the result of family violence and recognise our duty to do more. The ACT government remains absolutely committed to the prevention of domestic and family violence and to protecting the most vulnerable in our community.

The coroner's report underscores the critical importance of a sharpened focus on systemic reform of the services that protect children and young people in the ACT. For the ACT government, the response to this tragedy began in 2016 and continues today.

The findings and recommendations of the coroner's report align with the findings from the 2016 Glanfield report, and significant system reform has already been undertaken to address the Glanfield report.

In 2016 the ACT government outlined its commitment to action in the *ACT government response to family violence* report. Under the leadership of the Deputy Chief Minister, Ms Berry, the government acted to appoint a coordinator-general for family safety, a full-time position to lead change and provide accountability across the service system; implement a collaborative and integrated approach to service redesign and improvement through the Family Safety Hub; build collaborative practices; and further develop a skilled and educated workforce, especially frontline staff, responding to the needs of adults and children experiencing family violence.

The government response provides a comprehensive summary of the many investments, initiatives and changes that have been delivered since 2016. This reform agenda spans all areas of the child protection and domestic and family violence response systems, and the government response outlines this ongoing work, which has driven changes to legislation, policy, practice and culture, training for staff, review of decisions, information sharing, and the interaction between ACT government directorates, agencies and service providers.

These efforts have been supported in every budget, and in the most recent 2021-22 budget, the ACT government invested a further \$35.9 million over four years in Safer Families initiatives. This funding expands the ACT government's evidence-based approach to addressing domestic and family violence. It will support a range of initiatives that strengthen the capacity of frontline services to respond to domestic and family violence, improve coordination across government, build important partnerships with the community sector and test promising new approaches.

The funding included an additional \$2.16 million over four years for the Domestic Violence Crisis Service and the Canberra Rape Crisis Centre as primary domestic and family violence responses, in addition to existing baseline funding. A further \$4.06 million supported three health justice partnerships. These partnerships integrate

lawyers into healthcare settings where they can reach people experiencing domestic and family violence who would otherwise not have safe access to receive such help.

Importantly, the budget also included \$249,000 for 2021-22 to continue the effective and innovative Family Safety Action Pilot, which supports high-risk families experiencing domestic and family violence by sharing information to identify, assess and manage risk. It also provides case management, case coordination and support for individuals and families.

The new investment in 2021-22 also includes an initial \$388,000 over two years to scope and design community-led responses to address the trauma and harm from domestic and family violence for the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community. This will support implementation of the *We don't shoot our wounded* recommendations.

The budget also provides \$940,000 over four years to continue the Support for Women and Children to Leave Violence initiative, which provides \$2,000 to eligible people to support them to sustain or re-establish a family home in the private market following the experience of family violence. This initiative will also scope options around access to housing that is affordable, long term and safe for people, and particularly women, who are leaving.

The ACT government has provided ongoing funding to the Domestic Violence Crisis Service to deliver Room4Change, a therapeutic residential men's behaviour change program. Room4Change supports the whole family and is one of a small number of residential behaviour-change programs in Australia.

The ACT government has also made significant investments in upskilling its workforce in domestic and family violence responses. Dedicated training programs have been developed and delivered to operational staff and these remain a core training requirement for those on our front line.

In 2019-20 the government committed \$2.48 million over four years to deliver domestic and family violence training for all ACT public servants, supporting the ongoing development of our skilled workforce and ensuring they are better equipped to recognise and respond to the needs of people experiencing domestic and family violence.

The ACT government continues to actively participate in the establishment and implementation of the national child protection information sharing system Connect 4 Safety. Since early 2016 there has been a significant increase in the volume of child concern reporting, and the 2017-18 budget committed \$2½ million a year to establish two additional frontline casework teams in response to the increase in child concern reports.

Child and Youth Protection Services—CYPS—has also established co-location and liaison relationships with OneLink, Education and Health to improve referral protocols and information sharing, and is improving the transparency of

decision-making through implementation of a new internal review of decisions process and progressing work to establish an external merits review process.

The ACT government is also continuing work to respond to a significant number of recommendations from a range of reviews, inquiries and reports into family and domestic violence and the child protection system, including the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse, the Glanfield report, the Our Booris, Our Way review, and the Legislative Assembly inquiry into Child and Youth Protection Services.

The ACT government is committed to continuing its reform, and to doing more, in response to the coroner's recommendations to keep children and young people safe and ensure public safety. While the coroner's findings lay sole responsibility for Bradyn Dillon's death with his father, that does not take away our responsibility as a government, and as a community, to do all we can to better protect our community's children and young people.

The ACT government agrees with the intent of all 17 recommendations across child protection, education and information sharing. Of the 17 recommendations, the ACT government agrees or agrees in principle to 16, and one is noted.

Our response to the coroner's recommendations addresses four key themes of workforce development, training and guidance, better support and training for mandated reporters, contemporary legislation and information sharing, and increased funding to meet demand and enhance partnerships.

Under theme 1, workforce development, training and guidance, the ACT government recognises the complex work undertaken by CYPS staff and will continue its efforts to improve workforce development, training and guidance of the ACT's child protection workforce.

A foundational and ongoing learning framework is currently being developed to support the work of CYPS staff, and it is aligned with the skills and experience necessary for staff at different levels. A key focus is strengthening delivery of forensic interviewing for more experienced CYPS staff, and a foundational interviewing program for new starters that introduces them to a framework for engaging and interviewing children.

An important aspect will be to review the current risk assessment system and to enhance it through the provision of supporting tools and resources that capture all aspects of risk assessment identified in this inquiry.

CYPS has taken further steps to refine and improve direction to operational staff regarding issues of family violence. Through the 2020-21 ACT government supply bill, \$128,000 was secured to fund CYPS staff training in the internationally recognised Safe & Together training model, delivered by the Safe & Together Institute. This model uses a suite of tools and interventions designed to support child protection practitioners to become domestic violence informed. This is in addition to

existing targeted domestic and family violence training undertaken by all frontline CYPS staff.

In relation to theme 2, better support and training for mandated reporters, the ACT government will continue its focus on how CYPS can improve engagement with and support of mandated reporters who are concerned about the wellbeing of children and young people in the ACT. Mandated reporters are people who must make a child concern report if they believe a child or young person has experienced sexual abuse or a non-accidental physical injury. They include ministers of religion, doctors, dentists, nurses, midwives, teachers, police, counsellors and childcare centre workers.

We will explore how to provide mandated reporters with training in and knowledge of appropriate referral pathways to ensure that they can better respond to the needs of children and their families, and better identify matters that must be reported to CYPS. CYPS will work with partners, including Health, Education, ACT Policing and community agencies, to provide an enhanced, aligned and consistent training program across the ACT to all mandated reporters.

In regard to contemporary legislation and information sharing, substantial work has already occurred to strengthen legislation and other mechanisms to improve responses and information sharing. This work will continue, with the intended outcomes of these existing initiatives expected to contribute to the government's response to the coroner's recommendations.

Child protection work is amongst the most complex work governments can deliver, and the workforce deserves contemporary legislation that is clear, simple and effective in guiding their work and responses to the most vulnerable and at-risk children and young people in our community. Children, young people and their families also deserve legislation that firmly prioritises safety within family. Further, the timely and effective sharing of appropriate information amongst involved authorities is crucial to the delivery of informed, responsive and best practice services to these children, young people and families.

The 2021-22 ACT budget allocates \$1.98 million over three years to review the Children and Young People Act 2008. This work will also respond to several external independent reviews, as well as the coroner's report, identifying the need for the ACT to have child protection legislation that is more contemporary, including in relation to the definition of how a child concern report is defined.

Progress has already been made on improving the appropriate sharing of information following a mandatory report being received by CYPS. The implementation of a new client management system, CYRIS, has improved the ability of CYPS to provide relevant information to mandated reporters in a simplified and timely manner.

Work to improve information sharing between CYPS and the Education Directorate is also underway. A project to build interfaces between systems that will improve information-sharing capability between the directorates, where appropriate, is expected to be completed in 2021-22. This will better inform the work of both CYPS and Education staff involved with a child or young person and their family.

The ACT government continues to actively participate in the establishment and implementation of the national child protection information-sharing system, Connect 4 Safety. Five jurisdictions, including the ACT, are already providing data on a regular basis. Work is also progressing in partnership with all states and territories and the commonwealth government to consider next steps to develop a national child safety and wellbeing information-sharing scheme.

In relation to education matters, the ACT government recognises that school is a protective factor for at-risk children. The ACT government supports national initiatives to improve information sharing across jurisdictions which, once adopted, will better protect students from being at risk of “disappearing” from education systems across Australia.

The ACT government has responded to the Glanfield report by making changes to the Education Act 2004. The Education Directorate, ACT public schools and non-government education providers work closely to support continued improvements to practices that relate to enrolment and attendance of students. The Education Directorate is reviewing the policy and procedures that apply to the management and monitoring of student enrolments and attendance. This information will be shared with all school sectors so that we can continue to build on our collaborative efforts to support student wellbeing, engagement and enrolment in approved forms of education.

A student attendance team has been established to support management of student engagement in approved forms of education. This team supports ACT public schools in monitoring and managing enrolment and attendance at school, as well as case management support to other cross-sector education providers where required.

ACT public schools continue to provide a range of supports to students to assist with their wellbeing and interventions which contribute to better understanding of student circumstances. These include access to school psychologists, social workers and youth workers.

ACT public colleges recently engaged in a pilot where legal liaison officers attended school sites to provide advice and referral support to students and families. Legal liaison officers are now funded for ACT public colleges on a recurring basis. Teachers are trained to identify students experiencing complex home lives and identify ways for them to seek and receive support. All ACT public school teachers participate in mandatory reporting training and are reminded of their obligations to report suspected circumstances of child abuse and neglect, and the Education Directorate continues to work closely with CYPS and with their liaison officer.

In relation to theme 4, increased funding to meet demand and enhance partnerships, the ACT government commits to undertake further design work to determine the best approach to deliver improved responses and practice to the ACT community. This design work will consider the child protection system holistically and the resources and capability required to deliver these outcomes.

The ACT government acknowledges the considerable workload of CYPS staff due to the increasing demand and complexity of families being reported to CYPS. As I

mentioned, the 2017-18 budget committed \$2½ million a year to establish two additional frontline casework teams in response to the increase in child concern reports. However, demand continues to grow. In the 2020-21 financial year, the CYPS intake team received 21,697 child concern reports to assess. This was a significant increase from 2019-20, when 18,663 reports were received, and which continued the upward trend seen over several years.

In the 2021-22 budget the ACT government committed \$6.49 million over four years to further develop CYRIS to ensure high-quality information is available to comprehensively assess the risk experienced by vulnerable children and young people. During 2021-22 work is expected to be completed on a new online reporting portal as part of the phased implementation of CYRIS that will decrease the administrative burden, streamline the process and increase the time available for intake staff to review information and assess reports, resulting in enhanced decision-making and responses.

The ACT government will also investigate the viability of piloting a response at intake to enhance engagement with mandated reporters through a dedicated consultation team at intake. The government also continues to fund the CYPS case analysis team, an important service for the holistic assessment of information held by CYPS in complex matters. In addition to undertaking holistic case reviews, the CYPS case analysis team has an increasing role in providing complex case consultations directly to operational areas.

The government will explore the viability of expanding the remit of the CYPS case analysis team to coordinate or provide a quality assurance case review process for children where a threshold number of reports has been received and co-existing risk factors for cumulative harm are present.

CYPS has also established liaison and referral points with government agencies and community sector providers to better meet the needs of vulnerable children, young people and their families. To further support these partnerships and information sharing efforts, a range of external partners now co-locate with CYPS on a regular basis. CYPS will continue to work in partnership and develop the relationships with key government and community stakeholders in responding to concerns of child abuse and neglect.

The ACT government takes its responsibilities for the safety and protection of Canberra's children and young people very seriously. Over the past five years, we have worked to undertake systemic reform. But we must do more, and we will. We will continue our reform agenda and do further work in response to the coroner's recommendations.

We need to continue to develop safe and effective responses regarding children at risk of harm. However, outcomes for children will be better if we can connect families with support before a child is identified as being at serious risk. This will require an integrated approach to reform across the ACT human services system.

Advancing the wellbeing of children and families in the ACT requires collective effort across a whole-of-community response. To advance this goal, in early 2021 the government and over 40 community organisations came together at a children and families forum to jointly progress a system-wide reform agenda, taking lessons and insights from past and existing reviews, engagements and reforms.

The forum developed shared principles and explored potential new structures, mechanisms and opportunities for the community sector and government to work differently together towards better outcomes for children and families. The ACT government remains committed to progressing ambitious and transformative reforms to improve the wellbeing of children, young people and their families and to work alongside community partners and families to achieve this.

These reforms have and will include changes across statutory and non-statutory services, such as embedding early family support, implementing child safe standards across all services and supporting the delivery of the children and young people core area in the ACT Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Agreement 2019-28, implementation of the recommendations of the Our Booris, Our Way review and through the development of the next iteration of A Step Up for Our Kids, the ACT's out-of-home-care strategy.

Such reforms will contribute to building a child protection system that is restorative, contemporary and underpinned by transparent and inclusive decision-making. Every child deserves to be safe in their home, and we remain committed to doing what we can to ensure children and young people have every opportunity to live happy and full lives. I present the following papers:

Coroner's report into the death of Bradyn Dillon—Government response, dated November 2021.

Coroner's finding into the death of Bradyn Stuart Dillon—Government response—Ministerial statement, 11 November 2021.

I move:

That the Assembly take note of the ministerial statement.

MRS KIKKERT (Ginninderra) (10.50): I thank the minister for her statement on the coroner's report into the death of Bradyn Dillon. I really appreciate the update. However, I do have some concern about the statement. The coroner's findings into Bradyn Dillon's death by the hand of his father are quite significant, with 17 recommendations. We have just heard the minister say that the government agrees in principle to 16 of them, and one is noted.

Because of the significance of the event, I would like to read out the 17 recommendations. It is really important for all of us, as well as Bradyn Dillon's mum and his extended family, to know which one of those recommendations has been noted, and the reason why.

Recommendation 1 is for CYPS to have a renewed training initiative, with a focus on strengthening the understanding and application of risk assessment, including cumulative harm, strengthening the understanding and application of legislative thresholds in informing decision-making, strengthening the understanding of forensic interviewing of children and parents, and the role of supervision to include provision of improved quality assurance of decision-making and administrative functions.

Recommendation 2 is to continue funding for the induction training package for new frontline workers. Recommendation 3 relates to funding and investment in training frontline managers and team leaders to develop and strengthen skills in risk analysis and quality assurance. Recommendation 4 is to consider legislative changes in relation to the definition of how a child concern report is defined from a core defined model to an intake defined model.

Recommendation 5 relates to funding a greater number of staff at the intake level of CYPS. Recommendation 6 is for funding to be provided to junior staff in intake to develop and enhance their skills in frontline work, which includes risk assessment and cumulative harm. Recommendation 7 is to consider the establishment of an intake consultation for complex cases.

Recommendation 8 is to continue funding for the case analysis team, with a view to increasing staff numbers. Recommendation 9 involves funding to engage a team of trainers in relation to providing mandatory reporters with skills to identify matters which require reporting to CYPS and those which could be referred to appropriate community organisations. Recommendation 10 is to consider legislative changes to include that mandatory reporters are advised of the outcome of the reports.

Recommendation 11 relates to the Education Directorate and is to adopt a formal process to require parents to advise the school where a child is being unenrolled to give details of where the child will be enrolled or home schooled. Further, where a child who is the subject of CYPS involvement has been unenrolled, CYPS is to be alerted if a child has been unenrolled and the name of the school where they will be enrolled, or the address for home schooling. Also that the Education Directorate will be obliged to contact the new school to confirm enrolment, and if enrolment is not confirmed, the Education Directorate must make a mandatory report to CYPS of that fact. Finally, that child tracking in the ACT be made mandatory for all schools.

Recommendation 12 is to adopt and implement the national schools reform agreement unique student identifier, USI, for the purposes of having a national information exchange scheme. Recommendation 13 is to participate in the management of the interjurisdictional data transfer scheme project through the Education Council of Australia. Recommendation 14 is to expand the usage of the Connect 4 Safety federal initiative to incorporate a health service provider component. Recommendation 15 is to continue to evolve the relationships between CYPS, ACT Education, SACAT, DVCS and other community organisations through the use of liaison officers.

Recommendation 16 is to enhance information sharing between CYPS and ACT Education in relation to real-time enrolment data and identification of children at risk, in conjunction with the proposal for mandatory child tracking. Finally,

recommendation 17 is that the Attorney-General, at the next meeting of state and territory attorneys-general, raise with his counterparts the establishment of a national database for children at risk.

These 17 recommendations from the coroner are all significant, and I call on the minister to come back by the end of this sitting day and let the Assembly and the public know which one of these 17 significant recommendations she has noted, rather than implementing, and the reason why.

MS STEPHEN-SMITH (Kurrajong—Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs, Minister for Families and Community Services and Minister for Health) (10.55): Madam Speaker, I do not need to wait until the end of the sitting day. The government response to the coroner's report was circulated with my statement at 8 am today, by you, and Mrs Kikkert could have read that. If she had done so, she would know that recommendation 14 is noted. That recommendation is to expand the usage of the Connect 4 Safety federal initiative to incorporate a health service provider component. That is noted because that work is already underway.

The ACT government has been, with the New South Wales government, leading the development of the Connect 4 Safety initiative; therefore, that recommendation is noted because that work is already well underway. Also, it is part of a national initiative.

In relation to those recommendations that were agreed in principle, that is for the usual reasons. They are national work, where the ACT government is participating but cannot direct that work. They are where we agree to the outcome and the intent, but more work is required to understand exactly how we would deliver that; or they require additional funding, and that funding has not yet been delivered through the 2021-22 budget and needs to be considered through further budget processes.

This is all very standard, Madam Speaker. As I indicated, the government's response was circulated with the ministerial statement at 8 am.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

Environment—electric vehicles

Ministerial statement

MR RATTENBURY (Kurrajong-Attorney-General, Minister for Consumer Affairs, Minister for Gaming and Minister for Water, Energy and Emissions Reduction) (10.57): I am pleased to present today a statement on the progress of zero emissions vehicle policies in the ACT.

The ACT government is committed to achieving the ambitious target of net zero emissions in the ACT by 2045 at the latest. Although we are a relatively small jurisdiction in Australia, we aim to be leaders in innovation and demonstrate to other jurisdictions and the world what is possible in the transition to a zero emissions future.

In 2020 the ACT demonstrated this leadership by achieving a 100 per cent renewable electricity supply for our community. The ACT government committed to this target last decade, at a time when the renewable energy industry was in its infancy in Australia. Our transition to renewable electricity demonstrates that a small jurisdiction can be a leader in adopting zero emissions technologies.

It should be noted that larger Australian jurisdictions are now following the ACT's lead in their approach to adopting renewables. The ACT's innovative reverse auction process for securing renewable electricity supply is now being adopted across Australia.

Having achieved a 100 per cent renewable electricity supply, the ACT has now turned its attention to two of the largest remaining challenges—eliminating the use of fossil fuel gas and decarbonising our transport system. Today I intend to talk about the latter.

Transport fuels are now the single largest source of emissions in our community. The vehicles we drive every day are responsible for around 60 per cent of all ACT greenhouse gas emissions. That is why we are prioritising the shift to zero emissions transport, including active travel, public transport and zero emissions vehicles.

In 2019 the ACT government introduced a new public transport network to drive the step change needed to deliver a high-quality, modern and sustainable public transport service. Our light rail system runs on 100 per cent renewable electricity, and we have started down the path to a zero emissions bus system. The ACT government is also integrating walking and cycling into Canberra's overall urban planning, transport, health, environment and education systems. The government has facilitated the introduction of electric bikes and scooters, which many Canberrans seem to have fallen in love with.

However, to reach zero emissions by 2045 will require the ACT to address emissions from passenger vehicles, which emit around three-quarters of our transport emissions. The ACT will not be acting alone. Many car makers have indicated that they see electric cars as the future of transport. Volvo and Ford Europe plan to offer only electric cars from 2030. General Motors plans to offer only electric vehicles by 2035. Volkswagen aims for 70 per cent electric car sales in Europe, and 50 per cent in China and the United States by 2030. More than 370 electric car models were available around the world in 2020, a 40 per cent increase from 2019, many of these SUVs.

Debate interrupted.

Remembrance Day

MADAM SPEAKER: Members, it being 11 am, I ask members to stand for one minute of reflective silence to commemorate the armistice which ended World War I, and to remember the sacrifice of those in all wars and conflicts in which Australia has been involved.

Members standing in their places—

MADAM SPEAKER: Thank you, members.

Environment—electric vehicles

Debate resumed.

MR RATTENBURY: Truck makers such as Daimler, MAN, Renault, Scania and Volvo have indicated that they see an all-electric future.

The ACT government wants to ensure that we are at the front of this movement to change the way our vehicles operate. The ACT government has committed to a broad range of actions to support a future of zero emission vehicles, including supporting new and innovative businesses in the ZEV sector to maximise job creation and economic development in the territory, working with local and state governments to facilitate the installation of charging stations on major routes to and from Canberra; amending road rules and the Parking and Vehicle Access General Code to promote ZEV uptake, ensuring all newly leased ACT government fleet passenger vehicles are ZEVs in 2020-21, where fit for purpose, and trialling financial incentives to encourage the uptake of ZEVs and electric bikes.

I would like to take this opportunity to outline the progress we have made to achieve a zero emissions transport system. In 2018 the government released its Transition to Zero Emissions Vehicles Action Plan. Since then we have made great progress in transitioning our government passenger vehicle fleet to zero emission vehicles. We now have one of the largest passenger zero emission vehicle fleets in Australia, with 169 vehicles, which is 29 per cent of our total fleet of 597 vehicles. We are following through on our commitment that all new fit-for-purpose vehicle leases are zero emissions.

To power these cars, we have installed 120 charging stations at ACT government sites, and we have worked with industry and government partners to open Australia's first publicly accessible hydrogen refuelling station in Fyshwick. This station will support 20 hydrogen powered vehicles in the government fleet—a unique commitment to trial this exciting new technology.

We are also looking at how to shift to zero emissions heavy vehicles, including emergency vehicles and waste collection trucks. The ACT Emergency Services Agency demonstrated leadership in working with German company Rosenbauer to develop Australia's first electric fire truck. As part of the 2021-22 budget, the ACT government is investing \$12.8 million over four years for the Emergency Services Agency's vehicle replacement program, which will include the addition of nine zero emissions vehicles to the emergency services fleet.

We are also putting in place incentives to support the broader uptake of zero emission vehicles in the community. The ACT has among the most generous incentives for zero emission vehicles in Australia. We have introduced two years free registration for new and used vehicles, as well as continuing the stamp duty exemption for new zero emissions vehicles. We will soon introduce zero-interest \$15,000 loans for zero emissions vehicles and charging equipment purchases, through phase 2 of the Sustainable Household Scheme.

I am pleased to see that the ACT community is responding positively to these incentives. Since the free registration scheme came into effect on 24 May, the total number of zero emissions vehicle registrations has increased by at least 32 per cent, to more than 1,300 vehicles. The number of ZEVs registered in the ACT has increased by more than 80 per cent since last year. More new ZEVs were registered in the last three months than the total stock of ZEVs five years ago.

This demonstrates that Canberrans are embracing this technology and are serious about their commitment to our community's target of net zero emissions by 2045. To support zero emission vehicles in Canberra, we are also looking at the infrastructure and charging stations that are required around our city.

In the 2020-21 budget we allocated \$2.7 million to install 50 public charging stations across Canberra. Work is also currently underway to develop a public charging master plan to support a strategic rollout of charging infrastructure. This will inform the location of the 50 publicly accessible charging stations, as well as future locations for publicly accessible chargers.

In terms of next steps, the government recognises that partnerships with industry will be critical to ensuring that ZEV manufacturers see Canberra as an attractive market for their vehicles. Under the 2020 parliamentary and governing agreement, the government has committed to engage with the ZEV industry and adopt a target for new ZEV sales by 2030. The sales target will demonstrate our community's commitment to establishing a sustainable ZEV industry within our borders. The ACT government is now working with the community and industry to establish a suite of new policy options to further facilitate the uptake of ZEVs in the ACT.

While the ACT is pursuing an ambitious climate agenda, Australia is clearly falling behind our global counterparts as the commonwealth continues to avoid cementing a national target for reaching net-zero emissions or establishing a clear national zero emissions vehicle policy. Only with national commitment, strong collaboration and participation across government, industry, research institutes and the community will we see the capacity to reduce emissions align with global climate goals.

The United Nations climate conference, COP26, has reminded us yet again of the need for urgent action and cooperation on climate change. Thankfully, the conference demonstrated growing consensus for enhanced ambition, while supporting adaptation and resilience for vulnerable communities. At the conference the federal government endorsed the Breakthrough Agenda, which aspires to zero emissions vehicles being "the new normal" by 2030. This will not happen without strong national policies, so I hope this agreement will serve as a catalyst to strengthen the federal government's commitment to cutting transport emissions and supporting a rapid shift to zero emissions vehicles.

The ACT is proud to be the first state or territory in Australia to achieve 100 per cent renewable electricity. But we will not be the last. This transition is inevitable and crucial if we are to address the challenge of global climate change. All states and territories are committed to net zero emissions. We are in the middle of an energy

revolution that will see major changes to the way we produce and consume energy for heating and cooling, lighting, cooking, entertainment and all of the other uses that we have.

We are also now at the start of a revolution in transport technology. The age of the internal combustion engine vehicle is coming to an end. A cleaner future is ours to build. The ACT will continue to be at the forefront of both of these revolutions, demonstrating that we can be a cohesive, dynamic and prosperous society while also meeting environmental challenges. Our citizens expect it; the global environment demands it; and this government will continue to deliver. I present the following paper:

Zero emission vehicles in the ACT—Update—Ministerial statement,
11 November 2021.

I move:

That the Assembly take note of the paper.

MS CASTLEY (Yerrabi) (11.08): I am pleased to speak about the minister's update on zero emissions vehicles in the ACT. The Canberra Liberals welcome the government making progress, because, as the minister states, transport fields are the largest source of emissions in our community and, without sensible policies, we will not achieve the uptake we need to meet our tripartisan net zero targets. While I welcome the detail the minister has been able to provide, I have a number of concerns about the government's leadership in this area.

In his statement, Minister Rattenbury talks about developing Australia's first electric fire truck and the fact that the government has committed \$12.8 million over four years for emergency service replacement vehicles. However, the only figure that Canberrans have to assess the merit of this investment is that Minister Gentleman has told us these electric fire trucks will reduce diesel fuel consumption by 185,000 litres over a 10-year period. It is insufficient information for Canberrans and this Assembly to understand how these measures will help us achieve our legislated targets and whether we are getting bang for our buck, which should always be a consideration.

The Climate Change and Greenhouse Gas Reduction Act 2010 requires the minister to prepare a report about the cost-benefit analysis of any government policy or program. Last year there was no report. The Canberra Liberals eagerly await the minister's report so that the Assembly can properly scrutinise the government's climate policies and ensure that Canberrans are getting good and sensible outcomes on reducing emissions.

Turning to private zero emissions vehicles, our progress is questionable. In his statement Minister Rattenbury states that there has been a 32 per cent increase in zero emissions vehicles since the start of the scheme, which is very welcome. But during the recent estimates hearings the minister was unable to provide answers about how many public charging stations there are across the ACT. When I later received the

information I learned that there were 37 operational charging stations, yet only 13 are publicly accessible.

Without charging infrastructure, the potential for rapid take-up of private electric vehicles is uncertain. I am pleased the minister has acknowledged this is an issue by committing \$2.7 million to install 50 public charging stations. What Canberrans want to know is where will those 50 charging stations be and how soon will they be built.

While I welcome the steady increase in zero emissions vehicle registration in the ACT, the reality is that these are still not affordable options for the vast majority of Canberrans. I recall reading an article earlier this year that the top suburbs to take up EV registration were Garran, Campbell and Phillip, just to name a few.

The Conservation Council's statement to the 2021-22 budget made the important point that the Vulnerable Household Energy Support Scheme aimed at supporting low income households to improve housing quality has received only 10 per cent of the \$50 million outlined in the Labor-Greens parliamentary agreement, which is not good enough. As rightly focus on achieving our legislated reduction targets, we must be mindful that low income and vulnerable Canberra households are not disadvantaged and are, indeed, supported to make changes that improve their quality of life.

In conclusion, the Canberra Liberals urge the government to release cost-benefit reports so that the community can clearly understand how the government is spending their money and what programs are driving down emissions most effectively.

MS CLAY (Ginninderra) (11.12): I would like to thank Minister Rattenbury, who has been a great advocate for electric vehicles in his time in the Assembly. It has been really satisfying to watch that EV policy come so far, so fast. Earlier this year the federal government was still claiming EVs would wreck the weekend, and I am pleased to see they have changed their tune since COP26, although their actual policy is pretty light on.

In the ACT we have led the world on some aspects of climate policy but we lagged behind on EVs. The ACT Greens were the only major party to take an EV policy to the election. Now it is core ACT government business. It is no wonder. Transport emissions make up around 60 per cent of our scope 1 and scope 2 emissions and we are in a climate crisis. We need to cut those emissions as quickly as possible. This is why every country that takes climate change seriously has big plans for EVs.

I am not really a car person. I love to ride. I did not own a car for the last 15 years. My partner had a Nissan Tiida and our household ran with one car and two bikes. It suited us really well. But in a car-loving city like Canberra, I understand that EVs are key. I worked this out when I ran a climate change project. I cut my footprint—and that of the average Australian—by 75 per cent, running different one-week experiments to see what worked. The transport section was really, really challenging. Catching the bus, walking and riding everywhere that I could go, car-pooling and trip-chaining—all of these worked. They all cut a tonne or more of emissions per year, and it was really good. But I had to think and plan ahead. I had to adapt my life around it. But

swapping one car for another car is effortless. It slashed two tonnes overnight and there was no behavioural change required.

That is why one of the first things I did when I got this new job was to get rid of that old car and buy an EV. I have gone from not owning a car at all to perhaps owning the coolest car in the country. It is a Hyundai IONIQ and I hired street artist Paul Summerfield to put a wrap over it. He has made this glorious steampunk vision of the Canberra of the future. It has got power from solar and wind, the animals have taken over, there is nature all through the city. It is just fantastic and it makes a lot of people smile all around Belconnen.

I am really, really pleased to see the ACT government's ambitious procurement of electric vehicles for the fleet. I was really glad to hear this morning that we are considering zero emissions garbage trucks. I called a few times for that as part of the 2023 collection contract, and I think this is absolutely the right time to be looking at it.

Electric buses are another great win. We have started to make that switch but we need to keep going. Our bus fleet accounts for three per cent of Canberra's tailpipe emissions and an enormous 52 per cent of ACT government emissions. We have got a goal of a zero emissions bus fleet by 2040 but the New South Wales government has set a faster pace. They want to hit that by 2030. And just as with EV passenger cars, we know we can save money long term if we switch over, because those electric buses do not need diesel and the servicing costs are much lower.

We need to build our charging infrastructure and plan for this change, but I think we can make it faster than we are planning right now. I am also wondering if procuring with New South Wales government might help get us economies of scale that will make it a bit cheaper.

EVs are glorious to drive. I have never yet met anyone who switched and regretted it. Over the life of a car, they are cheaper to run. They cost less to service and you never have to buy petrol again. But they are still expensive to buy up-front. I say this because I am not a car person. I once bought a \$500 car. I talked it down to \$450 because \$500, just frankly, seemed a little too much to spend on a car. Now you cannot yet buy an EV for \$450—not yet. The prices are coming down. At the start of this year the cheapest EV available in Australia was over \$50,000. That has now come down to around \$43,000. It is still a lot of money for many, many people. That is why the Sustainable Household Scheme includes EVs. The \$15,000 interest-free loan takes the sting off the initial purchase price. If you are already in the market for a new car, you really should consider an EV, because it will pay for itself over time, and it will be even quicker with that loan.

There are also second-hand EVs. Those are much, much cheaper. I saw one advertised today for \$11,000. That is actually getting to be a really good, cheap car. The range is a bit lower but these are really good as a town car.

The Sustainable Household Scheme will include loans for home EV-charging equipment. I think that is really good, but not everyone will need it. I am not sure if Ms Castley has direct experience of an EV; it is really important for us to build our

EV charging infrastructure, but what we are finding is that most people who live in a house just plug it into the socket at home. That is what we do. We do not have a charger; we just plug it into the wall. Fast chargers are going to be really important for people in apartments and for people travelling, and we definitely need to get on and build that network.

I would also like to see that Sustainable Household Scheme expand. I would really like to see some other zero emissions transport options included in it. For some households, any car will be out of reach, even with a big loan. I would like the scheme to include e-bikes. These are much, much cheaper than cars. Many cost around \$2,000. They can replace a vehicle. I know a lot of people who have switched their car commute for an e-bike commute. These will allow so many more households to access the scheme and to drop their emissions right to zero overnight. E-bikes would be a perfect way to participate for the 100,000 Canberra households who rent or who live in apartments and who want to get around and cut their emissions.

E-motorbikes should also be included. Diesel motorbikes are more efficient than cars but they have surprisingly high emissions for their size. An electric version of motorbikes, an e-motorbike, just takes those tailpipe emissions to zero overnight. I would also like to see this scheme expand if we find that it is not working quickly enough. We are in a climate emergency and we need to act like it.

Most countries with high EV uptake offered grants rather than loans. I really hope that in the ACT we will consider grants if we are finding that our uptake is not growing quickly enough. EVs are marvellous but they cannot be our only transport solution. They still cause some of the problems that internal combustion cars cause. They create congestion and they take up a lot of space. Not everyone can drive and, for many people, any car will be too expensive. That is why our climate change and transport strategies set out the need to rethink transport altogether.

We need to reduce our car use, we need to increase active and public transport and we need to build a compact and efficient city. We need the fewest cars on the road possible, and every single one of those cars should be an EV.

We need to do everything we can to help people make better choices to cut emissions. We need great public transport, and it needs to be zero emissions as soon as possible. We need programs and great infrastructure to support our active transport. We need really innovative last-mile solutions, like the e-scooters. And we need to help everyone switch their old internal combustion car for an EV, an e-bike or an e-motorbike as quickly as possible.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

Arts—Statement of Ambition

Ministerial statement

MS CHEYNE (Ginninderra—Assistant Minister for Economic Development, Minister for the Arts, Minister for Business and Better Regulation, Minister for Human Rights and Minister for Multicultural Affairs) (11.20): I welcome the

opportunity to update the Assembly on the release of the Statement of Ambition for the Arts. The Statement of Ambition for the Arts was released on 1 October this year. The ambition is simple but powerful: for Canberra to be Australia's arts capital. This is a bold step but it is not a leap.

Canberra has always been a place for people who embrace arts, culture and creativity. This nourishes our individual and collective wellbeing and connects our emotions, ideas, stories and heritage. This strength provides a platform and motivation to further improve our standing, our reach and what we can achieve. It is as simple as this: no matter who you are, no matter where you are, you will want to be creating, participating or engaging in the arts in Canberra.

It should come as no surprise that Canberra has all the ingredients to become recognised as Australia's arts capital. We are proud of our First Nations peoples' enduring connections through their care and creations. We are proud of our design excellence, being a city built from a concept. We are proud of our institutions, organisations, venues and spaces and, importantly, the artists, arts workers, producers, visionaries and creatives who have founded, contributed to and enhanced them. And we are proud of the individuals and communities which generate the passion, foresight, drive and belief which result in exquisite, challenging and emotive creations.

Canberra already reaps the economic benefit of its arts and creative activity and only stands to further benefit from the innovation, born through collaboration, that is encouraged in my statement of ambition. The statement and its core ambition were formed on the basis of conversations I have had with members of the Canberra arts sector over the last 12 months. And I am pleased that the sector has welcomed it.

The statement of ambition and the three strategies within it, which I will outline shortly, will inform the ACT government's short and medium-term decisions on the arts. It will also be the framework guiding our long-term decision-making, including the development of a new arts policy, a new organisational funding model for the arts, and updated terms of reference for the Minister's Creative Council.

The ACT arts policy will be informed by research and developed in partnership with the ACT arts community over the remainder of 2021-22. This policy will include the steps, decisions and actions we will take to deliver the strategies to achieve the ambition. The new organisational funding model will have a focus on transparency and accountability and will be developed in partnership with the ACT arts community over the remainder of this financial year too.

To the statement's strategies, or the paths or routes we will take to help us reach the ambition: the first strategy is to create amazing art and culture, everywhere, at any time, for everyone. The second strategy is to develop arts, cultural and creative industry, practice and facilities, supporting creation and culture at all levels, via any path. The third strategy is to promote our arts and culture to attract artists, workers, visitors and investment. These three strategies are distinct but related. Each strategy supports the others.

The creation of amazing art and culture is supported through investing in artistic capacity and capability and in our arts and cultural facilities. By relentlessly and proudly promoting our arts and culture, we attract artists, arts workers, visitors and investors. And they in turn enhance and increase our industry, practices and creations—again, a bold step but not a leap.

The ACT is fertile ground for arts activity, which will enable us to intensify and grow our efforts in pursuing these three strategies. We already create in impressive numbers. Statistically, the ACT has the highest participation rate of 45 per cent in cultural activities.

Through the 2021-22 budget, the ACT government was pleased to fund a third round of the popular HOMEFRONT grants, supporting artists and creatives in the ACT to sustain and develop their practice as we emerge from the effects of the most recent COVID-19 lockdown. This is in addition to our history of supporting artists through arts activities funding and other more recent initiatives like the Creative Recovery and Resilience Program.

We already have a strong and demonstrated capacity to develop. The ACT is home to excellent arts facilities which offer a platform to many individual artists and arts organisations whom we will continue to support. For example, in this year's budget, \$2.833 million in additional funding was provided to the Cultural Facilities Corporation, \$330,000 of additional operational funding was provided to the Ainslie and Gorman art centres and the Belconnen Arts Centre, and \$2 million in funding was allocated for significant upgrades at the Tuggeranong Arts Centre theatre. We will intensify our efforts and investment to develop arts, cultural and creative industry, practice and facilities to achieve our ambition.

Canberra's reputation as an arts destination is tied to our ability and commitment to promote ourselves. Our creative identity and offerings are an asset to the marketability of Canberra, and we will zealously and proudly promote this asset. Canberra's arts sector will continue to be a source of inspiration, drawing like-minded people to visit, work, study and live.

This year's budget included funding for the ACT government to co-invest in a new state-of-the-art sound stage and virtual production studio in Canberra. This investment will enable us to continue to attract high-quality film and TV productions, to build our local industry capability and to inject millions of dollars into the economy. It will not only help to diversify our economy by developing employment opportunities but will nurture local talent and help them launch their film and TV careers. We will continue to pull all the levers we can to promote our arts and culture, to attract artists, workers, visitors and investment to Canberra.

