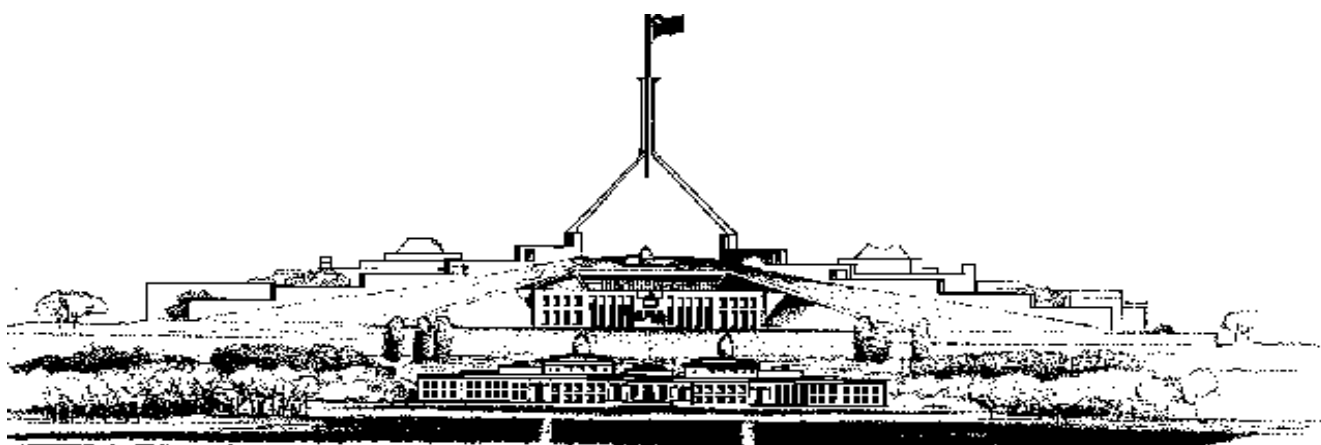




COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES



House of Representatives

Official Hansard

No. 6, 2016

Wednesday, 23 November 2016

FORTY-FIFTH PARLIAMENT
FIRST SESSION—FIRST PERIOD

BY AUTHORITY OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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SITTING DAYS—2016

Month	Date
February	2, 3, 4, 8, 9, 10, 11, 22 23, 24, 25, 29
March	1, 2, 3, 15, 16, 17
April	18, 19
May	2, 3, 4, 5
August	30, 31
September	1, 12, 13, 14, 15
October	10, 11, 12, 13, 17, 18, 19, 20
November	7, 8, 9, 10, 21, 22, 23, 24, 28, 29, 30
December	1

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**FORTY-FIFTH PARLIAMENT
FIRST SESSION—FIRST PERIOD**

Governor-General

His Excellency General the Hon. Sir Peter Cosgrove AK, MC (Retd)

House of Representatives Office Holders

Speaker—Hon. Anthony David Hawthorn Smith MP

Deputy Speaker—Mr Mark Maclean Coulton MP

Second Deputy Speaker—Mr Robert George Mitchell MP

Members of the Speaker's Panel—Hon. Sharon Leah Bird MP, Mr Russell Evan Broadbent, Mr Scott Andrew Buchholz, Ms Sharon Catherine Claydon MP, Mr Steven Georganas MP, Mr Ian Reginald Goodenough MP, Mr Andrew William Hastie MP, Mr Kevin John Hogan MP, Mr Stephen James Irons, Mr Craig Kelly, Ms Maria Vamvakinou MP, Mr Ross Xavier Vasta and Mrs Lucy Elizabeth Wicks

Leader of the House—Hon. Christopher Pyne MP

Deputy Leader of the House—Hon. Darren Chester MP

Manager of Opposition Business—Hon. Anthony Stephen Burke MP

Deputy Manager of Opposition Business—Hon. Mark Dreyfus QC MP

Party Leaders and Whips

Liberal Party of Australia

Leader—Hon. Malcolm Bligh Turnbull MP

Deputy Leader—Hon. Julie Isabel Bishop MP

Chief Government Whip—Ms Nola Bethwyn Marino MP

Government Whips—Mr Albertus Johannes van Manen MP and Mr Rowan Eric Ramsey MP

The Nationals

Leader—Hon. Barnaby Thomas Gerard Joyce MP

Deputy Leader—Senator the Hon Fiona Nash

Chief Whip—Mr George Robert Christenson MP

Deputy Whip—Ms Michelle Leanne Landry MP

Australian Labor Party

Leader—Hon. William Richard Shorten MP

Deputy Leader—Hon. Tanya Joan Plibersek MP

Chief Opposition Whip—Mr Christopher Patrick Hayes MP

Opposition Whips—Ms Joanne Catherine Ryan MP and Mr Graham Douglas Perrett MP

Printed by authority of the House of Representatives

Members of the House of Representatives

Members	Division	Party
Abbott, Hon. Anthony John	Warringah, NSW	LP
Albanese, Hon. Anthony Norman	Grayndler, NSW	ALP
Alexander, Mr John Gilbert, OAM	Bennelong, NSW	LP
Aly, Dr Anne	Cowan, WA	ALP
Andrews, Hon. Karen Lesley	McPherson, QLD	LP
Andrews, Hon. Kevin James	Menzies, VIC	LP
Bandt, Mr Adam Paul	Melbourne, VIC	AG
Banks, Ms Julia Helen	Chisholm, VIC	LP
Bird, Hon. Sharon Leah	Cunningham, NSW	ALP
Bishop, Hon. Julie Isabel	Curtin, WA	LP
Bowen, Hon. Christopher Eyles	McMahon, NSW	ALP
Broad, Mr Andrew John	Mallee, VIC	NATS
Broadbent, Mr Russell Evan	McMillan, VIC	LP
Brodthmann, Ms Gai Marie	Canberra, ACT	ALP
Buchholz, Mr Scott Andrew	Wright, QLD	LP
Burke, Hon. Anthony Stephen	Watson, NSW	ALP
Burney, Ms Linda Jean	Barton, NSW	ALP
Butler, Hon. Mark Christopher	Port Adelaide, SA	ALP
Butler, Ms Terri Megan	Griffith, QLD	ALP
Byrne, Hon. Anthony Michael	Holt, VIC	ALP
Chalmers, Dr James Edward	Rankin, QLD	ALP
Champion, Mr Nicholas David	Wakefield, SA	ALP
Chester, Hon. Darren Jeffrey	Gippsland, VIC	NATS
Chesters, Ms Lisa Marie	Bendigo, VIC	ALP
Christensen, Mr George Robert	Dawson, QLD	NATS
Ciobo, Hon. Steven Michele	Moncrieff, QLD	LP
Clare, Hon. Jason Dean	Blaxland, NSW	ALP
Claydon, Ms Sharon Catherine	Newcastle, NSW	ALP
Coleman, Mr David Bernard	Banks, NSW	LP
Collins, Hon. Julie Maree	Franklin, TAS	ALP
Conroy, Mr Patrick Martin	Shortland, NSW	ALP
Coulton, Mr Mark Maclean	Parkes, NSW	NATS
Crewther, Mr Christopher John	Dunkley, VIC	LP
Danby, Hon. Michael David	Melbourne Ports, VIC	ALP
Dick, Mr Dugald Milton	Oxley, QLD	ALP
Dreyfus, Hon. Mark Alfred, QC	Isaacs, VIC	ALP
Drum, Mr Damian Kevin	Murray, VIC	NATS
Dutton, Hon. Peter Craig	Dickson, QLD	LP
Elliot, Hon. Maria Justine	Richmond, NSW	ALP
Ellis, Hon. Katherine Margaret	Adelaide, SA	ALP
Entsch, Hon. Warren George	Leichhardt, QLD	LP
Evans, Mr Trevor Mark	Brisbane, QLD	LNP
Falinski, Mr Jason George	Mackellar, NSW	LP
Feeney, Hon. David	Batman, VIC	ALP
Fitzgibbon, Hon. Joel Andrew	Hunter, NSW	ALP
Fletcher, Hon. Paul William	Bradfield, NSW	LP
Flint, Ms Nicolle Jane	Boothby, SA	LP
Freeland, Mr Michael Randolph	Macarthur, NSW	ALP

Members of the House of Representatives

Members	Division	Party
Frydenberg, Hon. Joshua Anthony	Kooyong, VIC	LP
Gee, Mr Andrew Robert	Calare, NSW	NATS
Georganas, Mr Steven	Hindmarsh, SA	ALP
Giles, Mr Andrew James	Scullin, VIC	ALP
Gillespie, Hon. Dr David Arthur	Lyne, NSW	NATS
Goodenough, Mr Ian Reginald	Moore, WA	LP
Gosling, Mr Luke John	Solomon, NT	ALP
Hammond, Mr Timothy Jerome	Perth, WA	ALP
Hart, Mr Ross Anthony	Bass, TAS	ALP
Hartsuyker, Hon. Luke	Cowper, NSW	NATS
Hastie, Mr Andrew William	Canning, WA	LP
Hawke, Hon. Alexander George	Mitchell, NSW	LP
Hayes, Mr Christopher Patrick	Fowler, NSW	ALP
Henderson, Ms Sarah Moya	Corangamite, VIC	LP
Hill, Mr Julian Christopher	Bruce, VIC	ALP
Hogan, Mr Kevin John	Page, NSW	NATS
Howarth, Mr Luke Ronald	Petrie, QLD	LP
Hunt, Hon. Gregory Andrew	Flinders, VIC	LP
Husar, Ms Emma	Lindsay, NSW	ALP
Husic, Hon. Edham Nurredin	Chifley, NSW	ALP
Irons, Mr Stephen James	Swan, WA	LP
Jones, Mr Stephen Patrick	Whitlam, NSW	ALP
Joyce, Hon. Barnaby Thomas Gerard	New England, NSW	NATS
Katter, Hon. Robert Carl	Kennedy, QLD	AUS
Keay, Ms Justine Terri	Braddon, TAS	ALP
Keenan, Hon. Michael Fayat	Stirling, WA	LP
Kelly, Mr Craig	Hughes, NSW	LP
Kelly, Mr Michael Joseph	Eden-Monaro	ALP
Keogh, Mr Matthew James	Burt, WA	ALP
Khalil, Mr Peter	Wills, VIC	ALP
King, Hon. Catherine Fiona	Ballarat, VIC	ALP
King, Ms Madeleine Mary Harvie	Brand, WA	ALP
Lamb, Ms Susan	Longman, QLD	ALP
Laming, Mr Andrew Charles	Bowman, QLD	LP
Landry, Ms Michelle Leanne	Capricornia, QLD	NATS
Laundy, Hon. Craig Arthur Samuel	Reid, NSW	LP
Leigh, Hon. Dr Andrew Keith	Fraser, ACT	ALP
Leeser, Mr Julian Martin	Berowra, NSW	LP
Ley, Hon. Sussan Penelope	Farrer, NSW	LP
Littleproud, Mr David Kelly	Maranoa, QLD	LNP
Macklin, Hon. Jennifer Louise	Jagajaga, VIC	ALP
Marino, Ms Nola Bethwyn	Forrest, WA	LP
Marles, Hon. Richard Donald	Corio, VIC	ALP
McBride, Ms Emma Margaret	Dobell, NSW	ALP
McCormack, Hon. Michael Francis	Riverina, NSW	NATS
McGowan, Ms Catherine, AO	Indi, VIC	IND
McVeigh, Hon. Dr John Joseph	Groom, QLD	LNP
Mitchell, Mr Brian Keith	Lyons, TAS	ALP

Members of the House of Representatives

Members	Division	Party
Mitchell, Mr Robert George	McEwen, VIC	ALP
Morrison, Hon. Scott John	Cook, NSW	LP
Morton, Mr Ben	Tangney, WA	LP
Neumann, Hon. Shayne Kenneth	Blair, QLD	ALP
O'Brien, Mr Llewellyn Stephen	Wide Bay, QLD	LNP
O'Brien, Mr Ted Lynam	Fairfax, QLD	LNP
O'Connor, Hon. Brendan Patrick John	Gorton, VIC	ALP
O'Dowd, Mr Kenneth Desmond	Flynn, QLD	NATS
O'Dwyer, Hon. Ms Kelly Megan	Higgins, VIC	LP
O'Neil, Ms Clare Ellen	Hotham, VIC	ALP
O'Toole, Ms Catherine Elizabeth	Herbert, QLD	ALP
Owens, Ms Julie Ann	Parramatta, NSW	ALP
Pasin, Mr Antony	Barker, SA	LP
Perrett, Mr Graham Douglas	Moreton, QLD	ALP
Pitt, Hon. Keith John	Hinkler, QLD	NATS
Plibersek, Hon. Tanya Joan	Sydney, NSW	ALP
Porter, Hon. Charles Christian	Pearce, WA	LP
Prentice, Hon. Jane	Ryan, QLD	LP
Price, Ms Melissa Lee	Durack, WA	LP
Pyne, Hon. Christopher Maurice	Sturt, SA	LP
Ramsey, Mr Rowan Eric	Grey, SA	LP
Rishworth, Hon. Amanda Louise	Kingston, SA	ALP
Robert, Hon. Stuart Rowland	Fadden, QLD	LP
Rowland, Ms Michelle Anne	Greenway, NSW	ALP
Ryan, Ms Joanne Catherine	Lalor, VIC	ALP
Sharkie, Ms Rebekha Carina Che	Mayo, SA	NXT
Shorten, Hon. William Richard	Maribyrnong, VIC	ALP
Smith, Hon. Anthony David Hawthorn	Casey, VIC	LP
Snowdon, Hon. Warren Edward	Lingiari, NT	ALP
Stanley, Ms Anne Maree	Werriwa, NSW	ALP
Sudmalis, Ms Ann Elizabeth	Gilmore, NSW	LP
Sukkar, Mr Michael Sven	Deakin, VIC	LP
Swan, Hon. Wayne Maxwell	Lilley, QLD	ALP
Swanson, Ms Meryl Jane	Paterson, NSW	ALP
Taylor, Hon. Angus James	Hume, NSW	LP
Tehan, Hon. Daniel Thomas	Wannon, VIC	LP
Templeman, Ms Susan Raye	Macquarie, NSW	ALP
Thistlethwaite, Hon. Matthew James	Kingsford Smith, NSW	ALP
Tudge, Hon. Alan Edward	Aston, VIC	LP
Turnbull, Hon. Malcolm Bligh	Wentworth, NSW	LP
Vamvakinou, Ms Maria	Calwell, VIC	ALP
van Manen, Mr Albertus Johannes	Forde, QLD	LP
Vasta, Mr Ross Xavier	Bonner, QLD	LP
Wallace, Mr Andrew Bruce	Fisher, QLD	LNP
Watts, Mr Timothy Graham	Gellibrand, VIC	ALP
Wicks, Mrs Lucy Elizabeth	Robertson, NSW	LP
Wilkie, Mr Andrew Damien	Denison, TAS	IND
Wilson, Mr Joshua Hamilton	Fremantle, WA	ALP

Members of the House of Representatives

Members	Division	Party
Wilson, Mr Richard James	O'Connor, WA	LP
Wilson, Mr Timothy Robert	Goldstein, VIC	LP
Wood, Mr Jason Peter	La Trobe, VIC	LP
Wyatt, Hon. Kenneth George, AM	Hasluck, WA	LP
Zappia, Mr Antonio	Makin, SA	ALP
Zimmerman, Mr Trent Moir	North Sydney, NSW	LP

PARTY ABBREVIATIONS

AG—Australian Greens; ALP—Australian Labor Party; AUS—Katter's Australia Party;
 IND—Independent; LNP—Liberal National Party; LP—Liberal Party of Australia;
 NATS—The Nationals; NXT—Nick Xenophon Team

Heads of Parliamentary Departments

Clerk of the Senate—R Laing
 Clerk of the House of Representatives—D Elder
 Secretary, Department of Parliamentary Services—R Stefanic
 Parliamentary Budget Officer—P Bowen

TURNBULL MINISTRY

Title	Minister
Prime Minister	Hon Malcolm Turnbull MP
Minister for Indigenous Affairs	Senator the Hon Nigel Scullion
Minister for Women	Senator the Hon Michaelia Cash
Cabinet Secretary	Senator the Hon Arthur Sinodinos AO
<i>Minister Assisting the Prime Minister for the Public Service</i>	<i>Senator the Hon Michaelia Cash</i>
<i>Minister Assisting the Prime Minister for Counter-Terrorism</i>	<i>Hon Michael Keenan MP</i>
<i>Minister Assisting the Cabinet Secretary</i>	<i>Senator the Hon Scott Ryan</i>
<i>Minister Assisting the Prime Minister for Cyber Security</i>	<i>Hon Dan Tehan MP</i>
<i>Assistant Minister to the Prime Minister</i>	<i>Senator the Hon James McGrath</i>
<i>Assistant Minister for Cities and Digital Transformation</i>	<i>Hon Angus Taylor MP</i>
Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Agriculture and Water Resources	Hon Barnaby Joyce MP
<i>Assistant Minister for Agriculture and Water Resources</i>	<i>Senator the Hon Anne Ruston</i>
<i>Assistant Minister to the Deputy Prime Minister</i>	<i>Hon Luke Hartsuyker MP</i>
Minister for Foreign Affairs	Hon Julie Bishop MP
Minister for Trade, Tourism and Investment	Hon Steve Ciobo MP
Minister for International Development and the Pacific	Senator the Hon Concetta Fierravanti-Wells
<i>Assistant Minister for Trade, Tourism and Investment</i>	<i>Hon Keith Pitt MP</i>
Attorney-General (Vice-President of the Executive Council) (Leader of the Government in the Senate)	Senator the Hon George Brandis QC
Minister for Justice	Hon Michael Keenan MP
Treasurer	Hon Scott Morrison MP
Minister for Revenue and Financial Services	Hon Kelly O'Dwyer MP
Minister for Small Business	Hon Michael McCormack MP
Minister for Finance (Deputy Leader of Government in the Senate)	Senator the Hon Mathias Cormann
Special Minister of State	Senator the Hon Scott Ryan
Minister for Regional Development	Senator the Hon Fiona Nash
Minister for Local Government and Territories	Senator the Hon Fiona Nash
Minister for Infrastructure and Transport (Deputy Leader of the House)	Hon Darren Chester MP
Minister for Urban Infrastructure	Hon Paul Fletcher MP
Minister for Defence	Senator the Hon Marise Payne
Minister for Defence Industry	Hon Christopher Pyne MP

Title	Minister
(Leader of the House)	
Minister for Veterans' Affairs	Hon Dan Tehan MP
<i>Minister Assisting the Prime Minister for the Centenary of ANZAC</i>	<i>Hon Dan Tehan MP</i>
Minister for Defence Personnel	Hon Dan Tehan MP
Minister for Immigration and Border Protection	Hon Peter Dutton MP
<i>Assistant Minister for Immigration and Border Protection</i>	<i>Hon Alex Hawke MP</i>
Minister for Industry, Innovation and Science	Hon Greg Hunt MP
Minister for Resources and Northern Australia	Senator the Hon Matt Canavan
<i>Assistant Minister for Industry, Innovation and Science</i>	<i>Hon Craig Laundy MP</i>
Minister for Health and Aged Care	Hon Sussan Ley MP
Minister for Sport	Hon Sussan Ley MP
<i>Assistant Minister for Health and Aged Care</i>	<i>Hon Ken Wyatt AM MP</i>
<i>Assistant Minister for Rural Health</i>	<i>Hon Dr David Gillespie MP</i>
Minister for Communications	Senator the Hon Mitch Fifield
Minister for the Arts	Senator the Hon Mitch Fifield
(Manager of Government Business in the Senate)	
Minister for Regional Communications	Senator the Hon Fiona Nash
Minister for Employment	Senator the Hon Michaelia Cash
Minister for Social Services	Hon Christian Porter MP
Minister for Human Services	Hon Alan Tudge MP
<i>Assistant Minister for Social Services and Disability Services</i>	<i>Hon Jane Prentice MP</i>
<i>Assistant Minister for Social Services and Multicultural Affairs</i>	<i>Senator the Hon Zed Seselja</i>
Minister for Education and Training	Senator the Hon Simon Birmingham
<i>Assistant Minister for Vocational Education and Skills</i>	<i>Hon Karen Andrews MP</i>
Minister for the Environment and Energy	Hon Josh Frydenberg MP

Each box represents a portfolio. **Cabinet Ministers are shown in bold type.** As a general rule, there is one department in each portfolio. However, there is a Department of Human Services in the Social Services portfolio and a Department of Veterans' Affairs in the Defence portfolio. The title of a department does not necessarily reflect the title of a minister in all cases. Assistant Ministers in italics are designated as Parliamentary Secretaries under the *Ministers of State Act 1952*.

SHADOW MINISTRY

Title	Shadow Minister
Leader of the Opposition	Hon Bill Shorten MP
Shadow Minister for Indigenous Affairs and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders	Hon Bill Shorten MP
<i>Shadow Assistant Minister for Indigenous Affairs and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders</i>	<i>Senator Patrick Dodson</i>
<i>Shadow Cabinet Secretary</i>	<i>Senator the Hon Jacinta Collins</i>
<i>Shadow Assistant Minister for Preventing Family Violence</i>	<i>Terri Butler MP</i>
<i>Shadow Assistant Minister to the Leader (Tasmania)</i>	<i>Senator Helen Polley</i>
Deputy Leader of the Opposition	Hon Tanya Plibersek MP
Shadow Minister for Education	Hon Tanya Plibersek MP
Shadow Minister for Women	Hon Tanya Plibersek MP
<i>Shadow Assistant Minister for Schools</i>	<i>Andrew Giles MP</i>
<i>Shadow Assistant Minister for Universities</i>	<i>Terri Butler MP</i>
<i>Shadow Assistant Minister for Equality</i>	<i>Terri Butler MP</i>
Leader of the Opposition in the Senate	Senator the Hon Penny Wong
Shadow Minister for Foreign Affairs	Senator the Hon Penny Wong
Shadow Minister for International Development and the Pacific	Senator Claire Moore
Deputy Leader of the Opposition in the Senate	Senator the Hon Don Farrell
Shadow Special Minister of State	Senator the Hon Don Farrell
Shadow Minister for Sport	Senator the Hon Don Farrell
Shadow Treasurer	Hon Chris Bowen MP
Shadow Assistant Treasurer	Hon Dr Andrew Leigh MP
Shadow Minister for Competition and Productivity	Hon Dr Andrew Leigh MP
Shadow Minister for Charities and Not-for-Profits	Hon Dr Andrew Leigh MP
Shadow Minister for the Digital Economy	Ed Husic MP
Shadow Minister for Consumer Affairs	Tim Hammond MP
<i>Shadow Assistant Minister for Treasury</i>	<i>Hon Matt Thistlethwaite MP</i>
Shadow Minister for Environment and Water	Hon Tony Burke MP
Shadow Minister for Citizenship and Multicultural Australia	Hon Tony Burke MP
Shadow Minister for the Arts	Hon Tony Burke MP
Manager of Opposition Business (House)	Hon Tony Burke MP
<i>Shadow Assistant Minister for Citizenship and Multicultural Australia</i>	<i>Senator the Hon Jacinta Collins</i>
<i>Shadow Assistant Minister for Citizenship and Multicultural Australia</i>	<i>Julie Owens MP</i>
Shadow Minister for Families and Social Services	Hon Jenny Macklin MP
Shadow Minister for Housing and Homelessness	Senator the Hon Doug Cameron
Shadow Minister for Human Services	Hon Linda Burney MP

Title	Shadow Minister
Shadow Minister for Disability and Carers	Senator Carol Brown
<i>Shadow Assistant Minister for Families and Communities</i>	<i>Senator Louise Pratt</i>
Shadow Minister for Infrastructure, Transport, Cities and Regional Development	Hon Anthony Albanese MP
Shadow Minister for Tourism	Hon Anthony Albanese MP
Shadow Minister for Regional Services, Territories and Local Government	Stephen Jones MP
<i>Shadow Assistant Minister for Infrastructure</i>	<i>Pat Conroy MP</i>
<i>Shadow Assistant Minister for External Territories</i>	<i>Hon Warren Snowdon MP</i>
Shadow Attorney-General	Hon Mark Dreyfus QC MP
Shadow Minister for National Security	Hon Mark Dreyfus QC MP
Deputy Manager of Opposition Business in the House of Representatives	Hon Mark Dreyfus QC MP
Shadow Minister for Justice	Clare O'Neil MP
Shadow Minister for Employment and Workplace Relations	Hon Brendan O'Connor MP
Shadow Minister for Employment Services, Workforce Participation and Future of Work	Ed Husic MP
<i>Shadow Assistant Minister for Workplace Relations</i>	<i>Lisa Chesters MP</i>
Shadow Minister for Climate Change and Energy	Hon Mark Butler MP
<i>Shadow Assistant Minister for Climate Change</i>	<i>Pat Conroy MP</i>
Shadow Minister for Defence	Hon Richard Marles MP
Shadow Minister for Veterans' Affairs	Hon Amanda Rishworth MP
Shadow Minister for Defence Personnel	Hon Amanda Rishworth MP
<i>Shadow Assistant Minister for the Centenary of ANZAC</i>	<i>Hon Warren Snowdon MP</i>
<i>Shadow Assistant Minister for Cyber Security and Defence</i>	<i>Gai Brodtmann MP</i>
<i>Shadow Assistant Minister for Defence Industry and Support</i>	<i>Hon Mike Kelly AM MP</i>
Shadow Minister for Innovation, Industry, Science and Research	Senator the Hon Kim Carr
<i>Shadow Assistant Minister for Manufacturing and Science</i>	<i>Hon Nick Champion MP</i>
<i>Shadow Assistant Minister for Innovation</i>	<i>Senator Deborah O'Neill</i>
Shadow Minister for Health and Medicare	Hon Catherine King MP
<i>Shadow Assistant Minister for Medicare</i>	<i>Tony Zappia MP</i>
<i>Shadow Assistant Minister for Indigenous Health</i>	<i>Hon Warren Snowdon MP</i>
Shadow Minister for Early Childhood Education and Development⁽¹⁾	Hon Kate Ellis MP
Shadow Minister for TAFE and Vocational Education	Hon Kate Ellis MP
Shadow Minister for Skills and Apprenticeships	Senator the Hon Doug Cameron
<i>Shadow Assistant Minister for Early Childhood</i>	<i>Senator the Hon Jacinta Collins</i>
Shadow Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry	Hon Joel Fitzgibbon MP

Title	Shadow Minister
Shadow Minister for Rural and Regional Australia	Hon Joel Fitzgibbon MP
<i>Shadow Assistant Minister for Rural and Regional Australia</i>	<i>Lisa Chesters MP</i>
Shadow Minister for Resources and Northern Australia	Hon Jason Clare MP
Shadow Minister for Trade and Investment	Hon Jason Clare MP
Shadow Minister for Trade in Services	Hon Dr Andrew Leigh MP
Shadow Minister Assisting for Resources	Tim Hammond MP
<i>Shadow Assistant Minister for Northern Australia</i>	<i>Hon Warren Snowdon MP</i>
Shadow Minister for Immigration and Border Protection	Hon Shayne Neumann MP
Shadow Minister for Finance	Dr Jim Chalmers MP
Shadow Minister for Small Business and Financial Services⁽²⁾	Senator Katy Gallagher
Manager of Opposition Business in the Senate	Senator Katy Gallagher
<i>Shadow Assistant Minister for Small Business</i>	<i>Julie Owens MP</i>
Shadow Minister for Communications	Hon Michelle Rowland MP
Shadow Minister for Regional Communications	Stephen Jones MP
Shadow Minister for Ageing and Mental Health⁽³⁾	Hon Julie Collins MP
<i>Shadow Assistant Minister for Ageing</i>	<i>Senator Helen Polley</i>
<i>Shadow Assistant Minister for Mental Health</i>	<i>Senator Deborah O'Neill</i>

Each box represents a portfolio except for (1) which is in the Education portfolio, (2) which is in Treasury portfolio and (3) which is in the Health portfolio. **Shadow Cabinet Ministers are shown in bold type.**

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Wednesday, 23 November 2016

The SPEAKER (Hon. Tony Smith) took the chair at 09:30, made an acknowledgement of country and read prayers.

BILLS

Corporations Amendment (Professional Standards of Financial Advisers) Bill 2016

First Reading

Bill and explanatory memorandum presented by **Ms O'Dwyer**.

Bill read a first time.

Second Reading

Ms O'DWYER (Higgins—Minister for Revenue and Financial Services) (09:31): I move:

That this bill be now read a second time.

Today I introduce a bill that will amend the Corporations Act. It will raise the education, training and ethical standards of financial advisers by requiring financial advisers to hold a degree, undertake a professional year, pass an exam, undertake continuous professional development and comply with a code of ethics.

In introducing this bill today, we are implementing our commitment set out in the government's response to the Financial System Inquiry (FSI). With its introduction, we are also responding to recommendations made by the Parliamentary Joint Committee (PJC) on Corporations and Financial Services inquiry into proposals to lift the professional, ethical and education standards in the financial services industry.

This government is committed to ensuring Australia has a financial services regulatory regime that enhances confidence and trust by fostering an environment in which financial firms treat customers fairly.

Creating a holistic professional standards framework to raise the competency and professionalism of financial advisers is an important part of our commitment.

Raising the professional standards of financial advisers will play a significant role in improving consumer trust in the financial advice industry, which has had repeated instances of inappropriate behaviour.

Reduced trust acts as a barrier to consumers seeking financial advice, which is an extremely poor outcome for both consumers and industry.

We probably should not be surprised then, that right now only one in every five Australians seeks financial advice.

Appropriate financial advice can significantly improve people's financial wellbeing. That is why we simply must improve trust in the industry so that consumers can have confidence in the advice they are seeking—so that they can have recourse to the kind of strategic advice, expertise and knowledge that most everyday people do not normally hold.

Equally important is the sustainable future of the financial advice industry, which is integral to our economy.

I note that the proposed reforms follow important steps already taken by the government to improve the transparency and accountability of financial advice.

We have already established a register of financial advisers that allows consumers to verify the credentials of financial advisers and be confident that they are appropriately qualified and experienced.

We are also progressing reforms to life insurance advice remuneration structures. These reforms are an important step in addressing concerns that remuneration incentives are affecting the quality of advice provided to consumers and encouraging the unnecessary turnover of policies.

The government has consulted extensively on the measures in this bill, which build on the model proposed by the PJC on Corporations and Financial Services, chaired by my colleague Senator David Fawcett, and the recommendations of the FSI. This is an excellent example of different segments of industry working together to build a workable model.

I note that both the FSI and PJC reviews identified that the existing professional standards for financial advisers are too low and do not ensure that all financial advisers have the necessary skills to provide high-quality advice to consumers.

These reviews recognise that the current regulatory framework was not enough to build professionalism in the financial advice industry and has not encouraged this industry to take a greater lead in setting standards.

It is clear that the current framework lacks the incentives to encourage industry to go above and beyond the minimum.

For example, under the current law, advisers can become qualified to provide financial advice after just four days of training, and there are no specific ongoing training requirements beyond that.

There is now widespread support among industry, consumer groups, the government and parliament to raise education, training and ethical standards of financial advisers.

It is clear that the time is right and we must take advantage of this momentum.

The establishment of the standards body will be the first important step on the road to professionalism.

Under this proposed legislation, we will establish a standards body, as a Commonwealth company limited guarantee, to set education standards, professional year and continuing professional development requirements.

The body will also develop an exam and a comprehensive code of ethics for all financial advisers.

Establishing the standards body as a Commonwealth company will balance the body's independence with industry and consumer engagement.

It will also minimise the government's footprint and allow for the possibility of easily transferring the standards body back to industry once trust and confidence in the sector is restored.

The government will have no direct control over the entity's day-to-day operations, but, should the body not comply with its obligations, the responsible minister may give the body a written direction.

Such a direction would only occur in very exceptional circumstances.

The government will be responsible for all appointments to the board, which will comprise an independent chair, three industry representatives, three consumer representatives, an academic and an ethicist.

Industry will have a key role in the proposed model and will be consulted extensively as the body sets standards.

This is critical because industry must have a stake in the standards-making process if it is to be truly professional and to develop standards above the minimum.

Under the reforms, financial advisers who provide personal advice to retail clients on more complex products will need to meet these new standards.

Financial advisers who are only authorised to provide general advice or personal advice on less complex financial products, such as general insurance, will not be required to comply with the new standards.

The Australian Securities and Investments Commission will continue to set education and training standards for advisers who are only authorised to provide general advice or advice on less complex products.

New financial advisers will require a degree, while existing advisers will need to meet a standard equivalent to a degree set by the standards body.

While the detail will ultimately be set by the new standards body, it is important to note that not all existing advisers will have to return to university and complete a three-year degree program.

Some may not, but a majority are likely to receive credit for the education or training that they have already completed and will need only to gap-fill or undertake bridging courses to meet the standard required.

Existing advisers have from 1 January 2019 to 1 January 2024 to meet the new education standards.

While I commend the actions of some licensees who have already introduced a degree requirement for their financial advisers, government action is necessary in this space to ensure minimum standards apply across the whole industry.

The FSI found that low adviser competence was a factor in many of the recent high-profile instances of consumers receiving inappropriate financial advice and contributed to the low demand for financial advice.

The fact that an adviser could reach accreditation in four days has given the industry a bad image.

That is obviously not good enough and there is clearly room to do better if the industry is to reach its true potential.

A core feature of these reforms is the requirement that all advisers complete an exam set by the new standards body.

Such a requirement already exists in the United States, Britain, Canada, Singapore and Hong Kong.

New advisers will need to complete the exam from 1 January 2019. Existing advisers will have from this date until 1 January 2021 to pass the exam.

Collectively with the other measures in this bill, the exam will play a significant role in improving professional standards of financial advisers.

It will objectively test and strengthen the practical and ethical knowledge of existing advisers with immediate effect and will help renew confidence in the industry without significant lag times.

From 1 January 2019, all new entrants will need to undertake a professional year set by the new standards body.

This will involve at least one year of work and training to ensure that new entrants are mentored and assessed before they are fully authorised to provide unsupervised advice to clients.

Under the reforms, new entrants who have completed their degree and passed the exam will be able to provide advice on a supervised basis during the professional year.

The professional year trainee will be required to disclose to clients that they are completing the professional year and that they are not permitted to give advice unsupervised.

The Register of Financial Advisers will clearly show that the person is completing their professional year and only authorised to give advice under strict supervision.

A supervising adviser will need to ensure that the new financial adviser is appropriately supervised and take responsibility for all advice given by the new financial adviser during the professional year.

The standards body will develop guidelines on what constitutes 'appropriate supervision'.

Existing advisers will not need to undertake a professional year.

All advisers, both new and existing, will be required to undertake continuing professional development.

The new standards body will determine the requirements for continuing professional development, including the number of hours that advisers need to complete and which courses satisfy the requirements.

This requirement will ensure financial advisers are keeping up to date with relevant training, information, skills and knowledge to make sure that they remain competent in providing advice to consumers.

Roy Morgan reported in its 2014 *State of the nation* report that only 25 per cent of Australians rate financial planners' standards of ethics and honesty as 'very high' or 'high'.

This percentage must improve if the financial services industry is to meet the expectations of consumers.

In a more recent survey, up to 85 per cent of practicing financial advisers indicated that they support the introduction of a single unified code of ethics.

It is clear that financial advisers are hearing these concerns.

On the back of these concerns and the recommendations by the PJC, the government is requiring all financial advisers to subscribe to a code of ethics by 1 January 2020.

The new standards body will establish a single uniform code of ethics that will set out principles designed to help financial advisers conduct business honestly and with integrity.

All financial advisers will need to be covered by an ASIC approved compliance scheme, which will set out how the code will be monitored and enforced.

The compliance scheme will set out the arrangements for monitoring compliance, the sanctions for breaching the code, the process for consumers to make complaints, and the process for resolving disputes between the monitoring body and the financial adviser.

The compliance scheme will specify which 'monitoring body' is responsible for enforcing compliance—this could be either a professional association or a third party who is independent of the licensee.

It is important to note the significant role that professional associations, independent third parties and licensees will play in implementing these reforms.

These institutions will be directly responsible for ensuring financial advisers comply with the new standards.

Professional associations are likely to offer training and education services to their members, to assist them to prepare and to meet the new standards.

I note that many of these associations, particularly those in the Industry Consensus Group, have been instrumental in the development of these reforms.

I would like to thank Senator David Fawcett and the members of the PJC for their important contributions and I also wish to acknowledge the work of my predecessors.

It is anticipated that the new standards body will be established by mid-2017.

The new education, exam, professional year and continuing professional development requirements apply from 1 January 2019.

Existing advisers will have until 1 January 2021 to pass the exam and 1 January 2024 to meet the degree-equivalent requirement.

The provisions relating to the code of ethics take effect from 1 January 2020.

In closing, I note that these reforms represent a necessary and valuable change to the current regulatory environment for financial advisers, and are important steps in professionalising the industry.

Not only will they deliver significant benefits to consumers, they will also help maintain trust and confidence in the financial system. I commend the bill to the House.

Debate adjourned.

Crimes Legislation Amendment (International Crime Cooperation and Other Measures) Bill 2016

First Reading

Bill and explanatory memorandum presented by **Mr Keenan**.

Bill read a first time.

Second Reading

Mr KEENAN (Stirling—Minister for Justice and Minister Assisting the Prime Minister for Counter-Terrorism) (09:46): I move:

That this bill be now read a second time.

The government is committed to ensuring Australia's criminal justice framework is as strong as it can be—striking the right balance between protecting fundamental rights while ensuring justice is served. We are committed to ensuring our law enforcement and justice agencies have the requisite powers to appropriately contribute to the fight against crime at home and abroad.

To that end, we keep our criminal justice framework under constant review—our agencies, policies, laws and processes—to ensure that we have a regime in place that is well equipped for the job of tackling crime.

The bill about which I speak today—the Crimes Legislation Amendment (International Crime Cooperation and Other Measures) Bill 2016—is another example of our efforts in this respect. It is a comprehensive bill—11 schedules in length—which contains a range of measures that will strengthen the Commonwealth's already robust criminal justice arrangements.

The bill will enhance Australia's position globally in the fight against crime, making improvements to our international crime cooperation arrangements and our ability to assist international courts and tribunals.

It will make amendments to the Commonwealth's Anti-Money Laundering and Counter-Terrorism Financing Act to both strengthen that regime and make reporting requirements within it more flexible.

It will amend the AusCheck Act to bolster the government's ability to address serious risks, such as national security and safety risks, related to large-scale events of a national character.

The bill will also enhance the Commonwealth's anti-human trafficking and slavery regime and the protections afforded to vulnerable witnesses within our criminal justice system.

Finally, the bill will make a number of minor amendments to:

- streamline the annual reporting processes under the War Crimes Act, and
- enhance the Australian Federal Police's drug and alcohol testing arrangements, enabling it to maintain the integrity of its workforce and enforce its zero-tolerance policy regarding illicit drug use.

The bill also contains minor consequential amendments to facilitate the use of the Australian Criminal Intelligence Commission as an alternative name for the Australian Crime Commission.

I do not propose elaborating in detail on all of the measures I have just outlined that are contained in the bill. I would, however, like to draw the attention to some of the more significant measures.

International crime cooperation measures

As many of us here appreciate, international crime cooperation is an essential part of fighting crime in Australia and across the world.

Australia needs to ensure that criminals cannot evade prosecution or profit from crime because the evidence or proceeds of their crimes are located in different countries, or because they can move easily across borders.

Amendments in the bill will ensure Australia can respond effectively to requests for assistance from foreign countries and international bodies, in accordance with our international obligations. They will also ensure that the rules on adducing foreign material in Australian proceedings apply consistently throughout Australia. The amendments have been identified from practical experience and will provide certainty in the operation of key provisions.

Specifically, the bill will enhance Australia's ability to assist international courts and tribunals. These bodies are responsible for investigating and prosecuting individuals accused of committing the most serious crimes of concern to the international community, including the crime of genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes.

The bill will align the assistance Australia can provide to the International Criminal Court and international war crimes tribunals with the assistance we can provide in criminal matters to foreign countries. Australia's authority to provide assistance to these bodies is currently more limited than our capacity to assist foreign countries. The bill will permit forensic procedures, surveillance activities and telecommunications information to the international bodies.

The assistance would be subject to the same processes that currently apply to the assistance provided to foreign countries and to similar safeguards that apply to the use of these powers for foreign and domestic law enforcement purposes.

The bill will also amend Australia's mutual assistance regime, to enhance the assistance that Australia can provide in response to a mutual assistance request from a foreign country in a criminal matter.

These amendments will ensure that proceeds of crime investigative tools in the Mutual Assistance Act align with those in the Proceeds of Crime Act. They will also modify provisions in the Proceeds of Crime Act appropriately for the foreign context.

The amendments will also clarify the types of foreign proceeds of crime orders for which mutual assistance can be provided and confirm that the Mutual Assistance Act applies to interim foreign proceeds of crime orders that are issued by non-judicial government bodies.

The bill will also amend the Extradition Act to ensure that judicial officers and relevant courts have sufficient powers to order the remand of a person in an appropriate facility to await extradition following a surrender decision. This will improve the operation of the extradition process and assist Australia to meet its international extradition obligations.

Finally, the bill will also make amendments to the Foreign Evidence Act. These amendments will ensure consistent application of the rules relating to foreign evidence throughout Australia.

They will provide a process to certify material received from a foreign country in response to a mutual assistance request in terrorism-related proceedings. This will ensure that the certification is prima facie evidence of the fact of such receipt.

Vulnerable witness protections

I would also like to highlight the bill's proposed enhancements to the Commonwealth's existing vulnerable witness protections.

The government is committed to supporting and protecting vulnerable witnesses giving evidence in Commonwealth criminal proceedings.

The amendments will ensure the existing offence of identifying child witnesses or vulnerable adult complainants also extends to child complainants.

The bill will also amend relevant legislation to clarify that the protections afforded to vulnerable witnesses apply to future criminal proceedings, regardless of when the alleged offence occurred.

In relation to the Commonwealth's human trafficking and slavery offences, the bill seeks to broaden the definition of 'debt bondage'. It will also expand the relevant evidence that may be taken into account in determining elements of human trafficking and slavery-related offences.

Anti-money laundering and counter-terrorism financing amendments

In respect of the Commonwealth's anti-money laundering and counterterrorism financing framework, the bill makes several amendments. Firstly, to allow travellers departing Australia to electronically report cross-border movements of physical currency—currently, travellers who are carrying \$10,000 or more in cash must provide a written report at a specific time and point. The proposed amendments will maintain existing reporting requirements, but provide the necessary flexibility to ensure that a new digital form can also be used.

The bill will also list the Australian Charities and Not-For-Profits Commission—the ACNC—as a designated agency under the AML/CTF Act. This will enable the ACNC to access financial intelligence information to assess money laundering and terrorist financing risks associated with charities that register with the ACNC. In turn, this will enable the ACNC to better detect, monitor and halt money laundering, terrorist financing and other criminal activities involving ACNC-registered entities.

AusCheck Act amendments

Finally, I would like to mention the AusCheck Act amendments.

These will enable AusCheck, a business unit within the Attorney-General's Department, to conduct and coordinate background checks in relation to major national events such as the 2018 Commonwealth Games.

These amendments will enable the government to prevent persons who pose serious risks, such as persons of national security concern, from working or volunteering at major national events and contributing to serious incidents.

The amendments will provide me—as the minister—with a power to declare a major national event by legislative instrument. They will also permit regulations to be made in relation to the conduct and coordination of background checks for a major national event.

The term 'major national event' is intended to capture a type of event that is of such a large scale and national character that it would benefit from the coordination of security and other arrangements by the Commonwealth or across more than one jurisdiction in Australia. Some examples of events that, if held in Australia, could be characterised as major national events include the Commonwealth Games, the G20, the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation meeting and major international sporting events. In declaring an event as a major national event, I—as

the minister—must be satisfied that it is in the national interest that the Commonwealth be involved in the conduct and coordination of background checks in connection with the accreditation of people in relation to the event.

Using the established AusCheck scheme for these purposes will ensure that the background checks can be facilitated through established mechanisms, which are well supported by technical channels and legal frameworks.

Conclusion

Australia's criminal justice framework is both fair and strong. But it never serves to be complacent. Where we find opportunities to fine-tune aspects of our regime, we will take these up. This bill, which is very comprehensive in nature, is an example of the government doing exactly that.

Debate adjourned.

MOTIONS

Equal Rights

Reference to Federation Chamber

Ms MARINO (Forrest—Chief Government Whip) (09:57): I declare that the following order of the day, government business, is referred to the Federation Chamber for debate: Equal rights for all Australians—Resumption of debate on the motion of the Prime Minister.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

Annual Investment Statement

Mr CIOBO (Moncrieff—Minister for Trade, Tourism and Investment) (09:57): by leave—I have the honour to present the coalition's third Investment Statement to the parliament.

Introduction—why investment

This annual statement is to update the parliament—and the Australian people—on our work promoting Australia as a place for productive foreign investment. There are many strong views on the sort of investment Australia should accept. This is an important and welcome discussion and we need to engage with the range of views expressed by the Australian community.

Like most important things, there are sensitivities, risks and opportunities. However, it is only by examining them and considering our options that we can best respond and make sure we are doing the right thing. At a time when there are questions around globalisation and rising protectionist sentiment I do not resile from liberalisation and this investment statement is an opportunity to explain why.

I have just come from the APEC ministers' meeting in Peru, where I saw firsthand how Australia's leadership is continuing to shape the development and implementation of pro-growth trade and investment rules and standards in our region. Liberalised trade and openness to foreign investment builds productive economies—this is how we prosper and grow.

Foreign investment in context

Australia is the world's sixth largest landmass, with the world's 13th biggest economy, but ranks only 52nd by population. So it is only natural that our tremendous national endowments

generate greater investment opportunities than we can fund from our own savings. We have been tapping savings from abroad—foreign investment—for almost every decade for at least 150 years.

By supplementing our savings with the savings of others from overseas, we drive more investment here at home, generating higher growth, more jobs with higher wages, and raise more tax revenue to fund for example our schools and hospitals, than if we only invested what we saved ourselves and shunned foreign investment.

That is why the coalition government expanded the traditional role of trade minister to be the minister for investment as well. My job as minister for investment, and the work of my agencies, is to promote and attract productive foreign investment and to ensure Australia remains an attractive destination for that investment.

This means investment that:

- builds on our strengths
- helps us retain and create new jobs
- build competitive industries here at home; and
- helps us deliver our expertise to the world.

The areas this government has made a priority—in partnership with Australia's states and territories—are these areas which back our strengths:

- major infrastructure
- tourism infrastructure
- food and agribusiness
- resources and energy; and
- advanced manufacturing, services and technologies

To support these priorities, since 2013 the coalition has:

- Delivered Australia a unique 'FTA investment advantage'. The North Asian FTAs deliver unmatched preferential access, providing a powerful incentive for investors to expand businesses here and hire more workers to capitalise on our newly-won trade advantage in these key markets.
- Held around 100 investment roundtables with companies investing, or interested to invest, in Australia. I have hosted 28 of these since February this year as well as many bilateral investment meetings that have encouraged new investment, helped maintain our relationships with existing investors, and helped resolve issues and facilitate investment that otherwise may not have happened.
- - Because we know that most new foreign direct investment is additional; re-investment by those who already see the value of investing in Australia.
- Austrade, our investment attraction agency, has recorded 271 new investment outcomes, with a reported value of almost A\$17 billion, creating or safeguarding at least 30,000 jobs here in Australia.
- Over this term, I will continue to promote Australia as a destination for global investment dollars, to drive jobs and growth.

In 2015 the stock of foreign investment in Australia was made up of portfolio and other investment, representing some \$2.3 trillion, and foreign direct investment, representing some \$735 billion, for a total of around \$3 trillion.

The major sources of this investment were the United States, some \$860 billion, the United Kingdom, around \$500 billion, the remainder of the EU, representing some \$491 billion, and Japan, of some \$200 billion. Chinese investment is growing rapidly from a low base and at the end of 2015 represented around A\$75 billion. The emergence of China is the latest in successive waves of foreign investment in our history which started with the United Kingdom, then the United States and then Japan.

The quantum of new foreign direct investment into Australia in 2015 was valued at \$117.9 billion. This was down some \$38.7—or roughly 24.7 per cent—on the amount invested into Australia in 2014.

These trends are outlined in the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade's third annual International Investment Report which I will release today.

Although annual investment data tends to be lumpy, with large investments in one year—such as through the recent peak of the LNG investment boom—which causes spikes, these figures show that we cannot be complacent about our attractiveness as a destination for foreign investment.

Amidst subdued global growth, there is fierce competition for global investment. So Australia must redouble its efforts if we are to remain internationally competitive, to attract new investment, to retain and expand existing investment, and thereby safeguard Australian jobs.

This means ensuring Australia keeps up with the pack in terms of a globally and regional competitive corporate tax rate—this is why the coalition plans to lower company tax to 25 per cent over the medium term.

This means providing an attractive environment for start-ups and entrepreneurs—as was introduced last year through the coalition's National Innovation and Science Agenda.

This means deepening our trade and investment relationships with key markets including Indonesia, the European Union and the United Kingdom; and progressing transformational regional agreements such as the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership, to link us into regional value chains.

As for the TPP, the government has been clear on the very substantial new opportunities for our exporters and investors that would flow from this agreement, in particular the creation of a more seamless trade and investment environment across the region. My recent meetings in Lima revealed a widespread view among all TPP parties on the value of the deal. We have since seen public comments by President-elect Trump which appear to signal an intention to withdraw from the TPP. We will need to wait for more detail from the US administration after it has come to office, but in the meantime the Australian government remains committed to pushing to realise the high ambition, comprehensive outcomes that were embedded in the TPP.

Importance of foreign investment

Australia has long had export awards, but we are introducing something new this year. A national investment award.

Tomorrow night, I will announce the winner of our inaugural Investment Award.

This award will highlight some of the enduring, substantial, creative and new investments in our country that we should recognise and celebrate.

If we look at the nominees for the inaugural Investment Award, put forward by states and territories and Austrade, those seven companies and their joint venture partners have invested more than A\$138 billion in Australia and created or retained over 53,000 jobs.

We will be talking more about those seven in the coming days.

More generally, if you look at the 37 per cent of Australia's top 2,000 companies that are foreign-owned, these companies firms account for A\$1.1 trillion of assets in Australia, generate revenue of A\$629.3 billion and employed nearly 700,000 people in 2014-2015.

It is important we celebrate the jobs that new investment drives. Not everyone sees the value of investment openness. As with liberalised trade, some see it as a threat to their standard of living, rather than an opportunity to improve it.

When it comes to investment, we often hear about the bad but not the good. The nature of news means the factory that is closing gets more coverage than the one opening.

You have heard about the Ford plant closing, but not the \$1 billion Boeing has invested in Australia that is creating opportunities for engineering and machining companies to diversify and win new markets in the international aerospace market.

This is the case for Lovitt Technologies, a supplier to Boeing, one of the finalists, incidentally, for the investment awards.

Australia has had an enviable 25 years of economic growth, but this does not mean people have been unaffected by the challenges posed by disruptive technologies and global competition.

I know people are concerned about whether we can overcome these challenges.

Whether working hard will be sufficient to hold on to their jobs and their standard of living.

Whether our children will have the same opportunities to build good lives.

Whether our economic success story can continue.

Productive foreign investment, the investment this government promotes, is one of our best ways of confidently meeting those challenges.

Investment from outside of Australia has been critical to the development of our world-leading export industries.

Our mining boom would not have happened without foreign investment to develop the infrastructure, expertise and supply chains around the world we needed to make us the global resources powerhouse we are today.

For example, companies like Mitsui, whose long term investments and joint ventures in Australia employ an estimated 20,000 Australians, were instrumental in the development of the Pilbara's iron ore and the Bowen Basin's coal.

With Australia's transition to a new economy, opportunities in renewable energy are driving significant investments, particularly in hydro, wind and solar.

Companies like Neoen, from France, RATCH, from Thailand, and Goldwind from China are helping Australia reach its clean energy targets.

Investment award nominee Neoen out of France has close to A\$1 billion investment planned to date, including projects in South Australia, Western Australia and New South Wales. Neoen sees ongoing opportunities in Australia across all states and is ready to commit another A\$1 billion in renewable energy projects by 2020.

And, Australia is poised to become the world's largest exporter of LNG, when major projects come online. Projects like US company Chevron's Gorgon and Wheatstone developments in WA, and Japanese company Inpex's Ichthys project in Darwin.

These investments support the growth of small- and medium-size businesses like Total Marine Technology in Bibra Lake, Western Australia, whose CEO Paul Colley says:

We weren't sure our credentials were established enough to supply ... to a project as large as Gorgon. Chevron listened to us and TMT was awarded one of the most significant contracts in our history. ... In addition to doubling our number of employees, we've grown internationally with offices in Brazil and Malaysia.

We understand that in today's global world it is important for small Australian businesses, the engine room of our economy, to be part of the global economy.

Global value chains—where many countries are involved in producing a final good or service—now support 75 per cent of the world's trade and investment activity.

Boeing's investment in Australia is a great example of foreign investment that is creating jobs, driving innovation and supporting access to global value chains at the same time.

In Melbourne alone, Boeing has created jobs for around 1,200 Australians who make control surfaces and flaps for Boeing aircraft at Fisherman's Bend.

Working with the CSIRO—and ten local universities—Boeing's R&D investment in Australia has also helped us to become world leaders in developing new aviation products.

And Boeing's global supply chain has supported Australian companies win global supply contracts. In 2015 alone, more than 1,000 Australian companies were suppliers in Boeing's global supply chain. That year, Boeing spent approximately \$400 million on its Australian suppliers. Companies like Lovitt Technologies that have worked with Boeing for over 20 years.

Bruce Ramsay, Lovitt's Manufacturing Director says, 'Working with Boeing has given Lovitt the opportunity to grow from an automotive tooling supplier into a globally competitive aerospace component manufacturer.'

Let me be perfectly clear, this is investment that enables Australian businesses to connect with multinational companies.

It is investment that brings enduring jobs in Australia.

Investment is a two-way street

Let's not forget—Australia does not just receive investment from overseas, we have significant investment abroad.

We want an open and transparent global playing field for trade and investment. And Australia is helping to drive those objectives regionally and globally—in the G20 through developing guiding principles for investment policymakers and in the FTAs that we negotiate, including provisions to support Australian firms' ability to deliver goods and services overseas.

