



Debates

WEEKLY HANSARD

Legislative Assembly for the ACT

TENTH ASSEMBLY

7 APRIL 2022

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Thursday, 7 April 2022

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Thursday, 7 April 2022

The Assembly met at 10.00 am.

(Quorum formed.)

MR ACTING SPEAKER (Mr Parton) (10.02): Members:

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

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

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

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

Leave of absence

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

That leave of absence be granted to Mr Davis for today for health reasons.

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

That leave of absence be granted to Mr Barr and Mr Pettersson for today due to illness.

Children and Young People—ACT Children and Young People's Commitment 2015-2025 Ministerial statement

MS STEPHEN-SMITH (Kurrajong—Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs, Minister for Families and Community Services and Minister for Health) (10.04): I am pleased today to share our progress towards implementing the ACT children and young people's commitment 2015-2025. This commitment reflects the government's vision for a whole-of-community approach to promoting the wellbeing of children and young people from conception to 25 years in the ACT.

Every child in Canberra should have the opportunity to reach their potential, make a contribution, participate in decision-making and share the benefits of our community. The COVID-19 pandemic has impacted the wellbeing of our babies, children, teenagers and young adults. Together with the community, the ACT government has made schools safer, provided vaccinations, helped those in need or in crisis and

supported all young Canberrans—and will continue to do so as the pandemic evolves. However, there is more to do, as we face more challenges across the changing phases of the pandemic.

Mr Acting Speaker, our commitment is to provide access to quality health care, learning and employment opportunities for all children and young people in the ACT. Continuing access to education was part of the ACT government's COVID-19 recovery plan. Set up for Success and the future of education strategy provide a birth-to-18-years education framework, creating solid foundations to empower every child to learn. We acknowledge the role of parents in a child's education, especially in facilitating home learning and the challenges this pandemic has presented during lockdowns. One of the early successes of the future of education strategy was providing supports for students, families and teachers to rapidly shift to online learning in 2020 and 2021.

To lay out gradual and safe steps towards a COVID-normal life in the ACT, a roadmap for ACT public schools was released in June 2020. The roadmap supported the easing of restrictions on parent engagement in school-based activities as soon as possible. Our back to school plan in 2021 was informed by children, young people and their parents. Almost 1,400 students completed an online survey, along with almost 3,400 parents. This gave us insights into making the return to face-to-face learning as positive as possible and helping students feel safe at school.

We responded to the August 2021 lockdown by prioritising vaccinations for education staff and year 12 students, to help get students back into classrooms and ready for exams as soon as possible. As a government we have continued advancing vaccination rollouts directly and through community partnerships. To keep our schools safe, vaccinations are now available for all school-aged children, along with rapid antigen tests for students and staff in our schools. Once again, we listened to the voices of parents, staff and students about what would work best for them.

The evidence demonstrates the positive impact of early years learning on outcomes for later life. Safe learning opportunities were created for our children by Libraries ACT, through creating online videos for the Giggle and Wiggle, story time and bilingual story time programs; launching the summer story walk in January 2021, to promote the health benefits of reading and walking; and the delivery of books through the mystery box program to 1,700 customers, including Canberra families and early childhood education centres.

COVID-19 has impacted young people who are starting their career or who have lost employment opportunities. We have developed a range of pathways and programs to assist young Canberrans in their transition from school to further education or work. This includes delivering an ACT pilot of the innovative Headstart program, allowing 50 ACT public secondary students to take an extra year to complete college and start an apprenticeship or traineeship in a recognised qualification or trade; supporting sessions in ACT schools for young people to access information services about work health and safety and their rights at work, delivered by the Young Workers Advice Service; and providing subsidised training places under the Australian apprenticeships User Choice program. We also extended the ACT JobTrainer program to add

2½ thousand training places over two years. Through JobTrainer, young people can access free vocational education and training in key industries and occupations that are in demand in the ACT, including aged care, disability care, early childhood education and care, and digital skills.

While addressing the challenges of the pandemic, we progressed our key initiatives to promote life-long learning. This helps all individuals to be prepared for new opportunities, empowered with the knowledge and skills they need to make a difference. Through the technology enabled learning program we continued to provide access to technology for ACT public secondary schools. Since 2018, we have supplied 34,000 Chromebook laptops to secondary students. This includes more than 3,000 laptops being deployed to students who were new to ACT public secondary schools at the beginning of 2021. Where secondary students did not have internet at home, we have also provided free access to support their learning.

The ACT government is committed to Canberra's children and young people having access to quality learning environments, and we are continuing to build new schools and deliver upgrades and expansions. This includes construction of the Evelyn Scott School in Denman Prospect to allow the high school to open in 2023; a primary school in Throsby and a high school in Kenny; and delivering new school infrastructure and expansions at Franklin School, Campbell Primary School, Amaroo senior school and Gold Creek Senior School, to name just a few.

We have committed \$12.9 million over four years for a Future of Education Equity fund. These grants will help disadvantaged families meet their children's educational expenses and deliver a two-year trial at five schools to provide breakfast and lunch three days a week for students who require it. Evidence shows children learn better when they have adequate food for the school day, and this trial will support all children to enter the classroom ready to learn regardless of their family circumstances.

Mr Acting Speaker, the mental health of young people remains a key priority. We are improving access to existing mental health services for children and young people by providing an additional \$8½ million over four years, commencing in August 2021, to support the mental health of young people and their families. This new funding will enable the expansion of the operation of Catholic Care's youth and wellbeing program, which offers multidisciplinary outreach support for young people aged 12 to 25 years with mental health concerns, a trial of Orygen's moderated online social therapy program, and funding for Parentline to expand the existing support for parents.

In 2021, we launched Mindmap, the 24/7 online youth navigation portal to help young people, families and carers better navigate mental health services and resources available to Canberrans. In developing Mindmap, the team consulted with young people on what was needed to create an effective mental health online youth navigation portal. The need for this dedicated service was identified by young people themselves during the 2018 ACT Youth Assembly and in the Office for Mental Health and Wellbeing's review of children and young people in 2019.

We are supporting young people to build resilience and encourage help-seeking with the Youth Aware of Mental Health program, a mental health promotion and suicide

prevention program for secondary school students in the ACT. This program reached approximately 3,000 year 9 students across 14 ACT public, Catholic and independent high schools last year. In a study conducted by the Black Dog Institute, students were asked to help evaluate the effectiveness of the program in increasing help-seeking and reducing suicidal ideation and behaviour. The outcomes from this study will contribute to the evidence base for suicide prevention programs in Australian schools and support the ongoing implementation of this program.

We are working collaboratively with the community to recognise and respond to the needs of our younger Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Canberrans. It is important Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people can see themselves and their cultures reflected in our community, schools and health settings. It is our aim that they grow up in their families and communities and experience the same wellbeing outcomes as all other members of the Canberra community.

The government has committed \$20 million over 10 years to a healing and reconciliation fund to support the delivery of local priorities set out in the ACT Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander agreement and the national agreement on closing the gap. This will establish a Ngunnawal language centre and provide opportunities to rediscover and share Ngunnawal language and culture.

We also continue to support our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community-controlled sector in the ACT through improved facilities and amenities to better cater for the needs of children and young people. We have allocated more than \$15 million to the construction of a purpose-built facility for Winnunga Nimmityjah Aboriginal Health and Community Services, and another \$15 million for a purpose-built facility designed in collaboration with Gugan Gulwan Youth Aboriginal Corporation.

Another priority under the commitment is to implement policy that enables the conditions for children and young people to thrive. Access to information helps our community make evidence-based decisions. We are building a new dashboard to better inform the community on the wellbeing of our children and young people. This dashboard is based on the domains and foundations of the ACT wellbeing framework and brings together local and national data to support all Canberrans, to consider how and where they can best contribute to improving the lives of our children and young people in Canberra.

While many children in the ACT are progressing well, an increasing number are falling behind. Data from the most recent national Australian early development census shows an increase in the proportion of children starting school who are developmentally vulnerable across the five domains of physical health and wellbeing, social competence, emotional maturity, language and cognitive skills, and communication and general knowledge.

Children's early years set the groundwork for their life-long learning. Because of this we are making sure every three-year-old can take part in quality early childhood education. This is a key part of Set up for Success, an early childhood strategy for the ACT. We are taking the first step towards this goal through the quality early

childhood education for three-year-olds initiative. Children who would benefit most can access two days per week, 48 weeks per year, of free, high quality early childhood education. Up to 100 places are also available across all five Koori preschools in the ACT for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children. These initiatives will expand to reach more three-year-old children in the coming years.

We are also improving our preschool program, with the new preschool reform agreement with the Australian government providing long-term funding for four-year-old children to access quality preschool programs. This agreement will increase access to, and participation in, quality preschool programs to maximise the benefit of early education and support children to be ready to learn when entering primary school.

Two region-based initiatives are underway to further understand how our community can best support children who are developmentally vulnerable, and ultimately to reduce the number of children in these circumstances. These are the Good Start in Life study, run by the University of Canberra, which looks at how to deliver complex, integrated services and interventions across sectors to improve the health and wellbeing of children who are at risk of developmental vulnerability; and the Village For Every Child program, which identifies issues facing young families in the Belconnen area with the aim of transforming early childhood systems.

We are also developing a five-year strategy for the first 1,000 days. The Best Start for Canberra's Children: the First 1,000 days Strategy, aims to lay strong foundations for children from conception to two years old, mothers and families to improve wellbeing and development in the early years. The strategy will build on extensive research and engagement with a range of experts through a dedicated reference group. We are engaging with people with lived experience, to make sure the strategy is relevant, targeted and useful for those who the system often misses and whose voices are rarely heard directly.

Health promotion programs in schools and early childhood settings reached more than 42,000 students during 2020 and 2021. They supported more than 100 ACT schools and early childhood education and care services to improve students' health literacy and support health promoting environments. These programs, including It's Your Move, Kids at Play Active Play, and Fresh Tastes: healthy food at school, are well embedded and supported by the community.

We are committed to keeping children and young people safe and protecting them from harm. We all play a role to keep children and young people safe. As a community we owe it to our children, young people and families to do everything we can to support them to grow up safe, strong, connected and, wherever possible, together. The business of child protection belongs to us all.

Over the past six years, through the delivery of A Step Up for Our Kids out of home care strategy 2015–2020, the ACT government has achieved a considerable amount to establish a responsive and high functioning out of home care system. The implementation of this strategy has seen a marked change in the way the ACT supported children, young people and families at risk of entering out of home care.

We have increased the stability of children and young people in care, placed a greater emphasis on the remarkable work of carers and helped many young people transition to adulthood.

Notable results have been the increase in families accessing intensive family support services and a decrease in the number of children and young people entering out of home care. Working from a robust evidence base, we also know that the age profile of children and young people entering and living in out of home care has changed, with fewer young people under the age of five entering care and more children and young people in out of home care who are over 10 years old. The behavioural complexity and support needs of children and young people living in out of home care have increased.

Our next stage of reform effort is outlined in a new strategy “next steps for our kids 2022-2030” which is currently being finalised. Our ambitious agenda also builds on an evolving evidence base and on what we have heard from our own community about what works in supporting children, young people and families with complex lives. It recognises the significant challenge of reform in child and youth protection and seeks to engage everyone who has a role to play in keeping children, young people and their families safe and supported. It recognises that success will require doing things differently, both in policy and practice.

The ACT government is pleased to have delivered funding for the Safe and Connected Youth program. This program was developed, and is being delivered, in partnership with the community sector to support children and young people aged eight-to-15 years who are at risk of homelessness due to family conflict. The evaluation of the pilot program showed significant improvements in the outcomes for young people and their families supported by this service. We have allocated \$7 million over the next four years to deliver wraparound services, including therapeutic respite accommodation, early preservation outreach services, mediation and casework, and post-exit outreach. The connection of therapeutic services with respite accommodation offers a safe space for young people to rebuild their relationships with their family.

It is of significant concern that the ACT continues to see unacceptable over-representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people in out of home care. In 2017, the ACT government commissioned a wholly Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander-led review to look at the experiences of First Nations families in the ACT child and youth protection system.

The final report of *Our Booris, Our Way* was completed in 2019. While work is underway to implement the 28 recommendations and eight sub-recommendations, there is much more to do. We are continuing to implement the agreed recommendations from the *Our Booris, Our Way* report. This includes improving accessible and appropriate early support programs for drug and alcohol rehabilitation, family violence, mental health and trauma, as well as delivering funding for a temporary Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families advocate while we establish a permanent Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children’s commissioner. When in place, the commissioner will advise the government on a

broad spectrum of issues that impact Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people in the ACT and provide independent advice on issues of culture and equity.

When Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people, their families and communities have equitable access to culturally safe restorative justice practices, prevention and diversion programs, they can thrive. In the ACT's National Agreement on Closing the Gap implementation plan, there are bold targets to reduce the over-representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people in the criminal justice system. Under the commitment we are also advocating for the importance of the rights of children and young people. We recognise that children who come into contact with the youth justice system often have complex lives.

While young people need to be accountable for the impact of their actions on others, it is better for everyone if they are supported to address their challenges and diverted from the justice system. That is why this government, in partnership with the community sector, is working towards raising the minimum age of criminal responsibility from the current 10 years of age. To ensure the reform is successful, we are committed to improving accessible services and support for all children, young people and their families in the ACT. These services will help children and young people access timely and holistic support before, during and after a crisis.

The disability justice strategy has established a community of practice to support people with disability, their carers and supporters to navigate the justice system. One aspect of the work of the community of practice is to support people to understand their rights, access information and better understand the justice system. This has included working with Child and Youth Protection Services to create plain language information sheets for parents and kinship carers about therapeutic assessments and declared care teams.

We have also made significant progress in protecting the rights of LGBTIQ+ children and young people to live their lives free from stigma and discrimination. We recognise that for children and young people to thrive, they should be able to express identity, feel a sense of belonging and participate fully in society. The Capital of Equality strategy is designed to deliver equitable outcomes for LGBTIQ+ Canberrans.

Our progress includes legislative changes such as passing the Births, Deaths and Marriages Registration Amendment Act 2020—which provides independent pathways for intersex, transgender and gender diverse young people under the age of 18 to apply to change their name and registered sex in the ACT register of births to better reflect their gender identity—and the Sexuality and Gender Identity Conversion Practices Act 2020, which came into effect on 4 March 2021 and protects Canberrans from harmful sexuality and gender identity conversion practices.

We want to support mainstream services to be LGBTIQ+ safe, inclusive and appropriate, particularly in health and education settings. Under the Capital of Equality strategy, we are working to improve the health and wellbeing of intersex people with legislation to protect their human rights in medical settings, to be

finalised in 2022. Intersex people are further supported by a dedicated intersex peer support officer at A Gender Agenda.

In November 2021, the Office for Mental Health and Wellbeing released the guidance to support gender affirming care for mental health. The guidance was developed as a collaboration between the Office for Mental Health and Wellbeing, the Office of LGBTIQ+ Affairs, the ACT Health Directorate, A Gender Agenda and Meridian. It is a first of its kind in Australia and has been designed to support providers of mental health care to deliver their services in a gender affirming way and support the specific needs of trans and gender diverse people.

We are also supporting LGBTIQ+ youth at schools through the Safe and Inclusive Schools Initiative. The *Supporting students affirming gender at school: good practice guide* helps school communities to be proactive in gender inclusive practice and support students when they share or express their gender identity at school. More work on supporting LGBTIQ+ Canberrans will continue through the second action plan of the Capital of Equality strategy which was recently released. The commitment also looks to build strong families and communities that are inclusive and support and nurture children and young people. The evidence is clear that a family's needs are best met with earlier support while their children are very young or when problems emerge. Children and young people feel better supported and more sustained if they use a family's natural resources such as their extended family or community networks.

We have built a strong universal service system that focuses on the importance of early years development and welcomes families to seek advice and supports to meet their needs. Programs delivered through the child and family centres and Child Development Service continued during the COVID-19 pandemic and offered new and innovative ways to connect with families and provide tailored support. This included the CFCs supporting families by working with community partners such as GIVIT, Roundabout and the Salvation Army to supply clothing, food vouchers and financial relief to families impacted by lockdown.

The CFCs produced weekly newsletters and kids activity books during the 2021 COVID-19 lockdown period for all families case managed by the centres. Each week, the newsletters were structured around a theme—for example, “self-care” and “staying safe during lockdown”. The newsletters included parenting tips, links to useful websites and healthy living advice. The Child Development Service delivered over 14 online drop-in clinics during the 2021 lockdown period for speech pathology, physiotherapy and occupational therapy, providing information and advice to more than 140 families.

Whilst we have a network of quality services and supports in place for families, during consultation to develop the Next Steps for Our Kids 2022-2030 strategy, families, community sector service providers and other ACT government agencies told us that the current service system is fragmented; that pathways to support need to be improved; and that funding arrangements need to reflect a joined-up system of child, youth and family services operating with a shared framework. Working across government, we need to use the expertise of children and young people, parents and

carers with lived experience to help improve service models, policies and practice. I look forward to our joint work to progress this.

Mr Acting Speaker, we recognise the critical role and value of play in enriching the lives of Canberrans of all ages and in creating a healthy, connected, vibrant and sustainable Canberra. The ACT government owns and manages 515 publicly accessible play spaces across Canberra, based in our local neighbourhoods and central districts. These play spaces provide children with a variety of play opportunities that help them develop cognitively, physically, socially and emotionally.

Based on consultation and extensive community engagement, the play space strategy maps out how we will maintain and improve these important community assets. This includes a focus on delivering more diverse types of play, such as bike tracks, water and nature play and fitness equipment. This strategy will help guide future planning across the entire play space network, to give all Canberrans ready access to a mix of district, central and local neighbourhood playgrounds.

The continuing expansion of active travel networks, footpaths and cycle paths has provided children and families with improved safety, health and wellbeing. Our slower streets initiative aims to encourage children, young people and families to be active in the community. Our changed approaches to schooling and working as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic have created opportunities for families to consider new ways to travel in their local communities.

Finally, we must prioritise including children and young people in decision-making, especially in areas that affect them—ensuring they are informed and have a voice. Children and young people have a right to have their say in decisions that affect them and to have their opinions valued and considered. We are embracing the principles of co-design, to invite creativity and innovation into a space with the voice of lived experience, where we can safely identify the real problems.

The consultation and co-design undertaken by the Office of the Coordinator-General for Family Safety provided unique insights that truly represent the experiences and needs of children and young people. Over a six-month period, the ACT Children and Young People Commissioner and the Office of the Coordinator-General for Family Safety listened to 70 young Canberrans, 35 of whom had lived with family violence. These conversations made it possible to hear directly from young people about their experiences and the support they need.

The insights from these consultations have been published and shared widely in our community sector and across government. They provide the foundation for future supports and services and have so far informed two new initiatives: “got your back” is a peer support program for young people aged 12 to 25 years experiencing domestic and family violence run by Relationships Australia; and Relationships Australia and the ACT Youth Coalition are partnering with the Office of the Coordinator-General for Family Safety to build capability in the youth sector to recognise and respond to domestic and family violence.

We have undertaken co-design activities with children and young people at risk of homelessness to understand their needs. The ACT housing strategy provides a commitment to reducing homelessness and addressing gaps in our services system and to responding to new and emerging groups vulnerable to homelessness. Recent co-design activities undertaken by the Community Services Directorate include a therapeutic residential care home for young people in out of home care, a collaboration between Child and Youth Protection Services and Housing ACT and, as part of the Safe and Connected Youth program, the redevelopment of a Housing ACT property, co-designed with young people who have a lived experience of homelessness.

We continue to provide opportunities for young people to have a voice in the plans we develop and the platforms we introduce. The ACT Youth Advisory Council gives young people aged between 12 and 25 years an opportunity to take a leading role on issues that affect their lives and ways to raise concerns of young people with government and the community. The council has a key role in giving young people a voice to the ACT government. In 2021, the council published a consent brochure that was developed by young people for young people from diverse backgrounds, gender and sexualities. Sexual consent is a fundamental issue that impacts the safety of young people in our community. The brochure is a starting point for young people to have an open conversation about consent and supports young people to be comfortable in their sexual decisions.

In June 2021, the government, in partnership with the council, hosted the 2021 ACT youth assembly. It provided young Canberrans aged 12 to 25 years an opportunity to engage with the ACT government and share ideas on how to advance the agenda for youth issues. We had 109 young people with diverse backgrounds and experiences attend the Assembly to share ideas and develop innovative solutions to issues related to young people's roles in an inclusive society: environment and sustainability, resilience, rights and respectful relationships, and youth employment. The 2021 ACT youth assembly report includes recommendations for the ACT government and will be released in mid-2022.

We support opportunities for ACT students to come together to discuss issues which matter to them and affect their education. The ACT minister's student congress is a student voice initiative. Participating in the congress provides public school students experience in leadership, in advocacy, in organisational and networking skills as well as with opportunities to interact with government. In the past year, the congress addressed the pandemic response and gave advice on how to best support the move to online learning and then back to the classroom.

Mr Acting Speaker, it is exciting to see the progress we have all made towards the ACT children and young people's commitment 2015-2025. We know that we need a whole-of-community approach to further enhance the wellbeing of children and young people in Canberra. The challenges faced in recent years have presented us with new ideas and ways of working together. The upcoming release of the children and young people wellbeing dashboard will provide greater transparency on the

progress we are making to support children and young people to grow and thrive in our community. I present the following paper:

ACT Children and Young People's Commitment 2015-2025—Progress update on the implementation—Ministerial statement, 7 April 2022.

I move:

That the Assembly take note of the paper.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

Human rights—Discrimination Law Reform 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) (10.34): I am pleased today to provide an update on the government's commitment to review the Discrimination Act as part of the implementation of the Capital of Equality Strategy 2019-23, and as reflected in the parliamentary and governing agreement.

Protections in our Discrimination Act play a vital role in supporting our diverse community. This review is an important reform to make sure our Discrimination Act is at the forefront of best practice, and that we have the legal framework to promote equal opportunity, respect and inclusion.

Our Discrimination Act is now over 30 years old. Members may recall that the act underwent significant reforms following the ACT Law Reform Advisory Council's 2015 final report into the *Review of the Discrimination Act 1991*. However, there is still more to do. These reforms build on and draw from the LRAC report, as it is known, to further modernise our discrimination law.

To this effect, a public consultation was launched in October 2021 via the Your Say website, with a discussion paper and eight short consultation guides to help the community understand the proposals for reform. Individuals and organisations were invited to make a submission by sending an email or leaving a voice message. Participants also had the option to complete a short survey with 15 key questions arising from the discussion paper. The discussion paper invited members of the community to comment on four broad areas of proposed reform. These areas were expanding the coverage of the Discrimination Act, replacing the exceptions to unlawful discrimination with a new single justification defence, refining the existing exceptions, and introducing a positive duty to prevent discrimination.

Through the public consultation the government received 25 submissions and 17 survey responses. We facilitated three community roundtables, including one with religious bodies, and provided 14 tailored briefings to government and non-government organisations. The government received feedback on the proposed

reforms from peak bodies, government advisory groups, community legal centres, academics, advocacy groups and members of the community.

I am pleased to present to the Assembly a listening report summarising what we heard from the community, including valuable suggestions and creative ideas about how discrimination law can be improved in the ACT. As of this morning, the listening report is now publicly available on the Your Say website.

The first issue that the listening report addresses is the proposal to expand the coverage of the Discrimination Act. LRAC identified several areas that are not explicitly covered by the existing Discrimination Act, including sports, competitions and certain government functions. There was in our consultation almost universal support for expanding the coverage of the Discrimination Act. While there was support for the Discrimination Act to cover all areas of public life, the difficulty in defining “public life” and “private life” was acknowledged in many of the submissions.

There was strong support for ensuring that discrimination protections cover all functions of government, consistent with the Human Rights Act, which imposes human rights obligations on public authorities in all of their activities and decisions.

The government also asked the community to share its views on removing all exceptions and replacing them with a “single justification defence” that is similar in concept to the balancing of rights under the Human Rights Act. As an alternative, we asked how we could refine and improve the existing exceptions.

There was little support from the community for removing all of the exceptions in the Discrimination Act. This was primarily due to concerns that a single justification defence would make discrimination law more uncertain and result in more litigation. Instead there was considerable support for reforming the existing exceptions to better protect rights.

The listening report outlines the community’s views on reforms to exceptions that relate to acts done to comply with the law, religious bodies, voluntary bodies, licensed clubs, sport, work, employing workers in private homes, and insurance and superannuation companies.

There was also very strong support for the proposal to introduce into the Discrimination Act a positive duty to eliminate discrimination. Minister Gentleman touched on this a little yesterday in his ministerial statement on psychosocial work hazards. The listening report outlines a range of views provided by the community about how to implement this duty. The community made suggestions about how organisations can be supported to meet this duty and how the duty can be tailored to reflect the size and resources of different organisations.

The community also had some suggestions for other ways that discrimination law could be improved in the ACT. The listening report outlines ideas in relation to definitions, to discrimination issues in the community, to protected attributes and to religious discrimination. The community provided feedback about discrimination

complaints, exceptions, exemptions, culture and education. The listening report also outlines comments received regarding legal assistance, discrimination against Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, and consultation with vulnerable and disadvantaged people.

I would like to sincerely thank the Canberra community for their engagement in the consultation process. Their considered feedback is forming the basis of the amendments to the Discrimination Act. My sincere thanks also to JACS officials for all of their work in facilitating this consultation process, preparing the listening report and, importantly, progressing these reforms. There will be further opportunity for the community to provide input into these reforms. A consultation draft of a discrimination amendment bill will be released for further feedback from the public in the coming months.

I look forward to working with the community to ensure that the ACT continues to lead the way with progressive and fair discrimination law. These reforms are an important step in positioning Canberra as the capital of equality. I present the following papers:

Discrimination Law Reform Listening Report—

Ministerial statement, 7 April 2022.

YourSay Report, dated April 2022.

I move:

That the Assembly take note of the papers.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

Education Amendment Bill 2022

Ms Berry, pursuant to notice, as amended, by leave, presented the bill, its explanatory statement and a Human Rights Act compatibility statement.

Title read by Clerk.

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) (10.43): I move:

That this bill be agreed to in principle.

The Education Amendment Bill 2022 that I present today amends the Education Act 2004 and Education Regulation 2005 to continue the government's work in ensuring that all schools in the ACT are providing high quality education, with the appropriate systems in place to ensure our children and young people are safe and are able to access education.

The ACT Future of Education Strategy, released in 2018, outlines the ACT government's vision for the next 10 years for improved education for all ACT students in all schools that will build their skills and capabilities, and meet the needs and aspirations of our next generation.

Through the Future of Education Strategy, one of the first actions under the foundation of "systems supporting learning" is to review and amend the act. This bill is part of a third phase of amendments to the act. The first phase was through the Education (Child Safety in Schools) Legislation Bill 2018 and the second phase was through the Education Amendment Bill 2020.

These amendments will clarify and update the processes for suspension, transfer, expulsion and exclusion for all schooling sectors; strengthen the reporting of unenrolments, terminations of contract, transfers, expulsions and exclusions by all schooling sectors; clarify the role of non-government school principals and proprietors, and their legislative and compliance obligations; streamline the non-government school registration process and requirements, including a shift from periodic registration to ongoing registration with risk-based reviews; and amending the powers of the registrar to review and support compliance with the act in non-government schools, in consultation with a registration standards advisory board.

The amendments proposed in the bill have been developed in consultation with key stakeholder groups, including the Association of Independent Schools of the ACT; Catholic Education, Archdiocese of Canberra and Goulburn; education unions; parent and citizen associations; students; and relevant statutory authorities. These stakeholders are key partners in delivering the reforms proposed by the bill and they, like this government, are committed to ensuring that children have access to high quality education and that our students stay connected to the education system.

Reports such as the interim report of the Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability have identified that nationally there are reports of disproportionate use of suspensions and expulsions for students with disability. Therefore the sections in the Education Act 2004 relating to suspensions, transfers and exclusions were identified as needing reform to provide clarity for when and why they can be used and to also provide safeguards for all students, including students with disability.

In the current act, provisions relating to suspensions are combined with exclusions and transfers in one section. This applies to government, Catholic system and independent schools. The amalgamation of three different concepts within the one section has caused significant confusion for schools, parents and students. In clarifying and updating the processes for suspension, transfer, expulsion and exclusion for all schooling sectors we have separated out these concepts into discrete sections and provided a meaning of "unsafe or noncompliant behaviour", which is the rationale for enacting a suspension, transfer, expulsion or exclusion.

We have also added in the requirement to exhaust all reasonable alternatives before deciding to suspend, transfer, expel or exclude a student, and clearly outlined the requirements for communicating with parents and students for any of these actions.

Suspensions should only be used to for the purpose of ensuring a safe and effective learning environment at the school. Therefore clarity for all schools as to the reasons why a suspension can be enacted will assist to distinguish between behaviour management responses and proactive strategies to support a student's wellbeing and to manage safety. This aims to safeguard against the misuse of suspensions in ACT schools and will result in consistency in practice for schools across both government and non-government systems.

Should a student be suspended, to be compliant with section 27A of the Human Rights Act 2004, the act also requires the school to outline how they intend to support the student to continue their education during the suspension. It has also been outlined that the principal of a school must review any reasonable adjustments in place for the student, and make any reasonable adjustments the principal considers would support the student to return to school safely. These amendments proactively respond to the interim report of the Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability.

Through the bill we have also clarified the sections relating to transfers and exclusions. The current definition of "exclusion" in the act has different meanings for different sectors. For government and Catholic system schools, it means preventing the student from continuing to be enrolled or being re-enrolled at any school within that system; whereas for an independent school it means preventing the student from continuing to be enrolled or being re-enrolled at a particular independent school.

This inconsistency causes significant confusion and, to address this, a new category of "expulsion" has been created to apply to preventing the student from continuing to be enrolled or being re-enrolled at a particular non-government school. The term "exclusion" now refers to preventing the student from continuing to be enrolled or being re-enrolled in a particular system of schools and applies to both the government and Catholic systems. However, as a human rights jurisdiction, we have an obligation to provide free education to every child, in a government school. Therefore exclusion from a government school is only possible for a child who is not of compulsory education age, which means a child who is under six years old or is over 17 years. Amendments have been made to clarify that these are the only circumstances in which exclusion from the government system of schools can occur.

The proposed amendments to suspension, transfer, expulsion and exclusion will provide clear parameters in which these actions can be taken, as well as balance the right of the child to an education alongside the safety and wellbeing of the student, other students and staff at the school. The bill also strengthens the reporting of unenrolments, terminations of contract, transfers, expulsions and exclusions, by all schooling sectors.

Since the coronial inquest into the death of Bradyn Stuart Dillon, there has been focus on the need to monitor the movement of students between schools, to ensure students stay connected with the education system. Oversight of the student movement also enables the identification of known signs of risk and vulnerability, such as multiple movements between schools within a short period of time.

The bill proposes amendments to require the reporting of transfers, the newly created category of expulsion, exclusions, unenrolments and contract terminations by all schools within five days of occurrence, through the directorate's student movement register. Oversight and monitoring of the student movement register will be the responsibility of the Education Directorate, which includes following up on students who have not re-enrolled at a new school or education provider or registered for home education.

This is a critical expansion of the directorate's role to ensure all children and young people in the ACT are connected with education and the protective factors that education brings. The amendments to non-government school registration and review acknowledge that the majority of non-government schools already consistently deliver high quality educational services and are compliant with their legislative requirements.

The current requirements for these schools to obtain registration renewal every five years can provide an administrative burden and detract their focus from their core business, which is educating children and young people.

In addition to the need to streamline processes for non-government school registration, the Education Directorate's need to respond to recommendations from the ACT Human Rights Commission has also partly shaped the focus of the non-government schools section of bill. Amendments to the bill include the introduction of non-government school registration standards, which will replace the existing registration criteria currently in the act. They cover four key areas of governance, educational courses and educational programs, safety and welfare, and other operational requirements.

To oversee these new registration standards and processes to support compliance, the amendments propose to reorganise the oversight mechanisms for non-government schools. Registration for non-government schools is currently administered by a registrar of non-government schools, the registrar, who I appoint. To support the introduction of registration standards, it is proposed to create a registration standards advisory board, with the day-to-day administrative functions remaining with the Education Directorate, through the registrar. Members of the board will have appropriate experience and expertise to provide advice on matters relating to, and compliance with, the registration standards.

To acknowledge that the majority of non-government schools are compliant with their legislative requirements and to reduce the administrative burden for non-government schools, it is proposed to move away from five-year registration, instead enabling ongoing registration with risk-based review cycles that consider compliance with the registration standards administered by the registrar and supported by authorised persons.

Before the end of each calendar year, the registrar, in consultation with the board, will prepare a program for registration reviews of registered schools that the registrar intends to conduct in the next calendar year. The program for the reviews will outline the registered schools to be reviewed during the year and the areas of focus for registration reviews.

Reviews can also be conducted after a concern is raised about a school's non-compliance with the act. Should a school be found to be non-compliant with the act, at present, the only power available is to cancel a non-government school's registration. However, cancellation of a school's registration for a low-level instance of non-compliance is disproportionate; therefore, in consultation with key stakeholders, a wider range of actions has been developed.

In the instances of low to medium risk non-compliance, following advice from the board, a proprietor of a non-government school can be issued with a compliance direction. For medium to high non-compliance, following advice from the board, the amendments enable the minister to take regulatory action such as imposing or amending a registration condition for the school, cancelling the school's registration or cancelling the school's registration and disqualifying the proprietor of the school from applying for a further registration.

As I said previously, the majority of non-government schools already consistently deliver high quality educational services and are compliant with their legislative requirements; therefore we do not expect to have to take regulatory action. However, by including a wider range of regulatory actions in the act, we have the ability to do so, should an instance of serious non-compliance arise.

This means that the community can continue to be confident in the education provided by the non-government sector and know that oversight of the registration of these schools is supported by a strong set of registration standards and the advice of an advisory board comprised of members with appropriate experience and expertise.

The amendments in the Education Amendment Bill 2022 take important steps in ensuring that children and young people have access to education, by providing clarity as to when a suspension, transfer, expulsion or exclusion can be enacted, and outlines the steps that must be taken prior to taking these actions. It also ensures oversight of student movement through the reporting of unenrolments, terminations of contract, transfers, expulsions and exclusions by all schooling sectors.

The bill also streamlines the non-government school registration and review process, outlines clear registration standards and introduces the registration standards advisory board to support the oversight of non-government schools. It also includes powers to take regulatory action, should a school be non-compliant with the act. These changes will ensure that non-government schools can get on with the core business of educating our children and young people.

Further phases of legislative reform will continue over time and be informed through consultation with key stakeholders, including non-government schools and education unions, in the same way as for this bill presented today, in continued implementation of the Future of Education Strategy.

This government is committed to ensuring the protection of children and young people, and this bill makes our commitment clear. I commend the bill to the Assembly.

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

Fair Trading and Other Justice Legislation Amendment Bill 2022

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) (10.59): I move:

That this bill be agreed to in principle.

I am pleased to present the Fair Trading and Other Justice Legislation Amendment Bill 2022 to the Assembly. The bill makes amendments across four primary legislative acts and their corresponding regulations. It is an omnibus bill which primarily makes amendments within my portfolio responsibilities as the Minister for Consumer Affairs. However, the bill also includes amendments which fall within the portfolio of the Special Minister of State. The amendments will improve regulatory frameworks to promote greater consumer protection outcomes for our community.

The bill will make significant reforms to the regulation of the real estate industry by amending the Agents Act and regulation to improve professional standards and qualifications and streamline the licensing framework for the industry.

Significant trust is placed in real estate professionals by consumers in our community. Almost every Canberran will have some sort of interaction with real estate agents at some point, whether that be through the management of their rental property or through the sale or purchase of property. While most agents undertake their role and responsibilities in accordance with regulatory and community expectations, there has been some suggestion by industry and consumers alike that the industry would benefit from updated educational and qualification requirements.

The amendments to the Agents Act and Agents Regulation recognise and address the need for a highly skilled real estate industry workforce by introducing a new licensing framework to support the implementation of the national real estate training package. The national training package was commissioned by the Australian government and was designed to ensure that qualifications reflect industry roles and clearly define the skills and roles within the profession. These amendments will provide consistency with educational standards in place in other jurisdictions and will help to ensure that all parts of our real estate sector are appropriately trained to carry out their duties ethically, professionally and in accordance with the law.

Under the amendments, agent licences will be divided into class 1 and class 2 licences. From 1 July 2022, all licensees-in-charge of a real estate business must hold a class 1 agent licence, and this licence class will be subject to higher education qualification requirements.

The bill also introduces a specific land auctioneering licence and makes it an offence for anyone to conduct a land auction without holding a land auctioneers licence. From 1 July 2022, individuals seeking to conduct auctions will be required to hold either a class 1 or class 2 agent licence and complete three units of auctioneering-specific training.

To minimise disruption to the industry, the bill includes a transitional measure to allow existing agents who are licensed prior to the commencement of the reforms to continue to conduct auctions without a land auctioneering licence until 1 July 2024. This arrangement is subject to the condition that existing agents complete three units of auctioneering-specific training within this two-year period. This new licence class recognises that sales by auction inherently pose a greater risk to consumers as they are often unconditional and without a cooling-off period. Canberrans can be confident that agents who hold a land auctioneering licence have the necessary understanding and skills to complete their duties lawfully and diligently.

Additionally, the bill renames “salespersons” as “assistant agents” to signal to the community that, while this registration group provides important services to the community, it is an entry-level position and they are not subject to the same level of training as licensed agents.

The ACT government recognises that consumers have a reasonable expectation that real estate professionals are only able to carry out activities for which they have appropriate training, knowledge and qualifications. It is recognised that educational standards and the activities that can be performed under separate licence and registration categories must maximise protection for the community. Accordingly, the bill also restricts the activities an assistant agent may undertake as part of their registration so that, from 1 July 2022, assistant agents will be restricted from conducting auctions and withdrawing trust money.

In addition to these restrictions, all assistant agents registered after 1 July 2022 will be prevented from entering into agency agreements. This means that assistant agents will no longer be able to sign an agency agreement that binds a property owner and a real estate agency—or themselves as assistant agent—to lease or sell a property on a property owner’s behalf. Noting the need to provide a transitional period for existing assistant agents registered prior to commencement of the reforms, the restriction from entering agency agreements will apply to these registration holders from 1 July 2023.

A range of strict liability offences have also been included in the bill to support the appropriate enforcement of this new licensing framework. Under the amendments, the qualification and experience requirements prescribed for each registration and licence class will be determined by the Commissioner for Fair Trading using a disallowable instrument.

The qualification requirements will be updated in the disallowable instrument in accordance with the national training package. It is intended that, from 1 July 2022, all new entrants who wish to work as an assistant agent must complete five units prior to registration and an additional five units within their first 12 months as a registered

assistant agent. Likewise, a Certificate IV in Real Estate Practice and 12 months experience as an assistant agent will be required for a class 2 agent and a Diploma of Property (Agency Management) and two years experience as an agent will be required to be licensed as a class 1 agent.

The bill also contains amendments to remove barriers to work for highly skilled applicants by allowing the Commissioner for Fair Trading to grant exemptions from prescribed qualification requirements for applicants who hold an equivalent higher qualification. This means that applicants who hold relevant diploma or university degree qualifications will be able to enter the industry without having to reskill or complete a lower qualification.

A range of transitional arrangements have been included in the bill to minimise any disruption to the industry. As part of these arrangements, existing salespersons will be automatically transitioned to an assistant agent registration. Similarly, existing agents will be automatically transitioned to either a class 2 agent licence or a class 1 agent licence, depending on their experience and whether they have worked as a licensee-in-charge of a real estate business.

Given the significant responsibility held by licensees-in-charge as the overarching supervisor of a real estate business, class 1 agent licences issued to existing agents will be subject to a condition that they complete seven units of gap training by 1 July 2024. The imposition of gap training means the community can have confidence that agents who hold a class 1 licence have completed training across core risk areas of the profession, such as compliance, trust management and ethics.

The bill also contains amendments to the licensing framework for gaming machine suppliers within the Gaming Machine Act 2004 and the Gaming Machine Regulation 2001. The amendments support the ACT government's commitment to reduce gambling harm through strengthening consumer frameworks.

Firstly, the amendments provide that only corporations rather than individuals are eligible to be approved as suppliers of gaming machines. A gaming machine supplier enables a person to sell, install or maintain gaming machines and the equipment or systems designed for use with gaming machines. The amendments give effect to how the industry operates in practice. No individual has been licensed as a sole operator gaming machine supplier in the territory in the time the current act has been in effect. Due to the complexity of manufacturing, selling or servicing machines to national standards, it is unlikely that an individual would operate in such a capacity.