In the statement of ambition, I also announced two new flagship initiatives which are objectives in our ambition. Working towards them will propel us towards the ambition to be Australia's arts capital. First, we will host an ACT arts expo, a showcase festival of several months which promotes our arts, culture, artists, opportunities, industries and careers. The expo will show the world that the ACT is a place where talent can

thrive and where arts and cultural activities are happening everywhere, all the time. Whether it is events, comedy performances, educational seminars, careers fairs, exhibitions, amateur and professional theatre, musical and dance acts and festivals, pop-up art and performance, film and screen, art therapy, graphic design masterclasses, arts business accelerators, there will always be something on, something to do.

Secondly, we will explore how the ACT can become internationally known as a city of design. Design excellence is inherent in Canberra's character and history. Being a city of design would be an acknowledgement of Canberra's leading practice in its built environment, its services and its products.

I want to highlight another element of the statement of ambition before I finish: its detailed list of current funding for the arts across government. We fund an impressive array of artists, programs and facilities, and now this array of funding is outlined coherently, in the one place, for ready reference. New initiatives for this budget are highlighted in this document and the expenditure will be regularly updated. We will continue to ensure that all ACT government arts investments and decisions are easily accessible. Our current and future budget initiatives are, and will continue to be, firmly grounded in the strategies I have outlined.

The Statement of Ambition for the Arts is bold, but with our arts sector and its potential we should be bold. As I said when I first rose to speak, Canberra has all the ingredients to become Australia's arts capital, with its talented artists and creatives, first-class organisations and facilities, burgeoning creative industries, an ecosystem of arts and culture that is a great strength and unique to our region, and indeed Australia. I look forward to working with all of the ACT community to achieve our ambition for Canberra to be Australia's arts capital.

I present the following papers:

Canberra: Australia's Arts Capital—a statement of ambition for the Arts—2021-2026.

Australia's Arts Capital: Statement of Ambition for the Arts—Ministerial statement, 11 November 2021.

I move:

That the Assembly take note of the paper.

MS CLAY (Ginninderra) (11.29): I really welcome the minister's Statement of Ambition for the Arts. It is bold and there is an awful lot in there that I am so pleased to see. We have got all the funding laid out on three pages together. This may not mean much for anybody who has never tried to dig through arts budgets, but I have never seen it before and it is a really, really good step towards transparency.

I am also really pleased to hear about a lot of the directions that we are moving towards. I think it will be really good to have a review of our organisational funding model. We took that to the election. It is beyond time to have a good look at how we

are doing that and to review it in a really open and transparent manner. And I am really glad that that is going to take place. I am really, really excited to see the detailed policies that will come out under this and I am pleased to hear that they will be co-designed with the arts sector.

There are some really big visions in here, and I am still having a chat to people about them. There is the vision for the expo and the city of design. I think these are really big, new ideas and I am still getting my head around how they will fit in with what we have and how they will take us forward. But this is certainly the biggest leap forward we have seen since the 2015 arts policy, which was well and truly outdated and definitely needed to be updated.

One of the things that worry me, though—and it is one of the things that always worry me—is that I am still concerned that we are not responding to some of the long-term trends that have happened to the artists. And that has been accelerated by COVID. I am still concerned that we are not looking after the jobs in the right way that we need to for that sector.

I am really, really glad that we are investing in our facilities. I think that is important. I am hoping that we have enough funding in here to fix up the ageing arts infrastructure that we have. We have a lot that has been in disrepair for a long time and we definitely need to repair and upgrade that. I think it is great that we are carving out new ideas and places.

But there has been a bit of a tendency in Canberra to have really nice arts facilities that the artists cannot afford to use; the community groups cannot afford to rent them; and, if it is a studio, maybe the artists cannot afford the fees. So I am hoping that we do not fall into that same trap again with the new facilities that we are building. Every time I look at this I cannot get past the fact that we have got an arts budget with 60 per cent going to the buildings. I am never quite sure of the balance of that.

We have got a lot of progressive governments that are looking at some of these long-term jobs for artists and funding for programs in a way that we perhaps have not done before. I think it is probably not new—I think it is probably the way we did policy 20 and 30 years ago—and it is part of the recognition that some things are worth paying for. We understand that we pay for health and education, and once upon a time in this country we understood that we would pay for art and culture too because it is a public good, and public goods need to be funded.

There is a recent initiative that I really like that was launched on the Gold Coast, called ArtKeeper. It is obviously inspired by some other things. They have got a fixed-term contract for artists. It is a jobs-for-artists program. It is quite a small jobs-for-artists program but it is a really good new direction. I would love to see us move in that direction more.

We do have some of that in this arts policy. We have got 10 creative residencies. I think that is excellent. That is part of that long-term certainty, and that is a small part of what we took to the election, which was 100 jobs for artists. But I think we need to make sure that we do not lose sight of the need—that, if we want a rich ecosystem,

that ecosystem is really made up of the people, the programs and the networks. The facilities alone will not take us there. We need to make sure that we keep investing in the people who are making the art and we keep investing in the programs that the audiences want to see.

I am really, really keen to see how we progress, and I am also keen to make sure that we continue to see the consultation we have seen. It is always difficult in the arts sector to make sure that you are talking to everybody. The arts are not a monolith; probably no industry is, I know, even the Kingston arts precinct and the recent changes with the Geocon arrangement. We are no longer using Geocon as a developer. I think that is a good new direction, but I am very interested to hear what everybody in the sector thinks about that and exactly how that is going to affect the progress of the Kingston arts precinct and what we will see there.

But I do welcome this statement of ambition and I am particularly excited to see the details when they come out over the next year or so.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

Paper

Mr Rattenbury, pursuant to the resolution of the Assembly of 7 October 2021, presented the following paper:

COVID-19 pandemic—Social and economic recovery—Copy of letter to the Leader of the Australian Greens from Mr Rattenbury, Member for Kurrajong, undated.

Justice and Community Safety Legislation Amendment Bill 2021

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

Title read by Clerk.

MR RATTENBURY (Kurrajong—Attorney-General, Minister for Consumer Affairs, Minister for Gaming and Minister for Water, Energy and Emissions Reduction) (11.35): I move:

That this bill agreed to in principle.

I am pleased to present the Justice and Community Safety Legislation Amendment Bill 2021 to the Assembly. This bill makes amendments across 16 pieces of legislation. It is an omnibus bill which makes a range of minor and technical amendments to laws falling primarily within my portfolio as the Attorney-General. This bill also includes amendments which fall within the portfolios of the Minister for Human Rights and the Minister for Police and Emergency Services.

The amendments will improve the administration and operation of the territory's laws for different groups in our community. The amendments not only improve protections and promote better services for the more vulnerable members of our community but also promote an improved regulatory framework and operation of the ACT government and its agencies.

The changes to the Births, Deaths and Marriages Act clarify that information about an adopted person's date of adoption and important details about their birth, such as their family history and adoption records, can be included in their integrated birth certificate. This information is considered significant to an adopted person, and the amendment provides certainty that this information is more readily accessible.

The Births, Deaths and Marriages Act is further amended to clarify some technical issues identified in the implementation of reforms which commenced in August this year. For example, the amendments ensure that the Public Advocate is able to participate fully in hearings to advocate for young people applying to the ACAT for a grant of leave to change their given names and/or registered sex.

The changes to the Guardianship and Management of Property Act ensure greater protection for protected persons by confirming that fees are not payable for decision-making by guardians, while retaining the ability for guardians to be reimbursed for expenses. This amendment will also bring the territory in line with the current thinking across Australian jurisdictions about the nature of the role of guardians, who are those who are appointed to act as substitute decision-makers for individuals deemed to lack decision-making capacity.

The bill, through amendments to the Legal Aid Act, seeks to improve access to justice outcomes for vulnerable members of our community. The bill will permit the disclosure of data or information held by Legal Aid to commonwealth entities for the purposes of complying with the National Legal Assistance Partnership Agreement, or NLAP, and to third-party entities for research purposes where the request relates to improving access to justice outcomes or the provision of legal assistance services. These amendments will support the commission to not only comply with reporting requirements under the NLAP, a key funding mechanism for legal assistance providers in the territory, but also to participate in research projects which can assist in providing a more accurate and up-to-date picture of the areas of greatest legal need in our community.

While these provisions engage and may limit the right to privacy, I consider that any limitation imposed is reasonable and proportionate, in accordance with the Human Rights Act 2004. Extensive care has been taken to craft the amendment from a human rights perspective, and several safeguards have been included to minimise any impacts on the right to privacy. For example, the chief executive officer must be satisfied that any requesting commonwealth agency is required to manage the information in accordance with the Australian privacy principles. Further, only data collected from 1 July 2021 may be disclosed and the chief executive officer may only authorise a disclosure pursuant to ministerial guidelines, which are currently in development.

Key stakeholders will be consulted in the development of the guidelines to ensure they meet the needs of the Legal Aid CEO to make informed and balanced disclosure decisions. The guidelines will require the CEO to consider the full life cycle of the data, including how it will be used, managed and stored.

This bill contains amendments which update legislation, promote an improved regulatory framework and help to meet the operational requirements of ACT government agencies.

The bill introduces amendments across several ACT legislative provisions to reflect changes to the AFP's organisational structure and amend the definition of "senior officer" to reflect the titles now used by that organisation. These amendments are minor but ensure that our legislation remains up to date and accurate. They will support ACT Policing to transition efficiently to their new structure.

The changes to the Freedom of Information Act will update the requirements for disclosure of open access information of a minister to reflect changes to government requirements in relation to measuring the quality of life of ACT residents by replacing triple bottom line assessments with wellbeing impact assessments, in line with the ACT Wellbeing Framework. I note that this will assist in the fulfilment of the Tenth Assembly parliamentary and governing agreement's commitment to ensuring a holistic approach to government budgets, decision-making and reporting, including consistent, meaningful and measurable strategic and accountability indicators based on wellbeing. Wellbeing impact assessments will replace the current triple bottom line reporting requirement from 1 January 2022.

The amendments to the Liquor Act 2010 remove the requirement for interstate responsible service of alcohol certificates to have an expiry date. This amendment removes a regulatory barrier for interstate RSA certificate holders to be employed in the ACT. The amendments also address the changing nature in which data is stored by providing that interstate RSA certificates may be accepted in physical and digital form. These amendments seek to improve occupational mobility by aligning the ACT's regulatory framework with other jurisdictions and reducing regulatory and cost barriers for interstate workers operating in the ACT.

This bill will also amend the commencement provisions of the Magistrates Court (Infringement Notices) Amendment Act so that the amendments will now commence in February 2024 rather than February 2022. While it had been hoped to progress the appropriate infrastructure to support implementation by February 2022, factors that have delayed this include the government's prioritisation of other matters, including arising from the COVID-19 pandemic. The deferral of the amendment's commencement will provide time for a further examination of the resourcing requirements to implement the reform.

The government is committed to ensuring that individuals who are financially disadvantaged are supported in discharging their infringement notice penalties in a consistent and coherent way. However, more time is needed to put the infrastructure in place to support this outcome.

Among the other amendments in the bill are provisions that will modernise and clarify the notice required to be issued by an executor or administrator in the distribution of a deceased estate across several legislative provisions related to succession law. It will also enhance the ACT's recognition of self-represented parties in certain land title transactions by supporting their ability to verify their identity at specified agencies such as Australia Post, which are often more accessible given their many locations across the territory.

Finally, the bill will make a small technical amendment to the legislative framework for the Public Trustee and Guardian's powers to manage unclaimed bodies in the territory by clarifying the definition of unclaimed deceased person to provide that their death should be registerable rather than registered.

I am pleased to say that the bill being introduced today is a human rights compliant bill which promotes a number of rights and improves the operation and effective administration of the laws in the territory. I commend the bill to the Assembly.

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

Remuneration Tribunal Amendment Bill 2021

Ms Burch, pursuant to notice, presented the bill and its explanatory statement.

Title read by Clerk.

MS BURCH (Brindabella) (11.44): I move:

That this bill be agreed to in principle.

The Remuneration Tribunal Amendment Bill is a simple bill that seeks to amend section 9 of the Remuneration Tribunal Act to declare an additional office for the purposes of section 73 of the self-government act. If passed, the bill will require the ACT Remuneration Tribunal to inquire into and determine the remuneration allowances to be paid and other entitlements to be granted to the whip in the Legislative Assembly of a registered party other than the party to which the Chief Minister or the Leader of the Opposition belongs, if at least four members of the Legislative Assembly are members of that party. In this current Assembly, this would allow the tribunal to consider appropriate remuneration arrangements for the ACT Greens whip, just as it considers the remuneration of the government and opposition whips.

I commend the bill to the Assembly.

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

Legislative Assembly Sitting pattern

MR GENTLEMAN (Brindabella—Manager of Government Business, Minister for Corrections, Minister for Industrial Relations and Workplace Safety, Minister for

Planning and Land Management and Minister for Police and Emergency Services) (11.46): I move:

That the Assembly shall meet as follows for 2022 unless an absolute majority of Members request, in writing, that the Speaker or in the absence of the Speaker, the Deputy Speaker, or in the absence of both the Speaker and the Deputy Speaker, the Clerk, fix an alternative day or hour of meeting or the Assembly otherwise orders:

February	8	9	10
March	22	23	24
April	5	6	7
May	3	4	5
June		1	2
	7	8	9
August	2	3	4
September	20	21	22
October	11	12	13
	18	19	20
November	22	23	24
	29	30	
December			1

MR HANSON (Murrumbidgee) (11.46): I move:

Add:

“December 6 7 8”

I have circulated an amendment which would extend the proposed sittings next year by one week. The reason I do that is that the number of sittings proposed in this motion is historically the lowest in living memory. Indeed, Mr Rattenbury and I, and Madam Speaker, first came into this place in 2008 and in the following year, 2009, there were 15 sitting weeks. The following year there were 14. The year after that there were 14. And then, in the election year, there were probably fewer. I have not seen the number.

But what has been the normal form of this place is that there have been 14, 15, and then that seems to have reduced to 13. Of course, an election year sometimes is a little different. I see no reason why we would be setting a new low bar in terms of the number of sitting weeks in this place.

This year has been a bit of an anomaly because of COVID. We, as the opposition, offered to come back for a further sitting week in December so that we could actually allow time for a proper inquiry and report into the budget. The government chose not

to do that. The reason seems to be they want to get away on holiday. It seems to be the only plausible answer that we have been given. They refused it this year. This is an odd year, I grant you, because of COVID.

I do not see the rationale for next year. “We want to knock off and go on holiday” is the reason for this year, because it has been such a busy year, such an odd year. I do not see that that flies for next year, 2022, when we are—hopefully and all expectations—back to normal.

I am trying to establish whether this is just a deliberate attempt by the Labor Party and the Greens to reduce scrutiny on government. Certainly, that seems to be the case. We have seen that with the whole committee fiasco with the estimates process this year. Is it simply laziness? What we have here is a bit of lazy leftie government that does not want to sit. They want to knock off on 1 December next year so that they can get away on holiday.

Unless there is a rational explanation for why not, what is the reason for this historically low number of sitting days? We know that they do not want to do things like select committees because that would mean they have got to do more committee work. That has really affected estimates and a whole bunch of other processes we have got here. They do not want to do sitting days because that would stop them taking their two-month break that they are looking forward to next year.

Mrs Jones: Down at the coast house.

MR HANSON: Indeed, Mrs Jones might be right. It might be a matter of people popping down to their coast houses. Maybe Mr Rattenbury and Mr Davis have got some maintenance to do on their rental properties. Who knows? We can speculate about why they need so much time off, why the government need so much time off to take a break.

My amendment is a simple one. Let us just have an additional sitting week. It is important. It is very important to the opposition. It is very important to the opposition because we do have business, we do want to come in here, and we have questions to ask of this government. We want to make sure that we allow time in this place for debate on a whole range of issues that we put forward.

Let me tell you, Mr Assistant Speaker, that every sitting week the opposition sits down and considers what it is going to be discussing in its private members’ business, and there are always way more issues that we want to come in here to discuss than we are allowed time to do.

Members interjecting—

MR HANSON: Those opposite are interjecting. They are going to fight for their holidays. They are fighting for their extended holidays, two months Christmas break. They want that. The lazy lefties; that is what they are. What we have here is the lazy leftie ACT government who are going to be arguing and fighting.

Ms Cheyne—I have never seen her more passionate than when she fights for her Christmas holidays. She has probably got a cruise booked already. She has already booked a cruise. She does not want to lose the deposit on the cruise that she has booked already. She does not want to have an extra sitting week. It would take her up to 7 December to actually work. My God, she would not want to have to work that long.

We should be in this place for as many days as we can. We already sit far less than other parliaments in this country. They have had an excuse this year to book their early holidays, which is COVID. They see that as an excuse for next year. They cannot use COVID as an excuse to book their holidays. Let us have that one extra sitting week, which will only take us to 13. It is not the 15 or the 14 that used to be the form of this place.

I used to think it was about them avoiding scrutiny. I thought that they had changed the committee system so that they could just try and reduce the amount of time and have a coordinated view of the budget and have a select committee. It has become my view now, when you look at what their game is and the reason that was put to me that we need a break—“We need a good holiday this year”—it looks like that has continued on to next year. This is the laziest government in Australia.

MR BRADDOCK (Yerrabi) (11.52): After that bit of parliamentary theatre and being described as a lazy leftie, Mr Hanson, I am happy to have a meeting with you after the sitting days are finished for this year and we will discuss any matters that might be pertinent between us, for example, admin and procedure. I would also note that I am on more committees than you are on, Mr Hanson.

Mr Hanson interjecting—

Mr Rattenbury: On a point of order, not only is Mr Hanson interjecting but he took his mask off to do it. It is all entirely unnecessary, and he should observe the forms of this place.

Mr Hanson: On the point of order, I just make the point that, throughout my speech, those on the opposite side of the chamber were interjecting continually.

Ms Cheyne: Mr Assistant Speaker, I ask you to take note that, throughout Mr Hanson’s speech, he made a reflection on us, as individuals and as a party, about our motives being improper. They were not, and he should withdraw that. That might be considered highly disorderly, per the standing orders, so I would encourage you to reflect on that and make him withdraw.

MR ASSISTANT SPEAKER (Mr Cain): Noted. Mr Braddock, would you like to resume.

MR BRADDOCK: Thank you, Mr Assistant Speaker. Mr Hanson, I was asking for a simple reason why these days might not match the historical average, which is around 40 days in recent history. That simple reason is there are going to be two sets of

annual reports hearings next year; so there will be opportunity for those questions to be asked of the government and for accountability to be held. Therefore, two weeks of annual reports hearings, I think, is a fair substitute for the reduction in weeks when we meet.

Members interjecting—

Mr Gentleman: On a point of order, Mr Assistant Speaker, again Mr Hanson interjects. He removes his mask in order to interject in the discussion. It is unsafe under these parliamentary rules in regard to behaviour. We have clear instructions on how to speak and how to wear masks in the chamber. I ask that you ask him to leave the chamber if he cannot behave himself.

MR ASSISTANT SPEAKER: Noted, Mr Gentleman. I do note that members are allowed to take their mask off when speaking. Mr Braddock, do you have more to say?

MR BRADDOCK: I am just going to bring this one to a close by saying that the Greens will not be supporting this motion.

MR GENTLEMAN (Brindabella—Manager of Government Business, Minister for Corrections, Minister for Industrial Relations and Workplace Safety, Minister for Planning and Land Management and Minister for Police and Emergency Services) (11.55), in reply: The sitting calendar is broadly consistent with previous sitting patterns, and the government will not be supporting Mr Hanson's amendment. The 2022 calendar as proposed in this motion supports scrutiny of the government while allowing committees time to undertake their important work in conducting inquiries and holding the government to account. As you have heard, the committee's work will be extended next year. I commend the motion unamended to the Assembly.

Question put:

That the amendment be agreed to.

The Assembly voted—

Ayes 7

Noes 14

Mr Cain
Mr Hanson
Mrs Jones
Mrs Kikkert
Ms Lawder
Mr Milligan
Mr Parton

Ms Berry
Mr Braddock
Ms Burch
Ms Cheyne
Ms Clay
Mr Davis
Mr Gentleman

Ms Orr
Dr Paterson
Mr Pettersson
Mr Rattenbury
Mr Steel
Ms Stephen-Smith
Ms Vassarotti

Amendment negatived.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

Sitting suspended from 12.01 to 2 pm.

Questions without notice

Education—teachers

MRS JONES: My question is to the Minister for Education. Minister, a recent survey by the ACT Education Union—the largest survey of its kind in ACT history—found:

Respondents overwhelmingly reported that their school is negatively impacted by a shortage of staff (91%), and that these negative impacts are serious (95%).

... ..

Almost all (98%) of our school leaders who responded to the survey believe staff absences are undermining teachers' capacity to consistently deliver high quality education. Similarly, almost all (97%) of classroom teachers feel that students are being disadvantaged and their learning outcomes are being compromised by split or modified classes.

It also said:

Almost all (98%) of our school leaders who responded to the survey believe staff absences are undermining teachers' capacity to consistently deliver high quality education. Similarly, almost all (97%) of classroom teachers feel that students are being disadvantaged and their learning outcomes are being compromised by split or modified classes.

The report concludes:

The staffing shortage has revealed systemic issues for which a superficial solution will not suffice.

Minister, why is there no substantial increase in the full time equivalent positions for registered teachers in the budget to address these systemic issues?

MS BERRY: I thank Mrs Jones for the question. I guess the AEU has highlighted a teacher shortage crisis that the country is experiencing, and of course the ACT is not immune to that. Immediately on receiving a briefing on the survey, the ACT government's Education Directorate set up a taskforce with the Australian Education Union to investigate and understand why we are experiencing a teaching workforce shortage in the ACT and to understand how we can recruit and encourage more teaching professionals to come and work in the ACT.

Under the ACT budget, the ACT government committed to employ over 400 teachers in this term of government, and once our schools are built we will be able to employ teachers. In the estimates meetings, Mr Hanson asked about the number of teachers short in our schools. The response at the time was that there were 12 vacancies for full-time teacher professional positions, but this year we have seen that an additional 90 teachers and support workers have been funded in the ACT government's budget.

MRS JONES: I have a supplementary question. Minister, what do you say to teachers who the AEU says are overworked and under-resourced?

MS BERRY: I have listened very carefully to the teaching workforce in the ACT—first with the Developing the Future of Education strategy. The Education Directorate has over 5,000 contributions made by teachers, school parents and school students to the development of a strategy to take us forward to provide an equal and fair education for every young person in the ACT. As far as the education union survey goes, we have committed to work with the Australian Education Union and immediately set up a taskforce, on their request, to address these issues.

MR HANSON: A supplementary question. Minister, will you guarantee that no student will be disadvantaged, or their learning outcomes compromised, due to the lack of teachers in the classroom?

MS BERRY: There is not a lack of teachers in the classroom. I disagree with the presumption that has been made by Mr Hanson. Of course there is a crisis with regard to recruiting teachers to the profession. We have 12 vacancies—we have just provided that information to Mr Hanson during the estimates hearings—and we are working very closely with the education union and its members to understand what more we need to do in the ACT to encourage more teachers to work here in the ACT and to join our public education system. But the public education system and all school education systems are not immune from the teacher crisis. It is something that we need to consider carefully, and that is why we have put a taskforce together to undertake careful work to understand what is going on and what we can do better. Remember that in the ACT we are the highest-paying jurisdiction for teaching professionals—

Mr Hanson: Point of order: the question was whether the minister can guarantee that no student learning outcomes will be compromised because of a lack of teachers—the teacher shortage. I ask that she be directly relevant to that question.

MADAM SPEAKER: She is being directly relevant to the question, Mr Hanson. Do you have anything to add, Ms Berry?

MS BERRY: No.

Education—teachers

MR HANSON: My question is to the Minister for Education. Minister, according to the Australian Education Union report:

Staffing shortages have a direct impact on the workload of teachers. Almost all (97%) respondents describe their workload as at least a little difficult. More than three quarters (78%) describe their workload as ranging from ‘difficult’ to ‘extremely difficult’.

... ..

Nearly all (97%) said they work more than their maximum weekly hours. This includes working on the weekends, at evenings and during periods of leave or stand down.

Teachers have said:

'Teachers are drowning. We need support.'
'Please do something soon.'

Minister, what is happening this year to reduce the overwork burden on ACT teachers?

MS BERRY: I thank Mr Hanson for his interest and the time he has taken to look at the AEU survey. I have already said in this place, as well as during the estimates hearings and elsewhere, that the ACT Education Directorate immediately set up a task force with the Education Union to undertake this important work. There have already been a number of meetings.

MR HANSON: Minister, why are “nearly all” teachers in ACT schools working more than their maximum weekly hours?

MS BERRY: Our teaching professionals here in the ACT are absolutely dedicated to the teaching and learning of young people in our ACT public schools and also within our non-government and Catholic schools as well. I would say from the survey results that teachers are very dedicated, but so much more is being asked of them—particularly over the last couple of years, when we have asked them to completely change the way they deliver education to our young people.

Mr Hanson: It is you that has caused this?

MS BERRY: Yes, that is right; I caused part of it, Mr Hanson! That is right; it was all me!

We have asked so much of them, and they have delivered and gone over and above to continue to deliver a great education to our young people.

There is no doubt that our teachers have been working more than they ever would have over the last couple of years. I absolutely thank them for their tireless work and for their commitment to doing more than just being teachers and doing education and learning, but actually really caring deeply about the welfare of the young people in their charge.

I acknowledge that our teaching professionals, like other public servants over the last couple of years, have worked incredibly hard, seven days a week, late into the night, because of the unusual circumstances that our community and the world are going through with this health pandemic.

MRS JONES: A supplementary question. Minister, why have you allowed the situation to develop where teachers feel that they are drowning and are really asking for help?

MS BERRY: No, I have not, actually. I have really encouraged teaching professionals to engage with the ACT government in developing an education strategy for the ACT, and they have. We continue to work really closely with them and the Australian Education Union to ensure that we meet their needs, and we will continue to do that with the setting up of this task force.

Bushfire preparedness—Brindabella electorate

MR DAVIS: My question is to the Minister for Police and Emergency Services. Minister, today I joined the Minister for the Environment to speak about the launch of the air quality strategy, but prevention is better than cure. I trust you appreciate your Tuggeranong community's vulnerability to bushfires and the effects that the smoke haze of the Black Summer bushfires had on our constituents. What is the ACT government doing specifically in Tuggeranong to ensure that our community is best prepared for the summer?

MR GENTLEMAN: I thank Mr Davis for his question and, of course, his support for those people in Tuggeranong, which is my electorate as well. The ACT Emergency Services Agency and the ACT Parks and Conservation Service are doing a fantastic job in preparedness and readiness for the 2021-22 high-risk weather season. The whole of the ACT, including Tuggeranong, is well prepared—better prepared than ever before. This is because of the hard work of all of our staff across government and, of course, our volunteers.

With the recent rainfall, we anticipate bushfire risk will remain low throughout November and December, however, when the grass begins to cure over summer it will bring some increased threat of grass fires. So ESA and our volunteer crews have been working with our rural landholders, as well, across Tuggeranong to be prepared for the season.

I congratulate John Lillyman and the Amberly Farm on their preparedness for their season. Each year they prepare for the season and assist ESA in communicating to the whole community what we can do in preparedness—that is, a strong message to our community: make sure you are bushfire prepared. Go to the ESA website and download your bushfire preparedness plan for this summer. Tell your friends and family what you are doing over the summer period and be prepared. You can do that at the ESA website.

MR DAVIS: Minister, what ACT government resources are available to help Tuggeranong residents to prepare their families and their homes for the bushfire season?

MR GENTLEMAN: I thank Mr Davis for the supplementary question. As I was saying, resources available at the ESA website and through ESA and our volunteers as well. That is not just our RFS sheds that prepare resourcing for the season but also our stations throughout the outer edges of our suburbs in preparation for the fire season, make sure they talk to their neighbours and the people in their community about being prepared.

Education—teachers

MR PARTON: My question is to the minister for education. Minister, some of the most compelling facts in the AEU report are quotes from teachers themselves. One quote states:

'I have been teaching in the ACT for 25 years. The job/expectations have changed drastically over this time, with an increase in workload, accountability, paperwork, duties, family expectations and so on AND a decrease in resources, respect, job satisfaction.'

Another states:

'I feel extremely sad that myself, and so many other teachers feel this way. I feel let down by the system ...'

Minister, why has there been a decrease in resources, respect and job satisfaction over the last 25 years, when workload, accountability, paperwork and duties have increased drastically in that same time—the time that has been the life of your government?

MS BERRY: I am very pleased that the Canberra Liberals have finally started to take notice of the Australian Education Union and the important work they do in representing teaching professionals in our government schools, and the work that they have done more recently in surveying their members to understand what is going on within our school communities, to understand their needs as well as the pressure that our teaching professionals are under.

There has been no reduction in funding. All of our public schools are funded above the student resourcing standard. Indeed we are, of course, acutely aware of the value of our teaching professionals here in the ACT. That is why they are the highest paid and have some of the best working conditions in the country.

MR PARTON: Minister, does your government accept responsibility when teachers say they “feel let down by the system”?

MS BERRY: As I said, and I will say it again, that is why we undertook to work with the Australian Education Union to set up this task force, to understand the issues that are facing teaching professionals in our government schools. Understandably, the last two years have been incredibly difficult, but they have risen to the challenge, and I congratulate them on, and absolutely thank them for, their continuous, tireless work in providing a great education in our public schools.

MR HANSON: Minister, why are teachers saying that they do not feel respected?

MS BERRY: As I said, they have worked tirelessly over the last couple of years, particularly during this pandemic, and for years and decades before that. I have committed to the AEU, as I have said, to develop and put together this task force, to understand what more we can do to ensure that teachers feel respected, not just by their government but also by their community, their students and their peers, while

also noting that they are the highest paid and have some of the best conditions in the country. But I am absolutely committed to working with the Australian Education Union, our teaching professionals and school principals to do better, and we will do better.

Climate change—Net Zero Emissions Policy Forum

MR PETTERSSON: My question is to the Chief Minister and Minister for Climate Action. Chief Minister, can you provide the Assembly with further details about the Net Zero Emissions Policy Forum?

MR BARR: I thank Mr Pettersson for the question. The forum is an historic agreement between the New South Wales, ACT and South Australian governments to collaborate to solve a range of complex technical, economic, and also some very practical policy issues to get us to net zero as quickly and as fairly as possible. New South Wales, ACT and South Australia are founding members, but subnational governments from around Australia, and indeed the world, are encouraged to join the forum. It will provide a forum to share information on best practice emission reduction policies. It will help governments and ministers to connect with each other and to facilitate joint problem-solving through task forces on specific policy topics.

Co-founding this forum is a practical step that will lead to real and positive outcomes for the ACT. Subnational governments have demonstrated their commitment to a zero emissions future at COP26 through participation in a number of forums and in signing a number of agreements. The ACT has been a national and world leader in its ambition. By founding the Net Zero Emissions Policy Forum, we hope to carry this momentum forward and use our collective experience to achieve net zero.

MR PETTERSSON: A supplementary. Chief Minister, can you please update the Assembly on the international agreements for cities and subnational governments that the ACT has signed up to through COP26 forums?

MR BARR: In the lead-up to the summit the ACT signed a joint statement on zero emissions transport. We signed the global Coal to Clean Power Transition Statement and the Cities Race to Zero initiative. By signing the declaration to accelerate transition to 100 per cent zero emission vehicles, the ACT—along with countries, governments and car manufacturers—are pledged to work towards all sales of new cars and vans being zero emissions, globally, by 2040.

It is disappointing that at a national level our country did not join with other countries, including Canada, New Zealand and the United Kingdom, to sign the statement. The federal government has no phase-out time line for petrol cars and no intention, it would seem, to introduce incentives to drive zero emission vehicle uptake.

Because of this shortsighted approach, we run the risk of being the world's dumping ground for the least efficient vehicles. This is why subnational governments have to take the lead. The ACT will continue to work with other Australian states and territories to implement a nation-leading climate action policy that will encourage EV uptake. Locally, this includes providing two years of free registration and zero stamp duty on new zero emission

purchases and interest-free loans of up to \$15,000 to reduce the up-front cost of vehicles and, indeed, of home charging equipment. Canberrans will soon be able to use the Sustainable Household Scheme to purchase zero emission vehicles.

MS ORR: A supplementary. Chief Minister, can you update the Assembly on the progress of the Sustainable Household Scheme?

MR BARR: I thank Ms Orr for the question. The scheme is delivering real savings to households already. More than 2.2 megawatts of solar has already been installed. It is providing a boost to local industry, especially post the lockdown, with more than 100 businesses participating in the scheme so far.

Tracking indicates that over \$1 million is being settled each fortnight, which is providing a significant business stimulus. As at 8 November, so in the last week, nearly 1,400 households had applied for a loan through the scheme, to the total value of \$14.6 million in loan applications, 306 installations had been completed and more than 1,000 loans had been approved and are pending installation. The majority of the loans are for rooftop solar or for combined rooftop solar and battery systems. I can advise the Assembly that the first EV charger was installed through the scheme in the last fortnight.

Kingston arts precinct—delivery

MS CLAY: My question is to the Minister for the Arts. I am interested in the Kingston arts precinct, which is a major facility for arts, budgeted at around \$78 million in capital over the next term—almost half of our entire arts budget. I asked a few questions about this in estimates on 29 October, but we did not get any foreshadowing of last week's announcement to drop Geocon from the development. Why was the change made and when were decisions made?

MR BARR: As this relates to the Suburban Land Agency's role in urban renewal it is a question for me. The changes were made because the board and the agency were unhappy, not satisfied, with the level of progress—the private sector partner had, in fact, not achieved and not reached the milestones that were in the contract in the tender. The change was a decision made by the board, as is appropriate.

Ms Clay may be aware that this will be the fifth stage of the Kingston Foreshore project, and stages 1 to 4 were delivered by the predecessor to the SLA, the Land Development Agency. The final decision in relation to seeking to exit the contract with the private sector partner was made during the course of this year, but obviously there is a degree of commercial sensitivity associated with it so it could not be foreshadowed until the final decision was made by the board.

MS CLAY: How will this change affect the development of the Kingston arts precinct and the time line?

MR BARR: It will mean the Suburban Land Agency will take charge of the next stages of the project. That particularly relates to concluding the consultations in relation to heritage matters and engagement with arts organisations. The work to date

is about 50 per cent complete. The SLA are confident they can take the work that has been done to date and build upon it. So it is not the case that everything that has occurred to date is set aside; it will be built upon, but there are some issues that need to be resolved, particularly to the satisfaction of heritage, national capital design review panels, arts organisations and the community. Unfortunately, there was not sufficient progress on those issues under the previous delivery arrangements, so the SLA has stepped forward to resolve those issues and to progress the project. The delay is likely to be 18 to 24 months in terms of the final completion of the project.

MS LAWDER: Where is this government's transparency and accountability when community groups were informed of the cancellation of the contract less than a week after estimates, where this was discussed, and then it was in the press a week after the estimates hearing where many questions were raised about the Kingston arts precinct?

MR BARR: I outlined there were commercial sensitivities associated with the ending of the partnership with Geocon. Arts groups were advised before the media in relation to the changed delivery process. Overwhelmingly they have commented quite positively that this would see a way through to address the issues that had arisen during, particularly, the last 18 months.

Whilst Ms Lawder may seek to score a political point, which she is wont to do, we are focused on delivering a better project for all, and we believe we can do so as a result of the changes that we have put in place.

Education—teachers

MR MILLIGAN: My question is to the Minister for Education. Minister, your election platform from last year—and I am quoting your promise—was to deliver 400 teachers. Leaving aside the smokescreens you have used during estimates, when will there be 400 new teachers in classrooms in ACT government schools?

MS BERRY: There are no smokescreens. Schools are being built in the ACT—one school every year. There was a time when only one public school was built every four years, but, because of population growth, we are now building one public school every year. As public schools are built, the budget provides for making sure that those schools have the teaching and other staff to work in those schools. You have to have the school built before you put the teachers in it.

Mr Hanson: I have a point of order on relevance. When will the new teachers be deployed into those ACT government schools? Will the minister give us a date?

MADAM SPEAKER: I think the minister has concluded the answer.

MR MILLIGAN: Minister, how many new registered teachers will be appointed and deployed into ACT government schools this year?

MS BERRY: There will be around 90 schoolteachers and school staff engaged this year.

DR PATERSON: I have a supplementary question. Minister, can you talk to what new schools these 400 teachers will be working in?

MS BERRY: There are a number of schools being built across the ACT. We have the new high school at Denman Prospect, which will start operation next year. There will be a new school at Throsby, an expanded primary school in Taylor and a new high school in Kenny, as well as a school being planned for Strathnairn, out in West Belconnen at Ginninderry. So a number of schools—as I said, one every year—making sure that all our students have a place and a great education at their local public schools.

Education—teachers

MRS KIKKERT: My question is to the Minister for Education. Minister, according to the survey of ACT educators, a major problem exists with relief staff. It reports teachers as saying:

'We really need to treat relief staff with the value and respect they deserve as they are actually fully-fledged teachers in their own right.'

And:

'The school I am employed at has stated that we do not have a budget to pay for relief staff ...'

Minister, will your recent supplementation for relief teachers be enough to meet the urgent need?

MS BERRY: Yes, absolutely. As a response to the Australian Education Union survey of the teaching workforce in the ACT, the Education Directorate immediately took over the role of providing relief and casual teaching staff to our public schools. One of the issues that had been raised by the Education Union's membership was that that work of identifying a relief or casual teacher to work in a school was taking up some significant amount of time in administration. The Education Directorate has immediately taken over that work, and it is one of the things that the task force will be considering through its work with the AEU.

MRS KIKKERT: Minister, how is the new funding being allocated to each school?

MS BERRY: Each school is funded to provide relief staff.

DR PATERSON: Minister, can you outline further what this task force will look into?

MS BERRY: I thank Dr Paterson for her supplementary. As I said, the task force has already had a couple of meetings to try and understand the complexities around the recruitment of teachers and retaining of teachers in our teaching profession in the ACT. I should say that the teacher shortage across the country suggests that teaching professionals leave the career of teaching within five years; in the ACT it is around

seven. So we are already ahead of the pack with regard to retaining teachers here in the ACT.

The task force will look at a whole range of issues, including the teacher shortage, as I said: covering staff absences; continuity in education, particularly around the issues of split classes; teacher and school leader recruitment processes; and attraction and retention processes for teachers in the workforce. Of course, we understand that these teaching shortages are providing challenges for our teaching professionals, and we are absolutely committed to making sure that we work with them, with the setting up of this task force, and the AEU to address this issue.

Housing—affordability

MS ORR: My question is to the Minister for Housing and Suburban Development: can you please update the Assembly on the Suburban Land Agency's work to deliver more housing and more housing options across Canberra?

MS BERRY: I thank Ms Orr for her question and interest in new housing developments across the ACT. Canberrans have told us that they want a city that is sustainable. They want a city that is diverse and inclusive with a range of affordable housing options. This community values the environment, which is reflected in our goals of 70 per cent of infill for new developments. This community also values inclusion, and that is why we have committed to deliver at least 400 new public housing homes as well as 600 new affordable homes.