Promoting global openness matters for Australian companies. More than two-thirds of the goods and services supplied by Australia to the European Union, New Zealand and the United States are by Australian firms on the ground in those countries, using Australian skills and expertise.

For example, when I was in London recently I rode the iconic red London buses, operated by Australia's very own Transit Systems which runs part of the bus network in London and also in Singapore.

Government is protecting the national interest

The Foreign Investment Review Board (FIRB) monitors foreign investment to ensure it is not against our national interest. It is important to note that just because we accept foreign investment we do not lose the ability to set the rules that all companies (both domestic and foreign-owned) must comply with.

All companies are subject to our legislation and regulations, be it our taxation laws, our environmental and safety standards and our labour market requirements. We are not losing control of these things by accepting foreign investment.

In terms of critical infrastructure, we know risks must be managed carefully, and we will have more to say on this in the near future. In those rare cases where substantial problems are identified, the government will not hesitate to take appropriate action to safeguard Australia's national interests. This is why the Treasurer rejected the proposed acquisition of Ausgrid.

But outright rejections are rare; we continue to welcome foreign investment in critical infrastructure. For example, I was pleased to see a consortium comprising Australian and international investors participate in the Port of Melbourne lease.

Investment in agricultural land is also a touchstone issue here. This is why we have tightened the FIRB screening thresholds for agricultural land and agribusiness and established an agricultural land ownership register to help provide some facts around levels of foreign ownership.

It turns out that foreign investors held only 13.6 per cent of Australian agricultural land (as at 30 June 2016), and the biggest investors in agricultural land are the United Kingdom and the United States. China comes in fifth, holding only 0.4 per cent of Australia's agricultural land.

But we need investment to build on the great potential of our agricultural and food sector and to maximise its capacity to take advantage of the growth opportunities throughout our region. ANZ has estimated we need additional investment of \$1 trillion if we are to double our agricultural exports by 2050.

We can look to examples of where there has been controversy and reflect on the results. At 96,000 hectares, about the size of Iceland, Cubbie Station is one of Queensland's most significant agricultural land holdings. Less than five years ago, Chinese textile firm Shandong

Ruyi lifted Cubbie out of five years of voluntary administration with an investment of \$240 million. Today, it is hard to find a bad word about Cubbie Station or its foreign owner in Dirranbandi. Despite all the initial concerns, Cubbie's operations have stayed local. It is the lifeblood of farmers and local businesses. It is reported that more locals than ever are working on the crops, which will be worth more than \$85 million when they ripen next April.

It is not just those on the farm that benefit. Local businesses that might otherwise have suffered are benefiting from what is now a viable business at Cubbie. In the words of John Travers, Manager of the local agricultural machinery and truck dealership, Vanderfield:

Any concerns around the acquisition were quickly allayed because changes in the operations were unnoticeable. They remained loyal to their contractors and suppliers and recognised that we are part of the supply chain.

Foreign investment delivers not just jobs for those directly employed, but also practical, tangible benefits for many other Australians through the goods and services that are produced. The benefits of foreign investment can come in all sorts of different ways.

For instance, the entry of German discount supermarket Aldi has not only increased competition in Australia's supermarket sector. With plans to sell groceries and wine online to China in the first half of 2017, to be followed by establishing stores there, its regional expansion is building Australian jobs and Australian exports.

State and territory governments are also harnessing foreign investment. With assistance from foreign money and capability, they are creating tens of thousands of jobs across the country, while building the infrastructure we need to cut travel times and to get us to and from home even faster.

Projects like the Sydney Metro Northwest will cut travel time from 90 to 35 minutes and reduce car trips by 14 million a year. It will be delivered with investment from Hong Kong company MTR. It means new jobs now and broader benefits for decades to come.

And let us not forget our tourism sector, which directly accounts for one in every 20 Australian jobs. It is of particular importance to the regions, where 45 cents in every tourism dollar is spent. In my constituency alone, tourism directly employed some 30,400 people, with another 20,000 indirect jobs, and contributed some \$4.9 billion to the Gold Coast economy in 2013-14. But major investment in tourism is needed if we are to sustain this and fully benefit from the higher demand predicted to flow from the growth of Asia's middle class, from 600 million to three billion by 2030.

Our hotels, resorts and tourist attractions need upgrading with new investment. The Sheraton Mirage Port Douglas Resort was relaunched in August this year following an extensive \$43 million refurbishment of the resort's 294 guest rooms and their public spaces by Chinese company Fullshare Industrial Holding Group. Here again, foreign investment is helping to make Australia globally competitive, continuing a pattern of successive waves of foreign investment. We saw significant Japanese investment in Queensland hotels and resorts in the 1980s. Many of these assets eventually ended up in local hands. Sources of capital may change but the resulting infrastructure endures.

Today we welcome investment in tourism from new sources. TFE Hotels, established in 2013, is a joint venture between Australia's Toga Group and Singapore's Far East Hospitality Holdings. Operating 70 hotels nationally, with brands like Medina, Travelodge and Vibe, its

presence sprawls across Australia opening doors to tourism in northern cities such as Darwin and Rockhampton.

Conclusion

We are a proud and capable country. We have world-leading ideas, technology, and skills. We are embracing the challenges the global economy presents. Investment is a crucial element in our strategy to retain and create new jobs and economic opportunities—to safeguard what we have now and what we want for the future, and to project our capability into the world.

The right investment will support substantial and enduring jobs, sustain our businesses and local communities, build on our strengths and our potential. That is why as the Minister for Trade, Tourism and Investment I will continue to welcome foreign investment here at home and be at the forefront of efforts to maintain Australia's openness abroad.

Dr LEIGH (Fenner) (10:22): I rise representing the member for Blaxland, who is Labor's shadow minister for trade and investment and is presently on parental leave. At the outset I note that the opposition were not provided in advance with a copy of the statement or the document that the minister has tabled, so my comments will be of a general nature responding to the minister's speech and discussing the coalition's role in the fall in Australian investment that we have seen over recent years.

Labor acknowledges the benefits to Australia of foreign investment. As Senator Wong recently noted:

Last year Australians saved just over \$363 billion, yet investment in our economy was nearly \$425 billion. This was, of course, nothing out of the ordinary.

Over the last four decades, the gap between Australia's national savings and investment has averaged around 4 per cent of GDP.

By tapping into foreign investment Australia is using the savings of other nations in order to finance investment in our own country. Foreign investment ensures that we enjoy higher living standards and that we have a more productive economy and more sustainable industries. To do away with foreign investment would be to see employment decrease, wages fall, prices rise and the choices offered to consumers decrease.

As the shadow minister for trade and investment, Jason Clare, has noted:

Asia is the key to Australia's success in the years ahead. There'll be three billion middle class consumers north of us by 2030 and the key for Australia is making sure that we sell our products and our services to Asia—that we get our fair share of that market.

The member for Blaxland has noted Labor's strong history of support for open markets.

As the minister has noted, the statistics on inbound investment are concerning. An OECD report brought down in April this year noted that foreign direct investment flows to Australia fell by A\$23 billion, or 44 per cent, last year. That came despite inbound FDI inflows across the OECD's 34 member nations almost doubling in 2015. And it followed disappointing investment results for Australia in 2014, when foreign direct investment inflows declined by 30 per cent. So under the coalition in recent years we have seen a decline in Australia's inbound investment. I will return later in my remarks to the role that coalition policies may have played in that fall.

But it is important to put on record the role that foreign investment has played in the development of the Australian economy. In 1855 CSR's investment helped to shape our sugar industry. In 1877 we saw the United States firm Schweppes set up in Australia. In the 1920s we saw Kraft and Kellogg investing in Australia and, as David Uren points out in his terrific book on foreign investment, one of the great ironies is that Vegemite may never have become the global success story that it is without foreign investment from Kraft.

Foreign investment in our beef industry from Britain, the United States and Japan has been critical in developing that industry. Investors like the controversial Vestey family, International Ranchers and King Ranch, from Texas, have been important in our beef industry. Kodak set up here in 1908, Coca-Cola and Heinz in the 1930s and of course there is automotive foreign investment. The foreign investment in Australia by automotive firms, including General Motors, Ford, Chrysler, Leyland, Toyota and Nissan, were important in creating well-paying Australian jobs. And the role of this government in goading Holden to leave has had a damaging effect, particularly on the South Australian economy. The withdrawal of foreign investment is one of the chief challenges that South Australia faces at the moment.

Foreign investment has also been important in the media industry. I often have to chuckle when I see stories in tabloids railing against foreign investment. Without foreign investment from companies such as News Limited there would be fewer Australian journalists employed in Australia.

Labor's support for foreign investment is longstanding and is of a piece with Labor's support for a strong immigration system and for the benefits of a global trading system. Those on the other side of the House have a track record which has not always been strongly in favour of foreign investment. Black Jack McEwen—John McEwen—once said:

It is not good enough for this country to live by selling a bit of its heritage every year. We do not want to see Australia have its industries unduly owned in foreign hands.

Prime Minister John Gorton, travelling in Britain, once said:

... it has seemed to me that the posture of Australia in seeking overseas capital has been the posture of a puppy lying on its back with all legs in the air and its stomach exposed saying please, please, please give us capital. Oh, tickle my tummy. On any conditions.

While McEwen and Gorton are long gone, their heirs are still here in this parliament in those who would prefer to fear-monger over foreign investment rather than acknowledge its benefits.

On this side of the House, Labor has been strong in arguing for economic openness. As David Uren has noted, 'Labor has staked an even more liberal position than that espoused by the Liberals.' That was starkly on display when Archer Daniel Midlands made their bid for GrainCorp—a bid that those of us on this side of the House said, based on the publicly-available information, should have been broadly supported. But it was ultimately blocked by coalition Treasurer Hockey, making it the first major United States foreign investment bid to have been blocked.

The coalition has also introduced significant amounts of red tape around Australia's foreign investment. Senator Wong has pointed out that when it came to the Foreign Acquisitions and Takeovers Legislation Amendment Bill 2015 the exposure draft and regulations accounted for

more than 170 pages and were accompanied by a 105-page explanatory guide. As one of the former Minister for Trade's own investments specialists pointed out:

... the new fees have fuelled the narrative around Australia being a high-cost destination to invest in.

What did the Office of Best Practice Regulation have to say about this?

They admitted that this new red tape burden was being imposed last year without proper assessment and with the increased regulatory burden.

Under the government's proposals, we have 22 different screening thresholds and categories, which vary depending on the value and type of investment, and the nationality of the investor. When it comes to application fees, there are 33 different levels and categories of application fees, ranging from \$5,000 to \$100,000—a twentyfold difference in application fees. To take one straightforward example, we can look at the screening threshold differences for investments in agricultural land. For investment that comes from Chile, New Zealand and the United States, the screening threshold is \$1,094 million; for investments from Singapore and Thailand—but with the caveat that the land is used wholly or exclusively for a primary production business—the screening threshold is \$50 million. For investment in agricultural land coming from other countries, the screening threshold is \$15 million.

These differential screening thresholds have raised concerns among many. When the government's Foreign Acquisitions and Takeovers Legislation Amendment Bill was released, it was criticised by the Business Council of Australia, the National Farmers' Federation, the Food and Grocery Council, the Queensland Farmers' Federation and the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Western Australia. As the Business Council of Australia noted:

The government has declared that it is 'open for business', however its recent decisions have sent the opposite message to potential international investors considering investing in the Australian agrifood sector.

Those of us on this side of the House have no objections to new investment awards, but no-one is giving this government a gold medal for its investment policy, which has discriminatory screening thresholds applied inconsistently.

We should note, too, that the government's approach to foreign investment in agricultural land has been ad hoc. The minister correctly noted that agriculture is a very small share of all foreign direct investment into Australia. As at the end of 2014, foreign direct investments into agriculture were just \$1.3 billion out of a total of \$688 billion of foreign direct investment—that is just 0.2 per cent of all foreign direct investment. By comparison, mining accounted for 39 per cent and manufacturing for 13 per cent.

But concerns have been stoked over foreign investment into Australian agricultural land, chiefly by the member for New England who is, if anyone is, the heir to 'Black Jack' McEwen in this chamber today. The minister promised that there would be a public register which would allow members of the public to see the location and size of agricultural properties with foreign ownership. He said it would be like a map of all properties 'to see who owns what'. Now the member for New England has changed his tune, saying that only the aggregated data for the new registry will be made public. To the extent that we have those data, the Australian Bureau of Statistics' Agricultural Land and Water Ownership Survey showed that 99 per cent of Australian farm businesses were fully Australian owned in 2013, that 88 per cent of farmland by area was Australian owned and that a further five per cent was majority

Australian owned. This stands in contrast with the corporate sector, where Australian financial corporations are nearly 55 per cent foreign owned and non-financial corporations are over 40 per cent foreign owned. To take one example of a large multinational, the big Australian—BHP—has the majority of its shareholders overseas.

The debate over foreign ownership of agricultural land needs to be grounded in facts, not fear. Labor supports an evidence based approach to this issue, but we are concerned when the member for New England seeks to make political capital from this issue. Indeed, his comments stand starkly in contrast to the more sober and considered statements from the minister in the chamber today.

At the last election, Labor took a policy to the Australian electorate pledging to make Australia a more attractive destination for investors and to support jobs by liberalising screening thresholds for the farm and food sectors. We pledged that Labor would increase the screening threshold for investment in agricultural land to \$50 million, non-cumulative, bringing all investors into line with the agricultural land threshold under the Howard government's trade agreements with Singapore and Thailand. We said that we would remove the agribusiness screening category, a reform that would put agribusiness on the same footing as other investors. We said that we would review the current system's discriminatory treatment of investments in non-sensitive sectors by investors from Singapore, Thailand and non-free trade agreement trading partners, as well as the treatment of agricultural land under the Foreign Investment Review Board's framework.

Labor supports the role of the Foreign Investment Review Board, established in 1972 in response to the then horrifying prospect that the Chiko Roll might be sold off to foreigners, but we do see it as important that our foreign investment screening process has more consistency to it, that it does not have discriminatory screening thresholds based on nationality.

In the few minutes remaining to me, I cannot but respond to the minister's comments on company tax. It seems that, whatever the problem is that Australia faces, this government's response is to cut the company tax rate. As the member for Blaxland noted over the weekend, if you asked them what their solution was to the current woes of the Australian cricket team, they would probably say, 'Let's bring down the company tax rate.' But we have to compare our Australian company tax rate with the company tax rate in the largest economies of the world. In the United States, the corporate tax rate is 35 per cent. In Germany, the European Union's powerhouse, it is 29.65 per cent. In the top 10 economies in the world, the average corporate tax rate is 29 per cent. Here in Australia it is 28½ per cent for small businesses and 30 per cent for larger businesses. So, even without considering imputation, the corporate tax rate in Australia is comparable to the corporate tax rate in the largest economies in the world.

Yes, there have been suggestions that, under President-elect Trump, the United States might cut its corporate tax rate. But does Australia really want to be going down the road of Trumponomics? Do we really want to get into the prospect of following a tax plan which, according to independent experts, could add between \$5 trillion and \$10 trillion to debt in the United States?

Here in Australia we have had debt rising rapidly under the coalition. Since the coalition won office, debt has risen by over \$100 billion—more than \$5,000 for every man, woman and child in Australia. The rate of increase in Australia's debt has been more rapid under the

Abbott-Turnbull governments than it was under the Rudd and Gillard governments. Under the Rudd and Gillard governments, Australian debt rose on average by \$4.5 billion per month. Of course, that debt was taken on largely in order to address the global financial crisis, the largest downturn since the Great Depression. Every serious commentator accepted that Australia had to take on debt, because after all we were only left with razor-thin surpluses from the Howard years. All serious commentators—and I think it was even accepted by sensible people in the coalition at the time—knew that Australia needed to take on debt to deal with the global financial crisis.

But, since the coalition has taken over office, in a period in which we did not have a global financial crisis, debt has risen at a rate of \$4.9 billion per month. That is right: the rate of increase in Australia's debt has been more rapid under the Abbott-Turnbull governments with no global financial crisis than it was under Labor with a global financial crisis. So now is surely not the time to talk about a massive corporate tax giveaway, a \$50 billion corporate tax cut, at a time when Australia's headline company tax rate is in line with the largest 10 economies in the world.

Of course, no serious conversation about company tax can proceed with acknowledging that we have dividend imputation, a system shared only with New Zealand in the OECD, which ensures that we give about a third of the company tax revenue back through the personal income tax system. A 30 per cent company tax rate with imputation raises about as much revenue as a 20 per cent company tax rate without imputation. So, from a fiscal perspective, Australia's headline corporation tax rate for large companies of 30 per cent ought to be compared to other countries that have a 20 per cent tax rate without imputation. This point is often either ignored or deliberately left off the table when people are comparing company tax rates. But to do so is deeply misleading and ignores the impact on the Australian budget.

So, in conclusion, Labor concurs with the coalition about the value of foreign investment in creating jobs, raising productivity, ensuring that we have more competition and lower prices. But we do believe that the coalition has presided over a fall in inbound investment and that that fall in inbound investment can be traced in part to the hodgepodge of restrictive rules that have been placed around foreign investment, to the discriminatory screening thresholds and to this government's willingness to play footsy with the extremists who want to scaremonger over a foreign investment.

The debate over foreign investment needs to be conducted soberly and sensibly, recognising its historic benefits to Australia and recognising that, through a sensible system of screening under the Foreign Investment Review Board, foreign investment can be of benefit to the Australian economy over the long run.

Mr CIOBO (Moncrieff—Minister for Trade, Tourism and Investment) (10:41): I present a copy of my ministerial statement. I move:

That the House take note of the document.

Debate adjourned.

Reference to Federation Chamber

Mr CIOBO (Moncrieff—Minister for Trade, Tourism and Investment) (10:41): by leave—I move:

That the order of the day be referred to the Federation Chamber for debate.

Question agreed to.

BILLS

Social Security Legislation Amendment (Youth Jobs Path: Prepare, Trial, Hire) Bill 2016

Second Reading

Consideration resumed of the motion:

That this bill be now read a second time.

to which the following amendment was moved:

That all the words after "That" be omitted with a view to substituting the following words:

"Whilst not declining to give the bill a second reading, the House notes that the Turnbull Government cannot guarantee that, under Youth Jobs PaTH (Prepare, Trial, Hire):

- (1) jobs will not be displaced by cheaper labour;
- (2) wages will not be undercut and some participants will be paid below minimum award wages;
- (3) participants' safety will not be compromised and that adequate insurance arrangements will be provided;
- (4) participants won't be used to help businesses sidestep unfair dismissal protections; and
- (5) it will prioritise using small to medium enterprises in PaTH because they have a demonstrated track record of employing more job seekers through the jobactive programme".

Mr BANDT (Melbourne) (10:42): Right now, young people are getting screwed. Year after year, successive Labor and Liberal governments have been making life harder for young people. They have managed the economy in the interests of the few, instead of in the interests of everyone. And it is getting harder and harder for young people to get a job, as youth unemployment is high, and it has doubled over the general unemployment rate. The jobs that young people often do get are very highly insecure and often not well paid at all.

Study is getting less and less affordable, because university and TAFE are getting more expensive. The dream of owning your own home is getting further and further out of reach, with Australian house prices skyrocketing and incomes stagnant. Yet the government is not doing anything about this. In fact, if the government has its way the problem for young people will get much, much worse. If right now young people are getting screwed, if the government gets its plans through they will be right royally stuffed.

Let's have a look at the current situation. Youth unemployment is at nearly 13 per cent. That is more than double the general national rate. An Anglicare report that was recently released found that only one job is advertised for every six low-skilled jobseekers, who are often young people who have not had the opportunity to gain much work experience. Getting a job can be even harder for people living in a regional area or for people from non-English speaking backgrounds. Young people in Melbourne have told me that if they put 'Mohammed' in their CV and they send off their job application, they hear nothing; but when they change their name to 'David', the phone starts ringing.

And increasingly there are fewer entry level jobs available for young people, making it harder for young people to get their foot in the door, to build their skills and experience, to establish a career, to gain independence, and to plan and progress their lives. The youth

unemployment rate is always higher than the general unemployment rate, and in some respects that makes sense; young people are, as a whole, doing other things, whereas older people tend to be more likely to look for work.

What we also know, as a general historical trend, is that every time there is an economic downturn, we strike hard times or there is a recession young people are hardest hit first. The lines of the youth unemployment rate and the general unemployment rate diverge when we reach hard times, and it becomes proportionately harder for young people to find work. The youth unemployment rate for them skyrockets. What we have also found historically over Australia's history is that those two lines, after a year or so, tend to converge again and it becomes easier for young people to find work. Since the GFC that has not happened in Australia. For young people the line has stayed higher. Since the GFC it has become harder proportionately than at any other time in history for young people to get back into work. The entry-level jobs since the GFC are disappearing. Those jobs that you might walk into straight out of school or that you might walk into if you do not finish school are disappearing. The jobs that this government wants young people to get just are not being created any more in the way that they used to, and it is a national crisis.

So what is this government's response? Rather than listening to expert advice on how to tackle youth unemployment or invest in new industries that might create those jobs for the future, the Liberals have taken it upon themselves to be every young Australian's tough parent, serving up some tough love by telling them to pull themselves up by their bootstraps and earn or learn. Their first plan was to kick young people off Newstart, which is itself so low that it is below the poverty line and is a barrier to people finding work, because you do not have that money to invest in yourself—to get some training, to buy the new clothes for the job interview, to even get a haircut. Their first plan was to kick people off Newstart and make them wait six weeks before they can receive this measly payment to try and support themselves. Luckily, the Senate took a stand for young people and refused to pass this ridiculous measure. Yet, the Liberals are refusing to listen, saying they only want to make young people wait four weeks before they can get Newstart. Well, four weeks—the landlord does not care that you do not have money coming from the government to pay the rent, the public transport does not care that you do not have money because it is the government's fault. But the government's approach is still to say, 'Well, we'll deal with the national youth unemployment crisis by making life tougher for young people.'

At the same time the government wants to make learning more expensive, less accessible and more exclusive by cutting support for students and deregulating our universities—a move that experts have warned could see the creation of US-style \$100,000 degrees. So it is harder to earn by getting a job because, under this government and since the GFC, the jobs are not there in the same way, it is more expensive to try and learn, and even if you are lucky enough to get a job and to keep it and to earn an income, owning your home is becoming a pipedream.

In 1990 house prices were approximately six times a young person's income. In 2013 that had doubled to approximately 12 times a young person's income. It is not the fault of smashed avocados that housing is becoming increasingly unaffordable for people. Even if you find a job and even if you find a secure job—which is pretty tough to do these days—the ratio of your income to house prices is just skyrocketing. And that has happened under the watch of

Liberal and Labor. The old parties' policies of allowing negative gearing to happen and the capital gains tax discount to continue turned housing into an unproductive investment class, and it caused an explosion in house prices, meaning that overwhelmingly the only people who could afford to buy a house are those who already have one.

The government should be making it easier for people to buy their first home not helping people who already have one to buy their second, third or fourth. The Grattan Institute found that under these and other government policies real wealth held by older households from 2003 through to 2012 grew by \$215,000, but for younger households it went backwards. In 1994 young households had nearly 10 percent of the country's wealth, but by 2014 that had effectively halved to 5.5 per cent. So over 20 years young people went from having 10 per cent of the country's wealth to having about five per cent. At the same time it dramatically increased for older generations. This is why young people are getting screwed: successive governments have worked against them, dealing them an increasingly bad hand and growing intergenerational inequality. Governments have allowed the economy to run rampant and to screw young people.

The good news is that as a society we are becoming more and more aware of just how much young people are getting screwed. Academics, think tanks and civil society organisations are all pointing out how the odds are no longer in young people's favour and how, under Liberal and Labor, we may be creating a situation where we are leaving the economy and household budgets and the planet worse off for generations that come after us rather than better. But the bad news is that the government are refusing to look at the bigger picture and are refusing to listen. They are being the unreasonable parent instead of listening to their children or experts, having blind faith that they know what is best—that is, to make people work for either nothing or next to nothing. If it were a lesson on safe sex, this is a government that would be pushing abstinence not condoms. If it were a lesson on good behaviour, this is a government that would be sending young people to their rooms rather than talking the issue through.

Instead of working systematically to even the odds and deliver a better deal for young people, on budget night this year the Liberals unveiled their master plan for getting young people a job—this Prepare, Trial, Hire scheme. What it really meant, though, was that earn or learn became burn and churn. Essentially, this government's plan to tackle high youth unemployment and help young people get a job is to lure them to work for below the minimum wage. The Liberals' plan will not provide secure and meaningful work for the hundreds of thousands of young people who are unemployed. What will do is drive down wages for other workers and see employers burn and churn through young people. In fact, it could see people currently working in these roles kicked out in favour of free money and labour, courtesy of the government. Under the program being enabled by this bill, by not having to hire someone at the usual wage employers could bank more per week than the young people who are supposedly going to get a job. In other words, this scheme will allow employers, on the public purse, to take home more money than the young people who are going to be forced to work under it. The Greens do not accept that to get young people into work they need to be paid as little as \$4 an hour, which is well below the minimum wage. That is what this scheme is about.

Following the government's unveiling of this flagship program, the Secretary of the Australian Council of Trade Unions said 'this internship program is a path to nowhere' and 'gives business access to free, exploitable workers'. He asked:

Why would a business employ a minimum wage or lower paid worker when the government is ready to supply them with free labour and a \$1000 handout?

He pointed out that these internships could include low-skilled work such as work in supermarkets, which is not a plan to create real, lasting jobs. It is simply substituting existing low-paid labour with even cheaper, government subsidised labour rather than creating new jobs.

Let us be clear about this: internships, if they are structured correctly, can be a good thing. They can provide opportunities for young people to learn and build their skills. We have had internships for a very long time. Every political party in this place, I am sure, offers internships. Community groups offer internships. Organisations like community groups and political parties thrive on getting young people involved, but when we do it—and I speak here on behalf of the Greens—we do not offer out hope to people that this is some pathway to secure employment; it is about you and increasing your skills. You are not here doing government subsidised work where you are required to turn up at a particular time and clock off at a particular time. It is not a false job—because that is not what an internship is or should be. But when you ask people, as the government is doing under this program, to clock on and clock off and get the equivalent of \$4 an hour while they hold out hope of a secure job, and you pay employers \$1,000 from the public purse to put them on and displace other workers, that is not a scheme to create lasting employment.

The simple fact is this: this is a flawed plan dreamt up in isolation by a government that thinks it knows best, but it will not help people find secure long-term work. In fact, it could just see handouts to business to force young people to work for below the minimum wage and potentially force people from a job who are currently working in these roles. There is nothing in this bill that provides protection for someone currently working in a low-paid job from being forced out of that job by this new scheme so that government subsidised cheap labour can come in instead.

We have to take action to help make life easier for young people. That means tackling rising job insecurity and tackling housing unaffordability, but this program will not do that. If we were serious, we would be investing in education. We would be investing in big job-creating projects that will provide secure work for young people—like public transport and clean energy. We would be making it easier for people to get into education and complete it and we would end the unfair tax breaks that are pushing up the cost of housing and pricing young people out of the market. And we have to do it now because otherwise we run the risk of locking an entire generation out of secure work and locking an entire generation out of owning their own home.

Ms HENDERSON (Corangamite) (10:56): It is my great pleasure to rise and speak on the Social Security Legislation Amendment (Youth Jobs Path: Prepare, Trial, Hire) Bill 2016. This bill gives effect to the Youth Jobs PaTH measure announced in the 2016-17 budget as part of our youth employment package. Very proudly, our government announced this very significant package—an \$840 million package to tackle youth unemployment in our country.

That is in contrast to members opposite, from whom we saw no national initiatives to combat what we recognise is a very significant issue across our nation.

The Youth Jobs PaTH program is aimed at maximising the chance of young jobseekers obtaining a job and moving off income support. It will do this in a number of ways, through a very significant investment of three-quarters of a billion dollars, and help some 120,000 people over four years. It will do that by getting up to 30,000 eligible young jobseekers per year ready. It will prepare them and provide them with employability skills training from 1 April 2017. It will give young people a go while trialling them by providing an internship supported by a youth bonus wage subsidy.

Mr Deputy Speaker, I seek leave to continue my remarks at a later hour, following the statement by the Prime Minister.

Leave granted.

Debate adjourned.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

National Security

Mr TURNBULL (Wentworth—Prime Minister) (10:58): by leave—I returned yesterday from the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation leaders summit in Peru. While APEC is a meeting where issues of trade and economic integration dominate, all of the leaders of economies great and small understand the threat that terrorism poses to our security and, indeed, to the relative peace in our region, which has itself been the foundation for the economic growth on which our futures and those of our children depend.

In discussions with the leaders of the United States, China, Canada, Malaysia, the Philippines, Japan and others, cooperation on counterterrorism was a focus of attention.

Few places in the world are unaffected by terrorism—whether it is returning foreign fighters or home-grown terrorists.

Today I assure the House and the Australian people of my government's steadfast commitment to ensuring Australians remain safe, secure and free.

Australia's starting point is a stronger foundation than most other nations.

Our strengths are our freedom, our diversity, our security.

These attributes are not mutually exclusive; rather they are mutually reinforcing.

Security is a prerequisite to the trust and confidence that allows a diverse and free society to flourish.

But we do face real challenges. And we must be open to them and learn lessons from events at home and abroad in order to deal with them.

We must be clear-eyed and hard-headed as we assess the evolving threat.

There is no bliss in ignorance and no comfort in complacency.

Recent terror attacks in Nice, Baghdad, Brussels, Quetta, Orlando, Kabul, Jakarta and elsewhere remind us that terrorism is a global challenge that affects us all.

That is why a critical part of our strategy is to engage internationally and to contribute to global counterterrorism efforts.

Nowhere is this engagement more important than in South-East Asia.

This region and its people are part of the fabric that shapes and defines the Australian community and our national identity. But the rising influence in our region of terrorist organisations, such as ISIL or Daesh, demands the attention and the action of Australia and its neighbours.

Daesh's insidious influence was demonstrated by terrorist attacks in Jakarta on 14 January, and again in the attack on Indonesian police on the outskirts of Jakarta on 20 October.

As I told the House in my counterterrorism update on 1 September, the next mass-casualty attack on Australian victims could be somewhere in South-East Asia, where Daesh propaganda has galvanised existing networks of extremists, preyed on vulnerable young people and attracted new recruits.

In response, my government, alongside key partners in our region, is at the forefront of regional efforts to combat terrorism and counter the destructive narratives of violent Islamic extremism.

No one country can fight terrorism on its own.

And over the past decade, we have built closer diplomatic and security relationships with our neighbours, including Indonesia, the Philippines, Malaysia, Thailand and Singapore.

It is in this context that we continue to contribute to the global fight against Daesh and other terrorist organisations.

Daesh's control of territory and resources in Iraq and Syria boost its ability to promote virulently anti-Western ideology and inspire terrorist attacks internationally.

Only last week we saw Daesh's latest propaganda, which used footage of Australian locations and Australian icons in a call for further attacks against the West.

Daesh will continue doing this in an attempt to intimidate us.

But they will not succeed.

My government and our agencies are committed to decisive action to combat and defeat Daesh through the United States-led coalition in the Middle East.

In this fight, as with virtually every other significant security challenge facing our country, our alliance with the United States is the foundation of our national security architecture.

Australia's trusted solidarity with the United States is based on mutual respect—we and we alone determine whether and how our forces are put in harm's way—but the closeness of our relationship ensures that no ally has more influence than we do.

That influence is one which is highly valued now and in the future as President Obama reminded us in Lima on Sunday.

Those who assert that our ties and our alliance with the United States should be reconsidered fail to recognise that a strong, trusted, forthright Australia is a powerful force for good whether it is on the fields of conflict or in the corridors of power in Washington.

The fact is that the United States remains our most important strategic and defence ally.

This was on display only last week when I took part in the first Australian flight of the new P-8A Poseidon aircraft—developed between Australia and the United States Navy.

And in relation to counterterrorism cooperation, our collaborative screening of refugees from the Syrian and Iraqi conflicts has identified 22 persons of national security concern.

Right now, Iraqi defence forces, including units trained by the Australian Army, are making real progress in the liberation of Mosul from Daesh.

The contribution of the ADF to the defence of Iraq, working with the United States and other coalition forces, has been critically important—as has been acknowledged by President Obama and indeed by the Prime Minister of Iraq itself.

Daesh is under increasing pressure. It is losing territory, finance and fighters.

Its so-called caliphate and its illusion of invincibility are being shattered.

But as Daesh loses ground, many hundreds of foreign fighters in Syria and Iraq may seek to return to their countries of origin, including in our region—especially Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines as well as Australia itself.

Our law enforcement and security agencies have long been prepared for this challenge and are constantly monitoring for any shift in the threat environment ahead.

Indeed, we have seen in recent weeks three individuals charged with foreign incursion offences.

These latest arrests bring to 55 the number of people charged from 24 counterterrorism operations around Australia since September 2014. The acts of terror we have witnessed demonstrate that the international security environment has flow-on effects for Australia's domestic threat environment.

The Director-General of Security has informed me that he has reviewed the National Terrorism Threat Level and that it remains unchanged at probable.

We have been at this elevated level of threat since September 2014, in which time we have experienced four attacks and 11 successful major disruptions.

And despite Daesh's heavy territorial losses in Iraq and Syria, we do not expect this threat to diminish for some time. If anything, the threat has become more dispersed and new challenges are emerging.

Increasingly widespread use of encrypted communication platforms makes the detection and interception of terrorist communications far more difficult.

Human intelligence, and the strong relationships and trust on which it depends, are more important than ever.

Around the world, the increase of attacks by lone actors, who are by their very nature so much harder to detect, presents new challenges for disruption and deterrence by our security and law enforcement agencies.

The truck attack in Nice highlighted just how devastating an attack by a single perpetrator can be.

To ensure Australia is best placed to respond to the evolving global threat environment, and immediately following the Nice attack, in July I requested the Commonwealth's Counter-Terrorism Coordinator to review the lessons from recent terrorist attacks overseas and specifically the threat from lone actors.

While the full review will remain classified, I am pleased to be able to report it found Australia already has robust legislative, policy and operational arrangements in place to protect us from those threats. However, it also identified some areas requiring further work.

A key finding was the need to continue working on how to best protect public places.

I can confirm that in response to the review, we have committed, as a priority, to develop a national strategy for places of mass gathering, including a nationally consistent approach to risk assessment for such places.

The review also confirmed there are a diverse range of factors that could make someone vulnerable to radicalisation, from mental health issues to a history of criminality.

The review found that such factors might increase the vulnerability of lone actors to the propaganda of terrorist organisations offering them some perverse sense of inclusion.

So we need to better support our frontline professionals including health professionals, to respond to Australians who may be at risk of radicalising towards violent extremism.

I have therefore asked our agencies, the Attorney-General, the Minister for Health and Ageing and the minister assisting me on counterterrorism to work with the states and territories, peak bodies, international partners and the community to identify what more can be done in this area to help both carers and patients, taking great care we do not stigmatise some of the most vulnerable people in our communities.

In relation to the nexus between criminality and terrorism, a pilot of the National Criminal Intelligence System now underway in the Australian Criminal Intelligence Commission will allow us to better understand this correlation and identify threats.

It is clear from the review that our international partners face very similar challenges.

One of the key issues some international partners are addressing is the role played by their defence forces in domestic counterterrorism arrangements.

In Australia, a review is already underway to examine the support Defence provides to domestic counterterrorism operations, looking at both the legislative framework and the Australian Defence Force posture and capability in view of the current threat environment.

The evolution of terrorism since 9/11, the adaptability of terrorist groups like Daesh and the insidious allure this group has held for too many often very young and vulnerable Australians, should put each and every one of us in this House in no doubt that to defeat them we also must adapt.

And it has been the coalition government that has acted proactively to the challenge of the threat posed by Daesh.

We have increased our counterterrorism funding by \$1.5 billion since September 2014.

Our counterterrorism laws are designed to be the most robust and proportionate response possible in the current threat environment.

The government has shown it is willing and agile enough to amend these laws to sufficiently empower those agencies that are responsible for keeping us safe.

In the past year alone we have introduced three vitally important bills.

The amendments to the Commonwealth Criminal Code introduced in October will empower our military to target and kill a broader range of Daesh operatives, consistent with international law.

The bill applies to ADF operations to fight Daesh in theatre - including our airstrikes in support of the liberation of Mosul.

Less well known, but of increasing importance, is that this fight against Daesh is also conducted through cyberspace.

Now when I launched Australia's Cyber Security Strategy in April I acknowledged our nation's offensive cyber capabilities.

Those capabilities are housed within the Australian Signals Directorate and they provide us with a capacity to deter and respond to cyber-attacks against Australia.

These same capabilities also have important military applications, including in support of Coalition operations against Daesh in Iraq and Syria.

While I won't, for obvious reasons, go into the details of these operations, I can say that they are being used, that they are making a real difference in the military conflict, and that all offensive cyber activities in support of the ADF and our allies are subject to the same rules of engagement which govern the use of our other military capabilities in Iraq and Syria, such as our FA18 Hornets.

The Australian Signals Directorate's support for these operations is subject to stringent legal oversight and is consistent with our support for the international rules-based order and our obligations under international law.

This is just another example of our partnership with the United States, and is of critical importance to global, regional and domestic security.

We've also introduced the Counter-Terrorism Legislation Amendment Bill 2016 to allow, among other things, control orders to be placed on persons 14 years or older with appropriate safeguards.

It is a sad reality that young people are being drawn to this violent ideology.

Ideally we want to stop them getting to this point in the first place. And on most occasions, the work of families, communities, law enforcement and other agencies ensures people are turned away from radicalisation.

But it is the government's, and the parliament's, responsibility, to do what we can to mitigate and manage these risks by ensuring the necessary measures are in place.

The third bill is the Criminal Code Amendment (High Risk Terrorist Offenders) Bill 2016, which creates a new regime to allow for the ongoing detention of high risk terrorist offenders who are approaching the end of their custodial sentences but continue to pose an unacceptable risk of committing a serious terrorism offence if released.

The third bill is the Criminal Code Amendment (High Risk Terrorist Offenders) Bill 2016, which creates a new regime to allow for the ongoing detention of high-risk terrorist offenders who are approaching the end of their custodial sentences but continue to pose an unacceptable risk of committing a serious terrorism offence if released.

I want to thank the Parliamentary Joint Committee on Intelligence and Security, and the leadership of its chair, the member for Deakin, for its careful consideration of these bills and its recommendation that they be passed.

These laws are part of my government's ongoing reform to Australia's national security legislation. And this started in 2014 and continues to provide our agencies with the tools they need in an ever-changing security environment, and provides the public with the confidence that they can safely go about their daily lives.

From the time we came into government in 2013, the coalition has understood the evolving nature of the threat that terrorism poses and has been as adaptive and as agile in its response as the people who seek to do us so much harm.

Above all else, the most effective defence against terrorism is to prevent people from becoming terrorists in the first place. All levels of government and communities must continue working together to help prevent people from being drawn to violent extremism, particularly to prevent the radicalisation of our young people—to stop terrorists stealing our children's futures.

Continuing to build on our inclusive society where everyone has a place is vital. Countering violent extremism is a shared effort, of course, with the states and territories and it will be reported on and considered at the upcoming Council of Australian Governments meeting on 9 December.

Terrorist groups seek to identify weakness and vulnerability and to drive and exploit fear and division. Actions and behaviours that target particular sections in society merely play into their hands. We are one of the most successful multicultural societies in the world—from the oldest human cultures of our First Australians, to the newborn baby in the arms of its immigrant mother. We are stronger because of our diversity.

But this does not mean we should be blind to, or ignorant of, the challenges our society face. When we see extremist behaviour, it should be called out for what it is. And when we see vulnerability it should be addressed

by all Australians; by government; by business; by community.

We all have a stake in this. For it is the combination of our national attributes of security, diversity, freedom and the prosperity which they enable that make us best placed as a society to unite against terrorism and violent extremism.

As I have said many times, the glue that holds us together is mutual respect—the recognition that each of us is entitled to the same respect, dignity, and opportunities.

And as we look forward to this Christmas season, I can assure the House that my government is taking every action possible to keep Australians and their families safe, secure and free.

Mr SHORTEN (Maribyrnong—Leader of the Opposition) (11:18): I thank the Prime Minister for updating the House. We welcome the fact that the Commonwealth Counter-Terrorism Coordinator has concluded his report on the recent dreadful overseas attacks and the lessons that we can learn. We hope that the government will brief us very soon on this report. Labor will support the review into the way defence and domestic counterterrorism operations work together. I think there is merit, in particular, in looking at whether the

existing processes around the call-out of the Defence Force for domestic terrorist incidents is strong enough in the current threat environment.

This parliament works best when leaders on both sides cooperate and communicate on important issues such as this. I would like to briefly acknowledge former Prime Minister Abbott for consistently striving to keep me and Labor informed about national security. The Australian Labor Party fully understands and appreciates the importance of cybersecurity to our national security. While there are many issues that can divide this parliament, often very deeply, all of us in this place, on all sides, share a common determination to keep Australia safe. We are all committed to ensuring our people, our institutions and, indeed, our commercial enterprises are protected by the most up-to-date technology. We are all committed to providing the best possible assistance to the men and women of the Australian Defence Force, who have put themselves in harm's way in our country's name.

It is a century since Australians fought and fell on the Western Front, but there can be no question that the face of global conflict has dramatically changed, and changed exponentially, in recent years. But the courage of those who serve our nation endures. Our respect for their bravery, professionalism and skill is at the very heart of who we are as Australians and what we admire about Australians, as is the important regard in which we hold our security agencies and our intelligence community. When they seek our support, when they need our commitment to modernisation, we should be prepared to do what it takes to keep people safe.

The ultimate defeat of Daesh is a shared goal of all of those who believe in peace. In the years since this conflict began, we have learned not to underestimate their resilience or their adaptability. In fact, if we have learned anything about Daesh, it is that they will use every tool at their disposal—every weapon in their arsenal—to spread hatred, to encourage violence and to destroy innocent lives. Preventing this, combating terrorism and defeating extremism means meeting Daesh on every front, whether it is providing air support and training in Iraq or disrupting cyber operations—not just defensively, but offensively—ensuring we have, and use, the ability to silence the dreadful extremist propaganda and deprive them of resources and information.

Improving our cybersecurity is equally important in protecting Australia's government and non-government agencies and institutions from digital attacks. In the past year alone, we have seen Austrade, the Bureau of Meteorology and the Department of Defence targeted. We have seen large-scale attacks and initiatives carried out around the world; perhaps, most noticeably, in the United States. Increased connectivity with the world through the internet for our businesses and communities is outstanding. It is one of the defining forces of our modern society and economy. But it does let others in. An increase in connections to the internet is matched by an increase in the number of points vulnerable to hacking and cybercrime. The number of potential targets increases, and millions of our small and medium-sized businesses need government to help them stay safe in the digital world. They need it in a way that is simple enough for them to incorporate into their business and that they can afford. This means having the resources to design cyber defences for our products, our processes and our people—Australian-developed cybersecurity capability and standards to protect all Australians. That is why, in government, Labor opened the Cyber Security Operations Centre and adopted Australia's first comprehensive Cyber Security Strategy.

But we recognise that the scale and speed of change in this area mean that nothing can stand in stone. In the last two years, there has been more data created than in the entire previous history of the human race. We are living in a time when technology and invention are streaking ahead of traditional security and legal frameworks. Today, almost without thinking, Australians store and share vast amounts of private and personal information online—banking credit-debit records, medical history, tax and income data, intellectual property. It is why *The Economist* in 2014 estimated the global cost of cybercrime, intellectual property theft and espionage was around \$445 billion a year. That is before we consider what we share on social media about ourselves. Like all parents in this place and around Australia, I am conscious that social media has fundamentally reshaped childhood for this generation of Australians.

For all of these reasons, we cannot afford to assume that cybersecurity is a niche issue for techxperts, the harmless hobby of a few dedicated followers. We must recognise that there is no such thing as an unhackable system, no such thing as a foolproof platform. Instead, the world's leading cybersecurity experts all say we should begin from the assumption that there are already people inside the system. Our focus should be on finding out what they are doing, tracing their activity and preventing others from using the same entry point.

The key words in every cybersecurity conversation are trust and collaboration. No government has the reach or resources to act in this field alone. We must collaborate with the private sector, sharing information and strategies, learning from each other's successes and failures. That is true as well for cooperation with our international peers. We need to seek a new layer of engagement with our old allies and partners, recognising that frameworks and treaties written for a Cold War world need to be updated for an age where people can google bomb-making instructions and 3D-print guns. This is particularly important in our region. As Daesh is driven closer to defeat in the field, there is a very real risk of former extremists demobilising in our region—trained in the Middle East, better trained in combat, more radicalised than when they left. Managing this threat, keeping not only Australia but South-East Asia safe, will require our leadership and multilateral institutions and our example as a democratic, peaceful, prosperous and secure nation.

It is vital we continue to enhance the reach and flexibility of our cybersecurity capabilities, but I also have to add that all of the good work, all of the unreplaceable investment in technological safety, can count for nothing unless we continue to invest in the very human element of countering extremism. There are not enough walls, weapons and technology to guarantee safety alone, unless we deploy our citizens in the pursuit of combating extremism. Of course, when I talk about our citizens, I am mindful that one of the most powerful assets in the fight against terrorism does not wear a uniform or wield a weapon; it is our united, harmonious, inclusive nation. As the Prime Minister said so well in parliament only last month:

The terrorists want the wider Australian community to turn against Australian Muslims. Their message to Australian Muslims is, 'You're not wanted here. You will never be accepted here. You cannot be Australian.'

So in this place we have a solemn responsibility to counter that argument of the extremists, of the extreme right and the extremists in the Middle East who say that being a Muslim citizen of this democracy is incompatible with their faith. We need to counter that argument, not

amplify it. It is our job, our duty, to foster a more inclusive, a more respectful, a more egalitarian Australia. We do not just tolerate diversity; we embrace diversity. We do not just acknowledge multiculturalism; we embrace multiculturalism—as a bipartisan achievement and as a shared priority.

And no individual in this place did more to shape the modern diverse nation that we cherish today than Malcolm Fraser. As the Prime Minister generously said in condolences about the former Liberal Prime Minister, he was so far ahead of his time. The Prime Minister said:

When you look at what he did in respect of shaping the nature of Australia today, it is really quite remarkable.

As the Prime Minister reminded us in his most recent statement, just minutes ago, there is no bliss in ignorance. All of these are reasons why the Minister for Immigration and Border Protection's recent comments were so profoundly wrong. Suggesting it was a mistake to allow a generation of migrants to come to Australia more than three decades ago, because of the crimes of a tiny handful of their grandchildren, is not just ignorant and insulting; it is not just a denigration of people who have worked so hard and given so much to this country. The comments were not just a repudiation of the success of Australia, a nation made great by migration and multiculturalism. The minister's ignorant comments contradict, undermine and fly in the face of every briefing I have ever received from our security agencies who explain to us how best to counter radicalisation, about defeating extremism.

Loud, lazy disrespect, wholesale labelling of entire communities for the actions of a tiny minority, aid and abet the isolation and resentment that the extremists prey upon. In this place we are leaders. We do not just cater for majorities; we respect minorities. We do expect anyone who comes here to adhere to our laws and our values, but we must take the responsibility of leadership most seriously with how we act, with what we say. It is time for some leadership from the Prime Minister. It is time that the minister for immigration was brought into line. As the remarkable member for Cowan—who was involved in driving WA Labor's Cyber Security Strategy seven years ago—said this morning, and I agree, 'I am fearful that the minister for immigration's comments will be used by an extreme few who would seek to harm the fabric of our society.' Second and third generation migrants are teachers. They are police officers. They are entrepreneurs. They are members of this parliament on both sides of the House. They serve in our hospitals and they serve in the uniform of our country. They raise children. They pay taxes. They build communities. They coach local sporting teams. They create small businesses. They volunteer. They do, as I say, sit on both sides of this chamber. And we, in the Labor Party, do not start by calling them 'second and third generation migrants'; we call them 'Australians'.

And, in an age of rapidly evolving threats, of shifting battlegrounds and whole new forms of crime, we must continue to adapt our processes, our technologies and our capabilities. Our country requires it. The effort of our ADF personnel who put their lives on the line require us to do here the very best we can do. But we must also never lose sight of old truths in the search for new security. All of the machines and all of the walls and all of the guards are insufficient if we do not reach out and include all of those in our own society. We are always and every time a stronger nation and a safer place when we stand together. Now and always, let that guide us.

Ms LEY (Farrer—Minister for Sport and Minister for Health and Aged Care) (11:31): I move:

That the House take note of the document.

Debate adjourned.

Reference to Federation Chamber

Ms LEY (Farrer—Minister for Sport and Minister for Health and Aged Care) (11:31): by leave—I move:

That the order of the day be referred to the Federation Chamber for debate.

Question agreed to.

BILLS

Social Security Legislation Amendment (Youth Jobs Path: Prepare, Trial, Hire) Bill 2016

Second Reading

Consideration resumed of the motion:

That this bill be now read a second time.

to which the following amendment was moved:

That all the words after "That" be omitted with a view to substituting the following words:

"Whilst not declining to give the bill a second reading, the House notes that the Turnbull Government cannot guarantee that, under Youth Jobs PaTH (Prepare, Trial, Hire):

- (1) jobs will not be displaced by cheaper labour;
- (2) wages will not be undercut and some participants will be paid below minimum award wages;
- (3) participants' safety will not be compromised and that adequate insurance arrangements will be provided;
- (4) participants won't be used to help businesses sidestep unfair dismissal protections; and
- (5) it will prioritise using small to medium enterprises in PaTH because they have a demonstrated track record of employing more jobseekers through the jobactive programme".

Ms HENDERSON (Corangamite) (11:32): It is my pleasure to rise and speak on this bill, the Social Security Legislation Amendment (Youth Jobs Path: Prepare, Trial, Hire) Bill 2016, in continuation. I was talking about the three stages of the PaTH program, which will support up to 120,000 young people over four years. The first stage is getting them ready—preparing young people. The second stage is giving them a go—trailing them through an internship, supported by a youth bonus wage subsidy and voluntary internships of between four and 12 weeks where employers will receive an incentive of \$1,000 up-front and a young person, an intern, will receive a \$200-a-fortnight payment to supplement their Newstart allowance—on top of their Newstart allowance. Then, of course, the third part of this program is hire—giving young people a job. In order to provide that incentive to employers, the government is proposing that businesses will be eligible for a youth bonus wage subsidy of between \$6½ thousand and \$10,000 from 1 January next year.

This bill is needed because it is required to ensure jobseekers are not disadvantaged by taking part in the Youth Jobs PaTH measure announced in the budget to encourage eligible young jobseekers to take up a PaTH internship. Participants, as I have mentioned, will receive

\$200 fortnightly in addition to their social security payments. The bill ensures that these payments are not considered as income for social security and veterans' entitlement purposes. That is obviously very important; we do not want to do anything that will impact on their social security entitlements. So it will amend the Social Security Act, the Veterans' Entitlements Act and the Social Security (Administration) Act to support the Youth Jobs PaTH measure.

I do want to make some particular comments in relation to the member for Melbourne's contribution and more broadly in relation to some of the opposition that we have heard from members opposite. This is an incredibly important program for young people. In contrast to those opposite and to the Greens, here we are, as a government, looking at every possible measure to drive young people into work. We are incredibly proud of what we are doing. And it is absolutely fallacious to suggest that this is a \$4-an-hour program. What we are providing is a \$200-a-fortnight bonus—that is in addition to Newstart; \$200 extra per fortnight—which will put young people into the position of an internship for a limited period of time and, very importantly, will give employers the opportunity to trial someone and to train them. We all know that, when an employer brings anyone new into their business, there is a high degree of commitment by that employer to introduce a young person into the workplace, to train them and to get them job-ready, and the employer does not do that unless he or she, or the company, has a commitment to bringing someone into their organisation. It is also great opportunity for young people: to learn new skills; to get a taste of that industry or to get an understanding of that business; to get a sense of self-worth; to be encouraged; to be inspired; and of course, in doing so, to receive this important bonus.

So it is really regrettable that, while we have had this criticism both from the Greens and from the Labor Party, we have seen no ideas from members opposite. What are their ideas? We have seen no contrary ideas from the Labor Party.

As a government, we are doing everything possible to drive jobs, to drive new programs and to look at new ways of getting young people into work. And it is not just through the PaTH program. We have our \$96 million Try, Test and Learn Fund, introduced by the Minister for Social Services, asking all members of the community—volunteer groups, community organisations and members opposite—to come up with innovative employment ideas to drive employment. But what do we hear today from the member for Melbourne? No ideas. It is a zero ideas zone from the Greens and from members opposite. We recognise that government does not have all the ideas, and we are saying to Australians, 'Here is nearly \$100 million for an innovative scheme'—like a scheme that is being promoted and funded in my region, the GROW scheme, where G21 and Give Where You Live have done some wonderful work to try to address the very significant problems with youth unemployment, particularly in the Geelong region.

We are making some very important inroads, despite some members opposite—particularly the member for Corio—trying to talk down our local economy at every opportunity. Last month's unemployment figures show that unemployment in the Geelong is currently sitting at four per cent, with a three-month rolling average of 5.8 per cent. Despite all the criticism from those opposite, we are doing so much better than the Labor Party have ever given us credit for. While we get criticism from those opposite, what is remarkable in this debate is that we have no ideas from those opposite.

Not only do we have our Try, Test and Learn scheme on top of our PaTH scheme; we have the Transition to Work scheme, which is an alternative for the jobactive providers. It supports young people aged 15 to 21 through intensive pre-employment support to improve work readiness and help them into work or education. We have the ParentsNext program, which helps eligible parents to identify their education and employment goals—again, to help them get into work. We have our Empowering YOUth Initiative, again to support innovative approaches to helping young unemployed people move into work. We are absolutely committed and doing everything we can to drive those jobs and to drive those opportunities, and it is really disappointing that we have not seen some bipartisanship on what is a very, very significant measure.

The Minister for Employment, Senator Michaelia Cash, did an extraordinary job in leading our charge in passing the Fair Work (Registered Organisations) Amendment Bill 2014, which of course is a bill that is all about putting Australian workers first. In contrast to Labor, who wanted to back the union organisers, including those who had engaged in fraud and corruption, which is very disappointing, our government is focused on putting Australian workers first. It was wonderful to visit Kings Cars with the minister and to talk—

Mr Champion: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise on a point of order. The member is reflecting on members opposite and saying that they support fraud. That is not the case, and she should withdraw.