Given the technical nature of this occupation, the amendments to corporatise supplier approvals should mitigate risk to gaming machine users if individuals are approved as suppliers within the ACT. The amendments to limit approvals to corporations mean that gaming machine suppliers are registered as companies under the commonwealth Corporations Act. This ensures that the entities are subject to additional regulatory checks, as all companies must comply with various notification and reporting requirements under the commonwealth act.

The bill also makes amendments to the Race and Sports Bookmaking Act 2001 and the Race and Sports Bookmaking Regulation 2001 to provide that only corporations and not individuals or syndicates may hold a sports bookmaking licence. Sports bookmaking involves carrying on the business of receiving or negotiating sports bets, other than conducting a totalisator. As the only licensed sports bookmaker in the ACT is a corporate bookmaker, the amendments to remove individuals from the licensing provision give effect to how the industry currently operates in the territory.

The amendments are intended to maintain a public health approach to gambling harm prevention within the ACT. In 2020-21, 17 per cent of clients of the ACT Gambling Support Service listed sports betting as the most problematic form of gambling for them. The amendments to restrict sports bookmaker licences to corporations is expected to limit the number of people who can apply for a licence in the future to help mitigate the risk of an increase in sports betting services over time.

As with the amendments to the licensing framework for gaming machine suppliers, the amendments to the Race and Sports Bookmaking Act will also ensure that sports bookmakers are subject to a more robust and multifaceted regulatory environment due to their registration under the Corporations Act.

The bill also makes a range of minor and technical amendments to the Retirement Villages Act and the Retirement Villages Regulation to clarify uncertainties predominantly relating to meeting procedures. These changes seek to help retirement village residents better understand their rights and obligations.

I am pleased to report to the Assembly that the bill being introduced today is a human rights compliant bill which will significantly enhance consumer protections for our community. I commend the bill to the Assembly.

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

Environment, Climate Change and Biodiversity—Standing Committee

Statement by chair

DR PATERSON (Murrumbidgee) (11.11): Pursuant to standing order 246A, I wish to make a statement on behalf of the Standing Committee on Environment, Climate Change and Biodiversity.

At its private meeting on 29 March 2022, the committee resolved not to conduct an inquiry into the fossil emblem for the ACT. The committee noted that the ACT government had conducted a public vote on five fossils specific to the ACT that were selected by experts in the industry. A total of 1,135 votes were cast, with the winning fossil, *Batocara mitchelli*, receiving 30 per cent of the votes. There are a lot of enthusiastic fossil people in the ACT.

The fossil that was chosen is one of the most common fossils found in the ACT. It is a trilobite, a marine animal that lived in the water that used to cover the ACT. The

committee recommends that the Assembly adopt *Batocara mitchelli* as the fossil emblem for the ACT, as selected by the ACT community through the public vote.

Executive business—precedence

Ordered that executive business be called on.

World Health Day

MS STEPHEN-SMITH (Kurrajong—Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs, Minister for Families and Community Services and Minister for Health) (11.13): I move:

That this Assembly:

(1) notes:

- (a) each year the World Health Organization celebrates World Health Day to promote global awareness of the importance of health and focus attention on a specific theme that impacts people all over the world; and
- (b) that World Health Day in 2022 is occurring on 7 April and the 2022 theme is “Our planet, our health”;

(2) recognises the impact of climate change on the health and wellbeing of people and on the health of the planet;

(3) notes the ACT Government:

- (a) has joined the Global Green and Healthy Hospitals network; and
- (b) is investigating a formal commitment to the World Health Organization’s COP26 Health Programme goals;

(4) acknowledges the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic across the world and the ACT; and

(5) conveys its thanks to all health workers who have provided exceptional care throughout this pandemic and continue to protect the ACT community.

I rise today to move this motion on World Health Day and recognise that each year the World Health Organization celebrates World Health Day to promote global awareness of the importance of health and to shine a light on a specific theme that impacts people all over the world. The theme for World Health Day this year is Our Planet, Our Health.

The World Health Organization is urging all nations and societies to take action to keep people and the planet healthy and to foster wellbeing across society. The health and wellbeing of people and the planet are closely interlinked, and climate change is a health issue as much as it is an environmental one. According to the World Health Organization, environmental factors are responsible for almost a quarter of the global burden of disease.

This government believes that everyone should have the right to live in a healthy environment, and I thank Ms Clay for introducing a separate motion to this effect

earlier this year in response to the United Nations Human Rights Council declaration that the right to a healthy environment is a human right. It is timely that this year's World Health Day recognises the link between our health, our planet, our rights and the need for equity.

The ACT government is committed to ensuring that the health and wellbeing of all Canberrans is at the forefront of our decision-making, through the ACT wellbeing framework. Wellbeing is about all Canberrans having the opportunity and ability to lead lives of personal and community value, with qualities such as good health, time to enjoy the things that matter, and an environment that promotes personal growth and is sustainable.

The World Health Day 2022 theme, Our Planet, Our Health, serves to remind us that more can be done to mitigate the impacts of climate change and adapt to these locally, nationally and globally. The World Health Organization notes that globally more than 90 per cent of people breathe unhealthy air resulting from the burning of fossil fuels. A heating world is seeing mosquitoes spread disease further and faster than ever before. We have been seeing the impact of mosquito-spread disease in the recent outbreak of the Japanese encephalitis virus in Australia and the human and animal health impacts of that, as well as the cost to society of then ameliorating and addressing those impacts.

Extreme weather events, land degradation and water scarcity are displacing people and affecting their health. Pollution and plastics are found at the bottom of our deepest oceans and have made their way into our food chain. Food systems that are skewed towards highly processed, unhealthy food and beverages are driving a wave of obesity, increasing cancer and heart disease, but they are also generating a third of global greenhouse gas emissions.

The ACT government has been considering and responding to the growing risks of climate change and these impacts on the ACT community and government operations for more than a decade. The ACT government has been preparing for climate change by adopting a variety of policy responses, including the ACT Climate Change Strategy 2019-25 and Canberra's Living Infrastructure Plan: Cooling the City. These strategies focus on actions which set us up to adapt to and mitigate the effects of climate change in the territory.

We are beginning to see the real-world impacts of climate change on Australia and in the ACT. Over the previous four years we have seen firsthand the environmental and community impacts of extreme heat, bushfires, drought and severe storms in the ACT, as well as the terrible impacts of floods across Australia's eastern seaboard. The health impacts of climate change are tangible and significant. These include respiratory and heart disease, mental illness, allergies, injuries, food poisoning and poor nutrition. And these are just some of the ways that a changing climate affects us all.

If we want to continue to achieve our shared vision of Canberra being the healthiest place in the world to live and a city of high wellbeing for all, we must continue to develop ways to respond and adapt our health sector to our changing climate and

environment. The next five years are vital for increased climate change action. The latest report from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change highlights the need for rapid emissions reductions and adaptation to climate impacts. The ACT government will continue to plan and respond to climate change so that we can continue to enjoy the high quality of health and wellbeing that the ACT provides to its communities.

The Global Green and Healthy Hospitals network is an international community of hospitals, healthcare facilities, health systems and health organisations working to achieve measurable outcomes in improving sustainability at their facilities while promoting environmental health in their communities. The ACT government committed to the network in the Climate Change Strategy 2019-25, in order to improve sustainability performance and reduce emissions from ACT health facilities.

Consistent with this commitment, the ACT health system has joined the Global Green and Healthy Hospitals network, which is a project of Health Care Without Harm, one of the lead organisations involved in COP26. Supported by the World Health Organization, Health Care Without Harm and the UNFCCC Climate Champions, the COP26 Health Program enables transformational change to protect the health of people and the planet.

Initiatives under the COP26 Health Program include: building climate-resilient health systems; developing low-carbon sustainable health systems; adaptable research for health; the inclusion of health priorities in nationally determined contributions; and raising the voice of health professionals as advocates for stronger ambition on climate change. Two of the program's key initiatives support countries in developing climate-resilient and low-carbon sustainable health systems. The ACT government is investigating how we can commit to the COP26 Health Program goals and will continue to advocate for this important work at a national level.

A key area of concern for the ACT in recent years is the impact of bushfire smoke on air quality. On 11 November 2021, the ACT government released its bushfire smoke and air quality strategy, a whole-of-government approach to prevent, prepare for, respond to and recover from significant bushfire smoke events and our management of the smoke from wood heaters.

This strategy sets out key actions over the next four years, including strengthening wood heater emission standards, enhancing air quality monitoring and forecasting, identifying and supporting smoke refuges and providing economic support for those effected by severe bushfire smoke. I want to acknowledge Minister Vassarotti for really taking the lead in delivering this strategy and continuing to work on these initiatives.

The ACT government is also focusing on addressing the risk factors that lead to poorer health outcomes. We are striving to create healthier environments to prevent disease and aiming to support families and children to grow in a healthy community and live long and healthy lives.

The Healthy Canberra: ACT Preventive Health Plan guides action to reduce the prevalence of chronic disease by addressing these specific risk factors and aiming to support good health across all stages of life. The plan focuses on the promotion of active living, healthy eating, and the design of broader environmental factors, such as safe and accessible urban spaces, access to nature and other amenities.

The Preventive Health Plan includes many initiatives which aim to encourage and support Canberrans to make healthier lifestyle choices, including Kids at Play Active Play, which builds the capacity of early childhood educators to teach fundamental movement skills and to promote active play for children aged three and up; Fresh Tastes, which supports ACT schools to make healthy food and drinks a bigger part of everyday life for Canberra's kids; It's Your Move, which supports student-led health promotion innovation in ACT high schools; and Healthier Choices Canberra, which supports local businesses and sporting clubs to provide and promote healthier food and drink options.

I want to acknowledge the work of many non-government organisations in this space as well, and particularly the work that Community Services #1 has been doing, to engage with its community about how to grow and cook and healthier foods in an efficient and effective way that works for families, making sure that families understand what grows in the ACT and how you can prepare it, giving them the confidence to prepare healthy meals for their children but also engaging children and young people in that process.

The ACT government is planning for the future as we build the new world-class emergency and critical care facility at the Canberra Hospital. In a first for Australia, the new Canberra Hospital expansion critical services building will be an all-electric building, powered by the ACT's renewably sourced energy. This alliance with the territory's climate change strategy includes actions to ensure that newly built government buildings are all electric and on the pathway to zero emissions, as well as specifically to reduce emissions from ACT health facilities.

The critical services building will continue to deliver on the government's green credentials. The CSB was originally committed to as a four-star green star rating. However, we have now increased this commitment to achieve a five-star green star rating. The design team have adopted a ground-up approach to sustainability, with incremental refinements throughout the design development and ongoing enhancements and efficiency gains throughout the design and construction phases, towards delivering a cost-effective sustainable outcome. The integrated design team—including energy simulation, architecture and façade—is working collaboratively to realise a passive thermal design to reduce peak heating and cooling loads and reduce the demand on the 100 per cent electric infrastructure.

These new facilities will build on the substantial emissions reductions Canberra Health Services has achieved of 23 per cent since 2019, while responding to increasing healthcare service delivery needs, supporting the ACT government's commitment to achieving a zero-emissions health sector by 2040.

This is being achieved through ongoing investments to replace ageing building assets with modern energy efficiency technology, including delivery of all-electric health facilities. The total amount of Canberra Health Services waste that was recycled increased by 17 per cent when compared to 2019-20. More than 130 tonnes of organic waste were diverted from landfill during the reporting period, which is an increase of more than 16 per cent when compared to 2019-20. Forty-three per cent of the total waste generated by Canberra Health Services in 2020-21 was recycled. In May 2022 CHS expects to achieve Actsmart accreditation for recycling for the fifth year in a row.

World Health Day also provides an opportunity to reflect on and acknowledge the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. It is an opportunity to convey our thanks to all health workers who have provided exceptional care throughout this pandemic and continue to ensure that the ACT community is protected.

Since 2020 Canberrans have shown incredible resilience as we have grappled with the constantly evolving challenges of living in a pandemic. I am so grateful, and I know Canberrans are, for the efforts of our community to stay COVID safe and to be vaccinated to protect themselves and our loved ones. Canberra's primary health workers have supported our community with the continued delivery of health care and have adapted their delivery of care in response to public health restrictions and outbreaks.

Aged-care workers, community health workers and disability support workers have been at the forefront of the pandemic response, providing critical care to elderly Canberrans, to people with disability and to other vulnerable members of our community. Health workers right across the ACT have worked tirelessly since March 2020 to keep Canberra safe and strong. Today I take the opportunity once again to acknowledge the incredible pressure that this has had on their work and their lives and to thank them once again for their dedication in protecting our community. I call on the Assembly to join me in thanking these crucial members of our health services.

On this World Health Day, I acknowledge and thank the Canberra community for showing resilience in the face of the significant challenges and for showing collective care for our planet, our community and our health. I commend the motion to the Assembly.

MS CLAY (Ginninderra) (11.26): I would like to start by acknowledging the words of our health minister and the hard work of our health services, and also by acknowledging the work of Minister Vassarotti, who has been working in this field.

We are talking today about the World Health Organization's World Health Day, on 7 April. World Health Day draws our attention, and the attention of the global community, to a specific shared health topic of concern to people all over the world. The theme this year is Our Planet, Our Health. This theme highlights the intersection of the climate on public health, and it compels us to act to limit the impacts, in terms of both mitigation and adaptation. We need to reduce our emissions and we also need to learn to live with what we have already got locked in.

According to the WHO, environmental factors are responsible for almost a quarter of the global burden of disease. The WHO, for World Health Day this year, has posed a number of questions. They are really quite hopeful questions. They want us to re-imagine a world where clean air, water and food are available to everyone. They want us to imagine a world where economies are focused on health and wellbeing, not just GDP. And they want us to imagine a world where cities are liveable and people have control over their health and the health of their planet. It is a really, really hopeful vision and I hope I will one day live to see it.

We have direct experience of what this means here in Canberra. We are in a lucky position here. We are luckier than many others around the world. But we have experienced a lot of the direct impacts of environmental degradation and what that means for our health. In the Black Summer we became intimately aware of what climate change was doing. We all rushed out to buy masks and air purifiers. We lived for weeks in blankets of smoke. We lived in our leaky houses and apartments—those of us who are lucky to have a home. Thirty-one people in Canberra died, directly as a result of the fires. That is a direct correlation between climate change and health.

I have spoken to a lot of doctors about this issue. There has been a strange thing happening in the climate movement over the last few years. Doctors used to be very hesitant to come out and talk about advocacy. They did not really want to conflate public advocacy with their role of being a GP and of providing direct medical advice. But I am finding that more and more GPs are stepping up to speak about what happened that summer and what climate change means. We have got a lot of quite passionate advocacy groups, like Doctors for the Environment, who are also stepping up. I also know that a lot of doctors are worried about not only those 31 people who died but what the long-term impacts are of that summer of smoke. We just do not know.

The ACT Greens went to the election later that year with a promise to work at the intersection of climate change and health. We know that the health of our planet and the health of our people are inherently linked. We cannot pull those apart. According to the *Medical Journal of Australia* 2019 update on health and climate change, which was published just weeks before this crisis, the warming climate already posed a substantial and mounting threat to public health in Australia.

Climate change impacts our health in a lot of ways. It exposes us to increased temperatures and heatwaves, and more people die from those heatwaves at the moment than from most other natural disasters. It exposes us to smoke from bushfires. It increases the spread of disease—and we are seeing that with Japanese encephalitis at the moment. It exposes us to so many extremes—to the floods and to so many things that are impacting our health now, unfortunately, on a daily basis around Australia.

The ACT needs a strategic, health-based response to climate change and a plan for the health sector to reduce its own contribution to climate change and reach zero emissions. If we want to continue to our shared vision of being the healthiest place in the world to live and of being a city of high wellbeing for everyone, we have to keep

developing ways to respond to climate change and to adapt to what is going on in our environment.

With that in mind, I was really happy to bring a motion to the Assembly in February and really, really happy to see that resolution supported in this chamber. We have called for the right to a healthy environment to be introduced into our Human Rights Act because we know that the links between health and environment are absolutely essential. I am really pleased to see that that work is now proceeding.

The ACT Greens also made a lot of election promises around 2020. We wanted to make sure that the ACT government would bring a proposal to national cabinet for a national strategy on climate health and wellbeing for Australia. We are doing quite a lot of things here locally, but we are absolutely desperate for some national leadership on these issues.

We promised that we would develop an ACT government climate change preparedness strategy for the ACT health sector, ensuring that the sector recognises and responds to climate change risks for the health of patients, the delivery of care, infrastructure, service provision, the health workforce and supply chains. We said that we would ensure that ACT Health collects and reports on data to monitor progress against resilience indicators, including the continuation of the longitudinal survey and climate-related health impacts and costs.

The ACT government has been preparing for climate change. We have adopted a lot of policy responses already, including our ACT Climate Change Strategy 2019-25, our Living Infrastructure Plan: Cooling the City and some instruments that are coming in under that. We have also done quite a lot of work in our air quality monitoring and our building regulation sector. All of these are part of our adaptation and mitigation of climate change. These strategies focus on actions that set us up to deal with the effects and to reduce our impact on the planet. We are really looking forward to seeing a lot of these policies included as considerations in our new planning act.

On November 2021 the ACT government released its bushfire, smoke and air quality strategy. That is a whole-of-government approach to prevent, prepare for, respond and recover from significant bushfire smoke events and our management of the smoke from wood heaters. Unfortunately, we are likely to see an event like that again, so we need to be prepared. The strategy sets out key actions for the next four years, including strengthening wood heater emission standards, enhancing air quality monitoring and forecasting, identifying and supporting smoke refuges and providing economic support to those affected by severe bushfire smoke.

The Healthy Canberra: ACT Preventive Health Plan guides action to reduce the prevalence of chronic disease by addressing the specific risk factors and by aiming to support good health across all stages of life. That plan focuses on the promotion of active living, healthy eating and the design of broader environmental factors such as safe and accessible urban spaces, access to nature and other amenities. A strong focus of the plan is to create healthier places where people live, work, learn and socialise and to empower people with the knowledge, skills and motivation to live well.

In a first for Australia, the new Canberra Hospital expansion critical services building will be all electric. It will be powered by ACT's 100 per cent renewably powered electricity. That really aligns with our climate change strategy. These new facilities will build on the substantial emission reductions Canberra Health Services has achieved of 23 per cent reduction since 2019, while still responding to the increasing healthcare service and delivery needs that we are seeing from multiple crisis. It is a really critical part to support the ACT government's commitment to achieving zero emissions in the health sector by 2040.

We have a lot of work to do in this area, and we have some really, really, big problems to face. I am really pleased to see that we are taking steps and making progress on a lot of these issues, and I am really looking forward to seeing further outcomes from some of the other issues that we know need development.

DR PATERSON (Murrumbidgee) (11.34): I would like to acknowledge the health minister's words and her thanks to our health workers in our community. I also acknowledge Ms Clay for her work on the right to a healthy environment.

World Health Day 2022 is recognised by the World Health Organization as a day for our planet and for our health. The connection between the two cannot be understated. What is good for us as humans correlates directly with what is good for the environment: fresh, healthy food; sustainable transport; supporting local business; natural fibre products; cooling our neighbourhoods and cities; and the list goes on.

The relationship and balance between the health of our community and the health of our planet are inextricably and intrinsically linked. The World Health Organization has estimated that more than 13 million deaths around the world each year are caused by environmental issues.

Health underpins our fundamental being and is critical to our quality of life, including our social connections. I am pleased to work with a government that incorporates wellbeing principles into every budget consideration. In Canberra we are very lucky to live in a city that has relatively clean air, clean water and a generally healthy environment.

A resolution that I moved in the Assembly last year to investigate the opportunity for Canberra to be recognised as a national park city is testament to this. However, we also need to acknowledge that there is always more that needs to be done here in Australia, federally, and across the world, as the climate crisis is a health crisis.

I am pleased to be involved with a relatively newly formed ACT group, Women in Climate and Health. I co-hosted a networking breakfast for this group last June and am looking forward to co-hosting another one this June here at the Assembly, with a guest panel to chat about reducing consumption in the food, apparel and building sectors. I am excited about the opportunities ahead to reinvent, re-imagine and innovate for healthier environments which contribute to healthier people and healthier communities.

It would be remiss not to also acknowledge that World Health Day has taken on a whole new meaning amidst the current pandemic. In recent years we have all been required to consider our health, and that of our communities, in a way we have never had to before. We have been required to consider how our actions affect not only our own health but that of our family, friends and neighbours.

The public health directions of this government have been fundamental in keeping our community healthy. I commend everyone in our community for doing their part to stay at home when required, isolate and quarantine, test, get vaccinated and maintain social distancing.

In closing, I encourage all Canberrans to take some time today to consider where, on a sliding scale, they consider their personal health currently sits, and to consider any actions they might be able to take to improve their own health by also considering what they can do to improve the health of our environment. Thank you.

MS DAVIDSON (Murrumbidgee—Assistant Minister for Families and Community Services, Minister for Disability, Minister for Justice Health, Minister for Mental Health and Minister for Veterans and Seniors) (11.37): I rise to support this executive motion in support of the World Health Day theme Our Planet, Our Health, and I thank Minister Stephen-Smith for bringing this matter to this place.

It is clear that the health and wellbeing of people and planet are closely interlinked. Climate change is a health issue as much as an environmental issue, as Minister Stephen-Smith discussed earlier. The World Health Day theme of Our Planet, Our Health serves to remind us that more can be done to mitigate the impacts of climate change and adapt to these impacts locally, nationally and globally.

The ACT government has been preparing for climate change by adopting a variety of policy responses, including the ACT Climate Change Strategy 2019-25 and Canberra's Living Infrastructure Plan: Cooling the City. These strategies focus on actions which set us up to adapt to and mitigate the effects of climate change in the territory.

The health impacts of climate change are tangible and significant. These include respiratory and health disease, mental illness, allergies, injuries, food poisoning and poor nutrition, and are just some of the ways that a change in climate affects us all.

Growing up, I saw firsthand what happens when you live in an inhospitable environment; when your primary source of fresh food is what you can grow, but there is no water to keep the garden alive; when your dad uses a bulldozer to dig a mass grave for the livestock he has to shoot before they die of dehydration because there is no market to sell them; and when every kid at your school has got three different kinds of cooties at once because every family is re-using the same bathwater for the whole household and they are having to buy clean drinking water from other towns.

If I close my eyes and just think about it for a moment, I can still taste the bitterness in the back of my throat from the tablets for gastro, because when your water tank gets

low you get a lot of dirt through the tap. You watch the last fish left in the dam swim around in tiny circles in a puddle so small that his fin is sticking out of the top of the water and getting sunburnt but his will to survive is so defiant that you do not want to have to do the only humane thing. This is what climate change means for this country: more drought, more storms, more floods, more heatwaves.

As Minister for Mental Health, I know only too well the impact that climate change anxiety is having, and will have, on people's mental health. This can be a concern about more frequent and dangerous weather events impacting on our lives or about making places that people call home no longer liveable. I will be heading up near Lismore next week, and my heart breaks for what they are going through right now.

Climate change anxiety goes to the heart of something that generations of Australians have taken for granted, and that is that the next generation will have things a little better than the current generation. This is why I see people in their 30s, 40s and 50s investing their superannuation in ethical funds that support renewable energy, ditching the car for an e-bike or a MyWay card, or supporting the School Strike 4 Climate. It is why I see grandmothers and grandfathers installing solar panels on their home or putting up climate action now signs in their front yard, or participating in actions with XR.

When scientists and suburban grandparents are willing to be arrested for non-violent direct action like writing "Climate action now!" in chalk paint in public spaces to draw attention to the climate crisis, that is a very clear signal that what they are feeling is an inescapable existential threat as a direct result of climate change. Chalk paint washes away, and the words I say today will be forgotten by lunchtime, but the existential threat of climate change is such that, without solid and rapid action, we are guaranteed a harsher and more inhospitable world forever.

On 1 December last year, the 2021 Mission Australia youth survey was released, and 45.8 per cent of ACT young women and 40.6 per cent of young men said that the environment was one of their top three issues. Their other top issues were equity and discrimination, and COVID-19. Our young people are telling us that what we, as leaders in our community, need to focus our attention on is protecting the health of both people and our planet. They are physically demonstrating how important the environment and climate action are to their mental wellbeing, through things like climate strikes and environment litigation.

More than 16 per cent of young people in the ACT volunteer in the protection of our environment and caring for country. Just two weeks ago, young people at our universities in Canberra were making their voices heard in calling for immediate action on climate change, and there will be more action from School Strike 4 Climate later this month. If we truly care about their mental wellbeing and their future, we must support them. This is why the ACT government's actions on climate change today and our future policy agenda are so critical. This is the best way we can support these people in our community who are actively trying to ensure a liveable future for all of us.

In a first for Australia, the new Canberra Hospital expansion critical services building will be an all-electric building, powered by the ACT's renewably sourced energy. This aligns with the territory's Climate Change Strategy 2019-25 that included actions to ensure that newly built government buildings are all electric and on the pathway to zero emissions, as well as specifically to reduce emissions from ACT health facilities. These new facilities will build on the substantial emission reductions Canberra Health Services has achieved—23 per cent since 2019—while responding to increasing healthcare service delivery needs, supporting the ACT government's commitment to achieving a zero emissions health sector by 2040.

Being part of the solution is important for all of us. I know that many of the healthcare professionals, catering staff, cleaners, administration staff and managers in our hospital will be very happy to know that their workplace is providing quality clinical care for our community while also reducing carbon emissions.

We are also listening to the community when they talk about the mental wellbeing impacts they are experiencing as a result of our changing world. Our focus on prevention and early intervention, and on the delivery of services in the community, means that we can support each other to solve problems sooner and closer to home. The increased funding provided in the most recent ACT budget, as well as the bilateral agreement with the commonwealth that I spoke about on Tuesday, provides significant funding for services with that early intervention focus, delivered in community settings and working with our community sector partners, as well as delivery through Canberra Health Services.

Ultimately, the best way to prevent the mental health impacts of climate change is to save the planet, so I am very happy to be part of an ACT government that works to reduce carbon emissions in every area, including the challenges we face in healthcare services. We would not be in a position to do this work without the decades of Greens who have come before me in this place and who I work with today on good, evidence-based policy development.

Most of all, I am thankful to be part of a Canberra community who work together across sectors and interests, including our hardworking public service, to find solutions to our shared challenges in this changing world and make sure that they are implemented well. I support the motion.

MR STEEL (Murrumbidgee—Minister for Skills, Minister for Transport and City Services and Special Minister of State) (11.45): I am very pleased to speak on this motion moved by Minister Stephen-Smith today. We know that climate change is real and one of the main contributors to climate change is transport emissions, which now make up 63 per cent of emissions in the ACT. That is also the third leading cause of emissions in Australia; just under 20 per cent comes from transport.

We need to tackle this issue. It has real health impacts. Air quality affects people's health. We know that because there have been significant regulations in a range of different countries right around the world to regulate emissions standards for new vehicles to make sure that the vehicles that are driven on our roads have to meet the requirements of those stringent standards.

Unfortunately, in Australia we have no emission standards whatsoever for carbon dioxide and we have emission standards in place for particulate matter and noxious emissions that are outdated. We have Euro 5 emission standards. The rest of the world is way ahead of us. Not only does Europe have the Euro 6 in place but they have just committed to Euro 7—higher standards for new vehicles to make sure that they can improve air quality.

The commonwealth government has, to date, refused, unfortunately, to implement those higher emission standards. This is something that we have recently written to the commonwealth about, as part of our review into road safety, because, while we acknowledge that many people are affected by motor accident injuries on our roads, thousands of people are actually affected by the emissions that come from transport on our roads. Those are deaths and injuries that are not included in the road toll.

The commonwealth government has been consulting on a draft regulation impact statement on the introduction of Euro 6 standards, which itself acknowledges the significant impact of noxious emissions on public health. We know that living close to major roads and highways increases the risk of dying early and has been linked to higher incidents of dementia in the elderly. Higher levels of benzene, a known carcinogen, have been discovered near major roads, particularly when traffic is congested.

The two main air pollutants of greatest concern to health experts are fine particles, commonly referred to as PM2.5, and ground-level ozone. Noxious emissions produced by road vehicles are a significant contributor to both, particularly in major cities. Scientific evidence links long-term exposure to PM2.5 with ischemic heart disease, cerebrovascular disease, lung cancer, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, and lower respiratory infections—in particular, pneumonia.

There is also mounting evidence that PM2.5 exposure can contribute to the incidence of type 2 diabetes. A study into the public risk of exposure to air pollutants from 2013 found that long-term population exposure to PM2.5 alone was attributable to 9 per cent of all deaths from ischemic heart disease in Australia's four largest cities. This has a significant impact on public health and it is why I am really pleased that this World Health Day 2022 is acknowledging Our Planet, Our Health.

The two are linked significantly. Our response to climate change, and particularly transport emissions, is directly linked to the health of our community here in Canberra. We want to live in a community that has clean air. Unfortunately, we do not have a federal government that is willing to put in place the necessary health regulations, the necessary transport regulations, to ensure that this occurs.

We know that Euro 6 is not just about reducing the amount of PM2.5 and other noxious emissions from ICE, internal combustion engine, vehicles. It is about ensuring that we also support the take-up of zero emissions vehicles, which do not pump out any CO₂ from the tailpipe together with all of those other noxious emissions. This is something that we have to tackle and the commonwealth government has to tackle, in the term following the next election.

The ACT government will continue to advocate on this issue. I have been speaking with my state colleagues right around the country—transport ministers, ministers for the environment and energy—about how we can advocate together to make sure that the commonwealth acts on this critically important issue, one that we know from the research is contributing to death, contributing to disease, in the country. The commonwealth government needs to wake up and make a change. This World Health Day acknowledges these important facts that they themselves have acknowledged are causing health problems for our communities, for our cities, here in Australia.

MS STEPHEN-SMITH (Kurrajong—Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs, Minister for Families and Community Services and Minister for Health) (11.51), in reply: In closing the debate, I want to express my disappointment that none of the Canberra Liberals chose to engage in the conversation about this very important matter or take the opportunity to thank our healthcare workers on World Health Day.

One can only conclude from this that the Canberra Liberals are a bit confused about the connection between our planet's health and the health of Canberrans and that they really do not quite know what to say about it in the context of a federal election. I guess that is not surprising. They purport to understand the impact of climate change and the importance of a clean environment for our community, but, given that their federal Liberal colleagues do not, they obviously have chosen to stay quiet on this matter today.

I want to express my disappointment and, I am sure, the disappointment of Canberrans that the Canberra Liberals have not taken this opportunity to join with the government to recognise the importance of these issues and to support the government's efforts in joining the Global Green and Healthy Hospitals network and continuing to pursue, in collaboration with our national and international partners, a climate resilient and emissions-reducing health system, a better environment for all Canberrans to protect their health, and, as I said, to thank our healthcare workers for the really important work that they do every day. Despite this, I continue to commend the motion to the Assembly and I hope that the Canberra Liberals will support the motion.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

Sitting suspended from 11.53 am to 2.00 pm.

Ministerial arrangements

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) (2.00): The Chief Minister will be absent from question time today. I will take questions in his portfolio areas.

Questions without notice

Schools—safety

MS LEE: My question is to the Minister for Education and Youth Affairs. Minister, since WorkSafe ACT placed a prohibition order on Calwell High School for being unsafe, you have stated repeatedly that those types of incidents are “very rare”. The Australian Education Union ACT has bluntly refuted this claim. Branch president Angela Burroughs said:

In response to Minister Berry saying that incidents of violence in Canberra schools are rare, that is the situation we wish was present, but it is not the reality ...

The last quarter report indicated that more than 1,600 incidences had been reported across ACT schools.

Of those, the majority of them are occupational violence incidents, and 71 per cent related to assaults. They’re not from just one or two schools, they’re from a cross section of schools.

Minister, why did you say in this chamber and in public that violence in our schools is very rare, when the union says that is simply not true?

MS BERRY: The Leader of the Opposition needs to read the rest of the article, where it says that critical instances like this one—

Ms Lee: It is a direct quote from the union.

MS BERRY: There is a direct quote from me as well, Ms Lee, that says that critical incidents like this one are rare. Yes, we do record incidents across schools. We encourage the reporting of incidents across schools—

Ms Lee interjecting—

Mr Hanson interjecting—

MR ACTING SPEAKER: Ms Lee! Mr Hanson!

MS BERRY: so that we can ensure that we are able to support those schools in responding to any incidents—

Ms Lee: The union says, “In response to Minister Berry.”

MS BERRY: Mr Acting Speaker, it is very difficult to provide a succinct response when I am getting continuous interruptions.

Mr Hanson: Or a truthful one, it would appear.

MR ACTING SPEAKER: Members, if we can allow the minister to complete the answer.

Ms Lee: If she actually got to the point, we would.

MS BERRY: It is really—the snide comments from Ms Lee are really unhelpful today.

Ms Lee: I am just repeating it because you seem to not understand—

MR ACTING SPEAKER: Ms Lee, we have had enough.

MS BERRY: Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker. It is important to note that the RiskMan incidents are reported across all categories, not just these sorts of critical incidents that we have been talking about this week. They also include everything from low-level incidents, minor cuts, abrasions, falls and other minor risks. Lower level incidents form a significant component of the incidents recorded. That was also recorded in the paper, in the article that Ms Lee was referring to.

MS LEE: Minister, how can you keep claiming that you are keeping teachers safe when there have been 1,600 incidents of violence in the last quarter, 71 per cent of them being for assault?

MS BERRY: As I have explained, these are not incidents like the one that we have been talking about this week. These are a range of incidents, they range from areas like skinned knees, trips and falls and other minor incidents, including more serious assaults, which have been included in RiskMan. What we do, as the Education Directorate and within the government, is encourage people to report incidents. Often the same incidents will be reported by a number of teachers and school staff through the RiskMan reporting. We encourage that so that we can understand the incidents that are occurring in our schools and so, if there are issues where they need additional support, we can put those supports in place.

MR HANSON: Minister, how can you say that many of these incidents were minor when 71 per cent of the incidents related to assault?

MS BERRY: I did not say what Mr Hanson said.

Schools—safety

MR HANSON: My question is to the minister for education. Minister, since WorkSafe ACT placed a prohibition on Calwell High School for being unsafe, you have stated repeatedly that those types of incidents were “very rare”. Last year the Australian Education Union’s report stated:

The staffing shortage also has direct consequences for work safety in schools ... Almost one in five respondents have experienced violence in the classroom as a direct consequence of split or cancelled classes.

Minister, you now have two reports—one reporting 1,600 violent incidents, of which 71 per cent related to assault, in the last quarter—a total number of 2,100 this year, I understand—and a union report from last year saying that one in five teachers experienced violence in the classroom as a result of split classes. You were saying that these incidents were “very rare”. How can you say that when you were told last year that one in five teachers experienced violence in the classroom?

MS BERRY: I am not suggesting at all that there are no issues that occur within our schools, and we have encouraged our school communities to report these incidents, no matter how large or how small they might seem. We absolutely encourage it, and sometimes that will mean there will be multiple reports on the same incident within a school that are collected into RiskMan. Yes, there are issues that have been reported in RiskMan, but I have said that this particular incident is rare. This kind of critical incident is rare in our schools. Swearing at a schoolteacher is very different to the incident that we are talking about this week, and that is also reported as an assault.

I think we need to be careful about the debates that we are having in this place and the political point-scoring that we are having in this space by members of the opposition around these issues, and not to conflate it more than it needs to be. Yes, there are incidents in our schools, but they are rare, as far as the incident we have been talking about this week is concerned.

MR HANSON: Minister, why did you not act immediately when you were told last year by the union that one in five teachers had experienced violence in the classroom?

MS BERRY: I act every day in my role as education minister to ensure that our workplaces are as safe as possible, and that our schools are as safe as possible for students to attend. That is a continuous piece of work. We will continue to work closely with the Education Union on this. It is a difficult issue. It is a complex issue. It is an issue that reflects the challenges that we have in our society with regard to managing violence. Violence is unacceptable anywhere, and it is unacceptable in our schools. I will continue to work closely with our school communities to ensure that they remain a safe place and that, when incidents do occur, we can put the supports in place.

MS LEE: Minister, are you saying that the union are wrong when they reported last year about one in five teachers experiencing violence in the classroom? How do you continue to justify your assertion that incidents of this kind are rare?

MS BERRY: No, in answer to the first part of the question. No, I am not suggesting that the AEU is lying. What I am saying, though, is that critical incidents like the one that we have been discussing this week are rare. As I said, we encourage reporting of all incidents in our schools, so that we can ensure that we put the supports in place when they occur.

Canberra Hospital—expansion

DR PATERSON: My question is to the Minister for Health. Minister, as construction of the critical services building continues, how is the ACT government supporting the planning and preparation for opening this new healthcare facility in 2024?

MS STEPHEN-SMITH: I thank Dr Paterson for the question. The \$18 million investment that we announced in March provides funding to undertake the operational commissioning of the critical services building, the largest infrastructure component in the \$624 million Canberra Hospital expansion project, which of course in itself is the largest investment in health infrastructure since self-government.

The commissioning process will focus on preparing the workforce, service providers and our community for the commencement and opening of healthcare services in the new critical services building in 2024. The operational commissioning will activate the new facility for patients and visitors beyond the physical construction of the infrastructure. This requires time, effort and planning.

The critical services building itself, of course, will be state of the art, delivering more theatres, more intensive care beds, more treatment spaces in the emergency department, more medical imaging facilities, more inpatient beds and additional ambulance bays.

The commissioning takes into account the complexity and the technological sophistication of this 40,000 square metre critical services building. The whole implementation will be managed through a change program that will affect more than 2,000 Canberra Health Services staff and 26 clinical and operational departments. The program will also manage an estimated 41,000 items of ICT, medical equipment, furniture, fittings and general equipment and will impact our key partners such as the ACT Ambulance Service, retrieval services and others.

The operational commissioning program describes the process for supporting our people and the change management strategy to be used in the new infrastructure, including relocation, public consultation, management of equipment, selection procurement delivery, storage, installation and testing, establishing inventories, specific planning for the workforce, developing maintenance specifications, software and hardware mapping and risk management planning.

DR PATERSON: Minister, what will commissioning the critical services building mean for the workforce and the facility once it is open?

MS STEPHEN-SMITH: I thank Dr Paterson for the supplementary. The operational commissioning program will have a strong focus on supporting and building our workforce for the opening of the critical services building. The state-of-the-art design of this building means teams will have access to the latest advances in medical technology and new amenities to do what they do best, caring for their patients.

The change management work of operational commissioning will complete the workforce plan to bring on more doctors, nurses, allied health professionals and support staff, develop job specifications and a recruitment strategy for the opening of the critical services building, ensure there is a streamlined process on entry to the organisation for new clinical and support staff, and comprehensive development of necessary workforce training and education modules. The workforce planning for the critical services building is, of course, already underway, including the staging of planned recruitment activities across the various clinical professions.

The \$18 million operational commissioning investment will ensure that we have a clear and effective change management program and that is effectively managed and adopted by staff, that building systems and processes are integrated with clinical procedures that are tested under a controlled and robust framework, and it will also ensure that staff are appropriately trained in building systems and technologies and safe clinical work practices. It will provide simulation training for clinical and non-clinical staff on patient care and emergency management procedures. This will lead to seamless integration as specialist service providers with the clinical service when that is trialled and tested. Any potential risks to patient care safety and security will be identified and mitigated prior to the facility opening.

This further investment will support safe change management practices and increase staff morale, which further enhances staff retention and skill development. It shows our commitment to our staff and to delivering this significant health infrastructure project that will transform Canberra Hospital.

MS ORR: Minister, how will the opening of the critical services building link in with the larger health infrastructure program at the Canberra Hospital?

MS STEPHEN-SMITH: I thank Ms Orr for the supplementary question. The Canberra Hospital is undergoing significant change. We have well and truly begun the work on further transforming the campus for now and for the future of health care for the Canberra community and the surrounding region.

In December 2021, the ACT government launched the Canberra Hospital master plan, the blueprint for how we will continue the health infrastructure transformation we are continuing at the Canberra Hospital campus over the next 20 years. The master plan builds on the ACT government's nearly \$1.3 billion in investments in health infrastructure over the past decade and the Canberra Hospital expansion project that is, of course, currently underway. It incorporates improvements that we were already making and outlines how this work will continue into the future to meet the community's needs.

Implementation of the master plan will progressively transform the campus over a number of stages and consider how best to utilise existing critical buildings and services and the buildings that are currently under construction, such as the critical services building. Indeed, this government is investing in growing our healthcare capacity and ensuring future generations of Canberrans and their families have access to the very best healthcare facilities.