The government came to this term with a realistic plan to deliver on our housing needs in a sustainable way. Year by year the Suburban Land Agency has delivered new land to meet demand. Over the last four years the SLA delivered within one per cent of its dwelling targets. Since 2018 the Suburban Land Agency has released 14,503 dwellings. The indicative land release program target for the next five years is 16,434 dwellings, and the SLA is working hard despite the challenges that we face during this pandemic to make sure that it continues to meet this target.

Stand-alone houses, units and townhouses are all part of a range of options that are being delivered. All of these types of homes have a place in Canberra's future. Building a sustainable city and supplying a mix of housing options requires detailed planning and policy work. Green space, environmental sustainability and affordability and choice are all important factors in this work.

The government is working hard to build a city where communities are strong and where there is a place for everyone. We will keep finding ways to deliver land and promote development that is sustainable and that gives Canberrans the housing choices that we promised.

MS ORR: Minister, how is the SLA delivering affordable houses as part of its work?

MS BERRY: Affordable and public housing are critical to building a city that reflects our strong social justice and equitable values. Canberrans believe in fairness and

inclusion, and they want to live in a city where everyone has a place to call home and access to the services they need.

In 2020-21, the SLA continued to release land to support the ACT government's housing targets for affordable, public and community housing. Sites for a total of 345 dwellings were released against the target of 302 dwellings. The SLA offers a program for qualified buyers to get lower priced homes as well. More than 100 homes are anticipated to be sold through the affordable home purchase scheme in 2021, meaning that this year alone more than 100 people have had access to buy homes, townhouses and apartments at prices less than \$450,000.

As we announced today, this government is also working to deliver a new kind of option to our housing market—that is the build to rent. These projects involve building long-term rental housing made specifically for renters rather than buyers. The build-to-rent model is just one of the ways we are working to meet the territory's diverse and changing housing needs now and into the future. Most importantly, we are making a difference to the sustainable supply of housing for people of all income levels.

DR PATERSON: Minister, what steps has the SLA taken to ensure its land and housing supply program helps to deliver stronger communities?

MS BERRY: I thank Dr Paterson for her question. Canberrans deserve to have a say in how their neighbourhoods will be shaped. As the minister for suburban development I have been really pleased to hear the feedback from the community about the SLA's consultations. There are examples across the territory of really thorough community engagement resulting in land sales that meet the community's needs.

As the Labor minister for suburban land development I was able to ensure that the Gold Creek Homestead, Belconnen town centre and Coombs and Wright village projects have created great results for those communities. I have heard from community members in each of these areas about how they have a say in shaping the SLA's land release process. The SLA is using community feedback in these areas to create really detailed place design briefs. Those briefs then shape the requirement for land sales.

More than just bricks and mortar, bringing residents into the development process with these place-making opportunities creates a strong sense of ownership and community out of these new projects. I have been really pleased with how the consultation on major land development projects has gone this term, and I look forward to the SLA continuing this important work over the coming year.

The SLA has also a great program to help residents build connections in these new neighbourhoods. When a new suburb is established Mingle provides resources to help people connect. Through Mingle new residents get to set up play groups, events and other community-building activities so that people get to know each other and get to enjoy their new homes. At every level and using every tool we have available, this

government will continue to work hard to deliver housing to meet the needs of Canberrans and to promote stronger and more inclusive communities.

ACT Policing—Crime Stoppers

MS LAWDER: My question is to the Minister for Police and Emergency Services. Minister, when constituents report law and order matters to opposition MLAs, the MLAs are advised to encourage these constituents to report suspicious behaviours to Crime Stoppers. Information provided to Crime Stoppers is sent to ACT Policing intelligence for collation and analysis. This process rarely results in a satisfactory response for the constituent, as they receive no feedback. Minister, why do complainants never hear back from ACT Policing?

MR GENTLEMAN: I thank Ms Lawder for the question. I do not agree with the premise of her question at all. There is quite a bit of feedback on responses from constituents to ACT Policing on what occurs—

Mrs Jones: No, through Crime Stoppers.

MR GENTLEMAN: No, Ms Lawder said ACT Policing, and I am referring to that, as I am the minister for police. There is quite a bit of feedback, and police do a very good job, I think, in giving the feedback to constituents—

Mrs Jones: A point of order.

MADAM SPEAKER: Resume your seat, please, Minister.

Mrs Jones: It is on relevance. The minister clearly has not listened to the question, because the question asked about the fact that people are sent to Crime Stoppers when the information goes to ACT Policing, and constituents never hear back. It is nothing to do with the collection of data directly to ACT Policing. This is the third arm of delivered information. If the minister could be relevant to the question, that would be excellent.

MADAM SPEAKER: He is being relevant. Crime Stoppers feeds in to ACT Policing, which the minister is responsible for.

MR GENTLEMAN: As I said, ACT Policing do give feedback to constituents that report concerns through a number of avenues. I am very pleased with the work they are doing. They have been under quite a deal of pressure during our COVID lockdown, and I congratulate them on the work that they do.

Mrs Jones interjecting—

MADAM SPEAKER: No more, Mrs Jones.

MR GENTLEMAN: With respect to the reference to Crime Stoppers, Crime Stoppers is an anonymous opportunity for people to report through them to ACT Policing. It would not be appropriate to detail comments back through Crime

Stoppers. However, constituent matters, of course, do go back to them via ACT Policing.

Mrs Jones interjecting—

MADAM SPEAKER: Mrs Jones, next time you will be warned.

MS LAWDER: A supplementary question. Minister, could you table in the Assembly the details of the responses back to constituents when they make complaints—how many complaints were received and how many pieces are provided to those complainants?

MR GENTLEMAN: I will be able to take the detail of that on notice. Of course, there are quite a number of privacy issues in regard to that.

Ms Lawder: We do not need names.

DR PATERSON: A supplementary. Minister, could you please outline how the new police services model will improve communication between police and the community?

MR GENTLEMAN: I thank Dr Paterson for her interest in community safety. It is a fantastic opportunity for police to work much more strongly with the ACT community. As we have seen in other jurisdictions, the PSM means they are able to work with the community on hand, right in their neighbourhoods, to deliver better outcomes for the community. Police have taken up the opportunity with gusto, and their teams are out now, working with community members to make sure there is less crime across the ACT. That has resulted in lower crime numbers.

Data over the last number of years shows that we have had dramatic reductions in crime across the territory, so I am very pleased with that operation so far. It will continue to roll out. It was a big investment by this government—an investment, of course, that the Canberra Liberals voted against in the last budget. I certainly hope that they will vote for police resourcing in this budget.

ACT Policing—resources

MS CASTLEY: My question is to the minister for police. The President of the Australian Federal Police Association said on ABC radio: “I would argue that ACT Policing have been under-resourced for some time. It would be good to see Minister Gentleman inject a hundred or so police officers into ACT Policing—200 to get us in line with the minimum standard that is set across Australia in terms of numbers per hundred thousand. It’s times like this that you see the minimum numbers would be really useful, to have an extra hundred bodies to throw at this disaster, then we could really kick some goals.” Minister, how can a police force not at minimum numbers for normal times possibly cope with the extra demands and stresses of a COVID situation?

MR GENTLEMAN: I thank Ms Castley for the question. It is a very important one and it is a piece of work that ACT Policing have been trying to deliver with the resources that they do have and, of course, the extra resources that we have provided in budgets over the last number of years. But it is stretched, Madam Speaker, and it has been stretched due to the COVID implications over the last couple of years.

I do thank ACT Policing for the work they have been doing. Of course, we have been resourcing them, in an extra sense, over the last number of budgets and we intend to do that into the future. I certainly hope we can meet the numbers that they need into the future. I am not sure we will be able to deliver directly on what AFPA are asking for, but we will certainly do the best that we can.

Mrs Jones: Why not?

MR GENTLEMAN: We have, of course, limitations in our resources as well. Each directorate has to work as best it can through the processes that we have at the moment. Once again, I thank ACT Policing for the incredible work they are doing, and I also thank the AFPA for their advocacy on their behalf too.

MS CASTLEY: Minister, why can the ACT government not get the police numbers to minimum standards?

MR GENTLEMAN: We do resource police extra every budget. We have announced some fantastic programs in order to assist ACT Policing and in order to add to that resourcing over a number of budgets. It is not just numbers on the ground; it is the way that ACT Policing operate in the ACT. That is why, as mentioned, the police service model has been a success in other jurisdictions, and we hope to see it as such a success in the ACT as well.

MR HANSON: A supplementary. Minister, why did this government cut police funding by \$15 million in the 2013 budget, and what impact has that had on police resourcing?

MR GENTLEMAN: I do not agree with the premise of Mr Hanson's question. I certainly was not in government at that time. In the research that I have done, I have not seen the figures that Mr Hanson has claimed. I can say, of course, that Mr Hanson has voted against resourcing ACT Policing in every single budget that he has been here for. In every single budget he has voted against resourcing police in the ACT.

ACT Policing—resources

MR CAIN: My question is to the Minister for Police. A recent *Canberra Times* report stated that:

Break-ins at Canberra homes and businesses over the coming weeks of lockdown may not receive police attendance due to the resourcing pressures exerted by Covid-related duties.

The President of the AFP Association said on ABC Radio:

A lot of members had to be re-directed from investigation type works to go and do more covid work and covid compliance checks. If we could redirect some of those members from those compliance checks back into investigation team and some of those other crime teams to keep that momentum going. Some of these crimes are things people have been working on for months if not years to get to a resolution.

Minister, how many investigations were put on hold, delayed or deferred while investigating officers were directed to COVID compliance?

MR GENTLEMAN: I want to again begin by thanking our ACT police officers who continue to demonstrate a high level of commitment and dedication in response to COVID-19, as Mr Cain has indicated. Like all organisations, ACT Policing is having to manage resources appropriately, something they have been planning to do since last year. When significant police operational support is required in response to any emergency, ACT Policing implements previously prepared business continuity plans to ensure it can continue to manage its workforce, work places and systems as well. So every day ACT Policing prioritises calls for help to ensure police support is directed to incidents that require immediate attention.

Our police officers are incredibly capable and resilient and are being asked to work differently and flexibly. ACT Policing continue to consider all precautions to protect members and their families as much as possible as well. Policing remains alert to any increased risk and is equipping our members with the information and equipment they need.

It is important at this time that everyone takes care of themselves as well, their families and one another. I am advised that the welfare team—

Mr Cain: A point of order, Madam Speaker, my question was: how many investigations were put on hold, delayed or deferred whilst investigating officers were directed to COVID compliance? Please answer the question, minister.

MADAM SPEAKER: He is answering the question. It is in order. You may not like the answer, Mr Cain, but that is not the point. Anything else to add, Mr Gentleman?

MR GENTLEMAN: No.

MR CAIN: A supplementary. Minister, what are the natures of the investigations that were delayed, deferred or put on hold? A specific question.

MR GENTLEMAN: I leave the operational command of ACT Policing to ACT Policing. I do not interfere with their operations on the ground. That is the appropriate step for a minister to take—to support them where we can, as I have supported them in every budget that I have been involved with so far. I have increased their resources to give them the operational flexibility—

Mr Hanson: On a point of order on a point of relevance, Madam Speaker, the question was asking for the outcomes of those operations and what matters have been put on hold. The minister is trying to divert by saying he does not get involved in operational matters. That is not the subject of the question. It is appropriate that the minister report on what investigational matters have been put on hold.

MADAM SPEAKER: I believe the minister is in order. You are asking for detailed operational questions, and, rightly, the minister explains that he is not involved in detailed operational matters and that, indeed, ACT Policing would make—

Mr Hanson: He doesn't know the nature of the matters being put on hold? He doesn't know?

MADAM SPEAKER: I have made a ruling, Mr Hanson. It is in order.

Mr Hanson: Can I go with a supplementary then?

MADAM SPEAKER: Yes.

MR HANSON: Minister, how many crimes were not attended due to police being redirected to COVID checks during the lockdown?

MR GENTLEMAN: I am not sure that there were any crimes that were not attended. Crimes occur all over the ACT. Police attend wherever they can, and I have just given a detailed explanation on how they move their resources around the territory.

Mrs Jones: How many reported crimes were not responded to?

MR GENTLEMAN: If they want to qualify the question, they can put that on notice, Madam Speaker.

Members interjecting—

MADAM SPEAKER: Members, the level of snide interjections is unhelpful and disrespectful. I ask you all to be mindful of that and to show some respect and regard across the chamber.

Play spaces—municipal infrastructure standards

MR BRADDOCK: My question is for the Minister for Transport and City Services. Minister, fully fenced playgrounds are important for the safety of children who you might classify as “runners”, and also for the state of mind of their parents and guardians. Will the ACT government adopt a municipal infrastructure standard for these playgrounds?

MR STEEL: I thank Mr Braddock for his question. The ACT government wants to make sure that play spaces across our city are accessible and inclusive for a diversity of users, and we are actually out consulting with the community at the moment on a

draft play spaces strategy. One of the key actions under that strategy is to ensure that playgrounds are accessible for all. We want to hear from the community about having an emphasis on strengthening the delivery of playgrounds that are accessible for people with physical and psychosocial disabilities, neurodiverse people and those across the age spectrum. We have existing municipal infrastructure standards in place that guide the provision of new and upgraded play spaces across our city. MIS 10, for fences, guardrails and barriers, provides guidance on the height and distance of safety barriers in the public realm.

MR BRADDOCK: I have a supplementary question. Minister, will this municipal standard provide fences that are high enough to stop children from absconding over the top of them?

MR STEEL: The current municipal infrastructure standards reflect the Australian standard for swimming pool safety, which is a specification of a minimum height of 1.2 metres, although the ACT government is currently assessing a proposal to adopt playground fencing standards which align with guidelines from Kidsafe Australia and also the Building Code of Australia. Playgrounds are built in accordance with the current standards, although there are some playgrounds which were built to previous standards.

All playgrounds are also assessed using an independent level 3 safety and compliance audit annually. Work programs follow where any safety concerns are identified through that process.

It should also be noted that, as identified in the municipal infrastructure standards, fences or barriers are not to be used as passive management to contain unsupervised children. They are not a replacement for supervision by parents, carers or guardians, but we think that they play an important role. In fact, right at the moment we are installing a number of new fences at playgrounds: in Tuggeranong, at the Kambah Adventure Playground; in Throsby at the Throsby Community Playground, Jeffries Street Playground in Gowrie; and Muller Street Playground in Yarralumla; as well as the Greenway Learn to Ride.

MS CLAY: I have a supplementary question. Minister, what will be the date of the publication of the revised standards?

MR STEEL: I thank the member for her question. We are currently undertaking a consultation on the draft play space strategy. We want that full consultation to run its course, and we are really interested in feedback from a variety of different groups, including children with a disability and their parents, carers and guardians about what they would like to see in terms of the strategy going forward. Once the strategy has been adopted by the government in its final form, based on the community feedback that we have received, we will update municipal infrastructure standards accordingly.

Molonglo Valley—Namarag nature reserve

DR PATERSON: My question is to the Minister for Planning and Land Management. Minister, what can you tell us about the new Namarag nature reserve in the Molonglo Valley?

MR GENTLEMAN: I thank Dr Paterson for the question. She has been a great advocate for her constituents, and I am delighted that together we are able to expand the recreational space in Molonglo.

The new nature precinct is part of the Molonglo River Reserve and provides views over the Molonglo River corridor and the broader Molonglo Valley. It offers great walking trails, river access, fishing, picnic sites and the chance to play and explore in nature. It also helps restore woodland and grassland habitat and conserve some of the region's most threatened native plants and animals.

More than 10,000 new trees, shrubs and groundcovers have been planted, and more than 2,000 tonnes of habitat rock and 2,000 salvaged logs have been placed along the reserve. Numerous native trees were removed from development sites and reinstated intact as innovative pillars of habitat throughout the area, providing much-needed hollows for nesting wildlife.

The government has invested \$10 million in establishing Namarag. Namarag is protecting nationally endangered box gum grassy woodland and rocky temperate grassland, providing habitat for threatened species. The area has some of Canberra's best river access and is home to a wide range of native plants and animals, including the threatened pink-tailed worm-lizard and superb parrot.

DR PATERSON: Minister, how is Ngunnawal culture recognised and included in the reserve?

MR GENTLEMAN: The name Namarag is the Ngunnawal word meaning wattle. The name ties into the strong focus on celebrating the culture of the Ngunnawal as the traditional custodians of the area and their continuing connection to this particular site. Namarag celebrates Ngunnawal culture by showcasing art, storytelling and language. We worked closely with our Ngunnawal community in designing and constructing the park.

Lynnice Church, a local Ngunnawal artist, has her artwork showcased in various forms across the site. The story of the bogong moth is told through art on an immense half-acre scale at the Bugang Events Terrace. Bushtucker Terrace showcases native plants used for weaving, medicine and food. Namarag provides valuable opportunities for educational events, ParkCare activities and guided tours by providing creatively designed nature play facilities with bespoke features like the wedge-tailed eagle—or mulleun—nest.

Last week at the opening of the reserve, the pride that everyone involved in the project had in their work and their connection to our local Aboriginal culture were very clear to me. Namarag is an example I want to replicate across other parks, connecting more Canberrans to the traditional custodians of our territory.

MR PETTERSSON: Minister, how is the planning system protecting the environment and delivering reserves such as Namarag?

MR GENTLEMAN: I thank Mr Pettersson for his question. As residents move into Whitlam and Denman Prospect, they will discover this place and see Namarag's value as a great asset to the Ngunnawal people and culture. It will also be a place to explore, to have picnics and to see nature respond to changing seasons.

I am proud that our government is growing a network of parks and reserves. As our city grows, we are taking steps to protect and enhance our environment. It is because of good planning that we have protected woodlands and grasslands. This work will continue.

Our government is providing the diversity of homes that Canberrans want, close to their workplaces while also providing access to recreation and nature. We know that Canberrans love living close to green spaces where they can meet up with friends and family for a picnic or even a game of cricket. In contrast, there is the conservative Canberra Liberals' vision of bulldozers, congestion and endless sprawl, with only one housing choice that lines the pockets of their developer mates.

Madam Speaker, the government is protecting the landscape setting of our bush capital while creating accessible and friendly spaces that connect people and promote healthy communities.

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

Supplementary answers to questions without notice Business—Better Regulation Taskforce

MS CHEYNE: I took a question on notice yesterday that I can answer now, if that is all right. Mr Cain asked me, I believe, how much funding had been allocated for the discovery phase report from the Better Regulation Taskforce and how much of that had already been spent. There is no specific funding allocated to the discovery report. It will be drafted internally by ACT public service staff within existing resources.

ACT Policing—resources

MR HANSON: In response to a question, Mr Gentleman said that he had no records or there were no records of cuts to ACT Policing in the 2013 budget. I refer Mr Gentleman to the budget papers but also to numerous media articles, including an ABC article of 7 June 2013 titled "\$15 million cut to ACT Police budget".

Mr Gentleman further said he was not a member of the government. My understanding is that he had been re-elected at that point and was a backbencher and that the Labor government would have voted for that budget. I ask him to clarify the record, check the record, and perhaps come back into this place if he has misled.

MADAM SPEAKER: I am not quite sure if you sought to clarify a question on notice or if you took a point of order, but I will leave it to the minister to come back and make any correction, if necessary.

Papers

Mr Gentleman presented the following papers:

Bushfire Smoke Air Quality Strategy 2021-2025, dated November 2021.

Canberra Indian-Australian community—Support—Government response to the resolution of the Assembly of 13 May 2021, dated November 2021.

Canberra Nature Park Reserve Management Plan 2021.

Commissioner for Sustainability and Environment Act, pursuant to subsection 21(2)—Commissioner for Sustainability and the Environment—Scope 3 Greenhouse Gas Emissions in the ACT—an investigation of current scope 3 emissions and potential future reductions, dated November 2021.

Crimes (Assumed Identities) Act, pursuant to subsection 38(4)—Australian Criminal Intelligence Commission—Assumed Identities Annual Report 2020-21, dated 27 September 2021.

Financial Management Act, pursuant to section 26—Consolidated Financial Report—Financial quarter ending 30 September 2021, dated November 2021.

Freedom of Information Act, pursuant to section 39—Copy of notice provided to the Ombudsman—Freedom of Information request—Decision not made in time—Community Services Directorate (HOU-21/43), dated 22 July 2021.

Homegrown Me explosion—Coroner's recommendation from the inquiry into the origin—Government response, dated November 2021.

Inspector of Correctional Services Act—Report of a Review of a Detention Place by the ACT Inspector of Correctional Services—Healthy centre review of Bimberi Youth Justice Centre 2020—Government response, dated November 2021.

Office of the National Rail Safety Regulator—Annual report 2020-21, dated November 2021.

Official Visitor Act, pursuant to subsection 23DA(2)—Official Visitors Scheme—Annual report 2020-21.

Planning and Development Act—

Pursuant to subsection 79(1)—Approval of Variations to the Territory Plan, including associated documents—

No 376—Demonstration Housing Co-Housing—Ainslie section 25 block 6, dated 5 November 2021.

No 378—Bruce section 32 blocks 3 and 8—Supermarket, dated 2 November 2021.

Pursuant to subsection 242(2)—Statement of leases granted for the period 1 July to 30 September 2021, dated November 2021.

Planning, Transport and City Services—Standing Committee—Report 2—*Draft Reserve Management Plan: Canberra Nature Park*—Government response, dated November 2021.

Water Resources Act, pursuant to subsection 67D(3)—ACT and Region Catchment Management Coordination Group—Annual report 2020-21, dated July 2021.

COVID-19—Indian-Australian community support—government response

MR GENTLEMAN (Brindabella—Manager of Government Business, Minister for Corrections, Minister for Industrial Relations and Workplace Safety, Minister for Planning and Land Management and Minister for Police and Emergency Services) (2.59): Pursuant to standing order 211, I move:

That the Assembly take note of the following paper:

Canberra Indian-Australian community—Support—Government response, pursuant to the resolution of the Assembly of 13 May 2021.

MS CHEYNE (Ginninderra—Assistant Minister for Economic Development, Minister for the Arts, Minister for Business and Better Regulation, Minister for Human Rights and Minister for Multicultural Affairs) (2.59): The government response to the Assembly resolution of 13 May 2021 regarding the Canberra Indian-Australian community has been tabled. I acknowledge the serious COVID-19 situation in India and South Asia, as well as the profound loss and grief being experienced in those regions and in Indian and in South Asian communities here in Australia. I would also like to acknowledge the distress and hardship being experienced by Indian-Australians here in the ACT.

Over time, a strong, close and now longstanding relationship has been forged between India and Australia across areas including trade, defence, culture and education. The Indian community contributes to a rich multicultural way of life in the ACT, and I know that Canberrans appreciate that our city is a more vibrant place by having many different cultures call Canberra home.

On 27 April 2021, in response to escalating cases of the COVID-19 Delta variant in India, the Australian Minister for Health announced a temporary pause on direct flights from India for two weeks to 15 May 2021. At the time of the pause, India was in the middle of a national emergency and was, distressingly, reporting more than 300,000 new cases of COVID-19 daily and, tragically, daily deaths were in the thousands. Although the daily new-confirmed cases in the tens of thousands are still relatively high, thankfully they have significantly declined.

Although the flight pause aimed to reduce the risk of COVID-19 spreading to Australia via international travel, it also resulted in significant distress and hardship for Indian Australians in the ACT, many of whom have family in India and broader South Asia. The ACT government is committed to supporting Indian Australians especially through these times of adversity brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Community Services Directorate is working in partnership with community organisations who are reaching out to the Indian-Australian community to provide support, whether it is legal, financial, wellbeing or food and housing. I would especially like to acknowledge the work that local organisations are doing to support the Indian community in Canberra through these challenging times. In particular, the India-Australia Association of Canberra and the Federation of Indian Associations of

ACT have used their unique connections, passion and commitment to raise funds to send much-needed equipment to India and have provided support to the ACT-based community. And there have been plenty more as well.

I can also confirm that the ACT government is working closely with our counterparts in the Australian government and other states and territories to determine how best to provide medical supplies and assistance to those countries that need it.

Once more, I would like to acknowledge the trauma being experienced and the resilience of the ACT Indian and South Asian communities. The ACT government will continue to work with multicultural community partners and individual community leaders to support the Canberra Indian-Australian community throughout the COVID-19 pandemic and beyond. Together we will get through this. Minister Gentleman has tabled the government's response in the Assembly.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

Scope 3 greenhouse gas emissions—report

MR GENTLEMAN (Brindabella—Manager of Government Business, Minister for Corrections, Minister for Industrial Relations and Workplace Safety, Minister for Planning and Land Management and Minister for Police and Emergency Services) (3.03): Pursuant to standing order 211, I move:

That the Assembly take note of the following paper:

Commissioner for Sustainability and Environment Act, pursuant to subsection 21(2)—Commissioner for Sustainability and the Environment—Scope 3 Greenhouse Gas Emissions in the ACT—an investigation of current scope 3 emissions and potential future reductions, dated November 2021.

MS VASSAROTTI (Kurrajong—Minister for the Environment, Minister for Heritage, Minister for Homelessness and Housing Services and Minister for Sustainable Building and Construction) (3.03): I am pleased to speak to the investigation report on scope 3 greenhouse gas emissions in the ACT undertaken by the Commissioner for Sustainability and the Environment. In August 2020 the then ACT Minister for Climate Change and Sustainability, Mr Shane Rattenbury MLA, asked the commissioner to evaluate scope 3 greenhouse emissions for the ACT, including the consideration of possible ways to measure and reduce them, possible targets and recommendations for short and long-term actions. As the minister now responsible for reports undertaken by the commissioner, I am pleased to speak to this report today.

Greenhouse gas emissions accounting uses a system of classifying emissions as scope 1, 2 and 3 emissions. Scope 1 emissions are direct emissions such as those from transport, gas use and landfill within the reporting area. Scope 2 emissions are indirect emissions from the purchase of electricity generated from outside the ACT. The ACT has reduced its scope 2 emissions to zero through our innovative contracts with renewable electricity generators. We are the first jurisdiction in Australia to reach zero emissions in electricity, and we have a range of measures in place to address our scope 1 emissions.

Scope 3 emissions are those generated through the production of food and other goods outside the ACT and consumed within the ACT. Examples include emissions from manufacturing steel or concrete used in construction, mining and producing of raw materials; dairy farming; or producing electric appliances. Unlike scope 1 and 2 emissions, we do not have that much control over scope 3 emissions other than through changing the products and the services we buy. This is, in part, why most entities report on only scope 1 and scope 2 emissions, and the ACT's emissions reduction targets are in relation to scopes 1 and 2.

We do not report these other emissions for the ACT. We align with international reporting practice and report scope 1 and scope 2 emissions only, and this is to avoid double-counting of emissions nationally and internationally. Note that the ACT's scope 3 emissions are scope 1 or 2 emissions somewhere else. In fact, around half of the ACT's scope 3 emissions are produced from elsewhere in Australia, mainly Queensland, New South Wales and Victoria. If every jurisdiction achieved zero emissions targets like the ACT, all scope 3 emissions would also be zero.

This report highlights the extent of change needed throughout the national and global economy to bring emissions down. In the ACT we have seen great progress in reducing scope 1 and 2 emissions, the ones that are in our direct control, largely through shifting to 100 per cent renewable electricity and cutting our electricity emissions to zero.

We are now focusing on reducing the other scope 1 emissions, such as local transport and gas use, by encouraging the transition to zero emissions transport and phasing out fossil gas so that we can be powered by 100 per cent renewable electricity instead. It makes sense to start with the emissions that are in our sphere of influence and, now that we are making good progress, we can look to how we can reduce emissions across our broader economy and society.

We commissioned this report because we know that it is important to understand our broader emissions impact so that we can continue to lead on climate action and drive the economy-wide transformation that is needed. This is particularly important in the ACT, where we have a relatively high ecological footprint due to high consumption of goods and energy. Reducing scope 3 emissions is important for the bigger picture of global climate action, to keep global warming below two degrees, and we can play an important role in leading by example and inspiring others to take action. There is no time to waste in working towards net zero emissions. We will continue to advocate for national policies to decarbonise the energy and manufacturing sectors and look for opportunities to collaborate with other jurisdictions for a zero emissions economy.

The ACT Climate Change Strategy includes actions that do reduce scope 3 emissions, including two key areas highlighted in this report: reducing emissions from waste management, including moving now to introduce city-wide food and organic waste collection and re-use by 2023; and requiring all major projects over \$10 million to achieve an Infrastructure Sustainability Council of Australia rating, or green star rating, or equivalent.

The ACT Waste Management Strategy 2011-2025 includes key actions to increase recycling and avoid greenhouse gas emissions. Recycling avoids the generation of greenhouse gases by reducing the production of raw materials and scope 3 emissions while also reducing scope 1 emissions from landfill in the ACT. Introducing household food and organic waste collection will allow us to turn that waste into valuable compost and further reduce emissions from methane.

Reducing emissions produced in the delivery of major infrastructure is also a priority as we roll out the government's record \$5 billion investment program. This is a challenging space where we need to balance safety and longevity of infrastructure assets with sustainability, both in the construction and over the life span.

It is government policy that each of the projects directly delivered by Major Projects Canberra will have an independent sustainability rating, such as an infrastructure sustainability rating from the Infrastructure Sustainability Council of Australia, a green star rating from the Green Building Council of Australia, or another relevant equivalent.

The ISCA rating undertaken as part of the light rail stage 1 project included a tool for reporting and calculating the embedded emissions from material used in the construction of light rail, including the concrete, steel, asphalt and aggregate, and piping. As part of the ISCA rating process, the total quantum of materials and the corresponding embodied emissions from these construction materials were recorded in the infrastructure sustainability rating submission.

On the basis of this accounting, the light rail stage 1 project achieved a "leading" ISCA rating, the highest available rating at the time the project was completed. In fact, it was just the seventh project ever to receive this rating and has set the standard for future stages of light rail in Canberra. It was both a great environmental outcome and an opportunity for the ACT to learn a lot about how to continue cutting all types of emissions in future projects.

With work getting underway on stage 2, the government has recently released the light rail sustainability policy, which sets out commitments against multiple sustainability themes, including several that were late to low emissions construction material. This project is establishing sustainability targets against the themes and the commitments in this policy. The target includes net zero emissions across construction and operations for scope 1 and scope 2 emissions. This will be achieved through emissions reduction initiatives and addressing the residual emissions through the purchase of carbon offset or equivalent investment initiatives.

The project will also target a 30 per cent reduction in scope 3 emissions from a baseline model. Reduction in scope 3 emissions will be achieved through material reductions and substituting recycled or low embodied energy materials. Low and zero emissions construction materials will be prioritised through procurement and design activities. Sourcing materials from local manufacturers will also reduce scope 3 emissions.

Construction on the raising of London Circuit will commence shortly, and minimising emissions is a high priority of the ACT government. The project is minimising the requirement for new materials, as far as is practical, through the re-use and recycling of materials from demolition clearing and grubbing activities. Works including earthworks have been programmed in a way that minimises double-handling of materials. The running of diesel or petrol generators and engines will be kept to a minimum.

It is also important to remember that the delivery of major infrastructure projects like light rail will help to make Canberra a more sustainable city in the decades ahead. Building stage 2 to Woden will provide a more convenient and reliable transport option for people on the south side, helping to prevent future traffic gridlock and cutting transport emissions for a cleaner environment. Emissions for transport currently account for 60 per cent of the ACT's greenhouse gas emissions, so we need to give all Canberrans a genuine, clean alternative to private cars as our city continues to grow.

We know that technology is rapidly changing in the green building sector, and imports like carbon neutral green cement may increasingly be available in the next five years. This report, tabled today, reaffirms this government's approach to having lowered embodied emissions and provides useful recommendations for us to consider as we pursue and promote green innovation in the building and construction sector, both for government projects and across the wider market.

This report also highlights the importance of our work as a government in two other key areas. The ACT government is currently developing a proposal to include emissions reduction as an objective in the National Electricity Law, to help guide programs towards decarbonisation of the national electricity grid. Working with other jurisdictions to improve national frameworks is an important way to address emissions within and outside the ACT.

This report shows the important role food and agriculture play in reducing scope 3 emissions. To act on this, as well as to increase the resilience of our local agricultural systems to climate change, the ACT is embarking upon the development of a capital food and fibre strategy towards an eco-sustainable food and agricultural production system for the ACT. This will incorporate a regional drought resilience plan and will be delivered in the second half of 2022.

This report offers 12 recommendations which offer valuable guidance on options for continuing to lead the way to a zero emissions economy. The ACT is a small jurisdiction but we have shown that we can have a big impact. The recommendations include reporting scope 3 emissions every three years, setting scope 3 emission reduction targets, developing embodied emissions limits for government procurement, setting food waste reduction targets and increasing the re-use of construction and demolition materials. We will be considering these recommendations in detail over coming months and identifying how we can take the next steps to estimate and reduce our scope 3 emissions. Every step we take to reduce emissions is worthwhile and has

an impact. The only way is to start with what we can directly influence and broaden our impact as we go.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

Bushfire Smoke and Air Quality Strategy 2021-2025—report

MR GENTLEMAN (Brindabella—Manager of Government Business, Minister for Corrections, Minister for Industrial Relations and Workplace Safety, Minister for Planning and Land Management and Minister for Police and Emergency Services) (3.17): Pursuant to standing order 211, I move:

That the Assembly take note of the following paper:

Bushfire Smoke and Air Quality Strategy 2021-2025.

MS VASSAROTTI (Kurrajong—Minister for the Environment, Minister for Heritage, Minister for Homelessness and Housing Services and Minister for Sustainable Building and Construction) (3.17): The Bushfire Smoke and Air Quality Strategy 2021-2025 outlines the government's approach to better understanding and managing impacts on our air quality from bushfires and other smoke sources.

In a changing climate, we need to take action to protect people from poor air quality, including from bushfire smoke. Over the 2019-20 summer period, the ACT and surrounding areas were subjected to extended periods of unprecedented, extreme smoke pollution resulting from the black summer bushfires. I am sure that I do not need to remind you of the significant health, environmental, social and economic impacts across our community.

Clean air is fundamental to our health. However, it can be something that we take for granted. As fine particulate pollution crept through the cracks in poorly sealed buildings and impacted those most vulnerable during the bushfires, such as those sleeping rough on the street, this crisis highlighted the wide-ranging and compounding effects of poor air quality on many aspects of our lives.

I would like to start by explaining where this strategy began. The strategy originated as a response to this Assembly acknowledging the impact of the black summer bushfires on our air quality and health. Following the motion introduced by my colleague Minister Rattenbury on 13 February 2020, the Assembly resolved to call on the government to create a whole-of-government strategy on smoke and air quality in the ACT, to be completed and released before the beginning of the 2020-21 fire season and to report to the Assembly on the progress of the strategy in August 2020.

The government responded to the resolution in August 2020, outlining the range of work that had been completed to respond to and prepare for extreme smoke events. The government noted that the development of the strategy was severely impacted by factors including ongoing disaster management and recovery efforts, the COVID-19 pandemic and the Royal Commission into National Natural Disaster Arrangements, which had not yet concluded.

In February 2021 my colleague Minister Stephen-Smith informed the Assembly of the government's intention to release a strategy prior to the 2021-22 bushfire season and, by doing so, responded substantively to the resolution. Subsequently, Minister Stephen-Smith and I have worked together to develop and finalise a whole-of-government response that recognises the importance of leveraging our shared experience and knowledge of the impacts that smoke has on our health and wellbeing.

The strategy will complement broader work to address the impact of climate change in the territory and will build on existing strategic documents such as the ACT Climate Change Strategy 2019-2025, the ACT's Transition to Zero Emission Vehicles Action Plan 2018-21, the Air Environment Protection Policy, the ACT Emergency Plan and the Strategic Bushfire Management Plan.

To develop the strategy, the government has drawn on our responses to the Royal Commission into National Natural Disaster Arrangements and ACT inquiries and reviews into the 2019-20 bushfire season that have been completed since the Assembly resolution was passed. The government will engage with the community over the life of the strategy, including in implementing the strategy's first action plan and developing the second action plan.

Since the update my colleague Minister Stephen-Smith provided to the Assembly in February this year, the government has responded to the final report of the Royal Commission into National Natural Disaster Arrangements. The royal commission's report included a chapter and recommendations that are specifically dedicated to air quality from bushfire smoke.

The royal commission called on governments to develop close to real-time, nationally consistent air quality information, including consistent categorisation and public health advice; deliver community education and guidance; provide targeted health advice to vulnerable groups; and develop national air quality forecasting capabilities, including broad coverage of population centres, which apply to smoke and other airborne pollutants, such as dust and pollen, to predict plume behaviour.

The Bushfire Smoke and Air Quality Strategy 2021-2025 reflects the government's response to these recommendations and progresses work towards the recommendations where this is yet to be completed.

In our submission to the royal commission, the government recommended that nationally consistent air quality indices and associated public messaging should be adopted. Consistent with this, the government has already acted on the royal commission's recommendation about nationally consistent air quality information.

ACT Health has implemented air quality categories that correspond to nationally agreed health and activity advice and changed online public information about air quality to reflect the national categories and public health messaging for a one-hour and 24-hour PM_{2.5} exposure. The government has also conducted a preliminary investigation into market options for an expanded ACT air quality monitoring network, and our forecasting capability is being explored in consultation with the New South Wales government.

While there is not sufficient time to talk about all 20 actions listed in the first action plan that fall under the eight objectives, I would like to focus on just a few of the immediate steps that the government will be taking on this journey to clean air for all. The government will be improving air quality monitoring and forecasting and will investigate the feasibility and ongoing costs of a low-cost air quality sensor network. Enhancing our air quality monitoring and forecasting capability will allow us to harness more data to support better health outcomes for our community.

This action plan will see the development of buildings that are resilient to air pollution, covering both our future homes and heat and smoke refuges for our local communities. In practice, this means ensuring that the ACT construction code is updated to include appropriate climate change adaptation, as well as how we seal and provide ventilation in our homes.

We have also established a five-year, \$5 million building energy efficiency upgrade fund to be accessed by community clubs. This includes supporting clubs to become heat and smoke refuges for local communities, and it will ensure appropriate air filtration systems and financial payments for venues that are designated as official extreme weather refuge sites.

This strategy will provide targeted support to vulnerable populations and workers during severe air pollution events. While we all breathe the same air, we know that certain populations are more susceptible to the impacts of exposure to particulate matter—groups such as the elderly, infants, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, and people with underlying cardiovascular and respiratory disorders.

We know that people with socio-economic difficulties are also at risk, as they are less likely to have access to air conditioning, good insulation and air purifiers, and are more likely to have the leaky homes that provide little protection from smoke. We have also learned that outdoor workers and people attending outdoor events were vulnerable during this smoke event where there was no or limited access to respite.

As a community we are collectively responsible for protecting the more vulnerable in our community, and this strategy commits to some of the ways that we will be doing this. This includes providing strong and effective engagement strategies targeting vulnerable populations and workers; delivering specific guidance materials to help employers and the industry manage the risks of bushfire smoke in the workplace; continuing design work on new schools and continued energy efficiency upgrades to older schools to improve resilience to extreme smoke events; and ensuring that information regarding vulnerable people can be appropriately accessed, provided and used during an emergency event.