Mr Irons: That is not what she said.

Mr Champion: That is exactly what she said.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Goodenough): I call the member for Corangamite.

Ms HENDERSON: Mr Deputy Speaker, I will not withdraw. That is not what I said. I said that the Labor Party did not support a bill which combats union organisers engaging in fraud, engaging in corruption and engaging in dodgy union deals.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: There is no point of order. Please continue.

Ms HENDERSON: This is a great opportunity for me to say it again. What an absolute disgrace it is that the Labor Party did not support the Registered Organisations Bill, in contrast to the likes of the former Labor Attorney-General Rob McClelland, in contrast to the likes of Martin Ferguson and in contrast to the likes of Bill Kelty, who all stood up and said, 'Yes, we do require this reform; we do need to put Australian workers first.' So thank you for the opportunity to make that point. It was a shameful day when the Labor Party would not support this vital industrial relations reform for our nation.

As I was saying, in May, the Minister for Employment, Senator Michaelia Cash, and I visited Kings Cars, one of the many local employers in our region, and spoke very, very proudly about the Youth PaTH employment program. It is getting a lot of support and we are very enthusiastic as to how we can work locally with our local employers to make sure that as many employers as possible take up this opportunity and give young people a chance—because that is what it is all about.

Everything our government is doing is about putting the Australian worker first and driving jobs, and we are so proud. I will take the opportunity to look at what we are doing locally. There is our massive investment in infrastructure, including, at long last, the \$690 million that has been provided for rural and regional roads in Victoria. We had to drag the Labor Party

kicking and screaming in Victoria on that one. There is more investment in rail and our huge commitment to Avalon Airport—all about driving jobs. There are our massive job creation programs, including a \$20 million jobs and investment package for our region, which is very significant—looking at new investment, new opportunities, new industries and new jobs, including new jobs for young people. There is our Geelong Region Innovation and Investment Fund, which has created some 850 new jobs across our region. There is our \$155 million Growth Fund. There is the Geelong Region Job Connections program, supporting lots of fantastic grassroots job creation programs, including supporting the Pivot Summit, which I will be very proudly opening on Friday—driving digital jobs, jobs for the future and jobs for young people.

There is our focus on advanced manufacturing. What a reflection it was on Labor when they committed only around \$7 million to our region, in contrast to our very significant investments in advanced manufacturing, including an industry growth centre in advanced manufacturing and \$4.7 million for Deakin University for the Future Fibres Research Hub. There is also our strong commitment to the National Stronger Regions Fund and our strong commitment to small and medium business—delivering those tax cuts. Back in 2011, the Labor Party were very supportive of tax cuts for small- and medium-size businesses. Back then they were being quite open with the Australian people and acknowledging that that did drive new jobs, more investment and more opportunities. But now we see in another blatant, pathetic case of politicking, led by the Leader of the Opposition, an illogical opposition to tax cuts for small business. Then there are our free trade agreements—again, all about driving jobs.

We are getting the economy boosted again—as we did when we abolished the carbon tax and the mining tax and stripped red tape—and proudly doing all these important things to drive jobs and investment. This is a very important bill for young people and for our nation, and I commend this bill to the House.

Mr CHAMPION (Wakefield) (11:45): I wish I could say it was a pleasure to follow the member for Corangamite in rising to speak on the Social Security Legislation Amendment (Youth Jobs Path: Prepare, Trial, Hire) Bill 2016. Such are the delusions of this government, where they think if they get up and say the word 'strong' and 'we are backing Australian workers first' enough times that it will somehow echo and ricochet from this parliament out there into the community. But the community, of course, know exactly what this government is up to in a whole range of areas because they see in this parliament every single day that we either have no positive agenda at all or we have these rampant reactionary measures. The member opposite wandered from this bill, which is all about internships, and into industrial relations—all sort of weaved into the ABCC. What I would like to let the House know is that the Australian Building and Construction Commission does not deal with criminal behaviour at all.

There was a fellow in my electorate named Ark Tribe. He lived out in Middle Beach and he worked on the Flinders hospital site. He was worried about the safety of himself and the workers at that site, so they held a safety meeting because they were worried about working in an unsafe environment. And do you know what happened? He got hauled before the courts by Gestapo style tactics for months and months and months of his life. He was not a corrupt union official; he was just a construction worker who wanted to work in a safe environment.

Those opposite want to criminalise that sort of behaviour and want to pretend that it is wrong. The fact is, people like Ark Tribe are the real Australians who are really representing the Australian tradition—that of a fair go, of a fair day's pay for a fair day's work, of working in a safe environment and of being able to come home to your family. Instead, we have this nonsense where those opposite talk about fraud. There is a place to deal with fraud whether it is in unions, the local footy club, a company or anywhere else in the community and it is called the courts. And guess what: they are doing it every single day. There is nothing particularly special about it. That is the way we have set up our community for the administration of justice. That is the way we should pursue it because that is the best way to pursue it. We should leave industrial relations separate from criminal law.

I guess we should talk about this bill. The other thing those opposite like to do is talk about real-life experience. I was a union official and, on occasion, I had stop-work meetings. These days, those opposite might have put me in jail for it. I might be in chains, like my forebear: my great-grandfather, Peter Roberts. He was on the docks at Geelong. He died in an unsafe work environment. He was a member of the Industrial Workers of the World. Those opposite would have banged him up because that is what they are about. They are about criminalising trade unions and trade union activity.

Mr Falinski interjecting—

Mr CHAMPION: That is what was said. Let me tell you about what happened when I was a union official. Every so often I used to have to go out to some small retail establishment. I would be there and they would have somebody in to do 'work experience' or as an 'intern'. This would go on for weeks, sometimes months, and these people would be used to displace existing workers. Sometimes it was not such small institutions. We had one major retailer do it once. And I would have to patiently explain to those institutions, those commercial organisations that what they were doing was in fact illegal and that they should be paying these people.

From time to time some manager, or sometimes it was an owner of a company, would get into his head that maybe, if he had people come in as interns or for work experience, that would be a great boon to his business and that somehow the individual committing this free work would also get a benefit. Now, from this article in *The Sydney Morning Herald* by Clara Jordan-Baird, who is the national policy director of Interns Australia, I have got some figures: 'Only 20 per cent of unpaid interns are offered employment with the same organisation.' What happens to the other 80 per cent? I can tell you from my real-life experience: they get exploited. Let us think about that.

We roughly know what will happen under this bill and it will all come out in the Senate inquiry. The government is attempting to institute a program where we know the majority of people in the scheme are going to be exploited in some way.

Government members interjecting—

Mr CHAMPION: I suppose I will be generous with those opposite after the interjections. I heard the member for Corangamite talk. I remember being on the backbench of a government that was in a death spiral. You know those dive-bombers? I had a constituent who was in a dive-bomber. He was a guy who had to sit in the rear seat and he was the gunner. That is who you guys opposite are: you are in the rear seat of a plane and you are assuming

there is a pilot in the front, but they have bailed out and you are just sitting in the back and shooting away and you are taking out the rudder and the wings and you are hurtling towards the ground. And as you are hurtling towards the ground you are issuing orders to the rest of us. You are giving us your bon mots of wisdom as you hurtle towards the ground.

I have been there, so I am not telling you how to suck eggs. But from these situations—and I have certainly seen enough of them in my time in parliament—we should know the sorts of rorts that go on and the sorts of people, the bottom feeders, who are attracted to programs just like this. To be fair to those opposite, we have seen it in all sorts of programs across administrations. The LPG subsidy was my favourite. It was started by Howard. There was \$3,000 to subsidise LPG conversions. Australian taxpayers spent \$750-odd million subsidising commercial activity that would have gone on anyway. All it did was drag demand forward. It doubled the price of LPG conversions. No-one was keeping an eye on that.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Goodenough): Member for Corangamite, do you have a point of order?

Ms Henderson: Mr Deputy Speaker, I ask you to remind the member to confine his remarks to the bill. This is a speech on the bill that is before the House at the moment.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: On relevance, I call the member for Wakefield.

Mr CHAMPION: Was anybody here for her speech? Anyway, I am happy to relate it back to the bill because I am talking about the sorts of rorts that can go on under programs just like this. I will arrive at my point if you will allow me to just take this slightly circuitous route.

We had a program that did not create a job, that subsidised commercial activity that was going to go on anyway, that dragged all this demand forward and that did not do the industry one lick of good, because I can tell you it cost jobs in the end. I saw LPG conversion companies go out of business because all the work had been done in this massive boom that did nothing but push prices up. And you can bet that there were a few bottom feeders who entered that industry just to get their hands on the subsidy.

Here we have this program, which puts a \$1,000 incentive into the business and then a wage subsidy after that, where we have a group of vulnerable potential interns. We know youth unemployment is at extraordinary levels and that it is often regionally based. I know exactly what the member for Corangamite is talking about when she talks about the challenges of this and the desire to do something, but it has actually got to be the right thing to do. Nobody on the government side of the program has gotten up and said, 'Well, this won't be rorted. Don't worry about it; we've got all these protections in there.' What you are setting up here is a program with no protections. For a start, in this bill there is no definition of 'an intern'. I could set up an intern pathway company where I partner with small business to take the interns from one place to another, and maybe I would get a fee and everybody would be a winner.

Mr Coleman: Think positively.

Mr CHAMPION: Think positively! The member opposite tells me to think positively. I have been here too long to be so naive about the sorts of people who would be attracted to this program, because we have just seen it in VET FEE-HELP. I remember being in the government party room when we were told about VET FEE-HELP.

Ms Henderson interjecting—

Mr CHAMPION: Listen to this. It was supposed to be for TAFE. Then it was extended to private providers. Then, what happened? You came into government, and what did you try to do? You tried to fix it up—four or five times.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The member for Wakefield will resume his seat. The member for Corangamite on a point of order?

Ms Henderson: Mr Deputy Speaker, I would ask that the member direct his comments through the chair.

Mr CHAMPION: I am happy to direct my comments through the chair. This government attempted to fix that program four or five times. Eventually Senator Birmingham from the other place did it. I know Senator Birmingham. He is a smart cookie. He has now fixed it, because he has come down on them like a ton of bricks. Previous ministers tried to say, 'Maybe we can negotiate with these people.' The truth is that whenever there is a Commonwealth dollar you can bet your bottom dollar—do not be naive about it—that there will be some bottom feeder out there who will set up a method of rorting the program.

Ms Henderson interjecting—

Mr CHAMPION: Those opposite come in here with their rote-learning speeches where they recite the lines—and the member for Corangamite is a little bit better at disguising the lines. I heard some speeches last night. Honestly, they turn page 3 and then this is what page 4 says. I have seen speeches like that before—on both sides of the House. But the learning from this is that you need to question the executive, because when they come up with a program like this, which, frankly, you could drive a truck through—there is no definition of 'an intern' and no real safeguards—it could be rorted by a middle man or by just your local company who thinks, 'Well, I'm going to get rid of all my existing workers and bring in all these interns.' And do not tell me it will not happen. I have seen whole companies where everybody is on a traineeship. There is nobody to train the trainees, because every single employee was on a traineeship. I remember one South Australian employer where even the owner of the company was on the traineeship. That was in the Howard years, so we are going back a few years.

There has been completely shameless abuse of government programs across governments of various persuasions. So this is the thing: do not think that there is not someone out there right at this moment looking at this bill and thinking, 'How can I make some money out of this? How can I exploit this? How can I use this?' because you can bet they will. And you will have to come back here when the first scandal comes out and we will read all your speeches back to you. When it appears on the ABC or when *The Sydney Morning Herald* does an investigation, guess what will happen? We will have to come back here and read all of your silly speeches about it where you recited the lines that were written by some 22-year-old in the minister's office—with all of that life experience there.

That is the problem with this bill. It is just sloppy. And whatever you say, we have got a second reading amendment with which the member for Chifley, he has learnt, is wisely going to push it off into a Senate inquiry. Hopefully, that will tighten this bill up. This is dangerous stuff, because it is full of exactly the sort of naive thinking, the wishful thinking, that is present on this government's back bench. As I said before, they are in a death spiral, so they

are grasping onto whatever they can. But this is the wrong thing to grasp onto. I would encourage those opposite to start doing your jobs on the back bench. Behind the scenes, actually start to put a bit of pressure on your executive—who are all shifting though their jobs so quickly that they are not really paying attention, let's be honest, with all the ministerial changes in this government. Start doing your jobs.

Mr FALINSKI (Mackellar) (12:00): We can now resume normal transmission, I think. This is a critical piece of reform. For far too long too many people have languished, trapped, in the social security system, and the Social Security Legislation Amendment (Youth Jobs Path: Prepare, Trial, Hire) Bill 2016 is the beginning of a long and arduous journey to change the status quo.

Having run my own business, I know the challenges that businesses face when employing people they do not know, particularly those who have never worked before. To a small business, the cost of not getting it right can be expensive in terms of time and money and, most importantly, in lost opportunities. Employers often attempt to contain that risk by choosing to employ people with work experience and a proven track record. Unfortunately, this traps those who are trying to get ahead, trying to break out of the welfare system.

Over the last 24 hours I have borne witness to the Labor Party lecturing the rest of us on inequality in Australia. The member for Lilley was particularly illuminating on the issue. Never once did he mention microeconomic reform as a key platform to alleviating inequality. Never once did he talk about breaking the cycle of welfare dependency and unemployment. But we do. We talk about reform. We care about breaking the cycle of poverty and we care about employment, because the awful truth is this: that, after nearly seven decades of government-funded poverty programs, we have hardly moved the needle.

Many social programs during this time have done nothing more than entrench poverty from one generation to the next. It is simply a fact that, if you are solely reliant on the welfare system in today's Australia, it is highly likely that your health and education outcomes will be substantially lower and you will have a shorter lifespan. At the same time, the chances of you forming a household are very low, while the likelihood of the system passing these outcomes onto your children is very high. This system costs \$154 billion a year. In truth, the money is a second-order issue, because the Turnbull government is about saving lives, not money. When we on this side talk about reforming welfare—we are talking about saving lives, not money.

Those opposite typically provide two solutions to alleviating inequality: the first is increased spending on welfare; the second is a more distributive tax system. Despite dedicating hundreds of billions of dollars to decreasing inequality, those opposite say things have got worse, and yet their only answer is to keep doing more of the same. Labor can talk ad nauseam about inequality, because they need people to feel like they are victims and supplicants of the state. Under no circumstances will they talk about the inequality of opportunity that their own policies have created.

Of Australians aged under 20 who are on income support, 67,000 have, or have had, a guardian who has been on welfare for the last 15 years. Our lifetime welfare bill has now reached an estimated \$4.8 trillion dollars. That is not an amount we should try and grasp in terms of dollars and cents, but rather as a sum total of human misery. But numbers do not paint pictures. This is the story of a never-ending cycle of poverty passed on from generation to generation.

On this side of the House, we believe in standing up for hardworking Australians who aspire to a better future for their friends, their families and this great country—a modern and dynamic society that believes in helping people up, not dragging them down—with government as the great enabler, not the great enforcer. I am proud to be part of the Turnbull government that recognises that a new approach is urgently required. We cannot underestimate the urgency of the now. The Youth Jobs PaTH is part of our government's \$840 million project to improve people's chances of making a go of life, of getting and keeping them out of welfare and helping them to achieve their aspirations. The package, which is part of the Australian Priority Investment approach to welfare, provides a new, cutting-edge approach to youth employment. It will help 120,000 vulnerable young Australians over four years take advantage of job opportunities as our economy diversifies and transitions to broader based growth. It will help young people to get ready for meaningful work by giving them the tools they need to have a go and get a job.

The Turnbull government is seeking to improve employment outcomes for Australia's young people in a real, meaningful and tangible way by making it easier for them to enter the workforce. Young Australians should have the personal and financial opportunities that come with having a job—the independence, the experience, the self-esteem, the excitement and the chance to hone their skills. This aspect of employment is too often ignored by those on the Left of politics. The simple sense of achievement on someone's mentality has transformed lives and entire communities. Our future prosperity as a nation will suffer if we do not persistently tackle high levels of youth unemployment. Young people who cannot find a job are more susceptible to long-term unemployment and, from that place, it is a short trip to a cycle of welfare dependency.

I welcome the reductions in the youth unemployment rate that this government has seen so far, but the numbers are still too high. We have identified that it is often a lack of experience that keeps young people out of the workforce, so we are implementing a measure that will facilitate young people getting exactly that experience so they might find it easier to gain meaningful employment. The Youth Jobs PaTH program will help and encourage young Australians to learn new skills, become job ready, get a job, and stay in a job.

Having had open and frank conversations with the businesses of Australia, looking at the preliminary findings of the 'investment approach' actuarial analysis, and studying best practices both here and abroad, we have designed an innovative program that will make a real difference to young Australians. The prepare, trial, hire pathway will encourage employers to take a chance on young people by enhancing their employability, providing them real work experience, and increasing incentives for employers to take them on.

Importantly, the program will give vulnerable young people that are trying to better their lives and create a future for themselves the confidence they need to transition to, find and retain work. We need to understand that what many of us in this place take for granted for some people is simply unknown. Vulnerable young Australians have no, or virtually no, experience of what work looks like, of what the expectations are in terms of practice, behaviour, what to wear, what is done and, more importantly, what is not done at work.

The Youth Jobs PaTH is divided into three stages: prepare, trial and hire. To help young people gain a foothold in the labour market, young jobseekers will participate in intensive pre-employment skills training within five months of registering with jobactive. The first

three weeks of training will focus on skills such as working in a team, presentation, and appropriate IT skills, like limiting your use of Facebook. A further three weeks of training will centre on advanced job preparation and job hunting skills.

The government will introduce up to 120,000 internship placements over four years to help young jobseekers who have been in employment services for six months or more gain valuable work experience. Jobseekers and businesses, with the help of employment services providers, will work together to design internships of four to 12 weeks duration, during which the jobseeker will work 15 to 25 hours per week. Participation in an internship will be voluntary for both jobseekers and employers.

In addition to gaining valuable hands on experience in a workplace, young people will receive \$200 per fortnight on top of their regular income support payment while participating in the internship. People that take on interns will receive an upfront payment of \$1,000, and will benefit from the opportunity to see what a young worker can do and how they fit into the team before deciding whether to offer them a permanent job.

Stage 3 of the new Youth Jobs PaTH provides increased and streamlined wage subsidies for young people. Australian employers will be eligible for a youth bonus wage subsidy if they hire a young jobseeker who has been in employment services for six months or more. Businesses will have the flexibility to employ young jobseekers either directly, through labour hire arrangements, or combined with an apprenticeship or traineeship. As part of these reforms, existing wage subsidies will be streamlined, making them easier for employers to access. In our modern and dynamic economy, highly entrepreneurial and flexible firms with dynamic mindsets will proliferate.

Yesterday I heard from Bernard Salt that five of America's top 10 companies were formed within the past 40 years. In Australia, our top 10 most valuable companies were founded before 1929. We need business leaders with new ideas. And, as much as it pains me to say it, young people are the source of most these bright new ideas. The Turnbull government will also encourage young people to start their own businesses by fostering their innovation and interest in self-employment.

It is interesting that in the United States some of these innovative companies were formed by people still in their 20s—people like Mark Zuckerberg. Bill Gates was only 19 when he started Microsoft and created the DOS operating system that IBM bought. Even Warren Buffett started his funds management company when he was only 22. In Australia, this sort of entrepreneurship needs to be both encouraged and developed. This government will be part of enabling that to occur. It is this sort of stuff that not only helps young people find jobs that they love and that they want to be involved in but also builds our economy. It also helps create companies that pay taxes, that create jobs, that create wage growth, that create more competition in our marketplace and ensure that all of us, all consumers have the benefits of competition in the marketplace, so governments do not need to regulate as much, so that we can get out of the way of the market and allow people to enjoy the benefits thereof.

This bill, along with all the other reforms the Turnbull government is implementing, is about people's lives. It is about making a real difference to vulnerable members of our community. It shows that if you are willing to work hard, to put yourself out there, this government will support you no matter what your circumstances. This bill is not about the soft prejudice that says that people from tough backgrounds cannot aspire to something better,

that they are victims now and will forever-more be victims. This says that the human potential inherent in all of us will be supported and encouraged, that no person is not worth something, and that everyone can make a contribution. It is about saying that we believe that everyone can make a difference for themselves and for their families, and that if they are willing, this government, the Turnbull government, will support them. And we will break the cycle of poverty that has endured in this country for far too long.

Ms SHARKIE (Mayo) (12:14): I want our government to provide tangible opportunities for young people to gain relevant on-the-job training and experience. I worked for more than four years in executive roles in the youth space. When you know the challenges that face unemployed young people like I do, you really do want ideas like the ones contained in this legislation to work. However, I must put my concerns before the House.

As I outlined in my first speech, many young people in our country, for a variety of complex reasons, are struggling to transition to employment. Contributing significantly to the youth unemployment rate is the reality that every year fewer and fewer entry-level jobs exist. Young people who are underemployed, early school leavers or those who fail to transition successfully from school to further education or employment are some of our most vulnerable members in our society. High youth unemployment rates and overrepresentation in underemployment mean that young people who are disengaged from education are not in training or employment and that they face a bleak financial future—a future with hardship, increased likelihood of health and mental health issues, and an increased probability of involvement in the criminal justice system.

As our population ages, it is imperative for Australia's economic productivity and the well-being of society more generally that we equip all young people with the skills and support needed to become active, positive, contributing citizens. Young people who are unemployed for a prolonged period of time suffer wage scarring. The effect of wage scarring can be long-lasting and financially and emotionally detrimental. A recent international study from the Work Foundation in the United Kingdom indicated that long periods of unemployment when young can reduce an individual's wage-earning capacity between 13 and 23 percent by the age of 42. This phenomena negatively affects not only a person's individual financial ability but the nation's collective fiscal productivity. Therefore, I do commend the government for pressing ahead with the idea of systematically linking youth job seekers with work-trial opportunities and paid employment. It is a fundamentally good idea. But, like any idea, it also needs to be implemented well to make it work. It is from this standpoint that I offer a constructive critique of this bill, the Social Security Legislation Amendment (Youth Jobs Path: Prepare, Trial, Hire) Bill 2016.

My first observation when reading through the bill is that there is little detail on how the Prepare, Trial, Hire program—the PaTH program—will operate in practice. Much is left to regulation and administrative discretion. I understand the advantages of retaining flexibility when implementing a program like this. You want it to be able to adapt as conditions change and to leave room to incorporate improvements when lessons from its implementation are learned. However, too many fundamental questions remain unanswered in the bill and several important protections for young people are omitted.

For a start, it is not sufficiently clear how young job seekers will be insured while they are on their placements. WorkCover-style entitlements that insure young people against accidents

in the workplace are a fundamental workplace right, and my Senate colleagues will find it hard to support any final version of the bill without such protections.

The term 'internship', which is used in the bill, should be revisited. It conjures up images of making coffees for bosses in the offices of lawyers and accountants when most job seekers will be going down a very different, practical and vocational-skills-and-trades pathway. 'Work trial' would be a much more encompassing and meaningful expression to be used and would also highlight that the placements are intended to lead participants into work. Work health and safety requirements, including bullying and sexual harassment protections, must also exist to complement the WorkCover-style entitlements that are required.

The amount of and timing of the subsidy received by business to take on a young person must also be clearer so as to understand exactly how the incentives will work for business. In particular, we need to know whether those incentives may become perverse if the churning of interns can work to a business advantage. Churning would be an unintended and perverse outcome, and would not be to the benefit of either the young participants or to existing employees who find their jobs being displaced by a readily available pool of subsidised labour.

The lowest-skilled workplaces are particularly vulnerable to such churning, as young job seekers are generally less skilled and would, therefore, compete directly with other employees in a low-skilled workplace. Similarly, we also need to know that young participants are not displacing their own jobs. We need to know that businesses that employ a lot of young people, like McDonald's or a retail chain, cannot access young labour that simply replaces a significant chunk of their pre-existing workforce. It is for this reason that the Nick Xenophon team will seek to work with the government to ensure that appropriate industries are targeted for the PaTH program and that, where internship experiences are meaningful and do not displace existing labour, they genuinely facilitate a transition to ongoing employment. We cannot have a program that it is simply open slather and leaves young people open to exploitation. Between 2012 and 2015, NCVER recorded that the Australian economy lost almost 160,000 trainees and apprentices. We should, therefore, be targeting trades and the construction industry, and be, primarily, promoting this initiative to Australian small businesses. This will reduce the risk of churning by big business.

The range of reasonable excuses for a young job seeker to end their internship early needs to be expanded. Currently, it does not appear that the legislation allows for a young person to terminate their internship for judicious reasons such as for sickness or for compassionate grounds, such as the death of a close family member. That, surely, must be amended.

Furthermore, the definition of 'misconduct'—currently grounds for early termination of the internship—needs to be clarified in the legislation to avoid perverse incentives for business and to protect young people. For example, what level of proof is required for misconduct to be proven? Or is it just the word of the business owner versus the intern? Given the clear power imbalances between business and a young job seeker, there needs to be a clear and reasonable standard of proof defined in the legislation. To complement this, a complaints system needs to be established so that young people can access it if they become exploited. I am concerned that without such legislative protections and oversight we risk the cultivation of the Dickensian master-servant relationships, echoed in the 19th century.

There needs to be adequate resourcing for jobactive providers so that they can effectively negotiate placements with businesses and support internship participation. An additional question is whether jobactive or Transition to Work providers are better placed to house the PaTH program. I would argue that Transition to Work contract providers are a better fit as the government has a collective of organisations in Transition to Work that have proven specialist experience in delivering employment and transition support to young people.

The proposed bill currently excludes related entities from being able to deliver the 'prepare' phase of the PaTH program. In practical terms, this means that a provider that is both an RTO, a registered training organisation, and a jobactive provider will not be able to refer jobseekers from its own caseload to its own RTO to complete employability skills training. This runs counter to the notion of creating integrated services to prevent service gaps and will create particular problems in regional areas, where few providers are readily accessible. One possible remedy might be to exempt not-for-profit providers from the related entities rule.

One hundred dollars a week is very little to be paying an intern when their prospective employer is being paid a multithousand dollar subsidy to take them on and help them into employment. The balance of incentives needs to be much more fairly weighted. Furthermore, in rural communities, \$100 may be barely sufficient to cover the cost of running a car—remember that in communities such as mine there are few buses. The dollars offered would not cover the long drives that are required to even attend a program.

A work-trial style program like PaTH is only the beginning of the work the government needs to do in the young jobseeker space. The economic burden for Australian society and government as a result of youth inactivity and poor transitions is substantial. A national youth activation and transition service targeted towards young people who are not engaged in education, employment or training and who have multiple barriers would contribute to reducing this burden and increasing the productivity of the nation as a whole. For many young people who have had experiences of employment, those experiences have been temporary in nature. The Australian government Productivity Commission working paper *Prevalence of transition pathways in Australia* recognised that many young people frequently 'churn' in and out of the labour force. One of the main reasons for this is the casual or temporary nature of the majority of their employment opportunities. There is an urgent and compelling need for a youth activation and transition service to exist for disengaged young people to ensure that they successfully transition into stable employment or further training. The current jobactive service does not provide the specialist support needed for young people to successfully transition to sustainable employment, particularly young people who face complex non-vocational barriers, and yet those young people, who are the most vulnerable with the highest barriers to overcome—the stream C young people—are not in the youth transition service but in the adult transitional employment service, jobactive. It does not make sense. Of those young people, we know that many are not 'employment ready' after they leave school, particularly young people who did not experience a solid secondary education. For those young people, the opportunity to connect with vocational or pre-employment education and training needs to coincide with intensive support to address non-vocational barriers through the development of an individual plan with mutually agreed specific steps to address barriers, to identify and develop personal strengths and to reach goals. This level of support is the best way to create a foundation for future employability. International experience suggests that

such rapid activation of young people who are not in education or employment provides the greatest opportunity for a positive outcome. Such a national plan should be delivered as a specialised youth service, it should adopt a place based approach and it should be delivered by local community services. This is especially the case in regional and remote communities, where local delivery by providers allows for the flexibility to tailor the service to specific community needs and is integral to successful delivery.

Addressing the needs of young people who are unemployed, underemployed or inactive is equitably responsible and would be fiscally advantageous to the Australian government through the implementation of cost-effective, preventative activation programs that will ultimately reduce long-term dependence on welfare and increase Australia's productivity.

I and my colleagues do commend the idea behind the bill before us, but adequate safeguards would also need to be legislated in order to make it work in practice. It also must be understood that a workable program for young jobseekers is but a first step in engaging young people transitioning towards employment. I will support the bill in this House, but I acknowledge that my colleagues in the Senate reserve the right to propose amendments relating to what I have spoken on today.

I want to finish by telling you a story of a young person from my electorate, who served me at a checkout in the supermarket just a couple of weeks ago. This young man graduated with a bachelor's degree in science majoring in geology and ecology, and went on to study honours in environmental biology at the University of Adelaide. He is now in his first year out of university and has struggled to obtain even an interview for an environmental job, not just in South Australia but also interstate. He has also emailed a lot of companies explaining his interest in doing work experience or vacation work, but most employers will not take on work experience students. For every graduate or entry-level job he has applied for, the employer requires years of experience. As the young man described it to me: 'It's a never-ending cycle. If employers don't want work experience students, how are we supposed to get the experience in the first place? It's an issue of not just experience but also the sheer number of applicants for the jobs.' One job he went for, a graduate-level environmental officer position, had over 200 applicants, and this level of competition was not unusual. Of the group of about 20 to 30 talented students who graduated with honours with this young man last year, only 10 per cent have obtained full-time work in their area of specialisation and most have resorted to working in a supermarket and the like.

Young people, just like the rest of the population, want to build a good life for themselves. Currently, our society is failing to provide the jobs for our next generation of workers to get their start. As we do that, we will continue to fail our young people and we will fail Australia.

Mr BRENDAN O'CONNOR (Gorton) (12:29): I rise to contribute to this debate on the Social Security Legislation Amendment (Youth Jobs Path: Prepare, Trial, Hire) Bill 2016 because it is an essential debate to be had in this place insofar as providing opportunities for young people in this country to find work is concerned. I start by commending the contribution by the member for Mayo. I think her concerns about the bill are absolutely correct. The intent of the bill—at least if it is to ensure the opportunity of young people to get work—is noble and good, but, as always, we need to look at the impact of the legislation and whether in fact there are sufficient safeguards in place for the most vulnerable workers in the labour market, namely young people.

I also think it is true to say that there is no point providing a subsidised program, if you do not understand the challenges confronting young people. The member for Mayo went to the issue of non-vocational barriers to employment—the fact that there are so many young people who are not only not equipped with skills to deal with the labour market and find a job but also dealing with so many other barriers, including homelessness, intergenerational unemployment, drug dependency and all sorts of other difficulties. Whatever we do in supporting those on the margins—young people struggling—we need to ensure that we attend to them in a holistic manner; not only providing a job, in the case of people who might be struggling, but also attending to their other concerns so we can make sure that their attachment to the labour market is not a precarious one.

Labor supports opportunities for young people. We are concerned that there are in excess of 260,000 young people unemployed in Australia, and that is a very significant proportion of the unemployment numbers in this country. We know, as the result of automation and other changes in the labour market, there are fewer entry-level jobs for younger people. Therefore the government does have a role to partner businesses and partner companies to ensure we provide greater opportunities. We also know, because of the disruption to other sectors of the labour market, we have a situation where young people now are competing against older workers for the same jobs. There was a time when fast-food chains probably employed predominantly young people. That still may be the case but, increasingly, we are seeing older workers having to take on fast-food work because they have been displaced from other sectors of the labour market. This adds to the difficulty young people are having finding work at the moment.

We support the tenor of the bill, but we have some grave reservations. The member for Chifley has moved a very significant amendment that goes to the concerns that Labor has in relation to this bill. The night of the budget, when it was introduced by the Treasurer and later advocated by the Minister for Employment, was the first indication we had in relation to this proposed initiative that it would only apply to existing jobs. In fact, when asked whether it would apply to additional jobs or existing jobs, the Minister for Employment advised that it would only apply to existing jobs and then, of course, subsequently had to correct the record and say, 'No, it could include additional jobs as well.' That is a fundamental concern we have with respect to this initiative.

There is a concern that we are using tax payers' dollars to subsidise jobs that were going to be provided to young people anyway. If the minister needs to get a lesson on deadweight loss, she only need look at the weakness of this scheme. The way that the scheme has been set up will allow employers to use it to ensure there is no additionality to the labour market and, indeed, allow them to employ young people in existing positions, thereby avoiding having to fully pay for their own workers and, of course, not having to pay them pursuant to industrial instruments. There is a twofold problem here: firstly, the taxpayer will be paying for these so-called interns for work they were going to employ someone for anyway, but now they are getting a subsidy from the taxpayer; and, secondly, they do not have to ensure it is additional to the workforce. That is a concern, and it has been catered for in the amendment moved by the member for Chifley, where we want to get some guarantees as to this initiative.

We do not have to go too far back to remember what this government was considering doing to young jobseekers. It was not when long ago that the government was looking at

cutting any benefit whatsoever for all jobseekers up to the age of 30 from any support for six months. This government advocated that young people up until the age of 30 would receive no support for six months even when they were looking each and every day for work. Because of the pressure from Labor and others, that has now been reduced to one month, but I can tell you that for young people who are independent people looking for work, if they are not to receive any support for the first month they are unemployed and they are not living at home, it is an enormous burden and it is counterproductive. It will be more difficult where there is no support whatsoever for young people to look for work.

We ask the government, as they ended up backflipping on the six-month suspension of any support, to also change their position on the one-month suspension and provide some level of support, provided the young jobseeker is looking for work. That is what mutual obligation means. You cannot have the principle of mutual obligation when you say, 'There's an obligation on the young jobseeker to look for work, but there is no obligation on us to help them.' That is not mutual obligation. That is just putting the onus on them with no support from the government, and that is completely undermining the principle of mutual obligation that I thought both major parties shared in that regard. I ask the government to reconsider their position on the absence of support for one month so that they are not being unduly unfair.

While I am on my feet, in relation to support from government, they also extended the youth allowance to cover 22- and 23-year-olds so there would be, in effect, a 20 per cent cut, in real terms, to income support for unemployed young people at the age of 22 and 23. That is still something the government is seeking to pass through the Senate. It is a massive cut. If you are on Newstart, on the lowest support—we know Newstart is not a very significant income—you are going to be subject to a 20 per cent cut to that income, if you are 22 or 23. Again, that is a pretty harsh thing to do to that age cohort, and we would ask the government to reconsider its position there. It is pretty harsh stuff. It is not going to help them find work. It is going to make it more difficult. It is just gratuitously punitive and, quite frankly, quite nasty, but in keeping with this sort of government.

This government wants to have a society that is easy to hire and easy to fire. That is liberal philosophy, quite frankly—let the market rip, undermine the safety net, go after penalty rates, find ways to displace workers in the labour market, undermine employment security, diminish the conditions of employment, and smash unions so that there is little collective bargaining happening in the labour market. That is pretty much the modus operandi of the Liberal Party. Given that the aspiration of Prime Minister Turnbull and this government is to have an easy-to-hire, easy-to-fire, low-wage society, we are concerned that this initiative, even if it is well-intended, could actually lead to that result. Therefore, I think the government should seriously contemplate the amendment moved by the member for Chifley. I will just go to some of those points.

The member for Chifley has made clear that the opposition is not declining to agree to the second reading of this bill, but we are concerned about a number of key areas. Firstly, we are concerned that the jobs will not be displaced by cheaper labour. I have mentioned the fact that with this scheme, by being able to replace existing workers, rather than it involving additional jobs and an increase in the number of jobs available for young people in the labour market, we are concerned that if you have these so-called interns coming into workplaces on income

that is less than the award that applies to that workplace you are effectively undermining the existing arrangements in that workplace. It is the classic race to the bottom method used by reactionary right-wing governments, and we would be concerned that this initiative will actually apply in that way. So, quite rightly, the member for Chifley has said that we need to be given some assurance that that would not take place as a result of the efforts of this initiative.

Our further concern is that wages will not be undercut and some participants will be paid below award minimum wages. That is specifically referring to the failure to recognise awards in the workplace. Further, that participants' safety will not be compromised and that adequate insurance arrangements will be provided. Again, because this class of jobseekers will not be strictly identified as employees, they will not be covered by the workers compensation schemes that apply to actual workers. It would be very concerning to Labor if there were not sufficient support to provide some other means to ensure not only their safety but, indeed, provide compensation if they are injured at work.

Given that this scheme is effectively going right across the labour market, dealing with private sector companies, we are concerned that there is a possibility that these young people will be in unsafe situations where they will be at risk of injury, or worse. The member for Chifley may have already mentioned that we recently saw the tragic death of a very young participant on a Work for the Dole scheme in Toowoomba. It was an absolute tragedy and I know everyone in this place has that view. We say that when it, in particular, comes to young people in workplaces who do not have a great deal of experience, and given that this can go across so many sectors of the labour market, we do really need to ensure that we go above and beyond in providing safety and that in the induction of young people into these workplaces there is sufficient training for them to understand the potential risks. I am not aware that that will not happen, but there is no clarity from the bill suggesting that it will happen. Labor is insisting that we get some undertaking from the government that the safety of these young people has been taken into consideration.

Too many deaths are occurring in workplaces in this country. Three weeks ago a German backpacker was on the 14th floor of a building site in Perth and fell to her death, tragically. That is just one of many examples that can happen if young people, or workers generally, are not given sufficient safety training. We need to make sure that happens.

Another concern is that participants will not be used to help businesses sidestep unfair dismissal protections. That goes to our concern that, increasingly, people feel so little security of work. We would be worried about the vulnerability of workers if employers were able to obviate their responsibilities and not provide sufficient protection for those participants.

We have talked about prioritising small and medium enterprises. We do not want to see wholesale use of this scheme by large employers just as a mechanism to displace workers who are being paid under an award. Any scheme that involves taxpayers' dollars to subsidise wages should be about adding to the labour market, not taxpayers subsidising under-award-wage jobs. That is not what this bill should be about. Yet, when you read the bill, there is no clarity—none on security of employment, none on safety and not sufficiently on insurance, if compensation is required when there is an injury. There are so many questions requiring answers from the government, which I think are very appropriately determined through our

amendment. Until we get some clarity we have not made our position fully known on this. We ask the government to take these issues very seriously.

Ms MADELEINE KING (Brand) (12:44): I rise today to speak about the Social Security Legislation Amendment (Youth Jobs Path: Prepare, Trial, Hire) Bill 2016. The Turnbull government's prepare, trial, hire program, or PaTH as it is known, is a program that is supposed to prepare young people for work by placing them in voluntary internships for between four and 12 weeks. This bill is designed in part to support the introduction of PaTH.

I am particularly interested in the issues surrounding getting young people to work. I represent the electorate of Brand where pockets of the community are struggling with youth unemployment figures that stand at a staggering 13.6 per cent. This is more than double the national unemployment rate average. This is despite the electorate being home to Western Australia's major industrial strip in Kwinana—home to big and small businesses, from Co-operative Bulk Handling, Alcoa and BP to smaller fabricators and contractors. Supporting this state and the nation during the construction phase of the mining boom, job seekers in WA and Brand are now having to look elsewhere, beyond the Kwinana strip, to find work now the mining industry has moved into its foreseeable production phase. The move into this phase was always foreseeable. There was no surprise with this movement of phases. It was plain to see for all. The construction boom in the mining industry of Western Australia could not last forever.

The government—I might say the state government of Western Australia as well as the federal government here—has had a long time to consider the impact of this economic change on communities in Brand, in Western Australia and across the whole country. This government has used its time to come up with, and endlessly repeat, a slogan to address the unemployment rate—'jobs and growth', they say. It seems to be a big useless loop. I am concerned that PaTH is a cobbled together program that will not provide realistic opportunities for young unemployed people. I am concerned that it will not address the lack of jobs available to young people and will instead fail young job seekers.

Let us have a look at what PaTH is. It is supposedly designed to prepare young people for work by providing job seekers aged 17 to 24 with pre-employment training and placement in voluntary internships over four to 12 weeks. Businesses will be paid \$1,000 to take on an intern and then receive a wage subsidy of between \$6½ thousand and \$10,000 if they hire them at the conclusion of the internship. During that time interns may work 15 to 25 hours a week. In return, job seekers will receive payments of \$200 per fortnight on top of their current income support payments while they are participating in the PaTH program. The program is being introduced at the same time the other government job programs, such as the Work for the Dole scheme, are hopelessly failing our young unemployed.

I see and hear regularly from my constituents who are worried about their children that are unable to find meaningful work and with little prospect of meaningful work in the near future. I hear concerns from young people themselves who want to work but have no job, and this is not from lack of trying. Of course, the reality is that when there are less jobs than there are job seekers people will remain unemployed. This is a sentiment that has been shared with me by people in the jobs service industry, who have expressed their frustrations at a lack of jobs for people to apply for.

The Kwinana strip has been a major source of jobs for people living in Rockingham and Kwinana—the two cities within Brand—for many decades. Recently, on a visit to a local job service provider in Kwinana, with the member for Chifley, I was told by these people working on the frontline trying to help people find work that the jobs that were once so plentiful on the strip, as it is known, have now dried up. The jobs for those people who want to work are just not there.

Youth unemployment in parts of Brand stands at more than double the national unemployment average, as I have mentioned before. I repeat it because the figures are astounding. What happened to the jobs and growth mantra espoused by the government during the election? Where are these jobs? Where is the investment needed to get people back into meaningful employment? The sad truth is that Australia's youth are counting the cost of the Turnbull government's failure to develop a real jobs plan for the future and a real sustainable jobs plan for our nation.

In Brand and across the country we are seeing a government that is not willing to invest in their future by investing in the productive infrastructure that can deliver real opportunities and benefits to the community. One glaring example of this failure in my electorate comes to mind as I consider this bill: the Kwinana outer harbour. I know members of this place will have heard me mention the Kwinana outer project often. It is one of those nation-changing and certainly electorate-changing—not to mention state-changing—infrastructure projects. Instead of progressing the construction of the Kwinana outer harbour project, the Turnbull government is pursuing a \$2 billion investment in the Perth Freight Link, a road to a port which is fast approaching the day when it will reach full capacity and even then the road proposed does not even make it to the port. In fact, it stops about two kilometres south of the port. An alternative investment by the government, an investment in the Kwinana outer harbour project—a long-term investment in a long-term future—would instead unlock latent potential across existing industries and attract new industries into the area.

Support for the new outer harbour makes sense. It would help grow the local, state and national economies. It is estimated it would create 25,000 new jobs. That is a lot of employment opportunities for our young people. It would provide real paid jobs and training; not short-term internships off the back of a hastily put together program. The Kwinana outer harbour project would encourage innovation through the application of modern technology to port operations, and it puts people first by supporting a sustainable industrial base to underpin the flourishing communities in Brand. Such investment would create job opportunities that would give young people an employment future, and a long-term employment future. It would open up opportunities for new and developing industry to move into Kwinana to expand the large industrial estate that has been planned for there for many years. These new industries would be located next to a state-of-the-art export port.

Despite promising that it would tackle youth unemployment, the coalition has failed to deliver on the means and ends of actually doing so. According to the Department of Employment, youth unemployment nationally is at 12.8 per cent with nearly 300,000 unemployed young people between the ages of 15 and 24 unable to have productive work lives. On top of this, the department acknowledges there are another 170,000 people who have been unemployed for more than a year. We have a generation of young people who are disillusioned by the act of looking for jobs that simply are not there. It is a national disgrace.

Against the backdrop of this woeful performance, the Turnbull government has pulled together the PaTH program. I am concerned, as are many of my colleagues, that PaTH will not be a pathway to meaningful employment opportunities and will simply result in young people being exploited. We already know that the Work for the Dole program is not providing long-term solutions for young people. It is failing our young unemployed. In the case of Work for the Dole, even the government's own figures show nearly 90 per cent of its participants are not in full-time work three months after finishing the program. You would think that these results would cause a re-think on performance of this program, but, no, as we have heard from my colleague the member for Chifley, the response from the government was astounding. And I will repeat the response which was heard at last month's Senate estimates, 'The purpose of Work for the Dole is not necessarily to lead directly to a full-time job.'

It is no wonder that the failure of this program and the attitude towards young people trying to find work causes me to have concerns about this new plan proposed by the government. As you have heard from my colleagues who have spoken already on this bill, they and many others in the community are worried about whether the program represents a fair deal for Australia's young jobseekers. Under the PaTH program, we are concerned that young people will be forced to pay an even heavier price through the program's apparent flaws.

This bill is designed to provide support to participants' social security entitlements while in the program. It does this via two measures. Firstly, a provision will be inserted into the Social Security Act and the Veterans' Entitlements Act so that the \$200 payment interns receive is not counted as income for social security or veterans' entitlements purposes. And, secondly, it amends the Social Security Act to allow young people to suspend their payments if they are indeed employed—against all odds. They can then restart them without re-applying if they lose their job through no fault of their own within 26 weeks.

Now, if taken in isolation the government will claim the measures in the bill are noncontroversial and should be accepted. However, a closer look shows us that the reality is very different and that our concerns are justified. We are concerned at what the future might hold for young people who are at a most important stage in life as they look to enter the workforce and as they look to prepare for the rest of their lives. The reality is that the measures proposed by the government form part of a broader new program design which could see young jobseekers exploited. I agree with the proposition that there is dignity in work, but there is not much dignity if you are the victim of exploitation. The measures could undermine workforce standards, which would have an even broader impact on the wider community and those already in employment.

Perhaps most alarming is the fact that, unlike with Work for the Dole, for the first time participants would be placed in the private sector and would be paid below award wages. The Work for the Dole program is not-for-profit- and government-organisation based. PaTH places young people into businesses. This means private businesses will be given access to thousands of young Australians who will work for the benefit of business for less than the minimum wage. The implications of this are obviously concerning and again, impacts on more people than those participating in the PaTH program itself. PaTH has the potential to be used to displace jobs with cheap labour. Families do not want to see their children used in this way. Young people do not want to be used in this way and workers do not want to be usurped out of their jobs by a cheaper and potentially untrained labour source.

In this country we have a minimum wage overseen by the Fair Work Commission. This is something to be proud of. However, with PaTH there are very real concerns raised that participants may be entering a program where they are 'working' for below minimum award wages. The program could very well see young Australians doing the same job as others, except being paid less than the minimum wage. It is a dangerous path to take and, as the member for Burt said, it is a dangerous race to the bottom.

The reality is that we are experiencing a time in this country where wages growth is at the lowest rate on record. My colleagues' concern, and my concern, is that PaTH could be used to undermine wages across industries, and this concern is very real. Not only is it worrying to young people who potentially will be paid below award wages, and not only is it worrying to their families and loved ones who will potentially watch them work for less than they deserve and for less than an award wage, but it will also be worrying to workers and employees who could see underpaid PaTH interns doing their work and taking their jobs. In such cases there would be two victims: the underpaid intern and the person who, sadly, loses their job to them. Large numbers of interns could completely remove the need for existing employees to work at certain times in certain sectors, including hospitality and tourism. Who is to say that large numbers of PaTH participants would not be used over weekends, removing the need for regular employees at those times and also removing the need to pay penalty rates for those employees?

This is counterproductive, and could potentially add to the problem of underemployment in the community. Underemployment, as we all know, is a massive concern, with people struggling to find enough work to pay the bills and to keep their heads above water. It is a time where they are seeking more hours and greater employment. There are 1.1 million Australians wanting more work, but unable to find it, and underemployment in the August quarter was at 8.7 per cent, the highest level since this data began in 1978. In these circumstances it would be irresponsible to support a program that has the very real potential of adding to this problem and to people's hardships.

Another concern is that despite repeated questioning there are few assurances that interns will be covered by appropriate workers compensation schemes should there be an accident. That is because PaTH participants will be considered as 'volunteers', not as employees. This is despite the fact they will be doing jobs and will get paid, albeit a below award amount. This is farcical and it is a clear demonstration of exploitation. It is damaging, because in some jurisdictions this could affect the way workers compensation systems would treat participants in the event of an accident—which may well be a life-changing accident.

There are no specifics about the program: there is no detail on areas where jobseekers will acquire skills. The program has been touted as a means to prepare young people for work during these times of high youth unemployment, but there is very little in the way of detail in the way it will be implemented. In fact, while the program was announced in May and is scheduled to start next April the government cannot even tell us what an 'intern' is. In Senate estimates back in May the clearest outline of training and skills outcomes Minister Cash offered us was, 'We will give you the skills that employers tell us you just do not have.'

The government has also had trouble explaining what jobseekers will be doing in the internship phase of the program—whether they would be working or just observing. To say that this is a vague outcome for participants would be an understatement. It leaves them with

little scope to plan, to achieve or to develop in their work experiences. I and my colleagues are also concerned that large numbers of participants could be used within companies at any given time, with little sanction applied to employers that might 'churn' through participants as their engagement concludes. We do not know if this will happen.

The lack of information around this program and the problems not only for participants but for the wider community mean we cannot agree to this legislation at the moment, without amendment. The government needs to show how these issues will be fixed and addressed. We call—Labor is calling—for this legislation to be considered by a Senate inquiry. We would be doing a disservice to young jobseekers if we just agreed to PaTH and to this legislation without amendment. We would be doing a disservice to those workers who potentially would have their jobs undermined by this program.

The government's failure to invest in jobs and in infrastructure that will provide jobs, cannot be hidden behind a poorly-put-together program such as the PaTH program. The government must address the concerns raised against this hastily-put-together internship program, and Labor demands a better deal than this for young jobseekers.

Ms RYAN (Lalor—Opposition Whip) (12:59): I rise to support the amendment by the member for Chifley and to discuss this program that has been put forward by the government in the Social Security Legislation Amendment (Youth Jobs Path: Prepare, Trial, Hire) Bill 2016. It seems to me that this is a creative concoction. They have come up with the word 'PaTH' for a path, supposedly, to somewhere, and then they have thought, 'Prepare, Trial, Hire'. It is a clever little idea. There is only one problem: we have all seen *The Pursuit of Happyness*. We saw the film. We saw Will Smith being homeless while he worked for nothing with his young child with him. We have seen the film. We know that the glorified internship is a very, very sexy word that people use for unpaid work, unless there is a quid pro quo in terms of some kind of an accreditation.

An internship in this country is not tightly defined. We do, however, use the word to describe what RMIT students might do as part of their practical placement for which they are given accreditation in their postgrad study. ANU runs similar programs. There is a quid pro quo here. The young person attends a workplace in a learning environment to do a work placement. We even use that language of 'work placement' in high school with VET programs. There is always a quid pro quo.

The problem with this plan is that it is called an internship, but there is no quid pro quo. The notion here is that we are just going to roll out a policy so that we can pay kids \$100 a week on top of what they get for Newstart and they will actually be working. Or are they working? This is the least thought-out piece of legislation from those opposite to come into this place in 3½ years, and it is the worst. Worse than that, it is packaged like it is some kind of panacea for youth unemployment. There is no panacea for youth unemployment. There is no quick fix and there is no easy fix. We have tried these things before and they have been dropped. Why? Because they were not successful.

As a young person, when I first left school at 16 I was part of a program that came out of what we now call Centrelink, which used to be something very different. We were put into positions that were three-month trials where the government subsidised the employer to put those young people into those jobs. I was in a job for 12 months and I watched four other young people come and go in three-month blocks and get no ongoing employment. In our era,

I talked to lots of young people who were just going from three-month position to three-month position to three-month position. What we did was subsidise business. What we did not do was find long-term jobs for young people.

This is just another iteration of that, although this time it is dressed up as if it is more important. This is not about putting someone into a low-paid entry-level job where they may not even require a school finishing certificate or year 12 qualification. This is being dressed up like it is some kind of postgrad experience. It is not. This is about exploiting young people and finding yet another way to subsidise business. If they cannot get their \$50 billion tax cuts through, I suppose this was the next best thing. They are going to subsidise business and wrap it up like it is going to address youth unemployment. It is not.

As we saw in *The Pursuit of Happyness*, the American version of an internship is unpaid postgrad work. That movie blew apart any notion that internships are necessarily a way to get to work. Mr Deputy Speaker, if you remember Will Smith in that movie—I certainly do—you will remember him sleeping in a public toilet with his son. If you remember, that model that the movie exposed was where American companies—I think it was a law firm or an accountancy firm—would put on 10 interns who would do unpaid work and would ultimately vie for one paid position. It was not funny. The movie was incredibly sad, and so is this proposal which came down on budget night. The minister responsible, when asked, 'Is this about new jobs or existing jobs?' said, 'It's about existing jobs.' It is about existing jobs, so it is about reducing the wages of young people as they enter employment—well, quasi-employment or possible employment. Perhaps one in 1,000 will get a job out of this program. I have found this entire idea to be completely and utterly fanciful. It is absolutely fanciful.

There are so many other questions that come from it. Will they get a payslip? It is illegal in this country not to give a worker a payslip. Where in the provisions in here does it explain exactly what role these kids are going to play in these jobs? Are they going to be paid by the hour? Is that the plan for this loose \$100 on top of their Newstart? Is the \$100 if you show up or is it \$100 if you work 15 hours? Does anyone want to quickly do the maths on how much an hour this worker is going to cost the company? It is not like we pay young people an extraordinary amount now.

There are real risks in this. As someone who spent her life working with young people, I know what those risks are. As someone who spent her life with young people who went and got that part-time job after school, we applaud them and we love it. At 14 and nine months in Victoria, off they go out the door to get that part-time job. But when they are doing year 12 and they turn 18, halfway through the year they come to see you, heartbroken because they are no longer in that part-time job. They are too old and they cost too much on an 18-year-old's salary, so they have been replaced by a year 9 student. This will be open to absolute exploitation and abuse, and this government should be ashamed to put it forward as a serious idea.

This government wants to address youth unemployment. If they actually want to do something serious for the 260,000 young people in this country that are currently looking for work then perhaps they need to address the way we build infrastructure. Perhaps we could take the advice of the economists around the country and get started on some of those things.