I am looking forward to seeing this building rise out of the ground over the course of the year as we continue to work to deliver this state-of-the-art facility. As I have said, the project is a record investment in the future of our health system, the largest health infrastructure project since self-government. It is a key part of our plan to ensure that all Canberrans and those in the surrounding regions that we support have access to the health services they need when they need them.

Calwell High School—safety

MS CASTLEY: My question is to the Minister for Education and Youth Affairs. Minister, following the WorkSafe closure of Calwell High School, there has been deep concern expressed by parents and the community. Today's *Canberra Times* has a report titled, "Parents consider pulling students out of Calwell High School following reports of violence." One parent stated, "How do you send them back if you know they could get injured?" Another mother said her daughter did not want to return after being verbally abused by other students. Minister, how do parents send their children back to a school when they know they could get injured or verbally abused?

MS BERRY: Again, I will say that we need to be very careful in this place about how we speak about these kinds of concerning issues. This obviously has been a serious situation, and we do not want to unnecessarily scare people about the situation.

Opposition members interjecting—

MR ACTING SPEAKER: Members, let the minister answer.

MS BERRY: Anywhere else, this kind of behaviour would be bullying, but for some reason the opposition thinks it is okay to continue to make snide comments and continuous interruptions.

Opposition members interjecting—

MR ACTING SPEAKER: Ms Lee!

Opposition members interjecting—

MR ACTING SPEAKER: Members, enough! I will be warning members, shortly.

Mr Gentleman: I have a point of order. Standing orders make it very clear that members cannot be interrupted while they are on their feet. Standing orders make it very clear about how questions can be put and answered. This level of interruption is unacceptable, and I ask you, Mr Acting Speaker, to please deal with these interruptions and ensure that they do not occur again.

MR ACTING SPEAKER: I think Mr Gentleman has a good point. The level of interjections is rising to a level which is past my threshold. Members, I would ask you to restrain yourselves.

MS BERRY: As I said, it is irresponsible for us in this place to make comments that suggest that sending a child to school is going to scare them or that their school is unsafe. Our schools are generally safe places to be. There has been an incident at a school—

Mr Hanson: I have a point of order. The question directly quoted the parent saying, "How do you send them back if you know that they could get injured?" These are the

concerns of the parents. It is fair that the minister respond to the concerns raised by the parent. To spend her time answering the question by attacking the opposition for quoting this is not relevant to the question.

MR ACTING SPEAKER: The minister has 27 seconds to directly answer the question.

MS BERRY: I can assure parents that supports are in place at the school for teachers, school staff, students and their families to get them through what has been a very difficult time. I suggest that what we could do in this place is to support them through this period.

MS CASTLEY: I have a supplementary question. Minister, what options are available to parents who do not wish to send their children back to Calwell, knowing they may get injured or abused?

MS BERRY: Again, the irresponsible comments suggesting that students will get injured at a school are beyond the pale in this place, when a school has been going through a difficult period—that we would not be supporting them more.

Mr Hanson: Point of order again, on relevance. The member is attacking the opposition for asking a question that is a quote from a parent.

MR ACTING SPEAKER: What is your point of order, Mr Hanson?

Mr Hanson: My point of order is on relevance. You have to answer the question that is being asked. You cannot spend the whole time attacking the opposition because you do not like the question. The minister is just attacking the opposition, not answering the question. That is not relevant to the question.

Mr Gentleman: Point of order. Raising a point of order is a point; you cannot debate the question in raising the point of order; you simply put the point of order.

MR ACTING SPEAKER: Minister, I ask you to be relevant to the question, please.

MS BERRY: Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker, but I was. I was rephrasing the question that was asked of me to understand what it exactly was. The suggestion that children would be unsafe or would be injured if they returned to school is not helpful. I encourage members of this place who are contacted by families from schools, that they speak to their school communities so that they can be reassured that they will be safe there.

Mr Hanson interjecting—

MR HANSON: These sorts of comments are really unhelpful for this school community and for all of our schools.

Opposition members interjecting—

MR ACTING SPEAKER: Members, enough!

DR PATERSON: Minister, how is the ACT government supporting the Calwell school community during this time?

MS BERRY: I thank Dr Paterson for her sensible question about the kinds of supports that the Education Directorate is putting in place to make sure that this school can be positively supported to get them through what has clearly been a very difficult period of time over the last couple of weeks. The school has had additional senior staff from the Education Directorate put in place. It has had tele-health services made available for students and their families to access should they need it. It has had additional psychologists available for staff. The employee assistance program has also been available for staff, and a senior additional school principal is also in place to support the school moving forward for a more positive return in term 2.

Arts—federal funding

MS CLAY: My question is to the Minister for the Arts. Minister, I saw in the federal budget that 19 per cent has been cut from the national arts budget. What will that mean for our local ACT arts scene?

MS CHEYNE: I thank Ms Clay for the question and for her concern regarding the recent federal budget. It is telling to reflect on some of the media coverage that emerged out of the cuts that we have seen to the arts in that budget—the Australia Institute labelling them grim and problematic and The Conversation calling it a bleak picture. The MEAA analysis found that the funding allocation to regional arts is falling from \$18 million this year to \$7.5 million next year and that, going to the heart of what Ms Clay is asking, the funding to our national collecting institutions will drop between four per cent and 21 per cent over the next five years. This is concerning for us.

I think what is of most concern and most directly impacts the arts sector locally is that the commonwealth government has missed that this is still a sector that is in an enormous amount of pain and is very actively trying to recover. Just turning off the tap in some of the very welcome funding that they have provided, over the budget, does have very real impacts. I particularly underline the RISE fund, which has had a significant investment. I will give the commonwealth government that—there has been a significant investment. The ACT has generally had the proportion awarded to it that corresponds with our population, but that is stopping. That represents some of that 20 per cent drop that Ms Clay refers to.

MS CLAY: Minister, what have you learned so far about funding needs in your consultation on the arts capital?

MS CHEYNE: Ms Clay would be and is aware, I believe, that we have just released our listening report, in the last few weeks, out of our arts consultation in the development of our new ACT arts policy and our new ACT arts funding model, to assist us in achieving our statement of ambition for the arts in the ACT for Canberra to be recognised as Australia's arts capital.

We are in the middle of that engagement. First of all, we had that feedback through our survey, which is reflected in the listening report. I can certainly table that at the end of the sittings, to be shared with all members. We are undertaking some targeted engagement as well, in particular related to arts support. I am reluctant to go to the detail of what we have heard so far, simply because it would just be a snapshot and we are in the middle of that. I will certainly return to the chamber when those consultations have concluded and give the full suite of feedback that we have heard from artists. We look forward to a really exciting number of actions that come from it to show that we can grow our arts community in Canberra into the future and support them properly.

MS CASTLEY: Minister, can you tell us about the \$92,500 federal funding boost for live music venues in the ACT?

MS CHEYNE: No.

Opposition members interjecting—

Ms Castley: Can the minister take that on notice?

MR ACTING SPEAKER: With respect, you have asked her about federal funding.

Ms Castley: Mr Acting Speaker, she said that the federal funding has been cut.

MR ACTING SPEAKER: Questions without notice, members. Who has a new question? Mr Cain.

Calwell High School—communication

MR CAIN: My question is to the minister for education and relates to communication to parents about Calwell High School. There are reports in the *Canberra Times* today that parents who have spoken to the *Canberra Times* said they were unaware of the full extent of the staff shortages and safety issues until they saw media reports of daily incidents of verbal and physical abuse from students to other student and teachers. I know, Minister, that you do not like hearing what parents are saying; you consider that to be inflammatory in this place, but one parent is quoted as saying:

It's unacceptable that it had to get to this stage before we heard anything about it.

Minister, why did parents have to find out through the media about this situation?

MS BERRY: There are no daily physical abuses in the school, and the parents were informed on the day of the incident.

MR CAIN: Minister, why did it have to get to this stage, a WorkSafe report banning children from school, before the community heard about it?

MS BERRY: I refer the member to my previous answer.

MR HANSON: Why have you been keeping parents in the dark and then attacking their comments when they are raised here in the chamber?

MS BERRY: Mr Hanson has completely misrepresented me. Of course, I have not, and I absolutely have a deep sense of compassion, sympathy and concern for the parents, staff and the whole school community. That is why I ask that we reflect on the kinds of questions and conversations that we have in this place, after a particularly difficult time for that school community.

The Education Directorate, I and my office have been ensuring that supports are available at that school to get them through what is a difficult time. Yes, there have been issues at the school that meant supports were being provided. However—and I know Ms Lee really does not like hearing this—the facts are that COVID has exacerbated that situation. That is the fact of the matter. It is not an excuse; it is not about laying blame. It is a simple fact that we are going through an international health pandemic, and staff shortages, exacerbated by COVID, have meant that the issues at that school have become more challenging. That is the fact of the matter.

What I am doing, and what the Education Directorate is doing, is trying our very hardest to support that school community to recover and to have a more positive start in the second term of the school year.

Calwell High School—safety

MR MILLIGAN: My question is to the minister for education. When asked yesterday during question time whether fire systems at Calwell were in good working order, you stated, “Yes, I believe that they are.” It has now been revealed that your directorate was issued with a further WorkSafe notification prior to your false answer yesterday, which is, “related to fire extinguishers which had been relocated due to students using them as weapons.” Minister, why did you say fire safety systems were in good working order yesterday when they were, in fact, removed because they were being used as weapons and an additional two WorkSafe notifications had been issued?

MS BERRY: There was a prohibition notice, which was the question that I was responding to yesterday and required a response immediately to the fire extinguishers being accessible. The two additional notices are improvement notices which are different from a prohibition notice. We are now responding to—

Mr Hanson: On a point of order.

MR ACTING SPEAKER: Mr Hanson, on a point of order.

Mr Hanson: The question is for her directly. Yesterday the minister was asked if the fire systems at the school—

MR ACTING SPEAKER: What is your point of order, Mr Hanson?

Mr Hanson: It is on relevance. She is trying to deflect this and say that it is directly to a prohibition notice; it was not. The question relates to yesterday she was asked

whether the fire systems at Calwell High were in good working order. She said, “Yes.” It is quite clear from the evidence from WorkSafe that they are not. How does she explain that?

MR ACTING SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr Hanson. Minister, I would ask you to be relevant to the question if you can, please.

MS BERRY: I was relevant, Mr Acting Speaker, so I disagree with what the member of the opposition is saying. Yesterday I was asked in relation to a prohibition notice and my response was that I believe they are because that is the advice that I have been given. I will check, but I am confident that the advice I was given in responding to the prohibition notice, which was the only notice that we all knew about before the two improvement notices came out—that the response I provided was in response to the issues that were raised in that notice.

Mr Hanson: The question was whether the fire systems were in good working order.

Mr Gentleman: Mr Acting Speaker, on a point of order. The standing orders make it very clear about questions—they cannot contain imputations or inferences. Mr Milligan’s question deliberately contained an imputation on the validity of the answer previously by the minister. I would ask that you rule the question out of order.

MR ACTING SPEAKER: I am going to seek advice from the Clerk on that, Mr Gentleman.

Mr Gentleman: 117(a) and 117(d).

Mr Hanson: On the point of order, if I may, the reality is that the question is in order, because the minister’s response from yesterday has been proven to be untrue. The question was quite clear.

MR ACTING SPEAKER: Mr Hanson, if you can—

Ms Berry: Point of order. Mr Hanson has just said that my answer yesterday was untrue.

MR ACTING SPEAKER: And this is the point of contention, Ms Berry—

Ms Berry: No, I think he needs to—

MR ACTING SPEAKER: I am going to have to review the *Hansard* and make a ruling on this that I will bring to the chamber later. I can understand that there are aspects of statements that were made that did not line up with the question. I understand that Mr Gentleman’s point of order is that someone was being accused of lying, but I am not sure that that is actually what the accusation is. We will move on to the supplementary to that question, which is coming from Mr Milligan.

MR MILLIGAN: Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker. Minister, were you unaware of the truth about the fire extinguishers or did you deliberately mislead?

Mr Gentleman: There you go! The same—

Mr Hanson: It's a question. He's allowed to ask a question—

Ms Lee: He's allowed to ask.

MS BERRY: Again, Mr Acting Speaker, no. They are conflating the notices—a prohibition notice and an improvement notice—

Mr Hanson: No we're not. You're doing that.

Ms Lee: Exactly.

Mrs Kikkert: Hear hear.

MR ACTING SPEAKER: A supplementary, Mr Hanson?

MR HANSON: Are the fire systems and the fire extinguishers at Calwell High in good working order? Yes or no?

MS BERRY: That is my understanding, Mr Acting Deputy Speaker.

Opposition members interjecting—

Ms Berry: I just ask for your advice on whether the behaviour and the kind of giggling and sort of, you know, nastiness coming from the opposition is actually okay in this place and is the example that we want to set?

MR ACTING SPEAKER: Ms Berry, I am losing patience with the point that this has descended to. I would suggest to members that I am at the point of warning and naming. Can we please get through this question time without me having to—

Mr Hanson: We are at a bit of a loss here because we are being criticised if we say that the answer is not correct, but the minister is saying that there is nothing wrong with the fire extinguishers. We quoted from a WorkSafe notification that says that they have been relocated because they were being used as weapons.

MR ACTING SPEAKER: Mr Hanson, you are just debating the question. We will move on.

Veterans—federal funding

MR BRADDOCK: My question is to the Minister for Seniors, Veterans, Families and Community Services. Minister, I see that despite a sizeable population of veterans in the ACT and surrounding region, the federal budget sadly does not include a veterans' wellbeing centre for Canberra. What is the ACT government's plan on this?

MS DAVIDSON: The ACT does have a very sizeable population of veterans and their families—around 26,000 people—and we are the nation's capital. We have more

veterans per capita than other state capitals that have veterans' wellbeing centres. That is why we have been advocating strongly for a veterans' wellbeing centre for Canberra to provide social connection and a place where people can go to seek advice about everything from their children's school and where they can volunteer, to where they can get support with DVA and medical paperwork, employment and training, sporting groups and all of those things that make life an enjoyable thing when you are living in Canberra, as we all wish to enjoy.

We have done quite a bit of work to try and make the case to the federal government that we should have a commonwealth funded veterans' wellbeing centre here. Back on 17 November I had a meeting with the federal minister Andrew Gee to discuss some of these issues. On 7 December the ACT government engaged with veterans and mainstream services in the ACT to better understand their needs and where the gaps in support are. We will continue to engage with them to better understand those things. In February we wrote to Minister Gee advocating for a veterans' wellbeing centre, and I am very hopeful that there is still time and that we may still be able to see commonwealth support for a veterans' wellbeing centre in the ACT.

MR BRADDOCK: What services are available for veterans currently within the ACT?

MS DAVIDSON: We have a really diverse of range of ex-service organisations in the ACT to provide a wide range of supports. There is a veterans' support centre that has been funded by the ACT government. That funding was provided for a three-year period. One of the things that they spend a lot of their time doing there is providing support to veterans in going through difficult DVA processes and providing support for their welfare advocate. It is quite time consuming to go through a lot of that DVA bureaucracy. If processes could be improved federally that would reduce the need for that.

Our ex-service organisations provide a wide range of other services, including connecting people to employment and just sitting and having a coffee with people and understanding their experiences. They provide social connections and connections with sporting groups—both within the broader community and specifically for veterans—and with arts and culture groups. We would really like to see a physical space where those groups can come together, collaborate with each other and better support our diverse range of veterans and their families in the ACT.

MR HANSON: I have a supplementary question. Minister, what impact would cutting \$300 billion from the ADF have on our veteran community?

Mr Braddock: Point of order on relevance. How is that relevant to a veterans' wellbeing centre?

Mr Rattenbury: On the point of order, Mr Hanson well knows that Minister Davidson is not the minister responsible for that policy. Therefore it is out of order.

MR ACTING SPEAKER: I agree that the question is out of order, Mr Hanson.

Schools—safety

MRS KIKKERT: My question is to the Minister for Education and Youth Affairs. Minister, yesterday you said that incidents like Calwell were very rare and that you take them very seriously. Unions are saying the opposite. Parents are stating the opposite. WorkSafe is saying the opposite and has now closed a school because of the risk of imminent harm. Worse still, the union has warned that this situation is not confined to one school but is across the system. Minister, how can the community possibly have faith in you when it is now proven that these incidents are not rare, that you have ignored warnings from teachers and the unions, and that the real problem was not revealed in your letter to parents?

MS BERRY: I will say again that the incident that we have been talking about in this place is a rare occurrence. You cannot compare all of the incidents that have been reported on RiskMan to this single incident. A physical assault is very different from the kind of yelling or swearing or bullying behaviour that we might experience here on a day-to-day basis. It is important to understand that there are differences in the reports that are made to RiskMan. All issues are required to be reported in RiskMan. We have encouraged a positive reporting culture within our schools, to understand the issues within our schools and whether there are systemic issues of physical violence or critical incidents like the one that we have been discussing this week. That is the purpose of RiskMan, so that the Education Directorate can support schools.

MRS KIKKERT: Minister, how do you respond to the unions, parents and WorkSafe, who are all saying the opposite to your assertions in this chamber and in public?

MS BERRY: That is not the case. I have not suggested that there are not incidents in our schools. I have suggested that this particular incident is rare in our schools. This kind of critical incident of significant physical assault is rare in our schools.

Mr Hanson: You didn't mention "critical incident". Now you're saying that. That is not what you were saying.

MR ACTING SPEAKER: Mr Hanson, that's enough.

MS BERRY: What I am saying is that all incidents are reported to RiskMan so that the Education Directorate can support schools. To suggest that I am saying something otherwise is unhelpful and it is not the case.

MR HANSON: Minister, with regard to fire extinguishers, communication with parents and the extent of violence in our schools, are you not across the reality of what is happening in schools or have you been lying to parents, to us and to the community?

Mr Gentleman: A point of order. You cannot call people liars across the chamber. It is unparliamentary.

MR ACTING SPEAKER: Mr Hanson, you have been around here long enough to know—

Mr Hanson: On the point of order, I asked if she has been lying or not—it's a simple question—or whether she is not across the reality on the ground. That is what the union has said: that the reality on the ground is not what she has been saying.

MR ACTING SPEAKER: Mr Hanson, the language you have used in the question is unparliamentary. I will give you the opportunity to rephrase it.

MR HANSON: I will rephrase it. Minister, have you not been telling parents, us and the community the truth?

Members interjecting—

Mr Gentleman: Mr Acting Speaker, if I could assist your decision-making, I will draw your attention to standing order 117(d), which says that “questions shall not be asked which reflect on or are critical of the character or conduct” of persons in this place.

Mr Hanson: Mr Acting Speaker, asking whether someone is telling the truth or not is not an uncommon thing, I would have thought. If the minister is telling the truth or if she thinks she is in touch with reality, she can answer the question. But we have this dichotomy between what she is saying and what parents, the unions and others are saying. We are seeking an explanation. It is a reasonable question: is she telling the truth? If she is, she can tell us that she is and that she is in touch with reality. It is a reasonable question.

MR ACTING SPEAKER: All right. Members, my interpretation of this is that Mr Hanson has not called anybody a liar. He has asked a question about the assessment of information, the interpretation of information and then the communication of that information. On that basis, I will allow the question to stand. For the benefit of the minister and everybody else, I wonder if it would be helpful for you to repeat the question. It was a long time ago. Perhaps rephrase it in the way that you did the second time around.

MR HANSON: Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker. Minister, with regard to fire extinguishers, communication with parents and the extent of violence in our schools, are you not across the reality of what is happening in schools, or have you not been telling the truth to parents, to us and to the community?

MS BERRY: I have been telling the truth.

Sport and recreation—grants

MS ORR: My question is to the minister for sport. Minister, can you please update the Assembly on the 2022 sport and recreation grants?

MS BERRY: I thank Ms Orr for the question. I am happy and pleased to be able to update the Assembly today on the important investment in sport and recreation in the

ACT. On 24 March I announced the recipients of the 2022 sport and recreation grants. The grants will see more than \$2.6 million invested in local sport and recreation. More than 60 local sport and recreation organisations across Canberra will receive funding for operations, facility upgrades and equipment under the grants program.

The ACT government's Sport and Recreation Grants Program assists local sporting organisations and clubs to support and grow our community's ongoing involvement in sport and recreational activities. These include, under several categories, support to peak bodies and clubs with ongoing funding and supporting specific programs, like an operational program to support ongoing costs, a developmental program to support specific projects, a capital program to support sporting infrastructure, an inclusive participation program to increase sporting participation, and a women's participation and leadership program to promote female participation in sport and leadership roles in the sector. These grants are one of the many ways that the ACT government is supporting sport and recreation in the ACT.

MS ORR: Minister, how are these grants supporting sports clubs and communities in Canberra?

MS BERRY: The sport and recreation grants provide support to a diverse range of peak bodies and clubs to deliver activities that help to keep Canberrans engaged in sport and active recreation. The range of support is varied and tailored to each sporting group and club's needs. Almost all sports in the ACT are represented by peak bodies, and the ACT government provides ongoing funding through these grants to support peak sporting bodies that, among other things, deliver community competitions, development programs and performance pathways.

The grants also help with the purchase of necessary equipment to support participation and safety. The equipment and products that are used in the sports are as varied as the sports themselves. These grants ensure that clubs can afford to buy equipment that they need to run their sport and do it safely.

Finally, a key focus of these grants is to support programs that specifically reach out to engage communities that are often under-represented in sport and recreation. It is great to see the increasing participation by and recognition of women in sport, from the grassroots to leadership and at the elite level. The ACT government has a strong track record of supporting women's sport in the ACT, and these grants help to build on this commitment.

DR PATERSON: Minister, what is the range of sports funded through this grants process?

MS BERRY: I thank Dr Paterson for her supplementary question. This year's sport and recreation grants provide funding to over 60 local sports and clubs. I want to take the opportunity to highlight a couple of those that have been made to Canberra's local sports clubs.

Canberra Archery Club will receive funding for the installation of permanent all-weather structures to enable continued participation through weather conditions.

Tuggeranong Valley Rugby Union and Sports Club will upgrade two bowling greens from turf to synthetic and secure a long-term location for lawn bowls in the ACT. There is a significant investment in Canberra Croquet Club for upgrades to the heritage-listed sporting facility, to improve access and amenities to support groups disadvantaged by the current clubhouse design. Muslim Sisters to Action, MustACT, will receive funding to support a closed, culturally sensitive swim program for Muslim women to enjoy casual swimming lessons and hydrotherapy at Aquatots in Gold Creek. A grant to Yarabi Football Club will provide start-up equipment for its new football club in Gungahlin, which is affiliated with Capital Football.

I know that all of the recipients of these grants will utilise this funding to support growth and participation in their own sports and will contribute to what we already know—that Canberra is Australia’s sporting capital.

With that, I ask that all further questions be placed on the notice paper.

Supplementary answer to question without notice

Arts—federal funding

MS CHEYNE: With regard to Ms Castley’s supplementary question, my response was based on the fact that it did not appear to me immediately to be in order. Given the nature of the question I would seek some advice on that from you, Mr Acting Speaker, or the Clerk in the next sittings. But, given that she was so interested, I have reflected further on it, and I think I can offer an answer. The federal government has in this budget provided \$92,500 to performance venues in the ACT, but it is just three venues. I note that that pales in comparison to the 23 venues that our Amp It Up! fund has supported with \$790,000, let alone the \$500,000 that we have committed in the budget review through a second round of Amp It Up! Honestly, if that is all that Senator Seselja can deliver for the arts in the ACT, we are in dire straits.

Answers to questions on notice

Question No 625

MS STEPHEN-SMITH: This is not so much a matter arising from question time as post-question time the other day. Ms Castley sought to follow up on a question on notice that Mrs Jones had lodged. While I noted that there are issues around the member who asked the question, I thought that, for the information of the chamber and Ms Castley, I would advise that we are in the process of preparing an answer to question 625, which relates to nurses furloughed due to COVID-19.

I did not want to give the impression that we were not going to answer it simply because Mrs Jones was not here. It was just that it has been a difficult one to pull together to try to understand what data is available and the effort that needs to be gone through to collect that data, and whether that is a reasonable use of resources. We will provide an answer to that as quickly as possible.

The other question is a broad one that has been asked across all ministers and again covers a lot of data and a complicated question to answer.

Question Nos 684 and 685

MRS KIKKERT: Under standing order 118A, I seek an explanation from the Minister for Consumer Affairs as to why question 684 has not been answered within the set 30-day timeframe.

MR RATTENBURY: Yes. The explanation is that I have not received that response in my office yet but obviously it is overdue. I will undertake to Mrs Kikkert to follow it up immediately and ensure she gets it in a timely manner.

MR ACTING SPEAKER: The information that I have, Mrs Kikkert, is that the response to that question is not due until 24 April.

Mrs Kikkert: Okay, my apologies.

Mr Rattenbury: That would be why I have not received it then!

MR ACTING SPEAKER: Are there any other matters arising, Mrs Kikkert?

MRS KIKKERT: Yes. I am going to have one more attempt. Under standing order 118A, I seek an explanation from the Minister for Corrections and Justice Health for an explanation as to why the following question 685 taken on notice has not been answered within the set 30-day time frame.

Ms Cheyne: Question 685 is also due on 24 April.

Mrs Kikkert: My apologies. Thank you.

MR ACTING SPEAKER: We understand that they are both due on 24 April. So, Mrs Kikkert, as you were.

Mrs Kikkert: Great, thank you.

Leave of absence

Motion (by **Ms Castley**) agreed to:

That leave of absence be granted to Ms Lawder for this sitting day due to illness.

Papers

The **Acting Speaker** presented the following papers:

Committee Reports—Schedule of Government Responses—Tenth Assembly, as at 4 April 2022.

Inspector of Correctional Services Act, pursuant to subsection 30(2)—Report of a Review of a Critical Incident by the ACT Inspector of Correctional Services—A serious fire at the Alexander Maconochie Centre on 12 May 2021 (CIR 02/22), dated April 2022.

Mr Gentleman presented the following papers:

Auditor-General Act, pursuant to subsection 21(4)—Auditor-General's Report No 13/2021—Campbell Primary School Modernisation Project Procurement—Government response, dated April 2022.

Freedom of Information Act, pursuant to section 39—Copy of notice provided to the Ombudsman—Freedom of Information request—Decision not made in time—Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate (FOI 21/119698), dated 1 April 2022.

Planning and Development Act, pursuant to subsection 79(1)—Approvals—Variations to the Territory Plan, including associated documents—

No 364—Gungahlin Town Centre—Amendments to the Gungahlin Precinct Map and Code, dated 6 April 2022.

No 365—Housing Choices—Boarding Houses and Co-Housing, dated 6 April 2022.

Planning, Transport and City Services—Standing Committee—Report 8—*Inquiry into Giralang Shops—Interim Report*—Government response, dated April 2022.

Public Accounts—Standing Committee—Report 3—*Inquiry into the Auditor-General's Report No. 1 of 2020: Shared Services Delivery of HR and Finance Services*—Government response, dated April 2022.

Sport and active recreation—Report—Resolution of the Assembly of 22 April 2021—Update, dated April 2022.

Auditor-General's report No 13/2021—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) (2.57): Pursuant to standing order 211, I move:

That the Assembly take note of the following paper:

Auditor-General Act, pursuant to subsection 21(4)—Auditor-General's Report No 13/2021—Campbell Primary School Modernisation Project Procurement—Government response.

MR STEEL (Murrumbidgee—Minister for Skills, Minister for Transport and City Services and Special Minister of State) (2.57): The ACT government welcomes the recommendations in the audit report and agrees, or agrees in principle, with its six recommendations. The government is committed to ensuring that all procurement activity is fair, open and undertaken in accordance with the provisions of the Government Procurement Act 2001, the Government Procurement Regulation 2007, and all relevant policy and guidance material. In addition, the ACT government values sound governance practices, with a focus on transparency and ethical engagement with industry and the community.

The government and relevant directorates worked constructively with the Auditor-General and the ACT Audit Office throughout the performance audit. The ACT government continually monitors and works to enhance the ACT government's procurement framework, which is the hierarchy of whole-of-government procurement related legislation, statutory instruments, policies, schemes, guidance, fact sheets, tools, templates and systems that support territory entities to undertake procurement.

This work is ongoing and, while it has synergies with the audit report, it is broader than the formal response to the audit report. As part of this proactive work to strengthen the current system, the ACT government published the Probity in Procurement Guide in January 2021. Furthermore, new and updated guidance on various topics, including risk management, value-for-money considerations, calculating whole-of-life costs, and conflicts of interest, were released in January 2022. This material, which is available on the ACT government's external-facing procurement website, aims to assist officers undertaking procurement as well as the broader public to better understand the procurement framework.

A supply complaints management procedure has been established for consistently managing supply complaints about the conduct of territory procurement. The procedure is designed to provide an effective and efficient process for managing supply complaints relating to the acquisition stage of procurement activities, and it is consistent with free trade obligations relating to judicial review.

The ACT government is committed to making continual improvements to ensure public and industry confidence in procurement processes. As part of delivering on that commitment, an independent review of the operational performance of Procurement ACT was conducted 2021. The review was led by Ms Renee Leon, supported by the Strategy and Transformation Office in the Chief Minister, Treasury, and Economic Development Directorate. A copy of the review report is provided with this government response. This review was commissioned to identify areas for improvement in support provided by Procurement ACT to ACT government directorates undertaking procurements.

The review makes eight recommendations in response to these findings, which focus on clarifying roles and responsibilities, leveraging whole of government data and procurement activity to achieve better procurement outcomes, modernising systems and streamlining processes, and making advice and support easier to access, and ensuring Procurement ACT has the workforce capability to provide that advice and support. It acknowledges that Procurement ACT has processes already underway. Stemming from previous reviews and client feedback, there were some of the recommendations made.

Together with the recommendations of this and other audit reports, the findings and recommendations of that review are being used to inform the development of a whole-of-government procurement reform program. This will focus on supporting ACT government procurement activity to be robust, transparent and effective while also being streamlined and efficient. CMTEDD is currently in the process of preparing a detailed work plan for this reform program, and this will be publicly

released in June 2022. The procurement reform program is in addition to our ongoing review and improvement of the procurement framework.

The government takes seriously our obligation to undertake procurements efficiently, transparently, and in ways that promote and maintain community confidence that value for money is being achieved. We have already taken significant steps to update and strengthen the ACT's procurement framework where external advice has flagged the need to do so. We are currently working on a focus reform work plan to boost procurement capability across government and ensure that directorates receive the best quality support from procurement ACT. I welcome the scrutiny of this Assembly and its members on this work. And we will continue to provide updates as it progresses in the months to come.

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) (3.02): The ACT government welcomes the Auditor-General's Performance Audit Report into the Campbell Primary School modernisation project procurement, as part of robust and clear accountability and transparency frameworks for the ACT government.

Audit processes are an important part of accountability and transparency frameworks of the ACT public service. It is also important that procurement of school infrastructure is appropriately subject to scrutiny and audit processes to ensure both value for money and effective public administration. The government has welcomed the recommendations provided by the Auditor-General and acknowledges the need for robust supporting documentation on decision-making.

Government procurement and regulatory decisions must have a high degree of integrity and transparency. Canberrans are entitled to know that public money is being spent to deliver the services that they need in a way that is ethical and transparent. The ACT government uses its purchasing power to support the local and regional economy and to promote important social values, like protecting the environment, and promoting safe and secure employment. It is therefore important to ensure that any procurement processes are fair, open and undertaken in accordance with the provisions of the legislation.

The ACT government has agreed, or agreed in principle, with all six recommendations from the Auditor-General's report. The relevant directorates have worked cooperatively with the Auditor-General and the ACT Audit Office through the process. The government response demonstrates a commitment to listening when suggestions for improvement are made and taking action to implement change. This report and response will result in a stronger procurement system and better implementation of that system in every directorate. These changes mean that Canberrans can continue to have confidence in the government procurement decisions.

Continual review and a willingness to implement new procedures is a key part of maintaining public confidence. The government has been hard at work ensuring that

its procurement framework is up to date and effective since the start of this term. The Special Minister of State's work on procurement reform has included overseeing a review of Procurement ACT's operational performance, to identify any areas of improvement for the support and information provided during procurement processes. That work was already underway independently of, and prior to, the government's response to this report.

It is important to recognise and commend the Education Directorate for acting quickly to make improvements. During the course of the audit, and whilst the government's response was being finalised, the Education Directorate identified areas of improvement in its business practices. Immediate action was taken in response, and it is a normal and healthy part of responding to audit reports that directorates take action as soon as they practically can to make improvements.

In improving its processes, the Education Directorate has been working with Major Projects Canberra to progress the following actions: issuing stronger guidance and information on roles, responsibilities and authority, including communication protocols, the role of probity advisers and change management processes; streamlining records management protocols and practices to ensure the clear documentation of decision-making; strengthening engagement with tenderers and stakeholders that is enabled by clear communication protocols; and introducing targeted training and professional development to build capabilities in implementing the procurement framework.

The Education Directorate will take further action to ensure the probity of procurement processes and will fully implement the government's response to the audit. This includes the specific consideration of probity management and the provision of additional independent probity advice and training for tender evaluation panels. The Education Directorate is committed to ensuring that in future procurements where delegates have not accepted or have amended the recommendations of the tender evaluation panel, those decisions will be fully documented, in accordance with the government's response.

The government continues to work collaboratively across directorates to ensure that the recommendations of the Auditor-General result in improvements. The government takes seriously the obligations to conduct procurements in ways that maintain public confidence. The public servants undertaking procurement work deserve to have the very best guidance and support available. The changes made following this audit will help ensure that across government public servants are supported to meet the community's high expectations of transparency and accountability.

This process has demonstrated the government's willingness to accept scrutiny and to make improvements. The audit report shows clearly that the Education Directorate and Major Projects Canberra engaged openly and cooperatively with the Auditor-General from the beginning of this process. The response that the Special Minister for State and I are tabling today shows that the government engaged with this report and took concrete action in response.

I look forward to continuing to provide information to this Assembly about how public funds are used ethically and transparently to deliver public benefits, new schools, improved schools, and other vital services.

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

Sport—community wellbeing

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) (3.08): Pursuant to standing order 211, I move:

That the Assembly take note of the following paper:

Sport and active recreation—Report—Resolution of the Assembly of 22 April 2021—Update.

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

Freedom of Information Act—decision not made in time

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) (3.09): Pursuant to standing order 211, I move:

That the Assembly take note of the following paper:

Freedom of Information Act, pursuant to section 39—Copy of notice provided to the Ombudsman—Freedom of Information request—Decision not made in time—Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate (FOI 21/119698).

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

Planning, Transport and City Services—Standing Committee Report 8—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) (3.09): Pursuant to standing order 211, I move:

That the Assembly take note of the following paper:

Planning, Transport and City Services—Standing Committee—Report 8—*Inquiry into Giralang Shops—Interim Report*—Government response.

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

Planning and Development Act—variation No 365 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) (3.10): Pursuant to standing order 211, I move:

That the Assembly take note of the following paper:

Planning and Development Act, pursuant to subsection 79(1)—Approval—Variation to the Territory Plan 365—Housing Choices—Boarding Houses and Co-Housing.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

**Public Accounts—Standing Committee
Report 3—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) (3.11): Pursuant to standing order 211, I move:

That the Assembly take note of the following paper:

Public Accounts—Standing Committee—Report 3—*Inquiry into the Auditor-General's Report No. 1 of 2020: Shared Services Delivery of HR and Finance Services*—Government response.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

Planning and Development Act—variation No 364 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) (3.11): Pursuant to standing order 211, I move:

That the Assembly take note of the following paper:

Planning and Development Act, pursuant to subsection 79(1)—Approval—Variation to the Territory Plan 364—Gungahlin Town Centre—Amendments to the Gungahlin Precinct Map and Code.

Variation for the Territory Plan No 364 implements the planning recommendations of the *Gungahlin Town Centre Planning Refresh – Snapshot*, which was developed with the community. The ACT government's vision for the Gungahlin town centre is for an active hub where people can live, work, study and engage in recreational and entertainment activities. Simply put, the vision for the Gungahlin town centre is for a place that people can enjoy.

Variation 364 provides guidance on the built form and character of the town centre and promotes high-quality design outcomes as the centre continues to develop and grow. The variation sets out building heights and the need to provide priority active frontages to pedestrian thoroughfares. Furthermore, and in line with the community wishes, the variation facilitates more employment areas at the eastern end of the town centre. Vacant blocks on Flemington Road will be required to have commercial and employment uses, with two blocks being reserved for commercial development. To achieve this, the variation will be supported by a more detailed level of precinct planning for this land.

The draft variation was released for public comment from 30 September 2019 until 18 November 2019. A total of nine written submissions were received. I referred the draft variation to the Standing Committee on Planning, Transport and City Services under section 73 of the Planning and Development Act. I thank the committee for its consideration of this variation and for its report released on 21 September that included eight recommendations. I tabled the government's response to the committee's recommendations in the Legislative Assembly on 8 February 2022. Three of the eight recommendations were agreed, and the remaining recommendations were agreed in principle.

The commercial market assessment to be undertaken by the Suburban Land Agency and the more detailed precinct planning along Flemington Road will focus on the development of commercial and employment uses. Winyu House already offers an employment hub in the town centre and is available for ACT government employees to meet and work. This type of development could be established by federal departments and for private offices, and would support shopping, services, restaurants and entertainment at the town centre. These measures, in combination with uses such as community facilities and residential development, will enhance existing development at the town centre, to create a lively and active mix-use town centre.

In accordance with the government's response to the standing committee's recommendations, I directed the Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate to make a number of changes to the Territory Plan. First, I directed the removal of criterion 43 and rule 44, consistent with recommendation 2 of the committee, in order to reserve priority commercial space. Secondly, I directed two actions in recognition of the committee's recommendation 5. One action was to amend the building height in precinct 2B to allow up to two additional storeys where additional height does not have an adverse effect on adjacent development.

The other action was to adjust the height, in metres, for buildings in precinct 2B. This was to encourage commercial development and potentially a building that is entirely commercial, noting that commercial development typically has higher floor-to-ceiling heights than residential development. More specifically, the maximum height of buildings has been increased from 26 metres to 30 metres for a seven-storey development; from 42 to 50 metres for a 12-storey development; and from 48 to 58 metres for a 14-storey development in precinct 2B. These areas, where these variation height limits apply, have not changed.

Lastly, in response to recommendation 7 of the committee, the locations of active frontages within the town centre were adjusted to better align with areas identified as pedestrian thoroughfares. Four changes were made to the variation in accordance with this direction. A change was made to remove active frontage requirements from the eastern side of Gribble Street. This street has not been identified as a main pedestrian area or route; therefore, active frontage requirements are not necessary on both sides of the street.

Additionally, the requirement would have applied only to two underdeveloped blocks with narrow street frontages. Pedestrian linkages from the south of Anthony Rolfe Avenue to the north-east of Gungahlin are not compromised by this change because the western side of Gribble Street is developed and contains active frontages, with shop fronts with windows and a wide footpath.

Another change has been made to active frontage requirements more generally. For partial active frontages, the amount of blank wall allowed along the frontage has increased from 40 to 50 per cent. The reason for this change is to better differentiate between the mandatory active frontage requirements, which allows only up to 30 per cent of blank walls as part of the frontage. Mandatory active frontages are key areas for activation, as they generally form part of the main thoroughfare through the centre.

The third change is in addition to criterion C6, which requires the design of buildings along the linear park to promote casual surveillance to enhance the safety of park users. The linear park is recognised as a pedestrian thoroughfare within the eastern part of the town centre. For this reason, the fourth change was to add a hatching to the linear park in figure 11, to identify it as a main pedestrian area and route.

I approved variation 364 because it will protect land for future commercial development, provide guidance about the built form and character of the town centre, and provide high-quality design outcomes as the centre continues to develop and grow. Furthermore, the variation sets out building heights and the need to provide priority active frontages to pedestrian thoroughfares. Finally, the variation provides greater guidance for open space, greater flexibility for the location of community facilities, and more local employment opportunities through mixed use and commercial development, together with the appropriate residential development.

I would again like to thank the standing committee for its valuable insights into the development of the Gungahlin town centre and its report and recommendations. Consideration of these recommendations and the changes incorporated into the variation will provide real and lasting benefits for the Gungahlin town centre and residents of the district into the future. I have tabled the approved variation of the Territory Plan 364 and the background papers, including the *Gungahlin Town Centre Planning Refresh – Snapshot* and the report on consultation.