Finally, but very importantly, this action plan will be strengthening measures to address the air quality impacts of wood heaters. This includes setting more stringent wood heater emissions standards via building regulations, and taking steps to phase out older, polluting wood heaters that do not meet standards, including those sold second-hand. We will also be improving existing education and engagement programs, strengthening the regulation of environmental pollution, and taking steps to ensure that firewood sold in the ACT is sustainably sourced and meets compliance with government-recommended wood-burning practices.

This strategy is an important trigger to start having community conversations about how we should be heating our homes and how these choices impact on the most vulnerable in our neighbourhoods. As a growing city, we need to transition away from expensive, polluting wood and gas heating to comfortable, well-insulated homes heated by clean electricity. This is particularly relevant in areas of Canberra such as the Tuggeranong Valley, where regular temperature inversions and the shape of the valley hold pollutants closer to the ground.

As I have flagged throughout this statement, this is a journey towards cleaner air for all in this changing city. We as a community need to talk about whether or not these older, polluting legacy wood heaters still have a place in our city, which we prize for its clean air.

The government recognises that poor air quality caused by smoke pollution is an important issue for Canberrans, whether it results from bushfires or from wood heating. This strategy brings together our efforts across government to reduce the health effects of smoke pollution, particularly for the most vulnerable, and minimise the impact of smoke on our environment, the economy and our community. I commend the Bushfire Smoke and Air Quality Strategy 2021-2025, including the first action plan, to the Assembly.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

Inspector of Correctional Services healthy centre review of Bimberi—government response

MR GENTLEMAN (Brindabella—Manager of Government Business, Minister for Corrections, Minister for Industrial Relations and Workplace Safety, Minister for Planning and Land Management and Minister for Police and Emergency Services) (3.29): Pursuant to standing order 211, I move:

That the Assembly take note of the following paper:

Inspector of Correctional Services Act—Report of a Review of a Detention Place by the ACT Inspector of Correctional Services—Healthy centre review of Bimberi Youth Justice Centre 2020—Government response, dated November 2021.

MS DAVIDSON (Murrumbidgee—Assistant Minister for Seniors, Veterans, Families and Community Services, Minister for Disability, Minister for Justice Health and Minister for Mental Health) (3.29): On 22 June 2021 the report of a review of a detention place by the ACT Inspector of Correctional Services, *Healthy centre review of Bimberi Youth Justice Centre 2020*, was tabled. The ACT government welcomes this report and I am pleased to present the government's response today.

The government appointed Mr Neil McAllister as the first ACT Inspector of Correctional Services in May 2018. The inspector's powers as they relate to youth justice under the Children and Young People Act 2008 came into effect in December 2019. As part of the Inspector of Correctional Service's powers, Mr McAllister is responsible for examining and reviewing, at least every two years, each place declared

to be a detention place under section 142 of the Children and Young People Act. Presently this is Bimberi Youth Justice Centre.

Bimberi commenced operations in December 2008 and is the ACT's only youth detention place. Named after the ACT's tallest peak, Mount Bimberi, Bimberi acknowledges the challenges faced by young people in custody and the need to rise above to reach their full potential. Bimberi aims to ensure that young people feel safe, valued, respected, supported and hopeful about their future.

As the only youth detention place in the ACT, Bimberi accommodates young people aged 10 to 21 years who have been remanded in custody or sentenced to a period of detention by the ACT Childrens Court or Supreme Court. In the ACT, custody is a measure of last resort, and Bimberi is only one part of the ACT youth justice system. But Bimberi plays a critical role in our youth justice system and provides us with the valuable opportunity to support at-risk young people to grow and develop and reach their full potential.

The inspector commenced the process for the first review of Bimberi in April 2020. The methodology for the healthy centre review included interviews with 12 young people; a staff survey; consultation with oversight agencies; data and information gathering from the Community Services Directorate, the Education Directorate and Justice Health services; community consultation; and a five-day on-site inspection of Bimberi by the seven-person review team between 11 and 15 October 2020.

The healthy centre review is a proactive, whole-of-centre review measured against the ACT Standards for Youth Detention Places, which test the youth detention place, a "healthy centre" test, against four key principles. The first is safety: young people, particularly the most vulnerable, are held safely and staff and visitors feel and are safe. The second is respect: all persons are treated with respect for their human dignity. The third is purposeful activity: young people are engaged in activities that are likely to benefit them. The fourth is rehabilitation and preparation for release: young people are supported to connect with their family and the community, supported to rehabilitate and prepared for release back into the community.

Bimberi measured well against the healthy centre test, with the inspector noting in his report that most of the young people they interviewed felt physically and emotionally safe in Bimberi; young people in Bimberi were provided with an individualised approach to their care; young people were engaged in programs of education, learning and skill development to meet their individual needs; the health services provided to young people were appropriate; and young people were encouraged to maintain or re-establish positive relationships with family, friends and community agencies while in Bimberi.

The healthy centre review, as I have already noted, is the first whole-of-centre review of Bimberi, proactively undertaken in response to legislative requirements. Unlike previous reviews of Bimberi that occurred following a major event or incident, the review provides us with an opportunity to reflect on our successes, embrace opportunities for improvement, and continue to mature our youth justice system to ensure that the services we are delivering to young people are informed by evidence and best practice and are right for the ACT.

The report makes 27 recommendations in relation to the operations of Bimberi and services delivered by the Community Services Directorate, the Education Directorate and Justice Health services. The ACT government has carefully considered these recommendations, and 21 recommendations are agreed in full, five recommendations are agreed in principle and one recommendation is not agreed.

Many of the recommendations made in the report had already been identified in previous reviews of Bimberi and by the Community Services Directorate as areas for improvement. Consequently, several actions were in progress at the time of the healthy centre review or have since commenced. Four of the agreed recommendations—recommendations 2, 13, 17 and 24—are considered complete, and work towards several of the other agreed recommendations is underway.

The ACT government has agreed in principle to five recommendations. Of these, one recommendation has legislative implications, and three recommendations have financial implications for the government. The intent of each of these recommendations is supported; however, it is recognised that full implementation cannot be achieved within existing resources, and funding of these recommendations will be subject to future budget considerations.

One recommendation, recommendation 9, is agreed to in principle, and the government agrees in principle with achieving the intent of this recommendation.

Over the last decade, Bimberi has been strongly oversighted and has been the subject of multiple reviews, resulting in many recommendations and ongoing system improvements. It is necessary that the 27 recommendations made by the inspector are considered in partnership with recommendations from the other reviews into Bimberi, particularly the 2019 Human Rights Commission's commission-initiated consideration; and the independent review by Mr Peter Muir and the WorkSafe investigation, both undertaken in response to the August 2019 major incident in Bimberi.

Significant work has been undertaken by Bimberi in addressing recommendations made in these reviews, including the creation of new positions, extensive security infrastructure upgrades and enhancements to training and health and safety systems. This work is not complete; it continues to progress despite the interruptions of COVID. The recommendations from the inspector's report have been considered in the context of this ongoing work and, where appropriate, will be incorporated into existing projects.

As the first review of its kind by the inspector, the report provides a benchmark for Bimberi against the ACT Standards for Youth Detention Places: safety, respect, purposeful activity and rehabilitation and preparedness for release. The recommendations from the report will be considered in collaboration with other reviews undertaken of Bimberi in recent years and will assist in continuing to improve services delivered to young people in the ACT youth justice system.

The inspector acknowledges the hard work and dedication of ACT government staff working in Bimberi to ensure the safe care and custody of young people. I would also

like to recognise the tireless work done by the staff of the Community Services Directorate, the Education Directorate and Justice Health services, and our community partners, in ensuring that young people in Bimberi are supported to grow and develop, preparing them to successfully participate in the social and economic life of our community in the future.

The ACT government acknowledges the effective independent oversight provided by the inspector in supporting the ACT in delivering an accountable and transparent youth justice system that ensures that young people feel safe, valued, respected, supported and hopeful about their future. Updates on progress against agreed recommendations will be provided every six months to the inspector.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

Planning and Development Act 2007—approval of variation No 376 to the Territory Plan

MR GENTLEMAN (Brindabella—Manager of Government Business, Minister for Corrections, Minister for Industrial Relations and Workplace Safety, Minister for Planning and Land Management and Minister for Police and Emergency Services) (3.37): Pursuant to standing order 211, I move:

That the Assembly take note of the following paper:

Planning and Development Act—Approval of Variation No 376 to the Territory Plan—Demonstration Housing Co-Housing—Ainslie section 25 block 6.

Variation 376 for co-housing on section 25 block 6 in Ainslie is the first variation to the Territory Plan to be approved in support of the demonstration housing project. The demonstration housing project was created in response to an ACT Legislative Assembly resolution passed in June 2017. The resolution asked the ACT government to engage with the community and industry stakeholders about how to deliver demonstration housing proposals to showcase best practice in areas such as excellence in construction, design quality and innovative housing products and typologies.

This demonstration housing proposal offers a hands-on opportunity to test the effectiveness of co-housing in the RZ1 zone by enabling a real example to be constructed. Furthermore, through post-occupancy evaluation, the government will be able to consider whether the development of co-housing may be an effective method to provide different typologies and density in the RZ1 zone more broadly without adversely affecting suburban amenity. This may assist the ACT government to achieve the target set out in the 2018 ACT Planning Strategy of 70 per cent of new housing to be delivered within the existing urban footprint.

More specifically, variation 376 will enable co-housing to be developed at one site located at section 25 block 6 in Ainslie. Three single-storey homes and a shared communal area will be able to be developed on this standard residential block. The communal space will allow the occupants to share some facilities, including a kitchen, living area and guest bedroom. Generally, in the RZ1 suburban zone, only single-dwelling housing, which may include a secondary residence or a

dual-occupancy dwelling, can be constructed and cannot be independently unit titled. The co-housing dwellings will be able to be unit titled.

The ACT Housing Strategy establishes the overarching policy framework to guide decisions about policy, planning and delivery of housing across the ACT over its 10-year life span. The strategy has five goals, spanning homelessness support to affordable rentals and home ownership, and 74 priority actions. This project supports goal 5 of the strategy, to increase affordable home ownership by testing alternative occupancy models.

The draft variation was released for public comment from 19 February to 16 April 2021. A total of 14 written submissions were received. Thirteen of the 14 submissions supported the draft variation, and only one was opposed to it, demonstrating a high level of support for the development. As a result of public consultation, a provisional mandating of a maximum plot ratio of 50 per cent was introduced. This is consistent with the requirement for single-dwelling housing in the RZ1 suburban zone and will assist to maintain the amenity of the zone.

Under section 73 of the Planning and Development Act, I referred the draft variation to the Standing Committee on Planning, Transport and City Services. I thank the committee for its consideration of this variation and for its decision not to conduct an inquiry. I would also like to thank Stellulata, the demonstration housing proponent, for showcasing an innovative housing type and design as part of the demonstration housing project.

I approved variation 376 because it will enable an innovative housing type and design to be constructed and monitored in the RZ1 suburban zone. Variation 376 supports the ACT Legislative Assembly resolution passed in June 2017 to deliver demonstration housing proposals to showcase best practice in innovative housing types. I have tabled the approved variation to the Territory Plan and the background papers, the planning report and the report on consultation.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

Supplementary answer to question without notice ACT Policing—resources

MR GENTLEMAN (Brindabella—Manager of Government Business, Minister for Corrections, Minister for Industrial Relations and Workplace Safety, Minister for Planning and Land Management and Minister for Police and Emergency Services) (3.42): Mr Assistant Speaker, with your indulgence, I rise to respond to the matter raised by Mr Hanson regarding police funding and add to my answers during question time.

The budget documents show that from 2013-14 to 2016-17 ACT Policing's annual operating budget not only remained above \$149 million but increased by just over \$6 million, from \$149,966,000 in 2013-14 to \$156,866,000 in 2016-17. The most recent budget provisions were for \$196,546,000 in total costs and \$192,981,000 in payments for expenses on behalf of the territory.

The ACT government has worked closely with ACT Policing to ensure that our police force is adequately resourced to respond to emerging crime trends, prioritising ACT Policing's organisational needs as well. For example, in 2010-11 the government funded 16 additional police officers for liquor reforms and to establish an automated numberplate recognition team. In 2011-12 ACT Policing received funding for additional officers and equipment to enhance traffic operations to introduce random roadside drug testing, as well as staff to support the COAG security industry reforms.

In 2013-14 ACT Policing's road safety team was expanded by eight FTE and additional vehicles were funded to improve road safety outcomes. In 2015-16 the ACT government increased ACT Policing's baseline funding for enabling services provided by the broader AFP across the areas of financial and commercial ACT operations, IT operations, legal, human resources and forensics.

In 2016-17 ACT Policing received funding specifically to support victims of family and domestic violence as part of the ACT government's Safer Families budget announcement. This was in addition to increasing the capacity for Taskforce Nemesis to combat organised crime.

In more recent years, we injected almost \$34 million into ACT Policing to begin the police service model and support an additional 60 staff. I also draw members' attention to the evidence provided by the Chief Police Officer at estimates hearings earlier in the year where he outlined the need to take care when comparing police numbers with other jurisdictions, particularly given our relatively small urban footprint.

Business—support

MS CASTLEY (Yerrabi) (3.45): I move:

That this Assembly:

- (1) notes that over 1800 establishments make up Canberra's core night-time economy, employing 31 000 Canberrans and generating \$3.35 million in sales turnover in 2019-20 (Council of Capital City Lord Mayors 2021);
- (2) further notes:
 - (a) the 2021 lockdown in the ACT has had and, will continue to have, a long-term impact on all local businesses, but particularly hospitality businesses; and
 - (b) businesses have been let down by the ACT Government, with delays to emergency support payments during lockdown leaving Canberra's businesses struggling to survive; and
- (3) calls on the ACT Government to encourage more Canberrans into town centres by making:
 - (a) ACT Government parking in all ACT town centres free after 6 pm and on weekends until March 2022; and
 - (b) all public transport free after 6 pm and on weekends until March 2022.

I am pleased to introduce this motion on behalf of the many hundreds of small businesses that comprise Canberra's night-time economy. These small business owners are only now getting back on their feet after the government's crippling lockdown that smashed the hospitality sector, and they deserve all the support they can get.

That is the purpose of my motion today: to show our support for small business by encouraging customers through the door by calling on the government to provide free parking and free public transport after 6 pm on weekdays and on weekends until March next year.

When we speak about the night-time economy, we refer in general to economic activity that occurs between the hours of 6 pm and the early hours of the morning: retail trade; restaurants; takeaway and cafes; live entertainment; cinema; arts and cultural activities; health and wellbeing services; events; bars and clubs; sporting activities. What a large and diverse group of small businesses. Canberrans and all political leaders should be getting behind them, acknowledging their courage to start and grow their businesses, applauding their admirable work ethic, and honouring their commitment to employ staff and contribute to the vibrant night-time offerings that we all seek.

Small business is the backbone of our economy. The most important thing for small business's recovery right now is that we support them during the vital trading months of November and December, as well as over the summer season.

Today's motion calls on the government to play its part in encouraging more Canberrans to eat, drink and shop in the town centres, to help our battered economy bounce back from COVID-19, providing free car parking and free public transport. This will really make a difference in getting Canberrans out and about to enjoy our spring and summer evenings.

The number of small businesses that this initiative will support is significant. More than 1,800 establishments make up Canberra's core night-time economy, employing a total of 31,000 Canberrans, and generating a whopping 3.35 million in sales turnover in 2019 and 2020, according to the Council of Capital City Lord Mayors in 2021.

The Chief Minister has spoken repeatedly about a consumer-led recovery post-lockdown. Providing free parking and free public transport is a significant way of achieving that. We know that Canberra's economic recovery relies on small businesses being able to operate, which means getting people through the door and spending. Now that the ACT has reached 95 per cent of our population fully vaccinated, it is time to get people flooding back into town—into Civic, into all of our town centres—in the lead-up to Christmas and the summer months, to stimulate our economy.

This government often speaks about local jobs, but fails to understand that to support local jobs, you have to support small business. Instead, during lockdown, we saw government ignoring business, bungling the financial support scheme for business and,

until recently, persisting with onerous restrictions on how businesses could operate. Time and again, this Labor-Greens government fails to look after the businesses doing it tough.

Google mobility data shows that restaurants, cafes and shopping centres saw 40 per cent reductions in local traffic during lockdown, with the latest data showing that these businesses are still seeing 12 per cent lower traffic than normal.

This initiative alone will not solve the issues that businesses are facing after nine weeks of lockdown and ongoing restrictions, but it will encourage more groups of friends and colleagues to head out to our town centres, take in a movie and a meal, or share a cocktail and tapas at a bar or a club. And it will prompt more families to enjoy a special meal at one of Canberra's fabulous restaurants.

The Canberra Liberals call on the government to adopt this initiative to drive economic growth, bring hospitality and retail jobs back to Canberra and, most importantly, show that Canberra's political leaders genuinely have the backs of small business.

MR STEEL (Murrumbidgee—Minister for Skills, Minister for Transport and City Services and Special Minister of State) (3.50): I rise to move some amendments to Ms Castley's motion and offer some reflections on her well-intentioned but misinformed suggestions. I move:

Omit all text after "That this Assembly", substitute:

- “(1) notes over 1800 establishments make up Canberra's core night-time economy, employing 31 000 Canberrans and generating \$3.35 billion in sales turnover in 2019-20 (Council of Capital City Lord Mayors 2021);
- (2) further notes the ACT Government has supported businesses during the COVID 19 pandemic by:
 - (a) administering and co-funding the COVID-19 Business Support Grants, the largest grants program in ACT history which has so far provided over \$280 million in grants to businesses in the ACT; putting in place commercial tenancy support measures; and providing a range of other support measures through fees, charges, and tax reductions, waivers and deferrals;
 - (b) establishing the Outdoor Activation Taskforce to assist local businesses seeking to expand outdoors using available public spaces, with 43 businesses already having taken up the opportunity to commence operation in expanded trading spaces;
 - (c) providing designated areas of free parking in the evenings and on weekends across the city and town centres to encourage Canberrans to visit these precincts;
 - (d) providing free parking after 12 pm on Saturdays and all day Sundays across a majority of ACT Government-owned carpark across the Territory;

- (e) with restrictions easing after lockdown, providing designated areas of paid parking in select areas of the city and some town centres during particularly busy periods, like Friday evenings, to encourage turnover and support greater patronage of local businesses;
 - (f) providing free parking across all ACT Government-owned carparks across the Territory during both COVID-19 lockdowns;
 - (g) expanding bus services significantly by providing an extra 692 weekday bus services and an extra 236 Saturday services;
 - (h) providing late night light rail services; and
 - (i) providing significantly discounted fares for all public transport travel after 6 pm and on weekends, including free travel during those periods for seniors and concession MyWay card holders; and
- (3) calls on the ACT Government to continue working with businesses to identify ways to encourage more Canberrans into town centres, including by exploring:
- (a) further opportunities for outdoor dining and the activation of unleased public spaces; and
 - (b) COVID-safe public events linked to major seasonal celebrations like Christmas and New Year's Eve.”.

My amendments seek to do two things. The first is to correct the factual inaccuracies that plague her original motion, including her claim that Canberra's night-time economy brings in just \$3.35 million. In actual fact, it brings in \$3.35 billion. Secondly, I want to put on the record the range of things our government has done, and continues to do, to support Canberra's night-time economy through the COVID public health emergency and beyond.

My colleague Ms Cheyne will speak on the issues of business support and economic recovery raised in Ms Castley's motion, but I would like to address some of the issues related to parking and public transport first.

Our government has been agile in responding to the needs of Canberra businesses and the Canberra community during the COVID-19 pandemic, which has lasted for almost two years now.

In April last year, only a few weeks after the pandemic hit Canberra, the government implemented free 15-minute parking in various places around Braddon, Woden, Belconnen and Tuggeranong, to support takeaway pick-up from local restaurants and cafes during lockdown. This complemented other measures which we put in place to support businesses at this time, including free three-month commercial liquor permits to allow on-licensed businesses to provide takeaway alcohol. These changes proved to be so well supported, by businesses and patrons alike, that we have kept them in place to this day.

In addition, in the most recent lockdown, the government once again took quick and decisive action to support our town centres by pausing all pay parking across the territory. This not only encouraged takeaway patronage of our restaurants and cafes,

but also encouraged click and collect visits to our retail stores and provided an option for essential workers to commute safely to work during a time when we were encouraging people to use public transport only where it was absolutely essential.

We also helped Canberrans perform contactless collection of their groceries by allowing supermarkets to use a small number of car parks in our public car parks for their direct-to-boot services.

Going to the substance of Ms Castley's motion, encouraging and supporting Canberrans to shop, eat and socialise at our great local venues and retail precincts will be an important part of our next cautious steps out of lockdown from tomorrow night. But when it comes to the proposed actions in her motion, Ms Castley is misinformed or simply has not bothered to examine the widely available public information about car parking in our city.

If she had done, she would have found that the vast majority of car parks in the CBD and our town centres already have free parking after 5.30 pm, all day Saturday and all day Sunday. We provide this free car parking because car parks are generally in lower demand at this time when it is outside usual business hours and commuters are not parking in them while they go to work.

Providing free parking at this time instead encourages visitation to the hospitality and recreational venues in these areas. Not only is this parking free at this time, it is unlimited. So Canberrans can stay in our town centres for as long as they like, enjoying the great food, beverage and entertainment experiences on offer and pouring much-needed revenue into our local economy.

That said, there are several very popular areas in places like the city, Braddon, Dickson and Kingston, where paid parking actually helps support local businesses. In peak times, like Friday evening and Saturday morning, car parks in these particularly busy areas are highly in demand. Anyone who has ever driven down Lonsdale Street after work on a Friday can verify this. It is important that we encourage turnover in these highly valuable spaces so that people can run in and pick-up their takeaway, visit the local shops or park nearby if they have reduced mobility.

Another thing that the Canberra Liberals clearly have not considered is that paid parking in some selected areas of the CBD actually supports our thriving arts scene, as well as business. It is an effective way to manage demand within the ACT government car parks near the Canberra Theatre precinct, which is seeing more productions get underway.

Prior to the introduction of pay parking there, people were parking in those car parks to avoid paying in privately operated car parks like the Canberra Centre multistorey car parks. Pay parking has helped to deter this behaviour and ensured that patrons catching a show at the Canberra Theatre, The Playhouse or The Studio are reliably able to get a park. That is why the Canberra Theatre Centre has been very supportive of the current parking regime since it was put in place. Removing this would be a blow to the arts community during a time when they are focused on recovering from the impact of the pandemic.

Our government has gone above and beyond to support businesses during the COVID-19 pandemic, and we will continue to do so as our economy recovers. As my amendments foreshadow, we will continue to support businesses through initiatives like the Outdoor Activation Taskforce. We will also explore ways to support COVID-safe events held by businesses and community groups, through the use of public land and support for temporary traffic management measures, to ensure that the community can enjoy coming together again after so long.

I would also like to address some of Ms Castley's suggestions in relation to public transport. The most generous description of the proposed changes is that they are well intended. A less generous interpretation might be that this is a continuation of the Canberra Liberals' general recklessness when it comes to the handling of the pandemic, stemming way back to when the previous opposition leader, Mr Alistair Coe, declared the pandemic over, way back in May 2020.

The first and most obvious point that we need to remember is that the pandemic is not over. This community has led the world in our collective response to the COVID-19 pandemic, and we can be proud of that. Thanks to our world-leading levels of double-dose vaccinations, we are now taking gradual, responsible steps towards a COVID-normal life.

Public transport is, unfortunately, a high-risk setting for the transmission of COVID-19. It is an enclosed environment where people can sit closely together, sometimes for extended periods of time. That is why it remains one of the few settings where we will continue to require masks to be worn beyond Thursday evening. We do not want to undo the hard work of Canberrans and the sacrifices they have made over the past two years by rushing into changes that will unnecessarily increase community risk. We believe it is too soon to be encouraging people back onto public transport in droves. Believe me, there is nothing I am looking forward to more than being able to welcome people back to public transport when the time is right, but we are not quite there yet.

That being said, we recognise that many Canberrans rely on public transport to get around, to work, to study, and to access essential services. That is why we took extensive measures to ensure that public transport has remained safe and available during the public health emergency, including through the use of masks, check-in requirements, increased cleaning and moving to cashless ticketing. This approach has been driven by the health advice at every stage.

Many cities around the world cut public transport services quite dramatically in response to the pandemic. We did not. We actually increased and expanded services during the pandemic last year. I am happy to say that we are providing an additional 692 bus services each weekday and 236 Saturday services. We have increased the frequency of morning light rail services from every six minutes to every five minutes and extended peak services through to 7 pm on weekdays. This greatly assisted with social distancing on buses and light rail last year by spreading out the passenger load and giving people more options about when they travel.

Those are the measures that have supported Canberrans who have needed to use public transport to get safely around Canberra without taking unnecessary risk. We have been doing all of that while holding fares constant. We recognised that many Canberrans were doing it tough financially and froze the annual indexation of public transport ticket fees for a second year in a row.

Now we are operating an interim timetable, together with the school bus services now that schools are back. That recognises the fact that we are still in a period of risk. With the changes that have been made to health settings, we need to closely monitor those and monitor their impact on the availability of drivers, which may affect the reliability of services. It gives us some flexibility to respond to that.

Ms Castley's motion fails to take into account our existing arrangements for fares. We already provide significantly discounted travel during off-peak times and on weekends. We go even further for concession holders, for whom off-peak travel is completely free.

Earlier this year, I released the ACT Transport Recovery Plan, which outlines the government's plan to return public transport patronage back to pre-pandemic levels and then keep on growing it in the future. The plan highlighted that protecting the health and wellbeing of passengers must always come first. It is readily available online, and I encourage those opposite to have a read to understand what a responsible return to public transport looks like.

Central to the plan is that we will be guided by expert health advice in deciding when and under what circumstances it is safe to encourage people back onto public transport. The advice of the Chief Health Officer has been paramount in managing the continued operation of Canberra's public transport system during the pandemic. This will continue through the recovery period to ensure that passengers and Transport Canberra workers feel and are safe.

Ms Castley's motion is ill informed, and it takes no account of where we currently are in the ACT's pathway forward. We all want to help Canberra businesses—including those who make up our night-time economy—build back strongly after COVID, but the ideas that she has put forward will not achieve that. Instead, they make it less convenient for people to visit local businesses in key night-time precincts like the CBD, Kingston and Braddon, and make it harder for people to participate in our local arts scene, which is getting back on its feet. Worse, if free public transport saw a sudden surge of patrons back onto our buses and light rail during specific times of the day and the week, that could undo the gains that the community has worked so hard for, to get to a point where we can go out and enjoy the night and the rest of our lives.

I look forward to continuing to work with all my colleagues across the government in finding ways to support Canberra businesses to bounce back strongly through a bright Christmas season and into the new year.

MR CAIN (Ginninderra) (4.02): Deputy Speaker, I would like to support Ms Castley's very worthy motion and also speak against Mr Steel's wishy-washy

amendments. From my perspective as shadow minister for jobs, this is a very important motion. As Ms Castley has rightly mentioned, the night-time economy creates tens of thousands of jobs in the ACT community. This community fosters creativity, and creativity is a vital part of any culture and leads to innovation and entrepreneurship.

In a recent op ed piece in the *Canberra Times*, Professor Michael Dockery of Curtin University said:

... building—and supporting—a creative workforce is central to our economic future.

He was speaking of the Australian economy, but it applies equally here in Canberra.

The other thing that is worth mentioning is that the business community are coming out of a period of restriction where their normal activities have been hindered under public health orders. It is not for me to speak to the merits of that, but I will speak to the merits of assisting the business community in Canberra to recover from this COVID outbreak. Ms Castley has proposed specific measures that are targeted to help that recovery, and it is most disappointing to see the government move against such practical measures.

The proposal is for ACT government parking in all town centres to be free after 6 pm and to be free on weekends until 22 March 2022, and for all public transport to be free after 6 pm and on weekends until March 2022. These are practical measures designed to help the ACT business community, particularly the night-time economy, recover from the recent restrictions. What possible argument could there be against practical measures to achieve that outcome, to assist with their journey back into normality?

We have from Mr Steel a very uninspiring amendment—for example, to continue working with businesses. Well, that is a new idea, isn't it! I would like to reflect on the minister for business's refusal to support the establishment of a small business advisory council. How helpful that would have been during the COVID lockdown. How helpful it would be for the minister for business to listen to small business in the ACT.

I remember one of the most famous answers of all as to why she would not support this small business advisory council: why would we burden small business with having to be on a council to speak to government? That is one of the greatest lines I have heard in this place since being elected. It is a wonder the minister has not shut down all advisory councils that speak to government, because it must be such a burden for them to have that opportunity! That was disgraceful. If that council had been in place earlier this year, maybe things could have been managed a little differently, and maybe we would have had some practical outcomes and recommendations to support the community to recover from the COVID outbreak. It is a disgrace.

Here we have an opportunity for some repair to obvious poor business policy. This motion provides some practical things that will assist this community. What do we

have from the government? We have, “We will continue working with businesses.” That is a good idea; we support that notion. The government supports the notion “to identify ways to encourage more Canberrans into town centres” except when you provide practical assistance to achieve that very outcome. We support the idea of that, but when we provide a proposal that will practically accomplish it, it is not good enough!

Further, Mr Steel’s amendment suggests “exploring further opportunities for outdoor dining”. It is good to explore these things. I want to commend the government for rising to a new level. A new level! Ms Castley, I think the Canberra Liberals can take some credit for this. We are moving the government in the right direction. They are willing to explore things—isn’t that wonderful? There is a suggestion of the activation of unleased public spaces. Certainly, it is a good idea to consider, but there is no support for any practical measures to implement things.

Further, Mr Steel’s amendment would explore COVID-safe public events linked to major seasonal celebrations like Christmas and New Year. Wouldn’t it be wonderful to see the town centres so busy and the night-time economy so busy during these coming festive seasons? This is exactly what Ms Castley’s motion will produce. Minister Steel and Minister Cheyne will still be exploring it by the time we are into the New Year.

During this crucial period of post-COVID recovery, I think the community deserves more. The government should be ashamed of not supporting practical measures to support the ACT business community, particularly the night-time economy, to move out of restrictions and into normal life. I commend Ms Castley’s motion to the Assembly and wholeheartedly reject Mr Steel’s amendments.

MR DAVIS (Brindabella) (4.09): How exciting is it that we are having a debate in this place about the night-time economy, because it speaks to how well this city has responded to the pandemic; it speaks to the tremendous effort of frontline healthcare workers, who have been leading the charge to keep Canberra safe and strong; and it speaks to every Canberran that took the hard decision to lock down, to test and to vaccinate. And, now, with an easing of restrictions this week and continued good public health practices, we can get back out into our streets, our suburbs and our city, stimulate our economy, see our friends and have a feed and a drink. It is a credit to ACT Health that we are here.

This motion gives us the opportunity to talk about the role of public transport and the night-time economy in supporting our economy and our community as we recover from these last 18 months. The ACT economy, in large part thanks to this public health response, has been one of the most resilient in the world. This does not mean that there is no work to do. The ACT Greens will be supporting the amendments to this motion put forward by Minister Steel, which reflect the work the government is currently doing to support the use of public transport for people to travel into our town centres at night, as well as calling on the government to continue to find important opportunities to breathe life into our urban and suburban town centres.

The night-time economy in Canberra is a core part of our economic turnover, making up a higher than average proportion of establishments, at 5.9 per cent, versus 4.7 per cent nationally, and a higher than average proportion of sales—5.2 per cent, versus 3.3 per cent nationally—and a higher proportion of employment, with a whopping 13 per cent, versus 7.2 per cent nationally. Throughout the pandemic the government has provided a range of supports to businesses and artists. Now that we are in the recovery phase, it is a perfect time for us to be thinking creatively and strategically about how we can build a healthy economy that supports jobs and builds community.

As we socially and economically begin to recover from this lockdown, people's safe and comfortable use of public spaces—including bars, music venues, nightclubs and restaurants—at night is an important way of getting money flowing through our businesses and building back our community. The focus of the motion from Ms Castley, and these amendments, is on modes of transport that make it easy for people to get into and safely out of our town centres. The ACT Greens are strong supporters of public transportation and creative urban planning that allows people to live, work and play within a reasonable distance of each other.

Earlier this year, the Council of Capital City Lord Mayors commissioned a report into the Australian night-time economy. The section on Canberra sets a really positive tone for our emergence from the pandemic. The researcher behind this report praised the ACT government for its emphasis on urban infill and the impact of this planning principle on our thriving night-time economy. They put it simply that:

Over recent years a proliferation of new residential development along the city corridor and inner south has increased inner city living options with a flow on effect for both hospitality and tourism venues in this area.

You can only imagine my surprise that Ms Castley's motion speaks to the night-time economy when the advice from the Council of Capital City Lord Mayors seems to stand in stark contrast to the planning and urban sprawl policies advocated by the Canberra Liberals in this place just yesterday. Our city was designed with our town centres in mind, and I am a big supporter of ensuring that the investment the government makes into renewing and enlivening our night-time economy can be seen right across our town centres.

Investing in public transport, which makes it easy to move between these areas, is something the ACT Greens have been campaigning for, and now implementing in government, for several years. We want to make it easier for people to use public transport. Anything we can do to encourage public transport uptake is worthy of exploring. I was really struck by Ms Castley's suggestion that we could trial making public transport free at night time. I, too, am a strong supporter of free public amenities, and I will be interested in continuing this discussion, not only as a way of supporting our businesses and night-time economy but as a way of encouraging the use of public transport by the general public at all times and, most importantly, supporting low or no-income people to have equitable access to public services and public spaces.

I personally know the value of these urban areas in our night-time economy. Prior to getting elected, I worked as a bar manager, performer and artist in venues right across this city. Still now I enjoy a night out with my community at the Boardwalk Bar and Nightclub in Belconnen for a drag takeover, or down at PJ O'Reilly's in Tuggeranong, where you will find me every Thursday night for karaoke. I might even be able to have a few drinks, given how close it is to home.

Medium and high-density living in the Tuggeranong town centre has created an economic demand for more entertainment, dining and arts options in the Tuggeranong Valley. It is clear that there is an intersection between urban infill policy and the liveliness of our night-time economy. I am currently working with a young entrepreneur in my electorate who is looking to find an affordable and accessible space in my electorate in which to begin a business that would add even more colour and movement to our town centre.

The ACT Greens have been pushing for the creation of designated entertainment precincts for over a decade. We believe that the planning approach and noise limits have negatively impacted music venues, and, sadly, many iconic venues have closed before their time due to noise complaints. There have been numerous Assembly motions and government reports but still no concrete action. But now, with the devastating impact of COVID on the events sector, our venues need our support more than ever. We would like to see the designation of entertainment precincts across our city. We will set more flexible noise limits and require new residential developments to meet minimum sound standards, including proper windows, as well as informing all prospective buyers and occupants of the vibrant nightlife that is actively encouraged to flourish all around them.

As the ACT Greens spokesperson for the night-time economy, and the spokesperson for young people, I am really interested in the intersection between these two areas. The night-time economy employs young people and provides them with public spaces to meet, socialise and spend their money. Through the YourSay research that the government undertook during lockdown this year, we know that young people have been particularly impacted over the last 18 months. Young people have lost work and become more socially isolated, and have been less likely to attend medical appointments or seek care for medical issues. All of this has meant that young people's mental health has suffered more than their peers in other age groups. Boosting supports for our night-time economy will undoubtedly have a positive impact on the health and wellbeing of young people and support their positive contribution to our city.

Urban planning is key to encouraging social participation. Urban planning and design affect the accessibility of our businesses, services and public amenities such as transport. This is particularly important for people who are more likely to be reliant on active travel and public transport, such as older people, people with disabilities that prevent driving, students, and people who cannot afford car ownership. Unfortunately, minority communities are less likely to be considered when we design our town centres and the transport to and from them. The night-time economy and the social spaces that evolve with it are also important spaces for all members of our community.

As spokesperson for LGBTQIA+ people, I am also very mindful that the safety of all people in our urban areas is of the utmost importance if we are to create and support a vibrant night-time economy that is inclusive of all people. Basic things like proper lighting, broad and open walkways, accessible ramps, movement of people, and open, thriving businesses, are important to making people feel safe. A safe night out is a good night out. That is why the ACT Greens are really proud to have championed a permanent pill testing site, which will go a long way to ensuring that there is a public health response to the recreational drug use that occurs within our night-time economy.

Pill testing is not just an investment in public health; it is an investment in the sustainability of businesses that trade in the night-time economy. Bars, restaurants and nightclubs should not have to deal with patrons who are experiencing the adverse effects of unknown substances. Pill testing will limit the risk of violence in our venues and keep people safe. Ensuring that this service is accessible, comfortable and safe for people to use recreationally will be key to its success. I look forward to assisting the government to make sure that their funded pilot is effective and sustainable.

I once again thank Ms Castley for her motion. As one of Canberra's biggest fans of heading out for a night on the tiles, I love the opportunity to spruik the life and culture of our city. I want to ensure that people spend their money in our city and enjoy their time here. Over the last decade Canberra's night-time economy and restaurant industry has really thrived, and continuing this trend as we emerge from COVID is important. Ensuring that our suburban town centres are safe, accessible and welcoming to everyone is important from a social justice perspective and will build a fun, healthy and sustainable night-time economy.

MS CHEYNE (Ginninderra—Assistant Minister for Economic Development, Minister for the Arts, Minister for Business and Better Regulation, Minister for Human Rights and Minister for Multicultural Affairs) (4.18): I support Minister Steel's amendment to Ms Castley's well-intentioned but ill-informed, if not wilfully ignorant, motion. As Minister Steel noted in his remarks, our businesses—not least those establishments that make up Canberra's core night-time economy—rely on turnover in parking for their customers. The ACT has a mix of parking arrangements to support different activities in different spaces. As Minister Steel noted, if Ms Castley had bothered to look, she would have seen that the vast majority of our town centres already have free parking after 5.30 pm and all day Saturday and Sunday.

With this motion Ms Castley is trying to claim a win for something that already exists—claiming responsibility for something the ACT government already supports. Whether it is wilful ignorance, misguided information, an attempt to mislead or sheer laziness is anyone's guess. Even the presenters on 104.7 FM commented this morning about how these parking arrangements exist.

There is no doubt that hospitality businesses have been hit hard by this year's lockdown, and the ACT government has sought to support them throughout, including by paying out over \$475 million in business support since the start of the pandemic and \$280 million in grants so far. More broadly, businesses have been provided with

rates relief, payroll tax waivers and deferrals, stamp duty relief and land tax credit. The ACT government has waived licence fees for food businesses' registration, outdoor dining and liquor licensing.

I assume that Ms Castley's motion wilfully omits these because they have helped. Food business registration fee waivers have been extended until 31 March next year, and if food business registration has been prepaid for more than one year in advance, an additional 12 months will be added to the licence. Outdoor dining permit waivers have been extended for another 12 months, until 30 June next year. Annual licence fee waivers for some liquor licensees have been tapered to provide a 50 per cent fee reduction for 12 months from 1 April this year to the end of March next year. Eligible licensees include nightclubs, restaurants, cafes, bars, general licences, catering licences, special licences and club licences.