I note, too, today that we are talking about a situation where the ABCC bill, which is being put to the Senate, actively discourages large companies from putting on apprentices. So, we

will discourage apprenticeships and we will introduce internships—vaguely wrapped internships—in this path-to-nowhere program. Let's look at the notion of internships in this country. We have people doing internships and, as I said, the general view of those internships is that they are part of some kind of university qualification as a workplace placement and, in that sense, they are not necessarily a bad thing. But this legislation is a case of extrapolating from what the community perceives to be a good thing: you are going to a university that is going to give you not just an academic training but also the practical work component that is going to help you become more career ready. Note: we are talking about internships in this country that are generally about building a career; it is an entry level into a career. However, we have now got this down to youth unemployment—youths of 17 to 24 years of age. I do not think they are going to build a career from working for 12 weeks for what is ostensibly \$100 a week, on top of the government's Newstart allowance. So it is a subsidy for business. It is not about youth unemployment and it is not about preparing kids for work.

While I am here, I cannot ignore this notion—and I hear it in this place all the time—of how young people need to be in a program to develop soft work skills. What on earth are soft work skills? Tying your tie? Getting out of bed on time? As someone who has raised three sons, I have watched them all go out to work at very early hours of the morning at young ages. Every young person has to go through that process. We do not spit them out of school, put them in a truck, take them to a job site and say, 'They're ready.' Part of that development is about the relationship between the employer and the young person. When young people go through those first months of getting up and getting ready for work they sometimes stumble. It takes them a little while sometimes to figure out that they actually need to go to bed before 10 pm if they have to be up at 5.30 am. You cannot teach that as part of a program on soft skills. Our employers are not screaming out for young people to have soft skills. Our employers are asking for students who have the skills to work in a collaborative team. They are asking for literacy and numeracy. Most employers know that the soft skills of being polite to people and saying good morning when you get to work will have been learnt at home and that most of those things are about work culture. Work will teach them. They will develop those skills when they are at work.

So we have this notion that we are going to subsidise companies to teach soft skills in an internship that is about entry level work for young people. Let's face it, if this legislation comes into being then this internship is going to be about supermarkets. This is going to be about fast food outlets. This is going to be about 7-Eleven not having to break the law anymore, because it will be legal for them to do what they have already been doing. In fact, they will be further subsidised to do exactly what they have been doing, and they will be able to do it without having breached a visa regulation in the process because they will be doing it to young Australian people. This is a road to nowhere. It is a path to nowhere. In fact, it is nowhere for a young person. We know where this path will lead to in terms of work conditions and wages in this country. It will drive down wages. It will drive down conditions. They are my other questions: does this young person get a pay slip? Is this young person going to be on work experience, or are they considered to be an employee? Are they going to be covered by WorkCover? Are they going to be covered by the Fair Work Act? Will they have to provide their own equipment? Will they be expected to show up with hard shoes on on the first day of job? Will they have to pay for their uniform?

This legislation is an absolute thought-bubble from this government. They have not given any consideration to how they might tackle youth unemployment, except to find a way to drive down young people's wages and to drive down work conditions in this country. My last big question is: does the bill specify when these hours of work will occur? Will they be from 8 pm until three in the morning for a job of picking up glasses at a nightclub? Is that the job young people are going to be doing for their Newstart allowance, plus \$100? Are there going to be limits on how far from home they can be asked to travel before they are cut off Newstart, because they did not attend the nonworkplace for the noninternship to get their nontraining?

This government should come into this place and treat it with some respect. They should approach the creation of legislation that is supposedly about getting young people into work seriously. If they cannot approach it seriously then they should sit down and watch some American films, because I am sure that if they had seen *The Pursuit of Happyness* this bill would never have come into this chamber. Will Smith did a terrific job in that film, showing us all what Americanisation looks like. If we want to have internships in this country then can we have it so that there is a clear advantage for young people to be engaged in them and it not be an opportunity for potential exploitation?

I am going to finish with a quote from Clara Ivy Baird—a good friend of mine. She has worked in this building and now works for Interns Australia. She says:

There are countless interns who have gained real life benefits from their internships. Unfortunately, however, the opposite is also true: desperate to pick up work, too many young Australians are being lured in by an 'internship', and then used to pick up dry cleaning, make coffee and fill out data entry, often without being paid at all.

That is the real experience of a young person who is dealing with other young people. The people she is mostly talking about have a university degree. They are not 17-year-olds straight out of school, ripe for exploitation by this government and its cronies.

Mr PERRETT (Moreton—Opposition Whip) (13:14): I rise to speak on the Social Security Legislation Amendment (Youth Jobs Path: Prepare, Trial, Hire) Bill 2016. Can I say up-front, I commend the member for Lalor on her contribution. She is always worth listening to, and she certainly seemed to cover the perils of this legislation very well.

In another life, before I was in parliament, I had a couple of jobs that were less well remunerated than being a politician. I started off my time at high school spending every summer cotton chipping in the cotton fields around St George and then spent time, when I was at teachers college, working in an abattoir and at Hungry Jack's before moving into better paid jobs. I do say, Member for Lalor, that elements of my time as an articled clerk were not unlike what you described, except they did pay me as an articled clerk. I think 'paid slavery' would be the official description.

In 2016, we have heard an awful lot about jobs—all that talk of jobs and growth. I think I will need to get a therapist at some stage to get 'jobs and growth' out of my head. The coalition was all about the jobs and growth that they would be creating. But, sadly, the Turnbull government has failed at the very task that they set themselves—to create jobs and to create growth. They set the standard, and they failed. They have not met their own fundamental KPI which was—as written on the side of buses, basically—that they would deliver jobs and deliver growth.

Employment conditions have deteriorated so much that they are now, arguably, worse than at any time since the peak of the global financial crisis. I remind you of that, Deputy Speaker Broadbent, because the global financial crisis was the worst set of economic conditions since the Depression. But that is what we are looking at now. The problem is not just the unemployed; there is actually a huge problem in Australia of underemployment. The figure for underemployment for the August quarter was 8.7 per cent. Youth unemployment is at 12.8 per cent. There are more than 270,000 unemployed youth between 15 and 24 years of age. A recent report from Anglicare stated that there is only one job advertised for every six low-skilled jobseekers in Australia. The report said that in May this year alone nearly 140,000 people competed for roughly 22,000 entry-level jobs advertised across Australia.

This is a huge problem, and one that will not be solved by the government's PaTH program that is before the chamber. This bill is designed to support the government's prepare, trial, hire program—or PaTH. It provides that payments made to interns under the PaTH program will be excluded from the income test for social security payments, and thus not affect recipients' payments and entitlements. It allows for the suspension for up to 26 weeks of a person's social security payment, where they are employed by a business that is eligible to receive a youth bonus wage subsidy in relation to them under the PaTH program.

The problem lies not so much with the provisions in this bill as with the PaTH program itself, as detailed by the member for Lalor. The PaTH program is, appropriately, set to commence on 1 April 2017—because, surely, this is an April Fools Day joke on the young people of Australia. The program claims to provide job seekers aged 17 to 24 with work experience to maximise their prospects of subsequently gaining employment. These are, perhaps, noble intentions. But, although the objectives of the program might have some merit, there are huge problems with the architecture of the scheme. Australia's young unemployed are a very vulnerable group open to exploitation, and good government's job is to ensure that they are not being unfairly treated.

Existing programs, such as the Work for the Dole scheme, do have problems, and you could argue that they are failing. On the government's own figures, nearly 90 per cent of participants in the Work for the Dole scheme are not in full-time work three months after completing the program. We do not want to see our young unemployed given false hope and working for under award wages in a scheme that is destined to fail them.

This scheme, unlike the Work for the Dole scheme, will place young unemployed people in the private sector. Private sector employers will be paid \$1,000 as an up-front payment for each jobseeker that they take on through the PaTH scheme. There are concerns that employers could take on large numbers of PaTH participants at any one time. Employers could churn through the participants without ever offering a job to any of them—repeatedly saying, 'This person was unsuitable.' This could result in employers not having to employ workers in particular areas at certain times. For example, an employer in the hospitality industry could use PaTH participants at a time when they would otherwise have to pay their staff penalty rates.

There is a real concern that the PaTH program will result in jobs being replaced with cheaper labour because of this program. Participants will be 'working' for below minimum award wages. A PaTH participant will receive their Newstart payment plus the \$200 incentive payment while they are working for an employer in the program. If the participant is working

for 25 hours a week, their hourly rate will be only \$14.50. To put that in context, the national minimum wage is \$17.70 an hour.

The 7-Eleven wage scandal is fresh in our minds—we saw that footage. Here in Australia in 2016 people are, effectively, paying their employer for the job that they have. I have not seen a lot of condemnation about that come from those opposite. In light of the 7-Eleven scandal and some of the concerns in the fruit picking area, why should we consider sanctioning the underpayment of our unemployed youth? That problem with the scheme would be very easy to fix. The government would just need to set the bonus payment and the hours to be worked at a rate that equates with the national minimum wage. The fact that the government has not fixed this just shows where their priorities lie—despite their protestations about unions, their priority is never to uphold workers' rights. Wages growth, sadly, is at its lowest on record. The PaTH program could further undermine wages across a variety of industries.

A further, very basic, problem with the scheme lies in the government's failure to actually define what they consider an 'intern' will be under the scheme. It is six months since the scheme was announced, and we still have no definition. Can an intern be a waiter, for instance? Can an intern be a shop assistant or a retail assistant? Is there any threshold necessary for the intern to learn new skills? We just do not know. Most people consider interns to be learning something additional to that which they learn in educational institutions. Traditional roles as interns have been found in publishing houses, law firms and other professional services, where you will enhance what is delivered by academics. But it does not seem that the government's definition of an intern will marry with my traditional view of an intern that we are perhaps more familiar with. I should say up-front that I do not have a problem with industries having interns—it is this program that I have significant concerns about.

There is another question that the government has not addressed yet—whether the participants in this scheme will be covered by appropriate workers compensation schemes in the event of an accident while they are 'working'. The participants will actually be considered volunteers in the workplace and not employees. This can affect how they will be treated by workers compensation schemes in the event of an accident. So there are many problems that have not been addressed in this scheme, which was way too hurriedly announced by a desperate coalition in their May budget.

The Prime Minister promised us the end of three-word slogans—but what did we see throughout the election campaign? Jobs and growth. I think I have even heard it this week. Sadly, the Prime Minister has not delivered—on his watch youth unemployment has climbed to nearly 13 per cent, double the national average. The Turnbull government talks the talk but does not walk the walk when it comes to job creation. Representing a marginal seat, I should point out that the Prime Minister decided to start his election campaign in my electorate, in Moreton. It is a marginal seat, so I can understand that. He kicked that off at the Brisbane markets, probably knowing that employment is always an important issue in the electorate of Moreton. In the lead-up to the 2013 election the Liberal-National Party candidate, Malcolm Cole—a good bloke—made a commitment that the coalition would stage a Moreton jobs summit within 100 days of the election. The Abbott government was elected, so the deadline for the coalition government to hold this employment summit, important for Moreton, was

Monday 16 December 2013. But nothing occurred—not a thing. On 27 September 2013 I wrote to the relevant minister, Senator the Hon. Eric Abetz, a Tasmanian representative, regarding the implementation of the promised summit but to date this coalition 2013 election commitment has not been honoured.

This year we had a new election and a new parliament, the Prime Minister was elected by the people of Australia—with a majority of one—so I wrote to Prime Minister Turnbull after the election asking for the commitments made by the LNP during the 2016 election campaign to be honoured and I again asked that the commitment made during the 2013 campaign to hold a Moreton jobs summit also be honoured. You would think, with all the rhetoric coming from this government on jobs and growth, that the Prime Minister would be a man of his word, that he would honour their commitment. Sadly, to this day there is still no jobs summit on the horizon for Moreton—in fact, I have not even had a response from the Prime Minister to my letter to him. I call out the coalition government and ask that they honour their commitment—it is so important for the unemployed people in Moreton.

In contrast, the Labor Party has always had as its first priority the creation of jobs, and especially preparing youth for jobs. The member for Lalor and I in our previous lives were educators. We know how the important role education plays in giving people opportunities. In fact, Labor announced as a 2007 election commitment the Trade Training Centres in Schools Program. The Labor government's 2008-09 budget subsequently provided \$2.5 billion over 10 years to implement that program. Four rounds of phase 1 of the program were completed under the Labor government. Sadly, the coalition government announced in 2013 that the funding for the trade training centres would cease following round five of phase 1, and the projects would thereafter be known as trade skills centres. The objectives of the Labor program included addressing skills shortages in traditional trades and other eligible occupations by improving student access to trade training facilities that meet industry standards and improving the quality of schooling offered to secondary students undertaking trade related pathways. As this is the graduation season, we know how many students end up working through a variety of courses. People end up at university through a variety of courses, including those trade training courses. The program was also assisting young people to make a successful transition from school to work or further education or training.

This program is reaping benefits for the youth in my electorate of Moreton. I recently attended the opening of the trade skills centre at the Runcorn State High School with the member for McPherson in her ministerial portfolio. Runcorn State High will now be offering their students the incredible benefits of having trade training facilities on site at their school. This facility will make an enormous difference to the future of these students. There will be two more trade skills centres opening in the future at nearby schools. The principals of those schools, Terry Heath from Yeronga State High, also in my electorate, and Linda Galloway of the Balmoral State High, in Griffith, were there to witness the opening of the Runcorn centre.

At the opening, I met Michael, who is a grade 10 student at Runcorn State High. He was proud to show me around the facilities. He said he was looking forward to the workshops starting so that he could build a Formula One car—one of the things they do. The Formula High School Program is one of the programs to be offered at the Runcorn State High School. It will teach students engineering skills and practices while building a race car—not quite the same as making a tea cosy for my mum when I was in shop. But this is not just fun; it

obviously prepares them for work. Students who undertake the Formula High School Program will be completing a certificate II in Engineering Pathways, an engineering qualification that will equip them to enter a range of occupations. The student participants will learn practical, general, work-ready knowledge and teambuilding skills—real preparation for jobs where students learn a skill that is useful for employers, who will then give them a real job.

I fear that this PaTH scheme is not going to result in any more young people obtaining full-time work, but it may put the young unemployed, who are already vulnerable, in situations where they will be exploited. Young people deserve better than to be used and abused by an unscrupulous employer wanting cheap labour. That is my fear. Labor is calling for this legislation and the PaTH program itself to be considered by a Senate inquiry to ensure that these concerns are addressed. *(Time expired)*

Mr CRAIG KELLY (Hughes) (13:29): I was not actually going to speak on this bill, but I heard the member for Lalor talking about the movie *The Pursuit of Happyness*, saying how this is an example of why intern programs are not very good. The member for Lalor may not be aware, but the movie *The Pursuit of Happyness* was based on a true story of an American gentleman called Chris Gardner. He left jail with no experience, no college education, no connections and obtained—

The DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Coulton): Order. The debate is interrupted in accordance with standing order 43. The debate may be resumed at a later hour.

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

Indi Electorate: Jobs and Investment Fund

Ms McGOWAN (Indi) (13:30): I call on the coalition to walk the talk of listening to communities, avoiding duplication and respecting the local knowledge and experience of the leaders in rural and regional Australia.

The case in point: on Monday, in the Federation Chamber, the member for Murray referred to the \$20 million promised during the election campaign to the Hume region under the jobs and investment fund. He told us how he called a special meeting of 13 LGAs, who all came together to add their advice to the \$20 million jobs and investment fund that has been put forward by the minister, Senator Fiona Nash.

What I want to say to the coalition is that the member for Murray did not say that there is already a Commonwealth government advisory body that is commissioned to provide advice on jobs and investment. This is the Hume RDA, which has representatives from LGAs, government, business, industry and community. The chair of the Hume RDA has specifically communicated with the government, and me, to say that the RDA is the ideal body, already set up and already operating, to provide advice on this program. But, sadly, it has been ignored. Another meeting was held and more community people's time was wasted.

Recently, in a speech to the Press Club, the Minister for Regional Development lauded our rural leaders and said how pragmatic they are. My message to the coalition is this: do not ignore local advice and experience. Listen to these very pragmatic rural communities, reconsider the wasteful duplication of advisory bodies, and start acting on local priorities. *(Time expired)*

Crime

Mr CRAIG KELLY (Hughes) (13:31): On behalf of the constituents of Hughes, I would like to congratulate our local police forces serving under the command of local area commander Superintendent Julian Griffiths at Sutherland and Superintendent Peter Gillam at Liverpool. You can look at the fine job that they are doing in my local area, and in New South Wales, by comparing some of the crime statistics in New South Wales with those of Victoria. For motor vehicle theft in New South Wales over the last 12 months, we have seen a 12.6 per cent decrease. In Victoria over the same period of time, we have seen a 33 per cent increase in motor vehicle theft. In fact, today, if someone in New South Wales drove across the border into Victoria, they would be 66 per cent more likely to have their car stolen.

Also, in robbery, we see that offences in New South Wales are down between 22 and 42 per cent. In comparison, we see that offences in Victoria are up 14 per cent. The same goes for break and enter of a dwelling. In New South Wales, the numbers, thankfully, are down 7.2 per cent, but in Victoria, they are up 12.6 per cent. For stealing, we are seeing that New South Wales is down between seven and 10 per cent, whereas theft in Victoria is up 19 per cent.

Congratulations to the NSW Police and congratulations to the New South Wales government. (*Time expired*)

Migration

Mr KHALIL (Wills) (13:33): The Minister for Immigration and Border Protection confirmed yesterday that he believed that tens of thousands of Lebanese who migrated to Australia were a mistake, because 22 of their grandchildren had been charged with terrorist offences. By this twisted logic, all migration from the UK would be a mistake, because David Hicks was charged with terror offences.

The Minister has displayed a breathtaking ignorance of the success of generations of Lebanese Australians, the success of people like former Victorian Premier Steve Bracks, Australia Post CEO Ahmed Fahour, Richmond footballer Bachar Houliorr and my mate David Basheer at SBS.

It was during the early 1970s that my parents also were able to escape a war-torn Middle East for a life of peace and security in Australia. Like millions of migrants, including the Lebanese, they worked hard and made a contribution to their adopted country, instilling in us, the next generation of Australians, the importance of giving something back to the country that gave us such an opportunity.

The minister refused to apologise for his offensive comments; he doubled down. It was a pathetic, sad attempt at divisive politics. He may seek to distract from the myriad failings occurring under this government, but, in doing so, he causes enormous damage to our social cohesion. Worse, he has abrogated his responsibility as Minister for Immigration to bring Australians together. Rather, he has chosen to divide us through fearmongering.

And I ask the Minister for Immigration: does he believe, as he does for the hundreds of thousands of Lebanese Australians, that letting my family migrate from Egypt to this country was a mistake?

Migration

Mr LAMING (Bowman) (13:34): On that same topic, the ministerial statement this week—the truthful statement—that 22 of 33, or two-thirds of all terror-related offences, are directly related to one ethno-religious group is just that—truth. We are in a nation that, no matter uncomfortable, has to be able to express the truth. It is *prima facie* correct, and we, as a nation, need the public interest to decide how important that information is. The minister does not deserve to be criticised by those who do not agree with him.

Ms Ryan interjecting—

Mr LAMING: I listened politely to you and I ask Labor to listen politely to me, instead of shutting me down with a gobful. In this dialectic, our failure to engage this reality makes our nation weaker—

Ms Ryan interjecting—

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The member for Lalor.

Mr LAMING: Again, I ask Labor to listen as I did to them. If any religious and ethnic group that represents less than half a per cent of our population gets twice the number of carer payments, three times the number of disability payments, twice the amount of Newstart payments, are 94 per cent unemployed when they arrive and remain at 80 per cent two to nine years later, we need to talk about that. It is a failure as much by our system as it is of that group. This is a major PR disaster for this ethnic group. We need to work towards giving their children the education they need, the youth the training they need and the young adults the jobs they need so that can share in the Australian dream. Until we do that, we continue to reap the seeds of terrorism related offences. We can do better. *(Time expired)*

Dobell Electorate: Veterans

Ms McBRIDE (Dobell) (13:36): The Toukley RSL Sub-Branch will hold a dedication service for their restored cenotaph memorial this Friday. The original cenotaph was erected in 1971 and marks the final resting place of 397 deceased sub-branch members, whose ashes are interred in the cenotaph memorial gardens. With the passing of time, the condition of the names on the plaques has, sadly, deteriorated. The sub-branch members got to work and significantly upgraded the memorial. The plaques have been restored and, once again, names can be read and remembered. The concrete plinths are now beautiful granite borders, and a new rosemary garden creates a fitting place for members, families and the community to remember our departed veterans.

The service this week will be marked by the planting of a lone pine, struck from a seed that originated in Gallipoli. This memorial, which pays tribute to those who made the ultimate sacrifice in the First World War, is part of the sub-branch's broader Centenary of Anzac commemorations. A plaque remembering those who participated in the Vietnam conflict will also be unveiled. I congratulate Toukley RSL Sub-branch President Bob Wilson; his vice-presidents, Tom Hobbs and Keith Bailey; and sub-branch secretary, Graham Tredinnick, on their work in returning dignity to the memorial. Thank you to all members of the Toukley sub-branch and the women's auxiliary for your ongoing work supporting returned servicemen and their families. The Dobell community pays tribute to the service and sacrifice of those who endured the horrors of war in defence of our nation.

Capricornia Electorate: Adani Solar Farm

Ms LANDRY (Capricornia—Deputy Nationals Whip) (13:38): With many job losses in the Queensland coal sector in the past few years, I rise today to inform the House of some good news. Indian based energy company Adani will construct a \$200 million solar farm near Moranbah, in the inland coalfields of my electorate of Capricornia. The project is touted to create hundreds of new jobs over various stages of the work. This will provide a welcome shot in the arm for the mining town, normally reliant on coal. The Adani energy company will build the solar plant on 600 hectares of land on a local cattle property about 20 kilometres from Moranbah. The 100 megawatts of power to be generated will be significant, and this project, along with the Adani Carmichael coal project, demonstrates the company is committed to Queensland and job creation. The company expects construction to begin on the solar farm in mid-2017. The federal government has a policy of transitioning the economy from being resources-heavy to a future of innovation and technology, and this is one type of project that meets this goal. It also adds to our bipartisan, fully legislated renewable energy target of 23.5 per cent by 2020. For the record, Adani coal will not be used in Australia but will be exported to India.

Werriwa Electorate: Amity College

Ms STANLEY (Werriwa) (13:39): This year, Amity College in Prestons celebrates its 20th anniversary. I was very privileged to be present for the celebration of this milestone in September and again at the college last weekend for the year 12 graduation. The school was originally established by volunteers, with 33 students. It now has enrolments exceeding 1,800, with other campuses at Auburn and Shellharbour. As a local, I have been able to watch the school grow to the excellent teaching facility that it is today. I am always inspired by the achievements of its students, not only academically but also in the extra activities and volunteer pursuits that the students are encouraged to pursue.

South-west Sydney has a highly diverse population. Many people move to my area looking to raise their children. Our schools serve as community focal points and are a key part in helping shape these communities. Amity lives up to its name. It is a proud embodiment of the multicultural tradition of Western Sydney and of Werriwa and is an asset to my community. Twenty years is a long time, and the college is now beginning to span generations. Students who attended here in the 1990s are now sending their own children to the school, and former students are teachers. I congratulate the executive principal, Denis Erdogan; girls principal, Alpaslan Cem Sancili; boys principal, Atilla Sinik; and chair of the school's board, Abdullah Aksu; as well as teachers and students, for the great— *(Time expired)*

South Burnett CTC

Mr LITTLEPROUD (Maranoa) (13:41): Today I would like to acknowledge the crucially important contribution of South Burnett CTC, who work with those with disabilities in the South Burnett region. The humble beginnings of South Burnett CTC were as a grassroots community response to youth unemployment back in 1983. The dedicated, compassionate and community-minded people at South Burnett CTC have ensured that this not-for-profit organisation has grown into a multifaceted community-owned service for people across South Burnett, including Gumnut, which provides supported employment opportunities for up to 20 people with disabilities.

Last week I was fortunate enough to attend the opening of Heritage Lodge in Nanango, an accommodation precinct of duplexes designed and managed by South Burnett CTC, to allow people with disabilities to live independently. As I sat there at the opening ceremony, listening to Nina Temperton, the CEO of South Burnett CTC, I was reminded of the value of the sheer dedication and commitment of passionate and community-minded people like Nina, people on the ground who see a need and pursue the solution relentlessly. I would also like to note Heritage Nanango Community Funding Ltd, South Burnett Regional Council and the Queensland state government for their contributions to this project.

It is the community spirit I have been witnessing all over my electorate that I will be highlighting this Christmas. These amazing people, whether they are paid or whether they are volunteers, contribute so much to our social fabric and serve as a timely reminder of the importance of our roles in being advocates for our respective communities.

Burt Electorate: Mosque Attacks

Mr KEOGH (Burt) (13:42): There are some experiences during campaigns that shake and disturb you to the core. I am referring to the disgusting and cowardly attacks on two mosques in the electorate of Burt during the recent election campaign: the leaving of insulting and disgusting objects at the Southern River mosque, and the fire-bombing of a car and graffiti at the Australian Islamic College and mosque in Thornlie. The new electorate of Burt is one of the most multicultural in Western Australia—a diversity that should be celebrated. We have moved on from the Christian sectarianism so commonplace in Australia until merely a generation ago, so must we as a nation move on from religious vilification and attacks of all forms.

Yet some members of different religious traditions face religious persecution every day in Australia. As retired Chief of Army Lieutenant General David Morrison AO so elegantly expressed it, the standard you walk past is the standard you accept. As a multicultural society, we must accept and protect each and every person's right to practise their faith freely and without any form of intimidation or violence, just as we ask them to do the same and as we all stand for the Australian fair go.

I would like to acknowledge the good work of the WA Police in their investigations and support of the local community; the state member for Gosnells and Thornlie, Chris Tallentire; and City of Gosnells councillor Terry Healy, for responding so quickly to help the local community clean up before the children arrived for school the next morning, as well as Salim and Raif Youssef, the current and former presidents of the Australian Arab Association and proud Lebanese Australians in my electorate, who are in the gallery here today.

Maddinson, Mr Nic

Mrs SUDMALIS (Gilmore) (13:44): As anyone will tell you—particularly my family—I am usually not much of a cricket watcher. However, when parliament closes on Thursday, I will be searching for the cricket highlights, because Nic Maddinson will make his debut for Australia in the third test against South Africa. Nic will play on the Adelaide Oval. While this is one of cricket's greatest honours, more importantly Nic is a resident of the Shoalhaven area, in my electorate of Gilmore. Alongside fellow Shoalhaven resident Ian Davis, Nic will be the Shoalhaven's second test cricketer.

Nic has had close to 60 first-class games and has previously played for Australia in the Twenty20 and an Australian A team. On the local scene, Nic has competed in the Bradman Cup, Southern Zone and country teams. He began playing representative cricket for the Shoalhaven in the under-12s, competed in state teams and national junior teams and was a member of the Australian under-19s who successfully competed in and won the World Cup in 2010.

Locally, Nic has been awarded the Shoalhaven Sportstar of the Year award for three years and was also the recipient of the very famous Bernie Regan Memorial Sporting Trust Grant.

More than five years ago, at the age of 18 years, Nic made his Sheffield Shield debut in Adelaide and posted 113, which broke a 70-year-old state record as the youngest century-maker on debut. Everyone in our region will be sending their best wishes to Nic in his first test cricket match because he makes us all so proud. Go, Nic!

Geelong: Digital Billboard

Mr MARLES (Corio) (13:45): Back in April, VCAT approved a giant digital billboard on the corner of Yarra and Malop Streets. It is twice the size of a similar digital billboard installed on the corner of Moorabool and Ryrie Streets. The City of Greater Geelong had refused to grant a permit for the 'sky sign', citing that it did not suit the location, was oversized and shared no objective with the Central Geelong Urban Design Guidelines.

The council was right. This sort of large electronic advertising sign in the heart of our CBD distracts from the very things that Geelong should be emphasising: our history, our architecture and our heritage. Geelong is one of the most historic towns in Australia, although we do not often think of ourselves in this way. Indeed, the Geelong CBD has one of the best collections of heritage buildings adjacent to water anywhere in the country. The woolsheds, the factories, the shopfronts and the Customs House—these are what make Geelong special, not electronic billboards, and we will never compete on the basis of neon signs with our large neighbour up the road.

I firmly believe that the secret to reinvigorating our CBD does not lie in flashy lights. Just like Ballarat and Bendigo, but potentially on a much bigger scale, it lies in developing our heritage. It is important we show off who we are as a city and do not allow our beautiful architecture and streets to fall into the background. Let us show off the art gallery, the telegraph station, the Gordon, the boardwalk and the old Geelong post office, because they tell our story; they tell Geelong's deeply historic story.

Trade with Hong Kong

Dr McVEIGH (Groom) (13:47): The first consignment of international air freight from the nation's largest privately-owned airport touched down in Hong Kong this morning. This is a remarkable case of endeavour and initiative from the Darling Downs. Many said it was a pipe dream. But those naysayers have learnt that Toowoomba's Wagner family should never be underestimated. Due to their foresight and the commitment of local families and businesses, the potential for our electorate of Groom is only limited by the constraints we place on ourselves.

Not so long ago, people would have thought that air-freighting fresh produce to Asian markets from the Downs was a good idea but one fraught with challenges. Well, last night, a Cathay Pacific Airways 747 cargo flight did just that. It was loaded with chilled beef and

other produce to be taken to market. This regular service will see Australian clean, green and safe produce from the Darling Downs flown directly into Asia—including, for example, premium beef loin cuts from Oakey Beef Exports destined for high-end restaurants in Hong Kong.

Groom is truly a world-class example of industry leading business and job creation and growth, and of all levels of government supporting and facilitating where appropriate. I am proud to say: that is exactly what the Turnbull government has been doing in securing approvals for this airport, investing heavily in our roads, and getting on with the job of inland rail.

Smith, Mr Michael

Ms CHESTERS (Bendigo) (13:48): Today I rise to welcome to the Speaker's gallery Michael Smith. Michael Smith has been on a journey. He has walked 600 kilometres from Chewton in the Bendigo electorate in central Victoria to this place, to raise and highlight one of his great concerns. Michael has actually drafted a bill. He believes that it is this place and this parliament that should make the decision about whether this country enters into armed conflict and whether we deploy to war; he does not believe that it should be made by one person. In a recent interview with the ABC, Michael said:

I don't think these decisions should be with one person. I think that the more people that are involved in the decision, the better decision we'll get.

These are Michael's views.

We should congratulate and acknowledge anybody with this passion and commitment. To walk 600 kays to come here to raise this issue is a fantastic effort. And I know that the people of Chewton—the people's republic of Chewton—are very proud of Michael's efforts.

What this does is to remind all of us that we have great responsibility in this place, and, when one of our constituents makes this kind of effort, we should take time to discuss this in our party room and in our caucuses to see what more we can do in this area. Congratulations, Michael, on your efforts.

Tangney Electorate: Willetton Bowling Club

Mr MORTON (Tangney) (13:50): It was great news for the Willetton Bowling Club in Tangney when I was able to telephone Club President Max Strange to let him know that a \$250,000 grant from the federal government would be on its way to their club very soon. The Minister for Regional Development, Fiona Nash, has approved a Community Development Grant for a new synthetic green at this club that delivers on our election commitment. Willetton Bowling Club will also install new lighting to complete the project, with an additional \$20,000 from a Stronger Communities grant. Importantly, Willetton Bowling Club will contribute their own fundraising towards these projects.

The new Ultra Dry Max Pro synthetic grass green is great news for pennants players. And the new lights will mean both social and competition bowlers can play later into the evening and on more days of the year. Wet weather will no longer stop the members and friends at Willetton Bowling Club from getting out on the green and enjoying a game. The fantastic club rooms built in recent years by the City of Canning and the new synthetic green and new lighting will make Willetton Bowling Club's facilities second to none.

I cannot wait to see the project completed before next winter, and I look forward to getting down to the club to catch up with members very soon.

Jagajaga Electorate: Pasinis, Mr Jim

Ms MACKLIN (Jagajaga) (13:52): I am very pleased today to acknowledge the enormous contribution of Jim Pasinis as chief executive of Banyule Community Health. This month Jim has stepped down from his role as chief executive officer, a position he has held for the last 26 years. Jim has led the extraordinary growth of Banyule Community Health, an incredible community health organisation that has been at the heart of West Heidelberg for more than 40 years. It is one of the original Whitlam community health centres. It is a very lively community centre, where everyone knows that they can get the health and social services that they need.

Under Jim's leadership, Banyule Community Health has been completely rebuilt into its fantastic modern home in Alamein Road. This simply would not have been possible without Jim's commitment, dedication and hard work. In 2016, Jim was awarded Banyule Citizen of the Year in recognition of his commitment to social justice. West Heidelberg will miss him. I will miss him. Yes, we will miss his quirky sense of humour but, above all, we will miss his compassion, his commitment to social justice and his strong leadership. Thank you, Jim.

Flynn Electorate: Drought

Mr O'DOWD (Flynn) (13:53): I wish to speak today about the most widespread drought in Queensland's history. Despite fantastic winter rains across most of Queensland and record high prices for beef cattle, many producers are still doing it tough and know the drought is not over yet. Rainfall over the last two months is down by 80 per cent on average. More than 80 per cent of Queensland is still drought-declared, including almost the entire electorate of Flynn. North Burnett, South Burnett, Banana Shire, the Gladstone region and the Bundaberg region are completely declared. Only the Rockhampton area and the northern reaches of the Central Highlands are no longer declared.

June and July, which are normally very dry months, provided welcome relief for many landholders across the state, with record rainfall in these parts—but, unfortunately, it does not rain money. While the dust was settled and grass grew, livestock prices remained incredibly high, making restocking a high-risk venture, especially when there is no guarantee of much-needed follow-up rain. As we wind up for the year, I hope that those in this place will spare a thought and a prayer for our farmers, as they need the rain to provide you with Christmas dinner.

Multiculturalism

Ms RYAN (Lalor—Opposition Whip) (13:54): I stand here as a proud Australian. There are lots of things about Australia that I am proud of. One of the things I am proudest of is that a country that was built as a supposed prison built a great democracy and embedded the rule of law in our great egalitarian society. I am incredibly proud to call myself an Australian, and I am incredibly proud of our multiculturalism. But I am saddened that this week a minister of the Crown has come into this place and sought to divide this country—sought to smear a whole community on the actions of so few.

One of the things about the rule of law in this country that I am so proud of is that we hold individuals accountable for their actions. We do not hold the entire Catholic community

responsible for the sexual assault against children that happened in our history. If that were the case, all of us in this chamber would be ashamed. We do not smear a whole community on the back of the actions of a few. We have rule of law in this country. I am ashamed that a minister of the Crown would come into this place and try to divide and smear communities. But he has had practice. In the last week they have also been trying to smear every unionist in the country for the actions of a few.

Sunshine Coast: Infrastructure

Mr TED O'BRIEN (Fairfax) (13:55): I am delighted to say something positive on the back of such negativity coming from the opposition. When it comes to strong representation, the Sunshine Coast is back. Admittedly, we actually had a few tough years, because my predecessor, the former member for Fairfax, was a serial absentee. I think he attended less than eight per cent of divisions. But, boy, has the world changed now. It has changed because we have a united force, with the member for Fisher, with the member for Wide Bay and with me as the member for Fairfax, working exactly how the Turnbull government works: delivering as a united team.

Look at the big ticket items on the Sunshine Coast. Take the Bruce Highway, with over a billion dollars on local stretches of the Bruce Highway. Then there is the Sunshine Coast Airport. Within four months alone, what have we seen? We have seen an environmental green light—tick, done, delivered. We have also seen the designation of the airport as an international airport—done, tick, delivered. As of last week, the Turnbull government announced a \$181 million concessional loan to that airport—done, tick, delivered. We will continue to work as a united team to deliver for the Sunshine Coast.

Multiculturalism

Mr HAMMOND (Perth) (13:57): I rise to speak on behalf of those very good people in my electorate of Perth, who the Minister for Immigration and others on the government side might like to describe as 'the children of second and third generation immigrants'. Those electors who I am privileged to speak on behalf of are so much more than that and so much more than the unfair and untrue slur that the Minister for Immigration and those on that side would like to paint them as. They are doctors, they are nurses, they are teachers, they are hard workers and their mums and dads contribute to P&Cs. They are Australians, and they are the people who make this country what it is.

They do not deserve to be painted, as the members of the other side would like to have them painted, as those who are responsible for the security of this country being at risk. They are Australians. There is a culture on the other side where the member for Bowman, the Minister for Immigration and the Prime Minister hide behind a number of facts without displaying the truth. The truth is that these are not immigrants; these are Australians. The Prime Minister is held captive to his conservative right. This Prime Minister is now just somebody that we used to know.

Wide Bay Electorate: Bruce Highway Upgrade

Mr LLEW O'BRIEN (Wide Bay) (13:59): It was a pleasure to welcome the Minister for Infrastructure and Transport to Wide Bay last week to inspect progress on the Bruce Highway, Cooroy to Curra, four-lane Section C project. Section C is a 10.5 kilometre stretch of highway from Traveston to Woondum and is scheduled to finish in mid-2018. The

construction phase is supporting around 600 jobs and, when completed, will boost the local economy. At the 2013 election, the coalition government committed to \$2 billion to upgrade the Bruce Highway through Wide Bay. The Cooroy to Curra four-lane upgrade will make that section safer, faster and less congested, and it will improve flood immunity to prevent Gympie being cut off when the Mary River floods. It will also improve the capacity to move freight more efficiently along the coast. This will support major industry in the region, including the timber industry, manufacturing, dairying and local agriculture.

The Cooroy to Curra section was rated as one of the most dangerous sections of highway. Between 2002 and 2014 more than 50 people lost their lives along this deadly stretch. Regrettably, there are still too many lives being touched by the horror of serious accidents along this section yet to be upgraded. We need to continue to invest in the highway to make it safer and complete the full Cooroy to Curra project, including the 26 kilometre section D project to bypass Gympie.

Parliament House: Christmas Carols

Mr PYNE (Sturt—Leader of the House and Minister for Defence Industry) (14:00): Tonight in the Members Hall, the Canberra Choral Society will be singing Christmas carols for the benefit of the members, staff and others who inhabit the building, including Laura Tingle. I am sure we would much prefer to hear Laura Tingle singing than her husband, Alan Ramsey, who probably does not have nearly as nice a voice!

The SPEAKER: In accordance with standing order 43, the time for members' statements has concluded.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

Domestic and Family Violence

Mr SHORTEN (Maribyrnong—Leader of the Opposition) (14:01): My question is to the Prime Minister. Congratulations on your words at White Ribbon this morning. All of us agree that family violence is a national crisis. Rosie Batty, the Productivity Commission and the Victorian Royal Commission into Family Violence have all recommended that family violence survivors should not be cross-examined in court by their abusers. Will the Prime Minister join with Labor to amend the Family Law Act to ensure that vulnerable witnesses are protected during court proceedings?

Mr TURNBULL (Wentworth—Prime Minister) (14:01): I want to thank the Leader of the Opposition for his question, and thank him, his colleagues and all members for their support for White Ribbon. Addressing domestic violence is a priority for all of us. We have to stop it. Violence against women and children is utterly unacceptable. The truth is that not all disrespect of women ends up with violence against women, but that is where all violence against women begins. We have to lead with legislation, investments and government actions. But one of the most important things we have to do, as parents or grandparents, is say that it is our responsibility to make sure our sons and our grandsons grow up to respect the women in their lives, beginning with their mothers and their sisters—those most close to them. That is critically important. It is a point my wife, Lucy, has often made—it is a powerful one. That role of leadership is driving cultural change. The advertising campaign that I know all of us have admired, Stop it at the Start, that Senator Cash oversaw, has been particularly effective.

Let me address the issue of cross examination. We all understand that the cross-examination of a victim by the alleged perpetrator is a very traumatic experience. We are working very closely with the stakeholders in this area, in particular the judges and magistrates of the family courts, to progress measures to support vulnerable witnesses. We are establishing integrated duty lawyer and domestic violence support services in the family law courts to improve the support available to victims, and that includes assisting them to draft notices of risk and access alternative ways to give evidence. We have also commissioned a bench book which provides guidance for all judicial officers dealing with domestic and family violence, including guidelines for courtroom management to minimise secondary abuse through court processes of those that have experienced family violence. Judges and judicial officers always have a discretion, of course, in this area, and we are encouraging them to use this very actively to ensure that these distressing circumstances do not occur.

I noted what the honourable member opposite proposed this morning and the funding that he recommended, which, at first examination, would not appear to us to be adequate for the task that he has proposed. But I can assure honourable members opposite we are very well aware of the trauma that victims suffer if they are cross-examined by a perpetrator, and we have put in place the measures to ensure that that does not occur where it would create that type of trauma.

Turnbull Government

Mr HOWARTH (Petrie) (14:05): My question is to the Prime Minister. Will the Prime Minister please update the House on the government's record of delivering on its election commitments, including tackling union corruption and ensuring that employer organisations are more accountable to their members as well?

Honourable members interjecting—

The SPEAKER: Members on both sides: the Prime Minister has the call.

Mr TURNBULL (Wentworth—Prime Minister) (14:05): I thank the honourable member for his question. The government is getting on with the job. We are delivering for the Australian people. We are providing the strong and stable economic leadership Australia needs in this time of great change and even greater opportunity. To secure our future prosperity, to ensure that our children and grandchildren can enjoy the same and better standards of living than that which we enjoy we must live within our means and we must continue to pursue sound economic reforms, and that is exactly what we are doing.

Just this morning, the parliament passed our superannuation reforms, ensuring that the superannuation system is fair and sustainable for all Australians. We are making the 45th Parliament work—an obligation that falls to all of us—delivering important economic reforms, including around \$20 billion in gross budget repair; tax cuts to stop half a million middle-income Australians from entering the second-highest tax bracket; building on our big export trade deals by enhancing our free trade and strategic agreement with Singapore; and, for the first time, the parliament has passed the Fair Work (Registered Organisations) Amendment Bill 2014. The 44th Parliament rejected the bill three times; now it has been passed.

This will ensure that union officials are as accountable to their members as company directors are to their shareholders. We are cracking down on the dishonesty and the

malfeasance, the misuse and the abuse that has become all too common with union bosses. We are standing up for the workers. We are standing up for the members of trade unions. They are entitled to see that their money is well spent. They are entitled to know how it is spent. They are entitled to know where there are conflicts of interest. They are entitled to know whether their hard-earned union dues are being frittered away by union officials on personal extravagances.

You would think that the Leader of the Opposition, a former union boss himself and a former senior union leader, would support this. After all, given the scandals that we saw with Craig Thompson and others—so many of them have been exposed in the Heydon royal commission that there have been two arrests just over the last few days—and the \$870,000 misappropriated from the National Union of Workers, who are some of the lowest-paid workers in Australia, you would think that the Labor Party, composed as it is of so many former union officials, would say, 'Here is a chance to clean up the act. Here is a chance to make unions more attractive than they are today and make people more confident about joining them.' Labor did not do that. Labor backed the bosses. We backed the members.

Budget

Mr BOWEN (McMahon) (14:08): My question is to the Treasurer. Ratings agency Standard & Poor's has today warned that Australia's AAA credit rating will be at risk unless the Treasurer stands by his commitment to a surplus in 2021, a commitment which is in the Treasurer's own budget papers that bear his name. With his chaotic management of the budget, does the Treasurer take any responsibility for placing Australia's AAA rating at risk?

Mr MORRISON (Cook—Treasurer) (14:09): I thank the member opposite for his question. The budget is projected to return to balance in 2021. That balance is contingent upon the \$40 billion worth of budget improvement measures that are contained in the budget and the forward estimates being passed by this parliament. I am pleased that the Prime Minister has just reminded the House that some \$20 billion of that \$40 billion has already been passed through this parliament in just these few sitting weeks since the last election. That demonstrates that this government is getting on with the job of implementing our budget measures. But there remains a further \$20 billion, which those opposite remain substantively opposed to. The greatest guarantee for the AAA credit rating that those opposite could give the Australian people is to say that they will support the government's budget savings measures.

The government has laid out our plan in the budget. What stands in our way is the refusal of those opposite to stand up to their economic responsibility, heed the warnings from the ratings agencies and pass the government's budget. But they have an alternative plan! Their view is that the ratings agencies would rush to reaffirm Australia's AAA credit rating if the deficit were to be increased by \$16.8 billion. So confident were they that that would be the case that they took a \$16½ billion increased deficit to the last election. And what happened at the last election? You took a \$16½ billion deficit increase to the last election and it was no surprise that the Australian people rejected you.

Mr Perrett interjecting—

Ms Macklin interjecting—

The SPEAKER: The member for Moreton and, again, the member for Jagajaga will cease interjecting. We are heading down a certain track, I fear, with the member for Jagajaga.

Budget

Mrs SUDMALIS (Gilmore) (14:11): My question also is to the Treasurer. Will the Treasurer update the House on how the government is strengthening Australia's economy by reducing the deficit and arresting debt? Will the Treasurer again explain how important it is that the budget measures currently before parliament are passed to protect Australia's AAA credit rating?

Mr MORRISON (Cook—Treasurer) (14:12): I thank the member for her question and her keen interest. More importantly, I thank her and those who sit on this side of the House for their support for the government's budget, which is projected to return to balance in 2021. But, as I just remarked to the House, there are some impediments that stand in the way of that, and they sit opposite. I turn to none other than the support given by the former Treasurer and Prime Minister, Paul Keating, who said this earlier this year: 'When Commonwealth revenue has been so affected, the penny ought to drop; that what we should be doing is cutting spending. That is what the Treasurer'—referring to myself—'has said for some weeks now, and on this point he is actually right.' So we have the former Treasurer and Prime Minister, whom the shadow Treasurer claims is his great mentor, telling him direct, just as the ratings agencies are telling him direct: pass the budget savings measures to ensure the security of Australia's AAA credit rating.

Since 2013, as a government, under both Prime Minister Abbott and Prime Minister Turnbull, we have already cut the rate of spending growth from 4.2 per cent, as it was under the budgets of those opposite, to around 1½ per cent under the budgets of the coalition government. That is what we have achieved, and that is how we are arresting the debt. But we are faced with the impediment of those opposite, who would rather spend more and tax more and raise debt to even higher levels than actually face up to their economic responsibility and come into this place and support the government's comprehensive plan to achieve budget repair. Of the measures that I refer to, we have already been able to pass some \$20 billion worth through this parliament. They include the superannuation measures, which included some \$6 billion in additional revenue. That also included \$3 billion of investment back into the superannuation system—a world-leading superannuation system—to ensure that it is fairer, more flexible and sustainable.

Those opposite spoke an untruth to the Australian people at the last election. On superannuation, they said in their own estimates that they would do the same thing as the government when it came to the revenue net position. They did not tell the Australian people that they wanted to tax contributions more. They did not tell those who run home based businesses, those who are contractors and those who are seeking to catch up on their concessional contributions because they have been carers or they have been having children. They did not tell them they were going to strip those flexibility measures away. They did not tell them that at all. They went to the Australian people and misled them on superannuation and now, in this parliament, they have made a promise that, at the next election, the only party that is going to be taxing superannuation more is led by the Leader of the Opposition. (*Time expired*)

Economy

Dr CHALMERS (Rankin) (14:15): My question is also to the Treasurer. Ratings agency Standard & Poor's has today warned that Australia's AAA rating will be at risk unless revenue is increased in a sustained way. Why is the Treasurer refusing to support sensible reforms on negative gearing and capital gains tax?

Mr Pyne interjecting—

The SPEAKER: The Leader of the House will cease interjecting!

Mr MORRISON (Cook—Treasurer) (14:15): Of the \$40 billion in budget improvement measures that we set out in our budget—he is a little excited, though, Mr Speaker—that we took to the Australian people, \$25 billion of those measures related to payment savings and \$15 billion of those measures related to revenue. There was a balance of the two to ensure that we bring the budget back to balance. We think we got the balance right when it comes to the balance between taxes and expenditures. As a government we have always ensured that, where our expenditure has increased, we have offset that with payment savings—not revenue increases, but payment savings. When we have gone to the Australian people and we have said that we are going to cut taxes—as we have done for personal income tax and legislated through this place—or when we have gone to the Australian people, as we have said, and we have said we want businesses, particularly small businesses with a turnover of up to \$10 million, to be able to access a lower rate of tax and to access the instant asset write-off and the pool depreciation provisions, we have offset the cost of revenue—

Dr Chalmers interjecting—

The SPEAKER: The member for Rankin will cease interjecting. He has asked his question.

Mr MORRISON: with other revenue measures. That is how you actually drive yourself towards a budget balance. But those opposite are a one-trick pony when it comes to the budget, and the only thing that they are able to come up with is to tax people more. They are addicted to tax and, rather than try and ease the burden on Australian businesses so they can give Australians more opportunity for more hours, they just want to keep squeezing that tax lemon as hard as they possibly can. That presents a great threat to our economy.

The United Kingdom will bring down their autumn statement tonight, and we already know that they have put the UK on a trajectory to one of the lowest tax rates in the advanced world. We know that the Trump administration will be seeking to do exactly the same thing, and we have already moved in our budget to take Australia down a similar path. Those opposite plan to strand Australian businesses in a high-tax environment where they cannot invest, where they cannot attract capital and where they cannot provide additional working hours and additional wages to working Australians.

This is a leader of the opposition who, rather than following the economic policy advice of Bob Hawke, has become an acolyte of Bob Brown when it comes to economic policy. He is the Jeremy Corbyn of Australian politics, appealing to the Bernie Sanders and all the rest of them. This is a leader of the opposition who is so indulgent in cynical politics that he cannot find his way to the surface again.

Water

Mr KATTER (Kennedy) (14:19): My question is to the Deputy Prime Minister. Deputy Prime Minister, you are aware of the notorious Flinders River water allocations. Almost all of these waters, worth over \$180 million, have been granted to just two absentee landlord corporations. This was in contrast to refusal to even consider submissions from the people of the area itself that were based upon economic development, industry and community benefit. The most serious questions of ministerial and departmental impropriety are raised here. In the light of this impoverishment of the hands on to provide for the enrichment of the rich, would the minister consider right to sustenance legislation—rights enshrined in and from the time of the Magna Carta itself?

Mr JOYCE (New England—Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Agriculture and Water Resources) (14:19): I thank the honourable member for his question. At times I stay up late at night deliberating on the issues of Runnymede in 1215 and exactly what was going on between King John and those feudal lords. I do acknowledge that, after a few months, they broke out into a war in any case, so it was not of much use. But he does speak to a rather more substantial issue—the issue of water. Predominantly—

Honourable members interjecting—

The SPEAKER: Members on my left, and right. The Minister for Immigration and the member for Grayndler are interrupting the minister.

Mr Pyne: The member for Grayndler is claiming he was there. He helped to draft it!

An honourable member: He wrote it!

The SPEAKER: The Leader of the House will cease interjecting. The Deputy Prime Minister has the call.

Mr JOYCE: I take the interjection from the member for Grayndler, who is claiming that he built the Magna Carta. But the issue, of course, is one of water. The water licences for the member for Kennedy are overwhelmingly a state issue, especially on the Flinders. I note the concerns you have. We too are wanting to develop the north and to build more water infrastructure. It is vitally important, and that is why we have put up money for feasibility on 14 sites in Queensland and \$130 million on the table for Rookwood Weir. Unfortunately, the Queensland Labor government has been either tardy or unwilling to participate in it—we are still waiting for their support so we can get these things moving. Also in the member's electorate is one of those feasibility studies, at Cloncurry. We have to try and drive these agendas forward, because we know that water is wealth and, if we are driving jobs and creating jobs, we have to create the water infrastructure.

The member for Kennedy can take some solace in the fact that we are hard at work in Tasmania building that same water infrastructure. We have completed Chaffey Dam. We have also put money on the table for the South-West Loddon Pipeline and for the Macalister Irrigation District. These programs are up and running and we want to start more. We want to go further. We want to be the government that has the vision to build the water infrastructure.

I appreciate the trip that I took with the member for Kennedy to Hell's Gates, where we also have put money on the table for the feasibility study on that. That would be a tremendous project. But we need the same sense of fervour, the same sense of excitement as we have seen from the people who built the Snowy Mountains scheme. That is the sort of vision that our

nation is looking for. That is the sort of vision that people want from a government, a government that actually believes in the delivery of the tactile, in the things that you can see, rather than standing on their philosophical log and procrastinating and just waiting and waiting and waiting until nothing happens.

So, if it is the vision that you had on 15 June 1215 at Runnymede, where not-so-good King John was taken on by the not-so-good feudal lords, then that is the sort of vision. But, ultimately, the document was sustainable through time, and we want to build the water infrastructure that is sustainable through time for the Australian people.

Australian Building and Construction Commission

Mr HOGAN (Page) (14:23): My question is the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Agriculture and Water Resources. Will the Deputy Prime Minister explain to the House how forcing the rule of law on construction sites through the reintroduction of the ABCC will benefit the hardworking Australians I represent in the agricultural industry?

Mr JOYCE (New England—Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Agriculture and Water Resources) (14:23): I thank the honourable member for Page for his question. He is a person who understands the benefit to the Australian working man and woman from the production of food and from the delivery and processing of food. We note—in areas such as macadamia production that he has in his electorate—the great jobs that are produced not only by the farmers but also by the people who are processing the macadamias. That is also the case in the Casino cooperative meatworks. I commend the work he has been doing with cooperatives—those meatworks employing working men and women and making sure that they have the capacity to go home with a fair day's pay after a fair day's work.

But, unfortunately, from time to time we have an impediment in trying to bring forth these jobs that are so essential to the Australian economy. We note, for instance, the \$280-or-so million that was put aside to build the Melbourne wholesale fruit and vegetable markets. Unfortunately, when they went to build it, there was a bit of fight. You would think it would be about the farmers wanting it bigger. No, it was between the member for Griffith's crowd, the CFMEU, and the member for Maribyrnong crowd, the AWU. They went to fight and just kept fighting and fighting and fighting, until in the end the ABCC took them to the Federal Court and ordered that they remove the blockades, which were costing millions of dollars, and that they get back to work.

So what do they do when the court of the land says to go back to work? You would think they would obey that order. No, they did not. The CFMEU was obviously above the law. They do not have to comply with the law. That is for the regular men and women of Australia, not the CFMEU. They can just make their own arrangements. We saw it again with the desal plant, where the CFMEU went on strike, costing \$5 million a day.

The issue for the member for Page and for everybody here is that we must believe in the rule of law. We cannot have mum-and-dad operators going onto worksites, being bullied by thugs who stand over them, thugs whose belief is not in a fair day's work and a fair day's pay, but just in extorting money and extorting ridiculous conditions out of it.