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

Planning—land release program

MS LEE (Kurrajong—Leader of the Opposition) (3.18): I move:

That this Assembly:

(1) notes that the:

- (a) ACT is in a housing crisis;
- (b) ACT Government's Indicative Land Release Program 2021-22 to 2025-26 dictates that:
 - (i) over the next five years, approximately 70 percent of the land for new housing delivered by the ACT Government will be for high density dwellings;
 - (ii) 25 percent will be land for detached housing; and
 - (iii) the remaining five percent will be for mid-density dwellings;

(2) further notes that:

- (a) this approach is restricting Canberrans' housing choices;
- (b) it is not delivering a mix of housing typologies to meet demand; and
- (c) lack of choice is pricing Canberrans out of the detached and mid-density housing markets; and

(3) calls on the ACT Government to:

- (a) reframe the planned land release for the next five years to provide more options for mid-density and detached housing; and
- (b) ensure the new planning regime will deliver the housing choices Canberrans want and need.

The ACT is in a housing crisis, and those opposite appear to be ignoring the reality. In the last sitting week we heard various members of this Labor-Greens government say that they recognise the housing crisis in Canberra, but only a few minutes later they voted to completely wipe this acknowledgement from my motion. I notice that Mr Gentleman's amendment to my motion today also does the same, so no doubt the vote will be replicated.

Time and again we see Labor and the Greens shirk responsibility. I refer to the rising cost of living, the abysmal state of our roads and footpaths, our failing health system, the horrors we hear that are going on in our schools and health facilities—and the list goes on. It is no exception when it comes to the housing crisis that is happening right here, right now under their watch.

Let us be clear: Labor and the Greens have had more than 20 years to plan for the sustainable growth of our city—20 years to ensure that land supply meets the expectations of our community. They have failed our community, and they continue to fail our community.

The Labor-Greens solution to the housing crisis is to make high-rise apartments the only realistic option for many Canberra families. But we have clear evidence that Canberrans want choice when it comes to housing. Whether it be a detached house, a townhouse, a dual occupancy or an apartment, we know that they want choice.

It is also clear that Canberrans love the great bush capital and want the opportunity of having some green space to call their own. The Winton report of 2015 found that over 70 per cent of Canberrans want fewer apartment blocks of four or more storeys and dual occupancies and townhouses. The same report showed 85 per cent of Canberrans would like to live in a detached house and only 1.7 per cent of Canberrans wanted to live in an apartment block of more than three storeys.

The Labor-Greens government know this; yet, by deliberately strangling land supply, by deliberately tying themselves to an infill policy that is designed to drive Canberrans into high-rise apartments, they are restricting choice and restricting Canberrans from living in the dwelling types that they know Canberrans want.

The Labor-Greens government's Indicative Land Release Program for the next five years shows that 70 per cent of the new land release will be for high-density housing. That is a planned 11,381 high-density dwellings. For the remainder, 25 per cent of the planned land release will be for 4,171 detached houses and just five per cent or 882 medium-density dwellings. But the Labor-Greens government knows that a tiny fraction, 1.7 per cent of Canberrans, want to live in a high-rise apartment tower.

To recap, 70 per cent of the new housing to be delivered under Labor and the Greens will be high-rise apartment buildings, despite the government's own report saying that just 1.7 per cent of Canberrans actually want to live in that type of dwelling.

The question we have to ask is: why? Why does this Labor-Greens government continue to fail Canberrans on housing and deliver the exact opposite of what Canberrans want and need? The answer is simple: this Labor-Greens government is completely and utterly out of touch. It is out of touch with what our community's needs and wants are, and out of touch with the reality of the housing crisis that we are currently experiencing.

They do not listen to Canberrans when it does not suit them, whether it is on sky-high rates, the shocking violence that we are seeing in our schools and health facilities, or the government's infill agenda.

More recently, we have seen land ballots in the suburbs of Whitlam, Macnamara and Taylor, where tens of thousands of Canberrans have desperately bid for the meagre number of blocks on offer. The stats are staggering and equate to having up to 123 people competing for a single block of land. The numbers do not lie; there is clearly an overwhelming demand for detached houses in Canberra.

There is also a strong market for medium-density housing, but this Labor-Greens government is steadfast in its refusal to acknowledge it. Instead—and let us say it again—70 per cent of new housing will be high-rise apartment towers that only 1.7 per cent of Canberrans actually want to live in.

There is simply no housing choice in the ACT under this Labor-Greens government. You either compete with tens of thousands of Canberrans for one of the few blocks zoned for freestanding houses, or you move your family into an apartment. If Labor and the Greens are restricting land supply for the types of housing that they know people want, of course, the prices will go up. It is no secret; it is not rocket science. It is basic economics—supply and demand.

ACT Treasury has even told this Labor-Greens government that this would happen in the latest budget review. ACT Treasury states:

If the demand for land is higher than supply, then there may be upward pressure on prices which would see an increase to Government revenues, in the absence of a supply response.

Not only is Treasury telling the Labor-Greens government and the Canberra community that lack of supply will probably see prices go up, but also, of course, it will increase government revenue. The result is a housing market so restricted by this Labor-Greens government, so tight, that Canberrans are left deprived of their dream of owning their own home.

The Chief Minister recently spoke about the need for the ACT to attract and retain young talent. The Deputy Chief Minister has been speaking about the shortage of teachers and their yet-unfulfilled election promise to hire 400 more. The Minister for Health has been speaking about the need to recruit more nurses. How can we even begin to fulfill these goals of attracting talent to our city when they know that they will either be forced into a high-rise apartment whether they like it or not, or they will have to line up with the tens of thousands of Canberrans for the chance to nab a block for a detached house? We cannot attract much-needed workers to Canberra if they cannot afford to live here.

Under the watch of this Labor-Greens government, the median house price is now over \$1 million. We have the highest rents in the country, and we have tens of thousands of Canberrans lining up to bid on blocks where the chance of getting it is 123 to one. Canberrans want choice when it comes to housing, and this Labor-Greens government is wedded to an infill policy agenda that is absolutely failing our community.

My motion today calls on this government to address the lack of realistic housing options for Canberrans. We are in a housing crisis. Whilst there are complex and varied reasons for housing affordability, this Labor-Greens government must take steps to at least address the factors that are within its control. I commend my motion to the Assembly.

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) (3.28): I am pleased to have another opportunity to talk about what this government is doing to improve housing affordability and housing supply. I move the following amendment to Ms Lee's motion:

Omit all text after “That this Assembly”, substitute:

“(1) notes that:

- (a) house prices are rising nationally and internationally and the ACT is affected by these increases, alongside other jurisdictions in Australia and across the world;
- (b) the ACT’s existing dwelling stock comprised, at 30 June 2021:
 - (i) approximately 115 000 single residential dwellings; and
 - (ii) approximately 63 000 ‘other’ dwellings, including apartments, townhouses and semi-detached dwellings; and
- (c) the ACT Government’s Indicative Land Release Program 2021-22 to 2025-26:
 - (i) continues to supply dwellings ahead of population growth;
 - (ii) provides a mix of dwelling types and locations; and
 - (iii) is supported by private sector redevelopment in established suburbs;

(2) further notes that:

- (a) the Housing Choices collaboration hub showed a preference for infill development;
- (b) the Grattan Institute has identified increasing density in inner and middle suburbs as the most effective way to increase housing affordability;
- (c) density provides for affordable lifestyles with reduced transport costs and access to established services and facilities;
- (d) the Demonstration Housing project is testing ideas for medium-density development; and
- (e) unchecked urban sprawl increases emissions, reduces liveability and sustainability, requires expensive new infrastructure, and will destroy the bush landscape that surrounds Canberra, risking we lose protected flora and fauna forever; and

(3) calls on the ACT Government to:

- (a) clearly identify, through District Strategies, likely locations for future density, particularly medium-density development; and
- (b) ensure the new planning system will deliver the housing choices to accommodate Canberrans into the future.”.

There is no secret that house prices are rising, and it is an international problem which is having an impact across Australia, including here in Canberra. The ACT government has some levers available to it to improve housing affordability, and we are using the levers that we have, such as reducing stamp duty, and the affordable home purchase scheme.

Another one of these levers is supplying land for additional housing. Ms Lee seems to incorrectly conflate land release and housing supply, but housing supply is also about making more efficient use of the land and the infrastructure that we have in our existing footprint. I will go to comments about the availability of houses, and look at

the data from last year. Mr Acting Speaker, if you look at Allhomes, there were nearly 69,000 transactions. To say that it is too expensive and people cannot buy houses is simply refuted by the data.

I will go to Ms Lee's comments about density. Adding density to our cities is housing supply. It provides a housing option that is more affordable, not just to purchase but to live in. Smaller dwellings are great value for money. They are cheaper and more efficient to heat and to cool; and living close to work, public transport, shops and services reduces travel costs. We see people moving into these.

Rezoning and lease variation contribute to our high- and medium-density housing options in our existing suburbs. As a result, this type of development will not necessarily show up in government land release statistics. Ms Lee may have seen some of this type of development in her own electorate, with an increased number of medium-density options such as townhouses in Braddon, Turner, O'Connor and Dickson.

It is nice to see that Ms Lee and I share the same view that we need more medium-density housing options in our city. Having more of the missing middle, as it is often called in planning circles, will provide a greater range of options for Canberrans to upsize and also downsize their housing, according to their families' needs.

We also agree that the ACT government should be providing the housing choices that Canberrans want for the future. One thing that has been very clear in much research, whether it is the Winton report, the Housing Choices Collaboration Hub or the Grattan Institute, is that people in Canberra, and right across Australia, are looking for high quality, medium-density housing options in inner and middle suburbs in our cities. These reports consistently find that, when you account for all of the factors that people consider when choosing a home, people prefer high- to medium-density housing options in convenient locations.

The district strategies work in the Planning System Review and Inform Project will identify areas in our city that can accommodate medium-density housing. Given this high level of agreement about our need for more medium-density housing, I look forward to Ms Lee and the opposition strongly supporting these ideas in the district strategies.

I will also look forward to Ms Lee and the opposition providing their support for a range of medium-density options that the government is exploring through the Demonstration Housing Project, such as co-housing and the Manor House. Having a variety of housing choices will allow Canberrans to find the right property for their needs, whether they are a first home buyer, a growing family or a downsizing empty-nester.

With around 65 per cent of our existing housing stock being freestanding, single residential homes, we need to make sure that we are not leaving behind the people that are looking for something smaller and more manageable. Dwellings that have been added to the ACT property market are ahead of population growth, and this has

been going on for some years. Our land release program and ongoing private sector redevelopment will continue this trend. It has been a deliberate strategy of the ACT government to continue to release land ahead of population growth.

In addition, we are seeing the private sector contribute their own supply. To be clear, the private sector is contributing not just apartments but also medium-density options such as townhouses.

The ACT government has carefully factored in trends such as the growth in single-person households and the ageing population when assessing likely future needs for Canberra. And the ACT government is committed to equity. This includes ensuring that, when people want to get a foot on the property ladder, they are not forced to live in a far-flung suburb, spending hours each day commuting to work.

We are committed to protecting our environment, which means reducing the impact of urban sprawl on our surrounding bush and landscape, as well as reducing transport emissions. We are also committed to value for money for ACT ratepayers, which means sensibly and efficiently using the infrastructure that we already have. The ACT government will continue to release land ahead of population projections, but this is just one part of providing increased housing supply.

I would like to thank Ms Lee again for bringing particular attention to medium-density housing, and look forward to the opposition's continued support for additional medium density in our existing suburbs.

MS VASSAROTTI (Kurrajong—Minister for the Environment, Minister for Heritage, Minister for Homelessness and Housing Services and Minister for Sustainable Building and Construction) (3.34): I thank Ms Lee for bringing this motion to the chamber. I rise today to speak in support of the amendment to the motion that is being debated. All of us here in the Assembly are very focused on the challenges that we face as a jurisdiction, which are similar to all jurisdictions across the country, around the issues of housing affordability. It is something that we have discussed very regularly over recent months, and I expect we will continue to discuss it. As we have before, and will again, we note that it is important to place this conversation locally in the context of the national and global challenges in this area.

As I noted in a debate in the last sitting period on how to respond to the issue of housing affordability, I again stress that we cannot address the issue of housing affordability without also responding to the other great local, national and global challenges that face us. This includes the climate emergency, the extinction crisis we are facing, and our inequality crisis as we see a widening gap between rich and poor. If we were to do so, even if we were successful in creating some very short-term relief, it would come at an even greater cost, both for us directly today and for future generations.

Current government programs, including the Indicative Land Release Program, aim to provide a balanced program of land release that balance the issues we face as a city, including the housing needs for a growing city; housing choice that is changing and evolving; housing affordability, which is impacted by many things in addition to

supply; and the environmental impact of development—a particular issue for a city-state that is surrounded by bushland and steward to a range of environmental values that are under increasing threat due to issues such as climate change and development pressure.

I welcome the conversation progressed in this motion by Ms Lee around the issue of housing choice. It is an important one to have, and one that has been underway for some time, through projects such as the Housing Choices work and Demonstration Housing. It is a key part of the discussion as we work through the planning review, which is looking at planning legislation, the Territory Plan and the development of new district plans.

It is through this important community conversation that we can influence the tools and the settings which will deliver more housing options that meet our needs and our preferences. It is clear that our needs, preferences and choices around housing are changing. Our lifestyles have significantly changed over the past few decades, and many of us no longer pine for the homes that were built in the 1950s and 1960s—small homes on large blocks.

As we move through our lives, our needs also change and evolve. It is important that we engage in conversations about the types of homes we want in our suburbs, the opportunities we have for well-designed homes that keep us safe, keep us well and enable us to live a good life. In having these conversations, it is key to think about the impacts that our choices now have on the lives of those who come after us. The homes that we build now will be here for decades, and we need to ensure that they are designed for current and future needs, for individual households and for the community as a whole.

Some of the significant challenges that we are facing in relation to climate change and the affordability issues that also face us mean that we need to reflect on our expectations around housing. I encourage members to read an excellent interview in the *Canberra Times* by the incoming president of the Australian Institute of Architects and local architect Shannon Battisson, who reflects on the fact that our homes, like those in the United States, are amongst the biggest in the world, and challenges us to think beyond homes being a checklist of things that we want and more of a home that provides us with the things that nurture us and keep us sheltered. She suggests that if more people focused on designing the kind of space that they would like to bring a baby home to, or retreat within to grieve, houses would likely be smaller and more considered.

As I have stated previously, we need housing choice. As outlined in the proposed amendment, the ACT government's Housing Choices Collaboration Hub highlighted interest in a wider range of housing topologies and a range of different price points, with a focus on development that allows people to age in place. Demonstration housing projects are also test grounds for medium density, delivering that missing middle that people are asking for.

Rather than repeating simplistic solutions, I look forward to some more sophisticated discussion around housing affordability and preference in this chamber, particularly

through the planning review process. I repeat: when we have these discussions, let us ensure that we bring all of the issues to the table and that we continue to work on ways that we can improve affordability in a way that does not have an irreversible cost, either for people or for the planet.

MR CAIN (Ginninderra) (3.40): It is my pleasure, as shadow minister for planning and land management, to support the Leader of the Opposition's motion. It is such an important motion. I am sure there are Canberrans out there, thousands of them, tens of thousands, who have missed opportunities for the housing choice that they want. I am sure they are very pleased to see this motion being moved in this Assembly.

I have heard "housing choice" mentioned a few times by speakers this afternoon, but it seems like it is "the housing choice that we'll let you have". That is what that really means. "Here's the housing choice that we're going to let you have." It is not the housing choice that people are clearly showing by tens of thousands turning up for ballots for the release of a small number of pieces of land—clearly, land that is in high demand. It is not housing choice when you are basically denying choice to the community. That is not housing choice.

This important motion acknowledges the impact of the current Labor-Greens' land release program on the ACT's housing crisis and the lack of choice that Canberrans are being offered by the Labor-Greens government.

A land release program is an opportunity for the government to support the typology breakdown in the housing market, apart from development and redevelopment. The Leader of the Opposition mentioned the statistics; I think that all of us should be reading these statistics into the record. In Taylor, we had 7,484 people registered for 115 blocks sold. In Macnamara, we had 8,797 people registered for 71 blocks sold. Every other land ballot of late has been the same. This is not the story of a satiated market. Demand is not being met. More needs to be done.

I have asked the relevant ministers, time and again, whether they think the Labor-Greens government is releasing enough land to satisfy demand. The minister for suburban land development says that they are. That is a strange thing to say in response to what the community is clearly indicating.

As members would be aware, during annual reports hearings the Chief Minister and Treasurer refused to acknowledge that restricting the supply of land that Canberrans clearly want does not affect the price of homes in the territory. The Leader of the Opposition spoke about this supply and demand principle, and I think everyone understands what that means. If you restrict the supply of something in high demand, you will influence the price. Of course, who does not know that that is the law of supply and demand? Something called "Barr-onomics" says that if you restrict the supply of something that people really want, it does not affect the price. I look forward to some solid research to back up this rather unusual economic theory.

The statistics tell the story. If the government is really interested in housing choice, how about looking at the facts? People want a choice in dwellings, and the statistics are clearly telling me right now that that choice is not a reality. Just look at the

numbers, and do not conflate the issue of number of residential dwellings in order to say, “We’re doing the job,” because you are disguising the very low proportion of land for detached housing. There is an extraordinarily high percentage of land for high-density housing.

The Labor-Greens government has had over 20 years to get this right. Canberra has been growing for that whole time. We have been approaching borders, and have indeed approached borders, for over 20 years of planning. Here is where we are at—with a housing affordability crisis. We need, very simply, more variety of housing choice—duplexes, apartment buildings, standalone dwellings—and in the urban centres, to recognise the attractiveness and the family-centred, leafy green suburbs. We need to look at a wider choice of what is being made available to the community.

Ms Lee has introduced a motion outlining simple and effective solutions to provide more choice for Canberrans, who are currently being stratified according to what they can afford. As the most successful Labor Chief Minister that the territory has ever had would know, we are creating a society of haves and have-nots in terms of housing affordability.

Minister Gentleman talked about this being an international problem. Hang on; you have a responsibility, Minister, for what you are able to do in the ACT. You should not be looking for excuses anywhere you can find them. Focus on what you control in the ACT, which is the release of land, and the type of development that land is available for.

Minister, you talked about urban sprawl, and I am really confused about what that means when I hear you say it. If someone was coming in to the territory and deciding whether there was urban sprawl, they might think that there is because we have hit the borders in New South Wales to the north and we have bought land in New South Wales to the west, with an intention to expand the border. Some people would say that is urban sprawl.

Again, Minister, you use terms in order to criticise us—without any evidence, by the way—yet, the same terms could very easily apply to you. I do not know whether you actually recognise what the words mean in the context of the reality that we are in. We have seen that, sadly, this week, Minister, in your capacity as minister with responsibility for industrial relations and workplace affairs, when you presented ministerial statements about workplace safety without even referencing a high school in a suburb in your electorate that is a disastrous failure and an unsafe place for school students. Are you in touch with reality, Minister? The words you say in this place do not reflect that. Shame on you for that. Get something right, surely.

Sadly, I cannot accept the minister’s amendment to the motion from the Leader of the Opposition. I am a bit puzzled, too, by Minister Vassarotti saying, “We just can’t have small homes on big blocks.” I wonder how many members opposite could be described as having a small home on a big block. How many, I wonder, would like to volunteer to return their standalone home on a generous parcel of land to the market—to provide more housing choice, of course, for their community?

This is a very worthy motion. Canberrans who have been lining up for ballots, Canberrans who have been waiting and saving up for their housing choice, will be very pleased to see this motion being brought to this Assembly. I totally reject the minister's amendment to it.

MRS KIKKERT (Ginninderra) (3.49): I thank Ms Lee for bringing this very important motion before the Assembly. To quote Aussie band Men at Work, Australia has for many decades been the land of plenty. For many of us, and especially those born here, the sight of empty shelves at the supermarket over the past two years has been an important reminder of just how lucky we are to live in a nation generally characterised by enviable levels of peace, stability and prosperity. Mercifully, food shortages have mostly been temporary. In some cases, they have been unavoidable, caused, for example, by disruptions to production or supply chains. In other cases, shortages have been completely unnecessary, caused by irrational behaviour such as the hoarding of toilet paper.

Here in Canberra we are currently experiencing another kind of completely avoidable shortage, one that has already been allowed to go on too long and which is similarly created by irrational and even irresponsible behaviour. This is the shortage of housing choices. I wish to review five facts. Fact 1: in the ACT the government holds monopoly control over the release of land for new homes.

Fact 2: the ACT government's current indicative land release program dictates that approximately 70 per cent of the land for new housing over the next five years will be for high-density dwellings—in other words, apartment blocks.

Fact 3: according to the government's own Winton report from May 2015, this land release does not match demand. As one can clearly see in chart B of the report, only 7.3 per cent of Canberrans at the time of the survey expressed a desire to live in an apartment. To emphasise, that is 7.3 per cent who wish to live in high-density housing, not 70 per cent. Dictating that the supply of apartments in the territory will be 10 times greater than established demand is absurd. The only explanation is that Labor and the Greens unitedly believe it is their job to control both where and how people will live.

Fact 4: when supply does not meet demand, prices rise. As stated in the government's own budget review last month, if demand for land is higher than supply, prices go up. The only solution, assuming the government wants a solution, is to increase supply. The expert advice from the ACT Treasury underscores just how ridiculous Mr Barr sounded during recent annual reports hearings when he argued that his government's land release program has little impact on the territory's overall house prices, claiming that the program "has influence on the price of housing only in the areas in which land is released". I understand that Mr Barr studied both economics and economic history at the ANU, but that was nearly 30 years ago. Perhaps it is time for a refresher course on the basics of supply and demand.

Fact 5: it is entirely within the power of the current ACT government to alter its land release program to better align land supply with demand. This motion calls on the

government to do just that. Not supporting this motion means that Labor and the Greens do not care whether Canberrans can access the kinds of housing that they want and need. Needs are diverse, but there are very significant reasons why many Canberran families would not choose to live in small apartments.

Whilst many of these reasons are intuitive, academic research increasingly supports the reluctance that many people, and especially families, feel towards high-density living. For example, in 2019 researchers at Deakin University launched a study to help address what they described as “the lack of existing research on the social impact of high-rise apartment living on families with children”. They conclude that “high-rise living makes social life difficult for young families”. Living in an apartment block higher than two storeys, in fact, results in fewer social interactions for both children and adults, researchers found. Another recent Deakin University study found linkages between apartment living and several negative health implications in children, including obesity, low vitamin D levels, impaired social skills, increased distress, and poor social and emotional development.

Senior Australian architect Natalia Krysiak, in an article published last month, observed, “Apartments are often not designed with families in mind and, when families do move into them, it has profound implications.” “Apartment living,” Krysiak noted, “affects parenting styles, which can negatively affect a child’s development.” In addition, Krysiak pointed out that when families are forced into apartments, parents often then choose to have fewer children, an outcome that no doubt pleases the Greens.

This is the party, after all, whose extreme policy positions include encouraging community debate about how to fix the current level of population in Australia. Greens patriarch and former party leader Bob Brown recently stated publicly, “The human herd is eating the planet.” And quoting him once again, “A sensible population policy would aim for a naturally decreasing population.” The Greens in this Assembly certainly understand that forcing families into high-density living is one indirect way of achieving their goal of population control.

Whilst artificially limiting housing choices in Canberra disproportionately harms families, research suggests that the negative impacts of high-density living can potentially affect everyone. Researchers at Edith Cowan University recently reported, “High-rise apartment buildings have long been associated with the poor mental health of their residents.”

Studies from both Germany and Scotland have found that residents who live above the fourth floor of an apartment block experience “twice the number of symptoms of poor mental health as those on lower floors and in detached houses”. In addition, residents with existing mental health conditions who live in apartments are more likely to experience psychiatric illness. The correlation between high-density living and poor mental health is so clear, in fact, that researchers at RMIT University are currently carrying out a multi-year study to consider design improvements to help lessen such impacts.

Clearly, some people, including families, want to live in apartments and enjoy doing so. I honour that choice. I likewise support those Canberrans who want desperately to live in a townhouse or a detached house instead. As academic research conclusively shows, this desire is not irrational, nor is it selfish, as those opposite always insist whenever anyone tries to make a choice for their family that does not align with the radical Greens agenda.

The ACT Greens, it must be remembered, spent years advocating for better living conditions for chickens but fully support a land release policy that is forcing Canberra families to live cramped in high-rise battery cages. And ACT Labor are so desperate for power it seems that they are willing to be held hostage by their radical coalition partners.

Rejecting this motion will also make it clear that neither Labor nor the Greens care if choking land supply causes Canberra house prices to rise. In fact, despite empty slogans like “A home for all”, according to Productivity Commission data, these same two parties have overseen a nearly three per cent decline in the number of public housing dwellings over the past four years. It is a very real possibility that they are quite happy to see house prices in Canberra keep going up at a rate higher than the national average. I am certain that my Labor and Greens colleagues can comprehend their own budget review and therefore they know what it states. *(Time expired.)*

MS CLAY (Ginninderra) (4.00): I rise to speak in support of the amendment to the motion. I am glad we are having this debate today; it is a really important topic. It is an important issue in our bush capital as we look at how we will develop in future and as we reflect on the desires that we have heard from Canberrans in a lot of the past surveys and studies.

We have discussed here on many occasions that we are experiencing a housing affordability crisis. This is a serious issue, and it is not just being experienced here in the ACT. This is being felt right across Australia. In order to ensure that everyone has a home, we need to deal with this issue in a variety of ways. One of the considerations that we must take into account when dealing with the future of housing is the remaining land that we have in the ACT, what we need it for and what we plan to do with it. We cannot make quick, simple decisions about this.

I am keen to talk a little about the outcomes of the Housing Choices Collaboration Hub in 2018. For those who are not familiar with it, in 2018, 31 randomly selected members of the community were engaged in a deliberative process called the Housing Choices Collaboration Hub. Thirteen recommendations were developed across nine themes. Those themes included affordability; character; environment; lifestyle and diversity; planning and approvals; public housing; quality of construction; quality of design; and zoning.

The recommendations out of this Collaboration Hub are really interesting; there are a lot of sensible suggestions there. People wanted to ensure that a proportion of new land release is set aside for lower income earners and that we maintain that proportion. They wanted us to explore and implement alternative models for affordable home

ownership, including co-housing, rent-to-buy and financial options. They wanted us to include landscape plans and streetscape elevation to describe the character of green space, to encourage the diversity of street fronts and make sure that these are enforceable for multi-unit developments. They said that future developments in RZ3 to RZ5 needed to meet mandatory standards for the proportion of soft landscaping and plantable areas. That is to make sure we have room for shade trees and gardens to reduce the heat island effect and reduce stormwater run-off. We know how important those are as our climate is changing.

There was a greater preference for infill development over greenfield development, particularly along transport corridors. They said we needed to make sure that that was not done at the expense of parks and urban open space, but that we kept those green spaces while we did that transit-oriented development. For both infill and new developments, people wanted government to require or incentivise developers to deliver an increase in a mix of dwelling sizes and diversity of dwelling types, and an increase in the set proportion of new dwellings that meet universal design standards, whilst taking into account the different precinct characters and changes over time.

They wanted precinct plans to provide a framework for planning in and around suburbs and centres; an increase in government housing in line with our population growth, including an increase in the types of dwellings to reflect the changing demographics; housing built to a high quality throughout all stages, including independent inspection and certification processes; adoption of a sustainable outcome-based standard of design that demonstrates best practice design quality and liveability standards; allowing dual occupancy with separate title in RZ1; and avoiding lots of tall buildings closely packed next to each other.

That is what the community told us when we went through that deliberative process. Those are quite sophisticated recommendations that came out of that. It was quite a detailed debate and a detailed engagement with the issues. It was a bit less simplistic than debates we often have here in this chamber. I find it interesting what happens when you give the community a bit of time and a bit of expert guidance in terms of the sorts of solutions they are likely to come up with for us.

The community have told us what they want, and they will continue to tell us what they want. There is a strong preference there for infill development over greenfield development, for good quality development, dual occupancy in RZ1—whilst retaining greenspace—and for a diversity of dwelling types. They definitely do not want development at the expense of parks and urban open space.

In our parliamentary and governing agreement, we have a commitment from the ACT government to have at least 70 per cent of new housing development within Canberra's existing urban footprint. It is really important that we maintain that infill development as the preference. It is important because land is not an infinite resource.

We need to protect our environment and we need to make sure we do not endlessly sprawl. That is not merely to save the environment; that is the community's preference. They do not want to have to travel far and wide to get all their basic needs met. The community want easy access to centralised services. The best way we can do

that is to deliver a compact and efficient city. This will also help our climate emissions.

As we have been discussing for the last couple of days and for a few sittings now, we need good public transport to support our community. The government is committed to make 70 per cent of new housing development infill. The ACT Greens have a policy that 80 per cent should be infill, because we value our environment and our bush capital.

Canberra has and continues to expand. We have a number of suburbs in the pipeline that are waiting to be built, including Macnamara, Kenny and various Molonglo Valley suburbs. For a variety of reasons, we cannot click our fingers and build houses quickly to meet need; we need to recognise that the need exists and do what we can. There are shortages of building materials. There are labour shortages. We are living through a pandemic. We are working through a planning system and that will take time and effort. We have a mix of housing choices in the pipeline, but it is complicated and it takes time. There is an obvious benefit for the environment, as well as for the community, if we limit our urban sprawl.

We were talking about the impacts cats have on our native wildlife only yesterday. Everybody in here was in furious agreement about how important it is to protect our native wildlife from cats and to make sure that we protect our wildlife as we are moving through an extinction crisis. Actually, the biggest impact on our native species is development on their habitat; it is actually urban sprawl. We need to limit that.

I have been unpleasantly surprised in the last few weeks by some random reports in the media and some reactive comments about developing areas like west Tuggeranong and CSIRO Ginninderra. I do not think I have yet seen the detailed analysis of the complexities of planning our city, and the complexities of developing those areas, and the real and present issues in continuing urban sprawl, and the impacts of developing such areas. We need to think hard about that and make sure that we have done all the right assessments.

The role of the new planning act is really important in protecting our green spaces and identifying the right locations for future density and where our houses should go. We have got that planning review underway; we do not want to rush ahead and skip to the end. We need a planning system that considers and protects our environmental values. It is critically important. We need a planning system that recognises the climate change we are experiencing and the climate change that will continue.

We need to protect our environment, because a healthy environment is critical to our own health. We have all stood up and talked about that only this morning. We need to take active, protective steps for our environment; and we need to do that by making sure that, through our environmental protections and our planning act, our future development for Canberra is done in a conscious and conscientious way.

I look forward to hearing more from the community about how we should develop, and I look forward to getting more community input into the planning review. It is

absolutely critical that we keep having those detailed conversations. I take a bit of hope from the input that we got the last time that we did detailed, deliberative consultations. It was really interesting to get that feedback. As we are moving through the climate crisis and the extinction crisis, it is so important that we are planning future housing with our environmental lens front and centre for all of those considerations.

MR PARTON (Brindabella) (4.08): I rise to support Elizabeth Lee's motion in its unamended form and to highlight, again, the crisis that the Canberra housing market is facing. The truth is that it is falling on deaf ears and it is the Canberra Liberals that are again bringing the issues of the housing crisis to this Assembly, in the hope that this government might actually do something about the problem that it is certainly exacerbating.

With a mix of 70 per cent land release for high density, 25 per cent for detached housing and five per cent for mid-density dwellings, it is not providing choices. You just cannot say that it is. To the average Jane or Joe out there, what this tells them is that most people will have to buy an apartment. I have two families close to me, people who are under the age of 30, who have desperately—desperately—been trying to purchase a detached house.

One of those families has made the call on that. Irrespective of the fact that they want a piece of land with a house on it, they are going to have to buy an apartment, so they have bought one off the plan. The other family are just hanging on in there, turning up to auctions every week, putting themselves down for those lotto draws—that is how we should describe the housing balance—and getting disappointed week after week, after week. To tell those two families that they are being given choice is ridiculous.

Mr Gentleman, in his speech earlier, said that smaller dwellings are great value for money. What Mr Gentleman actually meant was: "Smaller dwellings are all you will ever be able to afford. I have got my big house at Calwell with my seven cars in the garage, in the inner south, so I am okay. Smaller dwellings are going to be all that you can afford and that is just tough luck. Sorry; you should have come along earlier. You are not going to get the choice that I got." That is what Mr Gentleman is saying.

With the mix of 70 per cent land release for high density, 25 for detached housing and five for mid-density dwellings, what we are seeing here is that there is not a choice. Canberrans want choice. Choice is being able to choose a product, not being forced into a purchase because the government provides more of one option than another. It would be like offering 70 per cent travel by light rail, 25 per cent by bus and five per cent by car. That is offering choice, isn't it? That is offering choice. I mean, that is three choices.

Mr Gentleman also talks about reducing the impact of urban sprawl. In many instances, when you talk about those individual choices of where people are going to purchase dwellings, it does not reduce urban sprawl at all because so many of those families are choosing to purchase land over the border in New South Wales. Aspirational families who want to build homes are choosing to purchase land in New South Wales and build their home on the other side of the border. Electorally, of

course, this government does not care. This government does not care because aspirational families that want to build a four-bedroom home can go and vote for Nichole Overall. It really is no skin off the Chief Minister's nose. He does not really care. When it all boils down, this planning policy is unfriendly to families.

Ms Clay stands up and says, "Look, there is a government review on. Let's just trust it. Let's just trust that the government is going to take in all the information and provide the outcomes that we all want, because we do not think that the government is going to hide or ignore the feedback that it gets which is not in line with its direction"—that is, the Winton report. I know we mention it a lot, but we think it is a pretty significant piece of data.

The community wants housing choice. During this government's housing choices discussion paper and consultation with the community, this message was heard loud and clear. Following this discussion, EPSDD said it would explore options to increase the mix of dwelling sizes available in residential developments, as well as providing flexibility to deliver a range of housing types. It went on to say that consideration would also be given to the provisions in the Estate Development Code.

Minister Gentleman, this government's own planning minister, said that people want different forms of housing in the suburbs, as well as in centres and mixed-use areas, and this includes townhouses, terrace houses, secondary dwellings and apartments. He continues to come into the chamber and talk about the fact that the government is working towards providing that missing middle. But the government is not doing it. We have got the plan laid out in front of us as to what dwellings are going to be released, and that missing middle is living up to its name, isn't it? Because it is missing. It is absolutely missing.

When will this government provide the choices and options to be able to live and raise a family in Canberra? Government members, as we expected, have amended this motion absolutely and completely. They will refuse to support it in its original form. But I reckon they know that the tide is turning on this particular issue. I think they know that the tide is turning. They know that the housing affordability disaster that Canberra has become has pushed a significant number of Canberrans to have a much closer look at this issue and to come to the conclusion that this government has got it wrong.

They sort of let them get away with it for a while. The water rose up to their chest and they said, "It will be fine." But there are a bunch of them now with their heads underwater and it is not working for them. So the tide is turning. We know you are going to vote against the motion in its original form. We know that. But, deep down, you know full well that these calls from the opposition are resonating in the wider community. I would suggest to all members of government that you ignore this changing tide at your peril.

In conclusion, I want to mention the fact that, in reference to comments that Mr Barr and Ms Berry have made over recent weeks—they talk about the fact that the land release makes up only two per cent of the market and so what they are referring to is the number of transactions that go on across an entire year—Mr Gentleman talked

about 69,000 transactions, which, to my understanding, is residential properties that have changed hands. I am assuming that figure is over a 12-month period.

What Mr Gentleman does not take into account is that we had all these people who put their hand up for the ballots of small numbers of blocks. In total, I reckon that is at least 15,000 individuals, because many of them would have been duplicated over a number of ballots. There have got to be 15,000 of them. So the land release is only two per cent of the market because that is what you have restricted it to. It is not that is what the market wants. You have restricted it to two per cent of the market and that is why the price is rising. If 15,000 individuals have put their hand up for these ballots over a period of six or 12 months, what you are talking about there is much more than two per cent of the market, if you are looking at 69,000 transactions. It is much more. I would hope that at some stage this government casts aside Barr-onomics and arrives at the conclusion that the restriction of supply will actually affect demand and will affect the price.

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) (4.16): I was not going to speak, but I feel compelled to, mostly because I am so disturbed by the opposition's contributions today as a collective—

Mrs Kikkert: The mental health of families living in high-density apartments is disturbing? Is it disturbing?

MS CHEYNE: Yes, Mrs Kikkert. Through you, Mr Acting Speaker, I will happily talk about living in an apartment, because I do. Quite honestly, I am sick of hearing Mrs Kikkert be disparaging of people who do, particularly given that such a significant proportion of her electorate does and does happily, in a neighbourly way. It is absolutely gobsmacking, to be honest—

Mrs Kikkert: Bringing in studies, evidence based—

MR ACTING SPEAKER: Mrs Kikkert!

MS CHEYNE: Mrs Kikkert is trying to suggest that a good proportion of her electorate are suffering from mental health issues because they live in higher density or in—

Mrs Kikkert: Families with little children. Do you listen?

MR ACTING SPEAKER: Mrs Kikkert, you were heard in silence.

MS CHEYNE: Mr Acting Speaker, I did listen, and it was extraordinary. It was just as extraordinary as on Tuesday this week, when Mrs Kikkert said that she thought that the government, in considering reducing the numbers of collections of red bins or landfill waste bins to fortnightly instead of once a week, was using an indirect way of controlling population growth. And she did it again today. Honestly, it is pretty disturbing, coming from the opposition, to suggest that the government, by stealth, is

trying to control population growth. I would request that the Leader of the Opposition pull her team into line on this, because it is pretty extraordinary.

What also is extraordinary, Mr Acting Speaker, is that there has been no consideration of the climate or the health of our environment and the future of our city and our people in this motion. It is reflected in Mr Gentleman's amendment, but it is not reflected in Ms Lee's original motion. It certainly was not reflected in any of the contributions that we have heard today that we need to be a city that is sustainable so that there is a future for the populations and the children that we are talking about—that Mrs Kikkert seems to care so deeply about, and yet she wants to trash their future. If there is no planet, there is not going to be anywhere for those children. It is just quite extraordinary. This is an opposition that, I have to note, did not speak—not one member—to say, “We are doing away with the old Coe approach of not supporting the fact that we need to do something on climate change”, and saying that the opposition is heading in a progressive climate action direction. Repeatedly, this week the opposition have been absent when it mattered. They are absent in their contributions today and I think they should really reflect on that. Mr Acting Speaker, in your own speech—

Members interjecting—

MR ACTING SPEAKER: Ms Lee! Members!

MS CHEYNE: The opposition can reflect on their own actions. There were plenty of words last year, but there is a considerable absence of actions this year, I have to say, especially in this place and especially when it matters. You also reflected, I believe, in your own speech, Mr Acting Speaker, on medium density and that the government does need to make sure that it will be reflecting that in its plans. Can I just point you to the amendment. This is really clearly stated in there, at 3(a). I could say more, but I am actually despairing of what we have heard from the opposition today. There have been a lot of calls from the opposition that we should be ashamed of ourselves. I think they should take a good hard look at themselves. I commend Mr Gentleman's amendment to the Assembly.

Mrs Kikkert: You are a clown! You're a clown.

MS ORR (Yerrabi) (4.21): Much like my colleague Ms Cheyne, I was not actually planning to speak today, but after hearing a few of the points that have been put forward in the debate I wanted to get up and share my views as well, so thank you for playing musical chairs with me, Mr Acting Speaker, and giving me the opportunity.

The part in this debate, for me, that has become most worrying is this idea that a particular house form will be better for your mental health than others. It is simply not true. The contributions we have heard put forward by members within this place today very much cherry-pick the evidence that is out there. We have seen a lot of places throughout this last pandemic which are really well set up to handle a health crisis that separates us. A good example has been Los Angeles, where everyone could go home. They had a house, they had a yard, they could do everything that they needed to do within the COVID health restrictions, and what we saw there was an increase, a very big increase, in mental health issues and isolation.

The form we build and the way we build it is not going to automatically give us a better health outcome. What we need to look at doing is how we build our city as a whole, how we provide access and how we provide the opportunity to connect. It is not going to be about whether we live in a high-rise apartment or a block out in the country, or anything in between those two. It is about what we do for all the spaces in between. It is what we do with the public spaces. It is what we do with the collective buildings.

To sit here and say that if you live in a tall apartment building you are going to have a terrible health outcome is actually quite dangerous. It is cherry-picking the evidence that is there and it is misrepresenting it. Every house form that we have, every typology that we use, will have its pros and cons. If we had housing correct we would still be building the same houses we built a thousand years ago. There is always room for improvement. Form follows function. If the function we want is to have healthy people who live in houses that contribute to their health then we need to have a range of housing that meets all the circumstances of our diverse community.