The Canberra Business Advice and Support Service has been extended until the end of March next year as well, and it gives businesses up to four hours free access to expert advice on a range of topics. We are continuing to support our businesses as we transition out of lockdown and they seek to capitalise on pent-up consumer demand from Canberrans and interstate visitors and, hopefully soon, international visitors. With the further easing of restrictions from tomorrow and the removal of density limits for outdoor spaces, let us, instead of shamefully talking it down, highlight the opportunity available to local businesses to expand their outdoor spaces and maximise their capacity for trade over the coming months.

The taskforce has a mandate to make public spaces available to businesses and is working with staff from across the directorates to manage applications on behalf of businesses. Wherever possible, it has an attitude of saying yes. Forty-three businesses have already taken up this option and commenced operation in expanded trading spaces. If a business would like additional outdoor space, I strongly encourage them to get in contact with the taskforce to make it happen. You can get in contact with the taskforce by email to oat@act.gov.au or by phone on 02 6205 4400.

Mr Cain's speech was something else. It was, at the very least, wilfully ignorant. It is another example—it is very common—of the Canberra Liberals, especially those two, saying that something has not happened when it has. Mr Cain said we should have met with businesses during lockdown. Mr Cain, we met with business leaders, and businesses more broadly, every single day, then three times a week, and now we are meeting once a week. We have said this repeatedly; it is not a secret. Those opposite need to improve their basic comprehension skills, whether it is with respect to listening or reading signs in town centres, because this is embarrassing. They cannot say that something is true because they say it is, without doing basic research. Everyone sees through it, and it is a waste of everyone's time.

It is important that I highlight a particular aspect of Minister Steel's amendment, which corrects a glaring inaccuracy in Ms Castley's original motion with respect to the contribution of our night-time economy. She somehow let it sit on the notice paper for four days and did not even correct it before or after she saw Minister Steel's amendment. In her motion and her speech, Ms Castley quoted the report that we have all referred to. She flagged that the hospitality sector had \$3.35 million in sales

turnover. If Ms Castley had a clue, she would realise that one medium-sized hospitality venue—not an entire sector—would have \$3.35 million in sales turnover. The figure actually reported, as Minister Steel has corrected, is \$3.35 billion. It is written in the report as “\$3,352 million”.

So the turnover of these Canberra businesses across the sector and for our economy is greater, by a factor of a thousand, than what is in Ms Castley’s motion. Unfortunately, as I have said, it is what we have come to expect: lack of effort, if not lack of understanding. A lack of effort to even try to understand is true of Mr Cain. Instead, there is a wilful misinterpreting of things and pretending it is true. That is what those opposite have done in their characterisation of the Better Regulation Taskforce. It is what we have come to expect from the Canberra Liberals, and it was shameful to watch Mr Cain double-down on this approach in his speech, defending another rehashed preamble cobbled together on Monday morning before the deadline for the administration and procedure committee.

Ms Castley and Mr Cain—Mr Cain especially, given his speech—might also like to reflect on a key statistic in the report, where the ACT bucked the national trend. The ACT was the only area in Australia to experience an increase in core night-time employment of four per cent. Those are jobs. We bounced back in 2020 and we will bounce back again. The work that our government is doing is supporting businesses to take advantage of the opportunities the pandemic presents; to employ more Canberrans as we work towards 250,000 jobs by 2025; and to celebrate everything our city has to offer, including a vibrant sector which is excited to welcome back even more patrons from tomorrow. I invite those opposite to be more constructive, to stop talking down our economy. If they were serious about supporting our business sectors, instead of political point-scoring and talking it down they would be promoting our city. Promotion of what we have here brings more visitors, which brings more business, but instead all we hear is doom and gloom. Ms Castley’s motion is at best wilfully ignorant. At worst—and this is what I suspect—it is lazy. I commend Minister Steel’s amendments to the Assembly.

MS LAWDER (Brindabella) (4.28): I would like to support Ms Castley’s motion and say a few words, most specifically, on parking in the CBD and also a bit about Canberra’s arts sector. The motion from Ms Castley calls on the ACT government to waive the cost of parking in non-peak times over our upcoming summer period, to help Canberrans get out and enjoy, most especially, the CBD area, and support the wonderful hospitality and retail venues that we have here in Canberra.

Given that the focus of this motion is on the night-time economy, I want to focus on that. We have the traditional migration to the coast coming up for many Canberrans, and some would talk about Canberra as being a ghost town during January. So we must do anything we can to encourage people to stick around. And if they are around, we must encourage them to go into the city and spend their money to keep businesses afloat, especially hospitality businesses. For up to two years Canberrans have done the hard yards with respect to the COVID-19 pandemic. The government took strong action, and Canberrans behaved extraordinarily well in response. They followed the health directions. Generally speaking, they locked down and did everything right; and our amazing vaccination results are another example of the way that Canberrans have

risen heroically to the task of doing whatever they can to fight this pandemic and to get back to normal, whatever that might be.

It has been, however, incredibly tough for our hospitality businesses, many of whom have had to completely close down during the period. Many of them have had to retool or redevelop their business models in order to keep going during the pandemic. Some of them have not yet reopened. Some of them will never reopen. Some have reopened to operate in a much smaller way than they once did.

I can give you one example in my electorate in Tuggeranong—a very popular cafe, Common Grounds at Gowrie. They have not yet reopened with dining in-house. For a range of reasons they are still only doing takeaway. Those reasons include lack of staff. That is related to international students, but it is a really complex mix at the moment, which Canberrans are doing their best to manage. Encouraging people to end up at their local watering holes is one way that we can help support those struggling businesses. Introducing free parking at night-time in our CBD would be a positive contribution to doing that. It would support the reopening of businesses and encourage people to patronise them.

Mrs Jones and Mr Gentleman were in the assembly back in 2015. I think the three of us—and perhaps some of the Assembly staff—were here. They may recall when night-time parking in the CBD was first introduced. That was in 2015, and during the estimates period. Mr Barr promoted much hilarity by comparing the cost of parking at night. He said:

The parking fees are not even likely to be part of the price of a bottle of sparkling mineral water at some of our high-end restaurants.

Of course, not all of us go to high-end restaurants; we might not be able to afford them. Many of my constituents cannot afford to go to high-end restaurants, and they cannot afford to buy high-end sparkling mineral water, either. I am not sure where the Chief Minister buys his mineral water or what type he purchases, but I think it is fair to say that he might be getting a raw deal if what he pays for a sparkling mineral water now is the equivalent of what he would be paying for night-time parking in the city.

These decisions are made by people who do not have to pay for night-time parking or even daytime parking. We in this place are very privileged that we do not pay for parking. It is easy for those opposite to tell people that they have to pay for parking because those opposite do not have to pay for it. They do not have to pay, but they expect everyone else to pay. When there were some complaints about it, government members made fun of those who have to pay and told them that it is just like paying for a bottle of sparkling mineral water. It was pretty shameful.

The residents in my electorate of Tuggeranong live in one of the furthest areas of the ACT from the CBD. I really do not want to go into it, but we heard all about the debacle of the bus network changes in the year before last, 2019. Tuggeranong residents do not have the option of catching the bus home very often; they are a long way away. If you are a single woman, for example, you are probably not going to

catch the bus home after a dinner or a night out in the city—maybe with a group of friends, yes, but it is not always a good option.

I think we all enjoy the night-time economy. It is fair to say, though, that I would probably go to slightly different places from my colleague Mr Davis. And I would probably even go to very different places from my colleague Ms Castley. That is how we keep our economy going—we all like different things. When I go out to dinner with my friends, we enjoy a bit of finer dining and we like quieter places. It is not that we are getting old or anything, but we like to have a conversation and we like to be able to hear each other. Between all of us here, we support so many different types of venues in our night-time economy, and that is exactly the way that it should be. Introducing free night-time parking in the CBD—and even in Braddon and some other areas—may incentivise Canberrans who do not live in or very close to the city to visit it.

I will briefly comment on something that Mr Steel said about people with reduced mobility in Braddon. As someone who has recently experienced reduced mobility, I can tell you that I do not go to Braddon at all. It is too congested there for me, even with this paid parking, which is meant to free up parking spaces. It does not work, in my experience.

Ms Cheyne: We might as well make it free.

MS LAWDER: Once again, we have an interjection from Ms Cheyne, who seems unable to contain herself when anyone else is speaking but who gets upset if someone else speaks while she is speaking. She does not like it at all when anyone else interjects, but here she is.

Ms Cheyne: Bring it on!

MS LAWDER: I am sorry to be speaking while you are interjecting! If Ms Cheyne would just let me finish—if she would try to control herself for just two more minutes—it would be appreciated. We have seen the Chief Minister in front of the media encouraging Canberrans to get out and spend in our city. I encourage that too; I think we all do. We encourage Canberrans to spend local and buy local, but people have many other options, including buying some of their goods online, so whatever we can do is a positive step, and waiving the cost of parking could be a positive.

I have been quite shocked by some of the comments about Ms Castley's motion, including very churlish—in fact, childish—comments from some opposite that it is about political point-scoring. I read this as a very straight, positive motion, contributing some ideas and suggestions, and I cannot, for the life of me, see where there is political point-scoring. The motion is asking for something positive. It is really depressing that the government wants to try to categorise it as political point-scoring when it is a positive motion about something that could be done to encourage patronisation of our businesses.

Finally, as shadow minister for the arts, it would be remiss of me not to mention our struggling arts community and how it has suffered over the past two years, with many

shows and events and venues closed down as a consequence of the lockdown and social distancing restrictions. But they have been resilient, and they are coming back soon. They have understood the necessity and now they are ready to try and do what they can. The government and the Assembly need to do what we can.

MRS KIKKERT (Ginninderra) (4.38): Before I begin, I would like to congratulate Ms Cheyne and Mr Steel for rising to the occasion and being two of the most condescending, disrespectful politicians here in the ACT Assembly! Congratulations, if that was your goal, because you rightly deserve to be called those things today. Ms Cheyne said that Ms Castley needed to do her research. Can I point out that Ms Castley has done her research quite extensively and she is far more competent at representing businesses as shadow minister than Ms Cheyne is as minister. If you look at the Access Canberra website, it still says that the parking fees are effective from 1 July 2021 and it lists how much parking costs when you park in the city centre or in town centres. She has done her research. It may be that the Minister for Business and Better Regulation has done her research; she may know that Access Canberra is very outdated and needs to be updated as soon as possible.

MS CHEYNE: No; it is correct.

MRS KIKKERT: So, it is actually costing people to park elsewhere in Canberra, rather than being a free car park? Anyway, you have had your turn.

I thank Ms Castley for bringing this motion before the Assembly today. A strong night-time economy adds vibrancy and distinctiveness to a location. It nurtures the creative and artistic industries without which cities become sterile and soulless. It also helps to foster social cohesion and a sense of inclusion as we spend time together, enjoying shared pursuits and pleasures. Most of what we would label “culture” takes place in our lives during evenings and on weekends. As COVID restrictions have reminded us, without the ability to gather for social and structural pursuits, life becomes stark and lonely.

Of course, those who work in the night-time economy have been disproportionately impacted by lockdowns and restrictions over the past 20 months. These workers are not few, either, making up two in every 15 people employed in Canberra. Clearly, for the sake of literally everyone involved, it is time now to supercharge the recovery of our cities and the night-time economy.

This motion calls for simple common sense, but the government’s rejection of this worthwhile motion highlights that common sense is not always common practice, especially in this Assembly run by the Labor-Greens government. The motion calls on two commonsense measures to be implemented over the next few months to encourage more Canberrans back into town centres, thereby giving a boost to the more than 1,800 businesses that make up Canberra’s core night-time economy: (1) make ACT government parking free after 6 pm and on weekends and (2) make all public transport free after 6 pm and on weekends.

Supporting businesses and events through free public transport is something the government already does. Eight years ago, when I took my children to the

Governor-General's centenary family picnic day, our bus ride was free. The government supports sporting events at Bruce Stadium and at Manuka Oval with free public transport, and free buses are available on Anzac Day and Australia Day. Currently, public transport is free in Canberra for anyone travelling to a vaccination clinic. In this context, a period of free travel at night and on weekends is the support we want to offer to Canberrans, and it will give a boost to our night-time economy.

As a member for Ginninderra, I am keen to see lockdown-impacted businesses in the Belconnen town centre and across the rest of my electorate prosper. I want to see thriving cafes, restaurants, cinemas, performing arts centres, clubs and takeaways. I hope to see entrepreneurs with dreams succeed as they launch new endeavours. Business owners and employees have paid a terrible price during this pandemic, as have musicians, actors and other artists. The entire community has been impacted. Those at the core of this city's night-time economy have shouldered a very large share of this burden. This motion calls on the ACT government to honour their sacrifice in a small way. Let us do everything we can for a few months to make it easier and more attractive for Canberrans to have a night out and support local businesses. I commend this motion to the Assembly.

MS CASTLEY (Yerrabi) (4.43): Let me apologise to the business community for the typographical error—the business community does an amazing job—and I thank Minister Steel and Minister Cheyne for pointing it out. It was very helpful and not quite the gotcha moment that they were hoping for.

What a shame. If the Labor-Greens government truly supported small business, they would have supported this motion. Let's face it, this is not an amendment; it is a total rewrite. Not enough has been done for COVID recovery. It is no longer about lockdown. As Minister Steel said, yes, there were some measures, but this is about COVID recovery. There was a support grant, but for many businesses this money went to bills, taxes and expenses to enable them to stay afloat long enough so that they could open their doors when lockdown ended. Some business owners have not paid themselves for nine weeks or longer. I spoke to a cafe that has not broken even since opening. Businesses have dipped into their reserves, and in many cases they are losing it all, if they have not already.

As my three colleagues have mentioned, the amendment calls on the ACT government to continue working with business to identify ways to encourage more Canberrans into town centres. There was a practical solution in my motion to do exactly that. Minister Steel, it is no longer about lockdown. Seriously, I wonder if sometimes the Labor-Greens government disagrees with me for fun because it has the power to say no. This is not a big ask. I am not being political on this one. Do the ministers realise just how desperate things are for some of our businesses? All I am asking for is that the government make it easy for as many Canberrans as possible to hit the town and spend their money in Canberra over the summer period.

As Ms Lawder said, we know that there is a mass exodus over Christmas, and there will be, because there has been no travel. So we want to make it easy for the people that remain in town to stay in Canberra and spend money here. These businesses are scrambling to get back to normal and will struggle through a quiet Christmas period.

One thing I know about businesses is that they must have a can-do attitude. Canberra businesses have been agile, they have pivoted and they have reinvented themselves—all to keep up with everything that has been thrown at them over these last 18 months. It is a shame that this Labor-Greens government is unwilling to do the same.

I am disheartened that, once again, I have put before this Assembly a motion that fights for courageous business owners in Canberra—the hardworking Aussies who have been brave enough to take the gamble and start their businesses—and that, unfortunately, once again, I will have to tell them the sad news that this Labor-Greens government will not stand up for them. It is a shame. I do not support the amendment Mr Steel has moved.

Question put:

That the amendment be agreed to.

The Assembly voted—

Ayes 15

Noes 8

Ms Berry	Ms Orr	Mr Cain
Mr Braddock	Dr Paterson	Ms Castley
Ms Burch	Mr Pettersson	Mr Hanson
Ms Cheyne	Mr Rattenbury	Mrs Jones
Ms Clay	Mr Steel	Mrs Kikkert
Ms Davidson	Ms Stephen-Smith	Ms Lawder
Mr Davis	Ms Vassarotti	Mr Milligan
Mr Gentleman		Mr Parton

Question resolved in the affirmative.

Original question, as amended, resolved in the affirmative.

Environment—climate change

MS CLAY (Ginninderra) (4.53): I move:

That this Assembly:

(1) notes that:

- (a) the Conference of the Parties 26 (COP26) climate summit in Glasgow has been billed as the world's last chance to meet the goals of the Paris Agreement and avoid a climate catastrophe;
- (b) the ACT is a small jurisdiction but is a global leader on climate action, helping to drive change beyond its borders;
- (c) in 2019, the ACT Legislative Assembly declared we were in a climate emergency and in 2021 called for a treaty to end the proliferation of fossil fuels;

- (d) the ACT Government has committed to achieving net zero emissions by 2045, and has set ambitious emission reduction targets for 2025, 2030 and 2040, and has already met its 40 percent emissions reduction target for 2020;
 - (e) the ACT Government has achieved its target of being powered by 100 percent renewable electricity by 2020 and has committed to phase out fossil gas;
 - (f) while the ACT has made great progress, we could do much more if the Federal Government implemented strong national policies to cut emissions and support action by states and territories;
 - (g) the Federal Government has set a goal of net zero emissions by 2050 but the current target for 2030 does not align with our obligations under the Paris Agreement and the Federal Government has set no interim targets to phase out fossil fuels;
 - (h) the Federal Government has no target to end coal and gas extraction and Australia continues to be the world's largest exporter of coal with around 72 new coal projects and 44 new gas projects in the pipeline around the country; and
 - (i) the Federal Government has no target to phase out fossil fuel from our transport sector;
- (2) endorse:
- (a) the ACT's membership and support for the Powering Past Coal Alliance;
 - (b) the Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty by asking each Member to sign the petition at <https://fossilfuel treaty.org/>;
 - (c) the necessity of rapidly phasing out the burning of fossil fuels, including ending the use of fossil fuel gas in the ACT by at least 2045;
 - (d) urgent prioritisation of zero-emissions transport, with programs and policies that support active transport, public transport, and a rapid transition to zero emissions vehicles;
 - (e) reforms to improve the sustainability of building in the ACT, including requirements for gas-free suburbs and infill, a revised climate-wise building code, and energy efficiency retrofitting programs such as the Energy Efficiency Improvement Scheme and vulnerable household scheme; and
 - (f) meeting the ACT's legislated emissions reduction targets and seeking opportunities to increase ambition in line with the latest science;
- (3) calls on the Minister for Water, Energy and Emissions Reduction to write to his Federal counterpart and, separately, calls on the leaders of all parties represented in the Assembly, to write to the Federal leaders of their respective political parties to urge them to commit to:
- (a) recognise and declare that we are in a climate emergency and need a rapid and just transition to net zero emissions for a stable climate;
 - (b) legislate interim targets for 2030 and 2040 on the path to net zero emissions that align with meeting the goals of the Paris Agreement;

- (c) immediately cease new fossil fuel exploration and rapidly phase out the extraction, export and use of coal and fossil gas;
 - (d) end public subsidies to coal and gas exploration, extraction, and processing;
 - (e) set a national target of achieving 100 percent renewable electricity by 2030;
 - (f) set a national zero emissions transport policy that is consistent with the 2030, 2040 and net zero emissions targets; and
 - (g) ensure that Australia fulfills all targets and commitments made on behalf of Australia at COP26; and
- (4) calls on the Chief Minister and the leaders of all parties represented in the Assembly to table a copy of these letters and responses in the Assembly by the first sittings of 2022.

Two years ago, I was at School Strike 4 Climate in Glebe Park with my five-year-old. She was fascinated by the handmade artworks from thousands of kids, but she couldn't read the words. I told her the gist but I skipped the scary parts. Some of those signs were funny: "Why go to school if you don't listen to the educated?" "If you act like children, we'll act like adults." "I've seen smarter Cabinets at Ikea." Some were chilling: "You'll die of old age. We'll die of climate change."

We marched with 15,000 people, led by students. They were fierce and strong, and they were right. Climate change is terrifying, but a lot of us were reassured that day. Many of us felt like we had been screaming into the void for years or decades. We thought we had finally got through. Our leaders could ignore us but they could never ignore these children.

A year ago, I was back at School Strike 4 Climate. I did not take my daughter this time. By design, there were not many people there. It was at Parliament House, in the middle of a COVID outbreak—not a good time to gather. The signs were back but they had changed. They were not funny or chilling; they were ash: "Flaming hell, fund our future not gas." "Stop burning our future." "By the time I'm 40 Canberra won't have a winter." "Your mother is burning."

Between 2019 and 2020, nothing had changed in federal climate policy, but the world was different. We had all lived the reality of living in a changed climate, and it was terrifying.

The summer had felt different. We had clear skies in the day and roasting hot north-westerly winds. I have lived in Canberra for my whole life. Normally, we get a cool evening sea breeze in summer. It flows up over the Clyde and it brings relief. But in December 2019 it dragged thick smoke from the Tallaganda fire. It choked our city. It gave our evening sky an eerie red glow. It was awful, but at least we knew that the smoke would clear. But it did not. The fires grew and the winds changed. The smoke stayed, day and night.

We have evaporative cooling in my house. We could not use it. We could not open up the house, either, to let air in. We sealed ourselves in and bunkered down, choking

and sweating. We had days, then weeks, trapped in hot smoke under a sky we could not see. That smoke got into two-thirds of Canberra homes and over a third of workplaces. Shopping centres, libraries and swimming pools shut down. I remember getting irrationally angry with a friend interstate who suggested that I get out of the house for a break. Where would I go? “How about the aviary,” she said. The aviary was closed. I think the birds were dropping from the sky.

There is an old cliché in fiction that the post always gets through. It comes from American frontier times and it has been appropriated by apocalyptic fiction. On 2 January, Canberra’s post stopped. They could not deliver the mail—too much smoke. Our media reported that Canberra had the worst air quality in the world.

After the smoke cleared, a storm swept across our city. It walloped us with golf-ball size hail. I was out on my bike. I sheltered in the Canberra Centre and watched ice pour down. That hail caused over a billion dollars of damage. Six hundred flying foxes were killed in Commonwealth Park. They survived the heat and smoke, but the hail got them.

A new fire grew and spread in Namadgi. Canberra was under threat again. We compulsively refreshed the Fires Near Me app. We got used to living in constant anxiety, waiting to see which way the wind would push the fire. It came within five kilometres of our suburban fringe and burnt through a third of the ACT—83 per cent of Namadgi park. Multiple rural properties were lost. Countless animals and plants died.

The collective trauma that Australians experienced in Black Summer and Smokepocalypse rolled straight into COVID. It has been two years of masks and emergency apps. We swap one disaster for the next, and we wait.

I do not know what the long-term effects of this will be, but I do know that Black Summer is a taste of what is to come unless we take immediate action. I was at a climate presentation yesterday with Professor Mark Howden. He showed us some graphs of our global trajectory, and it was not good news. He explained exactly what two degrees, three degrees and five degrees of change look like—flood, fire, drought, rising sea levels, inland seas and vast swathes of uninhabitable land. Our addiction to fossil fuel means we are now living through an experiment that we may not survive.

While COVID has added to our collective societal trauma, it has also shown us what is possible when governments decide to act. I am really proud of the ACT government response to climate change and to COVID. We have seen real leadership locally on both disasters, but we need national leadership as well.

Leaders everywhere are calling this an emergency. The IPCC says it is code red. Prince Charles calls COP26 our last-chance saloon. Greta Thunberg tells us to act as if our house is on fire, because it is. World leaders are using words like crisis, catastrophe and extinction, as if this is a perfectly normal way to talk. Grudgingly, our federal leader has attended Glasgow, but actions speak louder than words. We finally

have a vague pledge about 2050, but it will be far too late then. What about 2030? What about the legislated targets that will get us there—targets that are consistent with the science and the Paris agreement?

The world has had a few wins at COP26 but we got almost nothing from our federal leader. We have signed up to a deforestation agreement, which the states and territories will have to deliver. It is a smooth move to only make promises that someone else has to make good on. Our federal leader agreed that EVs are maybe a thing, but he is still not quite sure. He is still pouring money into fossil fuel; and Australia rejected the methane agreement and refused to sign it. We might yet get more from COP26—it is still going on—or we might get more mantras based on denial and false hope in technology that does not yet exist.

Is real action too hard? No, it is not. Big cuts are easy to make. I know, because I have done it. I started a climate change project in 2017. Frustrated by the federal government's tiny targets and greenwashed programs, I set out to do better. I decided to slash my carbon footprint one week at a time. I had no idea what I was doing; I had no idea if it was possible, but I cut 73 per cent from my carbon footprint in three years. I ran a parallel experiment and I did even better for the average Australian. Deep cuts are possible if you try.

The ACT government know this. We have done it here. ACT climate policy has been based on science and action for a decade. We have cut 60 per cent over the last nine years. Meanwhile our federal government have made no cuts—none. According to their inventory, between 2011 and 2020 emissions rose. The federal government is still supporting and subsidising fossil fuels. In 2020-21 they gave out public subsidies to the tune of \$10.3 billion. That is our money going to the fossil fuels that will burn up our planet! Unbelievably, fossil fuel exploration and new coal and gas mines are still opening up in this country. Australia does not even get the benefits. Most of that money flows overseas or to a few billionaires. That figure of \$10.3 billion in public subsidy is so large that it is hard to grasp. It means that in 2020, each and every minute of every day, \$19,686 was effectively given to coal, oil and gas companies and major users of fossil fuel.

If we continue down this path, that Black Summer will be our new normal. I do not yet know what 2022 will bring, but past behaviour is the best predictor of future conduct. I do not trust these federal politicians to do anything other than what they have done for the past 10 years—not unless we make them do better.

I was at another climate rally on the weekend, listening to another school striker. She told us that in the first four years of her life she did not see rainfall. She said she wondered what was the point in studying if she did not know if she would be alive at the age of 30. This is a common sentiment from our children. It is not alarmist; it is realistic. More Canberrans died from climate change during our Black Summer than died from COVID.

My daughter is nearly eight. I did not take her to that rally, because now she can read the signs for herself, and they worry her. Why can't our national leaders read those signs? We can turn this around. We are seeing so much leadership at so many

levels—businesses, industries, councils, state and territory governments, entrepreneurs, students and regular people.

The world is also moving on without us. Many car manufacturers have declared that they will no longer make internal combustion cars. Many countries are talking about imposing a carbon price on exports from those who lag behind. If we do not accept the changes that are needed and that are already happening, we will have no role in this. We will miss opportunities and we will be left out.

It is possible to make rapid change. We know this because we just did it at a national level for COVID. Don't be afraid of smart changes made well. We hear so much fear from some sides of politics. There is nothing to be frightened of. Those changes are going to make our lives better than they were before. I know this because that is what happened for my family when we went on a carbon diet.

Changing the national and the international conversation is hard, but progress is possible. COP26 has had an unprecedented level of participation. It has finally moved away from the toxic conversation of "Should we or shouldn't we?" and it is at that more productive stage of: "Exactly how do we do this and how do we do it fast enough?"

We have seen progress on smaller agreements, too. In June this year this Assembly passed a motion calling for a fossil fuel non-proliferation treaty. It was a grassroots call and it was really early in the piece. That call for a treaty now has the support of 132,737 individuals, and 17 cities and subnational governments, including the City of Sydney, the cities of Darebin, Moreland, Yarra and Maribyrnong in Melbourne, cities in the United States and the United Kingdom, and Barcelona, Nepal and Canada.

Today's motion calls on every member of this Assembly to endorse action that the ACT has already taken. That action is signing up to the call for a treaty, joining the Powering Past Coal Alliance, rapidly phasing out fossil fuel, including gas, and prioritising zero emissions transport. We are already doing this in the ACT. I want to make sure everyone in this chamber is 100 per cent on board.

Today's motion also calls on the leader of each party to write to their federal counterpart. We need our federal leaders to commit to doing what we have already done in the ACT. We need them to declare a climate emergency, and legislate 2030 and 2040 targets that will take us to net zero. We need them to immediately cease all new fossil fuel exploration, to phase out all fossil fuels and to end public subsidies for coal and gas. We need them to set a national 100 per cent renewable target. We need them to commit to a national zero-emission transport plan and to follow through on every commitment we make at COP26.

We do not have time to pull in different directions. We need leadership, coordination and action. I take real comfort from the progress we have made in the ACT, and there is so much more we can do and learn from others. We will only manage it if we have commitment and action at every level of government. I commend the motion to the Assembly.

MR BARR (Kurrajong—Chief Minister, Treasurer, Minister for Climate Action, Minister for Economic Development and Minister for Tourism) (5.06): I am pleased to speak in support of the motion. The ACT is delivering one of the most ambitious climate action agendas in the world. We are internationally recognised for achieving 100 per cent renewable electricity by 2020 and for achieving our interim target of a 40 per cent reduction in emissions in that same year. These accomplishments signal our progress towards achieving our legislated target of zero net emissions by 2045.

The government is committed to a fair transition to net zero emissions, and measures such as the Sustainable Household Scheme and the Vulnerable Household Energy Support Scheme will support Canberrans in achieving this goal. The Vulnerable Household Energy Support Scheme and the Solar for Low Income Program provide targeted support to improve energy efficiency of public housing, rental properties and low-income owner-occupier residences. They are an important way to build resilience and adapt to the challenges of a changing climate.

Our response to climate change also provides opportunities to drive the territory's renewable energy sector. Investment in sustainable infrastructure, like the Big Canberra Battery, will support job creation in the sector. The Big Canberra Battery will deliver at least 250 megawatts of new storage capacity across the territory. This project will not only support the territory's efforts to reduce emissions but also it will strengthen the stability of our energy grid, foster growth in the renewable energy sector, create more skilled local jobs and provide a source of revenue for the territory.

Through initiatives like the Community Zero Emissions Grants Program, the Energy Efficiency Improvement Scheme and the Community Clubs Building Energy Efficiency Fund, the government is working to support a reduction in emissions and energy costs for community groups, not-for-profit organisations, businesses and households across the city. These initiatives reflect the government's commitment to support community action towards net zero emissions. Achieving this future is a shared ambition of governments, businesses and individuals.

Our role is to set clear climate action priorities, to make the necessary investments and to facilitate the opportunities for informed decisions supporting the transition to net zero emissions by 2045. This will require changes to many things and, perhaps most significantly, to how we travel. Transport emissions currently contribute over 60 per cent of total emissions in the territory. To address this challenge we need to engage in more active travel, we need to utilise more public transport and we need to transition to zero emission vehicles. The government will support this transition.

We will also invest in improving our road and active travel networks, expand our public transport services, delivering a zero emissions bus network and rolling out more public charging infrastructure for zero emission vehicles. Through such collective action, we will ensure that all Canberrans are kept safe, enjoy our city's natural environment and share in the economic opportunities provided in the transition to a zero emissions future.

In the face of a climate emergency, the ACT's climate change response is urgent, ambitious and, most importantly, collaborative, equitable and informed by an understanding that we all have a responsibility to act. I commend the motion to the Assembly.

MS CASTLEY (Yerrabi) (5.10): As the Canberra Liberals shadow minister for emissions reduction, I welcome this opportunity to speak to Ms Clay's motion on COP26. The Canberra Liberals do not oppose this motion. The Canberra Liberals are ambitious for our environment and are fed up with climate change being a political issue.

We saw that recently with the arrogant remarks by the Greens leader, Shane Rattenbury, that he hoped the Canberra Liberals leader, Elizabeth Lee, took a large notebook to the COP26 conference. Ms Lee's participation at the Glasgow conference reflects the Canberra Liberals' commitment to broad-based action on climate change. I would like to put on the record comments by Ms Lee on the matter. She said that "action on protecting our environment, valuing and respecting our environment", are inherently Liberal values. In the *Canberra Times* of 2 November, Ms Lee is quoted as saying:

... it's also important to note that action on climate change, action to conserve our environment, should not be a political issue ... It is something that is of great importance to many people across all political spectrums. It's important that leaders show that.

Unfortunately, this motion today does not demonstrate that leadership. It is a missed opportunity. Young activist Greta Thunberg has captured the world's attention with her dismissal of token statements without demonstrating real outcomes as, "Blah, blah, blah." So why can't we, together, as an Assembly, show our young Canberra environmentalists that we are not "blah, blah, blah"; that we not only have tripartisan support for ambitious emissions reduction targets, but a tripartisan agreed plan on how we will get there?

The Greens talk about doing politics differently, and here in the ACT they speak about building a better normal. Let the Greens turn those words into action and take up my offer to come together and work this out.

Canberrans enjoy a high standard of living because our parents and previous generations worked hard to create it. If society is a compact between generations, it is our job as legislators to hand on to the next generation a better quality of life, which is why action on climate change is sorely needed. That is why the Canberra Liberals support ambitious goals to reduce our emissions. It is why the Canberra Liberals want to see accountability and transparency, with clearly defined measures to achieve our targets, and it is why the Canberra Liberals seek a tripartisan approach to these challenges.

The way I see it, most people are practical environmentalists. They support meetings of world leaders like COP26, but they also demand real, sensible action. Practical

environmentalists accept that they have an important contribution to make. They are eager for information and to know what changes they can make in their own lives to respond to our climate emergency.

As I said earlier, the Canberra Liberals will not play politics on the environment, because Canberrans do not want that. The reality is that the ACT's commitment to net zero emissions by 2045 is a tripartisan commitment. I am pleased and proud to stand here today and reiterate the Canberra Liberals' position on climate policy—that the Canberra Liberals support the ACT's 100 per cent renewable electricity target, we support zero net emissions by 2045, we support the 2025, 2030 and 2040 interim targets, and we accept the science of climate change.

The Canberra Liberals have always had a strong position on climate action in the ACT. In 1997 the then minister for environment, Gary Humphries, announced that the ACT government would work towards reducing the territory's greenhouse gas emissions by 20 per cent below 1990 levels by 2018—at that time a bold and ambitious step. It was my colleague Nicole Lawder who, as shadow minister for the environment, in August 2016 led the process for the Canberra Liberals offering tripartisan support for the targets of 100 per cent renewable energy by 2020 and zero net emissions by 2050. It was my colleague Jeremy Hanson, as the then Canberra Liberals leader, who endorsed that announcement; and, of course, that 2016 target has since been moved forward to 2045.

The ACT's size and comparative population density offer benefits that other jurisdictions cannot match in terms of meeting our climate goals. As I said earlier, Canberrans have a passion for sustainable practices and many can afford to take them up. Ms Lee's participation at Glasgow reinforces this commitment, which is why it was disappointing that the Chief Minister and Greens leader attempted to politicise the issue. We have much to do in our small territory with regard to reducing transport and gas emissions; and, frankly, I do not think we are on top of this. Talking together and showing real leadership, taking the politics out of climate change, would be a significant first step.

Today's motion contains words that point to a need for action—"last chance" and "climate catastrophe" among them. Given the language and stated support of the Labor-Greens parties for real action on climate change, I am puzzled why so much turns so slowly. Let us take these few examples. The 10-year review of the Climate Change and Greenhouse Gas Reduction Act 2010 was due to be completed as soon as practicable after 10 years of the act, yet we are still waiting. Why should such an important review take more than one year to complete, and when will we receive it?

With respect to Canberra's big battery project, it is disappointing that the Chief Minister and Minister for Climate Action refused, or was not able, to give any details during the recent estimates hearings about the time frame for delivering this important project. With respect to gas, when will the government stop using gas in government buildings, as they committed to? What is the government's plan to encourage households to move off gas, and how will they support low income and vulnerable households?

At the recent estimates hearings, Minister Rattenbury said that the government had no formal targets for households to disconnect from gas and could not provide information about how many Canberra households have moved off gas, and admitted they could not measure when a house is completely disconnected from gas. With respect to target emissions, we know that transport accounts for 60 per cent of the territory's emissions, so why is our government investing so heavily in diesel buses, and why was Minister Rattenbury unable at estimates to provide information about charging infrastructure for electric vehicles and what measures will reduce our transport emissions year on year?

As shadow minister for the environment and emissions reduction, I have been studying the measures we have in place to meet our interim targets, in an effort to hold the government to account on its environmental stewardship. There is a lack of clarity about whether we will meet the 2025 target, a lack of clarity regarding the policies that will see us achieve these targets, and a lack of clarity about the cost to government and the community of reaching such milestones.

There is also no clarity around whether we are achieving the best bang for our buck on emissions reduction, which is a question that we should all be concerned about. The answers my colleagues and I receive run to many pages of, "We're doing lots." But where is the simple maths showing the measure, the cost of the measure, the greenhouse reductions from the measure and, importantly, how far that particular measure takes us to deliver these important targets?

During estimates I asked Minister Rattenbury about whether we were meeting our 2025 scenario outlined in the climate change strategy. I was informed that a series of scenarios were put together to contemplate some of the pathways we would need in order to get to the targets we have. If the scenario in the strategy is not real, if that does not reflect the actual government targets, the question remains: what is the actual situation or scenario today? What are the measures for transport? What are the targets for transport? What are the measures for gas? What are the targets for gas? What will deliver us the 2025 targets, and how?

We need this information. I ask the minister for emissions reduction to share with the Assembly: what is the government's current scenario for reaching the 2025 legislated targets? What is the cost-benefit analysis of all of the measures currently in place to reduce our greenhouse gas emissions, and where is the recent economic modelling on new, additional measures to achieve our legislated targets? Otherwise, it is all blah, blah, blah.

On the issue of transparency and government's commitment to real climate action, another issue of concern is that the government continues to hold shares in fossil fuel companies, despite the Chief Minister telling ACT Labor's annual conference back in 2015 that the government would revise its environmental criteria for shareholdings of fossil fuel companies and adjust its investments.

Mr Rattenbury, who was Greens leader at the time, praised community groups for raising the issue and getting the government to focus on it. Clearly, the government

has not focused on it enough, given that it continues to hold an investment portfolio in fossil fuel companies. During a recent estimates hearing, on 21 October, Treasury official Patrick McAuliffe said that the government was moving towards no fossil fuel reserves at all. The Canberra Liberals call on the government to fully divest all of its shares in fossil fuel companies as a matter of priority.

If there is one issue on which Canberra can and should work in a tripartisan manner, it is climate change. Let us show how it can be done in partnership as a positive model that other states and territories can follow.

MS VASSAROTTI (Kurrajong—Minister for the Environment, Minister for Heritage, Minister for Homelessness and Housing Services and Minister for Sustainable Building and Construction) (5.22): I rise today to support Ms Clay's motion. As the COP26 meeting has shown us, the climate crisis is a problem that most of the world now fully understands. Unfortunately, Australia's response at a national level continues to be found wanting. At the Glasgow COP, the Australian government is more isolated than ever before. Still, there is a huge amount that state and territory governments can do on the ground to address climate change. Every jurisdiction in Australia has, for some time, had its own net zero target. Now, finally, so does Australia.

The ACT government has been acting on climate change for years, in line with the science. The ACT has now cut emissions by over 40 per cent on 1990 levels as 100 per cent renewable electricity is providing incentives for households to move from gas to efficient electrical appliances and giving incentives for switching to electric vehicles. This looks a lot like practical action to me.

I would like to stress that these changes are not necessarily simple or straightforward. Dealing with climate change is complex and requires careful planning, particularly around equity issues and a just transition. These changes will require support from everyone in the community to pull together to help cut our emissions, just as we have pulled together through the pandemic.

The ACT Greens, not latecomers to the existential threat of climate change, have a strong grasp on the practical solutions we have available to us right now. This is far from blah, blah, blah.

We took a vast array of policies to the last election in areas ranging from urban heat island effects to electric buses and everything in between. One of our election commitments was to set a 10-year pathway to shift to world's best practice on climate-ready and environmentally sustainable buildings. This commitment now appears in the 10th parliamentary and governing agreement and is a major focus of mine.