The Labor Party would be the champion of the CFMEU, with the member for Griffiths involved in the CFMEU, the member for Shortland involved in the CFMEU, and the member for Calwell involved in the CFMEU. These are part of the process, and they are paying their

dues here at the moment. They are paying their dues to make sure that they deliver back to the CFMEU, who has also delivered millions of dollars to the Australian Labor Party. The problem with the Labor Party these days is there are not many labourers in it. There are an awful lot of union officials but not many labourers. But we will make sure that we give our very best endeavours to get the cop back on the beat.

Taxation

Mr SHORTEN (Maribyrnong—Leader of the Opposition) (14:26): My question is to the Prime Minister. Today ratings agency Standard & Poor's warned that Australia's AAA credit rating will be at risk unless the government stands by its commitment to a surplus in 2021. On this basis, why is the Prime Minister still persisting with his \$50 billion tax handout to big business, when a ratings downgrade will push up the mortgage repayments for Australian homeowners?

Mrs Sudmalis interjecting—

The SPEAKER: Members on my right. The member for Gilmore.

Mr TURNBULL (Wentworth—Prime Minister) (14:27): There was a time when the Labor Party understood—indeed, a prominent figure on the opposition benches wrote a book about it—that reducing company tax, reducing businesses taxes, would, because it increased the return on investment, deliver more investment. And, if you get more investment—do you know what?—you get more jobs.

Around the world companies are reducing business taxes. We pointed to the policies of the incoming administration in the United States. You can look at what the UK government has done. That has been a policy followed by Labor governments in this place as well for the obvious reason: if you increase the return on investment, you get more investment.

Turning to the ratings agencies: the ratings agencies have been absolutely crystal clear. Their concern is that the government's budget will not be passed through the parliament because of the reckless opposition of the Labor Party. That is what their concern is. They recognise that we have an economic plan that sets out a path towards a budget surplus. They recognise that and they accept it. Their concern is the political risk, and that is why they welcomed the omnibus savings bill, that is why they welcomed the passage of the superannuation reforms, and that is why they have welcomed our ability, when it is there, to secure our budget policies through the Senate.

But we work very hard and respectfully and constructively with the crossbench, and we will continue to do so. But the Labor Party know very well that any and every measure in that budget can be passed if they support it, and it is their opposition which puts the AA rating at risk. It is the political risk—

An honourable member: You're the government!

Mr TURNBULL: The honourable member says, 'You're the government.' You're quite right. That is something you have not quite twigged to yet. We are the government; we won the election. The reality is: you cannot turn around and say to us, 'You're at risk of the AAA rating being pulled because of the rating agencies,' when the risk that the rating agencies identified is that the government's plan will not get through the Senate because of the trenchant political opposition of the Labor Party. So, if the Labor Party are concerned about

the AAA rating and if they want to support the AAA rating—and we would be grateful for it—then they should support the budget measures, because their passage will secure it.

DISTINGUISHED VISITORS

The SPEAKER (14:30): I would like to inform the House that we have present in the chamber this afternoon a delegation from Cambodia led by his excellency Mr Kimyeat. On behalf of the House I extend a very warm welcome to you.

Honourable members: Hear, hear!

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

Economy

Mr CREWITHER (Dunkley) (14:30): My question is to the Treasurer. Will the Treasurer advise the House on the importance of strong economic growth to employment security, job creation and wage growth for hardworking Australians? How important is it that the government continues to promote productivity and reduce inefficiencies that drag on our economy?

Mr MORRISON (Cook—Treasurer) (14:31): I thank the member for Dunkley for his question and for his support for the measures that this government is seeking and introducing to ensure greater productivity in the Australia economy, because from that comes the growth, the investment, the jobs and the wages. The way you lift revenue in this country, if you want to budget balance, is: you need to ensure that businesses are earning more, that employees are earning more and that they are getting extra hours. To do that you need a tax environment which supports business, particularly small business, to achieve that. But you also need an environment in the building and construction industry that when businesses and others go and invest they are not hit with a 30 percent premium as a result of the lawlessness in the building and construction industry.

I notice that the member for Grayndler has said very recently—I understand it was last night—that now was the time for the Commonwealth to lift investment right across the nation. It might be news to the member for Grayndler that, under the Labor Party, Commonwealth investment as a share of public investment was an average of 24 per cent. Under this government, it is an average of 30½ per cent. So this government has been lifting investment in Commonwealth investment, but investment particularly in public infrastructure is hampered by those opposite who continue to frustrate and work against the restoration of the Australian Building and Construction Commission.

Yesterday, I asked a very polite question to those opposite of those who happen to be members of registered trade unions. And none of them put their hands up. I asked them: 'Who are members of the CFMEU?' So, Mr Speaker, I thought this may be a reason as to why in unions' interests they may be seeking to protect the lawlessness in the building and construction industry on behalf of militant unions. So I did a bit of homework. It turns out that when you look at the Register of Members' Interests of the 68 members of parliament who sit opposite only 32 have not listed any union membership at all on their register of interests. That is interesting because when I look at the membership form of the ALP, which is a requirement, it says 'member of affiliated union'. So why is it that the member for Batman thinks it is important to declare a 1/400 scale model of a Shortfin Barracuda submarine but he

does not think it is relevant to disclose the fact of his membership, as others have on that side, of a trade union?

If we go to the actual register of interests question—and I happen have the member for McMahon's here. Strangely enough, he has not mentioned what union he is a member of. I am glad to know that he is a member of the Marconi club and the Guildford West leagues—they are fine institutions; great clubs—but he has not mentioned what union he is a member of. And question 13 says 'membership of any organisation'—(*Time expired*)

Superannuation

Ms PLIBERSEK (Sydney—Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (14:34): My question is to the Minister for Revenue and Financial Services. It has been revealed that Australia's biggest banks will have to pay almost \$180 million in compensation because they spent years charging over 200,000 customers fees for services that they did not actually receive. Is this what the minister meant when she said she wanted to lift superannuation funds to the same standards as banks? Does the minister really want superannuation account holders to be treated the way banks treat their customers?

Ms O'DWYER (Higgins—Minister for Revenue and Financial Services) (14:35): I thank the member for her question. I note that she believes, along with those opposite, that it is incredibly important that the mandated superannuation system, in which we force people to defer their wages that they earn today to save for their retirement income into the future—they think it is acceptable that it has lower governance standards than that that currently apply to banks and life insurance companies. It is ridiculous to think that millions of Australians who have their money in superannuation funds would have funds that have lower governance standards than what currently applies to banks and to life insurance companies.

Mr Brendan O'Connor interjecting—

The SPEAKER: The member for Gorton!

Ms O'DWYER: It is not actually something that we have dreamt up on this side of the House. In fact, there was a review that was undertaken under Labor's watch by Jeremy Cooper—a handpicked person from Labor for the job—who concluded that the governance standards for superannuation funds was not up to the mark. He said that there needed to be at least one-third of independent directors on these boards.

A second review conducted by David Murray said that there needed to be a majority of independent directors and an independent chair on these boards. It is so unacceptable to think that all of the problems that could occur within these funds can continue without there being appropriate oversight.

Let me just quote a couple of other people who think that this might be a good idea. Ken Henry, who was the former adviser to Paul Keating and former Treasury secretary, has been reported as saying it was time that industry funds accepted the need for new governance standards as advocated by the government. He said that the trade union movement should be proud of the system it created, but that the argument that, 'The system isn't broken, so why fix it?' was a bit like saying that a house that had not been torched should not have insurance. Paul Howes, the former Australian Workers' Union boss, has said:

It has been disappointing to see a knee-jerk reaction against the call for a more independent governance model ... Equal representation has been a success but the evolution of the super industry is important and I can't see anything negative in having more independents on boards.

Those on that side of the House want to protect their union mates and union bosses in maintaining access to slush funds. We think it is completely and utterly inappropriate, and we will stand up for members, we will stand up for what is right for them and we will stand up for their interests.

Workplace Health and Safety

Mr COLEMAN (Banks) (14:38): My question is to the Minister for Defence Industry, representing the Minister for Employment. Will the minister explain why it is critical to maintain a consistent approach to occupational health and safety in the workplace and how that will be assisted by the establishment of the Registered Organisations Commission and the Australian Building and Construction Commission?

Mr PYNE (Sturt—Leader of the House and Minister for Defence Industry) (14:38): I thank the member for Banks for his question. It is a very important question because occupational health and safety—a safe workplace—is the most important priority in every single workplace in Australia for employers and, equally, employees. The first task of every business is to ensure that their employees are in a safe workplace, and it is one of the most important requirements of unions, of course, to represent their members to ensure that they are in safe workplaces. That, of course, is the reason why the Labor Party should support the Registered Organisations Commission being established, which they have tried to oppose and failed this week, which is why it is an important signature reform. It is why they should support the Australian Building and Construction Commission—because healthy unions are good for their members. Honest union leaders looking after their members rather than lining their pockets should be the outcome that every member in this House should be seeking.

So I find very strange indeed the hypocrisy—the hideous hypocrisy—that members of the Labor Party, and particularly this Leader of the Opposition, show in their feigned concern about safety in the workplace for workers, when in fact the Leader of the Opposition deliberately parachuted into the Senate Kimberley Kitching to become Senator Kitching, who is alleged to have fraudulently filled out the safety tests for six union leaders in the Health Services Union. So they had a captain's pick where the Leader of the Opposition put Kimberley Kitching, Senator Kitching, into the Senate when the trade union royal commission has referred her to the Commonwealth DPP for fraudulently, it is alleged, filling out the safety tests for six union leaders from the Health Services Union and bragging about it. That put union leaders into workplaces, pretending that they had done the safety tests and safety standards that were necessary to go into those worksites but knowing that they did not have those safety standards that are required.

That reckless decision by the Leader of the Opposition was made over the complaints and the outrage of many members of his frontbench, particularly the member for Isaacs. The member for Isaacs, as I understand it, threatened to resign if Kimberley Kitching was appointed to the Senate. If that is not true, he is quite welcome to say that he was misrepresented and explain the facts, because that is the very strong story that is circulating. Over the objections of former Senator Conroy and the objections of members of the right-wing faction from his own state, he put into the Senate a person who had fraudulently filled

out the tests, it is alleged, of union leaders, putting workers in danger in the workplace. That is the real respect they have for workers' safety. (*Time expired*)

Superannuation

Mr BOWEN (McMahon) (14:41): My question is to the Prime Minister. Yesterday, the Minister for Revenue and Financial Services said she wanted to lift superannuation funds to the same standards as the banks. So is the former New South Wales Liberal leader and chairman of Industry Super Australia, Peter Collins, accurately describing government policy when he says:

If super funds had been responsible for systemic failures in financial advice, failure to pass on interest rate cuts, excessive executive remuneration and other forms of profit gouging by banks, there would have been a royal commission into super funds in a flash.

Mr TURNBULL (Wentworth—Prime Minister) (14:42): The honourable member knows very well that the government has sought to ensure that there are independent directors on industry super funds. That is hardly a radical proposal. This has been resisted by a number of the vested interests associated with the industry super funds, where, in many cases, as the honourable member knows, the directors are drawn solely from the employers and the unions. All we are seeking to do is to install what is regarded as corporate governance 101 in the rest of the corporate world. The honourable member should take care to represent the interests of the members as opposed to, once again, representing the interests of union bosses, who are very happy to sit in those well-paid directorships.

Aged Care

Mr ALEXANDER (Bennelong) (14:43): My question is to the Minister for Health and Aged Care. Will the minister explain to the House how a re-established Australian Building and Construction Commission will ensure hardworking Australians receive the aged-care services they deserve? What is standing in the way of this progress?

Ms LEY (Farrer—Minister for Sport and Minister for Health and Aged Care) (14:43): Thank you to the member for Bennelong for his question about the important subject of aged care—in particular, aged-care residential facilities. I would just like to provide the House with a demonstration of our investment in this important policy area. This year, it is estimated that Commonwealth funding in residential aged care will be about \$65,000 per resident. This year, aged-care spending is estimated at \$17½ billion—that is actually 20 per cent higher than it was in Labor's last budget, at least. Since June 2015, there has been an increase of about 3½ thousand operational residential aged-care places. Aged-care spending is increasing by an average of 6.7 per cent a year. With this ageing population and a figure that is only going to grow, it is important that we have adequate facilities to support Australians who need residential care and the ability for those Australians to access that care as soon as possible.

New facilities are being built around the country. In many cases it is a partnership with government capital investment and investment from the private sector. Unfortunately, the sites for these much-needed facilities are not immune to union thuggery that all construction sites face. I have an example which was reported in *The Age* in April this year: *The Age* reported that, on an aged-care construction site in Templestowe, Victoria, up to 30 workers simply walked off the job, just like that. The company allegedly told the CFMEU officer present, 'What you have done is illegal, and I am going to have to report you,' to which the

CFMEU officer allegedly responded, 'I know it's illegal, but I had to do it.' This is so wrong on so many levels. It just goes to show that the unions that are holding our construction sites to ransom can do these things just because they feel like it. We are committed to restoring law and order—

Ms Collins interjecting—

The SPEAKER: The member for Franklin will cease interjecting.

Ms LEY: on construction sites. Whenever I hear about elderly Australians unable to get a residential aged-care place or that place costing more in terms of the capital to build because of the union thuggeries, I know that not enough is being done by this Labor Party to sort out the union bosses who are running the show. We only have to reflect on the words of the trade union royal commission—

Ms Plibersek interjecting—

Ms Collins interjecting—

The SPEAKER: The member for Sydney and the member for Franklin.

Ms LEY: about the systemic world of louts, thugs, bullies, thieves and perjurers. This is across the board. It is operating in a construction site near each one of these Labor Party members. None of them are doing anything about it, but what it is doing is affecting the aged-care places, the residential funding and the cost for those everyday Australians. (*Time expired*)

Murray-Darling Basin

Mr GEORGANAS (Hindmarsh) (14:46): My question is to the Prime Minister. The member for Mallee said the Deputy Prime Minister was right to abandon the bipartisan commitment for an additional 450 gegalitres in the Murray-Darling Basin Plan saying, 'South Australia will get more water than it can actually handle.' Is it the position of the government that the Basin Plan delivers more water than South Australia can actually handle?

Mr TURNBULL (Wentworth—Prime Minister) (14:47): I thank the honourable member. I have the Basin Plan here which I will refer to in a moment. The Australian government is committed to delivering the Murray-Darling Basin Plan in full and on time. Our policy has not changed. The Basin Plan is based on an approach to water management that delivers a healthy basin and supports productive industries, confident communities and a resilient environment.

There are challenges in delivering anything as complex as the Basin Plan. What we need to remember is that, in delivering additional water for the environment, the sustainability of communities in economic and social terms must be preserved. I will refer the honourable member to section 7.17 of the Basin Plan. What it makes very clear is that it must be neutral or improved socioeconomic outcomes associated with the conversion of water from consumptive to environmental uses. That is what is in the plan; that is what the plan says.

Nobody is saying it is easy. I think it was Mark Twain that said, 'Whiskey is for drinking; water is for fighting over'—I remember it very well; I was the water minister. I understand because the Murray-Darling Basin Plan was put in place when I was the water minister under John Howard.

Ms Rishworth interjecting—

The SPEAKER: The member for Kingston.

Mr TURNBULL: It is always contentious, but the reality is that what we have to do is to find the solutions and the mechanisms that enable us to return water to the environment in a way that does not disadvantage basin communities in social or economic forms. There will always be arguments about water. There will always be disputes about water, but where there is goodwill and a dynamic, constructive approach then we will be able—

Ms Rishworth interjecting—

The SPEAKER: The member for Kingston will cease interjecting.

Mr TURNBULL: to deliver the plan in full as we are committed to. What I would invite the honourable member to do is to work with us and to encourage his colleagues in the South Australian government to work with us. Some of the language that was used by the South Australian water minister, I have to say, was not constructive and not calculated to assist in resolution.

The bottom line is this: we are committed to the plan, but the plan has provisions. The provision I just read out to the honourable member is very clear. The honourable member for Watson opposite knows this very well—he was the water minister; he knows it very well. For example, in 2012 he set up a review of the northern basin plan to look at precisely this point, so we know it is challenging but we are up to it, and we are going to deliver it.

Employment

Ms BANKS (Chisholm) (14:50): My question is to the Minister for Industry, Innovation and Science. Will the minister update the House on what the government is doing to promote Australian industry, business and jobs for hardworking Australians? Is the minister aware of any alternative approaches that would hurt Australian industry, business and jobs?

Mr HUNT (Flinders—Minister for Industry, Innovation and Science) (14:50): I want to thank the member and acknowledge that she comes to this place not just as the victor of Chisholm but also as somebody who has had a distinguished career in businesses that are providing jobs for numerous Australians. As part of that work she has been passionate about creating job opportunities for Australians. In that light, I am pleased to inform the House that last Thursday the member for Reid, in his capacity as assistant minister, and I met with all of the states and territories and achieved exactly what the Prime Minister was talking about: a good working relationship and an outcome where all of the Labor states and territories, as well as the coalition states and territories, agreed on a national business simplification initiative aimed at creating jobs, so unanimity across the jurisdictions with the federal government. Examples of what we are proposing to do to create jobs include: working with New South Wales on bringing down the time for formation of a cafe from 18 months to 3 months; working with South Australia on food-handling standards and simplifying those; working with Victoria on creating faster approaches to registering and starting retail businesses; working with Tasmania on ecotourism being expedited; and, working with Queensland on faster approaches to registering and creating agricultural and manufacturing businesses. Real action that will create jobs.

That has been twinned this week with the work of the parliament in passing the Registered Organisations Commission bill and the progress that is being made on the ABCC—two things

that will assist in not just establishing businesses but in allowing the construction to go ahead that is necessary to house these businesses.

I am asked if there are alternatives to this approach of actually creating job and actually allowing businesses to be created. And, yes, there are. Our friends on the other side are resolutely opposed to any action that will rein in union tyranny and thuggery in the workplace. Let me give you an example. Moose Toys, the Australian based maker of Betty Spaghetti and Little Live Pets, which, of course, the CFMEU uses as a way of referring to Bill and Burkie.

The SPEAKER: The Minister for the Environment will refer to members by their correct titles.

Mr HUNT: I apologise. I withdraw. Moose Toys was accused and threatened on site with the phrase by a CFMEU official, 'You do not want to be the dog who calls the cop on a union official.' Why would they tolerate that sort of intimidation of an Australian business. The reason is that they stand for the thugs. They do not stand for the businesses. We are creating jobs to make it simpler to do business. *(Time expired)*

Prime Minister

Mr BRENDAN O'CONNOR (Gorton) (14:54): My question is to the Prime Minister. I refer to the video of a Brisbane 7-Eleven employee being forced to return half her wages to her employer in cash. As a result of this cashback scam, staff are paid \$11 an hour below the minimum wage. Given the Prime Minister's own ministerial standards requires ministers to act with the highest standards of integrity, how can the Prime Minister possibly justify his ongoing holdings in managed funds that invest in 7-Eleven?

Opposition members interjecting—

The SPEAKER: Members on my right. The member for Wakefield will cease interjecting.

Mr TURNBULL (Wentworth—Prime Minister) (14:54): As honourable members are aware, my and my wife's investments are managed for us by an external adviser. They are invested almost entirely—for the most part in any event—in large managed funds, typically index funds, exchange traded funds, that have a wide range of investments. Typically, very similar to the large superannuation funds that many other members, including members opposite, have their funds invested in.

What I would suggest to the honourable member is that he now scour through the large portfolios of all the managed funds that are opposite. But the point of the matter is that I do not choose the stocks those funds invest in. I am completely transparent. They are there, and the allocation of the funds is a matter for my adviser. So it is kept very much at arms-length from me. It is thoroughly transparent and at arm's length.

National Security

Ms MARINO (Forrest—Chief Government Whip) (14:56): My question is the Minister for Immigration and Border Protection. Will the minister update the house on steps the government has taken to secure our borders and achieve third-country resettlement pathways? Is the minister aware of any alternative approach?

Mr DUTTON (Dickson—Minister for Immigration and Border Protection) (14:56): I thank the honourable member for her question. It is a particularly import question, because, as we all know, people smugglers have not gone out of business. Right now, people smugglers are trying to get people to pay money to hop onto boats. Tragically, we know the outcome if we lose control of our borders, because it was evidenced over the six years of the Rudd-Gillard-Rudd years, when the Leader of the Opposition was a senior member within that cabinet. There were 1,200 people, including women and children, who drowned at sea. There were thousands and thousands of children put into detention. It was the case that 50,000 people arrived on 800 boats, and we are still cleaning up Labor's mess.

Having got the children out of detention, having closed the 17 detention centres, having not had a successful people smuggling venture arrive in over 800 days now, and having fixed up this mess and this sad chapter in Labor history—

Opposition members interjecting—

The SPEAKER: Member for Wakefield, this is your final warning.

Mr DUTTON: —our determination is to get women and children and all those people on Nauru and Manus off those two islands, but to do it in such a way that we do not recommence boat arrivals. I do not want new arrivals to fill the vacancies we create, which is the policy prescription that Labor is putting forward. We have had Homeland Security and State Department representatives from the United States in Australia over the course of the last week or so talking through with officials from my department ways in which we can screen people very quickly and facilitate their removal. I do not want the people smugglers to hear the weak message being conveyed by the Leader of the Opposition, as we have seen over the course of the last couple of weeks.

The Leader of the Opposition is intent on creating whatever distraction he can. But the reality remains that this Leader of the Opposition presides over a weak and divided party. They were weak and divided when they were in government and they are weak and divided now. The people smugglers saw a weak leader in Kevin Rudd, they saw a weak leader in Julia Gillard and they know this Leader of the Opposition is at least as weak as they are.

I see notification today that the policy unit of the Labor Party has been taken over by the left of this party. That is a terrible development, because the people smugglers were rubbing their hands together when Labor was last in power, because the fact is that the left of the party completely dominate this border protection policy. That is why 26 people in the Labor Party came out against the legislation the government has passed through the Lower House. At every opportunity, this Leader of the Opposition shows that he is unfit to be Prime Minister of this country and, if he were to be elected at the next election, as sure as night follows day, the boats would restart.

Opposition members interjecting—

The SPEAKER: The members on my left will cease interjecting. I gave the member for Wakefield his final warning. He kept interjecting; he can leave under standing order 94(a).

The member for Wakefield then left the chamber.

Intellectual Property

Mr BURKE (Watson—Manager of Opposition Business) (14:59): My question is directed to the Prime Minister. Can the Prime Minister confirm that his government has threatened to sue Mark Rogers, a Sydney grandfather, over his use of the Medicare logo on his Save Medicare website. Will the government also be threatening legal action against the Liberal Party, the member for Forde, the Minister for Trade, the member for Bonner and the health minister, who have all used the Medicare logo in their own political material?

Honourable members interjecting—

The SPEAKER: The Manager of Opposition business knows the rules on props. The members on my left and right will cease interjecting.

Mr TURNBULL (Wentworth—Prime Minister) (15:00): There is a question on notice. See if that litigation is as he has described.

Domestic and Family Violence

Ms HENDERSON (Corangamite) (15:00): My question is to the Minister for Social Services. Will the minister update the House on what the government is doing to provide support services to people affected by family and domestic violence. How important is it that the government provides these services in our community?

Mr PORTER (Pearce—Minister for Social Services) (15:01): I thank the member for her question on this very important issue. Of course, on 28 October of this year, the Prime Minister announced \$100 million worth of support to the third action plan for reducing violence against women, and, in September of 2015, the Prime Minister announced a \$100 million Women's Safety Package. The question was directed to the way in which these fund important services. Perhaps there is no more important service being funded with this very large increase in funding, which has been made possible by the commitment of the Prime Minister, than the 1800RESPECT hotline. That translates to practical assistance for women in need, on the ground. Since its inception, the hotline has been—

Mr Hill interjecting—

The SPEAKER: The member for Bruce.

Mr PORTER: operated by Medibank Health Solutions, and it has used trauma counsellors from the rape and domestic violence services. Since 2010, there has been a much greater awareness of the issue and that has given rise to a greater number of people wanting to use this hotline. That is, in itself, a measure of some success as awareness increases.

The unfortunate outcome, however, was that, before we undertook recent reforms, the call wait time had blown out to over 10 minutes, which had meant that a whole range of women who were seeking assistance had actually given up waiting, and the call abandonment rate had lifted to 44 per cent. As a government, with the funding that the Prime Minister allocated, we did three things. Firstly, we commissioned an independent report to look into best practice models here and overseas. Secondly, we worked with Medibank Health Solutions to try and tailor the single best practical option that we could institute here. That option involved a first responder triage model, so that the first person you would talk to would be someone with at least a three-year degree qualification in a relevant tertiary field plus a minimum of two years experience in counselling. If you needed specialist trauma counselling, you were seamlessly

directed to that at the very point of the phone call. Thirdly, we steeled ourselves to what is, inevitably, the level of criticism you get when you engage in reform of this nature. Ms Jenna Price, through the *Sydney Morning Herald*, said that this would destroy 1800RESPECT. The member for Griffith, in agreeing with that, said that the changes were terrible and that they would divert people away—

Mr Perrett interjecting—

The SPEAKER: The member for Moreton.

Mr PORTER: from specialist trauma counselling. It might assist the member for Griffith to know that these have been the results: 80 per cent of calls are now answered in 20 seconds. The average call wait time has dropped from over 10 minutes to 35 seconds. The call abandonment rate in this incredibly important area has dropped from 44 per cent to 5.5 per cent. They are not terrible changes, as we were led to believe by the member for Griffith in the context of the election campaign; they are tremendous changes that help women in their greatest time of need when domestic violence— *(Time expired)*

Murray-Darling Basin

Mr BURKE (Watson—Manager of Opposition Business) (15:04): My question is to the Prime Minister. When the Deputy Prime Minister personally insisted on receiving the water portfolio in September 2015, did he keep secret from the Prime Minister his intention to undermine the additional 450 gigalitres in the Murray-Darling Basin Plan? Did the Prime Minister have any idea prior to Friday that his deputy had put in writing that the Basin Plan would not be completed, and since then, has the Prime Minister, in any way, reprimanded the Deputy Prime Minister for free ranging on the Basin Plan?

Mr Hunt interjecting—

The SPEAKER: The Minister for Industry, Innovation and Science.

Mr TURNBULL (Wentworth—Prime Minister) (15:04): Characteristically, from the opposition, we have one misrepresentation after another. The fact is the government is committed to the Basin Plan. If I may just remind honourable members, the section I referred to from the Basin Plan was from the Basin Plan 2012, so this is a plan that the honourable member is very familiar with. Indeed, I see here on the front page:

I, Tony Burke, Minister for Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities...

Gosh, no wonder he was so busy with all of those things to do. He could not pay attention to water. There it is. This is the plan the honourable member promulgated as minister, and the section to which I referred is in his plan, and that is part of the plan to which we are committed.

Energy Security

Ms FLINT (Boothby) (15:05): My constituency question is to the Minister for Environment and Energy. Can the minister update the House on what the government is doing to provide a more reliable and affordable electricity supply for the constituents and businesses in my electorate of Boothby and across South Australia. Is the minister aware of any alternative approaches?

Mr FRYDENBERG (Kooyong—Minister for the Environment and Energy) (15:06): I thank the member for Boothby for her question and acknowledge her deep concern for the

very high electricity prices her constituents pay, which are the highest in the National Electricity Market and some 50 per cent higher than the wholesale electricity prices that they pay over the border in Victoria. This makes life tough for Lucas Earthmovers, a family owned business that I visited in the electorate of Boothby. It also makes life tough for the households in Mitcham and Brighton and the small businesses in Dover Gardens and Somerton Park.

We know that Premier Weatherill was conducting a big experiment—in his own words—by the high uptake of intermittent power, namely solar and wind. But that big experiment failed when 1.7 million South Australians went into the black after the blackout in that state. Just yesterday we found out from the Australian Energy Regulator that there were some 10,000 electricity disconnections in South Australia over the last year. Of all the states and territories monitored by the AER, this was the highest number, and the amount owed by those hardship customers in South Australia was the highest of any state or territory monitored by the AER. That is why the coalition is determined to improve energy security and energy affordability. We are doing that by pushing reforms into the gas market through the COAG Energy Council, by commissioning the Finkel review into energy security, by looking into the effectiveness of the limited merits review process and by trying to get a coordinated, harmonised approach across the states and the federal government when it comes to the renewable energy target.

But we are getting no help from those opposite, because they persist with their 50 per cent—unrealistic and job-destroying—renewable energy target; they persist with a carbon tax, which we heard from the member for Hunter is a tax; and they persist in trading away blue-collar jobs in the regions, in the coal-fired power stations, in order to win Green votes in the city. We know that the Leader of the Opposition wants to take Jay Weatherill's experiment and take it national. Shame on him. But you have to understand: it is not just business and the coalition who have a problem with Labor's approach; it is also members of the party represented by those opposite. Graham Richardson has described the Labor Party's policy as stupid, as a farce and as a sell-out of the poor and the pensioners. They are not my words; they are Graham Richardson's. Only the coalition can deliver energy security and energy affordability for all Australians.

Murray-Darling Basin

Mr SHORTEN (Maribyrnong—Leader of the Opposition) (15:09): My question is to the Prime Minister. I refer to the Deputy Prime Minister's letter of 17 November to the South Australian government, indicating that the government would abandon its obligation to deliver 450 gegalitres of water to the Murray-Darling Basin through efficiency measures. Does the Deputy Prime Minister's letter reflect government policy?

Mr TURNBULL (Wentworth—Prime Minister) (15:09): Could the Leader of the Opposition assist us by showing where in that letter the word 'abandoned' is used?

A government member: Not once!

Mr TURNBULL: Not once. Yet again the Leader of the Opposition is misrepresenting what ministers have said. He has no regard for the truth. He gave a long speech today in which he thoroughly misrepresented statements by the Minister for Immigration and Border Protection—dishonestly did so. And I might say, on the subject of the recklessness of the Leader of the Opposition, he quoted the member for Cowan, who said, 'I am fearful that the

minister's comments will be used by an extreme few who would seek to harm the fabric of our society.'

Mr Shorten: Mr Speaker—

Mr TURNBULL: You can't take it, can you?

The SPEAKER: The Prime Minister will resume his seat.

Mr TURNBULL: Your dishonesty—

Honourable members interjecting—

The SPEAKER: The Prime Minister will resume his seat. Members on both sides will cease interjecting. The Leader of the Opposition on a point of order?

Mr Shorten: On relevance. It was a very straight question: does the Deputy Prime Minister's letter reflect government policy—yes or no?

Mr Pyne interjecting—

Mr Joyce interjecting—

Ms Henderson: Mr Speaker—

The SPEAKER: The Leader of the House and the Deputy Prime Minister will cease interjecting. The member for Corangamite will resume her seat. The Prime Minister has the call.

Mr TURNBULL: The Deputy Prime Minister, the government, is committed to the policy, which is to implement the Basin Plan, but the Basin Plan has conditions and qualifications and was set in place by the member for Watson when he was the minister. I have just read a portion of it, and achieving those neutral or improved social or economic outcomes is challenging. We recognise that, and that is why we need all jurisdictions to work together in a constructive way to achieve it. But what we have seen today is this consistent dishonest misrepresentation by the Leader of the Opposition. If it is not the Deputy Prime Minister, it is the immigration minister—he is misrepresenting one minister after another, all reckless to the consequences of what he says, promoting anxiety, stirring up resentment, stirring up conflict. He has no regard for the consequences of what he does other than his own political interest.

Mr Shorten: Mr Speaker, I seek leave to table the letter from Barnaby Joyce, because I do not think the Prime Minister has seen it.

The SPEAKER: The Leader of the Opposition will refer to members—

Ms Henderson: Mr Speaker—

Honourable members interjecting—

The SPEAKER: The member for Corangamite will resume her seat. Members on both sides will cease interjecting.

Ms Julie Bishop interjecting—

The SPEAKER: The foreign affairs minister will cease interjecting. I say to the member for Corangamite: the *Practice* makes very clear that leaders of political parties have certain precedence. The Leader of the Opposition will nonetheless refer to members by their correct titles.

Mr Shorten: Yes. Thank you for that.

Leave not granted.

The SPEAKER: I call the member for Corangamite, finally.

Opposition members: Hurray!

Victoria: Infrastructure

Ms HENDERSON (Corangamite) (15:13): My constituency question is to the Minister for Infrastructure and Transport. Could the minister update the House on the government's \$1.5 billion Victorian infrastructure package, including \$25 million for one of Australia's most important tourist attractions, the iconic, the majestic, the awe-inspiring Great Ocean Road?

Mr CHESTER (Gippsland—Minister for Infrastructure and Transport) (15:13): I thank the member for Corangamite for her question. I am not surprised to hear those opposite cheering the member for Corangamite. She is a very popular local member, and I note her commitment to securing funding for that iconic touring route the Great Ocean Road.

The Turnbull-Joyce government is focused on delivering a \$50 billion infrastructure investment program right across Australia—in our cities, in our major regional centres, in our rural and remote communities. We do that because we recognise that investing in good infrastructure not only can change people's lives but it can save people's lives. Too many people are dying and too many people are being seriously injured on our roads. Tragically, as of today 257 people have died on Victorian roads this year. The total last year was 226. Every death, obviously, is one too many, and that is why we are investing in safer roads right across Australia, in projects like the Great Ocean Road.

I was pleased to be with the Prime Minister last week in Melbourne when we announced a \$1.5 billion Victorian infrastructure package, and part of that package was \$25 million for the Great Ocean Road through our \$345 million regional roads package, which will see projects completed right across Victoria. The projects in the member for Corangamite's own seat involve safety measures around the recent landslips and rock-falls which have—

Mr Hill interjecting—

The SPEAKER: The member for Bruce is warned.

Mr CHESTER: impacted severely on this most scenic of all coastal routes. The member for Corangamite has been very active in calling for the Victorian government to match that \$25 million, and I am very confident that the Victorian government will come on board and yield to her campaign and support us in that regard. I commend the member for Corangamite for her advocacy.

I heard the member for Wannon cheering as well, and I want to recognise the work that is going to occur in his electorate on the Princes Highway upgrades. There is work also along the Hamilton Highway and the Geelong Ring Road. There is planning for the duplication of the Midland Highway between Geelong and Bannockburn.

In fact, there are projects right across Victoria which are going to be made possible through the Prime Minister's announcement last week. We are getting on with the job of delivering the infrastructure that Victoria needs. This government, under the Victorian \$1.5 billion infrastructure package, is also delivering \$220 million for the Murray basin freight rail

project. The member for Mallee has been a very strong advocate for that project. There is \$500 million to go towards the Monash Freeway upgrade, bringing a total of a billion dollars to go on reducing congestion on that route. The members for La Trobe, Deakin, Aston and Chisholm have all been strong advocates for improvements to that congested route. There is \$350 million for the upgrade of the M80 Ring Road. And, as I mentioned, there is \$345 million for rural and regional roads. One of the signature projects will be the \$97 million for the Echuca-Moama bridge, for which the new member for Murray has been a very strong advocate.

So this is a good deal. It is a good deal for Victorians and it is a good deal for the Victorian government. I am sure they will come on board and match that \$1.5 billion. (*Time expired*)

Murray-Darling Basin

Mr SHORTEN (Maribyrnong—Leader of the Opposition) (15:16): My question is to the Prime Minister. Did the Prime Minister have any advance notice of the contents of his deputy's letter of 17 November?

Mr TURNBULL (Wentworth—Prime Minister) (15:16): The Deputy Prime Minister understands the Basin Plan very well, as do I—as, indeed, does the member for Watson—and he understands that the government is committed to fulfilling it and he understands the provisions of the basin plan and the need for jurisdictions to work together to ensure it is delivered. And the commitment of our government to the basin plan is absolute. But it is a plan which presents significant challenges, which the member for Watson understood back in 2012 when he had the northern basin aspects of the plan reviewed to look at precisely these issues of ensuring that there is neutral or improved socioeconomic outcomes.

And, on that note, Mr Speaker, I ask that further questions be placed on the *Notice Paper*.

AUDITOR-GENERAL'S REPORTS

Report No. 26 of 2016-2017

The SPEAKER (15:17): I present the Auditor-General's Performance Audit Report No. 26 of 2016-17, entitled *Prudential regulation of superannuation entities: Australian Prudential Regulation Authority*.

Ordered that the report be made a parliamentary paper.

COMMITTEES

Selection Committee

Report

The SPEAKER (15:18): I present report No. 5 of the Selection Committee relating to consideration of committee and delegation business and private members' business on Monday, 28 November 2016. The report will be printed in the *Hansard* for today and the committee's determinations will appear on tomorrow's *Notice Paper*. Copies of the report have been placed at the table.

The report read as follows—

Report relating to the consideration of committee and delegation business and of private Members' business

1. The committee met in private session on 22 November 2016.

2. The committee determined the order of precedence and times to be allotted for consideration of committee and delegation business and private Members' business on Monday, 28 November 2016, as follows:

Items for House of Representatives Chamber (10.10 am to 12 noon)

COMMITTEE AND DELEGATION BUSINESS

Presentation and statements

1 Joint Standing Committee on Migration:

Statement on new inquiry into migrant settlement services

The Committee determined that statements on the report may be made—all statements to conclude by 10.15 am

Speech time limits—

Mr Wood—5 minutes.

[Minimum number of proposed Members speaking = 1 x 5 mins]

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

Notices

1 MR WILKIE: To present a Bill for an Act to amend the *Australian Meat and Live-stock Industry Act 1997*, and for related purposes. (*Australian Meat and Live-stock Industry (Amendment) (Tagging Live-stock) Bill 2016*)

(Notice given 22 November 2016.)

Presenter may speak to the second reading for a period not exceeding 10 minutes—pursuant to standing order 41. Debate must be adjourned pursuant to standing order 142.

2 MR BANDT: To present a Bill for an Act to amend the law in relation to workplace relations, and for related purposes. (*Fair Work Amendment (Pay Protection) Bill 2016*)

(Notice given 22 November 2016.)

Presenter may speak to the second reading for a period not exceeding 10 minutes—pursuant to standing order 41. Debate must be adjourned pursuant to standing order 142.

3 MR BANDT: To present a Bill for an Act to amend the law in relation to air services, and for related purposes. (*Air Services Amendment Bill 2016*)

(Notice given 22 November 2016.)

Presenter may speak to the second reading for a period not exceeding 10 minutes—pursuant to standing order 41. Debate must be adjourned pursuant to standing order 142.

4 MR SHORTEN: To present a Bill for an Act to amend the law relating to 457 visas, and for related purposes. (*Migration Amendment (Putting Local Workers First) Bill 2016*)

(Notice given 22 November 2016.)

Presenter may speak to the second reading for a period not exceeding 10 minutes—pursuant to standing order 41. Debate must be adjourned pursuant to standing order 142.

5 MS MCGOWAN: To present a Bill for an Act to amend the *Charter of Budget Honesty Act 1998*, and for related purposes. (*Charter of Budget Honesty Amendment (Regional Australia Statements) Bill 2016*)

(Notice given 22 November 2016.)

Presenter may speak to the second reading for a period not exceeding 10 minutes—pursuant to standing order 41. Debate must be adjourned pursuant to standing order 142.

6 MS T. M. BUTLER: To move:

That this House:

(1) notes that:

(a) 1 December marks World AIDS Day, which is held every year to raise awareness about the issues concerning HIV and AIDS, and is a day for people to show their support for people living with HIV and to commemorate people who have died; and

(b) the theme for World AIDS Day this year is 'HIV is still here—and it's on the move';

(2) acknowledges the roles played by people living with HIV and their friends, family, supporters, AIDS activists and researchers, past and present, in making living with HIV possible; and

(3) will support actions to reduce stigma and prevent new HIV transmissions, and work towards a cure.

(Notice given 21 November 2016.)

Time allotted—30 minutes.

Speech time limits—

Ms T. M. Butler—5 minutes.

Other Members—5 minutes. each.

[Minimum number of proposed Members speaking = 6 x 5 mins]

The Committee determined that consideration of this should continue on a future day.

7 MR HASTIE: To move:

That this House:

(1) notes that:

(a) from 21 to 28 of October the Minister for Veterans' Affairs undertook a veterans mission to Korea; and

(b) eight veterans joined the Minister to tour battlefields and attend commemorations, including Mr Gordon Hughes DSM, Mr Graham Connor, Mr Les Hall, Mr Jack Lang, Mr John Murphy, Lieutenant Commander Les Powell RAN (Retd.), Colonel Peter Scott DSO (Retd.), and Mr Ray Seaver;

(2) acknowledges that:

(a) this year marks the 65th anniversaries of the Battle of Maryang San and the Battle of Kapyong;

(b) the Battle of Maryang San took place on 3 October when the 3rd Battalion, The Royal Australian Regiment, as part of the 28th British Commonwealth Infantry Brigade, took part in Operation Commando, which included the capture of Hill 317, where 20 Australians were killed and 89 wounded—noted as the most significant Australian action of the Korean War;

(c) in the Battle of Kapyong on 22 to 25 April 1951, the 27th British Commonwealth Infantry Brigade, including the 3rd Battalion, The Royal Australian Regiment, was instrumental in stalling the Chinese advance on Seoul, with 32 Australians being killed, 59 wounded and 3 taken prisoner;

(d) more than 17,000 Australians served in the Korean War and the post armistice period, with more than 1,200 wounded; and

(e) the names of 356 Australians killed in Korea are listed on the Australian War Memorial Roll of Honour; and

(3) notes:

(a) that although it has been called the 'forgotten war' in Australia, Korea and its people are still grateful for the significant contribution the Australian forces made in the defence of a free Republic of Korea; and

(b) the service and sacrifice of those who fought in the Korean War.

(Notice given 22 November 2016.)

Time allotted—remaining private Members' business time prior to 12 noon

Speech time limits—

Mr Hastie—10 minutes.

Other Members—5 minutes. each.

[Minimum number of proposed Members speaking = 1 x 10 mins + 3 x 5 mins]

The Committee determined that consideration of this should continue on a future day.

Items for Federation Chamber (11 am to 1.30 pm)

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

Notices

1 MR HILL: To move:

That this House:

(1) notes that:

(a) there is a current controversy pertaining to the so called 'palace letters' between the then Governor-General Sir John Kerr and Her Majesty The Queen in the months leading up to the dismissal of the Whitlam Government; and

(b) this correspondence has been declared 'personal' and therefore secret at 'Her Majesty the Queen's instructions'; and

(2) acknowledges that:

(a) these letters are a matter of our national history which should be made available to the Australian people;

(b) regardless of the merits or otherwise of the dismissal, Australians deserve to know the extent to which The Queen involved herself in the sacking of an elected Australian Government; and

(c) the very notion of 'personal' letters between the Monarch and the Governor-General offends all concepts of transparency and democracy that we hold dear; and

(3) call on the Australian Government to take steps to have the documents released.

(Notice given 21 November 2016.)

Time allotted—20 minutes.

Speech time limits—

Mr Hill—5 minutes.

Other Members—5 minutes. each.

[Minimum number of proposed Members speaking = 4 x 5 mins]

The Committee determined that consideration of this should continue on a future day.

2 MR IRONS: To move:

That this House:

(1) recognises the actions this Government has taken to establish the Commonwealth Redress Scheme (CRS) for survivors of institutional child sexual abuse;

(2) congratulates this Government for leading by example by establishing the CRS for survivors of institutional child sexual abuse and for inviting other governments and institutions to 'opt in' to the scheme on the responsible 'entity pays basis' recommended by the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse;

(3) acknowledges the courage of the survivors who presented evidence to the Royal Commission and that their past and continuing advocacy for redress is vital to the successful implementation of the CRS; and

(4) recognises that this Government acknowledges that survivors of institutional child sexual abuse need and deserve equal access and treatment.

(Notice given 21 November 2016.)

Time allotted—50 minutes.

Speech time limits—

Mr Irons—10 minutes.

Next Member speaking—10 minutes.

Other Members—5 minutes each.

[Minimum number of proposed Members speaking = 2 x 10 mins + 6 x 5 mins]

The Committee determined that consideration of this should continue on a future day.

3 MS HUSAR: To move:

That this House:

(1) acknowledges that:

(a) Saturday 3 December 2016 is International Day of People with Disability (IDPwD);

(b) the United Nations proclaimed IDPwD for the first time in 1992 as a way of promoting better understanding of disability issues and as a sign of support for the dignity, rights and wellbeing of people with disabilities; and

(c) each year, the United Nations chooses a theme for IDPwD and this year's theme is 'Achieving 17 Goals for the Future We Want', which draws attention to the 17 Sustainable Development Goals and how these goals can create a more inclusive and equitable world for people with disabilities;

(2) encourages all Members of Parliament to support IDPwD in their electorates; and

(3) reaffirms its commitment to:

(a) ensuring Australians with a disability get the support they need; and

(b) an adequately funded and resourced National Disability Insurance Scheme.

(Notice given 22 November 2016.)

Time allotted—30 minutes.

Speech time limits—

Ms Husar—5 minutes.

Other Members—5 minutes each.

[Minimum number of proposed Members speaking = 6 x 5 mins]

The Committee determined that consideration of this should continue on a future day.

4 MS FLINT: To move:

That this House:

(1) urges all Australians to drive safely and with consideration for fellow road users over the upcoming summer holidays;

(2) notes the Government has made significant investments in road safety including:

(a) \$500 million from 2014-15 to 2018-19 in the Black Spot Program (BSP);

(b) an additional \$200 million from 2015-16 that makes an important contribution to reducing the national road toll under the National Road Safety Strategy and Action Plan; and

(c) completing 977 projects under the BSP which has saved an estimated 116 lives and prevented 5,959 injuries from crashes over 10 years;

(3) encourages all state and territory governments to address the over-representation of men in road fatalities through improved driver information and education; and

(4) calls on all Australians to drive carefully over the summer period.

(Notice given 22 November 2016.)

Time allotted—30 minutes.

Speech time limits—

Ms Flint—5 minutes.

Other Members—5 minutes. each.

[Minimum number of proposed Members speaking = 6 x 5 mins]

The Committee determined that consideration of this should continue on a future day.

5 MR J. H. WILSON: To move:

That this House:

(1) notes that in 2012, following a comprehensive and rigorous process, the then Labor Government declared 40 marine parks in Commonwealth waters, creating the world's first and largest comprehensive national network of marine parks;

(2) notes with concern that there is increasing pressure on Australia's marine environment, as indicated by frequent and severe bleaching of coral reefs across Australia's northern waters, extensive and unprecedented dieback of mangroves, and the loss of large areas of kelp forests in southern Australian waters;

(3) notes that Australia's marine environment is the most biologically diverse in the world according to the 2010 Census of Marine Life, with our oceans spanning tropical, temperate and sub-Antarctic waters, and where at least 33,000 marine species have been identified (many of which are found nowhere else on earth);

(4) notes that Australia is a signatory to the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea and as such is required to both conserve as well as sustainably utilise its Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ);

(5) notes the economic opportunity that marine parks bring regional communities as evidenced by long standing marine parks in Australia, including the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park which is worth over \$6 billion to the Queensland economy, and others including Ningaloo Marine Park, the Great Australian Bight, Lord Howe Island, Solitary Islands Marine Park and Maria Island National Park;

(6) notes the clear evidence that marine parks play an important economic role in accelerating the recovery of depleted fisheries, and that the long term net effect on fisheries of increased resilience and sustainability from highly protected marine reserves is positive;

(7) notes that in the 1990s the then Coalition Government put in place a systematic approach for declaring a comprehensive, adequate, and representative network of marine parks in Australia's EEZ, and proceeded to declare 22 marine parks in Commonwealth waters;

(8) notes with concern that:

(a) in December 2013 the incoming Coalition Government suspended Labor's marine parks from operation by re-declaring the parks in order to set aside their management arrangements and commencement date, pending the conduct of a politically motivated and unnecessary review; and

(b) after almost 3 years, these 40 marine parks have not been implemented, existing in statute only—leaving 5 of Australia's 6 marine regions with little to no protection at a time when the threats to Australia's valuable and important marine environment are increasing;

(9) notes that in the May 2016 budget the Coalition Government committed to completing the re-development of the management plans for the new parks within 12 months;

(10) notes that in the recent consultation by Parks Australia, over 50,000 submissions were received from around Australia, including from more than 5,000 recreational fishers, calling for the reinstatement of the marine parks and their high level marine national park zoning, without further delay or loss of protection;

(11) notes that the Expert Science Panel of the Coalition Government's own review recognises both the extensive science that went into the development of the marine parks developed by the Labor Government and the scientifically proven benefits of marine national parks;

(12) notes the Bioregional Advisory Panel of the Coalition Government's own review recognised the extensive consultation that has occurred in developing the marine reserves developed by the Labor Government, stating that there was in fact a considerable amount of 'consultation fatigue' expressed by many stakeholders;

(13) notes the increasing move by other countries to put in place large and highly protected marine parks in their EEZs, including action taken by the United States, Palau, Chile, New Zealand, the United Kingdom, and, most recently, the declaration in October 2016 by 24 nations, including Australia, of the Ross Sea marine park in the Antarctic high seas; and

(14) calls on the Coalition Government to bring the Commonwealth network of marine parks that were declared in 2012 into operation without further delay, and with no loss of marine national park protection.

(Notice given 22 November 2016.)

Time allotted—remaining private Members' business time prior to 1.30 pm

Speech time limits—

Mr J. H. Wilson—5 minutes.

Other Members—5 minutes. each.

[Minimum number of proposed Members speaking = 4 x 5 mins]

The Committee determined that consideration of this should continue on a future day.

Items for Federation Chamber (4.45 pm to 7.30 pm)

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

Notices—continued

6 MR VAN MANEN: To move:

That this House:

(1) notes that:

(a) the 'Declaration of Intent on a Strategic Dialogue' between the Government of Australia and the Government of the Netherlands was signed by Foreign Minister Bishop and Foreign Minister Koenders on 2 November 2016, in Canberra;

(b) the Declaration has been updated from the one signed in February 2014 by Foreign Minister Bishop and the then Foreign Minister Timmermans to reflect current events and increased closeness between our two countries through our shared commitment to achieve accountability with respect to the downing of MH17; and

- (c) the Declaration commits Australia and the Netherlands to enhanced cooperation on international security, trade and investment, human rights and development issues; and
- (2) welcomes enhanced economic and security cooperation between Australia and the Netherlands.

(Notice given 21 November 2016.)

Time allotted—20 minutes.

Speech time limits—

Mr van Manen—5 minutes.

Other Members—5 minutes. each.

[Minimum number of proposed Members speaking = 4 x 5 mins]

The Committee determined that consideration of this should continue on a future day.

7 MR HAYES: To move:

That this House:

(1) notes that:

(a) since 2014, Da'esh (also known as ISIL) has been carrying out terror campaigns against Christians, Assyrians, Mandaeans, Yazidis, and other ethnic and religious minorities in Iraq and Syria;

(b) these campaigns have taken the form of mass murders, torture, rape, kidnappings, sexual enslavement and other crimes; and

(c) these atrocities constitute war crimes, crimes against humanity, and genocide;

(2) noting that the United Nations mandated Independent International Commission of Inquiry on Syria has declared that Da'esh's actions against the Yazidi people amount to genocide, calls on the:

(a) Australian Government to refer to the Da'esh atrocities as war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide; and

(b) United Nations and Member States to co-ordinate measures to prevent further atrocities occurring in Syria and Iraq and take all necessary action to hold those responsible to account; and

(3) commends:

(a) the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, the Lebanese Republic, the Republic of Turkey and the Kurdistan Regional Government in Iraq, for their ongoing support and efforts to shelter and protect those fleeing the violence in Syria and Iraq; and

(b) those nations that are providing a permanent home for Syrian and Iraqi refugees who are escaping persecution and violence.

(Notice given 21 November 2016.)

Time allotted—20 minutes.

Speech time limits—

Mr Hayes—5 minutes.

Other Members—5 minutes. each.

[Minimum number of proposed Members speaking = 4 x 5 mins]

The Committee determined that consideration of this should continue on a future day.

8 MR L. S. O'BRIEN: To move:

That this House:

(1) congratulates the Government on the success of the National Stronger Regions Fund (NSRF);

(2) acknowledges the significant and positive impact that the NSRF is having in rural, remote and disadvantaged regions around Australia; and

(3) notes that the:

(a) Government is investing \$125,286,955 million in 40 projects around Queensland under 3 rounds of the NSRF; and

(b) NSRF is delivering infrastructure projects to create jobs in regional areas, improve community facilities and support stronger and more sustainable communities across Queensland.

(Notice given 21 November 2016.)

Time allotted—50 minutes.

Speech time limits—

Mr L. S. O'Brien—5 minutes.

Other Members—5 minutes. each.

[Minimum number of proposed Members speaking = 10 x 5 mins]

The Committee determined that consideration of this should continue on a future day.

9 MS SWANSON: To move:

That this House:

(1) calls on the Government to:

(a) establish a national inter-governmental taskforce to co-ordinate the response of state/territory and federal government agencies to the perfluorinated and polyfluorinated (per- and poly-fluoro) alkyl substances contamination on and around Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF) bases at Williamtown and Oakey, and throughout Australia;

(b) develop a nationally consistent approach for screening and health guidelines, assessments, containment, management standards and remediation protocols for Commonwealth sites and their surroundings that are identified as being contaminated with per- and poly-fluoro alkyl substances;

(c) provide:

(i) a breakdown and schedule of spending of the \$55 million allocated from the defence budget to deal with contamination at and around RAAF bases caused by per- and poly-fluoro alkyl substances;

(ii) transparency into the Government's per- and poly-fluoro alkyl substances interdepartmental committee, including a breakdown of its composition, terms of reference and meeting schedule; and

(iii) a timeline for when, how, and by whom the issue of per- and poly-fluoro alkyl substances will be brought to the COAG; and

(d) inform Williamtown residents when its proposed dialogue will begin on buybacks of properties contaminated by per- and poly-fluoro alkyl substances; and

(2) while welcoming the New South Wales Environmental Protection Agency's lifting of fishing bans implemented as a result of the contamination, calls on the Government to:

(a) ensure income support is available to affected commercial fishers through to March 2017; and

(b) advocate for leniency by lending institutions with respect to business and home loan repayments and lending practices involving properties in the Williamtown investigation zone.

(Notice given 9 November 2016.)

Time allotted—30 minutes.