Listening to some of the debate today, we would be of the belief that the only housing type that suits people is something that is for a large family. We know that families come in all different shapes and sizes. You will have single households, you will have couple households, you will have people with children, and you will have empty nesters. We have got a lot of people coming into our housing market and into the housing mix that we have never seen before that we need to respond to.

One of the largest growing cohorts that we need our housing to respond to is older women who have separated, who are saying that now that they do not have the superannuation because they have stayed home and looked after their kids, and they do not have the income, they need a place where they can stay, where they can find housing. This is what we need to do. We need to start looking at the diversity in our community, not whittling it down to: "If we build this one type of housing we will create a utopia." We need to start looking at our diverse population, looking at the needs that they have and seeing what we need to do.

This is what the minister has been doing for the whole time I have been in this place. He has been working through it with his directorate and actually going out there and saying, "What are the very diverse types of housing that we need in our city? What are we missing?" That missing middle that we all talk about is not unique to Canberra; it is in a lot of places. We are actively working towards rectifying that and how we put that into our city so that we not only have the existing stock, which has been done well for a period of time, but are now responding to these new and emerging needs that we have not quite captured within our built form. We have seen a lot of places coming up.

Mr Assistant Speaker, I put the offer out to anyone who wants to come and do a tour of my electorate: I will take you round every single housing typology that we have. I will happily drive around my electorate. I do it in my own spare time, looking at them. Once an urban planner, always an urban planner! I want to know what is going on in my electorate. You can come, you can have a look and I will show you how,

throughout all of our suburbs—quite a lot of them greenfields done under the policies of this government—there is diversity of housing, there is diversity of people and there is diversity of family types. There is something for everyone. This is the sort of environment we need to move towards, where you have the opportunity within your community, irrespective of who you are, to live and to have a place that suits you.

This is what the minister has been working towards and this is why I encourage it. It is not just in those greenfield areas; we have also seen it starting to happen in our urban renewal areas. There is a lot of work going on, particularly around the light rail corridor, bringing in a range of different housing types that start to build on the existing housing stock that is there so that there is more choice and more variety within our city.

I would like to pick up on the comments made by Ms Cheyne, and also my colleague Ms Clay, who said that it is also about the environment. We cannot just keep going out and going out. It is very commonly accepted within urban planning circles that if we continue to build into our pristine ecological areas there is a negative impact—that is, we do not have access to them. They cease to exist. That causes a lot of detriment and a lot of damage. It is a balance. We need to respect that, but the answer cannot simply be to keep releasing land,

There have been a lot of times throughout this debate when I have heard from those opposite that we simply increase supply; we put out more of these blocks. The implication is that we do not give consideration to where they are going; we have got to solve all the problems. It is actually a dangerous message to be putting out there because it is not going to solve all the problems and certainly from an environmental point of view it is going to create a lot of problems.

It also does not recognise the geography of how our current communities work. We have moved away from this idea of having big blocks and having employment scattered all across the city. We have employment in our clusters and hubs. We have our great town centres. We need to be providing access to those, not moving further away from them. Mrs Kikkert can go and have a look at these studies, because these ones have been proven and they are not cherry-picked. We know that if we continue to build out on the peripheries we create areas of disadvantage, because they have a longer transport task, they not necessarily have good access to the facilities that you will see cluster internally within a densified area, and do know that the outcomes are not as good for people out there.

There is a lot of work going on to rectify that, particularly in the outer periphery areas of Melbourne and Sydney, which are quite big, where people will spend an hour commuting from their home to the city centre. Canberra is not at that point. Canberra is not at that point, because of our geography, but we also do not want to get to that point. We can take the learnings from other places and we can apply them here so that we do not get to that point.

There are children in those areas too who have poor health outcomes, and that goes back to my original point: it is not about the type of house. There is not one type where you can say, “This will work and that will not.” It is far more nuanced than that.

We need to start raising this debate up from “if you do this or you do that, you are either good or you are bad” and start looking at everything in between and all the grey and the complexity that goes with this. That is how we start to get people homes and we build a city that responds to everyone so that they can have their house.

Mr Gentleman: Mr Acting Speaker, I have a point of order. During debate earlier on, Mrs Kikkert, in the contribution from Minister Cheyne, interjected, calling her a clown. It is unparliamentarily and I ask that she withdraw.

MR ASSISTANT SPEAKER: This was in an interjection?

MR GENTLEMAN: Yes. She stood and interjected, calling the minister a clown. It was well heard by this side.

Mrs Kikkert: You can check *Hansard*.

MR ASSISTANT SPEAKER: My understanding is that the word “clown” has been withdrawn before, by Wayne Berry, way back in 2006. Mrs Kikkert, are you of a mind to withdraw the imputation that Ms Cheyne is a clown?

Mrs Kikkert: I withdraw.

MS LEE (Kurrajong—Leader of the Opposition) (4.29): I have to thank Ms Orr, because for a large part of her contribution she made the case for my motion—that is, that the Canberra community want and deserve choice. That is exactly what my motion is about, so thank you, Ms Orr, for making those arguments and supporting my call for more choice.

When it comes to this Labor-Greens government, it is always someone else’s fault and it is always a matter of “Do as I say, not do as I do.” When it comes to “choice”, I use that term in quotations because, as Mr Cain aptly pointed out, it is not a choice when that choice has been determined by the Labor-Greens government, whether you like it or not. That is not choice.

It is all very easy for the Labor-Greens members in this place to throw around words like “choice” and “a house for all” and “leave no-one behind”, but when it really comes down to it, actions speak louder than words. What we have seen from this Labor-Greens government is a lot of hypocrisy. It is a case of “Do as I say, not do as I do.” Mr Gentleman is standing there, dictating to everyone else: “You should all go into an apartment or you should all downsize.” Where do you live, Mr Gentleman? Where do you live? This is so typical of every single Labor-Greens member in this place. It is always about “Do as I say, not do as I do.”

There has been talk from a few members about the Housing Choices Collaboration Hub. Let us put that in context. Firstly, it is 36 people. Secondly, they talked about infill. Their support for infill says that they want to see an increase in “a mix of dwelling sizes and diversity of dwelling types”. In fact, as specific examples for consideration or incorporation, it says:

... single level age-in places, shop top living, build to rent, share-housing, loft style, courtyard, terrace house, mews and manor.

There is nothing in there about high-rise towers back to back to back.

Whilst we are on listening to the community, let us repeat the figures, because these stats are staggering: over 12,000 applications for 101 blocks in Whitlam and over 8,000 applications for 71 blocks in Macnamara. So if you want to listen to 36 people, yes, they are valid views. Yes, they are infill, which specifically asks for a mix of dwelling sizes and diversity of dwelling types. Let us add to that the community, which has spoken extremely loudly: over 12,000 people for 101 blocks and over 8,000 people for 71 blocks. Let us not forget those Canberrans, the desperate Canberrans who want some choice. That is their choice and they are being deprived of it.

Radio station hit104.7 asked their listeners to tell them why they moved out of Canberra. Almost all the comments mentioned housing, and I will just repeat a few here. James says:

I can imagine plenty of young couples will move away because it is just about impossible to get into our overinflated housing market.

Steph says:

I have lived here my whole life. Our house here is too tiny for our big family but you would need a Powerball win to upsize in Canberra.

Collette says:

I never thought I would ever see the day that a two-beddy with a parking space and an outdoor living area was only affordable to the wealthy.

And these are only a few of the examples of the hundreds of comments on that post. So much for “a house for all”.

Mr Gentleman spoke at great length and talked up the opportunities that are available in medium density housing. In fact, he thanked me for bringing on this motion that says, “Hey, let’s have some more options in medium density.” Yet again we see, as is always the case with the Labor-Greens government, that their words do not line up with the reality. They do not live in the real world. If medium density housing is such a great idea and Mr Gentleman is so much in support of it, why is it that, under his own government’s indicative land release program for the next five years, only five per cent is allocated to medium density housing? Why is it that he comes into this place, talks up the great opportunities in medium density housing, but where it really counts, the allocation in the new land releases for housing, he has allocated a paltry five per cent—882 compared to 11,381 high-rise apartment dwellings? Answer that, Mr Gentleman.

This is a government that is completely out of touch with reality. This is a government that is completely out of touch with what the community needs and wants. There has

also been a lot of debate about, “They do not care about the environment.” I have said and placed on the record previously, numerous times, that environmental factors, when you are talking about residential development, are a given. It is the responsibility of any local government that is in charge of residential development to make sure that the environmental factors are taken into account. That is why those feasibility studies exist.

Talk about urban sprawl. Why, then, has the ACT government purchased land in New South Wales? What is that for? Why, then, have they invested over \$1 million in doing some feasibility study about residential for west edge? Why is that? They can throw whatever they want at us, but the reality is they know that they are failing the Canberra community when it comes to housing affordability, when it comes to housing choice. This is a government that is completely out of touch with the needs and wants of the Canberra community. They are completely delusional about what they can do to ensure that every Canberran has the opportunity to access a house of their choice. It is not choice when this government’s indicative land release program specifically dictates to the community: “70 per cent of you are going to be forced into apartments whether you like it or not.” That is not a choice!

The Canberra Liberals will always stand up for the Canberra community because we have not waved the white flag on home ownership in this city. We believe that every Canberran deserves the opportunity to continue to dream that they may one day own their own home. But this is a dream that is out of reach under the Labor-Greens government. We will not be supporting Mr Gentleman’s amendment.

Question put:

That the amendment be agreed to.

The Assembly voted—

Ayes 12

Noes 5

Ms Berry	Ms Orr	Mr Cain
Mr Braddock	Dr Paterson	Mrs Kikkert
Ms Cheyne	Mr Rattenbury	Ms Lee
Ms Clay	Mr Steel	Mr Milligan
Ms Davidson	Ms Stephen-Smith	Mr Parton
Mr Gentleman	Ms Vassarotti	

Amendment agreed to.

Original question, as amended, resolved in the affirmative.

Paper

Arts—federal funding

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) (4.44): Following question time

I flagged, in one of my responses to Ms Clay, that I would table the listening report for the arts policy consultation, particularly with regard to what we have heard so far from artists regarding art support. I present that now and I draw members' attention to theme 1:

Canberra: Australia's Arts Capital—YourSay website report.

Business—alternative business models

MS CLAY (Ginninderra) (4.44): By leave, in the absence of the proposer, Mr Davis, and on his behalf, pursuant to notice I move:

That this Assembly:

(1) notes that:

- (a) Canberra businesses have an important role in reducing unemployment, underemployment, and economic inequality, including through alternative business models such as micro and small business, member and worker-owned co-operatives, social enterprises, and not-for-profit corporations;
- (b) co-operatives are values driven, community-based, democratic organisations that are owned and controlled by their workers and people who use their services;
- (c) co-operatives can be more resilient in economic downturn, creating and supporting jobs and wealth that stays in the community;
- (d) co-operatives can provide secure jobs and offer a viable and fairer alternative business model to gig-economy “job shares” which are driving greater rates of underemployment and casualisation nationally and internationally;
- (e) in Australia, over 2 000 co-operatives are active in a diverse range of sectors, including agriculture, arts, childcare, health care, clubs, community services, education, energy, finance, hardware, housing, radio broadcasting, fishing, manufacturing, produce marketing, recycling, respite care, retail, superannuation funds, communications, transport, wholesale, and wine sales;
- (f) the Business Council of Cooperatives and Mutuals estimates that as of 2020, eight in every 10 Australians are a member of a co-operative or mutually owned organisation; and
- (g) the Canberra community has benefited from co-operatives in the ACT, such as the Canberra Food Co-op, Harmony Cleaning Co-operative, Canberra Seed Savers Co-op, and, while it was operational, the National Health Co-op;

(2) further notes that:

- (a) co-operatives looking to set up often have trouble securing loans from banks and otherwise raising capital because they have a distributed ownership structure;
- (b) a seed investment and interest-free loan funds would help co-operatives in their initial start-up phase, providing capital to get them off the ground.

Such a fund would also help businesses who wish to transition into a co-operative structure to do so; and

- (c) no new co-operative organisations were registered in the ACT in the 2020-2021 financial year; and

(3) calls on the ACT Government to:

- (a) provide accessible information on the establishment of co-operatives and other alternative business models that prioritise workers' rights and dividends to their workers and communities to deliver social goods;
- (b) explore the utility of establishing a unit within the ACT Government to assist prospective co-operatives to navigate existing processes required to establish co-operatives and other alternative business models;
- (c) investigate the potential benefits and appropriate mechanisms for providing financial assistance of the formation of co-operatives and alternative business models or the transformation of businesses into co-operatives and alternative business models;
- (d) seek to understand what Bologna in Italy is doing to make it a world leader in co-operative industry and, after considering this research, consider establishing an ongoing dialogue or formal partnership with that jurisdiction; and
- (e) report back to the Assembly on these inquiries by 30 June 2023.

I am really happy to talk about this motion today. It is a private member's motion developed and circulated by Mr Davis, who, unfortunately, is absent today due to personal reasons. He is disappointed about that because he was really excited to talk about this.

This motion is about supporting our co-ops. I want to start by painting a picture of how co-ops can transform a city. Every morning in the Italian city of Bologna, bicycle couriers deliver to nearby businesses bread freshly baked at local bakeries. The same network of couriers delivers books from the city's libraries and food from grocery stores to residents' homes. Unlike other delivery platforms, businesses in Bologna do not pay a commission to be a part of this delivery service, and the riders earn significantly more than workers do for other apps like Deliveroo or Uber Eats. These workers also get insurance for accidents and illness.

This service is called Consegne Etiche, which translates to "ethical deliveries". Consegne Etiche is a co-operative. Its courier platform is not just a delivery service; it is actually part of the social fabric of the community. The promise of the gig economy was that workers could break free from the nine-to-five grind, setting their own hours and making money on the side as they pursued their passions. But the reality has looked very different from that. These apps have become full-time contract jobs for gig workers, and contractors are denied benefits while gig companies lobby to further erode worker protections such as the right to unionise. Rather than sharing in the success of these new businesses, workers have gotten just a small piece of the pie and job security is weaker than ever before.

Consegne Etiche is a standout example of how alternative business models such as co-operatives can resist the trend towards disconnected and insecure gig work. Co-ops are people-centred organisations that are owned and run by and for their members, for the purpose of achieving a shared economic, social and cultural goal. Bologna is renowned for its strong network of co-op businesses. They produce a third of the gross domestic product. When two out of every three workers are co-op members, you know that you have a business model that is working really well. In this city, co-ops provide important social services like housing, early education and aged care in a way that eliminates the centralised bureaucracy and builds relationships between workers and consumers.

Mr Davis is leading this motion in his capacity as the ACT Greens spokesperson for business and the night-time economy. His interest in this topic stems from research that demonstrates that co-ops are often more resilient to economic downturns than their for-profit counterparts. Given the current post-COVID economic and social climate, it is really important we investigate different ways of supporting community-building and making sure that we still have job security.

The ACT already has a lot of amazing co-ops. I would love us to have more co-ops, just like Bologna. So this motion calls on the ACT government to find out what Bologna is doing to make it a world leader in the co-op industry and, after undertaking the research, to consider establishing an ongoing dialogue or a formal partnership with Bologna. A strong relationship between our two cities would help develop a culture of co-ops in Canberra.

The motion also calls on the government to provide accessible information on the establishment of co-ops and other alternative business models that prioritise workers' rights and return dividends to the workers and the communities delivering social goods. It calls on the government to explore the utility of establishing a unit within the government to assist prospective co-ops to navigate the processes to establish their businesses. And it calls on the government to investigate the potential benefits and the appropriate mechanisms for providing financial assistance to the formation or transformation of co-ops.

Businesses can be driven by values and not just by profit. Co-ops share internationally agreed principles, and they act together to build a better world through cooperation. Putting fairness, equality and social justice at the heart of their businesses, co-ops around the world are allowing people to work together to create sustainable enterprises that generate long-term job security and prosperity. They allow people to take control of their economic future. Because they are not owned by shareholders, the economic and social benefits of the co-op stay in the local community. Profits that are generated are either reinvested in the business or are returned to the members.

The flourishing of co-ops at the moment is intricately linked to economic challenges and crises due to their governance structures and is tied into the fact that co-ops prioritise members' interests and goals over the maximisation of profits. We have seen this happen a lot during history. Over the last 150 years, waves of new co-ops have appeared after major global disruptions. Examples include consumer co-ops that

took off globally after World War I to counter low purchasing power. More recently, after Argentina's economic collapse at the turn of the millennium, 400 companies across Argentina were converted to co-ops by almost 16,000 workers.

Canberra already has a really strong suite of co-ops operating across many different sectors. This motion seeks to strengthen supports to those existing organisations and provide support to the ones who are looking to establish or transition into a co-op structure. Mr Davis has been in discussion with stakeholders and constituents interested in forming co-ops, and he has heard that they are seeking support to get basic guidance on how to begin their transition. They just need information and assistance. This includes talking to the umbrella organisation CoCanberra, which is also known as Cooperative Commons and Communities Canberra. CoCanberra is an umbrella organisation we already have. It specifically focuses on how co-ops can help communities mitigate and adapt to the climate crisis.

I would love to mention just a few of the other amazing co-ops that we already have here. Canberra's Food Co-op is Australia's oldest food co-operative; it began in 1976 on the grounds of the ANU. I have shopped there myself. The original goal of the Food Co-Op was to provide cheap, healthy food for students. The Food Co-op remains on the ANU campus and now it is one of the only places left on campus where students can get nutritious affordable meals. Since starting their lunch program over 10 years ago, the co-op has employed migrant women to share their food cultures with a team of volunteers, while partnering with a range of organisations to upskill students and build a diverse and strong campus community.

Another stand-out example of a local cooperative working to provide economic security and shared benefits to their members is Trove Canberra. Trove Canberra is a local artist co-op. It was established in 2014 by a group of Canberra region craftspeople brought together through the Canberra Etsy sellers' group. Fast forward eight years and Trove Canberra is a thriving, creative community of makers who have really big plans for the future. In May 2019, Trove Canberra moved to its current location in Dickson, Canberra's vibrant restaurant and cafe district where it continues to thrive. The members create a wide range of handcrafted products, each specialising in their own particular medium, and everything is made in Australia.

Pre Power is another of our amazing local co-ops, and it provides community-level renewable energy generation. Soil City Co-operative Farms is a food sector enterprise in our region. It uses methods that capture carbon from the atmosphere. Tipua is an online artist co-op formed to remove the issue of being reliant on large companies. It supports artists by providing networking, mentoring, collaborating and showcasing art.

Co-ops can provide amazing services to our local community. They can also provide value and employment opportunities to the same community. Supporting co-ops intersects with another important area of work that we are currently undertaking here in government. My colleague Minister Vassarotti is developing the ACT's first food and fibre strategy, and there are great opportunities for co-ops to thrive in this agricultural space. Food is about as essential as it gets, and there is no better example of where the pursuit of maximum profit above all else is failing for all of us. It fails our farmers and their workers, who are not paid enough for their labour and for their

produce. It fails our environment, where choices of what to grow are informed by price and the dictates of major supermarkets, rather than with consideration of the eco-systems and what the community needs and what the community actually wants to eat. It fails all of us when fresh food becomes too expensive for people on low incomes to afford.

We have great opportunities to expand agricultural co-ops, particularly as the ACT government develops this food and fibre strategy. Agriculture co-ops contribute to food security while distributing profits fairly, and they can ensure that climate adaptation and resilience is central. There are some great examples of collectives and community supported agriculture models that work as co-ops between farmers and eaters in our region, including Southern Harvest, Patchwork Urban Farm, Many Ways urban farm, FIG and BurraBee farm. We know there are opportunities to look beyond food production to manufacturing and delivery and to every other aspect of our food system.

This motion asks us to envisage a co-op culture in Canberra. It asks us to create opportunities for workers and for members to establish co-ops that give back to our community and create job opportunities at the same time. It is the perfect time for us to think about this, as we are seeing so many changes in our society and we know that we need more ethical business models in order to deal with the problems we have and look after the people who live here. I commend this motion to the Assembly.

MS CASTLEY (Yerrabi) (4.54): So often, from this Labor-Greens government, we have ministers and members lecturing businesses about their duties, obligations and responsibilities. And we see that again today with Mr Davis's motion. He notes that Canberra businesses have an important role in reducing unemployment, underemployment and economic inequality, including through alternative business models such as micro and small business member and worker-owned cooperative social enterprises and not-for-profit corporations.

Excuse my ignorance, Madam Assistant Speaker, but I thought it was the government's responsibility to reduce unemployment, tackle underemployment and challenge economic inequality. So often we hear this government lecturing small business, yet all too rarely do we hear the government speaking up for small business, supporting them, encouraging them and backing them, as the Canberra Liberals always will.

Mr Davis calls on the government to provide accessible information about setting up co-ops. This already exists. So much information is available. If Mr Davis had done his research, he would know that Access Canberra is responsible for the registration of co-ops and maintaining registrations in the ACT. He would also know that on 21 March 2017, the Legislative Assembly passed enabling legislation that adopted the Co-operatives National Law (ACT) Act 2017. Access Canberra has a wealth of useful and detailed information about co-ops on their website, including: what is a cooperative? What is the difference between a distributing and non-distributing cooperative? What are the options, other than forming a co-op? How is a co-op formed? How is a co-op registered? What financial records must a co-op keep? And what does a co-op have to report on? There is also detailed information about

financial reporting for co-ops, meetings, rules, special resolutions, management, winding up of co-ops, and co-op disputes. The Access Canberra website has separate information about forms and fees, payment options, related resources and contact options.

Not surprisingly from the Greens, Mr Davis also calls for a new layer of bureaucracy, when he talks about establishing a unit within the ACT government to assist prospective co-operatives to navigate existing processes. The last thing any business, or co-op, needs from this Labor-Greens government is more bureaucracy and red tape. The government's Better Regulation Task Force was established supposedly to identify this red tape and remove it, but already the discovery phase report is months overdue. And how much can we expect from Minister Cheyne? She says that the task force's first and most critical task will be to talk to business about how to talk to business. Our business owners and entrepreneurs want government to get out of the way with the red tape so that they can get on with running and growing their enterprises.

Every now and again the Greens dip into the business portfolio and attempt to establish some business credentials. They should not bother, because the only party that genuinely understands business, and has the back of business, is the Canberra Liberals.

What business in Canberra want is actually very simple, and it is for this Labor-Greens government to reduce red tape and not add more.

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) (4.58): I thank Mr Davis, through Ms Clay, for bringing this motion to the Assembly. I am pleased to speak in support of it, and I thank Mr Davis's office for its engagement with my office on this motion.

The ACT government is supportive of enterprise in all of its forms. While we do not favour one form over another, it is important that we are providing Canberrans with information and assistance they need to carry on enterprise in the way they wish.

As flagged, in 2017, we passed enabling legislation adopting the Co-operatives National Law (ACT) Act 2017, which standardised the regulation of co-operatives across Australia. As democratically structured entities, co-operatives provide a direct ownership and collective benefit model for their members. Generally, co-operatives are based on the principles of voluntary and open membership, democratic member control, member economic participation, autonomy and independence, education, training and information, cooperation among co-operatives, and concern for the community.

We acknowledge that there is an important role that co-operatives can play in supporting the economic vibrancy of our city. Access Canberra, as Ms Castley has noted, are charged with the responsibility for registering co-operatives and the maintenance of the register of co-operatives in the ACT. They have advised that there

are currently 11 registered co-operatives and two foreign co-operatives in the ACT. Of course, there may well be other Canberrans who are interested in forming a co-operative.

It is important that we consider what role the government should have in supporting co-operatives, which I think Ms Castley has somewhat gone to, including in assisting where there are any barriers or perceived barriers in doing so. I appreciate that there is, anecdotally, a potentially limited awareness of what co-operatives even are.

Mr Davis's motion calls on the government to provide accessible information on the establishment of co-operatives and other alternative business models that prioritise workers' rights and dividends to their workers and communities to deliver social goods.

I am pleased to confirm, again, as Ms Castley drew out, that the government does already provide information through the Access Canberra website about co-operative registration. However, there is the opportunity to make things simpler and easier for people who may be thinking about this form of enterprise. So Access Canberra, in conjunction with the economic development directorate, will review the available information, with a view to developing a fact sheet providing a simple overview of what a co-operative is and its benefits, as well as outlining the process of registration. I do not believe in any way that this would be more bureaucracy and red tape.

It would not be a sitting week without Ms Castley's favourite topic, the Better Regulation Task Force. Yet again, she knows what is true, but selectively quotes what is happening, even though we have discussed this at length. The discovery report and the work program have been combined, and we look forward to releasing that in due course. It does not mean that there have been months and months of delays. In fact, I think the product will be even more useful than Ms Castley may have otherwise anticipated. I look forward to talking about it in detail again.

I note the other suggestions outlined in the motion, including establishing a dedicated unit to support co-operatives, investigating the appropriateness of financial assistance and seeking to understand what Bologna in Italy is doing. The government will consider these suggestions and their relative utility.

I note that while it is recognised that Italy is a leader in co-operatives, given the number of co-operatives, we need to consider this carefully and perhaps even cautiously, in understanding what the real outcomes have been. I say this because I note there is a prominent study of co-operatives in Italy. It is from 2006, so it was some time ago, but it found that while employment in co-operatives was less volatile, wages were more volatile and that co-ops had 14 per cent lower wages than capitalist enterprises. Again, I do appreciate that this was some time ago, but it was a prominent study of the situation regarding co-operatives in Italy, so I think it is timely that we have a look and see whether there is anything that might be beneficial for us to learn from here.

I thank Mr Davis, through Ms Clay, for bringing forward this motion and for highlighting the roles of co-operatives in our economy.

MR RATTENBURY (Kurrajong—Attorney-General, Minister for Consumer Affairs, Minister for Gaming and Minister for Water, Energy and Emissions Reduction) (5.04): I am pleased to have the opportunity to speak today in support of this motion regarding the enhancement of co-operatives in the ACT. This is also an issue that crosses over into some of my portfolio responsibilities. I do have responsibility for the co-operatives act in the ACT, which implements the national law.

I want to start by talking about co-operatives in a broader sense, though. Mr Acting Speaker, you may have heard that Amazon employees on Staten Island in New York have just become the first group of Amazon workers in the US to vote in favour of unionising. Good news; I imagine that we would all agree. It has been a long battle and, without wanting to spend too much time on this, there is still some way to go.

However, it has now emerged that Amazon has plans to ban certain words and phrases on its forthcoming internal employee messaging app. Those words and phrases include profane or inappropriate language, which is fair enough. They also include words like “union”, “pay rise”, “grievance”, “ethics” and “injustice”, which seems to be not quite fair at all. When it comes to the rights of its own workforce, it is clear that Amazon is not on board and it is going to fight the union movement as hard as it can.

I have picked this as an example of our globally broken system because it is current, but I could have chosen literally thousands of other recent news stories to illustrate the growth of wealth inequality, the fraying of the social safety net, the interests of shareholder profits trumping all other concerns, and the unsustainability of so many of the trends we are on, including economic trends. We need something different. We need to redress the balance, close the inequality gap and rethink our priorities as a society—actually, as a species. We need ways to encode values into the operation of commercial enterprises, and more diverse and equitable ways to create viable business structures.

We need a wholesale return to notions of the common good and better ways to measure the health of our economic systems. We need an alternative to the mindless growth imperative that has now brought forward the annual Earth Overshoot Day to 29 July, as of last year; and this year, undoubtedly, it will come even earlier. The laws of physics and nature will simply not allow this trajectory that we are on to continue for much longer.

How do we stop talking about economic growth as the Holy Grail of any government policy? How do we realise an economic system that keeps us within the finite limits imposed by our planet? How do we teach ourselves to value human beings more than we value the labour they perform?

Co-operatives should be part of the answer, and something we foster and facilitate here in the territory. They are owned and controlled by their members and are traditionally based on values of self-help, responsibility and equality.

The motion from Mr Davis today, as presented by Ms Clay, is really important, and I am glad it has been brought forward to the Assembly, because co-operatives are a

way of reimagining and rebuilding how we work together, and how we produce and share goods and services in a form that is, as the name says, much more co-operative. They are about people working together fairly and for shared goals.

In the ACT, I think we have a kind of jurisdiction that can advance co-operatives. As with so many other issues, we are small enough to make manageable and inventive change, but big enough to encourage larger jurisdictions to realise they can scale up and help co-operatives thrive in their own region.

We have a decent structure in place, as has already been referenced in the debate today, because in 2017 this Assembly passed enabling legislation adopting the Co-operatives National Law to standardise the regulation of co-operatives across Australia. This allows for the mutual recognition of co-operatives across participating jurisdictions without them requiring to register, which is good and a helpful change.

Access Canberra is responsible for the registration of co-operatives and the maintenance of the register of co-operatives in the territory. As highlighted by Minister Cheyne and Ms Castley, Access Canberra has a wealth of information available on its website. I have already asked Access Canberra, through the fair trading commissioner, to undertake a review of the website and its content to ensure that there is a simple overview of what a co-operative is and its benefits, as well as guidance for people wishing to register a co-operative.

Whilst Ms Castley outlined some of the details with a degree of acidity, I think it is useful to think about whether we can make it easier for people to understand. That is one of the questions that I have asked the directorate to look at. The next step is to ensure that there is appropriate assistance available for those wishing to register a co-operative in the ACT. We want to make it easier. It is about making sure that people think about this as an option that might be available to them.

I think that is the point of the motion that was misunderstood in some of the more critical commentary in the chamber today. This is about saying that people probably do not even realise this is an option that is available to them. How can we help them to better know that that option exists? They might be saying they want to do it together, that there is actually a different way to do business, and that we can do it in a way that is less about getting on top and more about working collectively to produce a great outcome.

The things contained in Mr Davis's motion are a starting point, and I am looking forward to seeing the report back to the Assembly that arises from the work that Mr Davis has asked for. I think these are very promising initiatives.

I do not want to repeat the points that my colleague has made. Ms Clay gave a very good outline of the value of co-operatives and the potential role they could play in our society in addressing some of the concerns that I have talked about today, and I endorse her comments fully. We can all be inspired by this vision, so let us seek to move forward with it, and start the work required to turn Canberra into a flagship city for the creation of innovative and people-centred cooperative business models.

I urge the Assembly to support this motion today, and I thank Mr Davis for drawing this very interesting and worthwhile issue to our attention.

MR BRADDOCK (Yerrabi) (5.11): I rise today to speak in enthusiastic support of Mr Davis's motion and to promote and celebrate the cooperatives we have here in Canberra. Cooperatives are very important pieces of the puzzle across three of my spokesperson roles for the ACT Greens and this Assembly. As democracy and community engagement spokesperson, I know that cooperatives are a living demonstration of organisational spaces that exist for the people by the people. As workplace health and safety and industrial relations spokesperson, I know that cooperatives model how workers can have power and control over their workspaces, which in turn lifts wages, conditions, job security and worker safety. And as better neighbourhoods spokesperson I am interested in how cooperatives are deeply imbedded in their communities, creating stronger and more resilient place-based networks.

Cooperatives can empower community members to become actively involved in the governance and running of the organisations that affect their everyday lives. Instead of your say in decision making being determined by who you know or how much money you have, cooperatives operate on a model of one person, one vote. An inspiring example of how this structure works comes from Earthworker Cooperative in Victoria. Members were frustrated by the lack of renewable energy and their regions were reliant on fossil fuels for employment. In the absence of any direction from federal climate change policy for a just and sustainable transition they established a cooperative factory manufacturing solar hot water systems. As they say at Earthworker Energy:

Each member has equal voting rights and decisions are made democratically. We have no boss or external shareholders. This means we ensure our workplace is safe, we are invested in the quality of the goods we produce, we make decisions in the interest of our local community and profits are shared equally and locally.

It will also be clear from the Earthworker example that cooperatives are good for workers. At its heart, a fair industrial relations system is about raising the voices of workers and increasing their level of influence and control within workplaces, with the aim of increasing safety, democracy and conditions. This means transforming the current status quo, where employers often have disproportionate power over employees to determine when and how they work, and for how much or, more critically, for how little! By contrast, workers' control, democracy and equality are built into the cooperative model. This offers a solution to inequality and injustice both in and outside of the workplace.

A study of 40 cooperatives of domestic workers from around the world show that cooperatives provide their members with higher wages and better working conditions, as well as with training and personal and professional development. Cooperatives also greatly enrich the social fabric of communities. They make for better neighbours and are particularly important for resilience and recovery during crisis periods. This is because cooperatives are deeply intertwined with the wellbeing of their surrounding neighbours.

The Assembly may be interested in a study published last year by Belgian researcher Adrien Billiet summarising evidence amassed over decades of research that indicates that cooperatives are highly embedded in their local community both by principle and by design. This means they have a long-term orientation, facilitate social innovation and have better resilience during crises.

Cooperatives' social innovation was particularly on display during the pandemic. While chain stores struggled with supply lines, Canberra's very own food cooperative, with its diversified and local supplier network, was able to keep providing members with the staples required during lockdown, adopting a home delivery and home ordering system to keep shoppers and volunteers safe. The Food Co-op has long combined support for the arts with social connection and health through their regular events, often specifically targeted at new Canberrans like international students, to help build community relationships whilst sharing cooking skills. The ACT Greens are proud to support local cooperatives, and I sincerely hope this motion is an important step in the government promoting and assisting the growth of these important enterprises here in Canberra.

MS CLAY (Ginninderra) (5.16), in reply: I will just make a few remarks in closing. I do not expect to use my full 10 minutes. I always find it interesting in here when we have our business credentials challenged. I really should not engage with that, but I am going to. I have been a company director. I have run estates. I have been a lawyer. I have operated lots of different businesses in lots of different fields. I have been an artist. I have worked in government, and I have worked outside of government. Actually, that is not particularly unique; that is pretty common. I think most of the Greens here have done quite a lot of different things, but I certainly do not profess to be an expert in business. I think business is really interesting because it is so varied. There is so much to learn, and you never finish learning. I think it is quite interesting that anybody here would think that they are an expert in business and that nobody needs any help.

I usually take a fairly Greens approach, and I think Mr Davis has taken a very Greens approach in developing this motion. I think he has done exactly what any of us Greens would do. He has not said, "I'm an expert and I think there is nothing more to learn here." He has gone out and listened to what people are telling him. He has done a bit of deep research, he has done a bit of deep thinking, and he has gone back and done a bit more listening. What he has heard from the co-ops that exist here; from people who have recently established co-ops, like Scotty Foster; from the people who have been working in co-ops for quite a long time; and from the people who would quite like to establish co-ops, is that it is actually quite difficult to do it.

Co-ops are a little different from other business structures. There is some information on the website, and that is great. We definitely do not need any more barriers for co-ops. That is why this motion is not introducing barriers; it is just introducing support for people who would like to access it. We heard that people need support, particularly with information to navigate how to incorporate a co-op. It is actually quite different and unique. I have incorporated quite a lot of different businesses and legal structures—partnerships and directorships and quite a lot of things—but incorporating a co-op is a different way of doing business and it is good

to have a bit of assistance, including, possibly, human assistance in that process—particularly if English is not your first language, or if you just find the nature of it a bit difficult to navigate, and that is pretty common.

We have also heard that co-ops have unique challenges in raising capital. I have been in the situation of raising capital for business enterprises and for social enterprises. It is really fun. It is not straightforward, and for co-ops there are a lot of unique challenges. When a bank looks at the structure of a co-op it sees that it is not the same as a for-profit company and it is not the same as other business models. For co-ops it is a lot harder to attract investment and to attract loans. We have been told by people who really are the experts in co-ops that that needs a bit of assistance.

Mr Davis has listened, and he has put together some of the assistance that people have said that they would like. They want better information than a few web links; they want a business unit that actually understands co-ops and can help provide some advice to people on how to incorporate those and put them together. He has also realised that we need to learn more about co-ops. I think learning is really good, so we are going to learn from the co-ops that we have here. But we have also realised that there is another place in the world that is doing co-ops quite well. They have taken off; they have become one of the most common business structures there. It would be great to have a little look at what they are doing. Learning is a really useful way to develop new public policy. Mr Davis has asked for that work to be done and then for the report to come back to the Assembly. It is a good way to develop policy.

Co-ops are very ordinary in one sense. Eight in 10 Australians are members of a co-op, so most of us have contact with a co-op at some stage. But they are also unique in a lot of ways. They do not have the same type of business charter as a for-profit company. They are not established for profit. They do not have a boss at the top and everybody else working for them underneath. They are based on a different structure. They are based on the fact that everybody is equal and that we have to achieve social and environmental goals, as well as achieving our product, service or whatever it is that our co-op does. I think that is an absolutely sensational way to set out to develop your business life and to deliver a service that Canberra needs. I cannot think of any better way to form your company than to think, “Let’s do it like that; let’s do it as a co-op.”

We are experiencing a lot of the problems that have been created by the old way of doing business. We understand that we are on a finite planet, and we are living as if we had infinite resources. That has to stop. A lot of the social problems are experienced with a greater divide in equality—as there are more rich and more poor people and as we get more bosses and more workers. It is not helpful. It is not a good long-term way to build a cohesive society and a healthy, sustainable planet.

I am glad that Mr Davis has brought forward this motion about co-ops. On one level it is a very simple motion based on very simple ways of developing policy. I am really excited to see what happens if we pass this motion today. I am excited to see what we hear back when we have done all this work to find out how we can help more Canberrans establish co-ops if they want to. I commend the motion to the Assembly.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

Speaker's ruling

Statement by Acting Speaker

MR ACTING SPEAKER: I would like to thank members for their patience with me as Acting Speaker this week. In particular, it was my first foray in question time and thank you for, by and large, showing the respect to the chair that the chair deserves, irrespective of who is sitting in it. Today I was asked to rule on a question without notice asked by Mr Milligan of Ms Berry in her capacity as Minister for Education and Youth Affairs. The question, word for word, was:

My question is to the minister for education. When asked yesterday during question time whether fire systems at Calwell were in good working order, you stated, "Yes, I believe that they are." It has now been revealed that your directorate was issued with a further WorkSafe notification prior to your false answer yesterday, which is, "related to fire extinguishers which had been relocated due to students using them as weapons".

He went on to say:

Minister, why did you say fire safety systems were in good working order yesterday when they were, in fact, removed because they were being used as weapons and an additional two WorkSafe notifications had been issued?

That is the question in its entirety.

Subsequently, Mr Gentleman raised a point of order asking me to rule the question out of order as it contained an imputation or inference, contrary to standing orders. We are talking standing order 117(b)(iii) and (iv), which states that a question without notice shall not contain inferences or imputations.

The question asked by Mr Milligan, which is contained in just the last line that I read, is in order. The imputation is in the preamble to the question. So the question is in order. However, in the preamble to the question, Mr Milligan stated that Ms Berry had given a false answer in question time. The practice of the Assembly, as outlined at paragraph 10.74 of the *Companion to the Standing Orders* is that members can direct a charge against other members or reflect upon their character only by substantive motion, which requires a distinct vote of the Assembly.

This ruling has given me some grief. I think it is line ball, but, while Mr Milligan may be of the belief that the answer given by Ms Berry yesterday was false, that is still an imputation or an inference, as it implies that Ms Berry has lied to the Assembly. It would have been open for Mr Milligan to move a substantive motion. It is against the standing orders to ask a question that contains an imputation or an inference.

I note that Mr Hanson is about to jump to his feet here. But I would say, Mr Hanson, that we are not debating whether the original statement of Ms Berry was false or not. That is not what we are debating. This ruling is about the fact that Mr Milligan has implied that Ms Berry has lied. And so I would ask, unless you are about to get to your feet, Mr Hanson—

Mr Hanson: On the point of order, you have ruled that the question was in order. You said that in the preamble there was an assertion that the answer that was given was incorrect. I think that, in the course of debate in this place, Mr Gentleman would regularly say, "What the opposition is saying is not true," or "That is not correct. That is not factually accurate." It is in the normal course of debate that we will say those things.

I think that, without getting into substantive debate, it is true that Mr Milligan believes and the opposition believes that the answer given was not correct. I think the opposition should have the ability to say, "Hey, we do not think that is right. We do not think that is correct." We have got the right to do that.

So there is nothing that would rule that question out of order. You have said that. In the preamble to the question or in debate it is quite within the ability of any of us to say, "That is not correct." I have heard Mr Gentleman say that things that we say are not correct, or Mr Rattenbury would say things that I have said are not correct. We are able to say that.

Are you saying that we are no longer able to say that because every time you say a word like that you are saying someone is lying? I mean, the whole point of debate is that we contest ideas. We contest facts. I have said on a number of occasions that Mr Gentleman has cut funding to police. He says that no, he has not. That does not necessarily mean that we have to withdraw those statements.