Houses built today will still be here in 2050 or beyond. They need to be fit for purpose once built. Few houses are later fully brought up to modern standards, because retrofitting is so expensive. In an apartment context, coordinating all of the unit owners to agree to a substantial retrofit is likely to be really difficult. It has to be done right, from the start.

What exactly do we mean by climate-ready and environmentally sustainable buildings? Canberra faces an uncertain future climate. One thing we know is that it will be hotter and drier, and there will be more extreme weather, particularly extreme heatwaves. By international standards, much of our housing stock does not provide good protection to occupants from temperature extremes.

To adapt our future houses for this, they must be able to provide better protection from extreme temperatures and other hazards, like bushfire smoke. This means houses that are better orientated, better insulated and better shaded, and capable of remaining comfortable in cold snaps or heatwaves. Canberrans deserve climate-wise houses.

The second objective is environmental sustainability. We must start building houses that do not require big heating systems to keep warm or air conditioners running all night so that we can sleep. Energy efficient houses lower the cost of living and are healthier and much more comfortable to live in. They will also make it easier for us to move away from gas, because energy efficient houses do not need a lot of energy, even if it only comes from electricity. We know this can be done. There are a growing number of amazing houses and apartments in Canberra already demonstrating what can be done with good design and attention to detail. This just needs to become a widespread practice.

Some will say that this is too costly and something only the wealthy will be able to afford. But many countries have minimum standards much higher than those in Australia. Academic research has estimated that minimum standards for houses in other countries with similar climates to Australia are at least 40 per cent more energy efficient. We can and must do better.

Environmental sustainability also extends to the materials we use for houses. Once a house takes little energy to run, the energy embodied in the building itself really starts to matter. There has been a lot going on in this space in the past year or so as new building products and materials—such as lower carbon concrete, green steel and so forth—start to come onto the market. Commercial buildings in Australia will soon have a rating tool to voluntarily report on their embodied carbon. Much is happening in this space, and it is happening fast.

The ACT government's goals in this area are unashamedly ambitious. The long lifetime of houses and apartments means that it is vitally important to set standards that will ensure that we produce residential buildings that are fit for purpose. We can and must do better, because current and future owners of these buildings are depending on us to get this right.

I thank Ms Clay for this important motion.

MR DAVIS (Brindabella) (5.28): I would like to thank my colleague Ms Clay for presenting this motion today. Should the Leader of the Opposition not learn enough about climate action on her trip, I would encourage her to take Ms Clay out for lunch upon her return. I have certainly learned a lot under her tutelage.

As the ACT Greens spokesperson for young people, I am politically and personally invested in mitigating the worst of the impending climate crisis. The participation of young people in democratic and political systems is essential to ensuring that they are part of the systems that make decisions that will impact them for generations.

Earlier this year, I brought forward a motion to this place to support the rights of the aforementioned young people to strike. Young people's activism and enthusiasm for action on the climate crisis has been driving action on climate change for decades. We have seen young people driving conversations and protests at COP this year, as they have in previous years. We know that these young activists have been nobly sceptical about the intentions and, importantly, the vested financial interests that have been displayed at COP, including, but not limited to, Australia's own stand, sponsored by Santos.

In an article by the *Guardian* published yesterday, one of these young activists, Villasenor, put it articulately:

The UN has shown us it's capable of mobilising against imminent global threats, and the climate crisis is the greatest global threat ever known to humanity ... We are quickly running out of time to protect children and future generations, and we're demanding adults step up right now and rally a critical global response to the climate crisis.

In the wake of COVID-19 and the horrific bushfires we have experienced, millions of people are demanding better. We cannot continue to allow this community voice to be drowned out by the corporate lobby groups and the billionaires who use their wealth and power to set the political agenda in this country and across the globe.

Lifting the voices of young people is one way we can fight back against those with such significant vested interests who are continuing to destroy our planet for their own profit—wealthy significant vested interests who continue to prop up the two old parties with big donations. I look forward to continuing to be a strong advocate in this area.

I am a passionate believer in social justice. Climate change is the biggest threat to the safety, security and wellbeing of marginalised people around the world. As the Greens spokesperson for health and education, I am proud that climate action and environmental sustainability are woven throughout our policies and all our approaches to public services. Our policy of implementing a health-based response to climate change is something I look forward to advocating more for, in this place.

Over the next few decades, climate change will emerge as the biggest threat to our health and our public health systems. It impacts health in a variety of ways, such as exposing people to increased temperatures, heatwaves and smoke from bushfires, and increasing the spread of disease. It is important that the ACT has a strategic health-based response to climate change, as well as a plan for the health sector to reduce its own contribution to climate change and reach net zero emissions.

Recently, the ACT Health Care Consumers Association made a submission to the ACT government advocating for a health-based response to climate change in the budget consultation. Their submission said:

HCCA recognises the overwhelming evidence that climate change will have adverse impacts on human health, and these effects are projected to worsen if action is not taken. There are significant environmental and financial costs of health care that need to be addressed. The health care sector is a significant contributor to greenhouse gas emissions, waste products and natural resource consumption. This threatens our present and future health.

Looking at the intersections of climate change and other areas of significant public policy is one of the next significant areas that the ACT government can lead on.

I am proud to be a member of a political party which, even when it is not popular, will always fight back against challenges to our climate and our environment. More than just agreeing to targets, agreements or strategies, we have historically in this place had the courage to have the difficult conversations with the community about what change in our community, our society and our economy will mean to protect us against climate change.

The Canberra Liberals have recently had a passionate about-face on a range of climate change policies, without the courage to have a difficult conversation with the Canberra community about the things that we will need to do to get there—like ending our reliance on gas and transitioning away from what is yet another dirty fossil fuel.

We have seen advocacy from Greens in this place laughed at when we have spoken about the need for car-free days or car-free areas in our city. We have seen the accusation that that would ruin the Australian way of life or the Canberra way of life.

It is an important challenge in this policy area for everybody in this place to make sure that, if they are going to go blah, blah, blah, they can properly articulate and challenge the steps we need to take to get to a net zero economy and a net zero society. You actually have to articulate the b, c, d and e as we step through that.

I look forward to more conversations in this place where all three political parties are prepared to authentically and honestly articulate their full vision for a city that continues to tackle the climate crisis, and all the different policy areas they will need to reflect on, and perhaps reform, if they are to be taken seriously in the debate.

MS DAVIDSON (Murrumbidgee—Assistant Minister for Seniors, Veterans, Families and Community Services, Minister for Disability, Minister for Justice Health and Minister for Mental Health) (5.35): Madam Speaker, let me begin speaking in support of Ms Clay's motion by thanking her for bringing to this place today the most important issue facing our planet.

Climate change will bring more natural disasters, such as bushfires, heatwaves, drought and summer storms. It will also disrupt economic activity and displace

populations in areas that become unlivable. The effects of climate change are already here, but they are not evenly distributed. There are people in our community who experience greater health risks during heatwaves and bushfires, including children under five, people over 65 years, and people with underlying health conditions or disability.

There are also people in our community who are disproportionately affected by the economic disruption that comes with climate change or have less financial resilience to recover from disaster or mitigate risks in advance. This includes many women, older people, unpaid carers, people with disability, and people in low income households.

There are greater concentrations of low income households, older people and children under 5 in parts of Canberra that experience heat island effects. When you are paying higher rent or mortgage costs and have insecure work because of zero hour contracts in low paid industries like retail and hospitality, and when you are experiencing greater levels of domestic and family violence, it is really hard to invest in home energy efficiency or a zero-emissions vehicle.

This is why we are working so hard to increase canopy cover, with a focus on areas that most need more trees, providing support for low income households to make their homes more energy efficient, and investing in an active travel and public transport network throughout our city.

We are making the changes needed to reduce carbon emissions, and we are doing so while also supporting the people who need to transition to new careers and new ways of living.

Climate change and social justice are interconnected issues. We cannot possibly address the climate crisis and the work needed to reduce our carbon emissions and water use in the ACT without also considering how we support and empower Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, low income households, older people, young people and people with disability to be part of the solution.

Research shows that children, older people, people with disability and women want to be involved in preparing for and reducing the risk of natural disasters such as bushfire. Older people often have a lifetime of experience in dealing with all kinds of adverse conditions, from which we can all learn. Children who are actively involved in disaster preparation have more resilience and better mental health in recovery afterwards. We have seen Canberrans of all ages demanding climate change action at school strikes and protests across our city.

We know that people with disability want to be involved in reducing carbon emissions. The lived experience of disability means that many people with disability have skills in adaptability and resilience that add a different perspective and fresh ideas to conversations about how we can implement change.

We are facing an existential crisis. As harsh as the reality of our situation is, we cannot turn away from it. The only way we will get through this is together. That

means that climate change action must be inclusive of everyone in our community and leave nobody behind. When it comes to climate change, we must act, and we must act now. Do or do not. There is no “try”.

MR STEEL (Murrumbidgee—Minister for Skills, Minister for Transport and City Services and Special Minister of State) (5.38): I incorporate my speech in *Hansard*, in the interests of time.

The document read as follows—

Thank you Madam Speaker, I rise to lend my support to Ms Clay’s motion and particularly the elements which relate to zero emissions transport.

The ACT is leading the country in taking a responsible approach to managing climate change and our environment. We are proudly powered by 100% renewable electricity, cutting out a major source of greenhouse gas emissions that other jurisdictions are still working to reduce.

This has made the next task very clear. We need to tackle the next largest source of emissions, transport head on. Transport currently makes up over 60 per cent of the ACT’s net emissions, and 18% nationally, including emissions from private vehicles, public transport and other vehicles in our fleet like rideshare, taxis and municipal vehicles.

One of the important steps we are taking towards this goal is implementing the Zero-Emission Transition Plan for Transport Canberra. This outlines the pathway to achieve the ACT Government’s ambition of a zero-emission public transport system by 2040.

This has started with the introduction of light rail to Canberra, which has seen 20 per cent of all public transport trips now powered by 100 per cent renewable electricity. But we also need to tackle the emissions produced by buses currently powered by fossil fuels. Through the Plan, the ACT Government is transitioning our city’s bus fleet to zero-emissions, including addressing the infrastructure, investment and skills needed to make the transition operationally successful.

This Plan will see the Government replace ageing diesel and CNG buses with battery electric buses powered with the ACT’s 100 per cent renewable electricity. This will be timed with plans for new bus depots with electric charging infrastructure to support the growing fleet of zero-emissions buses. We have been in the market through this year undertaking procurement of the first tranche of leased electric buses which will hit Canberra’s streets from 2022. We are also well advanced with procurement on a larger tranche of 90 electric buses which will be progressively introduced to the network over the next three years.

The Zero-Emission Transition Plan for Transport Canberra also takes into account the wider commitments and objectives of the ACT Government for public transport. It isn’t enough to reduce emissions from our bus fleet. Key to addressing climate change is working to expand and improve our public transport network to encourage more Canberrans to use it, to move people efficiently around our city, and make it a better place to live. That’s why we are focused on delivering Stage 2 of light rail to Woden, and continuing to improve public transport services so that in the new year we can not only return patronage to its pre-COVID levels, but keep on growing it.

Together with the actions the Chief Minister and Minister Rattenbury have highlighted today being delivered across government, the ACT's transport transition plans will play a central role in reducing harmful emissions and transitioning this city to a net zero emissions future.

But as Ms Clay's motion rightly points out, the policy levers that will make a difference here aren't all within the ACT's control. In transport, our national policy settings governing vehicle emissions are also a key piece of the puzzle.

Commonwealth Government policy currently only requires vehicles imported into Australia to meet Euro 5 or equivalent standard for noxious emissions and most importantly Australia has no specific standards on CO2 emissions. This is despite more stringent Euro 6 (or equivalent) emissions and CO2 standards having been adopted in the US, Canada, the EU, United Kingdom, Japan, China, Korea and India. These countries account for over 80 per cent of global new vehicle sales, and supply the majority of passenger vehicles sold in Australia.

A Regulatory Impact Statement prepared last year by the Commonwealth Department of Infrastructure has highlighted that introducing the Euro 6 standard in Australia would deliver benefits of \$6.4 billion in avoided health costs across a 23-year period. It would also help to significantly reduce Australia's total harmful emissions from transport over time and expand the range of vehicles available for consumers to choose from.

Australian consumers had access to 31 electric vehicle models in 2020, while consumers in the UK had access to 130 electric vehicle models. Feedback from peak bodies such as the Federal Chamber of Automotive Industries indicates that the lack of more stringent emissions standards in Australia is a key driver of decision-making by vehicle manufacturers about whether to import affordable, modern vehicle models here. There is strong evidence that other markets are being prioritised.

Until these standards change, Australia will experience higher vehicle operating costs, poorer health outcomes and private vehicle transport will continue to drive our emissions up.

Requiring all new vehicles sold in Australia to meet Euro 6 emissions standards and an appropriate equivalent CO2 standard is a tangible, practical action the Commonwealth Government could take right now, to significantly reduce Australia's emissions from transport and deliver cleaner air across Australia's cities. We had hoped that the Prime Minister might have made it part of his package to present to the COP26 summit in Glasgow, given it is such low-hanging fruit for reform.

To date the Federal Government has refused to implement new vehicle standards saying this is about choice.

The Federal Government's refusal to introduce new vehicle emissions standards is severely limiting consumer choice to be able to buy affordable emissions vehicles. Manufacturers simply won't bring their latest technology here.

Paying more to drive a limited range of outdated models that pollute our air is no choice at all for Australian motorists.

If the Federal government does not move on this as part of its platform for the next federal election, I have been working with state and territory colleagues to explore how we may be able to deliver an equivalent policy framework through coordination between jurisdictions. This is obviously not an ideal solution. But we aren't going to stand by and let the Commonwealth's inaction on vehicle standards put a handbrake on the supply of cleaner vehicles into Australia or the availability of more affordable models that make these accessible to everyone—a real choice madam speaker.

So I very much hope to see a genuine, ambitious and detailed national zero emissions transport policy from the Commonwealth Government soon. The ACT stands ready to work in partnership with our federal colleagues and other jurisdictions to put this into action. We've put our plans on the table; it's time this federal government did likewise.

MR RATTENBURY (Kurrajong—Attorney-General, Minister for Consumer Affairs, Minister for Gaming and Minister for Water, Energy and Emissions Reduction) (5.38): I rise today also to support Ms Clay's motion. With COP26 underway in Glasgow, this motion is a timely reminder of the global significance of our local action and the importance of national leadership in keeping global warming to well below two degrees, as committed to in the Paris agreement.

This year the conversation at the UN climate summit has, thankfully, for the first time, directly tackled the need to phase out coal, oil and gas if we are to achieve net zero emissions. The UK government has led a call to phase out coal-fired power, with more than 40 countries signing up to this commitment to phase out coal by 2030 for larger economies and 2040 for smaller economies.

We can be proud that the ACT government signed up to this agreement and continues to be a member of the Powering Past Coal Alliance. We can be proud that we have committed to phasing out fossil fuel gas, starting with banning gas connections in new greenfield suburbs from 2022, then stopping gas connections in new infill developments from 2023. With a 100 per cent renewable electricity supply, this just makes sense. We can power our city with zero emission electricity rather than continuing to burn fossil fuel gas.

We can be proud that we are a leader in promoting zero emission vehicles, that our government passenger vehicle fleet is now around 30 per cent zero emission vehicles, and that the number of these vehicles on ACT roads is increasing as a result of our policies. We can be proud that we have reduced emissions by over 40 per cent from 1990 and that we have legislated targets for 2025, 2030, 2040 and 2045, and plans to get there. These targets reflect what is needed to keep global warming to well below two degrees. We can be proud that our climate policies are based on the latest science, and that we are doing our part to secure a safe and just future for people and the planet.

What we have achieved here in the ACT, I believe, has inspired others to act and provides a useful demonstration of what is possible. We have made significant progress, but we could have achieved even more if there were supportive national policies in place to provide certainty and clear signals to the market. That is why it is highly relevant to discuss national policies in this Assembly as well.

The only time Australia's emissions have significantly fallen in recent decades at a national level was when Australia had a price on carbon. National policies are critical for a consistent approach, and this example amply demonstrates that. While the world moves on to finding smart solutions for a zero emissions future, our federal government continue to pursue their misguided notion that fossil fuels will remain a viable energy source long into the future. This is not only wildly irresponsible climate vandalism; it is also a high-risk approach in an economic sense, leaving our emissions-intense industries exposed in a carbon-constrained global economy. It is clear that we need to end all new coal and gas exploration and extraction. It is clear that we need to rapidly phase out the use of coal and gas, and to find new zero emission ways of manufacturing, so that we can be competitive globally.

Continuing to invest taxpayer funds in subsidising fossil fuel projects is not acceptable. Pretending that we can continue with business as usual and somehow, through seemingly magical technological advances, achieve net zero emissions is not acceptable. Relying on unproven technologies like carbon capture and storage to have any hope of cutting emissions is not acceptable, and it is selling out future generations. We need urgent action on a scale that reflects the urgency of our situation. National governments cannot keep talking about the climate crisis while continuing to pump greenhouse gas emissions into the atmosphere.

Thankfully, many global leaders are starting to realise what needs to happen and are beginning to take action to phase out fossil fuels. I hope that our federal government will also realise that ignoring the problem is no longer an option, that the climate crisis demands true leadership, and that protecting the interests of the fossil fuel industry over the safety and health of people is not okay.

As the motion seeks, I will be writing to the federal emissions reduction minister to call on the government to commit to ending coal and gas extraction, set targets consistent with meeting the goals of the Paris agreement, and implement a range of measures that are necessary aspects of responsible national climate policy.

I will, of course, also write to the Leader of the Australian Greens with these requests. I am proud to say that these commitments have already been made by the Australian Greens, because we are a party that understands the climate crisis and have long been committed to taking action to deliver a just transition and a safe zero emissions future.

The motion also invites Mr Barr and Ms Lee to write to their federal party leaders, urging them to adopt policies and reflect these commitments. This is important because, as I have mentioned, we need strong national policies for an effective and just transition to net zero emissions. Instead we see the federal Labor Party continue to support gas, including backing massive gas extraction in the Beetaloo Basin, and the federal Liberal Party continues to promote the use of fossil fuels. These policy positions are out of touch with reality. They need to get with the times if Australia is to keep up with the pace of global decarbonisation.

I thank Ms Clay for this motion. It does challenge us all to reflect on what we can each do to make a better future for the generations set to come after us. In the ACT we

have made significant inroads, but we cannot rest on our laurels. Every day that I come to work, with the portfolio responsibilities I have, I am thinking about what I can do today to keep us moving forward to continue to reduce our emissions.

As we reflect on the meeting in Glasgow, those challenges become ever clearer to us. There are new ideas coming from Glasgow. There is new pressure. There are new commitments. I have some optimism that we are starting to turn the corner, but there is much work left to be done, and all of us need to play our part in that.

MR BRADDOCK (Yerrabi) (5.44): There is an interesting psychology of anxiety, when the more you are exposed to something that causes that anxiety, the less anxious you actually feel about it. This is a really tricky thing because this is a climate emergency. It is tricky because the more we say it—this is a climate emergency—the more we get desensitised to it. We become used to the words. But the planet does not care about that.

We now have a situation where delay is the new denial. People pretend to be wise and throw up reasons why we cannot slash emissions as fast as the science is telling us we need to. People try to throw up questions, trying to delay in any way possible us doing what we need to do.

It is incredibly frustrating to hear so many people in positions of influence and power say that this is a great threat, but their actions do not match their words. I challenge everyone here: do your actions match your words? There is not the appropriate level of panic that we need to be able to address this situation. This is not a threat that we can saunter vaguely towards. We need to be doing everything we can to reduce our emissions, because delay is the new denial.

This frustration is growing in our young people, who are having to strike to draw attention to the issue. This was magnified when we lived through the Black Summer and lived through the reality of a warmer climate. It is much harder to be desensitised to climate change when you are literally choking on inescapable smoke.

I have two family members who are particularly sensitive to smoke. They have asthma. We live in Gungahlin, partly because when we lived in Belconnen it got too bad for my wife's asthma during the winter, due to wood fires. We did not want to have to go to hospital six times a year just because someone wanted to use a wood fire. How will my family and I go in the future if there are more fires and more smoke?

We have to get off fossil fuels. We have to do it now. We cannot keep going with business as usual. Delay is the new denial, and we need to do this now.

MS CLAY (Ginninderra) (5.47), in reply: I am really pleased about this debate today. I am tired. I do not want to fight about climate change anymore; I want to fight climate change, and I am so pleased to hear that this tripartisan motion is not opposed. This is a motion that calls on tripartisan leadership at the federal level to match the action and the leadership we are seeing at every other level in Australia. It reflects the yearning that everybody is feeling all around Australia. We need to come together on this. I feel that yearning to come together too. That is why I took this motion to

Mrs Jones, Ms Lee and Ms Castley before bringing it on today. We have to get together and work together on this and we need our federal leaders to do the same. They are not doing it.

I am a practical environmentalist. That is why, before I came into this job, I set up and ran a recycling company. I was worried about waste, so I set up a solution. I got a patent for a new method and we fixed that problem. I am pleased to say that we have managed to sell that company; somebody else is now running it. Practical solutions are important. It is also why I set up and ran a climate change project. I put myself and my at-the-time-reluctant family through a massive experiment, as guinea pigs, to completely transform our lives to see whether we could slash our emissions to the amount you would need to, to have a safe and stable climate. And we did it. It was really fun and it worked. I believe in practical environmental solutions, particularly for climate change. That is why I am so pleased to be part of this government and part of this chamber that is taking so many practical steps.

Today we have seen Minister Vassarotti, the environment minister, table two pretty astonishing climate change reports. She tabled a report about our air quality, which sets out in very frightening detail exactly what happened in 2019, including the 31 deaths that occurred and the extent of the smoke apocalypse that happened, and gives us a pathway forward. She also tabled another report, which I think went down without as much comment as it should have had, about scope 3 emissions. This is the first time that any jurisdiction in Australia—state, territory, federal—has tackled scope 3 emissions. We are going to start measuring those and we are going to do something about them. It is a really practical step and it has just taken us strides forward.

Minister Rattenbury also tabled today an update on our EV policy. Again, there was another practical, brand new announcement in there that I have never heard publicised before. Apparently, we are now looking at electric garbage trucks under our next contract. That is fantastic. I am so pleased to hear it. There were so many updates in there.

We have seen an awful lot of updates from Minister Steel on our transport sector about the ongoing electrification and the need for active and public transport. There are so many practical steps in that transport strategy. It is all pinned on climate change. It is really good news, because transport is difficult. It requires behaviour change and it requires people to make different choices than maybe they are making at the moment. It is really good to see that pinned in.

I am pleased to see that our climate strategy has over 100 actions in it. I was very pleased to hear Minister Barr's update on our energy and exactly where we are going. It is really good. I am so proud of all the practical steps we have taken in the ACT: electrification of our transport; steps to deal with our urban heat island effect and to shape our city to make sure that we have a livable city as our climate adapts; a 10-year pathway to make sure our buildings are sustainable and are built sustainably; a pathway to get off gas; and a pathway towards EVs. A lot of these are brand new policies that were not around at all a year or two ago. And now we have got them on the ground and are rolling them out as fast as we can. It is really good to see.

We just need leadership at the national level that parallels that. Minister Rattenbury has explained some of the national problems we are dealing with. We cannot deal with decarbonising the entire economy on our own. We cannot remove the levies that are imposed on electric vehicles that come into our country. We cannot make decisions about fossil fuel exploration and extraction and export interstate. It is beyond our borders. We need our national leaders to do that. That is why we are calling for tripartisan support from those national leaders. We are asking them to come together and deal with climate change together.

I am a big believer that past behaviour is the best guide to future conduct. I am pleased to see a lot of the past behaviour that we have had for the last 10 years on climate change. Just today we have seen three brand new climate announcements that I have never heard of, at least one of which, and possibly more, is Australia-leading. I am pleased to see that we have so many detailed strategies that have so many detailed actions in them. I would encourage anybody who has not had a look at those to have a close look and maybe get their head around them.

I have been following our divestment really closely. We keep asking questions about our divestment from fossil fuel. Every time I ask a question, we have got less in there. We are down to less than one per cent and we are on track to have none soon. Change is happening very quickly. Of course, it does not happen overnight. It does not happen the first day that you ask, but the change is happening very fast. It is important to keep an eye on what is happening, to keep asking the right questions, to keep getting the right details and to monitor what is having an effect.

A number of us went to a very sobering climate presentation yesterday, where Professor Mark Howden was telling us about our national emissions. It is not great news. It is also not great news on global emissions. A very interesting thing is happening with a lot of the climate change scientists and academics at the moment. They are all absolutely apolitical and they stay so far out of the political sphere—and I think they are right to do it—but they are starting to come together and identify those areas of government and politics where they think real climate action is working, because they know they cannot stay quiet anymore.

Mark Howden told us that the ACT government's trajectory, our climate actions, our past behaviour, the detailed actions that we have set out and the targets that we have committed to, which we are achieving, are on track with the Paris agreement. They are on track to keep our climate safe and stable. If everyone in the world was taking action the way we are taking action, we would have less than 1½ degrees warming. That is obviously not happening right now in this country and it is not happening right now everywhere in the world, but I was really happy to hear it. It is a climate strategy that has been put together with a lot of care, evidence and commitment, and it is a climate strategy that is working.

I am pleased that we have had this opportunity to take all of these firm actions and all of these practical environmental steps up to the next level, to our national leaders, and to perhaps show them that it is not that difficult but it is that important. We need tripartisan agreement at that level from every single party and every single

decision-maker if we are going to have a chance at turning this around. I commend my motion to the Assembly.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

COVID-19 pandemic—racism

MRS JONES (Murrumbidgee) (5.55): I move:

That this Assembly:

(1) notes that:

- (a) since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, racism amongst a small minority of Canberrans has surfaced and been directed towards those of culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds;
- (b) this intolerance has resulted in what appears to be an increase in verbal racial attacks and threats of actual physical attacks;
- (c) when it occurs, this kind of abuse is damaging to both the individual being targeted and their entire community;
- (d) the vast majority of Canberrans are respectful to all people and abhor such behaviour;
- (e) when such incidents occur in the workplace, industrial laws and policies provide a mechanism for redress to affected individuals;
- (f) whilst illegal, when such incidents occur in the public domain, affected individuals have greater difficulty in recording their experiences and seeking redress;
- (g) victims can experience barriers in accessing the existing complaints processes of the Human Rights Commission, and ACT Policing must prioritise its resources, which together contribute to the difficulty in obtaining a full picture of the prevalence and circumstances of such incidents; and
- (h) Australia has not had a national anti-racism strategy since 2018, and that a national anti-racism framework was proposed by the Race Discrimination Commissioner in March 2021 and publicly welcomed by the ACT Government;

(2) refers this matter to the Standing Committee on Education and Community Inclusion for an inquiry to investigate the prevalence of and, mechanisms for, reporting incidents of vilification and threats of physical violence on persons in the Territory on the basis of their race, linguistic diversity, ethnic origin, religion or status as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander people;

(3) requests the Committee in conducting its inquiry to have regard to the:

- (a) social and legal context in which vilification based on race, linguistic diversity, ethnic origin, religion or status as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander people occurs;
- (b) effectiveness of existing reporting mechanisms, both for the purpose of redress in relation to individual incidents and for statistical monitoring of the prevalence of vilification based on race, linguistic diversity, ethnic

- origin, religion or status as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander people in the ACT community generally;
- (c) adequacy of the existing legal frameworks applying to vilification based on race, linguistic diversity, ethnic origin, religion or status as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander people in the ACT, including any gaps in their coverage, and evidence-based ways to reduce the incidence of racially based vilification;
 - (d) adequacy and accessibility of existing processes and practices of relevant organisations to address vilification based on race, linguistic diversity, ethnic origin, religion or status as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander people;
 - (e) value of establishing, and possible content of, an anti-racism strategy for the ACT; and
 - (f) any other matter the Committee considers relevant; and
- (4) requests the Committee to:
- (a) encourage participation by affected individuals and groups by providing interpreter services, inviting confidential submissions, taking evidence in camera, holding documents in confidence where it considers it appropriate to do so, and otherwise making the hearings family-friendly and held virtually where appropriate;
 - (b) consider whether to publish a discussion paper by 31 March 2022 and whether to provide an interim report before 1 July 2022; and
 - (c) report back to the Assembly by 30 September 2022.

Australia is a dynamic and diverse multicultural society. Whilst our immigration history has not been without fault, we now have a non-discriminatory immigration system and welcome people of all cultures and ethnicities. While there is a long way to go, we are working as hard as we can to address the systemic disadvantage faced also by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

Being the daughter of an Italian migrant, I am part of Australia's multicultural story. Canberra has benefited immensely from its diversity. At the 2016 census, the Canberra community included people from over 170 countries or regions other than Australia. Being the national capital, we are an international city that celebrates different cultures. Our Multicultural Festival has grown to be a highlight of this city's annual calendar and I hope we will see it again next year.

COVID-19 and the associated lockdowns have placed Canberrans under huge pressure—financial pressures; children learning from home, locked inside for days. This has unfortunately led to an apparent rise in the number of verbal attacks and threats of violence on people in the Canberra community on the basis of their ethnic origin or cultural origin, religion or language.

Let us be clear: COVID-19 can affect anyone and is not transmitted in our community by persons of any specific race, ethnicity, religion or culture. Because I am the shadow minister for multicultural affairs but also because I am an MLA and a member of the Canberra community who cares about this issue, I have been

approached by a number of people over the last two years who have told me about verbal racial attacks on them or people in their communities, and that those attacks increased during this time.

I have lived in Australia all my life. My mother experienced a level of racial discrimination and abuse, but even from her I never heard these stories—that is why I am so worried about it—people being abused in multi-unit complexes who cannot get away from their abusers, because they are locked in because of the COVID-19 lockdown at the time; rocks thrown at people’s windows; taxis driving past people because of their colour, perhaps; women in hijab being verbally abused; business owners of Chinese origin being targeted; and Indian Canberrans being called “curry dogs” and “effing Indians”.

While we differ on many things in this place, I am sure that all of my fellow MLAs here will have heard of similar experiences and some of us may have been subjected to them ourselves. I meet regularly with representatives of the various multicultural communities. They are not homogenous; they are very different people with very different views and beliefs. One thing that has struck me about each of these communities is how they wish to support each other. Each of these communities have had similar experiences and are keen to see a reduction in racism, regardless of where it is directed.

In my meetings some have said to me, “We have been trying to get this sorted for years, to find a place to report and for those reports to be taken very seriously.” In one recent meeting I asked community leaders why such attacks cause so much hurt, and the answer I received really struck me. It was that “an attack on one member of our community is an attack on our whole community”.

One issue that has arisen is the lack of effective reporting mechanisms in the ACT for racist attacks. I have become concerned that there is a gap between what individuals and communities are experiencing and what is officially recorded as having occurred. Such attacks are illegal, and ACT police are able to receive these reports, but it seems that they do not have adequate resources to respond in many instances. The Human Rights Commission is also able to receive reports, but it requires complainants to go through a complaints process.

While the Human Rights Commission does what it can to make sure that the complaints process is accessible to all Canberrans, regardless of their language skills, not all instances are being reported. This process is not easy for people for whom English is a second language and it is not well-known by this group of people. The simple fact is that I have been meeting with multicultural groups about this issue now for several weeks and not a single one of them knew how to report to the Human Rights Commission. This is evidence enough that the reporting mechanisms are not working. Those who actually need this service do not know that it is there or how to access it.

In proposing this motion, I am hoping for a range of outcomes. Firstly, I want to get an understanding of the prevalence of such attacks in our community—quantified, if possible. I believe that the Human Rights Commission and ACT Policing will be able

to assist the inquiry in this regard. But I would also like to hear from people experiencing such attacks, and hear whether or not they have reported them when they occur. Without data we just cannot know how much of a problem this is and how much work we have to do.

Secondly, I want to know the context in which such attacks occur. Canberra is famously the public service town. The public services, both ACT and commonwealth, have strong workplace frameworks which discourage such behaviour and, when it does occur, allow opportunities for complaints. Do people get called names on the street, in car parks or at the petrol station? Some of the worst verbal attacks I have come under, especially when I had a sign on the car, have been at the petrol station where everybody meets. Do people say things at community events and sporting events that they would not say at work? Do our high-density housing complexes pose a particular problem? Do life pressures—financial, relationships, the COVID crisis—mean that some people seek out a scapegoat? Do people think that this actually is not a problem and is not occurring?

Thirdly, I would like the inquiry to provide a forum for people to share their experiences. This will be assisted by encouraging the inquiry to hold some hearings in camera—that is, in private, for people not so familiar with the language of this place—and encourage people to make confidential submissions. People fear rejection or they fear further targeting. I would also encourage submissions from people who are not themselves victims but who have observed it occurring to others, bystanders. Maybe we can find out what the appropriate response is for a bystander.

During last year's election campaign somebody told me that the Canberra Liberals will never get elected while we have a towelhead on our team. Seriously. Honestly, I was so shocked by the statement that I had no idea what to say; it was so far removed from my experience of the person they were referring to. I did not even know it was a term that existed, which is a good thing in a way. But how do you respond appropriately to something like that? "He is a good bloke. You really should get to know him"? I do not think there was any interest from that person in getting to know him.

Fourthly, I want, effectively, a stocktake of the existing laws that prevent such behaviour. You will note that this motion refers to racism based on people's race, linguistic diversity, ethnic origin, religion or status as an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander person. What might be captured under the catch-all of racism can be vilification and discrimination based on how people identify, their religion, whether or not they speak English, and their racial or ethnic background. I am concerned that potentially people who are abused need to, before working out which legal framework applies to them, decide the basis upon which they were abused, which can be difficult.

Finally, I would like the inquiry to look at the current reporting mechanisms. Let me be clear: the Human Rights Commission and ACT Policing do take complaints and try to do good work in this area. But if we do not examine our systems, we will not know what is working well and what is not.

I note that the inquiry will be able to explore other matters that the committee considers relevant. I ask the committee to conduct the inquiry in a way that allows the greatest community engagement possible. I have suggested that a discussion paper be prepared by 31 March 2022. I hope that such a paper would support people making a submission to frame their experiences and to prompt them to consider a wider range of issues. I have also encouraged the committee to provide an interim report. This could provide an opportunity to show the experiences of people who have experienced or observed racism and inform final recommendations. I have asked the inquiry to report back by 30 September 2022. This is a long reporting date. But I think the issues that will be disclosed require the committee to dedicate this substantial time to the inquiry, if possible.

I thank Labor and the Greens here for their engagement with me on this referral and for indicating their support for it. I have amended the motion on the notice paper to reflect some of the feedback received from Labor and the Greens. This will be an important inquiry. At this stage, there is no evidence base, other than the reports to me personally, and there are no pre-determined outcomes. I hope that this inquiry's report, however, guides how this territory deals with and addresses racism in our community for decades to come.

Once again, I note the wonderful diversity we have in Canberra and the contribution of all our multicultural communities in our city, and also the very kind and good nature of the vast majority of Canberrans, many of whom go well out of their way to make others feel welcome. Even if you do not identify as being from a specific racial, linguistic, ethnic or religious community or identify as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander, I would encourage you to participate in this important inquiry.

MR BRADDOCK (Yerrabi) (6.07): The ACT Greens support this motion. I would like to sincerely thank Mrs Jones, as well as Minister Cheyne and all of her staff, for the collegial negotiations that brought tripartisan support for this motion.

Canberra's diverse community is a testament to the thriving multiculturalism here. However, the pandemic saw further emergence of targeted racist threats and acts of micro-aggression towards culturally and linguistically diverse communities. These attacks are not acceptable. People who engage in this type of behaviour do not and cannot represent us. Right wing extremism is a threat not only to our national security but also to community cohesion.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, CALD communities, the migrant community and women, in particular, already face existing barriers such as discrimination, limited access to social networks and leadership opportunities, employment anxieties and inequality. The list is extensive. Interpersonal acts of racism not only cause great hurt and distress but exacerbate these markers of social exclusion.

While the ACT is a wonderfully inclusive and multicultural community, it is a sad reality that racial and religious vilification and hatred still exist. We as a community should not and do not accept intolerance. Many will not consider themselves racist,

yet many in our community experience racism. That is why we must understand the systemic, structural and subtle ways that racism is perpetuated in our community.

As elected representatives, it is our responsibility to ensure that there are not only appropriate measures under the law to protect people against damaging vilification, but appropriate mechanisms to report and respond to incidents when they occur. Reporting should be independent, safe, easy and non-invasive, with easily accessible accommodations for language and ability. Responses should be timely, empathetic and effective.

The Greens have already taken an active role in strengthening our laws against hate speech, with Minister Rattenbury in 2016 introducing new laws to provide important protections for people who are subjected to religious vilification. These laws also received tripartisan support. Investigating any barriers to implementing these laws is welcome.

My office has been lucky enough to have an exceptional ANU intern working on a project over the last couple of months, Ms Erica Smythe. Erica has written a report on increasing civic participation in multicultural communities and contributed to writing this speech. She writes from a position of lived expertise, having an Indonesian background and attending school in Bendigo.

This is particularly pertinent as extreme incidents of racism were seen in Bendigo during the rally against a mosque, which shows how racism holds the potential to intensify if it is not prevented. Subsequently, the Bendigo City Council's strategic approach to combat the issue reveals how communities can resist and reduce these sentiments by collaborating with their local networks and agencies. This emphasises how Canberra needs to uproot discrimination by creating preventive strategies to stop it growing.

One of Erica's keystone recommendations was for the ACT to have an anti-racism strategy. In its recent call for a national anti-racism strategy, the Australian Human Rights Commission made the case that our society needs to move from safe to brave. This means moving beyond simple acts of recognition to a fully-fledged plan to support social cohesion and inclusion at all levels. It also moves beyond the short-term celebration of visible and palatable signs of cultural differences, like music, dancing and food, and asking the hard questions about representation, power and resources.

The absence of an anti-racist strategy in the ACT means there is a lack of a mechanism for accountability. Government has a responsibility to the community to create actionable items to help combat racism. Actions in response to community racism must be taken at a local level. An anti-racism strategy for the ACT will complement the national framework with local strategies. It would show our commitment to ending racism and our intention to protect and promote equity and social inclusion. I thank my colleagues for enabling this important recommendation to be added to the motion.

Noting the extent of the incidence of racial harm, as Mrs Jones's motion allows, is an essential step, but it is only the first one. It must be followed by real, practical and community-led actions to address the root causes. That is why I am pleased to support the inclusion of an inquiry looking for evidence-based ways to help reduce racism.

As the ACT Greens spokesperson for democracy and multicultural affairs, I would like to emphasise the importance of democratic and government engagement. If these processes are not accessible and inclusive of multicultural communities then we have no hope of truly understanding and addressing racism. Solutions must be led and informed by these communities and individuals.

We know that there are barriers for people from culturally and linguistically diverse communities to fully participate in our government processes. We need to address these barriers to enable these communities to share their insights, experiences and backgrounds to inform better decision-making across the ACT.