Speech time limits—

Ms Swanson—5 minutes.

Other Members—5 minutes. each.

[Minimum number of proposed Members speaking = 6 x 5 mins]

The Committee determined that consideration of this should continue on a future day.

10 MR RAMSEY: To move:

That this House:

(1) recognises that:

(a) the Strzelecki Track is a vital freight and tourist route connecting Adelaide to the Moomba Gas fields in South Australia's far north-east and South East Queensland;

(b) the route is used extensively by pastoralists, mining vehicles and tourists and is no longer fit for purpose due to pot holes, bulldust and closures from flooding;

(c) it can take more than 12 hours for heavy transport to negotiate 338 kilometres from Lyndhurst to Moomba;

(d) the Track is used by many tourists heading into the heart of Australia and visiting some of the wonders of outback South Australia and Queensland and with a proper standard road there is great potential to grow this industry; and

(e) the Track is also used by heavy transport which supports the exploitation of the Moomba Gas Fields and trucks carrying supplies to, and cattle from, properties and they are totally reliant on this route;

(2) notes that:

(a) the Track cuts through remote and inhospitable country where emergency services are reliant on the Royal Flying Doctor Service;

(b) more than 30 road trains a day navigate the Track each day carrying vital equipment for the gas industry and thousands of dollars of damage is done to each of these trucks on a daily basis; and

(c) rain can close the road for up to six weeks as it did in 2010 when large sections were washed away or left underwater and on average shuts the road for 45 days a year; and

(3) calls on the state and federal governments to work together in an urgent manner to bring about the sealing of this vital route.

(Notice given 21 November 2016.)

Time allotted—25 minutes.

Speech time limits—

Mr Ramsey—10 minutes.

Other Members—5 minutes. each.

[Minimum number of proposed Members speaking = 1 x 10 mins + 3 x 5 mins]

The Committee determined that consideration of this should continue on a future day.

11 MR GEORGANAS: To move:

That this House:

(1) expresses its deepest condolences for the victims of the devastating earthquakes that hit Central Italy on 24 August and 30 October 2016;

(2) recognises the:

(a) ongoing suffering and displacement that the earthquakes have caused to the residents of the affected towns; and

(b) courageous and tireless work of the emergency and medical workers, and volunteers to save lives and prevent further tragedies; and

(3) expresses our sincere thanks to the Australian communities who have rallied to show their support and solidarity in the face of this tragedy.

(Notice given 10 November 2016.)

Time allotted—10 minutes.

Speech time limits—

Mr Georganas—5 minutes.

Other Members—5 minutes. each.

[Minimum number of proposed Members speaking = 2 x 5 mins]

The Committee determined that consideration of this should continue on a future day.

12 MS MCGOWAN: To move:

That this House:

(1) notes that:

(a) the nbnTM Fair Use Policy is unfair for rural and regional Australia;

(b) rural nbnTM users have restricted data speeds, limits on capacity and have to pay more for a poorer service;

(c) under the nbnTM Interim Satellite Service, rural users had 'off peak' data from 11pm to 2pm;

(d) on the new nbnTM Sky MusterTM Satellite Service, the 'off peak' data has now changed to between 1am and 7am; and

(e) the consequence of the nbnTM Fair Use Policy is that businesses, students, home workers and farmers have reduced Internet access and pay comparatively more; and

(2) calls on the Government to:

(a) implement the recommendations of the 2015 Regional Telecommunications Review and review the nbnTM Fair Use Policy in light of the impact on rural families and businesses;

(b) maximise the amount of data available under the satellite service; and

(c) revert the off-peak period in the nbnTM Fair Use Policy to 11pm to 2pm, to accommodate the realities of rural life.

(Notice given 22 November 2016.)

Time allotted—remaining private Members' business time prior to 7.30 pm

Speech time limits—

Ms McGowan—5 minutes.

Other Members—5 minutes. each.

[Minimum number of proposed Members speaking = 2 x 5 mins]

The Committee determined that consideration of this should continue on a future day.

THE HON A. D. H. SMITH MP

Speaker of the House of Representatives

23 November 2016

DOCUMENTS

Presentation

Mr PYNE (Sturt—Leader of the House and Minister for Defence Industry) (15:18): Documents are tabled in accordance with the list circulated to honourable members earlier today. Full details of the documents will be recorded in the *Votes and Proceedings*.

MATTERS OF PUBLIC IMPORTANCE**Domestic and Family Violence**

The SPEAKER (15:18): I have received a letter from the honourable member for Griffith proposing that a definite matter of public importance be submitted to the House for discussion, namely:

The need to address family violence as a national priority.

I call upon those honourable members who approve of the proposed discussion to rise in their places.

More than the number of members required by the standing orders having risen in their places—

Ms BUTLER (Griffith) (15:19): It is, of course, a very important week to talk about family violence—violence against women and their children. This Friday, 25 November, is the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women. It is also the commencement of 16 days of activism against gender related violence that concludes on 10 December, which is International Human Rights Day, as members would know.

Family violence is a national priority, and it should be treated that way in this country. On average, at least one woman is killed by a partner or former partner in Australia each week. One in three Australian women has experienced physical violence since the age of 15. One in five Australian women has experienced sexual violence. One in four Australian women has experienced physical or sexual violence from an intimate partner. One in four Australian women has experienced emotional abuse by a current or former partner. And women are at least three times more likely than men to experience violence from an intimate partner. These sets of statistics are repeated so often in this place—and they are repeated for a very good reason, because family violence is a national epidemic and, as I said earlier, it should be a national priority.

As a nation, we do need to do better when it comes to family violence. I am really proud that it was a Labor government that introduced and instigated a plan, under the great leadership of then Minister Tanya Plibersek, who instigated the National Plan for the Reduction of Violence against Women and their Children 2010-2022. This is an excellent document that is currently under its third action plan, which was announced in October this year. Much more needs to be done when it comes to fulfilling the aspirations of that plan: for a country that does not suffer from this epidemic of domestic and family violence that we have seen here for such a long period of time.

I wanted to make some observations about some policy challenges that arise in relation to family violence. For example, it has been almost three years since the coalition government announced its cuts to community legal centres, which directly provide front-line services to domestic violence victims. From 1 July 2017, community legal centres or CLCs are facing a 30 per cent funding cliff, with almost \$35 million in cuts. And that is a terrible shame, Mr Deputy Speaker Coulton—welcome to the chair—because, obviously, access to legal services and the assistance that surrounds legal services is incredibly important for women who are seeking domestic violence orders, and for women who are in the family law courts, who need assistance to manage the experience of going through the family law courts. Legal assistance is incredibly important.

Another thing that is incredibly important for people who have left a violent relationship is housing. Domestic violence is a leading cause of homelessness in this country. It is incredibly important that the National Partnership Agreement on Homelessness be renewed. I call on the government to confirm that it will renew the National Partnership Agreement on Homelessness, which expires very soon, and therefore that it will give those services that provide housing for homeless people, including homeless women who have left violent situations, the certainty that they need to continue their programs and ensure that their workforce does not leave.

Speaking of the National Partnership Agreement on Homelessness, it has actually now been more than two years since the coalition government's cuts to that partnership agreement's capital expenditure component. There were two annual cuts of \$44 million—so an \$88 million cut—to capital expenditure on homelessness in this country, at a time when people across the country are crying out for more housing options for women and children who have been forced to leave home because they have been facing family violence at home.

We have also been talking in this parliament today about family law, and I mentioned it earlier. There is a really important reform that needs to happen in relation to family law. It has been more than two years since the Productivity Commission recommended that the government reform family law processes so that perpetrators of family violence could not personally cross-examine their victims. It has also been a little bit more than 12 months since Women's Legal Services Australia wrote to the Minister for Women and to the Attorney-General to ask them to implement cross-examination reform in this country. In February this year in Senate estimates, the Attorney-General said that nothing would be done in that term of parliament to give effect to this recommendation, but we found out in April that a roundtable had been held in relation to this issue back in March. It is now November and there has been no news from the government about this crucial cross-examination reform in that intervening period.

We invited the government today in question time to get on board with our policy. Our policy would require judges at the first mention in a family law proceeding—by which time you will have seen on the papers the disclosure of any allegations of family violence—to consider whether vulnerable witnesses can be protected using existing measures, like video-conferencing, having witnesses behind screens or having a support person, but, then, if that were not enough, to require a judge to consider whether they should refuse to allow an alleged perpetrator to personally cross-examine the alleged victim. Of course, it is important that accusers be able to be cross-examined by the accused. We do not seek to prevent people from cross-examining, but we say that it should be able to be done through a lawyer—through someone who is a professional; through someone who is bound by a code of ethics; through someone who is bound by professional responsibility obligations and under the scrutiny of legal profession regulators. That is what we say the court should be able to do.

The court should be able to order that someone who has been accused of abusing, of assaulting, of committing crimes against the other party in the family law matter should not be allowed to revictimise and retraumatise that person through personally grilling them in a courtroom, through using family law proceedings to personally grill them.

Mr Perrett: Hear, hear!

Ms BUTLER: I hear the member for Moreton agreeing with me. He has been such a strong advocate of this reform. He has been a key driver of this reform. Labor has a strong policy. We will, if elected, implement this change to cross-examination, but it should not have to wait that long. We know it and the government know it. It is time for the government to move to commit to making the legal change and to commit to providing the additional legal aid funding that would be needed so that both parties could have a lawyer if that power were required. This is a crucial reform. It is not just the Productivity Commission or Women's Legal Services Australia who say so; it is also Rosie Batty, the former Australian of the Year, who has been campaigning so hard on her campaign for safety first in family law. This is a crucial reform. We have already waited long enough. The government know that they need to do this, and it is about time that they moved on it.

It has been about a year and half since this government's cuts to Family Violence Prevention Legal Services—which are Aboriginal family violence prevention legal services—were reversed, but the government has yet to provide any assurance to those services of any ongoing funding beyond 2018. Some funding was recently announced in October, but it was only a year's funding for a handful of services and no services have as yet been funded beyond 2018. These are incredibly important services that serve women who are most at risk of family violence. The Prime Minister himself has, I think, recited the statistics that, if you are an Aboriginal woman or an Islander woman, you are 34 times more likely to be a victim of family violence than a non-Aboriginal or Islander women. It is also the case that you are something like 60 times more likely to suffer a head injury.

These statistics are chilling for us, and they are a reason that certainty should be given to these frontline, key services that do incredible work on the smell of an oily rag. If you are out west, if you are in Roma, the Family Violence Prevention Legal Service covers hundreds of square kilometres with only a handful of staff. These are not expensive services but they are critical services for Aboriginal women and Islander women, and there should be a stronger commitment from this government to continue to funding them.

In question time today the Minister for Social Services had a go at me—believe it or not, on White Ribbon Day acknowledgment, of all days—for complaining about the fact that he has taken the \$5 million that they had committed to 1800RESPECT and, instead of giving it to Rape and Domestic Violence Services Australia to hire more professional specialist trauma counsellors, has given it to MHS, the private firm that was linked to the data breach involving defence force personnel a couple of years ago, and has said to MHS, 'Take this money and create a triaging service to divert people away from the more professional specialised counsellors.' They advertised for counsellors—the people to take the phone calls—and the qualifications were lesser. The advertising required people to be able to commit to working from home. I would like to know whether the minister is proud of the fact that fewer people are actually making a call directly to a specialist qualified trauma counsellor in relation to family violence when they are traumatised. If I were him, I would not be proud of that fact. I would also like the minister to confirm and to commit that all of the people answering those telephone calls are women. So far I have seen very little from anyone to confirm that that is the case.

There is so much more to do. We need to work hard on this. I think that it would be wonderful if we had genuine bipartisanship on pursuing these reforms. *(Time expired)*

Mr TUDGE (Aston—Minister for Human Services) (15:29): I am pleased to rise in support of the member for Griffith's matter of public importance motion today, which is the need to address family violence as a national priority. I admire the member for Griffith's commitments to this area. The reason why I get up in support of her motion is because it is indeed already a national priority, and it was this government which put it on the national agenda predominantly when Prime Minister Turnbull came to office as Prime Minister. Indeed, the very first cabinet decision of the Turnbull government was the \$100 million Women's Safety Package. I will go through that package in a few moments time, but, before doing so, can I say that as all of us across all sides of this chamber would agree, violence against women and children is completely unacceptable in any form.

As a husband, as a father of two daughters and as the son of a mother, it is almost unfathomable for me to think that there are men out there who would physically harm the girls and women in their lives. It is unfathomable for so many of us. But when you look at the data, unfortunately, it occurs way too frequently. The member for Griffith talked about some of that data for domestic violence. I will just reiterate some of those figures, which are truly staggering. This is from the Domestic Violence Prevention Centre website. They have some data which shows: just under half a million Australian women reported that they had experienced physical or sexual violence or sexual assault in the past 12 months; more than a million women had experienced physical or sexual assault by their male current or ex-partner since the age of 15; over a third of women who experienced physical assault in the 12 months before the survey said the perpetrator was a current or previous male partner; a third said the perpetrator was a male family member or friend; a third of women had experienced physical violence since the age of 15; and one in five women had experienced sexual violence since the age of 15.

And, of course, we know that so many physical assaults, sexual assaults and family violence episodes are not reported at all to the police but they are truly staggering figures. But behind every single one of those pieces of data is a person, is a child in many cases or is a family that may have been devastated because of the violence which had been committed against that woman or against that girl. It is truly a tragic situation when we still have statistics like that and, of course, in the Indigenous community the figures are just so much higher again. If time permits, I will reflect on that towards the end of my remarks.

Governments, and particularly the national government, should be leading in this area and should be leading to address some of the statistics and some of the domestic violence which is occurring at way too high a rate. This government has been the most proactive federal government that has ever been in this place in addressing domestic violence. I mentioned at the outset that the very first decision of the Turnbull cabinet was a \$100 million Women's Safety Package.

Ms Burney interjecting—

Mr TUDGE: When you look at some of the issues that funding package went towards, it went towards very practical measures which are now being implemented, for example: \$12 million to trial with states the use of innovative technology to keep women safe; \$5 million for safer technology, including working with telecommunications companies to distribute safe phones to women and with the eSafety Commissioner to develop a resource package about online safety for women; \$17 million to keep women safe in their homes by expanding

successful initiatives like the Safer in the Home program to install CCTV cameras and other safety equipment; \$5 million to expand the 1800RESPECT number, which the Minister for Social Services referred to in question time; and a \$2 million increase in funding for MensLine for tools and resources to support perpetrators not to reoffend.

I could go on, but all the details of the \$100 million package that was announced are now public.

As the Prime Minister himself said a few weeks ago, that package is now having real, tangible results on the ground. He referred to a couple of things in his remarks when he was with the Queensland Premier at the COAG summit. He referred, for example, to the fact that there are now 12 new specialist domestic violence units and five health justice partnerships which are now operational as a result of that funding. Those services are being delivered by community legal centres and legal aid commissions at locations across Australia. Since January of this year, 1,400 services have been provided to 535 women experiencing family violence—82 per cent of whom have one or more children—and it provides a very integrated case-management approach. The 1800RESPECT line has also had a significant take-up since the announcement. Since the additional funding has been introduced, over 80 per cent of calls are answered within 20 seconds, which is a very significant improvement. That has been a very good initiative which came out of that package.

That package was informed very much by Rosie Batty and Ken Lay and the work they did to support that package being developed. I am a bit disappointed about some of the snide remarks coming across from the other side. Of all the issues that we deal with, surely this is one which should be above politics.

Honourable members interjecting—

Mr TUDGE: Just in recent times, we announced a further \$100 million package, which is the Third Action Plan 2016-19, and that has a number of initiatives as well including: \$20 million allocated to prevention and early-intervention programs to break the cycle of domestic and family violence; and \$15 million to improve and expand national, domestic and family-violence services, which includes the 1800RESPECT number and other initiatives. There has been a record amount of funding being put into domestic violence services from this government. It has also had the imprimatur of the Prime Minister—firstly of Tony Abbott and now of Malcolm Turnbull, who has made this a national issue.

Honourable members interjecting—

Mr TUDGE: I want to just briefly address perhaps the most important issue—

The DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Coulton): Order! The minister just might resume his seat. I have had a request that, due to the serious nature of this MPI, we have some respect in the House, and I think that goes for both sides. I will have no more interjections or I will be evicting people.

Mr TUDGE: Above and beyond the services that we are funding, though, perhaps the most important part in really addressing domestic violence is changing attitudes, particularly changing attitudes amongst men. This is a task which all men should be facing up to and reconsidering, but it is also a task on which the government can, in part, inform and lead. One of the things that we have done is allocate \$30 million to a national campaign called 'Let's stop it at the start'. We are six months into this three-year campaign, and it is already having

some quite considerable results, which we are very pleased to see. For example, between April and June this year, the ad, which was put on YouTube, was the most watched advertisement on YouTube, with more than 36 million views. It has already influenced 67 per cent of all those who have seen these campaigns, and almost two-thirds of people have said they have taken action as a result of these campaigns.

We can take action there, but we also need to take action in the local football clubs and in local communities, where all men can step up and say no in relation to disrespecting women because, ultimately, as the Prime Minister frequently says, violence often starts from disrespecting women in the first place. This campaign is about respecting women. All of us can make a difference, particularly the men in our society. We have a serious package, we are doing serious things in relation to this, but we need further work. I commend this motion.

Ms HUSAR (Lindsay) (15:39): Community leaders especially speak as advocates about domestic violence, but they rarely speak as victims. I would like to do something a little different today. In my first speech in this place, I said 29 out of my 36 years of life had been affected by domestic violence. I am a survivor of family violence, and it has taken me a long time to overcome the trauma of that and be where I am today. I know there are a lot of women out there, many of whom suffer in silence, and today I stand in solidarity with survivors and with those women who are afraid to speak. I will use my story, told in this place, to advocate for the change we need. I will use the prelude to White Ribbon Day, which is on this Friday, as an opportunity to shine a light into the darkest corner of my own life.

The first 13 years of my life were marred by physical domestic violence committed towards my mother at the hands of my always-drunk-when-abusive father. My dad was the son of a World War II German soldier who committed many acts of violence against his own wife and against his seven children. My father had been raised in a home where violence was the accepted norm at a time when society said these things were private matters. Whilst the blows that landed on my mother during my childhood did not land on me physically, they might as well have. The trauma inflicted was the same. I recall it vividly—and in great detail. Each episode of this violence over my first 13 years was different, but the aftermath was always the same: dad would apologise and promise to be different, and that would work for just a short time.

On the evening of another round of abuse, Dad launched the family dinner of that night at the wall. The stain remained on that wall for a very long time, but the stain in my heart would linger much longer. Mum then bundled my sister and me into the family car and we fled. We would go to the refuges in our community until, after so many years and so many incidents, my father knew the locations and we were not safe there anymore. We then shifted to staying in hotels, which were located above pubs, where the people below were loud, and sometimes their noise would spill into the streets, waking me and reminding me that I was not in my own bed or in my own home. I was in a foreign place because I was not safe in my home.

One night, when Mum was hurrying to get my sister and me out, dad had removed and smashed the distributor cap from the car, rendering it useless and leaving us trapped. The police fetched us that time. I still remember sitting in the Penrith police station well into the early hours of the morning and the police officers giving us pink milk while we waited. The police did their best. Again, after this event, my mum returned home.

We know many, many women return time and time again, even when their lives are massively disrupted, along with those of their children, and I hope that the blame that was launched at my Mum during the nineties for not leaving is no longer part of the 'solution' around domestic violence and that the question of 'why doesn't she just leave' quits being asked. Eventually, though, the courage rises up, services step up and women stand up, finally leaving—but not before one last terrible incident. There were 13 police cars the last time physical violence affected my childhood. But this was the end of the physical violence once and for all. Whilst the physical part ceased, other abuse around finance and control ramped right up. Sadly, the wheel of domestic violence continues to affect my life as a grown woman with children of my own. The last 16 years of my life have been and continue to be affected by domestic and family violence.

In the limited time I have left, I would like to take this opportunity to thank opposition leader Bill Shorten for his continued support of my personal situation, his understanding and the support he provides to me. I would like to thank my caucus colleagues and our staff who know my story yet do not judge me and continue to provide support. I would like to acknowledge the Penrith Women's Health Centre, who have been providing services to my community for 30 years, including to my mum then and to my own family now.

In my experience I have found that victims mostly do not talk about domestic violence because other people do not talk about domestic violence. For many years I was embarrassed and I was ashamed. I know that I should not have been but I was. I hope that today I have lent my voice, my story and my passion for advocating for change to the choir of the white ribbon movement to stand up, to speak out and to act. Thank you.

Mr LLEW O'BRIEN (Wide Bay) (15:45): Before I go on, I would like to acknowledge the very difficult speech just given by the member for Lindsay. It is certainly a display of how domestic violence affects the people who are involved in it, and those around them.

This is a very serious matter and, yes, there is a need to address family violence as a national priority, absolutely. We need to have a coordinated approach to address it, we need the appropriate responses to acts of domestic violence and we need the appropriate education to prevent domestic violence. We need to have, as a society, a better understanding of domestic violence. If we are going to tackle this issue at a community and social level, we all need to understand what domestic violence is. With domestic violence, what first comes to mind is a very violent attack by a man on his partner in the family. That is a tragedy, and it is what we need to identify as the most significant and important area of domestic violence that we need to address. But we also need to understand that domestic violence has a number of different levels and, as the Prime Minister said earlier, that domestic violence always starts with disrespect.

Domestic violence also shows its ugly head in control, when the abuser starts to control the victim through any number of different methods—whether it is controlling their social environment, who they are allowed to see or the clothes they are allowed to wear. It really is a terrible, terrible situation to be in, and it spans all cultures and sociodemographic areas—unfortunately, it is particularly prevalent in Indigenous communities. The problem focuses on women, and it should be, because women are predominantly the victims. But an area that I probably recognise, in some ways, more than most is that women can also be offenders when it comes to family violence, and men can be victims.

When I first became a police officer, there was a change to the law that added same-sex couples to the area of family violence. I think we always need to recognise that the family has changed over many years, and that a victim of family violence in a same-sex couple suffers in the same way as a victim in a heterosexual relationship. We need to respond, and we always need to recognise that. It is something that I have seen over and over again, and it is an area of the community that is often forgotten.

When it comes to education, as parents we need to let our sons know that only cowards beat women. Only cowards commit those acts that destroy families. And, as a father, I want my daughter to know that she does not have to put up with it. As the member for Lindsay said before, quite often women go back, and it is such a complex area. It is so devastating when people look at women who continue to return to violent relationships and they just do not understand the control that their abuser has over them. We need to educate our daughters that they should never put up with being the victim of abuse.

The coalition is acting with regard to family violence. We have implemented quite a number of plans, including the action plan that sets out 36 practical actions under six priority areas. We are doing the work on family violence. Family violence is something that, as a society, we should never put up with. It is one of the motivating factors that sees me here as a member of parliament, and I am proud to be part of a government that is addressing this issue.

Mr GOSLING (Solomon) (15:50): I stand to speak about family violence and White Ribbon Day, which is marked this Friday, as is the International Day for Elimination of Violence against Women. I want to acknowledge my friend, the member for Lindsay, and all of the speakers. I was proud to attend the White Ribbon breakfast here in Parliament House this morning. I want to acknowledge all of those whose lives have been affected by the scourge of family violence and I want to acknowledge all of those who are working to make things better.

I will touch on the Northern Territory's situation and, hopefully, will give some good examples. I am proud to be a member of a party that is proposing concrete practical steps to address family violence in our communities. While I am not taking anything away from what the Prime Minister had to say this morning, I am proud of the initiatives that our leader has highlighted, including the issue of family violence leave, the initiatives around revenge porn and also how we can change how our courts run so that victims of family violence are not then taken through another process of unnecessary trauma.

One of the reasons that I welcome our leader's approach is because of the impact of family violence on the people of Darwin and Palmerston—my electorate. The overall effect of family violence in the Northern Territory is substantial.

For example, we have by far the highest rate of homicide offences related to family violence in the country. In the last three years, there have been 75,000 incidents of family violence in the Northern Territory—out of a population of 244,000. At least one child is subjected to family violence in the NT every day; 44 per cent of family violence orders were breached, and 44 per cent of family violence offenders were repeat offenders. Rates of assaults related to family violence were more than four times higher in the NT than in any other Australian state or territory. These are obviously not stats to be proud of, and we are certainly not proud of them in the Northern Territory. But we look at them in the cold light of day and commit ourselves to making things better. There is a long way to go.

One thing that we are very proud of is that there are volunteers working both in the protection space and in the legal space—with the refuges. But there are also people, strong men, working with other men in men's groups to encourage them to be the agents for change in their communities. One such organisation is the 'No More' campaign, which is headed by local Aboriginal leader, Charlie King. He is an inspirational man. He is widely known for his role as an ABC sports broadcaster, but he has also tirelessly dedicated himself to this No More campaign.

The campaign started in 2006. It followed a large meeting of Indigenous men from right across the Northern Territory. I stress that, obviously, family violence is not just an issue to do with Indigenous men—but Charlie King has seen the need and called together people from 37 different locations throughout the Northern Territory. They came together and made a commitment that they were going to work to make sure that there was no more family violence. They have been working on that for some time, and I am very proud to say that Charlie King will be coming here to Canberra next week and will be bringing some countrymen with him, and they will be talking about the initiatives that they have committed to.

When we address family violence on a national scale, it is important that we support groups that are tackling family violence on the local level. We need to make sure that organisations that are working with people caught up in family violence are properly funded. I want to acknowledge all of those people who work in the refuges and the legal services of the Northern Territory. Keep doing your work. It is absolutely essential. And I want to say well done to Charlie King and I look forward to seeing him here next week.

Ms LANDRY (Capricornia—Deputy Nationals Whip) (15:55): I thank the member for raising the issue of domestic violence. I agree with the sentiments that family violence should be a national priority—and indeed it is. As I have said before, there are few places in Queensland that witness higher rates of domestic violence than my electorate of Capricornia. The Capricornia police district reports the highest rate of domestic violence in Queensland. While the statistics are marginally improving, according to Rockhampton police the rate of domestic violence attacks here is 141 per cent higher than the state average.

Last year, to assist families in trauma caught up in the cycle of domestic violence and other Family Court matters, the Turnbull-Joyce government took a bold and positive step to appoint a permanent Federal Court Circuit judge to be based in Rockhampton. Judge Anne Demack held her first sitting on 7 March, presided over by the Chief Judge of the Federal Circuit Court, his Honour Judge John Pascoe.

I lobbied hard for the Commonwealth Attorney-General to make this appointment, in a city where family violence is out of control. This appointment was both supported and hailed by the Central Queensland Law Association as the most significant decision for the legal industry in Capricornia in over 40 years. It directly helps some of the most disadvantaged families that are caught up in the cycle of domestic violence, and subsequent custody and family law disputes.

The new permanent Federal Court Circuit judge services all of Central Queensland, including Rockhampton, Mackay, Gladstone and Emerald. But, to my surprise, this was criticised by the state Labor government. Queensland's state Labor Attorney-General, Yvette D'Ath, and the federal opposition's shadow Attorney-General, the member for Isaacs, both

denigrated the appointment of a new federal judge in Rockhampton. They were more concerned about bricks and mortar than the safety and survival of victims and the improved and more timely access to a Family Court judge in a regional area with the worst record for family violence.

An article dated 17 February this year in the *Queensland Times* reports:

Queensland Attorney-General Yvette D'Ath has accused her federal counterpart, Senator George Brandis, of incorrectly referring to a Rockhampton courtroom as vacant and refusing to contact her about courthouse arrangements for the judge, Anne Demack.

... ..

"There is no vacant courtroom," she told Queensland Parliament ...

That was a load of rubbish. In the same article, it was reported:

Federal Circuit Court of Australia chief Richard Foster told the committee he wrote to the Queensland Justice Department's Deputy Director-General and to Ms D'Ath.

"I received a response on 7 January saying, 'services are limited but basically we do have some capacity; ...

"Now that (Sen Brandis) has made the announcement ... we can accommodate it."

So there was room at the inn after all—albeit be it with renovations, which the Commonwealth was happy to pay for.

In February, the *Brisbane Times* reported Queensland's Attorney-General as saying Judge Demack's appointment was 'an empty gesture to serve a cynical political purpose'.

Well, today, on the topic that domestic violence needs to be a national priority, can the member of Isaacs please explain what on earth his state counterpart means and why he too objected to the appointment? The Liberal-National coalition is standing up for the most vulnerable in our community, an area hit by the highest domestic violence rates in the state, while the Labor Party say appointing a permanent judge to Rockhampton is cynical. That is just rubbish. Do they want these families to travel to Brisbane and wait years for a chance to front a judge to arbitrate family disputes and violence? In the so-called Labor heartland that is Rockhampton city, the Labor Party has failed the most vulnerable families at a time when they most need faster access to the Federal Court.

The positive steps the government are taking include the recent announcement at the COAG summit that we would commit \$100 million to Commonwealth initiatives under the Third Action Plan, including \$20 million for preventative strategies and cultural change; \$15 million for front-line services like housing and financial support; \$10 million to prevent forms of sexual violence, including nonconsensual sharing of intimate images; \$25 million to address family violence in Indigenous communities; and \$30 million for front-line family violence legal services.

Dr FREELANDER (Macarthur) (16:00): I am pleased to rise to support the motion moved by the member for Griffith. For most of my career I have had mainly positive interaction with families. However, there has always been some exposure to family violence. Having worked on call at my local hospital with a busy paediatric and maternity unit, I have seen some bad things that have been etched in my memory.

I remember two twins—one of whom died; the other survived with severe cerebral palsy—who at eight weeks of age had their skulls smashed so severely that when I resuscitated them

it felt like their heads were the smashed shell of a boiled egg. I remember the child shaken and bashed so severely at the age of three that she never saw, walked or talked again. I remember the two-year-old boy who was so severely punched that his liver was described as looking like red jelly at autopsy. I remember the six-year-old girl who was starved to death in her own home. I remember the mother made hemiplegic and unable to care for her children following an attack by her partner. So these are real things, and they have been real things to me in my career.

We know that there is a strong correlation with violence against children and violence against women. Some of the women I have seen with their children have been murdered by their partners. I know that there is more that we could do. Firstly, let me say that I abhor the phrase 'domestic violence'. It implies a somewhat benign event. This is not a benign event. Nothing could be further from the truth, as I have seen. Secondly, I do know that all of us in this parliament abhor violence in families, and we are at one in wanting to deal with it.

I think it is a great thing that men are taking responsibility for crimes that are predominantly perpetrated by men. We must also educate our young people, especially those exposed to family violence, about its causes and about prevention strategies. Most of all, we need to fund legal support and access to housing for those women and children fleeing violent households. Domestic violence is pernicious and it is evil. We have done a little better of late with recognising the evil, even though for many that recognition has come too late.

Violence in the home is seen, properly, as a national problem, but it needs to be dealt with at all levels of government. We do now have a national plan and a national approach which, in the broad, has widespread support not just amongst law-makers but also in the community. We should also have a national registry of perpetrators of family violence. For example, when the ACT government recently imposed—and in an election year—a flat rate of \$30 per household for a Safer Families Levy to address the consequences of family violence there was barely a ripple of disapproval. And that is a good thing.

But it is the pernicious side to violence and its pervasive effect on families and on children that make it so hard to contemplate, to explain and to address. Good intentions are not enough. The job of governing extends beyond just passing laws and saying the right things at the right time, or even appropriating the necessary funding. It involves ensuring that what we do actually works. Governments especially need to ensure that the left hand knows what the right hand is doing. And we need to be more open about our approach to family violence. Stripping community legal services of over a third of their funding makes no sense if you are genuine about addressing family violence and providing support and protection to those who most need it.

One of the few free services that provide comprehensive assistance for women and families escaping family violence are Community Legal Centres. The Macarthur Legal Centre in my electorate includes a Women's Domestic Violence Court Advocacy Service. That centre and those like it provide information, referrals, advocacy and support for women and children when they most need it. They help with the housing department, Centrelink and police referrals. That is as you would expect. Let's give the people doing the job, and who have been doing it for many, many years, the appropriate resources and the help that they deserve and need. I have seen many good people try their best to make life better for those traumatised and trapped by the fear and the physical reality of violence in the home.

We have finally realised that this is not an isolated or localised problem; it is more akin to a national emergency. There is impetus for meaningful change right across our country and across our parliament. (*Time expired*)

Mrs WICKS (Robertson) (16:05): I also welcome this opportunity to speak on this matter of public importance moved by the member for Griffith. If there ever was a matter of public importance, this surely would be it. Domestic and family violence is about more the what is spoken about in this place and in these corridors; it is also about shifting the culture across our nation. I want to commend all speakers in this very important debate, particularly the member for Lindsay. I thank the member for Lindsay for her courage in speaking out. I certainly hope that that will encourage more people to also speak out and, in doing so, help us shift the culture across the nation.

As the Prime Minister said in his address to this morning's White Ribbon breakfast, what we are talking about today is a matter of respect.

Disrespecting women does not always result in violence against women. But all violence against women begins with disrespecting women.

This is backed up by the national statistics, which are shocking. One in three women have been a victim of physical or sexual violence since the age of 15 by someone known to them. One in four women have been emotionally abused by a partner, and one woman dies almost every week at the hand of a current or former partner.

When I spoke earlier today with Brisbane Water Local Area Command Superintendent Danny Sullivan it became clear that these statistics are just as true in my electorate of Robertson, where, on average, every two hours a police vehicle will respond to a domestic violence call on the Central Coast—not every two weeks, not every two days, but every two hours. That is why I helped to facilitate a local domestic violence committee in my electorate with local community leaders and local experts meeting together to discuss grassroots solutions and to also help start a conversation with more families, teachers, young people and schools, in particular. Slowly, I believe that we can see a change in the conversation on the Central Coast and across our nation.

We can see this in one simple but breathtaking local visual statement, where Brisbane Water Local Area Command has overseen an extraordinary community push to plant white poppies on the grass at The Skillion at Terrigal this year. Similar to a sea of red poppies earlier this year as we commemorated Anzac Day, these white poppies honour the thousands of victims of domestic and family violence. I am told that volunteers worked for hundreds of hours to hand-make 55,000 poppies that were placed there on Monday in the shape of a ribbon. Terrigal provides a stunning backdrop to the display, a display which was three years in the making. Our local police partnered with women's empowerment and advocacy group Zonta to help make the display a reality, and I am advised that the Central Coast Council also contributed \$6,000 for the materials. We even had local businesses lending a helping hand, with Burson Auto Parts at Gosford donating screwdrivers at short notice after volunteers arrived to discover that the ground was too hard for the wooden poppy stems. School students walking past have been dropping in to help out and the local newspaper, the *Express Advocate*, has done an excellent job in promoting this initiative. I commend Superintendent Sullivan and his team, including Gillian Mitchell, Tim Jeffrey, Jessica Bradbury, Nick Carroll and Peter Watson. These are our local men and women on the front line, who do an

outstanding job. I look forward to meeting them on Sunday and encourage our community to join us as we walk up the Terrigal Skillion to make a statement in condemning the actions of those who commit domestic violence.

I also take this opportunity to commend the Turnbull government on its announcement today of the new eSafety Commissioner, Julie Inman Grant. The commissioner will have a strong focus on online safety and the issue of non-consensual sharing of intimate images, often described as revenge porn. She has a big task ahead, but I am pleased to see that the Turnbull government will conduct a public consultation process on proposed civil penalties in this area, targeted at both the perpetrators and those sites which host intimate images and videos shared without consent.

There is much more that this government is doing too, including a \$30 million national campaign called Stop it at the Start to change young people's attitudes to women and violence, in partnership, of course, with our states and territories. We have also launched the third action plan, with an additional \$100 million investment. This complements the existing work of states and territories around Australia, including in New South Wales, where video is now collected by police when attending a domestic violence incident which is then able to be submitted to court as evidence. I understand from Superintendent Danny Sullivan that our local police command is leading the state in taking advantage of this initiative. Finally, we have the \$100 million Women's Safety Package, which includes expanding the 1800RESPECT frontline services, drastically reducing wait times. I commend the government on its strong leadership and approach to this most important of issues and encourage all of us here to continue to promote the need for leadership in standing up against domestic and family violence.

Ms STANLEY (Werriwa) (16:10): I rise to speak on this matter of public importance, acknowledging that this Friday we observe White Ribbon Day and the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women. Moreover, I acknowledge the courage of the member for Lindsay, who by telling her story today in this place vividly illustrates why we must eliminate all violence against women and children. The deepest scars from family violence are often invisible and stay with victims for life. It creates a deep and long-term harm, not only to them but to those around them, that can engulf whole families, especially the children. To feel that you are trapped, with no recourse, no way to act and nowhere to go, is suffocating and further isolating in itself. The statistics are stark and confronting too. While one instance of family violence is one too many, to hear that one in four women has experienced physical or sexual violence at the hands of an intimate partner is appalling, and yet it is known that many more incidents of domestic violence go unreported.

When something as harmful and damaging as this continues to be so common, it is incumbent on us in this place to act. I am proud to be part of a party that champions women and the contribution that they make to our communities, our workplaces and our homes. I am also proud of the commitments that were announced by the member for Maribyrnong this morning, commitments that go beyond simply acknowledging that the status quo is not good enough and instead propose strong practical actions that seek to improve the protection for victims and witnesses of family violence. The reforms that Labor has proposed would compel a judge to consider whether a vulnerable witness should be protected in cases where domestic violence is alleged. This would mean that, where a judge believes the mechanisms available

to him or her under the Family Law Act are insufficient to protect such vulnerable witnesses, the judge will be empowered to direct that all unrepresented litigants in the matter be represented by legal aid. This means that vulnerable children and women will not have to suffer cross-examination by their perpetrators. Not only is this a practical reform advocated by many non-government organisations and the Productivity Commission's *Access to justice* report; it is most importantly a reform that will mean that victims are not further harmed.

The cuts to frontline community legal services continue to be of great concern in my electorate. Reducing the funding of these services by 30 per cent means that fewer women can access the legal support services they need when they are in crisis. On top of that, the uncertainty of the funding beyond 2017 for the national partnership agreement means that there will be fewer opportunities for those fleeing domestic violence to find somewhere to stay. In fact, the New South Wales Liberal government's reduction in funding for those refuges has meant that there have been refuges closed which were operating for 30 years and doing a fine job. We owe it to every family affected. We need to do more, we can do more to address this and we should just do it.

Mr ALEXANDER (Bennelong) (16:13): I would like to thank the member for Griffith for raising this matter today. This is one of the most pressing issues facing Australia and I am proud of this government's and, equally, Labor's records on the issue of domestic violence. This Friday is White Ribbon Day. We have already discussed this in the Federation Chamber earlier this week. I had the honour to speak on the topic and I would again like to thank the member for Gellibrand for raising it, but it is so important that I have no issue repeating myself in this chamber.

White Ribbon Day is a day to honour and recognise the suffering of victims of domestic violence and reaffirm our commitment to ending domestic violence in Australia. I am very proud to be a White Ribbon ambassador. On Monday I restated my oath: 'I pledge never to commit, condone or remain silent about violence against women.' These simple words are a prescription for a safer life and a better society. This oath should stop violence in its tracks but, sadly, as we know, words and intentions are not enough. That is why I am proud of the government's record on domestic violence.

Domestic violence has been at the forefront of the coalition's agenda since we came to office in 2013, and we have built momentum around the issue. The first act of the Turnbull government was to announce a \$100 million Women's Safety Package, which focused on practical, immediate action to keep women and children safe as well as improving training for frontline workers. One massive success that is saving lives includes expansion of the 1800RESPECT frontline service. Our new model for telephone counselling has reduced the average call wait time for victims of domestic violence from 10 minutes to just 35 seconds—and I agree with the member for Griffith: women should be manning these phones.

We also launched the evocative Stop it at the Start campaign, which dominated water cooler conversations earlier this year. The ad has been viewed 36 million times, and 67 per cent of all influences—parents, family members, teachers, coaches and employers—have seen the campaign and, of those, 68 per cent have taken action. Essentially, almost half of all influences have seen the campaign, absorbed its message and done something in response to it, including reconsidering the way they behave towards others and talking with a young person about respect in relationships.

Just last month, the government co-hosted the COAG National Summit on Reducing Violence against Women and their Children. The summit brought together first ministers, women's safety ministers as well as academics and experts in domestic and family violence, and leaders in business and the not-for-profit sector to review progress and highlight best practices in efforts to reduce violence. At the summit, COAG launched the Third Action Plan of the National Plan to Reduce Violence against Women and their Children 2010 to 2022. This includes a \$100 million commitment for preventative strategies and cultural change, for frontline services like housing and financial support, to prevent forms of sexual violence, to address family violence in Indigenous communities and \$30 million for frontline family violence legal services. These funds and initiatives represent a big commitment from the government to ending the scourge of domestic violence. I, with everyone involved in their implementation, wish success, and I hope that together we can make a difference. As the Prime Minister said earlier this morning, 'There is still so much more to do. We can't be satisfied while even one person is in danger.'

Violence against a partner is never excusable. No matter how tense relationships may get, violence is never the answer, and victims of abuse must know that it is never their fault. I say to all men: the most masculine and the most manly thing you can do is always respect your partner. Today marks the day to make these statements, but that respect must be respected every day of the year.

I congratulate, respect and admire the member for Lindsay's contribution. Her contribution reminds us of the words said previously in this place, 'Courage and heroism do not always wear a uniform and carry a rifle.'

The DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Coulton): This discussion has concluded.

BILLS

Treasury Laws Amendment (Fair and Sustainable Superannuation) Bill 2016

Superannuation (Excess Transfer Balance Tax) Imposition Bill 2016

Returned from Senate

Message received from the Senate returning the bills without amendment or request.

COMMITTEES

Joint Standing Committee on Treaties

Report

Mr ROBERT (Fadden) (16:19): On behalf of the Joint Standing Committee on Treaties, I present the following reports: Report 164 Air Services-Kuwait, Air Services-Bahrain and Report 166 Implementation Procedures for Airworthiness-USA; Convention on Choice of Courts-accession; GATT Schedule of Concessions-amendment; Radio Regulations-partial revision.

Report made a parliamentary paper in accordance with standing order 39(e).

Mr ROBERT: by leave—I present the Joint Standing Committee on Treaties reports 164 and 166, which contain the committee's review of six treaty actions. Four had been tabled in the 44th Parliament. Then the inquiries lapsed when parliament was dissolved. These treaties were subsequently referred to the committee at the beginning of the 45th Parliament.

There are also two air service agreements in Report 164. The first is with Kuwait and follows the standard Australian model air service agreement and is expected to facilitate further trade and tourism between our two countries. The second is a protocol to amend the current air service agreement with Bahrain and provide far more liberal route rights and tariff provisions for both countries. It also changes reference from the 'State of Bahrain' to the 'Kingdom of Bahrain'. The committee has recommended that both air service agreements be ratified.

Turning to Report 166, the Implementation Procedures for Airworthiness with the United States of America will enable Australian manufacturers to gain access to the US aviation market, which, as we know, is one of the largest in the world. It will certainly encourage innovators to invest in new technologies and, especially, modification and modernisation of old aircraft.

The Convention on Choice of Court Agreements sets out how courts will treat jurisdiction clauses in private contracts. In these clauses, the contracting parties agree in which court system they will resolve any disputes. Australia's accession to the convention will provide greater clarity and certainty in this area, especially for those seeking private agreements across borders.

Further, the amendments to Australia's Schedule of Concessions in the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade, which we all know as GATT, will remove tariffs on a range of technology products and eliminate agricultural export subsidies. The committee acknowledges the significance of these two ministerial decisions. We note that both will provide incremental improvements for Australian consumers and farmers, which is not only good for those on the land. However, further work always needs to be done to reduce domestic subsidies and non-tariff barriers, if more progress is to be made on liberalising global trade.

Finally, the partial revision of the Radio Regulations updates the international use of the radio frequency spectrum, including the allocation of spectrum to radio communication services. These regulations ensure the rational, efficient and equitable use of this global resource called a spectrum. The revisions will improve a wide range of areas including: provisions for the growing demand for mobile broadband services; improving aeronautical communications capabilities; and provisions to improve radar for collision avoidance and driver-warning systems. Acceptance of the revisions will allow Australia to align itself with the rest of the world in its regulation of the radio-frequency spectrum.

The committee recommends that binding treaty action be taken for all of the treaty actions in the report. On behalf of the committee, I commend these reports to the House.

BILLS

Social Security Legislation Amendment (Youth Jobs Path: Prepare, Trial, Hire) Bill 2016

Second Reading

Consideration resumed of the motion:

That this bill be now read a second time.

to which the following amendment was moved:

That all the words after "That" be omitted with a view to substituting the following words:

"Whilst not declining to give the bill a second reading, the House notes that the Turnbull Government cannot guarantee that, under Youth Jobs PaTH (Prepare, Trial, Hire):

- (1) jobs will not be displaced by cheaper labour;
- (2) wages will not be undercut and some participants will be paid below minimum award wages;
- (3) participants' safety will not be compromised and that adequate insurance arrangements will be provided;
- (4) participants won't be used to help businesses sidestep unfair dismissal protections; and
- (5) it will prioritise using small to medium enterprises in PaTH because they have a demonstrated track record of employing more job seekers through the jobactive programme".

Mr CRAIG KELLY (Hughes) (16:23): It is a privilege to have the opportunity to continue my comments on the Social Security Legislation Amendment (Youth Jobs Path: Prepare, Trial, Hire) Bill 2016. I actually was not going to speak on this bill but I heard the member for Lalor talk about the movie *The Pursuit of Happyness*. It is actually a true story based on an American gentleman named Chris Gardner. He was born in 1954 to an underprivileged background. His childhood was racked with poverty, domestic violence, alcoholism and family illiteracy. In his late 20s he found himself in jail. Coming out of jail with no experience, no college education, no degree and no connections, he took on an internship, which is what this legislation is all about. He took on an internship at a stockbroking firm to learn the ropes. He realised that with that background, without having an education, he had to strive harder, work harder and work smarter. He had to use his time as best he could. They say he was the first to arrive at work and the last to leave, even though he was unpaid on an internship.

Eventually, he got a job. He then went on to work for another broking firm and then took the risk of breaking out on his own. With \$10,000 in capital and the only piece of furniture being a single desk, he started up his own broking firm, called Gardner Rich. The rest is history. He went on to have a net worth today of over \$60 million. He made his first million dollars by the age of 34 and, to celebrate, he bought himself a black Ferrari previously owned by Michael Jordan.

He owns a multimillion dollar apartment in Chicago's Trump Tower, and President-elect Trump has said of Chris Gardner that his story is a tremendous lesson in tenacity. He has also recently written a book titled *Start Where You Are: Life Lessons in Getting from Where You Are to Where You Want to Be*. One of the chapters is 'Learn the ropes first, then conquer Rome'. The story of the movie *The Pursuit of Happyness*, the true life story of Chris Gardner is something that should be held up as an example of entrepreneurship, of tenacity and of hard work, and the reason that having internships is such an important part of our economy.

If Chris Gardner were here I am sure he would speak of the importance of internships and the importance of this coalition policy. We know what those in the Labor Party have. This is to the young Chris Gardners out there today in Australian society who will take advantage of this policy to get themselves an internship, to lift themselves up and create a success of their lives. To think that the Labor Party is going to vote against this, well, it tells us everything about the modern Labor Party. I commend the bill to the House.

Mr McCORMACK (Riverina—Minister for Small Business) (16:27): I rise to sum up on the Social Security Legislation Amendment (Youth Jobs Path: Prepare, Trial, Hire) Bill 2016. This bill introduces legislative amendments that help give effect to the Youth Jobs PaTH Program announced in the 2016-17 budget as part of the Youth Employment Package. The best form of welfare that any government can provide is a job. We know that when seeking to enter the labour market for the very first time many young people do not have the skills and experience employers look for. This can make it harder to get a start. It can leave them susceptible to long-term unemployment and welfare dependency. The Liberal-Nationals government is committed to supporting young people to acquire the skills they need in order to move from welfare into work. The Youth Jobs PaTH—prepare-trial-hire—program will maximise the chances of jobseekers under 25 in getting a job, in obtaining employment. It has three elements. Prepare: employability skills training to help young jobseekers learn the skills expected by employers so that they are more competitive when they are applying for a job. Trial: voluntary internships of four to 12 weeks to give jobseekers a chance to show what they can do in a real workplace, with financial incentives to participate for both businesses and jobseekers. Hire: a new youth bonus wage subsidy of up to \$10,000 to support businesses wanting to hire young people.

These three initiatives—skills training, real work experience and wage subsidies—are an investment by the coalition government in the future of Australia's young people. Young people are the leaders of tomorrow. This will instil confidence and encourage their transition into employment. It will enhance their employability to maximise the chances of obtaining a job and moving off income support—obtaining a job and keeping that job. It will also allow them to experience a broad range of personal and financial opportunities that come with being employed. These amendments are designed to help young jobseekers by making sure that young people undertaking PaTH internships receive the full benefit of their participation. Youth Jobs PaTH internship incentive payments to participants will not be considered as income for social security and veterans' entitlement purposes, and that is important. This means the participants will receive the full amount of the incentive payments on top of their existing social security payments or their veterans' entitlements. The amendments also aim to ensure that eligible young people, in particular circumstances, will be able to have their social security payments restored without having to make a new claim. If they lose their job, through no fault of their own, with an eligible employer within 26 weeks of ceasing to receive income support they can then reconnect to government services and income support.

In conclusion, the passage of this bill will ensure young people are afforded every opportunity to become fully engaged and job ready to maximise their chances of finding work as quickly as possible. Youth unemployment imposes significant economic costs through lower workforce participation and related welfare costs—as a regional member of parliament, I know this as well as anyone, youth unemployment rates generally being higher in regional areas than they are elsewhere—not to mention the greater social cost to the young person, their families and our local communities. It comes at a great cost.

We cannot stand idly by while there are tens of thousands of young people who stand to be at risk of long-term welfare dependence—I would say intergenerational welfare dependence. I call upon those in this place to support Youth Jobs PaTH and this legislation, which will give young jobseekers the full benefit of this program.

The SPEAKER: The original question was that this bill be now read a second time. To this, the honourable member for Chifley has moved as an amendment that all words after 'that' be omitted with a view to substituting other words. The immediate question is that the amendment be agreed to.

The House divided. [16:35]

(The Speaker—Hon. Tony Smith)

Ayes69
Noes75
Majority.....6

AYES

Albanese, AN
Bandt, AP
Bowen, CE
Burney, LJ
Butler, TM
Chalmers, JE
Chesters, LM
Collins, JM
Danby, M
Dreyfus, MA
Feeney, D
Freeland, MR
Giles, AJ
Hammond, TJ
Hayes, CP
Husar, E
Jones, SP
Kelly, MJ
Khalil, P
King, MMH
Leigh, AK
Marles, RD
McGowan, C
Mitchell, RG
O'Connor, BPJ
O'Toole, C
Perrett, GD (teller)
Rishworth, AL
Ryan, JC (teller)
Snowdon, WE
Swan, WM
Templeman, SR
Vamvakinou, M
Wilkie, AD
Zappia, A

Aly, A
Bird, SL
Brodthmann, G
Butler, MC
Byrne, AM
Champion, ND
Claydon, SC
Conroy, PM
Dick, MD
Elliot, MJ
Fitzgibbon, JA
Georganas, S
Gosling, LJ
Hart, RA
Hill, JC
Husic, EN
Keay, JT
Keogh, MJ
King, CF
Lamb, S
Macklin, JL
McBride, EM
Mitchell, BK
Neumann, SK
O'Neil, CE
Owens, JA
Plibersek, TJ
Rowland, MA
Sharkie, RCC
Stanley, AM
Swanson, MJ
Thistlethwaite, MJ
Watts, TG
Wilson, JH

NOES

Abbott, AJ
Andrews, KJ
Banks, J

Alexander, JG
Andrews, KL
Bishop, JI

NOES

Broad, AJ
 Buchholz, S
 Christensen, GR (teller)
 Coleman, DB
 Crewther, CJ
 Dutton, PC
 Evans, TM
 Fletcher, PW
 Frydenberg, JA
 Gillespie, DA
 Hartsuyker, L
 Hawke, AG
 Hogan, KJ
 Hunt, GA
 Joyce, BT
 Kelly, C
 Landry, ML
 Leaser, J
 Littleproud, D
 McCormack, MF
 Morrison, SJ
 O'Brien, LS
 O'Dowd, KD
 Pasin, A
 Porter, CC
 Price, ML
 Ramsey, RE (teller)
 Sudmalis, AE
 Taylor, AJ
 Tudge, AE
 Van Manen, AJ
 Wallace, AB
 Wilson, RJ
 Wood, JP
 Zimmerman, T

Broadbent, RE
 Chester, D
 Ciobo, SM
 Coulton, M
 Drum, DK
 Entsch, WG
 Falinski, J
 Flint, NJ
 Gee, AR
 Goodenough, IR
 Hastie, AW
 Henderson, SM
 Howarth, LR
 Irons, SJ
 Katter, RC
 Laming, A
 Laundry, C
 Ley, SP
 Marino, NB
 McVeigh, JJ
 Morton, B
 O'Brien, T
 O'Dwyer, KM
 Pitt, KJ
 Prentice, J
 Pyne, CM
 Robert, SR
 Sukkar, MS
 Tehan, DT
 Turnbull, MB
 Vasta, RX
 Wicks, LE
 Wilson, TR
 Wyatt, KG

Question negatived.

Original question agreed to.

Bill read a second time.

Message from the Governor-General recommending appropriation announced.

Consideration in Detail

Bill—by leave—taken as a whole.

Mr HUSIC (Chifley) (16:42): We have had the opportunity through the course of this debate to outline a number of concerns that we have about the program design that will be supported by the passage of this bill. This bill does two things: one is that it provides a top-up to income support levels, and the second thing it does is that it allows someone to re-engage with the social security system if they have not been successful in holding down a job through the PaTH program.

A number of us will no doubt be taking the opportunity during consideration in detail to focus on different elements of the actual PaTH legislation that is being considered, and we would also like to take the opportunity to ask the government for answers to questions that we feel were simply not answered by the government, with all due respect to the minister at the table. A series of concerns have been raised relating to things such as the definition of what an intern would be and whether or not, for example, this bill would allow for the displacement of existing jobs. We also asked questions about whether or not wages would be undercut as a result of this system. Even with the top-up that is provided people will be paid at a rate that is less than the national minimum wage, and we have expressed concerns about that.