MR ACTING SPEAKER: Mr Hanson, I understand the point that you are making, but in this instance we are talking about the semantics of the word "false". If indeed Mr Milligan had said that that answer was incorrect, it probably would not have crossed what is a very, very narrow line.

Mr Gentleman: I will point out that Mr Hanson, of course, is reflecting on and debating the ruling of the Speaker now, which is against the standing orders as well. If he disagrees with your ruling, Mr Acting Speaker, he can move a motion against your ruling. But he is, again, not standing within the standing orders just within this last comment.

Mr Hanson: On a point of order. I do not think you have actually made a ruling, Mr Acting Speaker. Have you made a ruling, Mr Acting Speaker? I think you were getting to it.

MR ACTING SPEAKER: I have not actually quite made the ruling, Mr Gentleman.

Mr Hanson: So he is wrong, is he not?

MR ACTING SPEAKER: Thank you, members. So whilst it is open to Mr Milligan to move a substantive motion, it is against the standing orders to ask a question that contains an imputation or inference. And so I ask Mr Milligan to withdraw any imputation against Ms Berry.

Mr Milligan: I withdraw, Mr Acting Speaker.

MR ACTING SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr Milligan.

Paper

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) (5.28): Before we go to adjournment, can I just say that I understand that there may have been a document missing from the presentation earlier on in the papers bundle. I do apologise for this. For the assistance of all members, I table the paper that should have been included in the bundle:

Review of Procurement ACT—October 2021, conducted by Renée Leon.

Adjournment

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

That the Assembly do now adjourn.

Australian War Memorial—sponsors

MS CLAY (Ginninderra) (5.28): I would like to speak today about a national institution here in the ACT. The issue was brought to my attention by many concerned Canberrans. I want to talk about the War Memorial. I do not want to speak just about the memorial; I would like to speak about one of its darker elements.

This important national institution is meant to recognise the tragic toll of war and military service, and the impact it has on our entire country and those who have served, but it is sponsored by the very industry, the weapons industry, whose products cause so much of this harm. We would not accept a respiratory hospital being funded by cigarette manufacturers. Why should our War Memorial be sponsored by weapons manufacturers?

One sponsor in particular that I would like to focus on is Lockheed Martin. Today is the day that their contract with the Australian War Memorial ends. We do not yet know when or if this contract will be renewed, but it is my hope that it will not be. It is inappropriate that the profiteers of war fund a national institution which is there to commemorate and acknowledge the toll of war, but not to glorify it. It is particularly egregious in this case because it is Lockheed.

I would like to put on record some information compiled by the Medical Association for Prevention of War. They said that Lockheed Martin, including its wholly owned Australian subsidiary, makes more revenue from warfare than any other weapons company anywhere. Weaponry represents 89 per cent of its total sales. The company needs wars. While ADF personnel and tens of thousands of civilians died in the war in Afghanistan, Lockheed Martin's share price skyrocketed.

Lockheed Martin promotes and profits from militarised approaches to conflicts, thus predisposing us to more wars which might otherwise have been prevented. The company and those founded with it co-founded the US committee to expand NATO, helped build momentum for the catastrophic invasion of Iraq, and saw benefits in the war in Syria and in tensions between India and Pakistan. As one analyst part-funded by Lockheed has commented, “It’s hard to sell a frontline fighter to a country that isn’t threatened.” Of course, the company joins in fanning the flames of war with China.

Lockheed Martin’s products and services do not stop with fighter jets, warships, assault weapons, missiles and missile defence, and electronic warfare systems. They include items that are ethically dubious or some of which are outright illegal, including nuclear weapons, which are now banned under the 2017 Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, drones which terrorise civilians and have killed thousands, and military interrogation. Further to all of this, the company’s customers include some of the world’s worst human rights abusers.

We know from an independent Ipsos survey commissioned by the Medical Association for Prevention of War that the majority of Australians—59 per cent of us—believe that the War Memorial should not accept money from companies that profit from the sale of weapons. Even more, 68 per cent, believe the War Memorial should not accept money from companies that produce weapons of mass destruction. Our community here does not support it, and the Australian War Memorial should reconsider accepting any further contracts with any weapons manufacturer.

I thank the Medical Association for Prevention of War for their strong advocacy on this issue and the work they have done to bring this to my attention. I thank the local Canberrans who are working hard to advocate on this issue and are hoping to end this funding.

I understand this issue has been brought to the attention of the Australian War Memorial, and it is on the public record. It should have been part of their due diligence when they were accepting funds. I hope they have realised that accepting Lockheed Martin’s funds helps to promote a culture of warfare rather than honouring those who have tragically lost their lives in wars. We are all hoping they do the right thing and refuse war money.

Canberra—community and arts events

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) (5.32): I want to finish the sitting week adjournment debates in the manner in which I started—by reflecting on the incredible array of community events which have been, and continue to be, on offer in our city as we emerge from some of the most difficult few years of our lives.

I recently joined the Ginninderra Catchment Group as part of their Clean Up Australia Day initiatives which they held through the month of March, with a particular focus

on our waterways. This Lake Ginninderra clean-up was special in a few ways. The team provided kayaks so that we were able to get to the rubbish that has collected in the reeds and access areas that otherwise are not easy to get to. Everybody who turned up got to have a go. There was a barbecue, of course, as well as dedicated wellbeing areas, thanks to the Landcare ACT wellbeing coordinator, to reconnect back with nature after having seen the destruction that humans can do with waste.

Dr Bruno Ferronato was also on hand to help us understand the healthiness of Lake Ginninderra. Pleasingly, it is doing pretty well. Perhaps most unusually, one of the pieces of rubbish found was what appeared to have been a rather large garden fountain, or at least a slightly broken garden fountain. We could only surmise that it had washed downstream during some of the heavy rains that we have had, which, in and of itself, is worth reflecting on.

That same day coincided with private gardens across the city being opened to anyone interested, for a very small fee, which was directed to charities. Open Gardens Canberra was formed in 2015 to continue the tradition of private open gardens established by Open Gardens Australia. Its mission is simple but powerful: to open gardens in the Canberra region for viewing by members and the public, to encourage sustainable garden practices, and to support community projects and charities. Two Belconnen gardens featured during this weekend's open days—the Mediterranean garden in Cook and the Davenport garden in Melba. It was a really lovely way to spend some time admiring the extraordinary efforts and beauty, and to take away some ideas, thanks to the owners generously making themselves available to answer any questions over the two days.

Last weekend, of course, heralded the return of the third AusIndia Fair. Despite the atrocious weather, this indoor event attracted a large crowd who were able to reconnect and reflect on the incredible contribution that the Indian community makes in Australia, the indelible, shared cultural and democratic bonds of Australia and India, and the extraordinary friendships and achievements across our local community. My thanks go to FINACT for their continued commitment to this event and what it means for the Canberra community, and particularly for combining it with Harmony Week celebrations, highlighting the strength of our diversity and how we are a better city because of it.

Finally, I want to take us back to Belconnen and bring attention to an exhibition that is close to my heart, *Lake Ginninderra: Nine Ways*, at Belconnen Arts Centre. The Tin Shed Art Group of nine artists—Noelle Bell, Julie Delves, Margaret Gordon, Eva van Gorsel, Manuel Pfeiffer, Alan Pomeroy, Peggy Spratt, Jenny Adams and Delene White—have captured Lake Ginninderra through their eyes, reflecting their experiences, views and interactions of and with our much-loved lake. The art ranges from sculpture to printmaking to painting, and captures landscapes and detail, the abundant fauna, the buildings and sculptures which frame the lake shore, the paths and the people that can be found along those paths.

Indeed, I have been captured as one of the people along those paths by renowned local artist Delene White in her series of portraits of 30 lake walkers. It is particularly humbling as I have never had my portrait painted before, but what I have loved most

is recognising the other lake walkers. Indeed, my portrait has been hung next to Graeme's, and I do not think Delene had any idea that Graeme and I actually know each other, but we do, because of walking around the lake. Having always passed each other on the lake walk at around the same time each morning and saying our usual hellos in passing, several years ago we stopped to have a longer chat and now when we see each other that is more typical of what we do.

I encourage all Canberrans, but especially Belconnen residents, to explore this fun and beautiful exhibition that shows off such a special part of our home, so meaningfully reflected by nine talented artists.

Federal election—candidates

MR PARTON (Brindabella) (5.37): We are very close to a federal election. I do not know if you guys have noticed, but it is very close, and it is apparent, isn't it? It is apparent every time you open Facebook, it is apparent every time you step out to a community event and it is apparent walking around the suburbs with the signs that are appearing in front yards.

I just wanted to bring it to members' attention today that at this point in the campaign, albeit not officially in the campaign, we are not seeing a great deal of effort from the Greens in promoting their No 1 Senate candidate. I do not know if you can remember the Simon Sheikh for the Senate campaign, which was just massive; it was huge. Simon was everywhere, and it happened at a time when social media was not as all-pervading as it is now. It must have cost a fortune.

Do you remember how big the Lin Hatfield Dodds campaign was? Again, everywhere you looked you saw Lin Hatfield Dodds. Where is the Greens campaign machine now? How sad is it that the Greens have pre-selected a proud First Nations woman as their lead candidate for the Senate, but then the party has just gone missing? Does it strike you as being a little odd?

I think Canberra needs to know what is going on here. We are all friends in here, so let us break it down to the basics and be honest about what is going on in here. Because Dr Tjanara Goreng is not actually the lead Greens candidate in the Senate. She is not the lead Greens candidate; David Pocock is the lead Greens candidate in the Senate! I think everybody that intends to vote for Mr Pocock should be well and truly aware of that.

Disability services—Daydream Machine

MS DAVIDSON (Murrumbidgee—Assistant Minister for Families and Community Services, Minister for Disability, Minister for Justice Health, Minister for Mental Health and Minister for Veterans and Seniors) (5.39): Over the past two years most of our conversations about people with disability have focused on increased health risks from COVID and the unrelenting threats by the federal government to undermine choice and control in the NDIS. But today I want to tell you about a wonderful local initiative that is focused on the ways in which disability can contribute to greater

creativity, focus, skill and joy; and I know that this is a topic close to your heart, just as it is to mine.

On Thursday last week I attended the launch of the Daydream Machine, a creative arts studio founded by ACT local hero in the Australian of the Year awards, Luke Ferguson. Luke has developed skill in working with young people with disability through his teaching at the Woden School. Now he has taken his skills to the next level by opening the Daydream Machine, supporting young people with disability to follow their passion for music, visual arts, photography, engineering, storytelling and writing, and more. Local businesses and individuals in our community have seen what a positive difference he makes to the lives of young people and their families, and they have donated or they have offered support to help this wonderful new studio to get up and running.

The launch party last Thursday was awesome fun, and to see the team of superheroes that Luke has assembled was just wonderful: Jacob's marble run showing his skills in engineering; Grace's rewrite of classic 90s gangster rap and finding the best caramel slice in Canberra—which, I might just confirm, is indeed at Home Ground Cafe in Hughes—Peta's contribution of words and drawing and collage in her visual art, which you can see if you stop by my office; and Logan's audio book *The Secret Library*, which is also in my office, if anyone wants to listen. It is a tale of magic, loss and human kindness, themes which many of us in the community have been thinking about a lot over the last two years.

I want to take a moment to reflect on the beauty and the joy that is present within neurodiversity. The people whose minds work differently to yours or mine can bring new perspectives to problems that we are all trying to solve, and that we are stronger and better together as a community. The young person who is supported to engage their passion and has positive role models around them is well on their way to building resilience and strong mental wellbeing.

The Daydream Machine is a safe space for young people to explore their creative interests with people who share their enjoyment of trying new things and making something wonderful. Now, as Frigga, who is Thor's mum, said, "Everyone fails at who they're supposed to be. The measure of a person, of a hero, is how well they succeed at being who they are." So thank you, Luke, for helping these young people to discover who they are and supporting them as they learn how to use their creativity, their talent and their skills to create their own future.

Multicultural affairs—events

MR CAIN (Ginninderra) (5.42): Canberra is a city of varied cultures, and as a local member I get many opportunities to connect with and understand our diverse cultures. While I have been known to attend many multicultural events since I have been elected, and even before that, I do so with a special interest and special responsibility in this short period before us now, while my colleague the shadow minister for multicultural affairs is on leave. I am just looking after that in her stead.

I just want to mention a few of the wonderful events that I have been to and one that is forthcoming as well. A few weekends ago, I, along with several of the MLAs from this house, attended the Molonglo Valley Multicultural Day and really appreciated the organisation that was behind that, particularly from the Molonglo Valley Community Forum and the multicultural community in that part of Canberra.

As with all of these wonderful events, it was full of entertainment, live performances, food, activities and stalls representing community organisations. Kids races were included. We got to see the mountain dragon again, and Bollywood dancing. There were games for children and families and plenty of traditional food stalls, which are to my particular liking. It was a pleasure to witness the beauty and colour of different cultures coming together peacefully and in celebration.

I could certainly say the same about last Saturday's AusIndia Fair at the Racing Club, held by the Federation of Indian Associations of the ACT, FINACT. I said to several people, "Thank you for holding this. It really is in place of the Multicultural Festival that, sadly, we were not able to enjoy this year." That was a wonderful afternoon and conducted in a wonderful spirit.

It was also a pleasure this week, just a couple of nights ago, to address the Canberra Interfaith Forum as an invited guest speaker to speak on a topic of relevance for all people of faith and to share the podium with Dr Dharam Pal Dhall, who gave a wonderful scientific exposition of the benefit of prayer and faith. It was a very interesting approach to the question.

I look forward to this coming Saturday night. My wife and I will be attending the India-Australia Night held by the India-Australia Association of Canberra. We look forward, again, to lots of colour, lots of fun, great food and fantastic company.

I expressed in my inaugural speech—it seems like a long time ago but I believe it was only 18 months ago!—that every human life has incredible potential, irrespective of differences in gender, age, colour and creed. In my engagement with not just the multicultural community in Canberra but the whole of the Canberra community, particularly my beloved district of Ginninderra, I am fully reinforced in that sentiment, the more I get to mingle with people and see the wonderful activities that they do, often on a purely voluntary basis. I want to commend the success story of many of these communities in Canberra and certainly encourage all of our MLAs to be supporters and encouragers of their events. Thank you.

Health—National Health Co-op

MRS KIKKERT (Ginninderra) (5.46): Many residents in my electorate of Ginninderra were shocked by the announcement on 22 September last year that the National Health Co-op had gone into voluntary administration. At the time, this member-owned, bulk-billing cooperative had 32,000 members, most of them in my electorate. That made it one of the largest primary healthcare providers in the ACT, covering nearly eight per cent of all Canberrans.

Clinics were located in the Belconnen suburbs of Evatt, Higgins, Kippax and Macquarie, with additional locations in Coombs and Chisholm, and one on the ANU campus. Like thousands of other Belconnen residents, my family had been members of the co-op for many years, and this news left us all concerned about what might happen. Thankfully, all four of the former National Health Co-op clinics in Belconnen were quickly sold and are still open and able to provide essential services to residents in my electorate.

Today I acknowledge the Nigerian Association of Medical Doctors in the ACT and the central role that its member doctors played in preserving these local clinics. Ten of these skilled medical professionals from Nigeria, determined not to let their communities down, made the brave decision to expand their roles from medical practitioners to practice owners. These 10 doctors purchased six of the seven existing clinics, providing a soft landing for thousands of Canberrans.

I honour that decision, as I honour all entrepreneurs and small business owners in this territory. To these doctors, I say thank you. I also wish to thank the Nigerian Association of Medical Doctors in the ACT for mentoring and supporting these important professionals and for its role in fostering collegiality and networking between its members and their communities.

This past week, it was my pleasure to attend the association's awards ceremony. I thank Dr Uche Menakaya, the association's president, for his leadership and for his kind invitation. I also take the opportunity to publicly congratulate all of the doctors who received much-deserved awards on the night. Our community is a better place because of good people like the members of the Nigerian Association of Medical Doctors in the ACT. Thank you.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

The Assembly adjourned at 5.50 pm until Tuesday, 3 May 2022 at 10 am.

Answers to questions

Mental health services—patient deaths (Question No 506)

Mrs Jones asked the Minister for Mental Health, upon notice, on 8 October 2021:

How many deaths in care (within the meaning of the section 3BB of the Coroners Act 1997), (a) occurred and (b) were referred to the coroner, (i) in 2018-19, (ii) in 2019-20, (iii) in 2020-21 and (iv) from 1 July 2021 to 30 September 2021.

Ms Davidson: The answer to the member's question is as follows:

(1)

ACT Policing reports all deaths in care, as defined in section 3BB of the *Coroners Act 1997*, to the ACT Coroner.

The number of such deaths reported in each year requested is as follows.

(i) in 2018-19	Two deaths of persons subject to mental health orders were reported to the ACT Coroner.
(ii) in 2019-20	Seven deaths of persons subject to mental health orders were reported to the ACT Coroner.
(iii) in 2020-21	Five deaths of persons subject to mental health orders were reported to the ACT Coroner.
(iv) from 1 July 2021 to 30 September 2021	To 30 September 2021, two deaths of persons subject to mental health orders were reported to the ACT Coroner.

Environment—Healthy Waterways project (Question No 583—revised answer)

Ms Lawder asked the Minister for Water, Energy and Emissions Reduction, upon notice, on 11 February 2022:

Further to the response to question on notice No 232, can the Minister provide (a) the Healthy Waterways progress reports, including final and evaluation reports, (b) the Healthy Waterways Business Case, (c) Model for Urban Stormwater Improvement Conceptualisation (MUSIC) models for assets, as supplied to the Government according to the 2016 Alluvium report, (d) detailed design MUSIC models and (e) the Healthy Waterways Operation and Maintenance manuals.

Mr Rattenbury: The answer to the member's question is as follows:

- (a) These reports are still being finalised and will be released on their completion, before the end of this financial year. The Final Report will be posted on the Healthy Waterways website and the Evaluation Report will be made available either directly or via the ACT Government's Open Access Information Portal.
- (b) The Healthy Waterways Business Case ('Final Supplementary Report - 9 Feb 2016') was released to you as a part of Freedom of Information (FOI) request 21/42215.

- (c) As provided previously, the Government does not hold the MUSIC models for the preliminary designs of assets. The models supplied to the Government in the preliminary design phase ('Phase 1') were for the seven subcatchments. These can be made available upon a request to my office directly.
- (d) The MUSIC models underpinning detailed designs of assets ('Phase 2') can be made available upon request to my office directly.
- (e) The Operation and Maintenance manuals are being assessed by documentation officers against criteria for Open Access.

Officers within the Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development have consistently provided information on request on the Healthy Waterways program. This has included data, music models, business cases; and in response to a broad Freedom Of Information request. These continued requests are creating a significant diversion of Government resources. My officials remain available if there is a specific concern to be addressed, however continued broad requests may be seen as an excessive diversion of resources.

**Government—grants programs
(Question Nos 588, 590, 597, 606, 610)**

Mrs Jones asked the Minister for the Arts; the Minister for Business and Better Regulation; the Assistant Minister for Economic Development, the Minister for Human Rights and the Minister for Multicultural Affairs, upon notice, on 11 February 2022:

- (1) What grant programs were operated or administered by your portfolio in (a) 2016-17, (b) 2017-18, (c) 2018-19, (d) 2019-20, (e) 2020-21, and (f) 2021-22?
- (2) For each grant program referred to in part (1), (a) what was the purpose of the grant program, (b) how much money was budgeted for the grant program in (i) 2016-17, (ii) 2017-18, (iii) 2018-19, (iv) 2019-20, (v) 2020-21, and (vi) 2021-22, (c) how much money was expended under the grant program in (i) 2016-17, (ii) 2017-18, (iii) 2018-19, (iv) 2019-20, (v) 2020-21, and (vi) 2021-22, (d) was the program accounted for as an expense on behalf of the Territory ("administered" within the meaning of Australian accounting standard AASB 1050), (e) how many applications were received for grants under the program in (i) 2016-17, (ii) 2017-18, (iii) 2018-19, (iv) 2019-20, (v) 2020-21, and (vi) 2021-22, (f) who decided, approved or rejected applications for grants, (g) what percentage of applicants were approved in (i) 2016-17, (ii) 2017-18, (iii) 2018-19, (iv) 2019-20, (v) 2020-21, and (vi) 2021-22, (h) what percentage of applicants were rejected in (i) 2016-17, (ii) 2017-18, (iii) 2018-19, (iv) 2019-20, (v) 2020-21, and (vi) 2021-22, (i) what criteria, policies, guidelines applied to the program.
- (3) For each grant program referred to in part (1), but excluding non-competitive grant programs that provide generalised financial assistance to individuals or businesses, (a) who received a grant in (i) 2016-17, (ii) 2017-18, (iii) 2018-19, (iv) 2019-20, (v) 2020-21, and (vi) 2021-22, (b) when did the recipient apply for the grant, (c) when did the recipient receive the grant, (d) how much was the grant and (e) did the conditions that attached to the grant prevent (or have the effect of preventing) the recipient

making public comment on any issue; if so, how was the recipient prevented from making public comment.

- (4) Has the portfolio provided a grant that was not provided under one of the programs identified in part (1) in (a) 2016-17, (b) 2017-18, (c) 2018-19, (d) 2019-20, (e) 2020-21, and (f) 2021-22.
- (5) For each grant referred to in part (4), (a) who received the grant, (b) how was the recipient of the grant identified, (c) what was the purpose of the grant, (d) when did the person receive the grant, (e) what conditions attached to the grant, (f) did the conditions that attached to the grant prevent (or have the effect of preventing) the recipient making public comment on any issue; if so, how was the recipient prevented from making public comment and (g) how much was the grant.
- (6) Does the Government report or disclose publicly the recipients of grants and the conditions that attach to those grants.

Ms Cheyne The answer to the member's question is as follows:

Please refer to the Attachments A - E

Attachment A

Question 588: Minister for the Arts

- (1) Public reporting in ACT Government Annual Reports includes the type, monetary value and recipients of Grant funding:

- a. Publications - Chief Minister, Treasury and Economic Development Directorate (act.gov.au). (CMTEDD)

Further budget information can be found in the ACT Government budget papers.

- b. ACT Budget - Treasury

*NOTE portfolios and priorities have changed since 2016, whilst reporting of these grant programs is currently in the CMTEDD Annual Reports now, they may have been reported in other ACT Government Annual Reports previously:

https://www.cmtedd.act.gov.au/open_government/report/annual-reports

Reporting on 2021-22 grant programs will be reported in the 2021-22 annual report, to collate this information now on any of the 2021-22 grant programs would be an unreasonable diversion of resources.

(2)

(a) – (c) Refer to response 1

(d) Most of the grants are expensed through CMTEDD's Controlled accounts, and are funded using Controlled Recurrent Payments appropriation.

(e) Identifying the number of applications received against each program is an unreasonable diversion of resources.

(f): Specific funding guidelines/criteria and assessment process for each grant program were developed for the information of potential grant applicants. Information is not readily available for this question and would require a significant diversion of resources not readily available in this format.

(g)-(h): Information is not readily available for this question and would require a significant diversion of resources.

(i): Refer to (f) above.

(3)

(a): See response provided under Question 1 and 2.

(b)-(e): Information is not readily available for this question and would require a significant diversion of resources.

(4) Refer to response 1. To collate any further information would be an unreasonable diversion of resources.

(5) Not applicable.

(6) Information regarding funding recipients is publicly made available through related media activities and detailed in the Annual Report. The conditions attached to these grants are generally not disclosed publicly other than via the general applicant information which is contained within the published grant funding guidelines for each program.

Attachment B

Question 590: Minister for Business and Better Regulation

(1) Nil.

(2) Nil.

(3) Nil.

(4) Nil.

(5) Nil.

(6) Nil.

Attachment C

Question 597: Assistant Minister for Economic Development

(1) Public reporting in ACT Government Annual Reports includes the type, monetary value and recipients of Grant funding:

a. Publications - Chief Minister, Treasury and Economic Development Directorate (act.gov.au). (CMTEDD)

Further budget information can be found in the ACT Government budget papers.

b. ACT Budget - Treasury

*NOTE portfolios and priorities have changed since 2016, whilst reporting of these grant programs is currently in the CMTEDD Annual Reports now, they may have been reported in other ACT Government Annual Reports previously:

https://www.cmtedd.act.gov.au/open_government/report/annual-reports

Reporting on 2021-22 grant programs will be reported in the 2021-22 annual report, to collate this information now on any of the 2021-22 grant programs would be an unreasonable diversion of resources.

(2)

(a) – (c) Refer to response 1

(d) Most of the grants are expensed through CMTEDD's Controlled accounts, and are funded using Controlled Recurrent Payments appropriation.

(e) Identifying the number of applications received against each program is an unreasonable diversion of resources.

(f): Specific funding guidelines/criteria and assessment process for each grant program were developed for the information of potential grant applicants. Information is not readily available for this question and would require a significant diversion of resources not readily available in this format.

(g)-(h): Information is not readily available for this question and would require a significant diversion of resources.

(i): Refer to (f) above.

(3)

(a): See response provided under Question 1 and 2.

(b)-(e): Information is not readily available for this question and would require a significant diversion of resources.

(4) Refer to response 1. To collate any further information would be an unreasonable diversion of resources.

(5) Not applicable.

(6) Information regarding funding recipients is publicly made available through related media activities and detailed in the Annual Report. The conditions attached to these grants are generally not disclosed publicly other than via the general applicant information which is contained within the published grant funding guidelines for each program.

Attachment D

Question 606: Minister for Human Rights

There are no grant programs funded under the Human Rights portfolio.

Attachment E

Question 610: Minister for Multicultural Affairs

Answering this question to the level of detail required would require the diversion of significant resources.

For the period requested links have been provided to published information about grant programs.

1)(a) Portfolio arrangements and administration of grants have changed over time. There are currently 2 grant programs administered in the Multicultural Affairs portfolio.

The Participation (Multicultural) Grants Program promotes community participation and cohesion, cultural diversity and social inclusion in the Australian Capital Territory (ACT).

The National Multicultural Festival (NMF) Grants Program Grant provides funding for projects that highlight and promote community participation, cultural diversity, and social inclusion at the annual Festival.

The outcome of these grants is reported in the annual report and this information is available publicly from the following sites:

- [Community Services Directorate Annual Report 2016-17](#)
- [Community Services Directorate Annual Report 2017-18](#)
- [Community Services Directorate Annual Report 2018-19](#)
- [Community Services Directorate Annual Report 2019-20](#)
- [Community Services Directorate Annual Report 2020-21](#)

(b) This information is provided at the websites in question 1(a).

(c) This information is provided at the websites in question 1(a).

(d) These grants are paid through the territories controlled accounts and are therefore not accounted for as administered items.

(e) Providing this level of detail would require the diversion of significant resources.

(f) Grants are assessed through a panel arrangement; the panel is comprised of government and community members. All panel members are required to sign a conflict of interest declaration to ensure that there are no conflicts with grant applicants. Once recommendations are put forward by the panel, these are approved by the panel Chair and the relevant delegate within CSD. There are feedback and complaints mechanisms provided to applicants regarding the grant process.

(g) Providing this level of detail would require the diversion of significant resources.

(h) Providing this level of detail would require the diversion of significant resources.

(i) There are Grant Guidelines available for each grant program and these are published on the CSD website here: [Grants, Scholarships and Awards - Community Services \(act.gov.au\)](#) when grant rounds are open.

2)(a) Recipients of the Participation (Multicultural) Grants and the NMF Grants are published on the CSD Grants Website [Grants | Multicultural - Community Services \(act.gov.au\)](#).

(b) Providing this level of detail would require the diversion of significant resources.

(c) Providing this level of detail would require the diversion of significant resources.

(d) This information is published on the CSD website as at 2(a).

(e) There are sometimes conditions placed on successful recipients the Participation (Multicultural) Grants and the NMF Grants where there are specific requirements of the grant that needs to be met. This could include the requirement to obtain the proper insurance for an event. The conditions placed on these grants vary broadly and depend upon the nature of the grant, the recipient who has applied and the project being funded. Generally, there is no condition placed on a recipient of the Participation (Multicultural) Grants and the NMF Grants regarding making public comment.

3) Information about the broad range of grants outside the competitive grant programs, including grants delivered in response to COVID-19, are reported in the CSD annual report and is available at:

- [Community Services Directorate Annual Report 2016-17](#)
- [Community Services Directorate Annual Report 2017-18](#)
- [Community Services Directorate Annual Report 2018-19](#)
- [Community Services Directorate Annual Report 2019-20](#)
- [Community Services Directorate Annual Report 2020-21](#)

4) Providing this level of detail would require the diversion of significant resources.

5) The outcome of grants is reported in the annual report and this information is available publicly at the websites provided in question 1(a). Any conditions a grant applicant are included in the individualised Letter of Offer provided to successful applicants, which are not published.

Government—grants programs (Question Nos 589, 592, 601, 622)

Mrs Jones asked the Attorney-General; the Minister for Consumer Affairs; the Minister for Gaming and the Minister for Water, Energy and Emissions Reduction, upon notice, on 11 February 2022:

- (1) What grant programs were operated or administered by your portfolio in (a) 2016-17, (b) 2017-18, (c) 2018-19, (d) 2019-20, (e) 2020-21, and (f) 2021-22?
- (2) For each grant program referred to in part (1), (a) what was the purpose of the grant program, (b) how much money was budgeted for the grant program in (i) 2016-17, (ii) 2017-18, (iii) 2018-19, (iv) 2019-20, (v) 2020-21, and (vi) 2021-22, (c) how much money was expended under the grant program in (i) 2016-17, (ii) 2017-18, (iii) 2018-19, (iv) 2019-20, (v) 2020-21, and (vi) 2021-22, (d) was the program accounted for as an expense on behalf of the Territory ("administered" within the meaning of Australian accounting standard AASB 1050), (e) how many applications were received for grants under the program in (i) 2016-17, (ii) 2017-18, (iii) 2018-19, (iv) 2019-20, (v) 2020-21, and (vi) 2021-22, (f) who decided, approved or rejected applications for grants, (g) what percentage of applicants were approved in (i) 2016-17, (ii) 2017-18, (iii) 2018-19, (iv) 2019-20, (v) 2020-21, and (vi) 2021-22, (h) what percentage of applicants were rejected in (i) 2016-17, (ii) 2017-18, (iii) 2018-19, (iv) 2019-20, (v) 2020-21, and (vi) 2021-22, (i) what criteria, policies, guidelines applied to the program.

- (3) For each grant program referred to in part (1), but excluding non-competitive grant programs that provide generalised financial assistance to individuals or businesses, (a) who received a grant in (i) 2016-17, (ii) 2017-18, (iii) 2018-19, (iv) 2019-20, (v) 2020-21, and (vi) 2021-22, (b) when did the recipient apply for the grant, (c) when did the recipient receive the grant, (d) how much was the grant and (e) did the conditions that attached to the grant prevent (or have the effect of preventing) the recipient making public comment on any issue; if so, how was the recipient prevented from making public comment.
- (4) Has the portfolio provided a grant that was not provided under one of the programs identified in part (1) in (a) 2016-17, (b) 2017-18, (c) 2018-19, (d) 2019-20, (e) 2020-21, and (f) 2021-22.
- (5) For each grant referred to in part (4), (a) who received the grant, (b) how was the recipient of the grant identified, (c) what was the purpose of the grant, (d) when did the person receive the grant, (e) what conditions attached to the grant, (f) did the conditions that attached to the grant prevent (or have the effect of preventing) the recipient making public comment on any issue; if so, how was the recipient prevented from making public comment and (g) how much was the grant.
- (6) Does the Government report or disclose publicly the recipients of grants and the conditions that attach to those grants.

Mr Rattenbury: The answer to the member's question is as follows:

Please refer to the Attachments A – D

Attachment A

Question 589: Attorney-General

Information provided at **Attachment A.1** responds to the following components of the question:

- Question 1(a), (b), (c), (d), (e) and (f)
- Question 2 (a), (b) and (c) (first occurring); and
- Question 4.

In response to Question 2(c) (second occurring), none of the grant programs listed in Attachment A.1 were accounted for as an expense on behalf of the Territory. Trust Grants programs were accounted for in the Confiscated Asset Trust account.

In response to Question 6, some information about grants administered in the portfolio and the recipients of those grants is published in one or more of JACS annual reports for the relevant years, budget papers, media statements and the legislation register. Although there is not currently a single approach taken to publication, any conditions on an individual grant recipient are not published.

Otherwise, answering all components of this question to the level of detail sought would require an unreasonable diversion of resources.

(A copy of the attachment is available at the Chamber Support Office).

Attachment B**Question 592: Minister for Consumer Affairs**

There are no grant programs funded under this portfolio.

Attachment C**Question 601: Minister for Gaming**

Information provided at **Attachment C.1** responds to the following components of the question:

- Question 1(a), (b), (c), (d), (e) and (f)
- Question 2 (a), (b) and (c) (first occurring); and
- Question 4.

In response to Question 2(c) (second occurring), the *Voluntary surrender of Gaming Machine Authorisations* grant program and *ACT Government COVID-19 Economic Survival Package and DSSF* grant programs listed in Attachment C.1 were accounted for as an expense on behalf of the Territory.

In response to Question 6, some information about grants administered in the portfolio and the recipients of those grants is published in one or more of JACS annual reports for the relevant years, budget papers and media statements. Although there is not currently a single approach taken to publication, any conditions on an individual grant recipient are not published.

Otherwise, answering all components of this question to the level of detail sought would require an unreasonable diversion of resources.

(A copy of the attachment is available at the Chamber Support Office).

Attachment D**Question 622: Minister for Water, Energy and Emissions Reduction**

1. What grant programs were operated or administered by your portfolio in (a) 2016-17, (b) 2017-18, (c) 2018-19, (d) 2019-20, (e) 2020-21, and (f) 2021-22?

The following grants are administered by Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate (EPSDD):

	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22
Renewable Energy Innovation Fund (grants)		Active	Active	Active	Active	Active
Community Zero Emissions Grants		Active	Active	Active	Active	Active
Climate Change Community Partnership		Active	Active	Active	Active	Active

We have excluded any subsidies provided which do not meet the definition of a grant. Please note that the above grants are not disclosed as part of the annual report.

The above excludes payments made by EPSDD which are classified for Financial Statement purposes as grants and purchased services but do not meet the traditional definition of a grant.

2. For each grant program referred to in part (1),

a. Purpose of the grant program

Renewable Energy Innovation Fund (REIF)	The funding is provided by industry successful in the ACT Government's renewable energy auctions to fund innovative projects that grow the renewables industry. To test the market and provide flexible, early-stage funding to support a diversity of new and emerging technologies and ventures, with the potential to support the development of the ACT as an export-oriented hub for renewable energy innovation. It incorporates direct grants and clean tech funding.
Community Zero Emissions Grants	The Community Zero Emissions Grants program is designed to provide funding for diverse projects that inform and education the community on how to reduce emissions. Please refer to the Everyday Climate Choices website for information on the purpose of the grant program, available at https://www.climatechoices.act.gov.au/policy-programs/community-zero-emissions-grants .
Climate Change Community Partnership	To provide financial assistance to the Conservation Council, Canberra Environment Centre and See-Change Inc. This is a non-competitive grant.

b. How much money was budgeted for the grant program in (i) 2016-17, (ii) 2017-18, (iii) 2018-19, (iv) 2019-20, (v) 2020-21, and (vi) 2021-22

EPSDD believes that providing this level of detail will be an unreasonable diversion of resources.

c. How much money was expended under the grant program in (i) 2016-17, (ii) 2017-18, (iii) 2018-19, (iv) 2019-20, (v) 2020-21, and (vi) 2021-22

	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21
Renewable Energy Innovation Fund (grants)	46,800	2,280,541	2,244,108	1,646,081	3,943,427
Community Zero Emissions Grants*	0	140,910	144,258	157,603	128,534
Climate Change Community Partnerships	0	359,775	368,769	377,989	387,438

*Zero Emission Grants include grants provided which were ultimately returned to ACT due to non-delivery of milestones.

2021-22 financial year is yet to be completed and data will be available following 30 June.

(d) Was the program accounted for as an expense on behalf of the Territory (“administered” within the meaning of Australian Accounting Standard AASB 1050)

No grants detailed in this document are territorial in nature.

e. How many applications were received for the grant program

	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21
Renewable Energy Innovation Fund (grants)	Unreasonable diversion of resources, given that Renewable Energy Innovation Fund consists of several grant programs.				
Community Zero Emissions Grants	N/A	19	17	21	16
Climate Change Community Partnerships	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

2021-22 financial year is yet to be completed and data will be available following 30 June.

f. Who decided, approved or rejected the grant applications?

Renewable Energy Innovation Fund (grants)	The REIF Business Advisory Board determines the outcome of grant applications.
Community Zero Emissions Grants	The program is run through a competitive grants process. A cross-directorate panel is convened to assess the applications and select the successful projects. The final decision is signed off by the Deputy Director-General of Environment, Water and Emissions Reduction.
Climate Change Community Partnerships	This is a contribution targeted to specific organisations which is ongoing.

g/h. What percentage of the applications were approved/rejected?

Provision of this data would be an unreasonable diversion of resources.

i. What criteria, policies, guidelines applied to the program?

Renewable Energy Innovation Fund (grants)	A request for proposal were developed for this grant. There was also a deed of grant based on the ACT Government template.
Community Zero Emissions Grants	Please refer to the Everyday Climate Choices website and the ACT Climate Change Strategy 2019-25 for information pertaining to this question.
Climate Change Community partnerships	This is a contribution targeted to specific organisations which is ongoing.

3. For each grant program referred to in part (1), but excluding non-competitive grant programs that provide generalised financial assistance to individuals or businesses, (a) who received a grant in (i) 2016-17, (ii) 2017-18, (iii) 2018-19, (iv) 2019-20, (v) 2020-21, and (vi) 2021-22, (b) when did the recipient apply for the grant, (c) when did the

recipient receive the grant, (d) how much was the grant and (e) did the conditions that attached to the grant prevent (or have the effect of preventing) the recipient making public comment on any issue; if so, how was the recipient prevented from making public comment?

Provision of this data would be an unreasonable diversion of resources.

4. Has the portfolio provided a grant that was not provided under one of the programs identified in part (1) in (a) 2016-17, (b) 2017-18, (c) 2018-19, (d) 2019-20, (e) 2020-21, and (f) 2021-22?

All climate change and energy grants are provided under the above grant categories.

5. For each grant referred to in part (4), (a) who received the grant, (b) how was the recipient of the grant identified, (c) what was the purpose of the grant, (d) when did the person receive the grant, (e) what conditions attached to the grant, (f) did the conditions that attached to the grant prevent (or have the effect of preventing) the recipient making public comment on any issue; if so, how was the recipient prevented from making public comment and (g) how much was the grant?

Refer to answer for question 4. Any other details are an unreasonable diversion of resources.

6. Does the Government report or disclose publicly the recipients of grants and the conditions that attach to those grants?

Renewable Energy Innovation Fund (grants)	Successful grant recipients have been announced publicly. The conditions of the grants are outlined in the Deed of Grant with each prospective recipient.
Community Zero Emissions Grants	Yes. The grant amount, recipient and round are published on the publicly available Everyday Climate Choices website. The conditions of the grant are outlined in the Deed of Grant template which is provided upon request.
Climate Change Community Partnerships	No, we do not disclose this contribution.

Government—grants programs (Question Nos 591, 596, 619, 621)

Mrs Jones asked the Minister for Climate Action; the Minister for Economic Development; the Minister for Tourism and the Treasurer, upon notice, on 11 February 2022:

- (1) What grant programs were operated or administered by your portfolio in (a) 2016-17, (b) 2017-18, (c) 2018-19, (d) 2019-20, (e) 2020-21, and (f) 2021-22?
- (2) For each grant program referred to in part (1), (a) what was the purpose of the grant program, (b) how much money was budgeted for the grant program in (i) 2016-17, (ii) 2017-18, (iii) 2018-19, (iv) 2019-20, (v) 2020-21, and (vi) 2021-22, (c) how much money was expended under the grant program in (i) 2016-17, (ii) 2017-18, (iii) 2018-19, (iv) 2019-20, (v) 2020-21, and (vi) 2021-22, (c) was the program accounted for as an expense on behalf of the Territory (“administered” within the meaning of

Australian accounting standard AASB 1050), (e) how many applications were received for grants under the program in (i) 2016-17, (ii) 2017-18, (iii) 2018-19, (iv) 2019-20, (v) 2020-21, and (vi) 2021-22, (f) who decided, approved or rejected applications for grants, (g) what percentage of applicants were approved in (i) 2016-17, (ii) 2017-18, (iii) 2018-19, (iv) 2019-20, (v) 2020-21, and (vi) 2021-22, (h) what percentage of applicants were rejected in (i) 2016-17, (ii) 2017-18, (iii) 2018-19, (iv) 2019-20, (v) 2020-21, and (vi) 2021-22, (i) what criteria, policies, guidelines applied to the program.