Again, as the Human Rights Commission has pointed out, experiences of discrimination, racism and social exclusion are clearly linked. Measures to address racism will always be more effective when accompanied by measures to promote social cohesion, inclusion, equal opportunity and participation. These initiatives should ensure that people from culturally diverse backgrounds have full access to legal support, education and information on their rights, delivered in a culturally appropriate way.

Outside this inquiry, active outreach is essential to address racism and to ensure that those most impacted have a seat at the table and are authentically consulted on government and policy development processes.

Multicultural community organisations in Canberra consistently have put in an incredible effort on advocacy and inclusion. But we know that the best outcomes are produced when a local government collaborates with local civil society organisations. We need to further enable access to grants and government supports that help make Australia a strong and diverse community. We need to put our money where our mouth is. Creating a more inclusive grant and budget process is a powerful step to ensuring practical action and empowerment of multicultural communities.

Overall, our community is one that embraces and celebrates cultural, religious and linguistic diversity. But we cannot continue to claim to be a successful multicultural community if incidents of discrimination or racism occur in our neighbourhoods. People should feel safe in public spaces. People should feel that they belong. All Canberrans deserve to be treated with respect and decency. We welcome this inquiry.

MRS KIKKERT (Ginninderra) (6.15): I thank Mrs Jones for bringing this very important motion to the Assembly today.

Nine months ago I stood in this chamber at the request of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander leaders and invited my Labor and Greens colleagues to join them and me in calling for an independent inquiry to investigate and document institutional racism in

the territory's prison. Disappointingly, those opposite rejected that invitation. I am glad that this time they have chosen to support this motion.

When I spoke in February, I raised the distinction between systemic racism and interpersonal racism. The former refers to practices, policies and processes embedded within systems or institutions that maintain and reproduce avoidable and unfair inequalities. In contrast, interpersonal racism includes behaviours such as hostile, derogatory or negative racial slights and insults. This motion addresses the latter—specifically, verbal racial attacks and threats of actual physical attacks.

As I said previously, this kind of behaviour is easy to recognise and reject, which is exactly what the vast majority of Canberrans do. As shadow minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander affairs, I stand today to acknowledge that terrible things are said both to and about Aboriginal Australians. Let me be very clear: it is completely wrong, it should never happen and it should never be allowed to happen.

What exactly is the extent of this problem in the ACT? How often does it occur? What damage does it cause? Those questions are at the heart of this motion, yet at this point we have no satisfactory answers.

As an example, one of my staff recently entered the Canberra Centre late one evening and witnessed two men engaged in a vicious and relentless racial attack on a security guard. The perpetrators fled when they thought they were being filmed. When my staff spoke to the victim, the guard's response, sadly, was that such verbal attacks happen all the time but that he has learnt to just ignore them.

I know about this disturbing incident only because it was reported to me; otherwise none of us in this Assembly would have any idea that this attack occurred, because it was not formally reported in any way. Clearly, we need to make it easier and more expected that people will report incidents of racism, whether as victims or witnesses. This gap is directly acknowledged in the proposed new national anti-racism framework that was released in March this year, and which the Secretary to the Attorney-General's Department said has the full support of the Liberal-Nationals government.

I support referring this matter for inquiry by a committee, to consider the prevalence of racist attacks and threats, their context, the adequacy of existing processes, and the effectiveness of existing reporting mechanisms, and to make recommendations about how all of these can be improved.

Likewise I fully support the motion's focus on encouraging participation in the inquiry by making the experience as culturally safe and welcoming as possible. In particular, I hope that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Canberrans will take advantage of this opportunity to speak with complete openness about their own personal experiences with racism in the territory. I will be doing everything I can to encourage that participation. It is essential that we know what is happening so that we can take the steps necessary to address it. I commend this motion to the Assembly.

MS CHEYNE (Ginninderra—Assistant Minister for Economic Development, Minister for the Arts, Minister for Business and Better Regulation, Minister for Human Rights and Minister for Multicultural Affairs) (6.19): ACT Labor will be supporting this motion today, and I thank Mrs Jones for bringing it forward and the engagement that has been incredibly constructive between her office, Mr Braddock's office and mine. The ACT is a welcoming, diverse and inclusive society. Racism has no place in Canberra. We are a proud multicultural community, and there must be zero tolerance of any form of racist behaviour.

While the ACT has a strong legislative framework to address racial discrimination and vilifications, I do welcome the opportunity to hear from the community about the gaps, accessibility and adequacy of the system, including redress options as well as, importantly, the root causes. A committee inquiry doing a deep dive will be valuable.

It is important to flag that one of the biggest challenges, unfortunately, of racism that occurs in the public domain, or casual racism, is that it can be fleeting, it can be from strangers, and it can be over in an instant. This does not make it any less devastating, but it does mean it can be difficult to prove. It is also worth noting that some people may not wish to relive an incident, whether easy to prove or not, and so choose not to report it, rather than there necessarily being a barrier to reporting. Then there is racial prejudice, something which is even more insidious, and even unconscious, but can limit the ability of some in our community to participate or engage in society equally.

So it is important that we not only look to how reporting and redress systems work, and how we can support people to access those, but also how we can address the root or systemic causes of racism and racial prejudice in the ACT. I am glad and appreciate that the motion reflects this, because, as all the other speakers have flagged, what it comes down to—and I think we do all agree in this place—is that we do not want these incidents to occur in the first place, at all. There should never be a place for it.

We do have work underway in the ACT to address this, including: our Welcoming Cities work, the reforms of the Discrimination Act and the development of the multicultural recognition act, as well as our engagement with the proposed national anti-racism framework, which we publicly welcomed earlier this year. I would love to talk about these and the opportunities this inquiry presents but, in the interests of time, I will leave it there but look forward to engaging thoroughly and comprehensively, with my two portfolio hats, with the committee through this inquiry. I know that the Human Rights Commission stands ready to do so too.

MRS JONES (Murrumbidgee) (6.22), in reply: In the interests of time, I thank all the parties for their support. I hope that there will genuinely be new and interesting information come out of the report, and I look forward to seeing a day when people from diverse backgrounds know very easily how to report these incidents, have the support to do so, at the very least, even if they are fleeting and hard to prove, and are able to offload those experiences and make a part of the statistical profile of what goes on in our city.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

Economy and Gender and Economic Equality—Standing Committee Report 3

MS CASTLEY (Yerrabi) (6.23): I present the following report:

Economy and Gender and Economic Equality—Standing Committee—
Report 3—*Appropriation Bill 2021-2022 and Appropriation (Office of the
Legislative Assembly) Bill 2021-2022*, dated 10 November 2021, together with a
copy of the extracts of the relevant minutes of proceedings.

As I do this, I would like to thank all the committee staff and all of the behind-the-scenes staff. This has been quite a compressed time frame and, in my first time being a chair, they have made it so easy for me. I really appreciate all of the support that I have received from the committee staff.

I move:

That the report be noted.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

Education and Community Inclusion—Standing Committee Report 2

MR PETTERSSON (Yerrabi) (6.24): I present the following report:

Education and Community Inclusion—Standing Committee—Report 2—
*Appropriation Bill 2021-2022 and Appropriation (Office of the Legislative
Assembly) Bill 2021-2022*, dated 11 November 2021, together with a copy of the
extracts of the relevant minutes of proceedings.

I move:

That the report be noted.

This is the second report of the Standing Committee on Education and Community Inclusion for the 10th Assembly. Following referral by the Assembly, the committee examined budget statements from the Education Directorate, the Community Services Directorate, and the Chief Minister, Treasury and Economic Development Directorate. The committee held five public hearings and heard from many witnesses, including ministers, directorate officials and representatives of community organisations.

I would like to thank all committee members for their participation. I would like to make a special shoutout to our new committee secretary, Christine, who has done a fantastic job in her first estimates.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

Environment, Climate Change and Biodiversity—Standing Committee Report 2

DR PATERSON (Murrumbidgee) (6.25): I present the following report:

Environment, Climate Change and Biodiversity—Standing Committee—
Report 2—*Appropriation Bill 2021-2022 and Appropriation (Office of the
Legislative Assembly) Bill 2021-2022*, dated 10 November 2021, together with a
copy of the extracts of the relevant minutes of proceedings.

I move:

That the report be noted.

I rise to speak to the report by the Standing Committee on Environment, Climate Change and Biodiversity on its inquiry into the ACT budget. This is the second report of the ECCB committee. This report reflects evidence taken by the committee in relation to the budget and presents findings and recommendations arising from examination.

The committee held four public hearings via video link and at the hearings we heard the views of community organisations on the budget, and we examined ACT government ministers and statutory officers responsible for the relevant portfolio areas, and accompanying officials.

The committee was pleased to hear that community groups welcomed the ACT government funding, including the four-year community grants from this year's budget. We note and support the provision of four-year community grants.

The report makes 26 recommendations on a range of topics, including the use of enforceable undertakings as a regulatory tool for environmental protection, emission reductions, the management of waterways, air quality, behaviour change, and the management of funding grants, including weed funding.

On behalf of the committee, I would like to thank everyone who participated in or otherwise assisted this inquiry. I would particularly like to thank the other participating members of the legislative committee, Mr Braddock, and Ms Castley, and the ECCB committee secretary, Frieda Scott.

I commend the report to the Assembly.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

Public Accounts—Standing Committee Report 2

MRS KIKKERT (Ginninderra) (6.28): I present report 2 of the Standing Committee on Public Accounts entitled *Appropriation Bill 2021-2022 and Appropriation (Office*

of the Legislative Assembly) Bill 2021-2022 together with a copy of the extracts of the relevant minutes of proceedings.

I move:

That the report be noted.

At its meeting on Tuesday, 9 November 2021, the Assembly resolved to amend the due date for standing committees to report on the ACT budget by requiring committees to report by 12 November 2021.

On 6 October 2021, the Appropriation Bill 2021-2022 and the Appropriation (Office of the Legislative Assembly) Bill 2021-2022 were presented in the Assembly. During this inquiry the Standing Committee on Public Accounts was required to examine the expenditure proposals for a number of outputs in the main appropriation bill for the territory as outlined in budget statements A, B and I.

The outputs included those of the Office of the Legislative Assembly; the Auditor-General; the ACT Ombudsman; certain output classes belonging to the Chief Minister, Treasury and Economic Development Directorate; Icon Water Limited; the Independent Competition and Regulatory Commission statement of intent; and an output class under Major Projects Canberra.

A total of 27 questions were lodged during the inquiry. Twenty-three questions were taken on notice by the ministers and statutory office holders during the hearings, and four questions on notice were submitted by committee members and visiting MLAs following the hearings. Answers to questions are available on the committee's webpage. The committee made a total of 21 recommendations.

At 6.30 pm, in accordance with standing order 34, the debate was interrupted. The motion for the adjournment of the Assembly having been put and negatived, the debate was resumed.

MRS KIKKERT: For the 2021-22 ACT budget, the committee selected the Centre for International Economics to provide a specialist budget adviser function. The committee has published a written analysis provided to it by the Centre for International Economics on the inquiry webpage.

On behalf of the committee, I would like to thank everyone who participated or otherwise assisted in this inquiry, including the Centre for International Economics, ACT government ministers, directorate officials, statutory officers, and members of the Legislative Assembly and their staff. The committee extends special thanks to the committee secretary, Samuel Thompson; Hansard, and broadcasting and other committee support staff of the Office of the Legislative Assembly.

I commend the report to the Assembly.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

Planning, Transport and City Services—Standing Committee Statement by chair

MS CLAY (Ginninderra) (6.31): In the interests of time, I seek leave to table my committee statement instead of reading it and to have it reproduced in *Hansard*.

MADAM SPEAKER: You can table it.

MS CLAY: I present the following paper:

Planning, Transport and City Services—Standing Committee—Petitions—Yerrabi Pond, Lawrence Wackett Crescent and Tharwa Drive in Theodore, and the closure of community greenwaste and landscaping supplies at Parkwood Pond—Statement, pursuant to standing order 246A.

The document read as follows—

Pursuant to standing order 246A I wish to make a statement on behalf of the Standing Committee on Planning, Transport and City Services relating to referred petitions.

Petition 5-21 concerning Yerrabi Pond was received by the Assembly on 20 April 2021 and referred to the committee under standing order 99A. As signatories to petition 5-21, 601 residents of the ACT requested the Assembly to support the establishment of “The Friends of Yerrabi Pond”, provide more facilities, improve signage on shared pathways and upgrade areas overgrown by weeds and bushes.

The committee notes that, in his response to the petition, the Minister for Transport and City Services said:

Noting the request for support to establish a Friends of Yerrabi Pond group, TCCS staff have met with petitioners and other community members, to discuss the process for establishing a Friends of Yerrabi Pond group and the roles and responsibilities of volunteers.

The committee also notes that funding was provided to enable implementation of on-ground improvements at Yerrabi Pond. Given the minister’s commitments and the budget allocation, the committee will not be inquiring further into the matters raised in petition 5 21.

Two petitions concerning Lawrence Wackett Crescent and Tharwa Drive in Theodore were received by the Assembly on 22 June 2021 and referred to the committee under standing order 99. As signatories to petition 17-21 and 20-21, 309 residents of the ACT requested the Assembly implement improvements to significantly increase safety at the western intersection of Lawrence Wackett Crescent and Tharwa Drive.

The committee notes that, in his response to the petitions, the Minister for Transport and City Services said:

Transport Canberra and City Services (TCCS) completed a traffic study on the conditions at the intersection which considered current traffic speed, volume, pedestrian data and crashes reported in the last five-year period. Twenty collisions occurred at the intersection over the last five years, this met the criteria set by the Commonwealth Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Communications for consideration within the Black Spot Program of a minimum of three injury collisions within a 5-year period. However, the benefit to cost ratio for improving the intersection was between 1.72-1.79, this did not meet the criteria of Black Spot Program funding that requires a 2 to 1 ratio. The ACT government will consider improvements to the intersection in the context of safety priorities across the ACT.

In light of the minister's commitment, the committee will not be inquiring further into the matters raised in petitions 17-21 and 20-21.

Petition 19-21 concerning the closure of community green waste and Landscape supplies at Parkwood Pond was received by the Assembly on 22 June 2021 and referred to the committee under standing order 99A. As signatories to petition 19-21, 2128 residents of the ACT requested the Assembly keep the community green waste and landscape supplies on Parkwood Road at West Belconnen open.

The committee notes that, in his response to the petition, the Minister for Transport and City Services said:

Ahead of the petition being tabled, the government took action to extend the current service arrangements for current Canberra Sand and Gravel for the site at Parkwood Road. The granted license extension will allow time for the Government to consider interim location options in the vicinity of Parkwood Road and to develop a longer-term solution while ensuring a continuity of green waste services. The ACT Government is undertaking a feasibility study for a new Resource Management Centre in the north of Canberra.

The committee considers the government response to be satisfactory and will therefore not be inquiring further into the matters raised in petition 19-21.

Committee report review—response

Statement by speaker

MADAM SPEAKER (Ms Burch) (6.32): Members, I wish to make a section 246A statement on behalf of the Standing Committee on Administration and Procedure, in relation to the report on the review of the committee undertaken by Dr Rosemary Laing.

Members will recall that on 6 October year I made a section 246A statement on behalf of the Standing Committee on Administration and Procedure. I noted that the Clerk has management responsibility for the office and that the committee had asked the Clerk to consider suggestions put forward by Dr Laing in the review and report back to the committee on how those suggestions might be implemented.

At its last meeting, the committee considered a position paper prepared by the Clerk in which he outlined the approach that he intended to adopt in response to the review. The committee agreed with the approach set out in the Clerk's paper. The committee noted that the Clerk had engaged a suitably qualified consultant to work with relevant staff and to consider recommended options for the organisational structure, having regard to Dr Laing's findings. The committee supported this approach.

The committee expects to see a revised structure from the Clerk early next year, with a view to considering a budget submission for the 2022-23 territory budget. For the information of members, I present the following paper:

Committee support—a starting point for reform—Clerk's position paper.

Planning and Unit Titles Legislation Amendment Bill 2021

Debate resumed from 8 October 2021, on motion by **Mr Gentleman**:

That this bill be agreed to in principle.

MR CAIN (Ginninderra) (6.33): The Canberra Liberals will be supporting the measures in this bill, particularly the streamlining and digitising of government processes. This bill makes minor amendments to three pieces of legislation, and I will step through these quickly.

The proposed amendment in this bill to the Unit Titles Regulation 2001 will streamline the process for endorsement of unit title applications. Applicants will be able to electronically submit a unit title application which can then be assessed electronically by the planning and land authority. This process is currently done manually and requires submission of hard copy applications with the applicant's signature on every page. According to the government's proposed amendment, it will facilitate, in part, Access Canberra's transition to e-conveyancing, which of course the Canberra Liberals wholeheartedly support. As an aside, I would recommend to the government that it look at other intense manual processes to make them as electronic and digital as possible.

The bill also amends the Planning and Development Act 2007 relating to land management agreements. These agreements are designed to establish appropriate sustainable agricultural management practices and good farm biosecurity for the subject land while maintaining ecological and cultural values present on the land and to protect the environment from harm.

The signatory for the government is the Conservator of Flora and Fauna. The current requirement for use of an approved form, when negotiating, granting, varying or taking other actions in relation to rural leases, will be removed by this bill. Power has been granted to the conservator to make guidelines setting out the requirements for land management agreements which will be undertaken, following passage of the bill, using an electronic smart form.

Lastly, the bill will amend the Land Titles Act 1925. The proposed amendments relate to building management statements, which are binding agreements for building lessees for the maintenance and administration of a building, obviously with multiple lessees. The changes clarify the application and approval process for a building management statement, including who can apply and what information must be included on the application. Lessees may apply to act before approval of the statement but after passage of the bill. They merely have to ensure that the statement includes elements required under section 123F. Very obvious things, I would point out, include the establishment of the committee office holders, and the process for resolving disputes and for a five-yearly review of the agreement.

As I said, the Canberra Liberals will be supporting this bill, which does include minor amendments to other pieces of legislation. I do want to thank the minister for arranging a briefing from EPSDD officials and from his office. I commend this bill to the Assembly.

MS CLAY (Ginninderra) (6.37): The Greens are happy to support this bill. It makes minor technical changes to ensure that several pieces of legislation are clear, concise and up to date. It relates to requirements for building management standards, the form of land management agreements and the signing of documents related to unit title plans. The amendments are minor in nature. The changes they make are necessary and worthwhile improvements, and they assist the government in agility and responsiveness. The Greens are happy to support this bill.

MR GENTLEMAN (Brindabella—Manager of Government Business, Minister for Corrections, Minister for Industrial Relations and Workplace Safety, Minister for Planning and Land Management and Minister for Police and Emergency Services) (6.37), in reply: I thank members for their comments and input into this bill and commend the bill to the Assembly.

Bill agreed to in principle.

Leave granted to dispense with the detail stage.

Bill agreed to.

City Renewal Authority and Suburban Land Agency Amendment Bill 2021

Debate resumed from 8 October 2021, on motion by **Ms Berry**:

That this bill be agreed to in principle.

MR CAIN (Ginninderra) (6.38): I rise to speak in support of this bill, which, I will say, while the minister described it in her presentation speech as administrative in nature, certainly has far-reaching ramifications, some of which I will touch on briefly in my speech.

The bill amends the City Renewal Authority and Suburban Land Agency Act 2017 to allow the Suburban Land Agency to purchase freehold land in New South Wales. Apparently, the SLA can only purchase land under the ACT leasehold system. This is a significant policy position, in my opinion, and it raises governance questions about the location, land development, rates, service delivery and the local government impact. The community deserves some clarification on how New South Wales land, purchased by the ACT government, will be governed. What arrangement will be in place?

It is my understanding that the Riverview developer, currently developing the Ginninderry estate, is involved in a joint venture with the government and that entity owns New South Wales land, on the other side of the border, that is part of this development. I am very keen to hear as soon as possible—and I think that the community deserves such knowledge as well—how such land, if indeed it is going to be purchased by the ACT government, will be governed and managed, particularly given the disparity between New South Wales and ACT rates on land at the moment.

I do appreciate the briefing from officials from the minister's department. They noted that some anomalies do exist that will be addressed by this bill: for example, biodiversity connectivity to protected species, to allow offsets in New South Wales for ACT government development and to address commonwealth land holding of New South Wales land that is part of ACT infrastructure. Imagine this in your own mind: a fire tower with support legs in the ACT and maybe one or two others in New South Wales on land held by the commonwealth.

While I do appreciate the briefing from the minister's department, neither they nor the minister in her presentation speech—and perhaps we will be surprised to hear more now—have touched on how New South Wales land will be governed, will be managed. Is it for investment? Is it for residential development? I am very interested to hear her answer to these questions. Otherwise, I support this bill, and the Canberra Liberals do as well.

MS CLAY (Ginninderra) (6.41): This bill makes amendments to the City Renewal Authority and Suburban Land Agency Act. It makes the necessary technical amendments to allow the Suburban Land Agency to have the legal authority to buy and sell land in New South Wales, if needed, in future. This bill exists within the context of the ACT government's commitment to 70 per cent of new housing development being developed within Canberra's urban footprint.

The ACT Greens are committed to stopping endless development on ecologically sensitive areas. We need high-quality urban infill and city limits that stop unending urban sprawl. This bill must only be used in circumstances of particular need and it must not be used as an opportunity to extend urban sprawl beyond our borders without transparency or accountability. We will be watching closely how this bill is used, once it becomes law. It might be an excellent candidate later in the term for a review of operation and for the introduction of some checks and balances. The ACT Greens support this bill.

MS BERRY (Ginninderra—Deputy Chief Minister, Minister for Early Childhood Development, Minister for Education and Youth Affairs, Minister for Housing and Suburban Development, Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence, Minister for Sport and Recreation and Minister for Women) (6.42), in reply: I am very happy to have the Greens' support for this bill in the ACT Legislative Assembly. It is important work that will be occurring in the ACT as we grow and as the population grows in our great city.

I am pleased to speak to, and in support of, this City Renewal Authority and Suburban Land Agency Amendment Bill 2021. The amendments to this bill provide for important measures that would allow a broader range of options for the government to expand housing choices and support for the growth of Canberra. This bill will support the government's commitment to ensuring an adequate supply of land, with the aim of facilitating high-quality, new neighbourhoods that meet the expectations and demands of Canberra's diverse population and economy.

Canberra continues to enjoy steady demand as a prosperous and livable city. Over the years, Canberra has flourished to be a highly attractive place to live, as a major regional city which has fared resiliently in recent times through this pandemic. Our city is a thriving place for talented people to find meaningful and fulfilling work, a great place for families to raise children, for students to study and have a world-class education, and for businesses to innovate and contribute to the local economy.

To ensure that Canberra continues to be a fantastic place to live, the Suburban Land Agency was established to develop and release land for housing in the ACT. The Suburban Land Agency balances social, economic and environmental considerations to deliver sustainable urban environments for people and businesses to live and thrive. It aims to include supporting affordable housing, safe and healthy populations, social inclusion, housing choice and environmental sustainability.

The Suburban Land Agency achieves these aims through urban renewal projects and greenfield developments. Its development of land helps create vibrant, inclusive and sustainable communities that are people focused and have diversified the ACT's economy. This bill will add to the toolkit of options available for the ACT government to develop land in effective ways and support the objectives of the Suburban Land Agency.

Canberra has seen significant growth in the past decade. It is true that the COVID-19 pandemic has caused slower population growth in recent times, particularly as Australian borders were closed. However, with the recent opening of the country's borders and a steady easing of restrictions on movement, the nation's capital is projected to grow. This means that there is increasing pressure on land availability, infrastructure and public spaces. Housing is a human need. A good, secure home is fundamental to so many parts of life: school, work, good health, friendships, comfort, security and happiness.

Throughout consultation on the ACT government's Wellbeing Framework, the Canberra community identified their home as the place where they felt safe and where

relationships were able to grow and be nurtured. Apart from providing physical shelter, a home provides a sense of constancy in our material and social environments. They are important basic elements needed for individuals and families to be able to secure their wellbeing and lead lives that they value.

There is no one-size-fits-all model for the perfect home. So, as part of its mandate, the Suburban Land Agency is tasked with ensuring that the supply of housing in the ACT meets the varied needs and expectations of all sectors of our community. This means providing for both public and private housing options in new suburbs; offering a mix of property types, ranging from low-density, detached dwellings on land to high-density apartments; meeting affordable community and public housing targets; supporting environmentally sustainable developments that contribute to emissions targets; increasing supply; and following and supporting whole-of-government strategies such as the ACT's Housing Strategy.

Under the ACT's Housing Strategy, the government has committed to an equitable, diverse and sustainable supply of housing for the ACT community. Under this goal there are a range of objectives for which this bill will contribute to their achievement. The key objectives of the Housing Strategy include providing land and housing development opportunities to meet demand, setting a 15 per cent target for social and affordable housing, maintaining a healthy land and housing development pipeline, providing a diverse mix of housing types and choice, facilitating innovative design and delivery mechanisms and encouraging well-designed environmentally sustainable and accessible housing.

The opportunities that we must leverage to reach these objectives include the ACT government's role in supplying new land to the market and enabling large urban renewal projects. Supplying new land in greenfield developments is a key part of the strategy as Canberra continues to grow its economy and population.

Developing new suburbs with strong linkages to the community has been the focus of the Suburban Land Agency. New suburbs are built with key priorities in mind, including access to open space and nature reserves, a network of recreational facilities and close proximity to schools, central services and transport. These are crucial elements to enliven greenfield sites to become vibrant, livable, connected neighbourhoods that draw strongly on the sense of social connection.

However, the ACT's Housing Strategy notes that the limited availability of land in the ACT and the growth of its population mean that the need for creative planning and design solutions, ensuring a steady supply of land in areas with good linkages to jobs, education, services and community, is essential to delivering housing options that meet the expectations of people in the ACT. The vast majority of future growth will be within our existing urban footprint, through a range of future developments. This follows the commitment in the parliamentary and governing agreement that at least 70 per cent of new housing development be within Canberra's existing urban footprint.

However, it is critical to futureproof greenfield development sites by ensuring that the ACT government has the option to extend such developments beyond the ACT borders. While, at this time, the ACT government has not forecast any additional

future specific cross-border development such as Ginninderry, the provisions of this bill will help futureproof our options for green developments, going forward. The bill aligns with the interests of the people in the ACT by facilitating a mechanism for a greater variety of housing options to be made available.

This bill contains three key amendments to the City Renewal Authority and Suburban Land Agency Act 2017. These three amendments work together to empower the Suburban Land Agency to acquire and sell land outside the ACT, giving the ACT government an additional mechanism to develop broader housing options for people living in and around Canberra.

Under the act, the Suburban Land Agency is currently only able to purchase land that is under leasehold in the ACT. As members would be aware, property in the ACT is owned and leased by the commonwealth under the management of the ACT government. Land is held under long-term Crown leases, which are generally granted for 99 years.

Land in neighbouring New South Wales, however, is generally held and transferred under a system of freehold title. Land owned under the freehold system means the landowner owns the land for an indefinite period of time. As the Suburban Land Agency's powers under its act are currently limited to buying and selling leases of land on behalf of the territory, the agency is currently unable to acquire land held under the freehold system in New South Wales.

As one of the bill's three key amendments, the bill will remove the word "leases" from the provisions that empower the agency to purchase and sell land. The effect will be to enable the agency to buy and sell freehold land. The agency may purchase freehold land if the ACT government chooses in the future to exercise this mechanism in developing future greenfield sites. Such decisions will be dependent on arrangements to be made between the ACT government and the New South Wales government or local shire representatives.

Secondly, this bill will make a consequential amendment to clarify that the proceeds made from selling land, and not just selling leases of land, will form part of the agency's income. Where the agency buys and then sells land under the freehold tenure system, this amendment will ensure that the proceeds of the sale will be returned to the agency.

Thirdly, the bill will insert a new definition of the term "land" in the act. Currently, the term "land" is not defined in the act. However, as the current act does not empower the agency to purchase land under the freehold system, in effect the concept of "land" in the act is limited to land within the ACT borders. This bill will expand that concept by including land located in New South Wales as part of the definition of the term "land".

However, two things should be noted. Firstly, the bill will clarify that the declarations of urban renewal precincts will still be limited to land which is within the ACT borders. Secondly, the bill enables land development activities—for example, land remediation, carrying out works on land and preparing land for development—to take place on land purchased by the agency outside the ACT.

I thank members in the Assembly for their contributions to this bill. The amendments in this bill mean that the ACT government can offer a broader range of housing choices to Canberrans into the future. The options availed by this bill will futureproof greenfield developments and contribute to ensuring the supply of a variety of housing that meets the expectations and needs of our growing city.

Bill agreed to in principle.

Leave granted to dispense with the detail stage.

Bill agreed to.

Mr Andrew Snedden—retirement Statement by Speaker

MADAM SPEAKER: Just before I call Mr Gentleman to move the adjournment motion, I would just like to make a brief statement concerning the retirement of Andrew Snedden from the Assembly's committee office. Today marks the last sitting day for Andrew before he finishes with us next week. Andrew commenced with us here in 2010 after a career in the Senate at federal parliament.

During his time here, he has worked on just about every standing committee as its secretary. He also managed the committee office for a considerable part of that time, assisting chairs and secretaries to deal with major matters that arose in various committees.

Andrew has made his mark on a number of the select committees that he has been secretary to, probably more than any other committee secretary since self-government. He was secretary to select committees on such diverse subjects as fuel pricing, supermarket competition policy, end-of-life choices, the parliamentary budget officer, and the 2016 election, as well as contributing to numerous estimates committees. In the Tenth Assembly he has been secretary to the Standing Committee on Health and Community Wellbeing.

Across all those committees, Andrew has guided and he has worked to collate lots of evidence given before Assembly committees, seeking the views of committee chairs and members, and then producing draft reports. I am sure that he can look back with some degree of satisfaction on assisting the relevant committees and on the work that the committee office has provided to the community and to this Assembly.

On behalf of all members, I thank Andrew for his efforts over the last 10-plus years and I wish him well for his future.

Adjournment

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

That the Assembly do now adjourn.

Remembrance Day

MR CAIN (Ginninderra) (6.55): I will not keep members here for very long, but it is striking to me that we have a sitting day on Remembrance Day, 11 November. I do want to commend the Speaker for the tradition of a minute's silence that all of us together reflected on this morning at 11.

This sort of ceremony is really important because there are not many Canberrans whose lives are not affected by war and loss in war. And while it is tragic to reflect on such losses, it is good that we can recognise that the horrible things that happened came to a conclusion which produced a relatively peaceful and stable society. We trust that we never have to have such a moment again.

I want to reflect, and bring to the attention of the Assembly, that my own stepfather, my mother's second husband, Kenneth Naseby, fought in World War II as a naval seaman between 1944 and 1946. He served on HMAS *Australia*, which fought during the battle of Leyte Gulf during the invasion of the Philippines. This heavy cruiser was struck by a kamikaze Japanese aircraft—and some say it was the first such attack on an Allied ship—with the loss of 30 lives, including the captain's.

My office in this Assembly has many links to service men and women, friends and family in active service, who have served in the past, from tank drivers in World War II to Light Horsemen at the charge of Beersheba. My current adviser's grandfather, John Seaton, was a fighter pilot in the Korean War, stationed out of the Kimpoo Air Base with the 77th Squadron. He then went to Antarctica with the RAAF on an exploratory expedition, mapping untouched parts of the continent while flying a small plane.

So even in our office and, I am sure, in other offices in this Assembly and in households around Canberra, there are many connections between those who have sacrificed themselves to defend our nation and its principles. I would encourage all of us to contemplate and reflect on their sacrifice and their contribution, as is currently happening today. Lest We Forget.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

The Assembly adjourned at 6.58 pm until Tuesday, 23 November 2021, at 10 am.

Answers to questions

Domestic and family violence—safer families levy (Question No 409)

Mrs Kikkert asked the Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence, upon notice, on 6 August 2021:

- (1) Did the Minister announce that the increase to the ACT Safer Families Levy will raise an additional \$8.8 million for domestic and family violence services in the ACT, and that frontline services will be prioritised for funding; if so, can the ACT Government provide a detailed and complete breakdown of funding of the Safer Families Levy for this term of government.
- (2) How much funding will be allocated to the frontline services of (a) Toora Women Inc (Toora) and (b) EveryMan.
- (3) How much funding has EveryMan received from the ACT Government for each of the past five years and for what purposes.
- (4) Will the ACT Government provide funding for two specialist children's counsellors, as urgently requested by Toora in their 2021-22 ACT Budget Submission (and supported by Doris Women's Refuge); if not, why not and what measures will the ACT Government take to support the increasing demand for services provided by Toora.

Ms Berry: The answer to the member's question is as follows:

- 1) The ACT Government will stage an increase to the Safer Families Levy of \$5 per year over four years, taking the Levy from \$30 per household currently to \$50 per household in 2024-25. The Levy increase will go directly to funding Safer Families initiatives.

This will deliver a total of \$8.8 million over the next four years to expand funding for essential family, domestic and sexual violence initiatives for the ACT community. Funding from the Levy will be prioritised to frontline service delivery by both community and government services.

The Safer Families funding allocation is outlined in detail in Budget Paper 3 each year. As detailed in the 2021-22 Budget Paper, a range of initiatives are funded beyond 2021-22 via forward estimates.

- 2) Toora Women Inc. (Toora) and EveryMan are funded primarily through the *National Housing and Homelessness Agreement (NHHA)*. EveryMan also receives *Community Development Program (CDP)* funding.
 - a) The total NHHA funding to be received by Toora for the 2021-22 financial year is \$4,023,050.72.
 - b) The total NHHA funding to be received by EveryMan for the 2021-22 financial year is \$1,680,771.15. In addition, EveryMan will also receive \$500,543.80 CDP funding.
- 3) The below table provides a composite breakdown of the funding received by EveryMan for the past five years, including the stated purpose and specific programs against these amounts.

EveryMan Australia Funding Breakdown							
Funding Source	Service	16/17 Funding	17/18 Funding	18/19 Funding	19/20 Funding	20/21 Funding	Program Description
NHHA	Early Intervention Program – Base Funding	\$718,988.44	\$735,870.20	\$753,899.00	\$772,369.52	\$787,044.55	Support (crisis accommodation and/or a range of related support services), to help people who are experiencing homelessness achieve the maximum possible degree of independence.
	Early Intervention Program – Equal Renumeration Support	\$36,858.80	\$55,475.28	\$75,866.76	\$131,909.19	\$165,639.39	
	Managed Transitional Program – Base Funding*	\$509,749.11	\$509,749.11	\$509,749.11	\$509,749.11	\$509,749.11	Support (crisis accommodation and/or a range of related support services), to assist men exiting correctional settings who are at risk of homelessness.
	Managed Transitional Program – Equal Renumeration Support	\$26,043.36	\$39,197.16	\$53,605.20	\$93,192.21	\$117,002.90	
	Head Tenant Program – Base Funding*	-	\$50,000.00	\$50,000.00	\$65,000.00	\$65,000.00	Support (building skills, knowledge, and resilience) for individuals at risk of eviction from a social housing property.
	Indigenous Program – Base Funding**	\$276,189.51	\$375,617.76	\$384,820.36	\$394,608.48	\$407,165.05	Support (including crisis accommodation and/or a range of related support services), to support Indigenous individuals or families at risk of homelessness
CDP	Indigenous Boarding House Program – Base Funding**	\$229,464.39	\$312,071.56	\$319,717.32	\$327,550.4	\$338,281.76	Support (including crisis accommodation and/or a range of related support services), to support Indigenous individuals or families at risk of homelessness
	EveryMan Program – Base Funding	-	\$262,954.90	\$269,396.99	\$275,997.22	\$281,241.17	Services to men and other service users (including counselling, information and referral and peer support services) to manage the complexity of the physical, emotional and social issues that impact on their wellbeing, family and other interpersonal relationships.
	EveryMan Program – Equal Renumeration Support	-	\$22,501.11	\$29,622.59	\$45,117.27	\$56,654.24	
	Working with the Man – Base Funding	-	\$116,527.43	\$119,382.35	\$122,307.22	\$124,631.06	Specialist behaviour change program for those who have used violence in an intimate partner setting. The program offers a full range of resources to build the capacity for participants to make lasting change.
	Working with the Man – Equal Renumeration Support	-	\$9,971.29	\$13,127.14	\$19,993.57	\$25,106.14	
TOTAL FUNDING BY YEAR		\$1,797,294	\$2,489,936	\$2,579,207	\$2,757,822	\$2,877,516	-

*NPAH Funding, Indexation not applicable

** As per the existing contractual arrangements under 2016.27662.222, Toora Women Inc. receive the funding for both the Indigenous and Indigenous Boarding House Programs, with this funding subsequently passed on to Everyman, as the agency who administers these programs.

- 4) All community budget submissions are considered by the ACT Government. The ACT Government recognises the need to provide specialist services for children impacted by domestic and family violence.

In 2018-19, the ACT Government provided additional funding of \$700,800 over four years to four women's support services, including Toora, to better respond directly to the needs of women and children impacted by domestic and family violence.

Projects are underway to understand what children and young people themselves say they need, and to ensure appropriate integrated mental health and trauma supports.

Justice—justice reinvestment program (Question No 412)

Mrs Kikkert asked the Attorney-General, upon notice, on 6 August 2021:

Can the Attorney-General provide a breakdown of each individual ongoing and trial justice reinvestment program and the funding provided to them since their inception.

Mr Rattenbury: The answer to the member's question is as follows:

The ACT Government committed to developing a Justice Reinvestment strategy in 2014 to 2018.

The strategy developed involved using '*a smarter, more cost-effective approach to improving criminal justice outcomes by reducing crime and diverting offenders, and those at risk of becoming offenders, from the criminal justice system*'. The areas of focus identified were: improving justice accommodation options; responding to the impacts of drug and alcohol dependence; early support for people living with a mental illness or disability; pathways for safe and sustainable bail; community building capabilities and reducing the overrepresentation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in the justice system.

By 2018, trial justice reinvestment programs and evaluations had commenced including in the areas of family support, bail support, housing support, restorative justice and specialist courts (for example, focussed on drug related offending or indigenous offenders). A number of the trial programs became established as ongoing programs, while others evolved.

The ACT Government's justice reinvestment approach has underpinned both its Building Communities not Prisons initiative ([Building Communities Not Prisons | Justice and Community Safety Directorate \(act.gov.au\)](#)) and its Reducing Recidivism plan ([Reducing Recidivism | Justice and Community Safety Directorate \(act.gov.au\)](#)).

Some of programs trialled as the Justice Reinvestment Strategy was developed form part of the Building Communities Not Prisons initiative announced in 2018, (in particular, the Ngurrumbai Bail Support Program and Yarrabi Barmirr). Similarly, some of the programs which form part of the Building Communities Not Prisons initiative and other established justice reinvestment programs, form part of the Reducing Recidivism Plan announced in 2020 (in particular the Ngurrumbai Bail Support Program, Warrumbul Court, Yarrabi Bammir, the Justice Housing Program, the Drug and Alcohol Court, Strong Connected Neighbourhoods and Restorative Justice Conferencing).