We have also expressed concerns about whether or not people who are in the unfortunate position of experiencing a workplace accident would be covered by workplace compensation legislation and what the arrangements would be around that. It is a bit hard to imagine that a \$200 top-up to income support will cover people in the instance where they are injured, have significant medical costs, are unable to participate in the program and may be potentially prevented, as a result of that injury, from taking up employment. These are all serious questions and none of them, I say with the greatest of respect to the minister at the chair who has been provided with the summation to provide to the House, has been addressed. So I think it is important that in consideration in detail these things be looked at.

Importantly, one of the issues is that this bill will enable, in effect, churn. It recognises that there will be churn in this program—that is, that there will be people who will go through the PaTH program, will potentially start with an employer and then not be retained by that employer and will have to re-engage with the social security system. So there are questions that certainly arise out of schedule 2 of the government's bill, where it allows for a suspension instead of cancellation of income support. This addresses the need for safeguards in the event business fire employees within 26 weeks instead of following through on their commitment. I would like to ask: how much of this churn does the government estimate will happen as a result of the program? How many workers does the government anticipate will not make the full six months after participating in this program? With the government guarantee that businesses will not churn through free interns instead of hiring long-term employees? How will that churn be monitored? What steps will be put in place to identify it before interns are placed and after? Who will monitor those rates? Is a tip-off line in the National Customer Service Line enough to pick up instances of churn across 30,000 placements in up to 20,000 businesses a year? How will the government know whether interns are accepted and other employees in the organisations are retrenched? How much information about its company and its staffing will a business have to provide to be eligible to accept more interns under PaTH?

Mr McCORMACK (Riverina—Minister for Small Business) (16:47): I thank the member for Chifley—the shadow minister—for his questions. They are pertinent ones. I understand and acknowledge that. I am not going to endeavour to answer the hypothetical questions towards the end of his consideration in detail, but some of those earlier in his remarks I will answer.

The internship is an opportunity for individuals on income support to gain valuable work experience in a real workplace on a voluntary basis. There is nothing wrong with that. This should not be confused with paid work, as individuals will continue to remain on income support whilst undertaking the internship. The youth employment package will equip young

jobseekers by getting them ready, giving them a go and getting them a job. I would have thought, given those wonderful ideals, that Labor would have gotten on board with the bill as proposed by the government in its original form.

I am asked how this form of work is legal and how it complies with the Fair Work Act. It is not work; it is work experience, and like other work experience programs such as the National Work Experience Program, internship participants will not be employees for the purposes of the Fair Work Act. In particular, this is because the Social Security Act provides that people will not be employees for the purpose of the act merely because they are undertaking an activity under their employment pathway plan. No legislative change is needed to exempt the internships from the coverage of the Fair Work Act because of the following: the Social Security Legislation Amendment (Employment Services Reform) Bill 2008 amended 631C of the Social Security Act to provide that from July 2009 approved programs of work and any other activities, including the employment pathway plan, did not give rise to an employer-employee relationship. That is important.

What protections will be in place to prevent employers from abusing the program, including displacement? I was asked that by the member for Chifley. Employers who participate in the internship program must be able to show real prospects of ongoing work. There will be safeguards to ensure that existing workers are not displaced. The program sets a maximum duration of 12 weeks and the number of weekly hours worked in a placement comes in at 25 hours. So internships will be voluntary for both businesses and jobseekers and will be co-designed by them to ensure that placements meet both of their needs. Importantly, the government will closely monitor the way employers use the program to ensure they are not exploiting or churning—a word the member for Chifley used—and burning jobseekers. Employers who are exploiting jobseekers will be blocked from using the program, as they should be.

Employment services providers will also be responsible for brokering internship placements and ensuring places are consistent with program guidelines. This includes the safety of jobseekers. Everybody in this parliament is adamant that the safety of jobseekers and workers is always paramount. Although internships are not an employer-employee relationship, businesses have a duty of care to provide a safe work environment—as the small business minister I know how important that is—and appropriate supervision for jobseekers undertaking internships. This includes ensuring compliance with applicable state and territory occupational health and safety legislation.

I also have to say that the Youth Jobs PaTH initiative is going to be good for Aboriginal jobseekers. I know the member for Chifley did not raise this, but he would probably like to know that of the 115,000 Indigenous jobseekers in employment services, around 76,000—roughly two-thirds—are being supported by jobactive, a further 29,000 are participating in the remote Community Development Program and 9,000 in disability employment services.

This is a good program. As the small business minister I commend it. I commend businesses to get on board with the program. Moreover, I commend jobseekers to absolutely take part and participate in this program because it will give them real meaning, real work and a real pathway for the future.

Ms BURNEY (Barton) (16:51): I do not disagree with the sentiments of the Minister for Small Business. Labor believes in employment and youth employment as away of breaking

disadvantage. There is no question about that. However, the youth unemployment figures are not reflected when you average out employment figures here in Australia, as is often done by the government. Spruiking unemployment figures is a smokescreen for the extreme level of youth unemployment in many regions across this country, including the Central Coast and the Hunter. I know the figures for these areas very well. Employment is an important pathway out of entrenched disadvantage. There is no question about that. Where Labor parts ways and the reason that the member for Chifley has moved these amendments is the nature of this program. Please do not pretend that it is anything other than an election thought-bubble. We all watched it. We all saw it. There was no detail then and there seems to be even less detail now.

The member for Chifley has highlighted a number of questions that we would like answered. I have come out of the New South Wales parliament, where, strangely, ministers did answer the questions raised in debate by the opposition. That is why you have three people sitting over there in those chairs, working away, I am assuming, to provide you with the answers to the questions that we are raising. That is what I am used to. It is sadly not what I see in this parliament. The issue that I am very much wanting to know about, particularly with my shadow portfolio responsibilities of human services, is where this program intersects in a real way with Centrelink and the administration of Centrelink. There must be a connection somewhere if the participants are recipients of, I am assuming, mostly Newstart. This concerns me deeply when I look at some of the real issues with Centrelink, particularly the lack of access to information and the extreme waiting times for people who are trying to get some information about their situation. I was in the Northern Territory on the weekend, and people there were waiting between three and six hours to get some sort of response from Centrelink. The IT system is nothing short of clunky. The casualisation of the staff is extreme. It seems to me that these issues need to be considered in the administration of this program. In fact, it is unclear to me how this program is going to be administered, where it is going to be administered from and what government agencies will have the responsibility for ensuring its overall implementation.

I will be a little more specific. The questions I raise are very much a microcosm of what the member for Chifley raised. I would like to know where the checks and balances are for this program. I have seen on countless occasions initiatives being undertaken, without real thought as to what the actual consequences were going to be, and how the checks and balances were to be put in place. I want to know how many interns one firm can have. I want to see and have explained to me, as we do on this side, what a detailed implementation plan is and whether there is any evaluation, given the Auditor-General's report about a number of programs just recently. How will this program be implemented? Who will do it? What is the plan? And what agencies are going to be responsible in its implementation? Is there an evaluation plan built in? What will be counted in that evaluation plan? How will we know whether it is successful or not?

The other issue is the human side of this. What will happen to a young person who is long-term unemployed—and this program is being held out to be the panacea for your long-term unemployed—if they are placed as intern after intern, after intern, with never any real outcome because of the way in which the program is structured? It seems to me that these are legitimate questions. I am not being cheeky, minister. I am asking these questions because I

think they need to be answered to make sure that this program does what it says it is going to do— (*Time expired*)

Mr McCORMACK (Riverina—Minister for Small Business) (16:56): I will answer the member for Barton's questions inasmuch as she asked about the relationship between Centrelink and the Department of Employment. Of course those organisations talk with each other. They always do. They do with the coalition in government, they did when Labor was in power and they will continue to do that. That is just a given. This youth employment package was announced in the 2016-17 budget. It is an \$840.3 million investment over four years to assist young people to develop the ability, skills and real work experience they need to get a job.

The member for Barton, coming from Whitton as she does, would understand the importance of young people getting a job. I know she does. I know she served in the New South Wales parliament. I know she had a fine record of service to that state parliament. I know that she, like me, as the small business minister, wants to see as many young people in jobs as possible. This package represents just that; it is a substantial investment in our youth. There could be no finer investment by a government than in our youth. It will ensure that young Australians receive job ready skills, which will enable them to obtain a foothold in the job market. It will build on initiatives introduced by the government under the Youth Employment Strategy. And it will work to further boost young people's job prospects by helping them to be better prepared for the workplace.

The member for Barton asked whether it would lead to an intern after intern, after intern situation. I can understand the member for Barton asking that question. But I know as an employer, before I got into parliament, as an editor of *The Daily Advertiser* newspaper at Wagga Wagga and then as a small business owner, if you have a good intern and they prove they were job ready—once they prove that they are capable of doing what you want them to do—you gave them a job. If there was a job there, you gave them that job. I am sure that employers across Australia will relish the opportunity to get good, young people job ready, focused on what they need to do, trained up and understanding the whys and wherefores of a workplace. If a job becomes available, they will get that position. It just makes good sense. It makes good business sense. It is what good bosses do. These measures, combined with existing initiatives, including the Transition to Work Service, Empowering YOUTH Initiatives and the ParentsNext Project, will be putting young job seekers on a pathway to finding and, most importantly, keeping a job.

At the core of the youth employment package is the Social Security Legislation Amendment (Youth Jobs Path: Prepare, Trial, Hire) Bill 2016, the bill that we are considering in detail now. It is a \$751.7 million initiative. It maximises the chances of jobseekers under 25 years of age getting a job. That is the age group where many of them leave school and many have seen their parents unemployed and their grandparents unemployed. We, as a government, want to get those young people into jobs because the best way out of welfare is into a job. The best way to a better future is a job. I understand that, as the Minister for Small Business. I know the members for Barton and Chifley and all those opposite get that. We on this side, of course, get it, because we are the side that understands how important getting youth employed is.

The youth employment package also includes measures on encouraging entrepreneurship and self-employment, designed to encourage young Australians to start a business and to create their own job. The package provides a step-by-step pathway to work, which directly deals with the major challenges to employment faced by young people—particularly in regional areas.

Whilst we are talking about regional areas and young people, we should also mention the backpacker tax, and why we want to make sure that the backpacker tax is fixed at 19 per cent, not 10½, so that foreign workers are faced with young Australians who are going to be paying a higher level of tax. We want to make sure that we get that fruit picked, make sure that those abattoirs are serviced, make sure that those pubs have the hospitality staff needed. There are many provisions, not just this one. There are many pieces of legislation that are so important and so critical to get through in these final few days of the 2016 parliament, to ensure that we get youth employed. And we must ensure that this particular legislation is carried.

Ms SHARKIE (Mayo) (17:01): Thank you, minister, for answering many of the questions that I have, but there are still so many that remain unanswered. The PaTH program will affect 120,000 young people, so it is imperative that government gets it right, particularly as this program affects our most vulnerable people entering the workforce.

While I support the government in ensuring that we are supporting young people, I think that this is too important to leave so many areas vague or open to ministerial or administrative discretion. I would like to ask the minister a number of questions relating to this. To begin with, how would the government ensure that employment service providers will explain to participants their rights in the workplace before an internship commences? How will the government disallow program participants from working beyond standard hours—for example, not just beyond the standard number of hours per day and beyond the standard number of continuous hours, but working without a break as well? We know young people are so eager to please and they are going to be so desperate for this free internship to turn into a job.

In my electorate there is 17 per cent youth unemployment. I meet hundreds of young people who are so desperate for a job. How will the government ensure that participants are able to afford the travel costs to attend the compulsory training components of the program, and what special conditions and consideration will be given to rural participants whose travel costs are considerably higher than other participants? The minister has a rural electorate like me. There are no cheap buses—there are no buses for young people to get on. They will need to somehow put petrol in the car and then get to that place of work, which may be 20 or 30 kilometres away. How will the government ensure that participation in the internships will be purely voluntary, and there will be no penalty beyond losing internship payments for withdrawing from an internship?

I acknowledge the minister's comments in relation to the duty of care of the employer, but how will the government ensure that the health and safety of participants in internships will be adequately protected and that adequate compensation will be available to participants, should they become sick or injured as a result of a workplace incident? I would be devastated to think that I supported legislation where, six months down the track, a young person in a butcher store who is so keen to work, so eager, loses their hand and then has no compensation and no rights of reply. I would be devastated to think that I supported that legislation.

How will the government ensure that program participants are provided with sufficient protections from bullying and sexual harassment? Again, we are talking about the most vulnerable people—many entering the workforce for the first time. How will the government ensure that large businesses do not abuse this scheme and use it purely as a source of cheap labour, replacing existing jobs? Surely this program should not be designed for cafes? How long does it take to learn how to make a coffee and to go out and wait tables? This program should be focused on people who are in trades, on where we know there will be jobs in the future and on where we know small businesses will be able to connect and put on apprentices and trainees. We know that we have 160,000 less trainees and apprentices today than we had just a few years ago. That is where the focus of this must be.

How will you ensure that there is sufficient focus and support for our most vulnerable young people, for young people from Aboriginal backgrounds, young people who have had possible connections with juvenile justice, and young people who are guardian-of-the-minister children? We need to ensure that those young people are properly supported and get the most out of this scheme.

How will the government ensure that there are effective complaints systems in place for program participants concerned with unreasonable treatment by their host organisations? I would also like to touch upon the previous member's comments about the program being properly reviewed and evaluated. Adding to that, I would like to say that it must be independently evaluated, and that review must be publicly available.

In closing, I am very concerned about medically certified sickness or compassionate reasons, such as even the death of a close family member, not being reasonable excuses for a program participant to end their involvement in the program. Surely this needs to be addressed.

Mr McCORMACK (Riverina—Minister for Small Business) (17:06): Thanks to the member for Mayo for her questions. They are important ones. I will just give a bit of an outline of the program to attempt to relieve some of her fears and concerns, which I would say are unfounded. I can assure the member for Mayo it is a good program. It has been well thought through, with consultation with key stakeholders and business groups, and in particular it provides jobs and hopes and opportunities for young Australians. The Jobs Youth PaTH improves upon and complements existing supporting programs by providing real world solutions to the real world employment challenges facing young people—young people in my electorate of Riverina, young people in the honourable member's electorate of Mayo. I know her electorate well.

The employability skills training will be intensively delivered in two blocks of three weeks, and the close engagement with employers in the training's design means that it will deliver real results. A wide range of organisations have already been consulted, as I have just discussed, on the training and their feedback will inform its implementation. The internship placement is different from existing work experience activities because it delivers a formal opportunity for young people to understand the work environment and at the same time it gives employers an opportunity to ensure the job seeker is a good fit for their business. Other key differences include: under the internship job seekers will receive a \$200 per fortnight supplement on top of their income support payment, so that is a bonus, and employers will receive an up-front payment of \$1,000 to host an intern, so that is good for them too. So it is a

win-win situation. Previous wage subsidies for youth under 30 provided employers with up to \$6,500, GST inclusive, over 12 months if they hired an eligible job seeker. The new youth bonus wage subsidy provides up to \$10,000 over six months. In addition, all wage subsidies for job seekers aged 25 to 29 years—parents, Indigenous, mature age and the long-term unemployed—will be further enhanced, including payment over six months.

The member for Mayo asked about sexual harassment, about bullying in the workplace and about safety in the workplace. I can assure her that all those fit under this legislation. Of course no government would put in a plan that was going to give bullies in the workplace the opportunity to perpetrate their crimes—and they are crimes—against young people. There has been some suggestion that participants are going to be paid only \$4 an hour. The Australian Council of Trade Unions have suggested that. The claim that the scheme will see young Australians paid so little per hour is a blatant lie, and the ACTU really should issue—

Mr Husic: Rubbish!

Mr McCORMACK: No, it is not rubbish. They should issue an apology for trying to mislead Australians. Dare I say it, that is typical of that organisation. Under the innovative Youth Jobs PaTH plan, the payment of \$200 per fortnight is on top of the existing income support that the job seeker already receives. It is an opportunity for individuals, as I have said before, with income support to gain valuable work experience in a real workplace on a voluntary basis but with all the conditions that a usual employee would benefit from, would be subjected to and would have the experience of. This should not be confused with paid work as individuals will continue to stay on income support whilst undertaking the internship.

This is a good employment package. It is good for youth. It is good for young Australians. It makes them job ready. Many of them have not experienced this sort of undertaking before, this sort of opportunity, and I can assure the member for Mayo that particularly for regional areas, particularly for young people in country regions, this is a good deal for them. It makes them job ready. Employers and representative organisations such as the Business Council of Australia and the Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry consistently state that young people need to improve their employability skills and have recent work experience. This PaTH program enables just that. Australian Bureau of Statistics data shows that more than 100,000 unemployed young people aged 15 to 24 have never worked before. It is a staggering statistic. Job seekers who undertake work experience are more likely to find sustainable ongoing employment. The department's administrative data for December 2014 showed that of the job seekers who undertook unpaid work experience, almost half were in employment three months later compared to 26 per cent for other activities.

Mr BRIAN MITCHELL (Lyons) (17:11): It is a sad day in Australian governance when a first-term opposition MP has to school a minister of the Crown on a piece of government legislation. The ACTU is absolutely right—it is \$4 an hour on top of the Centrelink payment that they would normally already get. To say otherwise is simply a blatant falsehood. The minister and I share a history. I too am the former editor of a local newspaper—though not one quite so salubrious as *The Daily Advertiser* in Wagga! Our newspaper also had interns. They were university interns, usually students in their third year, or graduates. The big difference between them and what is being proposed now is that they were what most people would understand interns to be, which is young people learning on-the-job training for the profession of their choice—invaluable work experience. It was a win for the employer—we

got a warm body to give some extra work to—but they got training, they got mentorship and they got a body of work that they could then use when they went out to get a real job.

The minister is quite right—if a good intern came along you would give them a job if a job was available. That is the key—if a job was available. The problem with this scheme is that it promotes, it incentivises, churn. You are going to give \$1,000 to an employer every 12 weeks. If you are a small business employer and you are on the bones of your bum a little bit and the opportunity is there to turf a worker every 12 weeks and get a thousand bucks every 12 weeks, you are going to take it up. The minister will assure us in a moment that that will never happen—'Trust us, we would make sure that would not happen.' But I will tell you what, Minister—people game the system all the time. They find the loopholes, they find the gaps. Unless this is tied down and ironclad, that is what is going to happen. People will be ripped off, kids will be churned through this system every 12 weeks and dodgy employers will pocket that \$1,000. One of my key concerns with this proposal is that it seeks to depress wages. It essentially creates a pool of free labour, and that then depresses wages for everybody else in the community. It treats young people as disposable—it tells them they are worth not quite as much as the rest of us. That, to me, is just not right.

I have a number of questions which hopefully the minister can answer in some detail. First, what happens if an intern sustains an injury at work?

Are interns covered by workers' compensation? The government simply has not addressed this important question. Will the base \$200 a fortnight include the possibility of being made to work on public holidays and weekends? Does a penalty rates regime apply for these times? I suspect it does not. What is going to happen? For a worker who gets penalty rates with these times, the employer will say, 'There is a worker I have got to pay penalty rates to, and there is a free bit of labour.' Guess who will get those hours? It is absolutely outrageous. I would like some clarification on that. What qualification will an intern earn after four to 12 weeks in a workplace working 15 to 25 hours a week? Will they get a certificate? Will they get a trade qualification? Will they get anything to send to another employer, or will it just be, 'Thanks very much, on your way,' while somebody else comes in through the front door?

The minister assures us there will be safeguards. When you are dealing with legislation of this magnitude and when you are dealing with the lives of hundreds of thousands of young people, we need better in legislation than 'Just trust us.' We need to see the detail before it is put to the parliament. That is why Labor is going to seek to refer this to a Senate review. The minister said he can assure the member for Mayo that it is a good policy. She had some very good questions. I, too, represent a rural seat and I, too, know young people who find it very difficult to get to work. They do not all have cars and public transport is absolutely woeful. It is very expensive to get around. These are questions that need to be answered as well.

The minister said this will deal with the real-world challenges. A real-world challenge for young people is getting fair pay in the workplace. Australians have worked for generations to get fair pay and fair conditions for Australians in workplaces. We are simply not prepared to give it up on what is looking more and more like a dodgy free employment scheme.

Ms SWANSON (Paterson) (17:16): I was listening intently to the minister as he said that there would be organisations that would broker partnerships for this program. I would like to directly ask the minister: which organisations will broker this program? Are they the same organisations that were completely decimated by the 2014 budget when the then Treasurer Mr

Hockey stood up and announced that he would no longer continue the very successful brokerage partnership programs that had been occurring and which saw many young people find work. After that, we saw an increase in joblessness with our young people. That was a direct result of what this government did to absolutely eliminate and annihilate those fantastic programs that were working and that this government did not support and did not continue.

We on this side understand that youth unemployment truly is a scourge in our society and it is vital that we all work together to create the best environment that we can for our young people to get a job. We welcome additional resources being invested in youth employment, but I am convinced, as is Labor, that this Youth Jobs PaTH, as it stands, is not the best way to support young jobseekers or invest Commonwealth funds. It is not a pathway to employment, but, rather, a road to nowhere in my assessment.

The amendment that Labor proposes seeks guarantees that this legislation will not be used to exploit young people or to undermine workforce standards. As the member for Mayo pointed out, these young people are so keen to impress. They really are desperate for those jobs. How will they not be exploited? We have all been in situations where you might stay back for those extra couple of hours when you are trying your best to get an absolutely great opportunity. How will we ensure that these young people will not be exploited? We have real concerns about whether this actually presents a genuine opportunity for young people to gain meaningful employment or whether it is just going to be completely unworkable.

There is no firm definition of what an intern is under the program or what sectors they could be asked to work in. Large numbers of participants could be used within companies at one time, as we have already pointed out. There is a distinct difference between companies and the organisations that brokered programs in the past, as was pointed out earlier in the day. Also, large numbers of these interns could completely negate the need for existing employees in certain sectors, such as hospitality. And, as my colleague just pointed out, the penalty rate issue is one of the most glaring ones. What is going to cover someone who should be paid the appropriate penalty rates for being away from their family on a weekend, as opposed to an intern being brought in and being taken advantage of? These are real and genuine concerns that we have.

At a time when wages growth is at its lowest on record, there are very real concerns that the Youth Jobs PaTH program could be used to undermine wages across many industries. It will not be just young people and would-be workers who will suffer but all workers in lower-paying jobs who would be forced to compete with what is, virtually, slave labour. The Youth Jobs PaTH program does not specify real job areas in which jobseekers will acquire skills. All we have been told is that these programs will give young people the skills that employers tell us that they need. We need to know what these skills are. What are they? How will it work? I still want to know the definition of an intern. I want to know what they will be doing and I want to know what, more importantly, they will be learning. I want to know how this government can guarantee that it will not depress wages and I want the government to guarantee that it will not displace jobs.

I also want the government to guarantee that it will provide vital access to workers' compensation. It is no good saying, 'Everything will be okay; they will be safe and we would not put anything in place that would put anyone in a dire situation.' Well, I may be new but I am not quite that naive. We want to see this properly accounted for. The safety of our young

people should be legislated. This government has an appalling record when it comes to helping young people. Apprenticeship numbers have been absolutely in freefall for the past three years. We have had the VET scheme; we have had Work for the Dole, which has not worked out well; and, I guarantee, in a few years we will be hearing how this has not worked out as well. These answers must be found.

Ms CHESTERS (Bendigo) (17:21): I also have a number of questions for the Minister for Small Business, or the person representing the minister—and we are not quite sure who that is at the moment. Perhaps it is the Minister for Infrastructure and Transport, who is sitting at the table, who is now representing the minister on this issue. Hopefully whoever is going to answer these questions is listening closely, because on this side we have raised a number of serious questions that we believe the government needs to answer, and our friends on the crossbench have also raised questions in relation to this program.

Since I made my speech on the Social Security Legislation Amendment (Youth Jobs Path: Prepare, Trial, Hire) Bill 2016 in the second reading debate, the government still has not responded to the concerns that I and many others raised. I reiterate the concerns about occupational health and safety. Where do these interns fit with regard to occupational health and safety? What happens if they are injured on a worksite? Do they complete a claim form? Are they entitled to workers compensation? Are they entitled to days off in payment of that? What happens if a worker is injured? We have already seen what has happened in the Work for the Dole scheme. There is no responsibility whatsoever if somebody is injured, we have heard—and we know that a young person tragically lost their life while involved in a Work for the Dole scheme. We need the government to guarantee that that will not happen with this system.

We have heard—and again the government has not responded on this—about the issue of pressure being applied to wages. This scheme says that somebody will get their youth allowance payments and \$4 on top of that. What happens if they work on a weekend? Will they get an extra top-up for penalty rates? Is that being accounted for? What will this government do to ensure that these interns are not being used late at night, in the evenings, on penalty-rate days? Also, what is the government doing to ensure that these people, who will effectively be on a payment of Newstart plus \$4 an hour, are not undercutting jobs and workers in these places? What about in places where there is a collective agreement in place that pays much more than this? Will the government guarantee that workers are not displaced in terms of shifts or hours? Will it guarantee that these interns will not take hours away from casuals who are relying on shifts to make ends meet?

The government has also not been clear about how these interns will intersect with, and what rights they will have under, the Fair Work Act. Again, the government has not been clear with the Australian people and with the prospective interns about how the Fair Work Act will apply to these young people. Will they have access to the unfair dismissal provisions? The reason the government is twisted in so many knots is that, currently under the Fair Work Act, there is no classification for an intern—none whatsoever. So, if a young person who is engaged in the program is dismissed, what happens to their payments? The government has said that they need to be able to prove that it was not their fault. That is so arbitrary. Who decides that dispute if an employer says, 'You're gone,' and the intern says,

'That's unfair'? Who is the arbiter? Who gets to decide that? If you are a worker, you are protected under the unfair dismissal provisions. In this particular situation, we do not know.

Also, the government have still failed to prove that these are not \$4-an-hour supermarket internships—a concern that has been raised not just by the union movement but by young people themselves. The government still have not convinced us or the Australian people that this will not cut jobs. For a government that rant a lot about jobs and growth, they have failed to demonstrate how this program will not take jobs away from young people, and they need to come in here and make that clear. It used to be considered a bit of a rite of passage that a young person's first job would be in retail or hospitality. The government need to guarantee that, with this internship, they are not taking away jobs that otherwise would have gone to young people. They have failed to address that question. They have failed to answer that. They should come in here and address the concerns that have been raised not just by people in this House but by people within the community.

Mr BRIAN MITCHELL (Lyons) (17:26): I have been sitting here very patiently waiting for the Minister for Small Business to actually answer my questions. This is consideration in detail of the Social Security Legislation Amendment (Youth Jobs Path: Prepare, Trial, Hire) Bill 2016, and I have been very polite, I think. I asked him what I thought were fairly decent questions about whether young people on these so-called internships will be paid penalty rates, whether they will be made to work long and extraordinary hours through the night, whether they will be given access to transport options—all sorts of questions that the minister has failed to answer, perhaps because the minister is no longer here. The Minister for Small Business seems to have so little interest in this matter that he has departed the chamber and seems to have left his intern, the Minister for Infrastructure and Transport, in his place. I hope you are getting more than \$4 an hour, Minister! On the matter of highly paid interns, I cannot go past the fact that my predecessor, the former member for Lyons Mr Eric Hutchinson, has got a pretty nice internship himself, with Senator Stephen Parry, the President of the Senate. It is a little more than \$4 an hour, of course. It is around \$160,000 a year, to attend functions. So that is not bad.

I am happy to stand here all day—I am here all week—and wait for the minister to come into the chamber and actually answer some of the very serious questions that have been put by me, the member for Mayo, the member for Paterson and the member for Bendigo, amongst others. These are very important questions. This is supposedly—so the government says—a panacea for the scourge of youth unemployment. I do not think there is anybody in here who is not desperately serious to see this matter addressed. Youth unemployment across the country is far too high. Where we differ is on how to address it. On this side, what we know is: you educate young people, you train young people and you provide them with pathways to work via apprenticeships. Yes, there are legitimate internships, such as those that university students and graduates go through, where they train for a short amount of time on the job and they get a portfolio of work, they have mentorship and they are on their way. That is a legitimate internship. A legitimate internship is not being employed by the local fish and chip shop, where the employer gets \$1,000 to put you on behind the deep fryer, and you stand there for 12 weeks shuffling the fries and then you are out the door and somebody else walks in. That is not a legitimate internship. That is free labour, and what that means is that the kid next door does not get that job. The kid next door does not get that job on proper wages

because that job has been taken up by free labour paid for by the taxpayer. That is just a taxpayer-funded rort for business. It is just not right. So the member for Bendigo asked a very good question on those matters.

I am still here; the minister still has not arrived. I do not know what could be keeping him. This is supposedly a very serious matter that the government has put to the House. We really need answers on these questions. I really would like to see him answer them.

Mr HUSIC (Chifley) (17:30): What is becoming clear is this: this is a massive new program. What is being proposed here or what will be supported by this bill is something way higher than what the government has ever done. They have an existing program, the National Work Experience Program. It takes 6,000 people. This program boosts that up five times: 30,000 young Australians will go through this program. It is an entirely new system. A lot of people have legitimate concerns: that jobs will be displaced; that people who would have got a job independently will be replaced by an intern. And 'intern' has not even been defined; there is no definition from those opposite of what an 'intern' is. They may be an intern barista; they may be an intern construction worker; they may be an intern retail assistant—which completely flies in the face of what the general public thinks an intern is.

Those people would be paid below the national minimum wage. Bear in mind: the national minimum wage right now is \$17.70 an hour. But an intern who works 25 hours a week and receives only their Newstart payments plus the \$200 top-up will earn \$14.50 an hour. The small business minister was saying that the ACTU should apologise because they were misrepresenting the situation. Guess what? The stats are clear. These people—these interns; these young Australians—will be brought in at a lower rate than the national minimum wage.

As wisely observed by the member for Mayo, we have no understanding about what the span of hours will be on any given day. They are supposed to work 15 to 25 hours a week. How do we know that they will not work 12 hours a day without a break? That is a legitimate question that was being posed. We have had questions about whether or not penalty rates would be undermined.

We have had a whole stack of concerns. But guess what? We are not going to get answers today, because what is going to happen is: the minister at the table here is just going to do them as one job lot and thinks that he will answer them in five minutes. And he will not. None of the questions that have been raised through the course of this consideration in detail, about a program that is massively expanding on what is currently being done, that will involve young people—questions that everyone wants to get legitimate answers to—will not be answered by this government.

It is a clear demonstration that, as the member for Barton said, they engaged in an election thought-bubble. Six months after this program was announced in the federal budget, they still cannot define what an intern is. They still cannot give us assurances that these people will be covered by workers' compensation. They still cannot give us assurances that the interns will not be used to displace jobs, in a market where people are already underemployed. Underemployment is already at an all-time high. People are already concerned about wages growth flatlining. There are all these concerns out there. But this government will not answer.

And I am sorry, but—with the greatest respect to the minister, who I have great time for: it is not good enough, Minister, to have all these members of parliament raise legitimate

questions and to have them just pushed off into one five-minute job lot. Not only do these members deserve answers; the Australian public, who will be seeing this new thought-bubble unveiled, deserve answers as well.

It is basically April 2017 when this program comes in, and we still do not have answers about what is going to happen. I actually think we do need to get answers. We need to get answers to the question about workers' compensation, because, in the submission made by the department to the Senate inquiry that is going on now, published on the website, we are now told that the Department of Employment has insurance arrangements in place to cover jobseekers undertaking activities, including group personal accident insurance and combined liability insurance. But what happens if someone is permanently incapacitated as a result of an accident through being involved in an internship? What happens to them? At what rate do they get paid out? At what rate can they expect income support? Where do they go? Do they go on to DSP? What happens there? They will be placed in the invidious situation of being locked out of the job market. And we do not even know the details about the coverage.

These are the types of questions that deserve to be answered, and they should not be treated disrespectfully, through the way that they are being managed right now—with all due respect to the minister.

Mr CHESTER (Gippsland—Minister for Infrastructure and Transport) (17:35): I thank the members opposite for their questions and their contributions to this debate, and I thank them for their impending support for the bill which is before the House.

Mr Husic: We've still got questions!

Mr CHESTER: And there will be more questions. I am going to answer some of the ones that I have got to in the last 10 or 15 minutes, Member for Chifley.

As the members are aware, the youth employment package was announced in the 2016-17 budget and is an investment in the order of \$840 million, which will be implemented over four years to assist young people to develop their employability skills and provide them with the work experience they need to get a job. I thank the members opposite because I think they are very sincere in their enthusiasm for helping young Australians receive the job-ready skills they need which will enable them to obtain a foothold in the job market. It does build on other initiatives that the Turnbull government has implemented under the youth employment strategy, which will further boost young people's job prospects by making sure they are in a position to be better prepared to join the workplace.

Members asked questions as to: 'Why aren't the jobseekers undertaking internships paid at the minimum wage?' Under this program, placements do not constitute an employer-employee relationship and do not involve wages or salaries. The jobseekers continue to receive their income support as well as a \$200 fortnightly supplement, which is paid by the Australian government. The program will provide those young jobseekers aged from 17 to 24 with an opportunity to show prospective employers what they can do in the workplace while gaining those valuable work skills and experience. I am sure members opposite would agree with me that quite often all a young person needs is a chance to get a foothold, to get their foot in their door, to demonstrate that they have the capacity to hold down employment. This internship program gives them a chance to prove their suitability for future employment.

In terms of the question about whether it complies with the Fair Work Act: the internship is not work; it is work experience, as members opposite would be aware. In relation to the need for such initiatives: it has been a matter of concern put to the government by organisations such as the Business Council of Australia and the Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, who have consistently stated that young people need to improve their employability skills and to have had recent work experience. The ABS data shows that more than 100,000 unemployed young people aged 15 to 24 have never worked before. That is an important consideration when we reflect on the position put by the government in relation to this legislation—100,000 young people aged 15 to 24 have never actually worked before. Giving them the opportunity to prove their abilities in the workplace is an endeavour worth pursuing.

In terms of protections to be put in place—and I acknowledge the questions raised by several speakers regarding protections to prevent employers from abusing the program, including the displacement effect, which I think some members referred to—employers who participate in the internship program must be able to show real prospects of ongoing work and there will be safeguards to ensure that existing workers are not displaced by the scheme. The program sets a maximum duration of 12 weeks, and the number of weekly hours worked in the placement will be 25 hours. The internships will be voluntary for both the businesses and the jobseekers and be co-designed by them to ensure that the placements meet both their needs. Again, that is an important consideration. For this to work, it has to be in the interests of the young person themselves and it also has to be seen to be of some benefit to the business sector, which will be passing on the opportunity for these young people to learn those skills with the on-the-job training provided through the internship program. It will be up to the government to ensure—and I take the caution in the spirit that it was meant—that the program is closely monitored to ensure that the employers who use the program are not exploiting and not, to use the vernacular, churning and burning young people by simply rotating them through. If they are seen to be exploiting young jobseekers they will be excluded from the program in the future.

I do want to acknowledge the contribution by members opposite, and I am sure there will be other questions that will be raised. But I would hasten to say that this is a comprehensive package that has targeted services and support for all unemployed young people. It is a well-designed package, with an evidenced-based pathway to help young Australians into the workplace. It offers, I think, a meaningful and rewarding opportunity for young jobseekers and employers a like to bridge the gap and to get young people working.

Ms SHARKIE (Mayo) (17:40): I will not take up too much more of the House's time, but I do have a couple of concerns. Prior to me coming to this House, this was an area of my own employment. So it is something that I am particularly passionate about. The focus of this program needs to be about young people. What I am not aware of, and what is not detailed in the legislation, is: what career mentoring will be provided to the young person to ensure they are placed in a work setting that will fit with their talent and their career goals, or will they just be shunted anywhere that suits the jobactive provider?

The minister has mentioned health and safety. In relation to my previous question, he said that it was in the legislation. But I could not see in the legislation any specific legislative protections for young people. I note that the minister, now responding to the questions, has detailed that this is not an employee-employer relationship. Therefore, my concerns are even

more heightened about the protection of young people, vulnerable people—many of whom, as the minister acknowledged, have not even been in a work placement before. How do we know that they will be safe and respected in the workplace and that they will have rights and protections?

I would like to ask why jobactive providers were chosen to deliver this. Why are they in the legislation? Why not Transition to Work providers? That is a government program. We know that they tendered out the program to youth specialist providers and organisations that are recognised and well respected across the industry. They know how to work with young people and they get the best out of young people. So why would this program be working through jobactive providers and not Transition to Work?

Another query I have particularly relates to my electorate and to all rural electorates across Australia. If you are registered training organisation as well as possibly being the successful provider of this program, you will not be able to train your young people in your RTO as well as place them into employment. I understand that the government was probably trying to ensure that there was not double-dipping—it is one of those favourite words at the moment. However, when you are in a regional area, there is often one organisation and that organisation often only has one or two staff members. So it is really going to be impossible in regional and rural Australia for this program to be effectively delivered—and that is where I believe we need this program to be delivered the most.

In relation to the training, I would also like to say that, from my reading of the legislation, a young person will not receive that \$200 per fortnight while they are in the training component of this program; it is only when they are in the placement. Again, how do you afford to get to training? Anyone who is on youth allowance is only getting just over \$400 a fortnight to live on if they are on the independent rate. Out of that, they have to feed themselves, they have to clothe themselves and they have to cover rent. It is so far below the poverty line that the idea that we would have an expectation that a person would also get to their own training without any subsidies—which are provided under Work for the Dole but not under this program—while you are in the training component—seems grossly unfair.

I would also like to talk about the trades and industries that will be targeted. I am very concerned that this will be a program that essentially will be picked up in hospitality and in retail—areas where we know it does not take 12 weeks to train a young person. We certainly do not need any more baristas; what we need are plumbers, painters, electricians and hairdressers. We need people to work in a variety of areas where we know that there are career opportunities for young people where they will very quickly learn a range of skills that are transferrable and will have a certificate in their hand and they will not be making coffee at age 29 and waiting on tables. These young people deserve more than that.

I would like to go back to a couple of other issues that I have raised previously. I am particularly concerned about the level of ministerial discretion and administrative discretion in this legislation. The government is spending an enormous amount of money on this program—so you have got to get it right. You cannot afford to waste this money and put young people, who are our most vulnerable people, in the workforce in a worse situation.

Ms LAMB (Longman) (17:45): I was sitting in my office, watching what was happening down here in the chamber and I felt compelled to come on down and speak to this. It was just over a week ago that I found myself here speaking to the Social Security Legislation

Amendment (Youth Jobs Path: Prepare, Trial, Hire) Bill 2016. As I mentioned back then, Labor has always supported meaningful investment and initiatives that give young people a real pathway towards long-term, stable employment because, as I am sure the minister would agree, there is real dignity in having a job. I am a mother of four boys and they range from 16 to 26—so I am a mother and also a worker. Up until a few months ago, I was a worker just like my boys are. I know that there is real dignity in having a job. I know about being able to put food on the table, to put a roof over your head, to be able to join the local sporting team and to be a member of my community, and that comes from having a job. I know that firsthand. I would like to thank the member for Mayo for those questions that she raised and I look forward to waiting for the minister to answer them as well because I am keen to hear those answers.

The point that I felt compelled to come down and make about this proposal is that there are several elements about the program that have the potential to undermine what our country has fought hard for in the way of workforce standards. The first thing I would like to raise is that we should all be alarmed by any proposal that allows a business to pay workers below the award rate. We have heard it a number of times before. I was in my suite and I could hear the minister arguing around \$4 an hour. Having 17- to 24-year-olds participate in an internship for 25 hours a week, earning \$100 a week—I do not need a calculator, but I am happy to get it out of my office and bring it down to the minister if he needs a hand—that is \$4 an hour. If he needs one, please pass it on that I can hand one over to him.

I have always believed in a fair day's pay for a fair day's work. We have award rates in this country because, as a society, we believe that low-paid workers should have economic security and should be protected from exploitation. In question time today, I heard the Prime Minister say, 'We back the workers.' Well, I tell you what, I wonder how that young, Queensland, 7-Eleven worker feels about that backing of the Prime Minister. I wonder how backed that worker feels when I watch the video of that. The second concern I have got is the real risk of companies cycling through young workers and using them as cheap labour. You could be working early mornings, you could be working late nights, you could be working weekends and you could work Christmas Day—nothing to stop you—in any industry at all.

In my electorate, we not only have unemployment but also have underemployment. Those are workers who are already working but are actually looking for more hours. The real risk is that they can lose their hours. You do need to look any further than Longman to have see how underemployment is playing out. At Caboolture Community Action, where they feed the hungry and the homeless—and I have spoken about this great organisation a number of times—we are seeing more and more people turning up that do have jobs but do not have enough hours. There is enough money to put fuel in the car and there is enough money to pay the rent but there is not enough money for food. That is the real story of underemployment.

As I said before, we have always supported meaningful investment. We will always support initiatives that give young people a pathway through unemployment because, like I said, I know in Longman there is nothing more dignifying than having a decent job. Over the last week, as I am sure many people have, I have been to a lot of school awards ceremonies celebrating the achievements of our children, but the one thing that parents keep asking me about, and the thing that always resonated with me, was jobs for our children. This is the stuff

that is concerning for them. We cannot allow a proposal like this to go through unchecked. We must have security.

My questions—and I am happy for him to get back to me on these—to the minister are: what guarantee will he give us that people will not lose their casual hours? Those people who are underemployed already in my community, what guarantee will they have that they will not lose their casual hours that they want more of? What guarantee—and I heard the member for Mayo raise this as well—will our kids have that they will know their rights at work as they first start at a place of employment?

Mr HUSIC (Chifley) (17:50): As has been evident through the course of the consideration in detail, there are quite a few members within this chamber that have expressed deep concerns about the program design that will be supported by this bill. We think this is a major new initiative by the government, which we have expressed concerns about from the get-go that this has been rushed through, not thought through and that the program design has flaws in there that could cause real problems for young, unemployed Australians. No-one for a moment is suggesting that youth unemployment in this country is not a problem; it is a problem. No-one is suggesting that new measures do not need to be considered, particularly given the performance of, for example, the Work for the Dole program that is unable to provide jobs for young Australians. Three months after they have completed Work for the Dole, nearly 90 per cent of those participants do not find work. They are not in full-time jobs. As I said during my contribution in the substantive debate, I was stunned at the blase way in which the departmental secretary said that Work for the Dole is not about finding a job. That would come as big news to the bulk of Australians who expect that a program like that will get people ready for employment. That program is tanking. This government has not found a way to reverse the slide for that program.

They have now come up with this program, a program which I note is modelled on overseas programs, and others have also observed that this has been modelled on attempts overseas to do similar things. In its submission to the Senate inquiry that is underway, the ACTU raised valid concerns, which were dismissed by the Minister for Small Business—

Ms Ryan: Shame!

Mr HUSIC: In response to the member for Lalor's interjection, it will be a shame if this program fails as well and falls in a heap and we have to come back here and address those failures. In its submission, the ACTU said the United Kingdom tried a similar scheme, the Youth Employment Scheme, YES, in 2013. This scheme was launched in January 2013 and was wound up in July 2014, with fewer than half the estimated placements having been made and no clear increase in real job placements. The YES scheme, like the Youth Jobs Path program, had a top-up element for the participant, a subsidy for the employer—tick, tick; both of these things are available under the proposed program—a shorter work experience component and a longer skills development component.

That scheme tanked, so the question to the government is: if we look at overseas models, can you give assurances to the House that the model being proposed here and that is supported by this bill will actually be successful? This is a \$752 million program, Minister. There is \$5.7 million allocated to it in this bill. Where is the rest? Has the \$5.7 million taken into account the 'cycling through'—as the member for Longman referred to it—of people? We do not know that.

The member for Longman mentioned the possibility of this cycling through. We are genuinely concerned that in some major businesses you will get a big group of these interns being brought in who will, just coincidentally, be put on weekends where penalty rates would not apply to them because they are already getting their payment. But the people who were earning those penalty rates would suddenly find that they did not have to come in for that shift. That is a big issue for people in those positions. The biggest champions of this type of program have been within the hospitality sector. They have never engaged in the jobactive program. Big businesses have never taken up those jobactive jobseekers. It has been small and medium enterprises who have done so. But we find that the ones that are quoted by those opposite when they are talking about the program are these big champions: the Business Council of Australia and AiG. Of course they would champion it. The concern is that the smaller businesses that have done the great thing by the country and have taken on more and more jobactive participants will not be the ones that are prioritised under this program. That is an issue.

We are watching this program closely. We are very concerned that people will be ripped off, that the program will fail and that it will be young people who will be forced to carry the cost, not this government, for a thought bubble announced in a budget leading into a hastily called election. Minister, there are deep concerns about this program and what it will actually achieve.

Mr CHESTER (Gippsland—Minister for Infrastructure and Transport) (17:55): In closing, I would like to thank members opposite for their contributions to this debate on the Social Security Legislation Amendment (Youth Jobs Path: Prepare, Trial, Hire) Bill 2016. I acknowledge the very genuine interest that many members have shown in what is an issue that has been particularly difficult for governments on both sides of this House to solve. If solving youth unemployment were easy, the government would have solved it in the last three years or those opposite would have solved it in their six years. It simply has proven to be quite an intractable issue for federal governments to manage.

The minister responsible is open to the practical suggestions that have been put forward by those opposite, and I am sure that there will be more opportunities for that conversation to occur. I think we have a shared desire across the chamber to get more young people off the dole, get them off unemployment benefits and get them into employment, and this is an important piece of legislation in that. It provides for \$840 million over four years.

I take up the comments of at least one previous member who said that there is real dignity in having a job. This program is about trying to find ways to get young people work experience so they go on to have meaningful employment. We believe the package will work because it provides a step-by-step pathway for young people to deal with some of those major challenges that young people in particular face when it comes to finding employment. These challenges are a lack of employability skills, a lack of experience and difficulties in competing with other jobseekers when it comes to actually being selected for the job.

We believe that this program will have good support from the business sector, particularly in the small business sector, which is a critical employer of young people right around Australia. It is well placed to give young people that chance, that foot in the door, that opportunity to learn new skills that may well lead to their overcoming any barriers that they may face in getting established in the workplace. Once they get that first opportunity, I am

very confident that they will have the capacity to develop a work ethic, which will stand them in good stead in the future.

It is important to stress—and several members have raised this issue—that under this internship approach jobseekers will receive a \$200 per fortnight supplement, which is on top of their income support payment. It is important for members to recognise that. The young people participating in this program will retain their income support payment and receive a supplement on top of it. So it is not \$4 per hour; it is actually a payment on top of the benefit they are already receiving, which is provided by Australian taxpayers. It is true that the employers will also receive an up-front payment in the order of \$1,000 to host and intern. As I said in my previous comments, it is up to the government to make sure that any businesses found to be exploiting the system are forced off it and to provide those protections for the young unemployed people. Internships will be voluntary for both the businesses and the young people involved. They will be co-designed by them to make sure the needs of both are met. I commend the bill to the House.

Bill agreed to.

Third Reading

Mr CHESTER (Gippsland—Minister for Infrastructure and Transport) (17:59): by leave—I move:

That this bill be now read a third time.

Question agreed to.

Bill read a third time.

Criminal Code Amendment (War Crimes) Bill 2016

Second Reading

Consideration resumed of the motion:

That this bill be now read a second time.

Mr DREYFUS (Isaacs—Deputy Manager of Opposition Business) (17:59): Labor takes a bipartisan approach to all matters of national security. We will always act to ensure that our police and armed forces, both domestically and abroad, have the powers they need to combat terrorism.

The Criminal Code Amendment (War Crimes) Bill 2016 updates Australian domestic law to reflect changes in international law in relation to the treatment of members of organised armed groups in non-international armed conflict. It reduces legal uncertainty for our armed forces overseas when they engage with non-state armed groups such as ISIL. It is an unfortunate reality that, in the last few decades, groups like ISIL, rather than hostile nations, have become the main threat with which we are forced to engage overseas. It has taken a while for international and domestic legal systems to catch up with that change.

These amendments provide legal certainty to members of the Australian Defence Force so that they can target members of organised armed groups with lethal force without the risk of potentially committing an offence under Australian domestic law. In particular, this bill amends division 268 of the Criminal Code, which provides for offences in relation to genocide, crimes against humanity, war crimes and crimes against the administration of justice in the International Criminal Court. If passed, it will mean that war crimes offences

only apply if the person or persons affected are neither taking an active part in the hostilities nor are members of an organised armed group, and the perpetrator knows of or is reckless as to the factual circumstances establishing that the person or persons are neither taking an active part in the hostilities nor are members of an organised armed group.

Other parts of the bill amend sections of the Criminal Code which apply the international humanitarian law principle of proportionality in relation to attacks on military objectives in non-international armed conflicts. Other small amendments have been made to reflect changes to international law.

This bill was thoroughly scrutinised by the Parliamentary Joint Committee on Intelligence and Security, the PJCIS, as with all national security bills which pass through this parliament. The PJCIS was fortunate to have amongst its members the member for Eden-Monaro who, as a distinguished former member of the Australian Army Legal Corps, has specific expertise in relevant areas of international law. I thank him for his counsel in this matter. The PJCIS heard evidence from the Attorney-General's Department, the Department of Defence and eminent international lawyers Professor Tim McCormack and Professor Ben Saul.

One point of concern for the committee was to ensure that there is a clear understanding of what is meant by 'members of an organised armed group'. Such groups can often contain a number of different actors, not just combatants—support personnel, for instance, and even administrative personnel. Non-state groups, by their nature, are formed of very different kinds of personnel when compared to national armies—they are often not so organised or professional in their constitution. However, it is worth noting that this would not appear to be the case when it comes to ISIL, which is just as highly organised as some armies.

Professor Saul noted that there was some controversy in international law as to the definition of 'members of an organised armed group' and suggested that it be defined as 'those with a continuous combat function within that group'. The committee's report notes that, while the most appropriate approach to determining membership of an organised armed group continues to be debated, Australia's key coalition partners and allies already operate in accordance with the international law which this bill will extend to cover Australian forces. This approach aims to treat organised armed groups on an equal footing with state armed forces and recognises that members of those groups, whether they are direct combatants providing combat support or providing combat service support, are all contributing to the military effort of the group and should not be given the same protection as civilians in an armed conflict.

The explanatory memorandum to the bill also makes clear that the term 'organised armed group' is to be interpreted in a constrained way, such that persons performing civilian-type functions in territory controlled by an organised armed group would not be considered to be members of that group for the purpose of the legislation. This is a complex area of international law, and it is right that a nuanced approach is taken.

The rise of ISIL, and al-Qaeda before it, has changed much about our world. It has made global theatres of conflict far less rigid and more difficult to define. It means conflicts crisscross state borders and national jurisdictions, drawing in far more players and introducing highly complex dynamics. Such changes have elevated the role of international law as a means of regulating conflict. This is a necessary outcome of conflicts no longer taking place country to country but country to non-state-armed group, with many different theatres of

conflict. Therefore it is right and necessary that Australian law is kept up to date with international law.

Our armed forces have been doing a superb job in this new and uncertain world. Outgoing United States President Barack Obama praised the 'remarkable' work of our armed forces, noting that, after the United States, Australian forces are the largest on-the-ground presence in the fight against ISIL. Labor supports our armed forces in this important work. By fighting terror at its source, they are helping to keep Australians safe. It is right that, when Australian servicemen and women engage in armed conflict against ISIL and other like groups overseas, they are given legal certainty about what they are doing. They cannot do their job properly, if there is the remotest concern about the legality under Australian law. I am pleased that this bill will offer them that certainty.

In recent years in Australia, notably under the prime ministership of the now member for Warringah, the debate about counterterrorism measures in this country had a tendency to reach a hysterical fever pitch. Instead of looking after the best interests of our country, the government seemed far more interested in playing wedge politics. I am happy to say that it appears that time has passed under the current prime ministership, and a calmer and bipartisan attitude to matters of national security has been resumed. Among all the storm and fury, it is important to note that our armed forces have been getting on with the job overseas. We should be very proud of what they have achieved so far and continue to achieve. Labor will support them every step of the way.

In the short number of sitting weeks allocated to the 45th Parliament so far, the Parliamentary Joint Committee on Intelligence and Security has handled five inquiries and produced the same number of completed reports. Some of these reports have been on highly complex bills, unprecedented in Australia or even the developed world. It speaks volumes for the work ethic and skill of the PJCIS secretariat that such a great amount of work has been completed in such a short time.

As it did in the 44th Parliament, Labor has taken a steadfast bipartisan approach to these bills. We have worked cooperatively with the new membership of the Parliamentary Joint Committee on Intelligence and Security, and its new chair the member for Deakin, to come to agreement on many difficult issues. It is an effort that I am proud of, and I think that other members of the committee can be proud too. The agreement reached on the passage of this bill is one of the fruits of this cooperative working relationship. I, on behalf of Labor, will work to ensure that relationship continues. I commend the bill to the House.

Mr SUKKAR (Deakin) (18:09): It is good to be able to follow the member for Isaacs' contribution on Criminal Code Amendment (War Crimes) Bill 2016. I want to echo his sentiments, as Chair of the Parliamentary Joint Committee on Intelligence and Security, that we have had a big workload. This has been part of that workload, but the urgency with which we have worked in a cooperative way to review and ultimately recommend that this bill be passed is really for one purpose, and that is to give legal certainty to our men and women in the ADF.

It is a credit to the leadership of our Prime Minister, who has put his full imprimatur behind this, to bring forward a legal uncertainty—that has certainly been in place for a very long time as the member for Isaacs has said—an area where Australian domestic law has not kept pace with international law. It has been an ambiguity for some time but it took our Prime Minister,

this Prime Minister, to elevate the issue and ensure that we are now seeking to plug that gap. So I want to give credit of course to the PJCIS, I want to give credit to all of the members, including the member for Isaacs, and I want to give credit also to the secretariat who have done an amazing job in relation to this bill.

In essence, as I have just said, the purpose of this bill and the purpose of these amendments is to bring into line the Australian domestic law with international law in the way we treat members of organised groups in noninternational armed conflict. The bill represents a key component of a range and suite of responses and measures that this government is seeking to implement to ensure that the threat of terrorism is addressed not only here on our own shores but from where it springs, particularly in the Middle East.

In essence the purpose of this legislation is to ensure that the ADF is able to target members of organised terrorist groups. That, in its essence, is what we are ensuring that they can do and, importantly, these amendments, in my view, will be crucial to the ongoing operations of the ADF against ISIS in Iraq and Syria.