- (3) For each grant program referred to in part (1), but excluding non-competitive grant programs that provide generalised financial assistance to individuals or businesses, (a) who received a grant in (i) 2016-17, (ii) 2017-18, (iii) 2018-19, (iv) 2019-20, (v) 2020-21, and (vi) 2021-22, (b) when did the recipient apply for the grant, (c) when did the recipient receive the grant, (d) how much was the grant and (e) did the conditions that attached to the grant prevent (or have the effect of preventing) the recipient making public comment on any issue; if so, how was the recipient prevented from making public comment.
- (4) Has the portfolio provided a grant that was not provided under one of the programs identified in part (1) in (a) 2016-17, (b) 2017-18, (c) 2018-19, (d) 2019-20, (e) 2020-21, and (f) 2021-22.
- (5) For each grant referred to in part (4), (a) who received the grant, (b) how was the recipient of the grant identified, (c) what was the purpose of the grant, (d) when did the person receive the grant, (e) what conditions attached to the grant, (f) did the conditions that attached to the grant prevent (or have the effect of preventing) the recipient making public comment on any issue; if so, how was the recipient prevented from making public comment and (g) how much was the grant.
- (6) Does the Government report or disclose publicly the recipients of grants and the conditions that attach to those grants.

Mr Barr: The answer to the member's question is as follows:

Please refer to the Attachments A – D.

Attachment A

Question 591: Minister for Climate Action

- (1) The Minister for Climate Action portfolio was established in November 2020. No grant programs have been operated or administered by the Minister for Climate Action portfolio to date.
- (2) N/A
- (3) N/A
- (4) N/A
- (5) N/A
- (6) N/A

Attachment B

Question 596: Minister for Economic Development

(1) Public reporting in ACT Government Annual Reports includes the type, monetary value and recipients of Grant funding:

- a. Publications - Chief Minister, Treasury and Economic Development Directorate (act.gov.au). (CMTEDD)

Further budget information can be found in the ACT Government budget papers.

- b. ACT Budget - Treasury

*NOTE portfolios and priorities have changed since 2016, whilst reporting of these grant programs is currently in the CMTEDD Annual Reports now, they may have been reported in other ACT Government Annual Reports previously:

https://www.cmtedd.act.gov.au/open_government/report/annual-reports

Reporting on 2021-22 grant programs will be reported in the 2021-22 annual report, to collate this information now on any of the 2021-22 grant programs would be an unreasonable diversion of resources.

(2)

(a) – (c) Refer to response 1

(d) Most of the grants are expensed through CMTEDD's Controlled accounts, and are funded using Controlled Recurrent Payments appropriation.

(e) Identifying the number of applications received against each program is an unreasonable diversion of resources.

(f): Specific funding guidelines/criteria and assessment process for each grant program were developed for the information of potential grant applicants. Information is not readily available for this question and would require a significant diversion of resources not readily available in this format.

(g)-(h): Information is not readily available for this question and would require a significant diversion of resources.

(i): Refer to (f) above.

(3)

(a): See response provided under Question 1 and 2.

(b)-(e): Information is not readily available for this question and would require a significant diversion of resources.

(4) Refer to response 1. To collate any further information would be an unreasonable diversion of resources.

(5) Not applicable.

(6) Information regarding funding recipients is publicly made available through related media activities and detailed in the Annual Report. The conditions attached to these grants are generally not disclosed publicly other than via the general applicant information which is contained within the published grant funding guidelines for each program.

Attachment C

Question 619: Minister for Tourism

(1) Public reporting in ACT Government Annual Reports includes the type, monetary value and recipients of Grant funding:

- a. Publications - Chief Minister, Treasury and Economic Development Directorate (act.gov.au). (CMTEDD)

Further budget information can be found in the ACT Government budget papers.

- b. ACT Budget - Treasury

*NOTE portfolios and priorities have changed since 2016, whilst reporting of these grant programs is currently in the CMTEDD Annual Reports now, they may have been reported in other ACT Government Annual Reports previously:

https://www.cmtedd.act.gov.au/open_government/report/annual-reports

Reporting on 2021-22 grant programs will be reported in the 2021-22 annual report, to collate this information now on any of the 2021-22 grant programs would be an unreasonable diversion of resources.

(2)

(a) – (c) Refer to response 1

(d) Most of the grants are expensed through CMTEDD's Controlled accounts, and are funded using Controlled Recurrent Payments appropriation.

(e) Identifying the number of applications received against each program is an unreasonable diversion of resources.

(f): Specific funding guidelines/criteria and assessment process for each grant program were developed for the information of potential grant applicants. Information is not readily available for this question and would require a significant diversion of resources not readily available in this format.

(g)-(h): Information is not readily available for this question and would require a significant diversion of resources.

(i): Refer to (f) above.

(3)

(a): See response provided under Question 1 and 2.

(b)-(e): Information is not readily available for this question and would require a significant diversion of resources.

(4) Refer to response 1. To collate any further information would be an unreasonable diversion of resources.

(5) Not applicable.

(6) Information regarding funding recipients is publicly made available through related media activities and detailed in the Annual Report. The conditions attached to these grants are generally not disclosed publicly other than via the general applicant information which is contained within the published grant funding guidelines for each program.

Attachment D

Question 621: Treasurer

(1) What grant programs were operated or administered by your portfolio in (a) 2016-17, (b) 2017-18, (c) 2018-19, (d) 2019-20, (e) 2020-21, and (f) 2021-22?

The ACT Revenue Office administers the First Home Owner Grant (program commenced 1 July 2000) and the Homebuilder Grant (program commenced 4 June 2020). Payments of the First Home Owner Grant ceased in the ACT on 1 July 2019. The ACT Revenue Office continues to administer the Grant however for transactions entered into on or before 30 June 2019.

COVID-19 Hardship Payments were administered in 2020-21 and 2021-22.

Please note while the annual report discloses grants for COVID-19 Quarantine Costs they are not traditional grants, as they are cost recovery reimbursements made to other jurisdictions for COVID-19 quarantine accommodation for ACT residents.

(2) For each grant program referred to in part (1):

First Home Owner Grant

(a) what was is the purpose of the grant program?

The First Home Owner Grant program provides financial assistance to eligible persons buying their first home.

The HomeBuilder Grant is a national program that provides support to the residential construction sector as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. The ACT Revenue Office administers the program in relation to eligible ACT properties for the Commonwealth.

(b) how much money was budgeted for the grant program in (i) 2016-17, (ii) 2017-18, (iii) 2018-19, (iv) 2019-20, (v) 2020-21, and (vi) 2021-22?

This information is comprised in ACT Budget Papers
<https://www.treasury.act.gov.au/budget/previous-act-budgets>. For ease of reference, the amounts have been tabled below:

Year	FHOG ('\$000)	Homebuilder ('\$000)
2016-17	11,352	N/A
2017-18	8,790	N/A
2018-19	8,776	N/A
2019-20	7,000	N/A
2020-21	6,000	N/A
2021-22	5,000	39,755

(c) how much money was expended under the grant program in (i) 2016-17, (ii) 2017-18, (iii) 2018-19, (iv) 2019-20, (v) 2020-21, and (vi) 2021-22?

The following amounts were expended in respect of the First Home Owner and Homebuilder Grants:

Year	FHOG ('\$000)	Homebuilder ('\$000)
2016-17	12,450	N/A
2017-18	15,250	N/A
2018-19	7,864	N/A
2019-20	4,826	N/A
2020-21	3,034	6,885
2021-22 (YTD Jan '22)	630	9,420

(d) was the program accounted for as an expense on behalf of the Territory ("administered" within the meaning of Australian accounting standard AASB 1050)?

Yes, the First Home Owner and Homebuilder Grant programs were accounted for as an expense on behalf of the Territory. The Commonwealth reimburses the ACT for expenditure on the Homebuilder Grant.

(e) how many applications were received for grants under the program in (i) 2016-17, (ii) 2017-18, (iii) 2018-19, (iv) 2019-20, (v) 2020-21, and (vi) 2021-22?

The number of applications received:

Year	FHOG¹	Homebuilder²
2016-17	1,051	N/A
2017-18	1,531	N/A
2018-19	947	N/A
2019-20	640	N/A
2020-21	422	437
2021-22	81	354

¹ Payments of the First Home Owner Grant ceased in the ACT on 1 July 2019. The ACT Revenue Office continues to administer the Grant in respect of transactions entered into on or before 30 June 2019.

² Complete applications received YTD January 2022.

(f) who decided, approved or rejected applications for grants?

The Commissioner for ACT Revenue (and the Commissioner's delegates) are responsible for administering the First Home Owner and Homebuilder grants subject to applicants meeting eligibility requirements.

(g) what percentage of applicants were approved in (i) 2016-17, (ii) 2017-18, (iii) 2018-19, (iv) 2019-20, (v) 2020-21, and (vi) 2021-22?

The percentage of applicants approved:

Year	FHOG (%) ¹	Homebuilder (%) ²
2016-17	99	N/A
2017-18	99	N/A
2018-19	99	N/A
2019-20	98	N/A
2020-21	97	89
2021-22	100	91

¹ FHOG percentages are current to February 2022.

² Homebuilder percentages are current to January 2022.

(h) what percentage of applicants were rejected in (i) 2016-17, (ii) 2017-18, (iii) 2018-19, (iv) 2019-20, (v) 2020-21, and (vi) 2021-22?

The percentage of applicants rejected:

Year	FHOG (%) ¹	Homebuilder (%) ²
2016-17	1	N/A
2017-18	1	N/A
2018-19	1	N/A
2019-20	2	N/A
2020-21	3	11
2021-22	0	9

¹ FHOG percentages are current to February 2022.

² Homebuilder percentages are current to January 2022.

(2)(i) what criteria, policies, guidelines applied to the program?

First Home Owner Grant – refer to the ACT Revenue Office website:

<https://www.revenue.act.gov.au/home-buyer-assistance/home-buyer-concession-scheme/first-home-owner-grant>

Homebuilder Grant – refer to ACT Revenue Office website:

<https://www.revenue.act.gov.au/covid-19-assistance/homebuilder-grant>

COVID-19 Hardship Payments***(a) what was is the purpose of the grant program?***

The Hardship Payments provide financial support for eligible Canberra workers who are unable to work as a result of complying with public health orders and guidelines (including the requirement to isolate while waiting on COVID-19 test results).

(b) how much money was budgeted for the grant program in (i) 2016-17, (ii) 2017-18, (iii) 2018-19, (iv) 2019-20, (v) 2020-21, and (vi) 2021-22?

The Hardship Payments are funded from the CMTEDD Hardship Fund that has a budget of \$750,000, with a funding profile of \$436,000 in 2020-21 and \$314,000 in 2021-22.

(c) how much money was expended under the grant program in (i) 2016-17, (ii) 2017-18, (iii) 2018-19, (iv) 2019-20, (v) 2020-21, and (vi) 2021-22?

The amount expended on Hardship Payments (excluding administration costs) under the program was \$12,690 in 2020-21 and \$80,967 in 2021-22 up to 28/02/2022.

(d) was the program accounted for as an expense on behalf of the Territory ("administered" within the meaning of Australian accounting standard AASB 1050)?

No. The Hardship Fund is Controlled Recurrent Payments.

(e) how many applications were received for grants under the program in (i) 2016-17, (ii) 2017-18, (iii) 2018-19, (iv) 2019-20, (v) 2020-21, and (vi) 2021-22?

The number of Hardship Payment applications received was 92 in 2020-21 and 1,221 in 2021-22 up to 28/02/2022.

(f) who decided, approved or rejected applications for grants?

Applications were approved or rejected at the Executive Branch Manager or Senior Director level within Finance and Budget Group, Expenditure Review Branch. The Executive Group Manager, Finance and Budget provided a review function when required.

(g) what percentage of applicants were approved in (i) 2016-17, (ii) 2017-18, (iii) 2018-19, (iv) 2019-20, (v) 2020-21, and (vi) 2021-22?

The percentage of Hardship Payment applicants that were approved was 54 per cent in 2020-21 and 24 per cent in 2021-22 up to 28/02/2022.

(h) what percentage of applicants were rejected in (i) 2016-17, (ii) 2017-18, (iii) 2018-19, (iv) 2019-20, (v) 2020-21, and (vi) 2021-22?

The percentage of Hardship Payment applicants that were rejected in 2020-21 was 45 per cent. In 2021-22, 53 per cent were rejected for not meeting eligibility requirements, while a further 21 per cent were assessed as likely being eligible for Commonwealth COVID-19 support payments in 2021-22 (including the Pandemic Leave Disaster Payment and COVID-19 Disaster Payment) and as result were referred to Services Australia for financial support. The Hardship Payment was not available for people who could access Australian Government COVID-19 support payments.

(i) what criteria, policies, guidelines applied to the program?

ACT Government COVID-19 Hardship Payment Guidelines available on ACT Government COVID-19 website https://www.act.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0007/1621627/ACT-Government-COVID-19-hardship-payment-guidelines.pdf

(3) For each grant program referred to in part (1), but excluding non-competitive grant programs that provide generalised financial assistance to individuals or businesses, (a) who received a grant in (i) 2016-17, (ii) 2017-18, (iii) 2018-19, (iv) 2019-20, (v) 2020-21, and (vi) 2021-22, (b) when did the recipient apply for the grant, (c) when did the recipient receive the grant, (d) how much was the grant and (e) did the conditions that attached to the grant prevent (or have the effect of preventing) the recipient making public comment on any issue; if so, how was the recipient prevented from making public comment

N/A

(4) Has the portfolio provided a grant that was not provided under one of the programs identified in part (1) in (a) 2016-17, (b) 2017-18, (c) 2018-19, (d) 2019-20, (e) 2020-21, and (f) 2021-22.

N/A

(5) For each grant referred to in part (4), (a) who received the grant, (b) how was the recipient of the grant identified, (c) what was the purpose of the grant, (d) when did the person receive the grant, (e) what conditions attached to the grant, (f) did the conditions that attached to the grant prevent (or have the effect of preventing) the recipient making public comment on any issue; if so, how was the recipient prevented from making public comment and (g) how much was the grant?

N/A

(6) Does the Government report or disclose publicly the recipients of grants and the conditions that attach to those grants?

N/A

**Government—grants programs
(Question Nos 593, 607, 611, 612)**

Mrs Jones asked the Minister for Corrections; the Minister for Industrial Relations and Workplace Safety; the Minister for Planning and Land Management and the Minister for Police and Emergency Services, upon notice, on 11 February 2022:

- (1) What grant programs were operated or administered by your portfolio in (a) 2016-17, (b) 2017-18, (c) 2018-19, (d) 2019-20, (e) 2020-21, and (f) 2021-22?
- (2) For each grant program referred to in part (1), (a) what was the purpose of the grant program, (b) how much money was budgeted for the grant program in (i) 2016-17, (ii) 2017-18, (iii) 2018-19, (iv) 2019-20, (v) 2020-21, and (vi) 2021-22, (c) how much money was expended under the grant program in (i) 2016-17, (ii) 2017-18, (iii) 2018-19, (iv) 2019-20, (v) 2020-21, and (vi) 2021-22, (c) was the program accounted for as an expense on behalf of the Territory (“administered” within the meaning of

Australian accounting standard AASB 1050), (e) how many applications were received for grants under the program in (i) 2016-17, (ii) 2017-18, (iii) 2018-19, (iv) 2019-20, (v) 2020-21, and (vi) 2021-22, (f) who decided, approved or rejected applications for grants, (g) what percentage of applicants were approved in (i) 2016-17, (ii) 2017-18, (iii) 2018-19, (iv) 2019-20, (v) 2020-21, and (vi) 2021-22, (h) what percentage of applicants were rejected in (i) 2016-17, (ii) 2017-18, (iii) 2018-19, (iv) 2019-20, (v) 2020-21, and (vi) 2021-22, (i) what criteria, policies, guidelines applied to the program.

- (3) For each grant program referred to in part (1), but excluding non-competitive grant programs that provide generalised financial assistance to individuals or businesses, (a) who received a grant in (i) 2016-17, (ii) 2017-18, (iii) 2018-19, (iv) 2019-20, (v) 2020-21, and (vi) 2021-22, (b) when did the recipient apply for the grant, (c) when did the recipient receive the grant, (d) how much was the grant and (e) did the conditions that attached to the grant prevent (or have the effect of preventing) the recipient making public comment on any issue; if so, how was the recipient prevented from making public comment.
- (4) Has the portfolio provided a grant that was not provided under one of the programs identified in part (1) in (a) 2016-17, (b) 2017-18, (c) 2018-19, (d) 2019-20, (e) 2020-21, and (f) 2021-22.
- (5) For each grant referred to in part (4), (a) who received the grant, (b) how was the recipient of the grant identified, (c) what was the purpose of the grant, (d) when did the person receive the grant, (e) what conditions attached to the grant, (f) did the conditions that attached to the grant prevent (or have the effect of preventing) the recipient making public comment on any issue; if so, how was the recipient prevented from making public comment and (g) how much was the grant.
- (6) Does the Government report or disclose publicly the recipients of grants and the conditions that attach to those grants.

Mr Gentleman: The answer to the member's question is as follows:

Please refer to the Attachments A – D.

Attachment A

Question 593: Minister for Corrections

Information provided below responds to the following components of the question:

- Question 1(a), (b), (c), (d), (e) and (f)
- Question 2 (a), (b) and (c) (first occurring); and
- Question 4.

In response to Question 2(c) (second occurring), none of the grant programs listed below were accounted for as an expense on behalf of the Territory.

In response to Question 6, some information about grants administered in the portfolio and the recipients of those grants is published in one or more of JACS annual reports for the

relevant years, budget papers and media statements. Although there is not currently a single approach taken to publication, any conditions on an individual grant recipient are not published.

Otherwise, answering all components of this question to the level of detail sought would require an unreasonable diversion of resources.

2016-17

Grant Name	Purpose of Grant	Recipient of Grant	Amount Paid	Budget Amount
Throughcare - Reducing prisoner recidivism	Grants paid to eligible detainees released from the Alexander Maconochie Centre	Various	87,181.12	89,000

2017-18

Grant Name	Purpose of Grant	Recipient of Grant	Amount Paid	Budget Amount
Throughcare - Reducing prisoner recidivism	Grants paid to eligible detainees released from the Alexander Maconochie Centre	Various	55,742.63	90,000

2018-19

Grant Name	Purpose of Grant	Recipient of Grant	Amount Paid	Budget Amount
Throughcare - Reducing prisoner recidivism	Grants paid to eligible detainees released from the Alexander Maconochie Centre	Various	57,108.32	90,000

2019-20

Grant Name	Purpose of Grant	Recipient of Grant	Amount Paid	Budget Amount
Throughcare - Reducing prisoner recidivism	Grants paid to eligible detainees released from the Alexander Maconochie Centre	Various	58,507.47	90,000

Justice Housing Program/Justice Housing Portfolio	This provides short-term accommodation options to help ensure bail granted by the courts is safe and sustainable.	Roman Catholic Church as Trustees for CatholicCare	163,303.00	163,303
Total			221,810.47	253,303.00

2020-21

Grant Name	Purpose of Grant	Recipient of Grant	Amount Paid	Budget Amount
Throughcare - Reducing prisoner recidivism	Grants paid to eligible detainees released from the Alexander Maconochie Centre	Various	59,619.11	90,000
Justice Housing Program/Justice Housing Portfolio	This provides short-term accommodation options to help ensure bail granted by the courts is safe and sustainable.	Roman Catholic Church as Trustees for CatholicCare	780,582.77	780,582.77
Total			840,201.88	870,582.77

Attachment B**Question 607: Minister for Industrial Relations and Workplace Safety**

(1) Under the Minister for Industrial Relations and Workplace Safety portfolio no grants programs are administered by Workplace Safety and Industrial Relations, Chief Minister, Treasury and Economic Development Directorate in the financial years stated in this question.

(2) Refer the response to question 1 above, no grants programs are administered.

(3) Refer the response to question 1 above, no grants programs are administered.

(4) While no grant programs were administered in the relevant financial years, a single individual grant was executed with the Trades and Labour Council of the ACT Inc. (UnionsACT) known as the WHS Liaison Grant.

(5) The Trades and Labour Council of the ACT Inc. (UnionsACT) known as the WHS Liaison Grant supports activities to:

- raise and increase awareness of work health and safety issues and resources in Territory workplaces
- facilitate access to work health and safety training for employers and employees
- provide other work health and safety services, advice and support to employers and employees; and
- undertake research into work health and safety and related matters.

This grant was executed in August 2019 and execution of the grant is reported publicly on page 158 of the Chief Minister, Treasury and Economic Development Directorate's Annual Report for 2019-20, including the total amount of the grant.

UnionsACT was provided the grant following an assessment of the following in line with the Chief Minister, Treasury and Economic Development Directorate Grant Administration Policy:

- whether it is in the public interest to raise awareness about health and safety; and if so,
- whether UnionsACT is a suitable organisation to provide awareness raising services, and
- whether UnionsACT has experience or infrastructure that would make it more effective than other organisations in doing so.

There is no condition applied under the grant that prevents UnionsACT as the recipient of the grant from making public comment about the grant.

(6) Refer the response to question 4 above, the WHS Liaison grant executed in August 2019 is recorded on page 158 of the Chief Minister, Treasury and Economic Development Directorate's Annual Report for 2019-20, including the total amount of the grant.

Attachment C

Question 611: Minister for Planning and Land Management

No grants were made for Minister for Planning and Land Management over the period.

Attachment D

Question 612: Minister for Police and Emergency Services

Information provided at **Attachment D.1** responds to the following components of the question:

- Question 1(a), (b), (c), (d), (e) and (f)
- Question 2 (a), (b) and (c) (first occurring); and
- Question 4.

(A copy of the attachment is available at the Chamber Support Office).

In response to Question 2(c) (second occurring), none of the grant programs listed in Attachment D.1 were accounted for as an expense on behalf of the Territory.

In response to Question 6, some information about grants administered in the portfolio and the recipients of those grants is published in one or more of JACS annual reports for the relevant years, budget papers, and media statements. Although there is not currently a single approach taken to publication, any conditions on an individual grant recipient are not published.

Otherwise, answering all components of this question to the level of detail sought would require an unreasonable diversion of resources.

**Government—grants programs
(Question Nos 594, 608, 609, 614)**

Mrs Jones asked the Minister for Disability; the Minister for Justice Health; the Minister for Mental Health and the Assistant Minister for Seniors, Veterans, Families and Community Services, upon notice, on 11 February 2022:

- (1) What grant programs were operated or administered by your portfolio in (a) 2016-17, (b) 2017-18, (c) 2018-19, (d) 2019-20, (e) 2020-21, and (f) 2021-22?
- (2) For each grant program referred to in part (1), (a) what was the purpose of the grant program, (b) how much money was budgeted for the grant program in (i) 2016-17, (ii) 2017-18, (iii) 2018-19, (iv) 2019-20, (v) 2020-21, and (vi) 2021-22, (c) how much money was expended under the grant program in (i) 2016-17, (ii) 2017-18, (iii) 2018-19, (iv) 2019-20, (v) 2020-21, and (vi) 2021-22, (d) was the program accounted for as an expense on behalf of the Territory (“administered” within the meaning of Australian accounting standard AASB 1050), (e) how many applications were received for grants under the program in (i) 2016-17, (ii) 2017-18, (iii) 2018-19, (iv) 2019-20, (v) 2020-21, and (vi) 2021-22, (f) who decided, approved or rejected applications for grants, (g) what percentage of applicants were approved in (i) 2016-17, (ii) 2017-18, (iii) 2018-19, (iv) 2019-20, (v) 2020-21, and (vi) 2021-22, (h) what percentage of applicants were rejected in (i) 2016-17, (ii) 2017-18, (iii) 2018-19, (iv) 2019-20, (v) 2020-21, and (vi) 2021-22, (i) what criteria, policies, guidelines applied to the program.
- (3) For each grant program referred to in part (1), but excluding non-competitive grant programs that provide generalised financial assistance to individuals or businesses, (a) who received a grant in (i) 2016-17, (ii) 2017-18, (iii) 2018-19, (iv) 2019-20, (v) 2020-21, and (vi) 2021-22, (b) when did the recipient apply for the grant, (c) when did the recipient receive the grant, (d) how much was the grant and (e) did the conditions that attached to the grant prevent (or have the effect of preventing) the recipient making public comment on any issue; if so, how was the recipient prevented from making public comment.
- (4) Has the portfolio provided a grant that was not provided under one of the programs identified in part (1) in (a) 2016-17, (b) 2017-18, (c) 2018-19, (d) 2019-20, (e) 2020-21, and (f) 2021-22.
- (5) For each grant referred to in part (4), (a) who received the grant, (b) how was the recipient of the grant identified, (c) what was the purpose of the grant, (d) when did the person receive the grant, (e) what conditions attached to the grant, (f) did the conditions that attached to the grant prevent (or have the effect of preventing) the

recipient making public comment on any issue; if so, how was the recipient prevented from making public comment and (g) how much was the grant.

- (6) Does the Government report or disclose publicly the recipients of grants and the conditions that attach to those grants.

Ms Davidson: The answer to the member's question is as follows:

Please refer to the Attachments A – D

Attachment A

Question 594: Minister for Disability

Answering this question to the level of detail required would require the diversion of significant resources.

For the period requested links have been provided to published information about grant programs.

1(a) Portfolio arrangements and administration of grants have changed over time. There are currently two grant programs in the Disability portfolio.

The Disability Inclusion Grants provide funding for local clubs, groups, community organisations and small businesses to promote social inclusion for people with disability through the removal of barriers to participation.

The I-Day Grants provides funding to individuals and community groups to develop a program or event to celebrate the International Day of People with Disability (I-Day) held annually on 3 December.

The outcome of these grants is reported in the annual report and this information is available publicly from the following sites:

- [Community Services Directorate Annual Report 2016-17](#)
- [Community Services Directorate Annual Report 2017-18](#)
- [Community Services Directorate Annual Report 2018-19](#)
- [Community Services Directorate Annual Report 2019-20](#)
- [Community Services Directorate Annual Report 2020-21](#)

(b) This information is provided at the websites in question 1(a).

(c) This information is provided at the websites in question 1(a).

(d) These grants are paid through the territories controlled accounts and are therefore not accounted for as administered items.

(e) Providing this level of detail would require the diversion of significant resources.

(f) Grants are assessed through a panel arrangement; the panel is comprised of government and community members. All panel members are required to sign a conflict of interest declaration to ensure that there are no conflicts with grant applicants. Once recommendations are put forward by the panel, these are approved by the panel Chair and the relevant delegate

within CSD. There are feedback and complaints mechanisms provided to applicants regarding the grant process.

(g) Providing this level of detail would require the diversion of significant resources.

(h) Providing this level of detail would require the diversion of significant resources.

(i) There are Grant Guidelines available for each grant program and these are published on the CSD website here: [Grants, Scholarships and Awards - Community Services \(act.gov.au\)](https://act.gov.au/grants-scholarships-and-awards-community-services) when grant rounds are open.

2)(a) Recipients of the Disability Inclusion Grants and I-Day Grant programs are published on the CSD Grants Website at [Grants and Awards | Disability - Community Services \(act.gov.au\)](https://act.gov.au/grants-and-awards-disability-community-services).

(b) Providing this level of detail would require the diversion of significant resources.

(c) Providing this level of detail would require the diversion of significant resources.

(d) This information is published on the CSD website as at 2(a).

(e) There are sometimes conditions placed on successful recipients of the Disability Inclusion Grants and I-Day Grants where there are specific requirements of the grant that needs to be met. This could include the requirement to obtain the proper insurance for an event. The conditions placed on these grants vary broadly and depend upon the nature of the grant, the recipient who has applied and the project being funded. Generally, there is no condition placed on a recipient of the Disability Inclusion Grants and I-Day Grants regarding making public comment.

3) Information about the broad range of grants outside the competitive grant programs, including grants delivered in response to COVID-19, are reported in the CSD annual report and is available at:

- [Community Services Directorate Annual Report 2016-17](#)
- [Community Services Directorate Annual Report 2017-18](#)
- [Community Services Directorate Annual Report 2018-19](#)
- [Community Services Directorate Annual Report 2019-20](#)
- [Community Services Directorate Annual Report 2020-21](#)

4) Providing this level of detail would require the diversion of significant resources.

5) The outcome of the Disability Inclusion Grants and I-Day Grants are reported in the annual report and this information is available publicly at the websites provided in question 1(a). Any conditions on a grant applicant are included in the individualised Letter of Offer provided to successful applicants, which are not published.

Attachment B

Question 608: Minister for Justice Health

There are no grant programs funded under the Justice Health portfolio.

Attachment C**Question 609: Minister for Mental Health**

- (1) Details of grant programs are provided in the ACT Health Directorate (ACTHD) and Canberra Health Services (CHS) Annual Report each year. Annual reports dating back to the 2009-2010 financial year are available on the ACTHD website:
<https://www.health.act.gov.au/about-our-health-system/data-and-publications/reports/annual-reports>
- (2)
- a) Details of grant purposes are provided in ACTHD and CHS annual reports each year.
 - b) Details for grant related budget and expenditure are detailed in Financial Statements included in the Annual Report.
 - c) Details for grant related budget and expenditure are detailed in Financial Statements included in the Annual Report.
 - d) Territorial Grants have consistently been accounted for and reported as 'administered' or as 'expenses on behalf of the Territory' within the 'Territorial Financial Statements' in line with AASB 1050 dating back to the 2016-2017 financial year. Other types of grants (e.g. health promotion grants, research grants) are not accounted for as 'administered' items.
 - e-f) It has been assessed that answering this question would require an unreasonable diversion of resources.
- (3) It has been assessed that answering this question would require an unreasonable diversion of resources.
- (4) Details of all grants are made publicly available through the Annual Report each year.
- (5) Not applicable.
- (6) Details on grant recipients are within ACTHD and CHS annual reports. Recipients sign a Deed of Grant which specifies the obligations of both the grant recipient and the ACT Government. ACTHD does not publicly disclose these deeds. It is a condition of all ACT Government funding programs that grant recipients provide a final report to the funding Directorate. Final reports must include a description of project outcomes and an acquittal of how the grant was used. ACT Government funding programs also require grant recipients to acknowledge ACT Government support in material produced as a result of that funding. These conditions are further detailed on the ACT Government Grants webpage: <https://www.act.gov.au/grants/home>

Attachment D**Question 614: Assistant Minister for Seniors, Veterans, Families and Community Services**

Answering this question to the level of detail required would require the diversion of significant resources.

For the period requested links have been provided to published information about grant programs.

1 (a) Portfolio arrangements and administration of grants have changed over time. There are currently 2 grant programs within this portfolio, the Seniors Grants and Veterans Grants.

The Senior's Grant is to provide funding for innovative projects that promote seniors as valued members of the ACT community and enable their active participation in community life; has a particular emphasis on supporting projects which address the areas of elder abuse, enhanced social inclusion, and those that address the needs of diverse seniors, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander elders and culturally and linguistically diverse seniors.

The Veteran's Grant is to support veterans and their families' wellbeing and social inclusion. To best meet the needs of the veteran community, a focus on older veterans, contemporary veterans and veterans' families might be considered collectively or separately as the focus of the grant application.

The outcome of these grants is reported in the annual report and this information is available publicly from the following sites:

- [Community Services Directorate Annual Report 2016-17](#)
- [Community Services Directorate Annual Report 2017-18](#)
- [Community Services Directorate Annual Report 2018-19](#)
- [Community Services Directorate Annual Report 2019-20](#)
- [Community Services Directorate Annual Report 2020-21](#)

(b) This information is provided at the websites in question 1(a).

(c) This information is provided at the websites in question 1(a).

(d) These grants are paid through the territories controlled accounts and are therefore not accounted for as administered items.

(e) Providing this level of detail would require the diversion of significant resources.

(f) Grants are assessed through a panel arrangement; the panel is comprised of government and community members. All panel members are required to sign a conflict of interest declaration to ensure that there are no conflicts with grant applicants. Once recommendations are put forward by the panel, these are approved by the panel Chair and the relevant delegate within CSD. There are feedback and complaints mechanisms provided to applicants regarding the grant process.

(g) Providing this level of detail would require the diversion of significant resources.

(h) Providing this level of detail would require the diversion of significant resources.

(i) There are Grant Guidelines available for each grant program and these are published on the CSD website here: [Grants, Scholarships and Awards - Community Services \(act.gov.au\)](https://act.gov.au/grants-scholarships-and-awards) when grant rounds are open.

2) (a) Recipients of the Seniors Grants and Veterans Grants are published on the CSD Grants Website

Grants | Seniors - Community Services (act.gov.au) and Grants | Veterans - Community Services (act.gov.au)

(b) Providing this level of detail would require the diversion of significant resources.

(c) Providing this level of detail would require the diversion of significant resources.

(d) This information is published on the CSD website at 2(a).

(e) There are sometimes conditions placed on successful recipients of the Seniors or Veterans Grants where there are specific requirements of the grant that needs to be met. This could include things like the requirement to obtain the proper insurance for an activity or project. The conditions placed on these grants vary broadly and depend upon the nature of the grant, the recipient who has applied and the project being funded. Generally, there is no condition placed on a recipient of the Seniors or Veterans Grants regarding making public comment.

3) Information about the broad range of grants outside the competitive grant programs, including grants delivered in response to COVID-19, are reported in the CSD annual report and is available at:

- Community Services Directorate Annual Report 2016-17
- Community Services Directorate Annual Report 2017-18
- Community Services Directorate Annual Report 2018-19
- Community Services Directorate Annual Report 2019-20
- Community Services Directorate Annual Report 2020-21

4) Providing this level of detail would require the diversion of significant resources.

5) The outcome of grants is reported in the annual report and this information is available publicly at the websites provided in question 1(a). Any conditions on a grant applicant are included in the individualised Letter of Offer provided to successful applicants, which are not published.

Government—grants programs (Question Nos 599, 603, 604, 618)

Mrs Jones asked the Minister for the Environment; the Minister for Heritage; the Minister for Homelessness and Housing Services and the Minister for Sustainable Building and Construction, upon notice, on 11 February 2022:

- (1) What grant programs were operated or administered by your portfolio in (a) 2016-17, (b) 2017-18, (c) 2018-19, (d) 2019-20, (e) 2020-21, and (f) 2021-22?
- (2) For each grant program referred to in part (1), (a) what was the purpose of the grant program, (b) how much money was budgeted for the grant program in (i) 2016-17, (ii) 2017-18, (iii) 2018-19, (iv) 2019-20, (v) 2020-21, and (vi) 2021-22, (c) how much money was expended under the grant program in (i) 2016-17, (ii) 2017-18, (iii) 2018-19, (iv) 2019-20, (v) 2020-21, and (vi) 2021-22, (d) was the program accounted for as an expense on behalf of the Territory (“administered” within the meaning of

Australian accounting standard AASB 1050), (e) how many applications were received for grants under the program in (i) 2016-17, (ii) 2017-18, (iii) 2018-19, (iv) 2019-20, (v) 2020-21, and (vi) 2021-22, (f) who decided, approved or rejected applications for grants, (g) what percentage of applicants were approved in (i) 2016-17, (ii) 2017-18, (iii) 2018-19, (iv) 2019-20, (v) 2020-21, and (vi) 2021-22, (h) what percentage of applicants were rejected in (i) 2016-17, (ii) 2017-18, (iii) 2018-19, (iv) 2019-20, (v) 2020-21, and (vi) 2021-22, (i) what criteria, policies, guidelines applied to the program.

- (3) For each grant program referred to in part (1), but excluding non-competitive grant programs that provide generalised financial assistance to individuals or businesses, (a) who received a grant in (i) 2016-17, (ii) 2017-18, (iii) 2018-19, (iv) 2019-20, (v) 2020-21, and (vi) 2021-22, (b) when did the recipient apply for the grant, (c) when did the recipient receive the grant, (d) how much was the grant and (e) did the conditions that attached to the grant prevent (or have the effect of preventing) the recipient making public comment on any issue; if so, how was the recipient prevented from making public comment.
- (4) Has the portfolio provided a grant that was not provided under one of the programs identified in part (1) in (a) 2016-17, (b) 2017-18, (c) 2018-19, (d) 2019-20, (e) 2020-21, and (f) 2021-22.
- (5) For each grant referred to in part (4), (a) who received the grant, (b) how was the recipient of the grant identified, (c) what was the purpose of the grant, (d) when did the person receive the grant, (e) what conditions attached to the grant, (f) did the conditions that attached to the grant prevent (or have the effect of preventing) the recipient making public comment on any issue; if so, how was the recipient prevented from making public comment and (g) how much was the grant.
- (6) Does the Government report or disclose publicly the recipients of grants and the conditions that attach to those grants.

Ms Vassarotti: The answer to the member's question is as follows:

Please refer to the Attachments A – D

Attachment A

Question 599: Minister for the Environment

1. What grant programs were operated or administered by your portfolio in (a) 2016-17, (b) 2017-18, (c) 2018-19, (d) 2019-20, (e) 2020-21, and (f) 2021-22?

In the Environment portfolio, the following grants are administered by Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate (EPSDD):

	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22
Community Garden Grants (CGG)	Active	Active	Active	Active	Active	Active

ACT environment grant program	Active	Active	Active	Active	Active	Active
ACT Rural Resilience Grants			Active	Active	Active	Active
ACT rural grants	Active					

2. For each grant program referred to in part (1),

a. Purpose of the grant program?

Community Garden Grants (CGG)	The purpose of the grants program is to provide funding for the building or extension of community gardens across the city. Full purpose of the grant is published for the community at: https://www.climatechoices.act.gov.au/policy-programs/community-garden-grants
ACT environment grant program	The ACT Environmental Grants Program supports and empowers the community to fulfil a stewardship role. The program provides an opportunity for the community to address environmental issues they are concerned about, to restore and conserve natural places that are special to them, and to engage other community members to do the same.
ACT Rural Resilience Grants	Support landholders dealing with the pressure of a changing environment, including addressing threats by weeds and pests and in the past drought resilience.
ACT rural grants	Support landholders to implement innovative sustainable farming practices.

b. How much money was budgeted for the grant program in (i) 2016-17, (ii) 2017-18, (iii) 2018-19, (iv) 2019-20, (v) 2020-21, and (vi) 2021-22?

EPSDD believes that providing this level of detail will be an unreasonable diversion of resources.

c. How much money was expended under the grant program in (i) 2016-17, (ii) 2017-18, (iii) 2018-19, (iv) 2019-20, (v) 2020-21, and (vi) 2021-22?

As published in the annual report, the following was provided under each grant program:

	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21
Community Garden Grants (CGG)	50,000	40,000	40,002	50,231	39,387
ACT environment grant program	185,000	203,005	192,460	218,138	202,884
ACT Rural Resilience Grants	0	0	141,700	159,307	182,530

ACT rural grants	72,799	0	0	0	0
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2021-22 financial year is yet to be completed and data will be available following 30 June.

d. Was the program accounted for as an expense on behalf of the Territory (“administered” within the meaning of Australian Accounting Standard AASB 1050)?

	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21
Community Garden Grants (CGG)	Not Territorial	Not Territorial	Not Territorial	Not Territorial	Not Territorial
ACT environment grant program	Territorial	Territorial	Territorial	Territorial	Territorial
ACT Rural Resilience Grants	Not Territorial	Not Territorial	Not Territorial	Not Territorial	Not Territorial
ACT rural grants	Not Territorial	Not Territorial	Not Territorial	Not Territorial	Not Territorial

2021-22 financial year is yet to be completed and data will be available following 30 June.

e. How many applications were received for the grant program?

	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21
Community Garden Grants (CGG)	6	20	20	22	27
ACT environment grant program*	10	9	11	12	9
ACT Rural Resilience Grants*		0	24	18	25
ACT rural grants*	10	0	0	0	

*Represents number of grants approved

2021-22 financial year is yet to be completed and data will be available following 30 June.

f. Who decided, approved or rejected the grant applications?