While not all contemporaneously and explicitly identified as 'justice reinvestment' programs, key justice programs / initiatives which reflect the ACT Government's justice reinvestment approach include:

Program	Budget funding '000					
	Pre 2018-19	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21 ¹	2021-22	Total
Ngurrumbai Bail Support Program	210 ²	160	305	495	482	1,652
Reducing Recidivism	0	0	784	804	824	2,412
Warrumbul Court	0	0	174	179	183	536
Yarrabi Bamirr	0	498	1,019	1,045	1,071	3,633
More support for families/ Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People Liaison Officer	0	138	281	288	296	1,003
Justice Housing Program (including Providing safer alternatives to remand)	0	1,450	11,117	4,700	2,595	19,862
Drug and Alcohol Court (including funding across a range of agencies)	0	1,583	4,271	5,996	0 ³	11,850
Strong Connected Neighbourhoods Program ⁴	1,282 ⁵	285	527	515	578	3,187
Improving access to restorative justice	63	129	132	134	135	593

¹ Figures in this column for Reducing Recidivism, the Justice Housing Program, and Strong Connected Neighbourhoods, reflect original Budget decisions. They differ from the figures given in response to QTON No. 07 from the 19 February 2021 hearing which reflect actual allocations having regard to the impacts of rolled over funding.

The figure in this column for the Drug and Alcohol Court also reflects the original Budget decision. It differs from the figure at given in QTON No. 07 from the 19 February 2021 hearing which reflects the impacts of rolled over funding but not the Health offset.

² Funds in 2017-18

³ The Drug and Alcohol Court is subject to further budget decisions of Government.

⁴ The Strong Connected Neighbourhoods Program has operated since 2008 under several titles and modes of program delivery

⁵ Funds from 2008-09 through to 2018-19.

Roads—roadworks noise (Question No 417)

Ms Castley asked the Minister for Transport and City Services, upon notice, on 17 September 2021:

- (1) Can people lodge a complaint with Access Canberra about the noise from trucks.

- (2) Has the Government tested noise from dump trucks along Horse Park Drive.
- (3) Will the Minister request testing for the noise for houses that back on to Horse Park Drive.
- (4) Has the Government done any research into the greenhouse emissions of diesel trucks carrying roadworks waste material.
- (5) How much damage do trucks cause to road surfaces compared to other vehicles.
- (6) What action would the Government consider or take if noise levels reached between 80-95 decibels as trucks passed.

Mr Steel: The answer to the member's question is as follows:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) Specific noise related to trucks cannot be identified through noise surveys coordinated by Transport Canberra and City Services. Noise surveys are assessed, based upon both noise levels and duration. Two noise surveys have been undertaken in Amaroo relating to Horse Park Drive.
- (3) See (2).
- (4) No specific research on the greenhouse emissions from vehicles carrying roadworks waste materials is available.
- (5) It is not possible to separately identify the contribution of particular classes of vehicles to road surfaces.
- (6) The guidance used by Roads ACT to determine the need for noise intervention is based on noise exposure which accounts for both the loudness and duration of noise rather than the loudness alone.

Should a noise survey exceed the current noise thresholds, then a variety of measures can be considered, such road resurfacing or the installation of noise attenuation measures.

Environment—gross pollutant traps (Question No 419)

Ms Castley asked the Minister for Transport and City Services, upon notice, on 17 September 2021:

- (1) Has Flexible given the Government a water sample from the Gross Pollutant Trap (GPT) and drying pad next to the ANU Cricket Grounds; if so, can the Minister provide the results.
- (2) Has Flexible given the Government a sediment sample from the GPT and drying pad next to ANU Cricket Grounds; if so, can the Minister provide the results.

- (3) Has Flexible given the Government a water sample from the GPT and drying pad next to the Drakeford drive; if so, can the Minister provide the results.
- (4) Has Flexible given the Government a sediment sample from the GPT and drying pad next to Drakeford drive; if so, can the Minister provide the results.
- (5) Is Flexible required to provide the Government with information about the source of material placed at ANU Cricket Ground and Drakeford drive; if so, can the Minister give information about the source of material; if not, why is Flexible not required to provide the information.
- (6) How many times has debris been cleared from the ANU Cricket Ground and Drakeford drive GPT in (a) 2016, (b) 2017, (c) 2018, (d) 2019, (e) 2020 and (f) 2021.
- (7) What are the volumes of debris cleared from the ANU and Drakeford drive GPT.
- (8) Why are independent tests not done to ensure integrity and confidence that no contaminated waste is being disposed of, leaking or drying at the ANU and Drakeford drive GPTs.
- (9) Has the Government consulted/surveyed residents near the drying beds about odours and other issues near the drying beds including residents' concerns.
- (10) Has the Government done any testing near the drying beds about odours and how they compare to Environment Protection Authority standards; if so, can the Minister provide details.
- (11) Why is transporting the waste straight to Mugga Lane not the most efficient environmental solution.

Mr Steel: The answer to the member's question is as follows:

- (1) No, this task is not in Flexible's maintenance contract. Collection of water samples is not typically required under their Environmental Management Plan (EMP) to accord with EPA regulations.
- (2) No, this task is not in Flexible's maintenance contract. Collection of water samples is not typically required under their EMP to accord with EPA regulations.
- (3) No, this task is not in Flexible's maintenance contract. Collection of water samples is not typically required under their EMP to accord with EPA regulations.
- (4) No, this task is not in Flexible's maintenance contract. Collection of water samples is not typically required under their EMP to accord with EPA regulations.
- (5) No, Flexible are not required to provide information about the source of material placed at the Turner and Monash drying pads. These are designated locations for drying wet material collected in the course of their stormwater network contracted services to Roads ACT. Materials dried at these locations are typically collected from the Belconnen and Central Canberra regions.
- (6) Please see data below:

Number of times debris has been cleared.

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Turner	14	18	18	19	18	13
Monash	11	10	11	12	14	9

(7) Please see data below:

Approximate amount of debris cleared (in tonnes)

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Turner	1790	1750	1720	1780	1910	1650
Monash	1380	1150	1460	1220	1470	1320

(8) All material stored on site is removed from the stormwater network. All material is currently transported to landfill following drying. No testing is required at these sites.

(9) TCCS has not surveyed residents regarding the drying pads.

(10) The designated drying pads are not monitored for odours.

(11) Liquid waste is not currently transported to a waste treatment or disposal facility (e.g. Mugga Lane) due to logistical and regulatory constraints.

Roads—Gungahlin (Question No 420)

Ms Castley asked the Minister for Planning and Land Management, upon notice, on 17 September 2021:

- (1) Has the Government consulted with the community about the dangerous intersection at Gungahlin Place and Efkarpidis Street; if so, can the Minister provide details.
- (2) How many complaints have there been about this intersection since the beginning of 2016 and can the Minister provide details, for example, nature of complaints.
- (3) How has the Government responded to the complaints referred to in part (2).
- (4) Has the Government done any work at this intersection in the last five years; if so, can the Minister provide details.
- (5) How many accidents have occurred at this intersection since the beginning of 2016 and can the Minister provide details.

Mr Steel: The answer to the member's question is as follows:

- (1) The ACT Government has received feedback from the community which was not solicited by the ACT Government. As a result a consultant has recently been appointed to identify improvements at the intersection. The Government will consider the consultant's findings and the feedback received from the community to inform any future improvement to the intersection.

- (2) No complaints have been received about safety at this intersection via Fix My Street. There have been two pieces of ministerial correspondence related to this intersection. The Hon Andrew Leigh MP and I visited the site to talk through the issues at the intersection (next to his office). A recent survey conducted by Ms Suzanne Orr MLA and shared with the Government included feedback about this intersection.
- (3) A consultant has recently been appointed to identify further improvements at the intersection. The Government will consider the consultant's findings and the feedback received from the community to inform any future improvement to the intersection.
- (4) In response to community feedback, the visibility at the intersection has been improved to meet current guidelines. This included relocating the existing bus layby approximately 8m away from the intersection as an immediate solution.

In addition, a consultant has recently been appointed to identify further improvements at the intersection. The Government will consider the consultant's findings and the feedback received from the community to inform any future improvement to the intersection.

- (5) Since 2016 a total of 17 crashes have been reported at this intersection (the table provides a summary of crashes at the intersection Gungahlin Place/ Efkarpidis Street for the period).

This rate of crashes is low compared to other similar locations.

	Total number of reported crashes	Type of crash		
		Fatal	Injury	Property Damage Only
2016 - 2020	17	0	0	17
2021 to date (preliminary data only)	0	0	0	0

Roads—maintenance (Question No 422)

Ms Castley asked the Minister for Transport and City Services, upon notice, on 17 September 2021:

- (1) How many pothole complaints have there been, each year in the ACT, since 2016.
- (2) What is the process once Access Canberra receives a pothole complaint and how long does it take, on average, for a pothole to be fixed.
- (3) Does the Government keep a register of how many potholes there are in Canberra and their severity; if not, why not.
- (4) How much money has been spent, each year since 2016, repairing potholes.
- (5) How many accidents have been caused by potholes, per year since 2016, and can the Minister provide details including costs.

- (6) How many reports of vehicle damage caused by potholes is the Government aware of, each year since 2016, and can the Minister provide detail including cost of vehicle damage.
- (7) What other damage has been caused by potholes.
- (8) Is there a dedicated team of staff repairing potholes; if so, (a) how many staff are in that team and (b) how many staff have been employed in this unit/team each year since 2016.
- (9) What is the Government doing to improve the condition of our roads and can the Minister provide details.
- (10) What is the Government's response to the comments of the director of the National Centre for Pavement Preservation that "the cost of addressing minor deficiencies is much less than addressing major deficiencies. We have to do road maintenance when the roads are in fair-to-

Mr Steel The answer to the member's question is as follows:

- (1) Please refer to table below for pothole complaints received, each year in the ACT, since 2016:

Calendar Year	Number of complaints received related to potholes
2016	1589
2017	186*
2018	109*
2019	91*
2020	1292
2021 (until 6 October)	3028

*Note: Data records for 2017-2019 may be inaccurate due to transfer of data between new Asset Management Systems.

- (2) The complaints are received by Access Canberra via Fix My Street, phone calls and emails. The current average turnaround time from receiving to completion is approximately 10 business days.
- (3) The Government uses asset management software (currently Assetic) which stores every request raised against each asset (e.g. road) as well as what has been done to remedy this. Using this system the Government can monitor recurring potholes and prioritise remedies accordingly.
- (4) Pothole repair is funded from the routine road maintenance budget. The Government does not track costs for pothole repairs specifically. The number of potholes repaired is shown in the table below.

Financial Year	Number of potholes repaired
2016-2017	6036
2017-2018	4382
2018-2019	3440
2019-2020	2697
2020-2021	6378
2021-2022 (until 30/09/21)	2479

- (5) The Government does not keep records of potholes as a crash causation factor.
- (6) The Government does not keep records of all vehicle damage caused by potholes.
- (7) The Government does not keep records of all damage caused by potholes.
- (8) Since 2016, Roads ACT has had approximately seven dedicated officers to provide routine road maintenance tasks including potholes patching. Since March 2021, Roads ACT have had an additional Automated Asphalt Paving Machine team (four people total) undertaking more durable patching of potholes. Officers are assigned to Road Maintenance tasks subject to competing priorities and weather.
- (9) The Government approaches its investment in road maintenance strategically, through undertaking planned preventive maintenance, planned corrective works and reactive maintenance. The annual resurfacing program is Roads ACT's major investments in the prevention of potholes and other pavement defects. Under this program, Roads ACT has resurfaced approximately one million square metres of roads each year.
- (10) The National Centre for Pavement Preservation is a United States (US) based organisation with a focus on the maintenance of public roads in the US (US).

The ACT Government focuses its investment in road maintenance mostly in preventative works, which target roads with fair condition. These resurfacing treatments are generally designed to prevent the road condition declining from fair to poor or very poor.

Electricity—usage and costs (Question No 424)

Ms Castley asked the Minister for Water, Energy and Emissions Reduction, upon notice, on 17 September 2021:

- (1) How much has electricity usage increased in households since 12 August 2021.
- (2) How has the system/network coped with this increased demand.
- (3) Have there been increased power outages as a result of increased demand; if so, can the Minister provide details about usual number of daily power outages compared to daily outages since 12 August 2021.

- (4) What backup plans are in place if electricity demand is too high and the system/network can't cope.
- (5) Can the Government guarantee the system/network can cope; if so, can the Minister provide details.
- (6) What is an average household electricity bill and how much will bills increase due to increased demand.
- (7) How much has electricity usage decreased in commercial buildings since 12 August 2021.
- (8) How much has gas usage increased in households since 12 August 2021.
- (9) How much has gas usage decreased in commercial buildings since 12 August 2021.
- (10) Will the ACT Government offer electricity bill savings/rebates/grants for households as a result of the lockdown; if so can the Minister provide details.

Mr Rattenbury: The answer to the member's question is as follows:

- (1) The ACT Government does not collect data at the level of detail requested. Specifically, the ACT Government only collects total annual supply data and does not collect information that separates household energy consumption from commercial use.

The annual supply of electricity in the ACT for 2018-19 and 2019-20 below. This data is reported to the ACT Government on an annual basis by energy utilities under the *Utilities Act 2000*.

	2018-19	2019-20
Electricity (MWh)	2,872,824	2,890,163
<i>Source: Energy Industry Levy determinations (54H – Utilities Act)</i>		

- (2) The ACT Government does not collect data at the level of detail requested. Matters relating to energy supply in the ACT are best directed towards Evoenergy. Evoenergy owns and operates the ACT electricity network.

The National Electricity Market (NEM) Reliability Standard specifies the maximum permissible unserved energy, or the maximum allowable level of electricity at risk of not being supplied to consumers, per financial year within the NEM. The standard is set at 0.002% of the annual energy consumption for associated regions per financial year.

An Interim Reliability Measure (IRM) was introduced by the National Electricity Amendment (Interim Reliability Measure) Rule 2020 (IRM Rule). The IRM Rule and changes to the Retailer Reliability Obligation (RRO) rules are intended to support reliability in the system while more fundamental reforms are designed and implemented. The IRM allows for a maximum expectation of 0.0006% of energy demand to be unmet in a given region per financial year.

The ACT forms part of the NSW region of the NEM, and the amount of energy demand unmet in the ACT is included in the NSW figure. For 2019/20 reporting period, the amount of energy demand unmet in the NSW NEM region was negligible.

In its annual compliance report, the Utilities Technical Regulator published the following data regarding electricity supply reliability in the ACT:

Parameter	TARGET	2016–17	2017–18	2018–19	2019–20
Average Interruption Duration per outage (CAIDI) minutes	74.6	92.84	126.72	96.92	114.33
Interruption Frequency (SAIFI) Number	1.2	0.90	0.79	0.95	0.72
Average Interruption Duration per customer (SAIDI) minutes	91	83.74	99.97	92.53	81.7

- (3) The ACT Government does not collect data at the level of detail requested. Matters relating to energy supply in the ACT are best directed towards Evoenergy. Evoenergy owns and operates the ACT electricity network.

Evoenergy reports known and planned outages in the ACT. Further information on outages, including an outages map is available on their website: www.evoenergy.com.au/outages.

- (4) Most electricity in Australia is generated, bought, sold and transported in markets that need to match supply and demand in real time. The National Electricity Market (NEM) fills this role for the east coast and southern states, including the ACT. Short supply situations are often the result of generation or transmission equipment becoming unavailable unexpectedly, such as the accident at the Callide Power station in Queensland in May. However, very hot days can provide short term challenges for electricity supply across the NEM which is managed through interjurisdictional cooperation.

The ACT Energy Emergency (Coordination) Plan (the Plan) is a supporting plan of the ACT Emergency Plan. It provides a framework for a coordinated approach to an actual or imminent event relating to the supply of electricity, gas and/or liquid fuel, locally and nationally. The Plan was reviewed during 2019 and 2020, and an updated plan was approved by the ESA Commissioner in July 2020. The ACT Energy Emergency Plan has not been activated so far in 2021.

- (5) The system security and reliability standards needed for a reliable and secure electricity market are defined in the National Electricity Rules and also by the AEMC's Reliability Panel. Australian Energy Market Operator (AEMO) and network businesses operate the system in line with these standards.
- (6) According to the AER[1], residential electricity customers in the ACT each use an average of 6,372 kWh per year and pay a \$1,793 median annual electricity bill. Residential gas customers each use an average of 42,078 MJ per year and pay a \$1,555 median annual gas bill. Any change in costs from changed electricity usage would be based on the pricing system that a customer is on.
- (7) The ACT Government does not collect data at the level of detail requested. Matters relating to energy supply in the ACT are best directed towards Evoenergy. Evoenergy owns and operates the ACT electricity network.

- (8) The ACT Government does not collect data at the level of detail requested. Matters relating to gas supply in the ACT are best directed towards Evoenergy. Evoenergy owns the ACT gas network.
- (9) The ACT Government does not collect data at the level of detail requested. Matters relating to gas supply in the ACT are best directed towards Evoenergy. Evoenergy owns the ACT gas network.
- (10) The ACT Government established the Utilities Hardship Fund in 2020 to support ACT energy consumers who may have difficulty paying their electricity bills as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic. Four electricity retailers volunteered to participate. The ACT Government co-funds \$100 vouchers for participating retailers to provide to vulnerable consumers. The fund was run in 2020-21 and is being run again for 2021-22.

For those in particular need, a government Utilities Concession is available for \$750 per year. The Government is also providing an additional \$250 rebate to eligible households for 2021-22, taking the 2021-22 payment to \$1000.

^[1] Source: <https://www.aer.gov.au/system/files/AER%20Jurisdictional%20Snapshots%202019-20.pdf>

Government—Future Jobs Fund (Question No 425)

Mr Cain asked the Minister for Economic Development, upon notice, on 17 September 2021:

- (1) In relation to the Future Jobs Fund initiative in the 2020-21 Budget, can the Minister provide any modelling done to demonstrate the anticipated protection or creation of 1,000+ jobs.
- (2) What criteria will be applied when distributing grants and other support payments through the Future Jobs Fund.
- (3) Will the ACT Government fund the Future Jobs Fund from debt; if not, how will it be funded.

Mr Barr: The answer to the member's question is as follows:

- (1) This figure is an estimate that will be dependent on a range of factors including labour market and economic conditions over the four years of the Fund.
 - (2) Criteria for the distribution of grants and other payments will be finalised as programs are developed.
 - (3) No. Funding under the Future Jobs Fund will be provided as expense and capital and sourced from revenues. These mechanisms will be used to deliver a range of activities to protect or create new jobs in high growth sectors in the ACT.
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**Justice—remandees
(Question No 427)**

Mrs Kikkert asked the Attorney-General, upon notice, on 17 September 2021:

- (1) Does the ACT have any goals or key indicators related to how long a remandee is incarcerated before being sentenced; if so, what are those goals or key indicators and how is the ACT currently performing; if not, why not.
- (2) Does the ACT have any goals or key indicators related to how long a remandee is incarcerated before having their next court appearance; if so, what are those goals or key indicators and how is the ACT currently performing; if not, why not.

Mr Rattenbury: The answer to the member's question is as follows:

- (1) No. The time between incarceration and sentencing will vary between and depend on all the facts and circumstance in individual matters.

ACT Courts are measured against twelve performance indicators in the 'Report on Government Services' framework set by the Productivity Commission, which provides information on equity, efficiency and effectiveness.

- (2) No. See the answer to question (1).

**Roads—William Hovell Drive
(Question No 432)**

Mrs Kikkert asked the Minister for Transport and City Services, upon notice, on 17 September 2021:

- (1) At what point is the William Hovell Drive duplication design stage at, given that as at 14 May 2021, the design stage was 70 percent complete.
- (2) Given that section 6.3 of the draft environmental impact statement for the William Hovell Drive duplication states that "telephone conversations with interested Hawker residents" had taken place, how many of these telephone conversations occurred and when did these calls take place.
- (3) Was there any effort to specifically reach out to residents of (a) Elsey Street, (b) Mainoru Place, (c) Kurundi Place, (d) Florina Place and (e) Andado Place, for input on the duplication; if so, what were these efforts and how many people were contacted.

Mr Steel: The answer to the member's question is as follows:

- (1) The detail design is at approximately 75% complete. The detail design will not be able to be fully completed until any feedback from the Environmental Impact Statement assessment has been received and incorporated.

- (2) There were three conversations which took place on 7 August 2021, 11 August 2021 and 17 August 2021.

The Environment Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate has advised that 216 residents adjacent to the project received notification letters. Emails to 41 community and interest groups have also been sent.

**ACT public service—superannuation
(Question No 434)**

Ms Lee asked the Treasurer, upon notice, on 17 September 2021 (*redirected to the Special Minister of State*):

- (1) In relation to superannuation payments in 2020-21, how much was paid across the ACT Public Service.
- (2) Further to part (1), how much was paid and to how many public servants across the funds of (a) Commonwealth Superannuation Scheme, (b) Public Sector Superannuation Scheme and (c) all other funds.
- (3) How many public servants utilised salary packaging in 2020-21, broken down by agency.
- (4) In relation to public servants that are eligible for full fringe benefits tax benefits, including public hospital staff under the Fringe Benefits Tax Assessment Act and Emergency Services Agency ambulance positions, how many (a) are eligible and (b) utilise salary packaging.
- (5) How many public servants utilised salary packaging in 2020-21 for (a) additional superannuation payments, (b) novated lease, (c) home mortgages or investment loans and (d) any other purpose.
- (6) How many public servants utilised long service leave in 2020-21.

Mr Steel: The answer to the member's question is as follows:

- (1) During 2020-21 ACT Government paid the following in superannuation payments:
 - ACT Public Service (employed by directorates): \$374,336,543.87
 - ACT Public Sector (employed by public authorities such as government commissions and authorities): \$16,749,517.47
 - Combined: \$391,086,061.34.
- (2) During 2020-21 ACT Government paid the following in superannuation payments across the funds of:
 - a. Commonwealth Superannuation Scheme:
 - ACT Public Service: \$4,204,856.21
 - ACT Public Sector: \$227,750.26
 - Combined: \$4,432,606.47

b. Public Sector Superannuation Scheme:

- ACT Public Service: \$158,510,021.42
- ACT Public Sector: \$7,318,524.94
- Combined: \$165,828,546.36

c. All other funds:

- ACT Public Service: \$211,621,666.24
- ACT Public Sector: \$9,203,242.27
- Combined: \$220,824,908.51

- (3) A total of 12,457 ACT public servants utilised salary packaging in 2020-21. Below is the breakdown of public servants, by agency, who utilised salary packaging in 2020-21:

Canberra Health Services	6,153
Chief Minister, Treasury and Economic Development Directorate	1,063
Community Services Directorate	367
Education Directorate	2,171
Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate	375
ACT Health Directorate	389
Justice and Community Safety Directorate	1,046
Major Projects Canberra	102
Transport Canberra and City Services Directorate	791
Total	12,457

- (4) ACT public servants that are employed by Canberra Health Services and ACT Ambulance personnel are eligible to access public hospital and ambulance fringe benefits through salary packaging under the *Fringe Benefits Tax Assessment Act*.

a. On 14 September 2021 a total of 8,376 ACT public servants were eligible; and

b. During the financial year of 2020-21, a total of 6,633 eligible ACT public servants utilised salary packaging benefits that were only available to public hospital and ambulance personnel.

- (5) During 2020-21, the breakdown of salary packaged benefits accessed by ACT public servants by category is as follows:

a. 7,075 ACT public servants accessed additional salary packaged superannuation payments;

b. 2,266 ACT public servants salary packaged one or more car/s through a novated lease;

c. 4,302 eligible public hospital and ambulance ACT public servants salary packaged to their home mortgage, residential rent, personal loans and/or everyday living expenses (through a prepaid salary packaging debit card); and

d. 1,419 ACT public servants salary packaged other benefits.

- (6) During 2020-21 the following numbers of staff utilised long service leave:
- ACT Public Service = 2,165
 - ACT Public Sector = 95
 - Combined = 2,260
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**Lake Tuggeranong—maintenance
(Question No 442)**

Ms Lawder asked the Minister for Transport and City Services, upon notice, on 17 September 2021:

- (1) What is the estimated leaf load, including nutrients, of the deciduous and evergreen trees around Lake Tuggeranong.
- (2) What is the planting and replacement policy.
- (3) How is Lake Tuggeranong divided in terms of areas of fertiliser application.
- (4) How much fertiliser is applied in each of these areas.
- (5) How often does street sweeping occur in the Tuggeranong town centre.
- (6) How much of the available organics and sediment is captured.
- (7) Is the Minister able to provide any research the Transport Canberra and City Services Directorate has done on the release of phosphate from organics.

Mr Steel: The answer to the member's question is as follows:

- (1) The ACT Healthy Waterways Program is conducting ongoing research with the University of Canberra into the sources of nutrient pollution entering Lake Tuggeranong and other urban waterways, including from leaf litter. Research at Lake Tuggeranong has identified that the majority of nutrients enter through the stormwater drainage system. Very little comes from specific points in the catchment, with nutrient load spread evenly across the urban areas of the catchment. This suggests that nutrients from leaves, fertiliser, soil and animal waste may be key sources, as all are known to enter road-side stormwater drains throughout the catchment. This year's research program will focus on identifying the main sources of pollution in the catchment. Leaf litter from trees planted around the lake is thought to be of minor importance, as the stormwater system delivers far greater pollutant loads from a much larger area. For this reason we have not focused our research questions on the parklands around the lake. The H2OK: Keeping Our Waterways Healthy community education and behaviour change program has recently shifted to targeting each nutrient source separately so that we can gauge the effectiveness of each intervention. Leaf litter was selected as a suitable starting point for this approach due to the no-regrets nature of encouraging more Canberrans to see it as a valuable resource, not a nuisance.
- (2) Planting in the ACT includes both native and exotic species that have been specifically chosen to survive in Canberra's climate, while improving diversity to strengthen the

resilience of our whole urban forest. Priority planting locations include suburbs with low canopy cover, replacement of removed trees, areas nominated by the community and streets and parks where there are existing planting gaps. Requirements of specific locations, such as areas adjacent to waterways, are taken into consideration and appropriate species are selected. Recommendations from ongoing research will also be considered.

- (3) The irrigated sections of Tuggeranong Town Park (the lawns and garden beds) are the only areas around Lake Tuggeranong to receive fertiliser through an annual nutrition program.
- (4) Tuggeranong Town Park was last fertilised in 2019 as part of the turf renovation and nutrition program. 1000kg of a multi-purpose turf fertiliser was applied over seven hectares.
- (5) The suburb of Greenway is scheduled for sweeping February, May, October and December, however, intermittent works to clear debris outside of this schedule are conducted on an as needs basis.
- (6) In the 2020-21 financial year, 21,450 m³ of street sweeping material was collected from the whole of Canberra, including organics and sediment.
- (7) No. TCCS hasn't done any research.

Parks and reserves—Fadden Pond (Question No 443)

Ms Lawder asked the Minister for Transport and City Services, upon notice, on 17 September 2021:

Why was Fadden Pond drained directly into Lake Tuggeranong and not overland, using the Healthy Waterways infrastructure (rain gardens, wetlands, etc).

Mr Steel: The answer to the member's question is as follows:

Works at Fadden Pond were planned and consulted with the Environment Protection Authority (EPA). All works were approved by an ACT Government aquatic specialist to ensure the best environmental outcomes. Works were undertaken in accordance with an Environmental Authorisation as well as an Environmental Management Plan (EMP).

Water from the pond was not pumped directly into Lake Tuggeranong. Water was released into an overflow sump that flows into a stormwater channel that flows into Upper Stranger wetland. Treated flows from Upper Stranger Wetland flow into Tuggeranong Weir and then into Lake Tuggeranong. This is the same process that occurs when Fadden Pond overflows.

Environment—Healthy Waterways project (Question No 445)

Ms Lawder asked the Minister for Water, Energy and Emissions Reduction, upon notice, on 17 September 2021:

- (1) With the diversion of only small flows along the Village Creek for Healthy Waterways Phase 1, eg, YA20, how will that be upscaled in Healthy Waterways Phase 2 and subsequent phases, so as to have a significant impact on reducing pollutants for both the low flows and higher flows.
- (2) What modifications were made to the Gross Pollutant Traps audited as part of Healthy Waterways Phase 1 around 2014.
- (3) Has a subsequent Gross Pollutant Traps audit been undertaken; if so, what were the results and has any action been taken.

Mr Rattenbury: The answer to the member's question is as follows:

- (1) YA020 was designed to divert a portion of storm flows from the adjacent drain. It receives inputs from all stormflows but, with a fixed inlet pipe size, the proportion of storm flows bypassing the asset increases as flows through the drain increase.

Large water sensitive urban design assets placed low down in catchments (i.e. like YA020) cannot process all the stormflows passing down the major stormwater trunks, so are designed to allow some flows to bypass them.

This design results in the greatest amount of pollution mitigation for the investment in a water quality asset because there are flows regularly entering and being filtered by the assets. Water quality assets can also be placed higher up in catchments along smaller stormwater channels where they can process all or most of the stormflows. Pollution mitigation by such assets is more expensive (considering the amount of pollution mitigated per year per \$ of assets) because further up in catchments the assets are processing stormwater less frequently.

For Lake Tuggeranong, which is receiving significant loads of pollution in stormflows that stimulate algal blooms, it is likely that some water quality assets will need to be placed in the upper catchment to clean stormflows to an acceptable standard. This is being investigated as a part of planning activities for Stage 2 of Healthy Waterways. The Healthy Waterways team is also investigating other kinds of infrastructure that can encourage infiltration of stormwaters into catchment soils where it then gets cleansed, as occurs in a natural catchment. The combination of water quality assets, infiltration infrastructure and other initiatives like public education and improved management of public green spaces by Government are likely to be required to keep our lakes clean and healthy.

- (2) There were some minor improvements made after the last GPT Audit, including the removal of some baskets for safety reasons and the cleaning of trash racks and GPTs.
- (3) Another GPT audit is currently being conducted, but it was suspended with COVID work restrictions. When this is complete a review will be conducted of work required to address any issues raised.

Parks and reserves—Fadden Pond (Question No 446)

Ms Lawder asked the Minister for Water, Energy and Emissions Reduction, upon notice, on 17 September 2021 (*redirected to the Minister for Transport and City Services*):

- (1) Is the Minister able to provide the results of testing done from the monitoring of Fadden Pond clean out.
- (2) Has any monitoring been done downstream to identify any impacts.
- (3) Will Fadden Pond be restocked with native fish.

Mr Steel: The answer to the member's question is as follows:

- (1) Testing of Fadden Pond was not conducted as it was not required under the Environmental Management Plan (EMP) approved by the Environment Protection Authority (EPA).
 - (2) Monitoring was not conducted as it was not required under the EMP approved by the EPA.
 - (3) Yes, EPSDD is planning to re-stock Fadden Pond with Golden Perch when stocks become available.
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ACT Public Service—independence (Question No 448)

Mrs Jones asked the Chief Minister, upon notice, on 17 September 2021:

- (1) Is the ACT Public Service apolitical.
- (2) Why does the Chief Minister's photograph appear on the internal ACT Whole of Government Shared Services website at <http://sharedservices/actgovt/default.htm>.
- (3) Who decided to include a photograph of the Chief Minister on the website.
- (4) Why was a photograph of the Chief Minister included on the website.
- (5) Was the Chief Minister or his office consulted about whether or not to include a photograph of himself on the website.
- (6) Was the Chief Minister or his office consulted about which photograph should be used on the website.
- (7) Is the Chief Minister concerned that having a photograph of himself on an internal ACT Whole of Government website might lead Canberrans to doubt whether or not the ACT Public Service is encouraged to be apolitical.

Mr Barr: The answer to the member's question is as follows:

- (1) The Code of Conduct for the ACT Public Service (ACTPS) outlines employee values and signature behaviours. The values outline that integrity in the ACTPS means being apolitical.
- (2) Internal inquiries into the Chief Minister's photograph appearing on the internal ACT Whole of Government Shared Services website concluded the following:

- <http://sharedservices/actgovt/default.htm> was decommissioned on 19 September 2017 (Attachment A).
 - The Chief Minister's image was added after the decommissioning of the site on 8 November 2017
 - The Digital Data and Technology Solutions (DDTS) web team provided information on the webmaster properties for the site. All staff listed that are still within ACT Government were contacted, however, none of the staff were able to provide information on the addition of the image to the site. The details provided by DDTS identified the staff member who uploaded the image, however, they are no longer employed by ACT Government.
 - The image photographer advised that it was taken several years ago for the ACT Budget and saved in the Whole of Government image library.
- (3) There is no record of a decision being made to include a photograph of the Chief Minister on the website.
- (4) It is unknown why a photograph of the Chief Minister is included on the website.
- (5) There is no record of the Chief Minister or his office being consulted about whether or not to include a photograph of himself on the website.
- (6) The Chief Minister or his office are not consulted or have input into the Shared Services internal website design.
- (7) The site has now been removed. ACT Public Servants are expected to follow the Code of Conduct which requires staff to be apolitical.

(A copy of the attachment is available at the Chamber Support Office).

Nurses—COVID-19 (Question No 450)

Mrs Jones asked the Minister for Health, upon notice, on 17 September 2021:

- (1) How many individual nurses worked on COVID-19 wards at The Canberra Hospital during the weeks ending on (a) 22 August 2021, (b) 29 August 2021, (c) 5 September 2021, (d) 12 September 2021 and (e) 19 September 2021.
- (2) How many individual nurses who had not received a "fit test" of a protective mask within the last year, worked on a COVID-19 ward during the weeks ending (a) 22 August 2021 (b) 29 August 2021, (c) 5 September 2021, (d) 12 September 2021 and (e) 19 September 2021.

Ms Stephen-Smith: The answer to the member's question is as follows:

(1)

ICU* and COVID Ward (includes new starter/relief/casual staff)	Week ending	Number of nurses rostered (headcount)
	22 August 2021	33*
	29 August 2021	116
	5 September 2021	86
	12 September 2021	115
	19 September 2021	83

*ICU data represents the number of nurses rostered to manage COVID-19 suspected or confirmed patients.

**ICU data not included as there were no COVID-19 patients in ICU the week ending 22 August 2021.

(2)

ICU and COVID Ward (includes new starter/relief/casual staff)	Week ending	Staff rostered and not fit tested
	22 August 2021	Not available
	29 August 2021	Not available
	5 September 2021	40
	12 September 2021	16
	19 September 2021	8

ACT Health—management systems (Question No 452)

Mrs Jones asked the Minister for Health, upon notice, on 17 September 2021:

- (1) What information technology system or other system does the ACT currently use to manage notifiable diseases.
- (2) When did the Government decide to obtain a new Notifiable Diseases Management System.
- (3) Why did the Government decide to obtain a new Notifiable Diseases Management System.
- (4) When will the Notifiable Diseases Management System, supplied under contract notice 638806, be fully implemented.

Ms Stephen-Smith: The answer to the member's question is as follows:

- (1) The ACT Health Directorate (ACTHD) uses two systems for public health management, surveillance, and investigation of notifiable diseases:
 - **NDMS** - A bespoke Digital Data and Technology solutions (DDTS) developed system known as the Notifiable Disease Management System (NDMS); and
 - **REDCap**.

The systems are integrated with the ACTHD's data repository for reporting purposes.

- (2) The 2017-18 ACT Budget provided \$398,000 for a new bespoke tool to manage notifiable diseases. The 2020-21 ACT Budget allocated \$7.515m for a new notifiable diseases response management commercial off-the-shelf (COTS) system.
- (3) The implementation of the new NDMS is aligned with the Digital Health Strategy 2021-2029, using technology to better manage health outcomes, and improving the readiness of ACTHD to manage notifiable diseases. The new system will improve access, reliability and efficiency by providing an integrated solution through increased automation, reduction of manual effort, improved reporting capability.
- (4) The system will be implemented in phases, with the first phase planned for the fourth quarter of 2021. The full solution will be implemented by the fourth quarter of 2022.

Mental health—mental health officers (Question No 460)

Mrs Jones asked the Minister for Mental Health, upon notice, on 17 September 2021:

How many persons were authorised as mental health officers under section 201 of the of the Mental Health Act 2015 on (a) 1 January 2020, (b) 1 February 2020, (c) 1 March 2020, (d) 1 April 2020, (e) 1 May 2020, (f) 1 June 2020, (g) 1 July 2020, (h) 1 August 2020, (i) 1 September 2020, (j) 1 October 2020, (k) 1 November 2020, (l) 1 December 2020, (m) 1 January 2021, (n) 1 February 2021, (o) 1 March 2021, (p) 1 April 2021, (q) 1 May 2021, (r) 1 June 2021, (s) 1 July 2021, (t) 1 August 2021 and (u) 1 September 2021.

Ms Davidson: The answer to the member's question is as follows:

The table below indicates the number of persons authorised, on the specified date, as mental health officers under section 201 of the *Mental Health Act 2015*:

	Date	Number
(a)	1 January 2020	90
(b)	1 February 2020	91
(c)	1 March 2020	93
(d)	1 April 2020	93
(e)	1 May 2020	97
(f)	1 June 2020	97
(g)	1 July 2020	97
(h)	1 August 2020	97
(i)	1 September 2020	97
(j)	1 October 2020	97
(k)	1 November 2020	96
(l)	1 December 2020	96
(m)	1 January 2021	96
(n)	1 February 2021	96
(o)	1 March 2021	76
(p)	1 April 2021	76

(q)	1 May 2021	76
(r)	1 June 2021	76
(s)	1 July 2021	76
(t)	1 August 2021	76
(u)	1 September 2021	80

In February 2021, an audit of the mental health officers was undertaken. The appointment of 20 mental health officers was revoked as the officer had either left the service; moved to a different role; or their status as a mental health officer was no longer required.

Questions without notice taken on notice

COVID-19—Condamine Court

Ms Vassarotti (*in reply to a supplementary question by Mr Hanson on Thursday, 16 September 2021*):

ACT Policing supported the ACT Health-led response to Condamine Court, remaining off-site during the operation, ready to assist as needed.

ACT Policing conducted four compliance checks on 23, 25, 26 and 28 August 2021. ACT Policing has not issued any criminal infringement notices to residents of Condamine Court as a result of breaches during quarantine.

Roads—William Hovell Drive

Mr Steel (*in reply to a supplementary question by Ms Clay on Wednesday, 6 October 2021*):

A 2.38km section of the shared path traverses the eastern side of the duplicated road from the new signalised intersection at Drake-Brockman Drive before transiting to the western side for the remainder of the alignment to John Gorton Drive.

The use of the eastern side for this initial 2.38km section has been identified to avoid conflict with a number of other pieces of infrastructure, including the identified Bicentennial National Trail which runs adjacent to William Hovell Drive. The provision of a sealed shared path on the western side would create a conflict with the trail. In addition, there will be a new access road to the Old Weetangera Cemetery built, which would also be required to cross the shared path if it was placed on the western side of this component of the alignment.

In addition to these conflicts, it has been identified by the project team and supported by the ACT Equestrian Association during consultation that a conflict between cyclists and horses at the Bicentennial National Trail underpass would not be suitable and presents an unreasonable risk to horse riders and cyclists.