Community Garden Grants (CGG)	The program is run through a competitive grants process. A cross-directorate panel is convened to assess the applications and select the successful projects. The delegate is the Deputy Director-General, Environment, Water and Emissions Reduction.
ACT environment grant program	The program is run through a competitive grants process. A panel is convened to assess the applications and select the successful projects. The delegate is the Deputy Director-General, Environment, Water and Emissions Reduction.
ACT Rural Resilience Grants	The program is run through a competitive grants process. A panel is convened to assess the applications and select the successful projects. The delegate is the Deputy Director-General, Environment, Water and Emissions Reduction.
ACT rural grants	The program is run through a competitive grants process. A panel is convened to assess the applications and select the successful projects. The delegate is the Deputy Director-General, Environment, Water and Emissions Reduction.

g/h. What percentage of the applications were approved/rejected?

EPSDD believes that providing this level of detail will be an unreasonable diversion of resources; all grant programs are over subscribed.

i. What criteria, policies, guidelines applied to the program?

Community Garden Grants (CGG)	<p>As published on the website available at https://www.climatechoices.act.gov.au/policy-programs/community-garden-grants.</p> <p>Guidelines for applicants for 2021-22 are available at https://www.climatechoices.act.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0007/1749202/2021-22-Community-Gardens-Grants.pdf.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Align with the funding priorities • Demonstrate sound project planning, including achievable milestones, timelines, and project outcomes • Establish that the project is feasible and represents good value for money • Demonstrate relevant stakeholder and community support.
ACT environment grant program	<p>As published on the website available at https://www.environment.act.gov.au/act-nrm/grants-and-support-packages.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alignment with funding priorities • Feasibility and effectiveness • Demonstrate sound project planning

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Soundness of project budgeting and value of money • Level of community engagement and reach.
ACT Rural Resilience Grants	<p>As published on the website available at https://www.environment.act.gov.au/act-nrm/grants-and-support-packages.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure the project is sound and represents value for money • Demonstrate alignment with management of invasive species (when targeted in year) • Enhances biodiversity, conservation and sustainable agriculture • Matching grant funding with either cash or in-kind contributions.
ACT rural grants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure the project is sound and represents value for money • Enhances biodiversity, conservation and sustainable agriculture • Matching grant funding with either cash or in-kind contributions.

The ACT Government commissioned a review of the ACT Environment Grants in 2019. This review investigated the long-term benefits of the program, including unexpected non-financial benefits such as community building. A copy of this review can be found on the [ACT Environmental Grants Program Website](#).

Copies of previous grant program guidelines related to ACT Environmental Grant Program, ACT Rural Resilience Grants and ACT Rural Grants, that were publicly available during the associated round, are included in [Attachment AA](#).

3. For each grant program referred to in part (1), but excluding non-competitive grant programs that provide generalised financial assistance to individuals or businesses, (a) who received a grant in (i) 2016-17, (ii) 2017-18, (iii) 2018-19, (iv) 2019-20, (v) 2020-21, and (vi) 2021-22, (b) when did the recipient apply for the grant, (c) when did the recipient receive the grant, (d) how much was the grant and (e) did the conditions that attached to the grant prevent (or have the effect of preventing) the recipient making public comment on any issue; if so, how was the recipient prevented from making public comment.

Community Garden Grants (CGG)	<p>a. Please refer the Everyday Climate Choices website for information on grant recipients for all rounds.</p> <p>b. Each recipient would have applied during the application period during each round, which is usually a 6–8 week period following the official launch of the grant round. Providing specific dates for each application is an unreasonable diversion of resources.</p> <p>c. Each recipient would have received the grant after the official announcement made by the Minister that their application had been successful. Providing specific dates for grant funding payment is an unreasonable diversion of resources, however it is generally within months of the announcement depending on the community groups timing to have the deed signed.</p>
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ACT environment grant program	<p>d. Please refer the Everyday Climate Choices website for information on grant funding amount for all rounds.</p> <p>e. A standard ACT Government Deed of Grant (DoG) agreement is used within the CGG program. This document does not prevent public comment on any specific issue.</p> <p>EPSDD believes that providing this level of detail will be an unreasonable diversion of resources.</p>
ACT Rural Resilience Grants	EPSDD believes that providing this level of detail will be an unreasonable diversion of resources.
ACT rural grants	EPSDD believes that providing this level of detail will be an unreasonable diversion of resources.

4. Has the portfolio provided a grant that was not provided under one of the programs identified in part (1) in (a) 2016-17, (b) 2017-18, (c) 2018-19, (d) 2019-20, (e) 2020-21, and (f) 2021-22.

- Grants are provided to the ACT's three water catchment groups (\$125,000 per group per annum) – Funding is provided to water catchments groups to assist in improving water quality.
- Rebates and other subsidies which are not a specific grant, including National On-Farm Emergency Water Infrastructure in 2019-20.

5. For each grant referred to in part (4), (a) who received the grant, (b) how was the recipient of the grant identified, (c) what was the purpose of the grant, (d) when did the person receive the grant, (e) what conditions attached to the grant, (f) did the conditions that attached to the grant prevent (or have the effect of preventing) the recipient making public comment on any issue; if so, how was the recipient prevented from making public comment and (g) how much was the grant.

Refer to the answer for question 4. Providing any other details are an unreasonable diversion of resources.

6. Does the Government report or disclose publicly the recipients of grants and the conditions that attach to those grants.

Community Garden Grants (CGG)	Grants are disclosed as part of the annual report. They are also disclosed on the Everyday Climate Choice website .
ACT environment grant program	Grant recipients are disclosed as part of the EPSDD annual report and on the EPSDD website 2021-22 ACT Environment and Nature in the City Grants - Successful Projects - Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate - Environment .
ACT Rural Resilience Grants	Grant recipients are disclosed as part of the EPSDD annual report and on the EPSDD website 2021-22 ACT Environment and Nature in the City Grants - Successful Projects - Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate - Environment .

ACT rural grants	Grant recipients are disclosed as part of the EPSDD annual report and on the EPSDD website <u>2021-22 ACT Environment and Nature in the City Grants - Successful Projects - Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate - Environment</u> .
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Attachment B**Question 603: Minister for Heritage**

- (1) ACT Heritage Grants Program has been administered over many years and consistently been open and accountable in its approach.
- (2) The ACT Heritage Grants Program assists the community to conserve and promote the heritage of the ACT. Information on the program including the past recipients and their funded projects from 2018 to 2021, and the 2021/22 Grant Guidelines can be found on the grants webpage, available at https://www.environment.act.gov.au/heritage/heritage-and-the-community/heritage_grants_program. To provide further information on years prior to 2018 as well as the further information requested would be an unreasonable diversion of resources.
- (3) The information requested is either not applicable to the ACT Heritage Grants Program, is answered in question (2) above, or would require an unreasonable diversion of resources.
- (4) An unreasonable diversion of resources would be required to answer this question.
- (5) This cannot be answered as it relates to question (4).
- (6) Information on the recipients of ACT Heritage Grants, their projects and the amount funded is available on the ACT Heritage Grants webpage for the year they are current. Details of the Deed of Grant including special conditions is not publicly available.

Attachment C**Question 604: Minister for Homelessness and Housing Services**

This question has been responded to by the Minister for Housing and Suburban Development, under QON 605, as the Minister responsible for financial matters within the social housing and homelessness portfolios.

Attachment D**Question 618: Minister for Sustainable Building and Construction**

There are no grants provided under Minister for Sustainable Building and Construction portfolio.

**Government—grants programs
(Question Nos 615, 616, 620)**

Mrs Jones asked the Minister for Skills; the Special Minister of State and the Minister for Transport and City Services, upon notice, on 11 February 2022:

- (1) What grant programs were operated or administered by your portfolio in (a) 2016-17, (b) 2017-18, (c) 2018-19, (d) 2019-20, (e) 2020-21, and (f) 2021-22?
- (2) For each grant program referred to in part (1), (a) what was the purpose of the grant program, (b) how much money was budgeted for the grant program in (i) 2016-17, (ii) 2017-18, (iii) 2018-19, (iv) 2019-20, (v) 2020-21, and (vi) 2021-22, (c) how much money was expended under the grant program in (i) 2016-17, (ii) 2017-18, (iii) 2018-19, (iv) 2019-20, (v) 2020-21, and (vi) 2021-22, (d) was the program accounted for as an expense on behalf of the Territory (“administered” within the meaning of Australian accounting standard AASB 1050), (e) how many applications were received for grants under the program in (i) 2016-17, (ii) 2017-18, (iii) 2018-19, (iv) 2019-20, (v) 2020-21, and (vi) 2021-22, (f) who decided, approved or rejected applications for grants, (g) what percentage of applicants were approved in (i) 2016-17, (ii) 2017-18, (iii) 2018-19, (iv) 2019-20, (v) 2020-21, and (vi) 2021-22, (h) what percentage of applicants were rejected in (i) 2016-17, (ii) 2017-18, (iii) 2018-19, (iv) 2019-20, (v) 2020-21, and (vi) 2021-22, (i) what criteria, policies, guidelines applied to the program.
- (3) For each grant program referred to in part (1), but excluding non-competitive grant programs that provide generalised financial assistance to individuals or businesses, (a) who received a grant in (i) 2016-17, (ii) 2017-18, (iii) 2018-19, (iv) 2019-20, (v) 2020-21, and (vi) 2021-22, (b) when did the recipient apply for the grant, (c) when did the recipient receive the grant, (d) how much was the grant and (e) did the conditions that attached to the grant prevent (or have the effect of preventing) the recipient making public comment on any issue; if so, how was the recipient prevented from making public comment.
- (4) Has the portfolio provided a grant that was not provided under one of the programs identified in part (1) in (a) 2016-17, (b) 2017-18, (c) 2018-19, (d) 2019-20, (e) 2020-21, and (f) 2021-22.
- (5) For each grant referred to in part (4), (a) who received the grant, (b) how was the recipient of the grant identified, (c) what was the purpose of the grant, (d) when did the person receive the grant, (e) what conditions attached to the grant, (f) did the conditions that attached to the grant prevent (or have the effect of preventing) the recipient making public comment on any issue; if so, how was the recipient prevented from making public comment and (g) how much was the grant.
- (6) Does the Government report or disclose publicly the recipients of grants and the conditions that attach to those grants.

Mr Steel: The answer to the member’s question is as follows:

Please refer to the Attachments A – C.

Attachment A

Question 615: Minister for Skills

(1)

Public reporting in ACT Government Annual Reports includes the type, monetary value and recipients of Grant funding:

- a. Publications - Chief Minister, Treasury and Economic Development Directorate (act.gov.au). (CMTEDD)

Further budget information can be found in the ACT Government budget papers.

- b. ACT Budget - Treasury

*NOTE portfolios and priorities have changed since 2016, whilst reporting of these grant programs is currently in the CMTEDD Annual Reports now, they may have been reported in other ACT Government Annual Reports previously:

https://www.cmtedd.act.gov.au/open_government/report/annual-reports

Reporting on 2021-22 grant programs will be reported in the 2021-22 annual report, to collate this information now on any of the 2021-22 grant programs would be an unreasonable diversion of resources.

(2)

(a) – (c) Refer to response 1

(d) Most of the grants are expensed through CMTEDD's Controlled accounts, and are funded using Controlled Recurrent Payments appropriation.

(e) Identifying the number of applications received against each program is an unreasonable diversion of resources.

(f): Specific funding guidelines/criteria and assessment process for each grant program were developed for the information of potential grant applicants. Information is not readily available for this question and would require a significant diversion of resources not readily available in this format.

(g)-(h): Information is not readily available for this question and would require a significant diversion of resources.

(i): Refer to (f) above.

(3)

(a): See response provided under Question 1 and 2.

(b)-(e): Information is not readily available for this question and would require a significant diversion of resources.

(4) Refer to response 1. To collate any further information would be an unreasonable diversion of resources.

(5) Not applicable

(6) Grant recipients are listed in the Annual Reports – refer to response 1. The conditions attached to these grants are generally not disclosed publicly other than via the general applicant information which is contained within the published grant funding guidelines for each program.

Attachment B

Question 616: Special Minister of State

Information provided below responds to the following components of the question:

- Question 1(a), (b), (c), (d), (e) and (f)
- Question 2 (a), (b) and (c) (first occurring); and
- Question 4.

In response to Question 2(c) (second occurring), all grants listed below were accounted for as an expense on behalf of the Territory.

In response to Question 6, some information about grants administered in the portfolio and the recipients of those grants is published in one or more of JACS annual reports for the relevant years, budget papers and media statements. Although there is not currently a single approach taken to publication, any conditions on an individual grant recipient are not published.

Otherwise, answering all components of this question to the level of detail sought would require an unreasonable diversion of resources.

2016-17

Grant Name	Purpose of Grant	Recipient of Grant	Amount Paid (\$'000)	Budget Amount (\$'000)
Racing development support funding	Racing development support	CMTEDD	4,134	0

2017-18

Grant Name	Purpose of Grant	Recipient of Grant	Amount Paid (\$'000)	Budget Amount (\$'000)
Racing development support funding	Racing development support	Canberra Racing Club	7,358	7,603
		Canberra Harness Racing Club Inc		

2018-19

Grant Name	Purpose of Grant	Recipient of Grant	Amount Paid (\$'000)	Budget Amount (\$'000)
Racing development support funding	Racing development support	Canberra Racing Club Canberra Harness Racing Club Inc	7,487	7,487

2019-20

Grant Name	Purpose of Grant	Recipient of Grant	Amount Paid (\$'000)	Budget Amount (\$'000)
Racing development support funding	Racing development support	Canberra Racing Club Canberra Harness Racing Club Inc	7,637	7,637

2020-21

Grant Name	Purpose of Grant	Recipient of Grant	Amount Paid (\$'000)	Budget Amount (\$'000)
Racing development support funding	Racing development support	Canberra Racing Club Canberra Harness Racing Club Inc	7,713	7,713

Attachment C**Question 620: Minister for Transport and City Services**

1) The following grants fall under my Transport and City Services portfolio responsibilities.

Road Safety Grants - In late 2020 management of the ACT Road Safety Fund moved from the Justice and Community Safety Directorate to Transport Canberra and City Services.

Adopt A Park - TCCS delivered Adopt-A-Park Community Grants program in 2019-20 and the program will again be delivered in 2021-22.

Street Art Grants – Grants were provided in 2020 and 2021.

(2) a) Information on the Road Safety Grants and Adopt a Park are available on the City Services website. The Street Art Grant Program was delivered to provide support to worthy street art projects around the ACT.

b) Information on the money budgeted for the Road Safety Grants is available on the City Services website.

The following was budgeted for the Adopt a Park grants program.

2019-20	\$183,989
2021-22	\$200,000

The following was budgeted for the Street Arts Grants program.

2019-20	\$300,000
2020-21	\$19,300
2021-22	\$159,000

c) The Road Safety Fund Grants are listed on the City Services website.

The following funding was expended under the Adopt a Park program

2019-20	\$183,989
2021-22	TBC

The following funding was expended under the Street Art program

2019-20	\$218,713
2020-21	\$19,300
2021-22	\$141,000*

* Two grant recipients returned their grant to the ACT Government.

d)

Road Safety Grants – Yes

Adopt A Park - No, TCCS does not provide any Territorial Grants.

Street Art - No, TCCS does not provide any Territorial Grants.

e)

Road Safety Grants

The ACT Road Safety Advisory Board Term Report 2015-18 outlines the number of applications received in 2016-17, 2017-18, and 2018-19

https://justice.act.gov.au/sites/default/files/2019-09/190228_-_ACT_Road_Safety_Board_End_of_Term_Report_2019_Access.pdf

The end of Term report 2019-21 outlines the number of applications received in 2019-20, 2020-21 and 2021-22 [Road Safety Advisory Board End of Term report \(act.gov.au\)](https://www.act.gov.au/transport-and-city-services/road-safety-advisory-board/end-of-term-report)

Adopt A Park

2019-20	56
2021-22	Grants not awarded yet

Street Art

2019-20	27
2020-21	1
2021-22	16

f)

Road Safety Grants

The Road Safety Grants Assessment Framework and Guiding principles documents are available on the City Services website. The documents outline the role of the ACT Road Safety Advisory Board in recommending applications to the Minister for Transport and City Services for funding.

Adopt A Park

An assessment panel is formed to assess and rate the applications against the criteria.

Street Art

An assessment panel was formed to rate the merits of each proposal.

g-h)

		2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22
% of applicants approved	Road Safety Grants	24%	25%	47%	23%	21%	34%
	Adopt a Park	N/A	N/A	N/A	59%		
	Street Art	N/A	N/A	N/A	92%	100%	100%

% of applicants rejected	Road Safety Grants	76%	75%	53%	77%	79%	66%
	Adopt a Park				41%		
	Street Art				8%	0%	0%

j)

Road Safety Grants

The criteria, policies, and guidelines applied to the Road Safety Grants program are in the Assessment Framework and Guiding Principles are available on the City Services website.

Previous Adopt-a-Park and Street Art Grants guidelines are provided at [Attachment C.1](#) and [Attachment C.2](#). *(Copies of the attachments are available at the Chamber Support Office).*

(3)

a)

Road Safety Grant and Adopt a Park recipients are available on the City Services website. The Street Art grants in 2019-20 were delivered to individuals and are not published on the website. Details are provided under (d) below.

In 2020-21 a street art grant was delivered to the Tuggeranong Community Arts Centre.

In 2021-22 the following grants were provided –

1	Community grant to support street art festival ("Satellite Art Slam")	Weston Creek Citizen Council
2	Community grant to support street art festival	Woden Community Service
3	Community grant to support street art festival	People Lab
4	Community grant to support street art festival	Localjinni
5	Community grant to support street art festival	Meridian
6	Community grant to support street art festival	Project Beats
7	Community grant to support street art festival	Ainslie and Gorman Arts Centres
8	Community street art grant	Northside Community Service
9	Community street art grant	Blue Gum Community School
10	Community street art grant	Weston Creek Citizen Council
11	Grant to support street artists during COVID-19	Woden Community Service
12	Community street art grant	Communities@work
13	Community street art grant	Farrer Community Association
14	Community street art grant	Greening Australia
15	Community street art grant	Play Activation Network

b)

Road Safety Grants

The 2021 grant round opened 8 April 2021 and closed for applications 12 May 2021

The 2020 grant round opened 3 April 2020 and closed for applications 12 May 2020

The 2019 grant round opened 12 April 2019 and closed for applications 31 May 2019

The 2018 grant round opened 9 April 2018 and closed for applications 23 May 2018

The 2017 grant round opened 9 May 2017 and closed for applications 23 June 2017

The 2016 grant round opened 30 May 2016 and closed for applications 15 July 2016

Adopt A Park

2019-20 – Were open to applications from 16 August 2019 - 13 September 2019.

Street Art

2019-20 – Open to applications from 4 June - 18 June 2020

2020-21 – Open for applications in July 2020

2021-22 – Open for applications from May - June 2021

c)

Road Safety Grants

The 2021 grant round was approved 29 July 2021

The 2020 grant round was approved 29 June 2020

The 2019 grant round was approved 10 August 2019

The 2018 grant round was approved 27 September 2018

The 2017 grant round was approved 6 October 2017

The 2016 grant round was approved 16 December 2016

Adopt A Park

2019-20 - Grants were provided to groups as projects were shovel-ready.

Street Art

2019-20 – Granted June 2020

2020-21 – Granted August 2020

2021-22 – Granted June 2021

d)

The Road Safety Fund Grants page on the City Services website lists how much money was provided to each grant. Information on the successful Adopt a Park projects is available on the City Services website. The value of the grants program for 2019-20 was \$183,989.

The Street Arts Grants Program grants for 2019-20 are provided below.

No.	Grant
1	\$10000
2	\$10000
3	\$9000
4	\$10000
5	\$10000
6	\$10000
7	\$5000
8	\$10000
9	\$8857.5
10	\$9700
11	\$10000
12	\$10000
13	\$10000
14	\$9570
15	\$7000
16	\$10000
17	\$5,444.91
18	\$8,900
19	\$9360
20	\$10000
22	\$10000
23	\$4074.2
25	\$4755
26	\$10000
27	\$7,051

The following Street Art grants were provided in 2021-22

No.	Grant Provided
1	\$10,000
2	\$10,000
3	\$9,000
4	\$6,000
5	\$10,000
6	\$10,000
7	\$10,000
8	\$15,000
9	\$13,000
10	\$8,000
11	\$10,000
12	\$8,000
13	\$15,000
14	\$10,000
15	\$15,000

e) There were no conditions attached to any of the grant programs recipients to prevent them from making public comment.

(4) No.

(5) See response to question 4.

(6) The successful ACT Road Safety Fund Grant recipients are published in the Annual Report and on the City Services website. Conditions associated with the grants are not published.

The list of successful grant applicants for Adopt a Park can be found on the City Services Website. The conditions are not published post the grant closing.

A public register is not available for Street Art Grants program. The conditions are not published post the grant closing.

Mental health services—Dhulwa Mental Health Unit (Question No 647)

Mrs Kikkert asked the Minister for Health, upon notice, on 11 February 2022:

- (1) Can the Minister provide a breakdown of all staff currently engaged at Dhulwa Mental Health Unit (Dhulwa), including number of staff, job title, work classification, employment type and workload.
- (2) How many patients are currently being treated at Dhulwa.
- (3) How many incidents of assault on a staff member by a patient/s have been reported in each year for the past three years.
- (4) How many staff have taken personal or medical leave due to an incident of assault by a patient, and what has been the total period of leave taken for this reason in each year for the past three years.
- (5) How many staff have left their employment at Dhulwa in each year for the past three years.
- (6) How many staff have left their employment due to have experienced assault or stress from dealing with aggressive patients.
- (7) How are patients managed where there is not enough staff available to keep regular care standards at each of the following units, ie patient lockdown.
- (8) What kind of training is provided to staff so that they can safely and effectively manage aggressive behaviour in patients.
- (9) Which staff receive this training, ie nurses, wardsmen etc.
- (10) Is ongoing and/or higher-level training provided to staff; if so, how often and what kind of training is provided to what staff.
- (11) How are patients who have committed acts of aggression and assault towards staff members managed, ie medicative, punitive, therapeutic, policy measures etc.

- (12) How many patients currently have work or school commitments that are accommodated by their treatment plan.

Ms Davidson: The answer to the member's question is as follows:

- (1) The Full Time Equivalent of staff employed at Dhulwa Mental Health Unit (Dhulwa) is detailed in the table below. Details related to workload are not able to be provided.

Classification	Casual FTE	Temporary FTE	Permanent FTE	Total
Assistant In Nursing (AIN)	0	2	2	4
Enrolled Nurse (EN)	0.6	0	1	1.6
Registered Nurse (RN)	0.7	0	42	42.7
Psychiatrists	0	0	1	1
Psychiatry Registrars	0	0	1.6	1.6
Total	1.3	2	47.6	50.9

In addition to the FTE allocation below Canberra Health Services (CHS) provides support services to Dhulwa including but not limited to, security services, food services, administrative services including reception and cleaning services.

- (2) As of 14 February 2022, 16 consumers are admitted to Dhulwa

- (3)

Financial Year	Number of RiskMan classified as Physical OV
2019/20	133
2020/21	99
2021/22 (up to 2 March 2022)	70

- (4)

Year	Number of Lost Time Incidents entered as a Staff Incident onto RiskMan
2019	1
2020	15
2021	14
1 January to 3 March 2022	7

- (5) In the past three years, 20 Dhulwa staff have resigned, one staff member retired and 11 staff left when their contracts ceased.

- (6) This information is not routinely captured and unable to be reported.

- (7) There are no patient lockdowns at health facilities. CHS endeavour to always meet safe staffing levels to ensure care standards are maintained.
- (8) New approved Occupational Violence (OV) Training commenced in 2021.

Components of the training include:

- a) All Staff Mandatory eLearning Modules – provides information about situational awareness and de-escalation. As of March 2021, CHS Education and Training Procedure was endorsed, and new education added to the Mandatory training framework. This requires all CHS staff to complete these modules. Current completion rates for all staff are 79 percent (6524 staff). MHJHADS completion rate is 81 percent. Dhulwa completion rate is 96 percent.
 - b) Face to face training includes practical modules which cover situational awareness, de-escalation, protection strategies and restraint. The training is aimed at inter-professional teams learning and practicing effective de-escalation and protection techniques and effective response to escalating violent behaviours. MHJHADS staff also receive training on restraint techniques.
- (9) All frontline responders from medical, nursing, allied health, administration, ward services, Peer Workers, Aboriginal Liaison Officers (ALO) and consumer consultants and security are receiving face to face training as part of a planned roll-out. The level of training is determined by clinical role. Current staff who have received previous training are being refreshed with new information and techniques in a one-day program. All new staff undertake two full days of training, determined by role.
- To date, 30 staff at Dhulwa have completed the refresher program. This number includes Assistants in Nursing, Enrolled Nurses and Registered Nurses (25 nurses) along with a Psychologist, ALO and three administration staff.
- (10) As at 4 March 2022 there are now four dedicated trainers at Dhulwa certified to provide the new OV training program. In addition to face-to-face programs, education is embedded with regular scenario-based training sessions. These sessions allow local area teams to practice scenarios together, improving teamwork, coordination and reducing risk of injury to staff and consumers. This approach is working effectively in Adult Acute Mental Health Unit and is planned to be commenced at Dhulwa once 80 percent of staff have received the new training. Dhulwa is the area of priority for training over March and April 2022.
- (11) Behaviour Support Plans have been developed for individual consumers to support therapeutic engagement and rapport building. As per the *Mental Health Act 2015*, CHS are required to use the least restrictive approach to care. The clinical team administer medication as clinically indicated; they do not punish patients. Staff members are supported by Employee Assistance Program (EAP), OV leave and supported to develop necessary skills.
- (12) All consumers at Dhulwa are supported to undertake distance learning if they wish. Computers are available for consumer use, or they can use their own personal devices under supervision. Currently there is up to three people studying.
-

**Canberra Hospital—Adult Mental Health Unit
(Question No 648)**

Mrs Kikkert asked the Minister for Health, upon notice, on 11 February 2022
(redirected to the Minister for Mental Health):

- (1) Can the Minister provide a breakdown of all staff currently engaged at the Adult Mental Health Unit (AMHU) at the Canberra Hospital, including number of staff, job title, work classification, employment type and workload.
- (2) How many patients are currently being treated at AMHU.
- (3) How many incidents of assault on a staff member by a patient/s have been reported in each year for the past three years.
- (4) How many staff have taken personal or medical leave due to an incident of assault by a patient, and what has been the total period of leave taken for this reason in each year for the past three years.
- (5) How many staff have left their employment at AHMU in each year for the past three years.
- (6) How many staff have left their employment due to have experienced assault or stress from dealing with aggressive patients.
- (7) How are patients managed where there is not enough staff available to keep regular care standards at each of the following units, ie patient lockdown.
- (8) What kind of training is provided to staff so that they can safely and effectively manage aggressive behaviour in patients.
- (9) Which staff receive this training, ie nurses, wardsmen etc.
- (10) Is ongoing and/or higher-level training provided to staff; if so, how often and what kind of training is provided to what staff.
- (11) How are patients who have committed acts of aggression and assault towards staff members managed, ie medicative, punitive, therapeutic, policy measures etc.
- (12) How many patients currently have work or school commitments that are accommodated by their treatment plan.

Ms Davidson: The answer to the member's question is as follows:

- (1) The Full Time Equivalent of staff employed and offering services to Adult Mental Health (including Access Mental Health team, Central Management, Adult Mental Health, Adult Acute Mental Health Service, Adult Mental Health Unit, Home Assessment Acute Response Team and Police, Ambulance, Clinician Emergency Response, Mental Health Consultation Liaison team and Mental Health Short Stay Unit) is detailed in the table below. Details related to workload is not able to be provided.

Classification	Casual FTE	Temporary FTE	Permanent FTE	Total
Administration	0	4.2	16.5	20.7
Allied Health Assistant	0	0	2	2
Health Professional Officer	0.8	4.7	14	19.5
Assistant In Nursing	0	1	2.8	3.8
Enrolled Nurse	0	0	1	1
Registered Nurse	0	0	49.5	49.5
Psychiatrists	0	0	2.8	2.8
Psychiatry Registrars/Resident Medical Officer/Junior Medical Officer	0	0	8	8
General Services Officer	0	1	3	4
Total	0.8	10.9	99.6	111.3

In addition to the FTE allocation below Canberra Health Services (CHS) provides support services to AMHU including but not limited to, security services, food services, administrative services including reception and cleaning services.

(2) As of 14 February 2022, 39 consumers are admitted to Adult Mental Health Unit (AMHU)

(3)

Financial Year	Number of RiskMan classified as Physical OV
2019/20	174
2020/21	143
2021/22 (up to 2 March 2022)	93

(4)

Year	Number of Lost Time Incidents entered as a Staff Incident onto Riskman
2019	6
2020	15
2021	19
1 January to 3 March 2022	6

- (5) In the last three years, two AHMU staff have been dismissed, 61 resigned, 10 retired and 16 left when their contracted period ceased.
- (6) This information is not routinely captured and unable to be reported.
- (7) There are no patient lockdowns at health facilities. CHS endeavour to always meet safe staffing levels to ensure care standards are maintained.
- (8) New approved Occupational Violence (OV) Training commenced in 2021.

Components of the training include:

All Staff Mandatory eLearning Modules – provides information about situational awareness and de-escalation. As of March 2021, CHS Education and Training Procedure was endorsed, and new education added to the Mandatory training framework. This requires all CHS staff to complete these modules. Current completion rates for all staff is 79% (6524 staff). MHJHADS completion rate is 81%. AAMHU completion rate is 83%.

Face to face training includes practical modules which cover situational awareness, de-escalation, protection strategies and restraint. The training is aimed at inter-professional teams learning and practicing effective de-escalation and protection techniques and effective response to escalating violent behaviours. MHJHADS staff also receive training on restraint techniques.

- (9) All frontline responders from medical, nursing, allied health, administration, ward services, Peer Workers, Aboriginal Liaison Officers (ALO), ward services staff and security are receiving face to face training as part of a planned roll-out. The level of training is determined by clinical role. Current staff who have received previous training are being refreshed with new information and techniques in a two-day program. All new staff undertake two full days of training, determined by role.

To date, 75 staff at AAMHU have completed the refresher program. This number includes Assistants in Nursing, Enrolled Nurses and Registered Nurses along with a Psychology Registrars and administration staff.

- (10) As of 4 March 2022, there are now five dedicated trainers at AHMU certified to provide the new OV training program. In addition to face-to-face programs, education is embedded with regular scenario-based training sessions. These sessions allow local area teams to practice scenarios together, improving teamwork, coordination and reducing risk of injury to staff and consumers. This approach is working effectively in the AAHMU.
- (11) Behaviour Support Plans have been developed for individual consumers to support therapeutic engagement and rapport building. As per the Mental Health Act 2015, CHS are required to use the least restrictive approach to care. The clinical team administer medication as clinically indicated; they do not punish patients. Staff members are supported by Employee Assistance Program (EAP), OV leave and supported to develop necessary skills.
- (12) Consumers admitted to AMHU are generally too unwell to attend to work or school commitments.

**Carbon emissions—reduction by households
(Question No 651)**

Ms Castley asked the Minister for Water, Energy and Emissions Reduction, upon notice, on 11 February 2022 (*redirected to the Minister for Climate Action*):

- (1) In relation to Budget Outlook p 124, what is the funding allocation of 2021-22 in \$319,000, 2022-23 in \$261,000, 2023-24 in \$137,000 and 2024-25 in \$139,000, for and can the Minister provide a breakdown of specific activities and policies this money is being used for
- (2) How many staff in the Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate and the Chief Minister, Treasury and Economic Development Directorate work on the activities and policies funded by this budget item.

Mr Barr: The answer to the member's question is as follows:

- (1) This funding allocation is for strategic communications and behaviour change related initiatives that support the ACT Government's ambitious climate action agenda.

This funding comprises:

- a. A total of \$556,000 in recurrent staffing costs over four years; and
- b. A total of \$300,000 over two years from 2021-22 to deliver communications education and awareness-raising campaigns to support key Government climate action initiatives.

The primary activity that this money is being used for is the Everyday Climate Choices website. The Everyday Climate Choices website provides the most up-to-date, scientifically validated information about climate change and tailored resources to help individuals, households and businesses reduce their carbon footprint and adapt to the effects of climate change.

- (2) Staffing arrangements funded by this budget item are as follows:
 - a. One non-ongoing Senior Officer Grade C from 2021-22 and one ongoing Administrative Services Officer 6 from 2023-24. The non-ongoing Senior Officer Grade C position was recruited and filled in February 2022.
 - b. Both positions are housed within the Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate (EPSDD). There are no staff within the Chief Minister, Treasury and Economic Development Directorate (CMTEDD) covered under this funding.
 - c. Communications and Engagement Group, CMTEDD collaborate with EPSDD on the activities outlined above.

**Education—Chromebooks
(Question No 662)**

Ms Castley asked the Minister for Education and Youth Affairs, upon notice, on 11 February 2022:

- (1) When were Chromebooks introduced into government schools, in terms of every student receiving one.
- (2) Why were Chromebooks introduced and what was the information technology (IT) system that existed before Chromebooks, for example, was there a set number of computers per classroom for students to use.
- (3) Which students receive Chromebooks, ie, in what year levels.
- (4) How much does each Chromebook cost the ACT Government.
- (5) How many Chromebooks are there and how many have been given to ACT students.
- (6) Does the Education Directorate (the Directorate) offer parents insurance for Chromebooks; if so, how does this system work.
- (7) What is the Directorate's policy for lost, damaged or stolen Chromebooks.
- (8) If a Chromebook is lost, stolen or damaged, are parents liable to pay for it and how much must they pay.
- (9) What is the policy for parents who cannot afford to pay for a lost, damaged or stolen Chromebooks.
- (10) How long must a student wait on average to receive a new or repaired Chromebook if it is lost, stolen or damaged.
- (11) What are the Directorate's costs to repair and replace Chromebooks.
- (12) How do government schools repair and service Chromebooks.
- (13) Do schools employ IT support; if so, can the Minister provide the details for each school.
- (14) Have schools had to employ extra IT resources since Chromebooks were introduced; if so, can the Minister provide a breakdown for each school.
- (15) Are schools required to report all repairs as well as lost/damaged Chromebooks to the Directorate; if so, how many repairs have there been since Chromebooks were introduced into schools.
- (16) How many Chromebooks have been (a) lost and (b) damaged, since Chromebooks were introduced.
- (17) What is the cost of the lost and damaged Chromebooks referred to in part (16) and can the Minister provide a breakdown for each school.
- (18) How many staff are employed by the Directorate to work on the Chromebook program.

Ms Berry: The answer to the member's question is as follows:

- (1) Secondary students started receiving a Chromebook in February 2018 (following the Election Commitment of the 2016 Election (EC LAB 028)).

- (2) Chromebooks were introduced to allow equity of access to devices for students. Chromebooks offer a common platform that allows use of familiar tools by students and teachers. Prior to the introduction of Chromebooks, devices and access varied across and within schools. A BYOD approach existed in high schools and colleges. There is more information on the ACT Education - Future of Education – Digital Access and Equity Program webpage - <https://www.education.act.gov.au/public-school-life/learn-anywhere-ict-for-students/future-of-education-digital-access-and-equity-program>
- (3) Students enrolling in ACT public high schools (years 7 to 10) and colleges (years 11 and 12) can opt-in during enrolment to receive a Chromebook.
- (4) The actual cost of a Chromebook is commercial-in-confidence and will not be disclosed.
- (5) Over 22,000 Chromebooks have been distributed to secondary students through the Technology Enabled Learning Program and the Digital Access and Equity Program since February 2018. More than 14,000 further Chromebooks have been distributed to primary schools as part of the 1 device per 3 student program.
- (6) The devices are owned by the ACT Government. There is no insurance on individual Chromebooks as this is not financially viable based on the value of the device against the cost of insurance and the risk of loss. Chromebooks are covered by a three-year warranty against faults.
- (7) The Directorate's policy is in line with the ACT Government's Policy in these areas:
- a. "lost" - Students and parents fill in and sign a statutory declaration form outlining where the device was possibly lost. Schools can request a replacement device through the Directorate program officers. A loan device will be provided while this is being resolved.
 - b. "stolen" - Same as for lost but the ACT Police are informed and can start an investigation to find the device.
 - c. "damaged" - Students return the damaged device to the school and sign a statutory declaration form outlining how the device was damaged. Schools can determine:
 - i. **if the damage was deliberate by the student who used the device** – the school will determine whether:
 - 1. The device can be fixed OR
 - 2. The student will be given a replacement Chromebook OR
 - 3. The student has to wait for the refresh program to get a new device (or choose to purchase their own device outside the program) OR
 - ii. **if the damage was caused by another person or by accident** - the school can arrange through the Directorate a replacement device.
- (8) Parents can pay for replacement or repairs; or they can choose to purchase a device outside the program.
- (9) The Directorate does not have a policy where the parent is required to pay.
- (10) Please see question 7.

- (11) If a device is deemed repairable, there is a standard flat rate non-warranty “call-out fee”, then charges for individual part fixes (eg screen, keyboard, CPU board etc). If damage is extensive, the device is recycled responsibly.
- (12) Schools report Chromebook service requests through a central service, managed by the Directorate and they are serviced through the contracted supplier.
- (13) The Directorate requests that each secondary school employs an IT Officer and for all other schools an ICT contact officer be nominated, as the ICT Coordinator for the school. The total number of IT Officers that are employed is 27, and there are also 77 IT Coordinators (Attachment A).
- (14) Schools have not needed to employ extra resources for the distribution or management of the Chromebooks. The Chromebooks are distributed and the dedicated ITO is responsible for distributing the Chromebooks to students in high schools. Overall management is undertaken by the Directorate.
- (15) All repair requests are centrally reported to and logged and managed by the contracted device supplier. Approximately 7,600 Chromebooks have been repaired under warranty since February 2018 (including a large number due to a widespread hinge fault). Around 250 devices have been repaired outside of warranty.
- (16) Lost devices are reported to the Directorate so they can be remotely disabled. Chromebooks that are damaged and not able to be repaired are returned to the Directorate and are disposed of responsibly through IT hardware recyclers. Around 2,500 devices have been deprovisioned since the start of the program, because they were lost or damaged beyond repair.
- (17) Please see question 4.
- (18) The Digital Access and Equity Program is responsible for Chromebook management and employs the following staff:
 - a. 1 x SOG C (full-time)
 - b. 2 x ASO 4 (full-time)

(A copy of the attachment is available at the Chamber Support Office).

Transport—Woden to Civic bus services (Question No 672)

Mr Parton asked the Minister for Transport and City Services, upon notice, on 25 March 2022:

What was the pre-COVID hourly maximum capacity of bus services from Woden to Civic of all services while running a full timetable.

Mr Steel: The answer to the member’s question is as follows:

Transport Canberra currently operates six bus services between Woden and the City. These services include three rapid services (4, 5, 6) and three local services (57, 58, 59).

Under a 'full' / pre-COVID timetable, the following maximum hourly capacities are possible between Woden and the City.

Table 1: Direct services running between Woden and the City (via Adelaide Ave):

Route (direct)	Services per hour (peak period)	Average bus capacity (licenced for standing / sitting)	Maximum hourly capacity (passengers / hour)
4	12	105 (e.g. articulated or steer tag bus)	1,260
5	7	105	735
		TOTAL	1,995

Table 2 : Other services that run indirectly between Woden and the City (via alternate routes):

Route (indirect)	Services per hour (peak period)	Average bus capacity (licenced for standing / sitting)	Maximum hourly capacity (passengers / hour)
6	5	65 (e.g. standard bus)	325
57	3	65	195
58	3	65	195
59	4	65	260
		TOTAL	975

The four routes identified in Table 2 use indirect routes which take in multiple suburbs and locations between Woden and the City. For example, the Rapid 6 service travels from Woden via Garran, Narrabundah, Griffith, Kingston, Barton and Parkes before arriving at the City.

When light rail commences on Canberra's southside this will be closely integrated with the bus network. This is expected to see a range of bus services continue to operate between Woden and the City.

Questions without notice taken on notice

Container deposit scheme—security

Mr Steel (*in reply to a question and supplementary questions by Ms Lawder and Mr Cain on Wednesday, 23 March 2022*):

Re.Turn It has advised five potential incidents were detected, with the last incident detected on 7 March 2022.

Re.Turn It has undertaken an initial review of security procedures, implemented preventative cyber security measures as well as extended transaction processing by 24 hours to allow time for any incidents to be identified before a transaction occurs.

Notifications were also sent to all customers requesting them to change their passwords.

Re.Turn It will continue to review data and investigate and will consider security upgrades in the future if required.

Re.Turn It has reported the incident to the Office of the Australian Information Commissioner (OAIC) and the Australian Cyber Security Centre (ACSC).