We know that members of these terrorist militias act as combatants, and our ADF personnel should be able to engage with them as such. This bill achieves its intended aims primarily through amending several sections of war crimes offences in division 268 of the Criminal Code and to introduce the concept of organised armed group in noninternational armed conflicts.

The proposed amendments draw a clear distinction between civilians on one hand and members of organised armed groups. As division 268 currently stands, war crimes offences may allow members of the ADF to be held liable for action against members of these armed groups in a noninternational armed conflict.

Schedule 1 of the bill contains four parts. Part I will amend the war crimes offences in 268.70, 268.71 and 268.72 of the Criminal Code relating to murder, mutilation and cruel treatment of persons in the context of noninternational armed conflict so that those offences would only apply if the persons are either not taking part in the hostilities nor are they members of that relevant organised armed group—in this case Daesh—and the perpetrator knows of or is reckless as to the factual circumstances establishing that that person is not a member or taking active part in those hostilities. The bill also introduces the principle of proportionality in relation to attacks on military objectives in noninternational armed conflicts. This is done by amending other provisions in division 268.

In broad terms, what I would like to conclude by saying—and I do not intend to use my entire allocation of time here because these issues I think have been aired very comprehensively not only by the Prime Minister but also the Leader of the Opposition. What we are seeking to do here is just to ensure that we can operate with our partners in armed conflicts in an environment where those whom we are fighting, those whom we are opposing are unconventional in the way they operate—unconventional in the sense that they are not a state. We do not think that via technical aspects of our domestic law they should be protected by provisions that, when originally drafted, were intended to protect civilians and those who were not engaged in activities that assisted in those hostilities.

So this is, in a sense, an uncontroversial change. But, as with all amendments in relation to the fear of war, they of course require significant review. I am pleased that we have conducted

that review through the PJCIS in a very thorough way. We were obviously assisted by the fact that the will of our ADF, the will of our security and intelligence agencies was so one-sided as far as these proposed amendments go, because we do not want any Australian member of the ADF to, in any way, be potentially subject to negative legal recourse by defending the values of our country and by defending the values of Western liberal democracy in fighting organisations like Daesh. It is for that reason that, again, I want to thank the Prime Minister, the Attorney-General; of course, I want to thank the PJCIS.

I commend these amendments to the House.

Dr MIKE KELLY (Eden-Monaro) (18:16): I acknowledge the previous comments of both the shadow Attorney-General and the chair of the PJCIS, the member for Deakin, and I congratulate him on his appointment as the chair of that committee. He is doing a very good job of getting that ball rolling with a lot of new members on the committee. It is a great privilege to be a member of the committee. We have a lot of fine experience and expertise that has been brought to bear through the membership. It does do very important work on an important bipartisan basis. A lot of people who sit outside this building often only see the parliament through the prism of question time and do not realise that there is such a deep body of work that is done on a very good, cooperative, bipartisan basis outside of those theatrical moments in here.

I also really want to acknowledge: the input of Major General John Frewen and his ADF team, who came and were very generous with their support in answering questions from the committee; the Attorney-General's; and, in particular, too, the committee's support staff, who are a very good team who have provided tremendous support in what has been a very busy period. Also, I would like to acknowledge the public contributions that were made by the ICRC, the International Committee of the Red Cross, who I have had the privilege of working closely with over many, many decades now—30 years, really. I also acknowledge professors Ben Saul and Tim McCormack, who provided very good quality contributions. Professor Tim McCormack is someone who I have known for many years and who I worked very closely with. He has supported the ADF in working our way through from some very difficult and challenging issues very much like the subject matter that this legislation deals with.

I would like to build on the comment that the shadow Attorney-General made about Labor's willingness to work with the government on security issues. I can assure the House and the community in general that Labor has a very solid, dependable and strong national security policy team. In particular, the Leader of the Opposition has very sound instincts on these issues. I would not be here if that was not the case. I think we have very solid grounds to be confident that the management of national security from both the government and opposition points of view is being conducted on a sound basis. We have been reinforced on the opposition side by the addition of very fine members in the member for Cowan and also the member for Solomon, who brings to this parliament his military experience as well. He is a good friend who I knew before his time in the parliament.

We have heard some specific details about the legislation. But to put it in context—I think this is very important to understand—the Defence Force and all of our military forces in the free world would have been coming to grips with very difficult circumstances since the end of the Second World War. A lot of our operational circumstances have been characterised by these situations of dealing with non-state actors. They are very difficult situations of actually being

able to identify the enemy in many circumstances. I think that was particularly characteristic in situations like Vietnam, which added extra tension and stress for our members of the Defence Force who returned and had ongoing, lingering problems afterwards that were not well understood. It is very important for us to provide as much clarity as we can in those operational circumstances, but it is also important that we are very careful in the way that we structure our targeting processes and the way we use force and deploy force judiciously in counterinsurgency and stabilisation operations. Any time that you cause collateral civilian casualties you will be potentially setting back your overall strategic mission.

I speak as someone who was involved in the Defence Force for 30 years, but who has recently separated from the reserve. In that time, I can reassure the community and the House, the Australian Defence Force always operated at the upper end, the highest end, of requirements of international law. In addition to that, in these circumstances—and bearing in mind the importance of discipline in targeting—the Defence Force operates well beyond the requirements of law in many circumstances, as well, understanding the importance of the impact of its decisions and the use of force in general.

This legislation effectively takes into account a history and tradition of those conflicts and the development of the law to try and catch up with those circumstances. We have had through the Geneva Convention post Second World War the additional of Common Article 3. It dealt with non-international armed conflicts, but was very inadequate in dealing with all the complexity.

Beyond that time, we had the development of additional protocol I and additional protocol II in particular, which deals with non-international armed conflicts in even more detail. Then, of course, we saw the development of the Rome statute, which tried to codify in practical terms all of this experience in reality. We had a body of law that was also evolved from the tribunal that dealt with the situation of the Bosnian conflict, trying to define these issues of members of organisations, what armed organisations are and putting some definition around that.

Really, what this legislation does is acknowledge that, in the circumstances that we are in in Iraq, for example, you have an armed organisation with individuals who are not only providing direct support to combat activities and engaging in those combat activities but providing what we from a military background would call combat support and combat services support. That is wrapped around the facilitation of military operations through what you might call engineering support in more professional circumstances but also in the logistics of conducting these operations and attacks. We recognise that in Iraq we have a non-state organisation that effectively controls large amounts of territory and is able to operate close to the state-like capacities in controlling that territory—financial resources and ordnance and military resources. This obviously poses a particular issue for our people, who have to, if you like, deal with the definition of a proper target in those circumstances. What we found was that the translation of what actually existed in international law was not effective in the way that the Criminal Code was developed in dealing with what we had refined through the Rome statute and state practice and experience.

This legislation effectively deals with that situation, and it is so important to take away the uncertainty for our defence personnel. We do not want to expose them to any allegations of having conducted themselves inappropriately, potential criminal action and that sort of thing.

So these amendments open up our targeting possibilities in Iraq, which have been constrained with that problem hanging over our personnel. They will be able to go out there and effectively prosecute operations against those people that we know are actively participating in this conflict against our forces and against the coalition forces and Iraqi forces so that we can bring this operation to a successful conclusion and rid the world, at least at this level of its current threat, of an organisation and of people who are, quite rightly, determined as evil and as a force that must be confronted by the free world and its forces.

I commend the men and women of our Australian Defence Force who have been engaged in that effort. It is an effort which is not just about dealing, as we would say, kinetically with the enemy but about building the capacity of the Iraqi security forces so that they will be able to take charge of their own security. Ultimately, the mission is to make ourselves redundant. As in many circumstances we have found ourselves in along those lines, whether in Afghanistan, in Iraq or in other conflicts around our own region—for example, Timor, Samoa and other places—it is about building capacity so that we can not only withdraw our own input but ensure that those locations do not descend back into circumstances where we need to intervene in the future. I think we should have learned a lot of lessons out of Iraq in that respect. Having gone through all the expense of blood and treasure and having spent a year there myself working with coalition forces to try and achieve that result, and failing miserably because we did not address effectively the 80 per cent equation of the counterinsurgency theorem—that is, 20 per cent security and 80 per cent social, economic and political and those two things needing to be meshed effectively—we did not do a good enough job of that, which led to the situation where we are back there now. So it is important that we get it right this time, and this legislation is really part of that story.

I reassure the House that, as I have said, the targeting discipline of our Australian defence forces is top-class. It has often been the case in all of the deployments I have been in that Australian operators and targeteers have had a very positive influence in the coalition circumstances they have been in. We take to the table an approach that has also influenced other coalition partners to be extremely careful with that targeting process, which has had a very positive influence on the way these operations have been conducted.

I will say that we are now in this process of the post-US election period, where we are now all looking to see what the new approach will be of the US administration after President-elect Trump is sworn in. Of course, during the campaign there was a lot of hyperbole and rhetoric, as there always is in political campaigns, but there was a lot of talk around how we deal with Daesh and some people may be concerned about whether we would be moving to a new approach that may lead to indiscriminate targeting. Certainly we would hope that will not be the case. Really, it will be a lot about what the appointments of the administration are and how the information and departmental support are dealt with in that process of setting up this new administration, but I do note that President-elect Trump is considering the appointment of General Mattis as Secretary of Defense. General Mattis was with us in Iraq. At the time that I was there, he was in command of the 1st Marine Division, which is a division well known to Australia. Its symbol—its shoulder flash—is the Southern Cross and its formation anthem is *Waltzing Matilda*. So we have quite a historic familiarity with the 1st Marine Division. General Mattis was quite a character, he said a lot of colourful things and his nickname is quite colourful, but I want to reassure people that this is someone we could have

confidence in. He would be a good adviser in circumstances like this. He is someone who grew up in that marine tradition under Commandant Krulak of the Three Block War, understanding those complexities and depths and levels of operation. It is a bit like 3D chess these days, but he understood that. He grew up in that conceptual regime and also helped them write better counterinsurgency, or COIN, doctrine for the marines and the US Armed Forces. So he does understand counterinsurgency theory very well and the judicious use of force, with a very exemplary career in the military himself in many different circumstances. So I would be reassured if he is finally appointed as the Secretary of Defense for a Trump administration.

I want to, again, thank the members of the committee and those who provided the material for the committee to come up with a good result on this legislation. This committee is providing a very good mechanism for vetting measures on security. Everything that has gone into that committee, in my experience over the last three years as a security adviser for the Leader of the Opposition and now in this role, has always been improved as it has come out the other end of the funnel and, as I say, always in a very good bipartisan spirit.

I commend the legislation to the House, and I salute the service of the men and women of our ADF who will be at the sharp end of implementing the consequences of this legislation. I wish them safe return.

Mr CREWTER (Dunkley) (18:30): I rise today to speak on the Criminal Code Amendment (War Crimes) Bill 2016. I particularly thank the Joint Committee on Intelligence and Security, which is chaired by Michael Sukkar, for the wonderful work that he and the committee have done on this legislation. We see around the world, in Australia and internationally, an increased international threat of terrorism as well as terrorist acts and war crimes. We have seen, in particular, recent terror attacks, whether it be in Canada, whether it be in Syria or elsewhere. There is a continual threat to our security and our way of life, and it is pleasing to see the committee and the parliament continuing to work to protect us.

Indeed, we live in a more interconnected world, particularly with social media, with an increasing need for regional and international engagement. It is crucial that we work with our international partners and key allies around the world, including the United States. Our activities in the way that our defence forces operate overseas have an international impact; they are not just of sole domestic relevance. As the Prime Minister said in his address this morning, 'No one country can fight terrorism on its own.' It is more important than ever to make sure that the way our military operates is compatible with our allies.

In Australia we have a dualist approach to international law, which means that, in terms of international treaties, we implement them at the domestic level as well to bring them into force. This bill, at the domestic level, alters Australian law so that it is in line with international law. Currently, the inconsistency leaves a gap between laws, which means that legal prosecution is possible when undertaking operational activities. This is something we wish to avoid when conducting legitimate operations. Critical to the protection of our ADF personnel and decision-makers is this legislation, which aims to ensure that organised armed groups such as Daesh, otherwise known as ISIL, who are becoming a greater threat than even some conventional military forces, can be legitimately targeted.

I am very pleased to have with me this week a member of the Defence Force Major Rob Marlow, who has served in Iraq as well as other areas. He is doing a terrific job and is with

me this week as part of the parliamentary program, in which I recently had the opportunity to go to Iraq and Syria, in the air, in a refuelling operation, as well as to Afghanistan on the ground and the UAE, to our bases.

We cannot keep operating on an outdated understanding of conflict with traditional armed force structures operating simply within the bounds of the traditional notion of states, particularly with groups like Daesh, which operates across traditional state borders. Otherwise, we will be constantly playing catch-up in a legislative sense. This, therefore, cripples our defence forces due to an inaccurate perspective of the nature of conflict.

Going to the substance of this bill, it will ensure that the changing nature of conflict does not escape our legislative definitions. Prior legislation left our Defence Force and our Defence personnel in a legal grey area, which was restrained by our domestic Criminal Code. This bill goes to the crux of the matter by amending the Criminal Code Act 1995. It makes the distinction in domestic laws between civilians and organised armed groups. This is a distinction which already exists in international law. It applies in the context of non-international armed conflicts as well as regular armed conflicts—that is, a conflict that involves one or more non-state organised armed groups. It is, indeed, a thing of recent times not to be simply facing a state or state-sponsored enemy. An organised group by definition is one which at least has a minimal degree of organisation. It has some kind of command structure or hierarchy. Its existence forms part of a collective purpose that is related to the broader hostilities and involves the use of force to achieve its purposes. It also incorporates a sufficient connection to non-international conflicts and can exist within a larger entity.

To make sure that a person cannot be charged with domestic law offences in the incident of a death of or an attack on a member of an organised armed group, even if they are not taking a direct part in the hostilities, is a key aspect of this bill. With Daesh, we see an ideological threat to us, our allies and those civilians and others within the countries in which Daesh operates. It is key not only to combat those who are targeting people on the ground in terms of combatants but also to those members of the organisations who might, for example, form the administrative wing and assist those fighters on the ground, who may not be technically fighting but are enabling the conflict aspects of the organised armed groups—for example, the training of suicide bombers, those recruiting fighters, those involved in propaganda or logistics, those who manage social media propaganda, where we have seen Daesh be particularly active on Twitter and other platforms, or those in weapons and ammunition transfer or production.

The second important aspect of this bill is the protection of civilians. The bill aligns Australian domestic law with the approach and view of international law when viewed in the context of the international humanitarian principle of proportionality. The principle of proportionality, according to the International Committee of the Red Cross, is:

Launching an attack which may be expected to cause incidental loss of civilian life, injury to civilians, damage to civilian objects, or a combination thereof, which would be excessive in relation to the concrete and direct military advantage anticipated is prohibited.

As Minister Dutton noted in his speech with respect to this bill:

The principle prohibits attacks which are expected to cause incidental loss of life or injury to civilians that would be excessive in relation to the concrete and direct military advantage anticipated.

So this bill does not reduce protections for civilians, and it is definitely important to note that. The amendments to distinguish civilians from organised armed groups, under Australian domestic law, are an important aspect of this bill. Existing protections for civilians remain the same, including for medical people, religious people and those not involved in combat. It maintains prohibitions against deliberate targeting of civilians, and this is a fundamental principle of international humanitarian law.

The amendments reflect international humanitarian law stating that civilian death or injury, within the principle of proportionality, do not incur charges of war crimes, including of murder. To reiterate the concept of proportionality regarding civilians, the bill actually concerns where civilian deaths or injury are the result of an attack on a military objective, launched in circumstances where the decision-makers and personnel did not reasonably expect the attack would cause incidental civilian death or injury that is excessive in relation to the concrete and direct military advantage anticipated. This is part of the aspect in terms of protection of civilians.

Having previously worked in Kosovo in the former Yugoslavia as an international lawyer on property rights to do with people who lost possession of their property due to the war, I saw the direct impact of war crimes, as well as crimes against civilians, and the impact of breaches to international humanitarian law. It is definitely important, particularly in the aftermath of conflict, to ensure that laws enable the targeting of combatants while protecting civilians and ensuring proportionality.

This bill will ensure minimal impact on genuine civilians. It is about ensuring protections do not apply to members of organised armed groups, while at the same time ensuring the adequate protection of civilians. It amends division 268 to provide express recognition of the distinction between civilians and organised armed groups. It is legally relevant and compatible with human rights and freedoms that are recognised and declared in the international instruments listed in section 3 of the Human Rights (Parliamentary Scrutiny) Act 2011.

The bill ensures that Australia is endorsing and codifying at the domestic level the position of international humanitarian law on the subject of conflict and proportionality, ensuring that we can target both state combatants, as well as armed groups and non-state actors, including Daesh.

Realistically, this bill will ensure that our combatants on the ground, including those such as Major Rob Marlow, who is with me this week, can operate while ensuring that they are in compliance with both international and domestic law. So they can directly combat the forces of Daesh and combatants on the ground, while at the same time protecting civilians. It is in exceptional circumstances, of course, that Australia will owe human rights obligations beyond its territory, particularly when this bill operates extraterritorially.

I personally would like to thank the committee again for their wonderful work on this bill, particularly the work of Mr Michael Sukkar as well as Minister Dutton and others who have had a say directly in the implementation of this bill. I look forward to it passing the chamber so that it will ensure our ADF personnel can operate in the field of armed conflict and ensure that they are safe and protected in doing so, whether it is Major Rob Marlow or the many other ADF personnel. I look forward to this bill passing the House and to the implementation

of this bill in domestic law, ensuring that we are in compliance with our international obligations.

Mr PERRETT (Moreton—Opposition Whip) (18:43): I rise to speak on the Criminal Code Amendment (War Crimes) Bill 2016. I would particularly like to commend the contribution by the member for Eden-Monaro, and also the member for Isaacs. The member for Eden-Monaro is not only on the Joint Committee on Intelligence and Security, which has looked at this piece of legislation, but, from his previous life in the ADF as a colonel, is an internationally recognised expert on international humanitarian law. He has been in conflict zones and has had to make and advise on rules of engagement. When the member for Eden-Monaro speaks on this topic he is heard around the world by people who respect his analysis. I thank them for their contributions. I also point out that there is obviously a bipartisan approach to this piece of legislation, as is so often the case when it comes to defence matters.

It is the role of parliament to make sure that all of our federal laws are fit for purpose, that they address the mischief intended to be addressed, and that there are no unintended consequences when it comes to legislation passed by the Commonwealth parliament. This bill addresses an anomaly in the war crimes offences so that it will target only the mischief intended and cures a potential unintended consequence. Sadly, the current law has not kept up with the nature of global conflicts. Sadly, our Defence personnel are engaged in a different set of circumstances to those from 100 years ago, when people dug trenches and knew where the enemy was. There is an area of law that deals with this. Like state law or industrial law, which I used to practise in, there is, basically, law that deals with warfare or with international humanitarian law. Obviously, a law that simultaneously permits and regulates the use of force might sound bizarre to some people listening tonight, but military necessity and the principle of proportionality are designed to balance the existence of armed hostilities with consideration of humanity.

The Red Cross does a lot of work in this area. It was formed out of conflict. Right when the Red Cross was first formed, there was the realisation that people were dying after war for no good reason. Since then the Red Cross has done a lot of great work. I am one of the Parliamentary Friends of the Red Cross and I particularly point out the *International Humanitarian Law* magazine put out by the Australian Red Cross. In particular, I recommend *'Pen and Sword: Journalism and International Humanitarian Law'* to the journalists in Parliament House. It raises some interesting questions.

International humanitarian law distinguishes between conflict between the armed forces of states—you might almost say traditional warfare—and conflicts in which one or more of the combatants are non-governmental. It also distinguishes between organised armed groups and civilians. This bill will ensure that Australia's domestic criminal laws with respect to war crimes are in line with the requirements of international humanitarian law. Our Defence personnel have been restricted in their operations overseas against non-government groups such as Daesh. Australia's allies, operating under international humanitarian law, have been able to operate freely against these Daesh targets. This bill before the chamber will address this anomaly by excluding from our domestic war crimes legislation criminal liability when organised armed groups are targeted by our Defence Force. It will ensure that organised armed groups do not benefit from the protections that are actually afforded to civilians. This will bring our domestic war crimes legislation in line with international humanitarian law

derived from the Geneva Conventions and the Protocols Additional to the Geneva Conventions.

Could I particularly mention a former Labor minister, Robert Tickner, who is, I understand, in Geneva at the moment doing great work for the Red Cross. Obviously, the Red Cross is always neutral and has always received bipartisan support in this parliament.

The legislation before the House has reasonable objectives to ensure that our Defence personnel are protected. We are very lucky in this country. For most of us, if we see an Army vehicle driving down our streets, we are proud. If we see a RAAF plane, we are proud. If we see a naval vessel in our day-to-day lives, we are proud to see that. Our ADF makes us proud, not nervous. That is not the case in all other 200 countries around the world.

Deputy Speaker Buchholz, I particularly mention my hometown of St George—because I know of your connection with it—where ADFA recently undertook some graduate training that was like a hostage situation. I was talking to some friends from St George that were staying with me last week, and they said it was the best thing for the town. It was incredible; all these Army vehicles, and people had to play terrorists and victims. It was a great boost for the town's economy. Hopefully, ADF will recruit some personnel out of St George in the next little while, because the people were very impressed with the young men and women of ADFA—who are some of our nation's brightest—and the way they carried themselves in my hometown. Well done to those ADFA people, who I think will be graduating soon.

When we see our ADF personnel, our reaction is that we are proud of them. We always are, and I say hello to those people from our Defence Force that are in parliament this week as part of the parliamentary placement program. Hopefully, they are still keen to be associated with the parliament after seeing it up close. I think, sometimes when you see democracy up close, it might be like watching how to make a sausage. It might be tasty, but you do not want to look too closely at it, and I say that as the son of a butcher.

Nevertheless, we must remember the important and dangerous work that our ADF personnel do both here and in far-flung corners of the world. We should never be complacent about their service and never be complacent about our Defence Force. We need to look after them while they are serving, and I would also like to mention the legal officers that do much of that work. I have had some connections with them on the encouragement of the member for Eden-Monaro, who pointed out the great work that they do. It is a way to keep a lawyer's shingle ticking over. But part of modern warfare is to be able to understand the laws of engagement. It is not like 100 years ago on the Somme, when you were in a trench and you knew where the enemy was. Now, you might be making life and death decisions about something while sitting in Kansas looking at an image provided by a drone. You might be making decisions about civilians or making decisions about people that are not state entities, rather, they are groups that are using human shields. They are very difficult legal decisions, and legal advice needs to be given to the commanding officers. The modern commanding officer would have a very close relationship with their legal officer.

We need to look after them when they are serving and make sure they get the right equipment, the right advice and the right training. But also, we need to look after our service personnel when they return to our shores. I mention our Returned Services League and those other veterans' groups, like Soldier On, Legacy, the Vietnam Veterans Association and many others that do a wonderful job of supporting both current and ex-serving members of the

Australian Defence Force and their families. In my electorate of Moreton, there are five RSL clubs: Sherwood/Indooroopilly, Salisbury, Stephens, Sunnybank and Yeronga/Dutton Park. They are all doing great work. I have spent quite a bit of time with these clubs over the years, as a member of parliament. I worked closely with them for the commemoration of the 100th anniversary of the Gallipoli landings. The RSL, as we all know, has a very proud tradition. It is one of our oldest national organisations, founded in 1916, so it is in its second 100 years of service to the people of Australia. As well as supporting and serving our ex-service men and women, the RSL promotes a secure, stable and progressive Australia. We are indebted to it for the services that it provides.

The orientation of Parliament House is towards the War Memorial, no doubt so that all members of parliament and senators are aware of the sacrifice of those that have come before. Two weeks ago we commemorated Remembrance Day in Moreton and around Australia. On 11 November 1918 the guns of the Western Front fell silent after more than four years of horrific continuous warfare. It is an important day when Australians of all races and creeds remember those who gave their lives for freedom—that horrible sacrifice of 60,000 Australian soldiers—and then the damage done after that war to numerous people, too many to count: people who did return, perhaps having lost limbs; the many families who lost family members; and the families of people who returned as well. There was horrific suffering.

I also attended a very special ceremony here at Parliament House with the Minister for Veterans' Affairs, where we commemorated not those who died in battle but those who died after returning. It was a very moving ceremony. I am sure the minister would agree. It was quite moving to place a poppy in a cross to commemorate those who took their own lives, sadly, upon returning. I know the minister is doing some good work in that area to look after those who return.

Modern warfare takes its toll on our defence personnel not only physically but also emotionally and psychologically. As I said, a decision might be made thousands of miles from where someone might die, but it still will take a toll on our ADF personnel and contractors and all sorts of people associated with modern warfare. Some returning service men and women, sadly, never recover, and some find it impossible to go on. We remembered, at the ceremony here in Parliament House, those men and women who could not find the will to go on, who were tormented by the horrors that they had seen fighting for our freedom, for our Australian way of life. It is important to do all we can to protect the men and women of Australia's defence forces, both while they are fighting abroad and when they return. This bill will help protect our brave men and women who are fighting abroad on our behalf, in conflicts that sometimes have no boundaries and against an enemy who is difficult to identify and, sadly, will do anything and will not respect international humanitarian law. I thank our ADF personnel for their service and commend this legislation to the House.

Ms BRODTMANN (Canberra) (18:55): We are witnessing a rapid transformation in the nature of armed conflict. The world looks very different to how it looked in 2002, when the existing Criminal Code provisions were enacted. We see it today in the rise of organised armed groups such as ISIS and the way these groups engage in non-international armed conflict. The world looks very different, and so do the laws that govern it. So it is appropriate that Australian law is updated in accordance with updates to international law.

The Criminal Code Amendment (War Crimes) Bill 2016 amends division 268 of the Criminal Code Act 1995 to align Australian domestic law with international laws governing the treatment of members of organised armed groups who participate in non-international armed conflicts. The bill recognises the distinction between a civilian and a member of an organised armed group. Members of an organised armed group do not benefit from the protections under international humanitarian law afforded to civilians or medical and religious personnel. These amendments today ensure that members of organised armed groups receive treatment equivalent to members of regular armed forces under the law.

These amendments are a reflection of what we have seen and experienced as a community since 2002, and there have been massive changes. We know we are in a different time, and this should be reflected in law. This distinction already exists in international humanitarian law. We should remove all doubt that it also exists in Australian domestic law. These amendments are not proposed with only current conflicts in mind. This is about setting a principal piece of legislation with which to go forward.

Of course, as with any legislation, it should reflect the time. When circumstances change, as always, so too should Australia's legal environment. And we should expect them to change, for the participants in conflict shape the nature of the conflict. We are seeing today armies at war with civilians and with civilisation. With ISIS, we have a flag in search of a nation. Its ambitions are destruction. Its enemies are modernity. Its weapons are anything and everything.

But there is a third front in ISIS's war, and it is one that does not get quite so much attention. Its fight is against the West and its fight is against the Muslim world, but its third fight is against female empowerment and all that it allows. Its fight is against women's access to education, women's freedom of association, women's freedom of religion, women's freedom of movement, women's freedom of speech—women's freedom. Its war is against women, and, in this war too, every weapon is fair game.

The 2015 ISIS manifesto 'Women in the Islamic State: Manifesto and Case Study' advises that the role of women is to 'remain hidden and veiled'. The manifesto declares that 'women gain nothing from the idea of their equality with men apart from thorns' and that they should focus on their 'divine duty of motherhood'. The same manifesto states that it is 'legitimate for a girl to be married at the age of nine' and that women should not get degrees. According to ISIS, women should only leave their homes in 'exceptional circumstances', such as committing jihad.

The United Nations estimates that ISIS has forced some 1,500 women, teenaged girls and boys into sexual slavery—these are old figures; I hate to think what sort of figures we are looking at now—but anecdotal evidence suggests that the true figure is far, far greater. The UN envoy on sexual violence in conflict found that girls from Iraq and Syria were made to engage in the most unspeakable acts of sexual violence. ISIS's justification for these acts, as outlined in its pamphlet—yes, that is right: a pamphlet—on female captives and slaves is that 'it is permissible to capture' and 'to have sexual intercourse' with 'unbelieving women'. Once captured, these unbelieving women can be bought and they can be sold, as—and I am quoting here from the pamphlet on female captives and slaves—'they are merely property, which can be disposed of.'

One so called 'unbelieving woman' is Nadia Murad. Nadia was 19 when her Yazidi village in Northern Iraq was captured by ISIS. Nadia watched, alongside her mother and sisters, as the men in the village—including her brothers—were brutally slaughtered. For the next eight months, Nadia was abused and she was raped by ISIS troops. She was held in captivity by 13 different 'owners'. Nadia, 19 years old, from a Yazidi village in Northern Iraq was held in captivity by 13 different 'owners'.

Nadia is a reminder of why it is important that we note this third front, the impact on women—and not because it is a new one. The Book of Lamentations recounts that: 'Women have been ravished in Zion, and virgins in the towns of Judah.' During the 15th and 16th centuries, throughout much of the world, the right to commit acts of sexual violence against the objects of one's conquest was considered a form of earned compensation.

The Second World War showed us a level of human tragedy that we have never seen. It was in this context that the character of sexual violence in conflict was altered, because it became mechanised then. To use one example, it is estimated that the Soviet army raped anywhere between one million and two million women in Eastern Europe and Germany during one year, 1945. So: the Soviet army raped one million to two million women in Eastern Europe and Germany during 1945; in one year, one army, one million women.

In the Bosnian War, rape was an official order. Rape camps were deliberately established. The reported aim of these camps was to impregnate the Muslim and Croatian women held captive. This occurred in the context of a patrilineal society, in which children inherit their father's ethnicity; hence, the 'rape camps' aimed at the birth of a new generation of Serb children. It was a tool of ethnic cleansing. It was a mode of genocide—and I use that word carefully, because, if what we are seeing today in Iraq and Syria constitutes genocide, we should call it out for what it is. It is a form of crime with a long history, and it is one that needs a new form of response. I propose that we prosecute the perpetrators.

This Friday marks the beginning of the 16 Days of Activism against Gender Violence. It will also be the launch of the 'Prosecute, don't perpetrate' campaign, which calls for an end to the impunity currently enjoyed by those who commit acts of sexual violence in the theatre of armed conflict. The 'Prosecute, don't perpetrate' campaign calls for the investigation and prosecution of sexual violence committed by Australians who have travelled to Iraq and Syria to fight with Daesh.

We know that Daesh has used sexual violence as a tactic of war. Sexual violence is a war crime, and we should treat it as such. The occurrence of systematic rape is well documented in Iraq and Syria. It is a crime against humanity; it is a crime against women; and we should treat it as such. The United Nations Human Rights Council has published reports of Daesh's intentions to impose: 'measures to prevent Yazidi children from being born'. This is genocide, and we should treat it as such. By some accounts—and we have heard quite a bit about it this week—over 100 Australians have travelled to Iraq and Syria to fight with Daesh and other extremist groups. We need to investigate and prosecute the sexual violence they have perpetrated as war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide, for these are all crimes under Australian domestic legislation.

We also need to remind ourselves that sexual violence in conflict is not inevitable. I think that everyone just thinks that this is basically the by-product of war—the raping of women; the raping of small girls; the raping of small boys—and just thinks, 'Oh, gee; that's bad, but

this is just a by-product of war.' We saw it with the Second World War. We saw it in Bosnia. It is not simply a sad consequence of war. It is how war is now being fought, and ISIS is using sexual violence as a weapon of war—as an orchestrated, coordinated, industrialised tactic of terror. It is a horrifying evolution of an age-old practice, and it is now the means to a very different end. And its use is a crime we cannot excuse.

I want to conclude by thanking a range of women who have been very active in this space for a very long time, who are still maintaining the rage and who are behind this campaign to prosecute, not perpetrate. I have met most of these women since I have been in the shadow Defence portfolio over the last four years. I have met most of them through the Australian Strategic Policy Institute, which has a number of seminars on women, peace and security and the range of UN resolutions that have emerged in this area.

It is very important that we keep discussing this issue and that we do not just sweep it under the carpet. It is important that we keep maintaining the rage about this issue, because it is not something that is going to go away by our basically just saying, 'Oh, sorry, but that is just a by-product of war; we're just going to have to put up with it.' It is unacceptable. As I said: women are being raped—and not just raped; enslaved. Nadia had—what was it?—13 'owners'. Small children—small girls and boys—are being raped and held as sex slaves, with 13 owners plus. It is unacceptable. It is brutal. It is hard to imagine the lives that these women are enduring under this hideous, monstrous existence.

I want to do a call-out to a number of people who have been very active in keeping this issue on the agenda and reminding us as leaders and as a community that we cannot take our eye off this issue. We do need to maintain our attention on this issue. I want to, first of all, thank Peter Jennings and his team at the Australian Strategic Policy Institute for having regular seminars on this issue. I was at a panel discussion probably a month ago where we had a woman who had just been involved in representing Australia on the UN 1325 and other resolutions. We also had Brad Orchard, from the Department of Defence, who is actually implementing the UN 1325 and other resolutions from the defence perspective.

We also had the wonderful Jennifer Wittwer, who is going to be our new representative in the UN, hopefully shortly. I understand she has had a bit of a bad bout with health but has recently got the all-clear. So she will, I hope, be winging her way to New York to be a fantastic representative for Australia in the very near future. I also want to thank Lisa Sharland, who has been very, very active in this space for a long time. She is probably one of Australia's leading experts on women, peace and security. She has worked on this issue in Africa, the United States, Europe and Asia. She is one of our leading experts here in Australia. Again, I want to thank her for educating me on this issue and constantly bringing to my attention the fact that we need to maintain the rage.

I also want to thank Susan Hutchinson for her continuing campaigning on this most crucial issue. I spoke about this issue yesterday and it was wonderful to have Susan in the gallery listening to the speech. She is an expert on women, peace and security and she has championed this issue with energy and dedication. She recognises, as I do, that asking for existing laws to be enforced should not be a controversial demand, should not really be much of a big ask. She recognises, as I do, that we should never excuse or tolerate incidents of sexual violence in armed conflict. She recognises, as I do, that we have the power to provide justice to the victims of these heinous crimes.

War crimes are criminalised in the Geneva Conventions Act 1957 and the War Crimes Act 1945. Genocide and crimes against humanity are outlawed in the International Criminal Court Act 2002. These laws need to be implemented. International law matters, and these laws need to be implemented. That is why we propose to amend the Criminal Code to better reflect it. We seek to harmonise international humanitarian law with Australian domestic law, because we recognise that the challenge we share is a common one.

Mr KEENAN (Stirling—Minister for Justice and Minister Assisting the Prime Minister for Counter-Terrorism) (19:10): I thank all members who have participated in this debate on the Criminal Code Amendment (War Crimes) Bill 2016. National security does deserve a bipartisan approach from this parliament. To date, this parliament has provided that approach and I think it is a good reflection on the fact that, in this vitally important policy area, we can work together to make sure that Australia is as safe as we can possibly make it.

Passage of the Criminal Code Amendment (War Crimes) Bill 2016 will ensure that the Australian Defence Force can conduct targeted operations against organised armed groups, such as the military arm of Daesh, to the extent permitted by international humanitarian law. These amendments also provide important legal certainty for ADF personnel in undertaking those operations. As the Prime Minister outlined in the House today in his address to parliament on national security and counterterrorism, this bill is part of a suite of actions taken by the government to empower our agencies and our defence forces to keep us safe. The bill has been subjected to careful scrutiny by the Parliamentary Joint Committee on Intelligence and Security, which concluded that the amendments would provide appropriate protection for civilians, while maintaining the capacity to conduct operations against legitimate military targets.

I did not have the opportunity to listen to every contributor to this debate, although I did catch a lot of what the member for Canberra said. She reminded us about the barbarity of the enemy that we are facing and the sexual violence, the enslavement of women and men—imagine an organisation that has been brought back slavery on an industrial scale—and the crucifixions. I had a very productive meeting with the King of Jordan this afternoon and, during that meeting, I learnt that one of his pilots was put in a cage and burnt alive, and that that was then used as propaganda in the course of the Islamic State. They throw homosexuals from roofs if they are discovered. What they inflict on the populations that have been under their control is an affront to basic human decency.

We should be very proud of the fact that the Australian Defence Force is out there targeting them, killing them and ultimately defeating them. These are people who are pure evil. I do not say that in any hyperboles way; look at their actions. We do need to call it out for what it is and we should all join together to support the work that the ADF is doing. This bill makes sure that the ADF are not subject to any legal ramifications as a result of their very deliberate, targeted and effective actions in defeating this barbaric enemy.

I thank the House for the support that this bill has been given, and I appreciate that the House can come together to assist the passage of important amendments such as these.

Question agreed to.

Bill read a second time.

Third Reading

Mr KEENAN (Stirling—Minister for Justice and Minister Assisting the Prime Minister for Counter-Terrorism) (19:13): by leave—I move:

That this bill be now read a third time.

Question agreed to.

Bill read a third time.

COMMITTEES**Law Enforcement Committee****Membership**

The DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Buchholz) (19:14): I have received a message from the Senate acquainting the House that Senator Bilyk has been discharged from the Parliamentary Joint Committee on Law Enforcement and that Senator Farrell has been appointed as a member of the committee.

BILLS**Civil Nuclear Transfers to India Bill 2016****Second Reading**

Consideration resumed of the motion:

That this bill be now read a second time.

Mr MARLES (Corio) (19:14): I rise this evening to speak in favour of and, in the process, to indicate Labor's support for the Civil Nuclear Transfers to India Bill 2016. Labor supports peaceful nuclear cooperation with India, which includes the exportation of uranium to India subject to a range of strong safeguards, many of which were assisted, facilitated and, indeed, negotiated by the previous Labor government with the government of India. What this bill will in essence do is provide certainty for the Australian export of uranium to India in the context of our law. That is important because, in turn, it will provide certainty to exporters here in Australia, which will assist in creating Australian jobs; it will provide a benefit to India, which desperately needs the development of a civil nuclear industry, and our uranium will help support that; and it will also assist in the development and increasing development of Australian-Indian bilateral relations.

At the outset, I want to make it clear that Labor takes a principled approach when it comes to issues regarding the export of uranium. Labor has a history of leadership on nuclear nonproliferation and disarmament. We absolutely and passionately believe in prohibiting and eliminating nuclear weapons as a humanitarian imperative, and we therefore have always taken a judicious and prudent approach to both the mining and the exportation of uranium from Australia. Most importantly, we support the export of uranium to India only under the most stringent of conditions, which ensure that Australian uranium: can only be used for civilian purposes in India; cannot, therefore, be diverted for military uses; can never be used in the development of nuclear weapons; and does not contribute, therefore, in any way to the proliferation of nuclear weapons.

Recognising that these safeguards and protections exist, and noting that our bilateral cooperation with India is beneficial to both nations, Labor is supporting this bill. In doing so,

Labor recognises the government's urgency in the passage of this bill—acknowledging that there are Australian suppliers close to finalising initial contracts for supply to India, and India, having already worked for over 10 years with the Nuclear Suppliers Group to demonstrate sufficient credentials in this area, is prepared to begin importing uranium from Australia. As I have said, we also acknowledge the need to provide Australian businesses and exporters with certainty. While there is now an urgent need to pass this bill, in our view, this could have been avoided with better planning. It is unfortunate that the government failed to handle this bill in a more timely manner. In the September 2015 JSCOT report, *Report 151*, the committee clearly recommended, in recommendation 5, that the government:

... outline the legal advice it has received concerning whether the proposed *Agreement between the Government of Australia and the Government of India on Cooperation in the Peaceful Uses of Nuclear Energy* breaches Australia's obligations under the *South Pacific Nuclear Weapons Free Zone Treaty*.

The government has, with more than a year's time, failed to provide this legal advice and it is unfortunate. Australia's international treaty obligations deserve careful consideration, and the government ought to have provided this advice in a timely manner.

That said, Australia recognises India's strong nonproliferation record, and we acknowledge the separation that exists within India's civil and military nuclear industries. As I have said, India has worked for more than 10 years with the Nuclear Suppliers Group to demonstrate its credentials in this area. India has diligently pursued its credentials as a responsible nuclear nation, and its work within the global nonproliferation and safeguards system has contributed to its shift towards greater regional and global leadership. Australia's agreement to supply uranium to India has been negotiated with due caution and is supported by appropriate international agreements and strong safeguards. The safeguards in place which apply to Australia's supply of uranium to India are conditions set out by the Nuclear Suppliers Group framework, the International Atomic Energy Agency framework and the Australia-India agreement on civil nuclear cooperation.

Nuclear Suppliers Group is a group of nuclear supplier countries that seeks to contribute to the nonproliferation of nuclear weapons, of which Australia is a member. In 2008, the NSG declared that, due to sufficient commitment and action taken by India in support of nuclear nonproliferation, nuclear trade with India was permissible. The NSG framework also includes safeguards and conditions, with IAEA safeguards being a condition of supply. Australian exported nuclear material will exclusively remain in India's civil nuclear sector, to which the IAEA applies strong safeguards and independent inspections. These safeguards are comparable to the safeguards that underpin Australia's other nuclear cooperation agreements. India agrees, in relation to uranium imports under the IAEA conditions, that:

... no such item is used for the manufacture of any nuclear weapon or to further any other military purpose and that such items are used exclusively for peaceful purposes and not for the manufacture of any nuclear explosive device.

Through the Australia-India Nuclear Cooperation Agreement, India and Australia agree that the:

... use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes should be consistent with the objectives of non-proliferation of nuclear weapons and with the respective international obligations of states;

Following the NSG's 2008 decision to permit nuclear trade with India, many countries including the US, Canada, France, Japan and Korea established nuclear cooperation with

India. Over 10 years ago, India's then Prime Minister, Manmohan Singh, agreed in a joint statement with US President George W Bush, which stated:

India would reciprocally agree that it would be ready to assume the same responsibilities and practices and acquire the same benefits and advantages as other leading countries with advanced nuclear technology, such as the United States.

At this time, Prime Minister Singh committed to the IAEA process of separating India's civilian and military nuclear facilities and programs. This process also included the step of India voluntarily placing its civilian nuclear facilities under IAEA safeguards. More recently, in January 2015, Prime Minister Narendra Modi and President Barack Obama made a further commitment to civil nuclear cooperation, including a commitment to US-built nuclear reactors, which will contribute to India's energy security.

Labor acknowledges the lengthy and intensive process that India committed to over a decade ago and has been diligently pursuing ever since. India's commitment to non-proliferation and disarmament is not just an advancement of our ability to engage in bilateral nuclear cooperation; it also benefits global progress on nuclear responsibility.

This bill is consistent with the position taken by Labor when in government and the position articulated in Labor's national party platform. Labor's national platform supports the export of uranium only under the most stringent conditions and safeguards. Since 2011, the platform specifically allows for supply to India on the basis of our bilateral relations and key steps taken by India towards nuclear non-proliferation. The current Labor national platform states:

In relation to India, an important strategic partner for Australia, commitments and responsible actions in support of nuclear non-proliferation, consistent with international guidelines on nuclear supply, will provide an acceptable basis for peaceful nuclear cooperation, including the export of uranium, subject to the application of strong safeguards.

Labor in government began the process addressed in this bill. In 2008, as a member of the NSG, Australia supported a decision to enable nuclear trade with India. In 2009, as a member of the board of government, Australia supported a decision to enable nuclear trade with India. Since that visit, the governments of both Australia and India have taken steps to implement the commitment then made by former prime ministers Gillard and Singh.

The way in which this bill operates is to make Australia's compliance with our international treaty obligations under the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and the South Pacific Nuclear Free Zone Treaty clear by law. In terms of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, it is understood that the obligations under the frameworks which I have just described in many respects equal and even go beyond what is required under the NPT. In respect of the South Pacific Nuclear Free Zone Treaty, there is an argument, which this piece of legislation ultimately clarifies, to make sure that our export of uranium to India is compliant in law with that treaty. It is important to acknowledge that the original intent of that treaty related to nuclear testing within the Pacific and, of course, what is being proposed here does nothing to undermine that. None of the other state parties to that treaty have raised any objection to the very public position that Australia has taken in relation to its export of uranium to India and, in terms of what we do in respect of supporting India's civil energy generation in a way that does not give rise to carbon emissions, there is obviously a climate change benefit that benefits those in the region.

It is important to acknowledge the significance of the exportation of Australian uranium to India from the perspective of India. India's civil nuclear energy generation capacity is vitally

needed by that country. In India today about 300 million people exist without access to electricity. There is an increasing dependence on imported energy resources to satisfy that rising demand. Its primary energy consumption more than doubled between 1990 and 2011. It is the world's third-largest energy consumer and the third-largest CO₂ emitter, and in that context nuclear generated energy is critical to its future.

The passage of this bill will also provide significant benefits here in Australia. Whilst India right now represents a modest market for Australian uranium in the short term, it does have very significant growth potential. India's Department of Atomic Energy is seeking to buy up to 1,500 tonnes of uranium from Australia over the next five years. India currently has 22 operable reactors, with five under construction and another 20 planned within the next eight to 10 years. As new reactors come online from the early 2020s, Australia could expect to supply a significant part of the 2,000 tonnes annually that India will require. Obviously, as India continues its ambitious plans to grow to where it has 25 per cent of its power from nuclear sources by 2050, our position in that export market is critically important.

Finally, there is also strategic benefit from increased cooperation with India. Australia and India have shared a commitment to peace, prosperity and stability in our region. We share a commitment to rules-based order. Australia has a deep interest in not just strengthening the bilateral relationship with India but also supporting India's growing leadership role in our region. It is in our interest to encourage India's growing leadership in the Indian Ocean and across the Indo-Pacific. In 2009, under the previous Labor government, the Australia-India bilateral relationship was elevated to strategic partnership level. We enjoy warm bilateral relationships, including a broad trade and investment relationship and rich people-to-people links. Australia's defence and security ties with India have grown substantially over the past several years. An element of this cooperation is a senior officials level of dialogue between Australia and India on nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament. This type of bilateral exchange enhances the capacities of both our nations to contribute to the global advancement of non-proliferation and disarmament. For all these reasons, Labor is happy to support this bill.

Debate interrupted.

ADJOURNMENT

The SPEAKER (19:30): It being exactly 7.30 pm, I propose the question:

That the House do now adjourn.

Climate Change

Ms ROWLAND (Greenway) (19:30): Australia needs to step up when it comes to action on climate change. Donald Trump's recent election in the United States means that there is now increased uncertainty over the Paris climate change agreement. Even though the president-elect now claims to have an open mind on the agreement, throughout his campaign for the presidency, Mr Trump pledged to cancel it.

At the COP22 meeting held recently in Marrakech, it was announced that Fiji would be the president of the COP23 meeting in Germany next year. This is a significant achievement for the Fijian government, and one on which I congratulate them sincerely. Hopefully, it will be a defining moment for the debate around climate change. Fiji's Prime Minister, Frank Bainimarama, whom I have had the honour of meeting on several occasions, used the

appointment to appeal to President-elect Trump for a change of heart and policy on climate change. He said:

Sir, you have said that you do not believe that climate change is man-made ... I am especially alarmed by reports that you intend to withdraw from the Paris Agreement, which would be disastrous for every person on earth. I appeal to you to show the leadership that the rest of the world expects the United States to take on this issue.

Australia should support this show of policy leadership in this area from one of our largest Pacific neighbours. We also have a significant role to play in meeting our commitments in the Paris Agreement. For our Pacific Island neighbour nations like Fiji, Kiribati and the Marshall Islands, this is not only a debate about targets and technology; it is a debate about their very survival. These island nations are battling not only against rising sea levels but also against more frequent and damaging storms and cyclones. Cyclone Winston, which hit Fiji earlier this year, was the strongest tropical cyclone ever recorded in the Southern Hemisphere, killing 44 people and leaving many homeless. In inviting President-elect Trump to visit his country, Prime Minister Bainimarama brought the consequences of climate change into sharp focus. He said:

We will show you how we are already having to move entire communities out of the way of the rising seas and you can meet the families of the 44 Fijians who were killed last February.

Australians are always generous in helping our neighbours when disaster hits. We were large contributors to help Vanuatu recover from Cyclone Pam in 2015, the Philippines from Typhoon Haiyan in 2013, and Fiji from Cyclone Winston earlier this year, but we should not just be worried when a disaster hits. We can take action to reduce our carbon footprint and assist with mitigation efforts. For example, the IAG's recent report on natural disasters found that every dollar spent on natural disaster mitigation efforts can save at least \$2 and help to prevent future losses. The benefits of mitigation are often unseen and expensive, and often we do not fully appreciate them until they are actually needed. It can be a hard policy to prosecute, but it is an absolutely necessary one because, while climate change impacts on all communities, it particularly hurts those who already have the least.

Australia must do more to help our neighbours, and one of the ways we can do this is by taking serious action on climate change. On that point, I was delighted this week to meet with representatives of Micah Australia from my local area. They are focused on Australia being a good neighbour in our region and helping developing countries who are increasingly being hit by more severe natural disasters. As Micah states: 'Beyond responding to emergencies when they occur, it will be critical that the global community acts decisively to build communities that are resilient in the face of these disasters.'

We on this side of the House completely agree, and we know that that is what the majority of Australians want. Unfortunately, we have a government that is full of climate change deniers and a Prime Minister who is beholden to them. This is despite his once declaring that he would not lead a party that was not as committed as himself to tackling climate change. Labor believe the science, and we understand the need for real action on climate. That is why we took a comprehensive climate change and energy policy to the last election, including a plan to reduce pollution and increase renewables. If we are serious about meeting our obligations under the Paris Agreement, then the government should strengthen their 2030

targets as well as implement real policies to reduce emissions, especially in the electricity sector.

I and my colleagues on this side of the House will continue to support real action on climate change in this parliament. We stand with the overwhelming majority of nations that are now committed to reducing emissions and stopping the devastating impacts of climate change. Our Pacific island neighbours like Fiji should not only have Australia's help after natural disaster hits to help them rebuild. We can, and should, do more to make sure their homelands are not washed away by the impacts of climate change.

Youth Unemployment

Mr VASTA (Bonner) (19:35): Tonight I rise to speak on a vital issue in my electorate—the issue of youth unemployment. I would like to address the effect of youth unemployment on the community and what this government is doing to help young people to find and stay in work. I would also like to mention a local organisation in Bonner that is doing a fantastic job with young locals to help boost their job prospects.

I am pleased to say the latest figures show unemployment is continuing to fall and jobs growth is on the rise under this coalition government. Over 50,000 more young Australians have found jobs in the last 18 months, which is a great accomplishment. However, there is more to be done to address the barriers young people face to employment.

I have heard many heartbreaking stories from young jobseekers and their parents about the mental strain of searching for work for months on end, and I want to assure my constituents that the government is tackling this issue head on. This year the government expanded on its existing youth employment initiatives such as the Transition to Work service and Empowering YOUTH Initiatives program by introducing the \$840 million youth employment package. A central part of this package is the Youth Jobs PaTH (Prepare-Trial-Hire) program. Youth Jobs PaTH will give thousands of young Australians a chance to get real work experience and a real job through pre-employment government-funded skills training, internships lasting four to 12 weeks and a youth bonus wage subsidy of up to \$10,000 for employers.

This program will represent a great opportunity for local youth and local businesses when it launches in April 2017. It will help young people to be better prepared for the workplace and encourage more businesses to hire them. I have been happy to hear from local businesses that are interested in Youth Jobs PaTH, and I encourage more businesses in my electorate to register online to participate and host an intern.

I am proud that local businesses and groups in Bonner have already rallied to help disadvantaged youth find work. BABI Youth and Family Service is one outstanding local organisation that for years has been giving young people training and employment opportunities. Recently, BABI's general manager, Michelle McNamara, shared with me a promising new social enterprise project that will involve the whole community to help vulnerable and disadvantaged young people find work. The two-year program would see BABI team up with local businesses and RTOs to deliver valuable counselling, training and work experience for young locals.

The program will address the barriers young people face getting into employment, from mental health issues to lack of transport. I am proud to support this project and I look forward

to seeing it get off the ground. BABI has serviced the Bayside and Redlands area for over 30 years. I commend them for their outstanding work and I wish them all the best in their future work helping young people where they need it most. The government will continue to support local youth employment programs like those run by BABI. I look forward to seeing Youth Jobs PaTH begin next year and seeing more positive employment outcomes for young people in my electorate.

Holt Electorate: Sikh Community

Mr BYRNE (Holt) (19:38): I was honoured last week to meet His Holiness Sant Baba Amar Singh Ji at the Gurdwara Sahib Nanaksar temple in Lynbrook for a very important discussion about community resource building for our region. His holiness is a world-renowned figure who has worked with many political leaders, including former United Kingdom Prime Minister Tony Blair, on issues like poverty alleviation, educational development and religious projects around the world. He is truly an internationally significant figure within the Sikh community.

Baba Ji, realising the enormous liberating power of education, has opened up schools throughout India and abroad, providing much-needed education to the needy. In 1988, Baba Ji had the foresight to purchase a piece of land in Lynbrook. This is in 1988—a long, long time ago—and there was not a lot out there. He bought this piece of land to build a new Sikh temple and to cater for the growing Sikh population in Victoria, which now totals approximately 45,000 people. At the time that Baba Ji was travelling around the suburb of Lynbrook it would have been, effectively, farmland, so it was great foresight by His Holiness and it took great vision to create that opportunity for the Sikh community to have the temple there. And I am sure that over time, provided that governments of all persuasions provide appropriate support, it will become an iconic community based facility.

Sikhism is one of the world's largest formalised religions and it traces its origins to Guru Nanak who lived in India in the 15th century. Many of the world's Sikhs live in the Punjab region; however, there are large communities in a lot of other countries, including Australia. The local Sikh community in my constituency is an amazing community. They are a very integrated community. They are a community that really does make a difference in my area. And they were a community that came to the forefront when we had issues of community concern about community safety, which is now making the headlines in papers like the *Herald Sun*. But it was their direct face-to-face consultation and input that alerted me to the extent of the difficulties we are facing with community safety in our region—because of what they told me, because of the Sikh community.

They were the first community that organised a community safety forum with Victoria Police, which allowed us to discuss this issue. This was during the federal election campaign, so we are talking a long time before it really, in a manner of speaking, hit the broadsheets like the *Herald Sun*. So I would like to commend them for the work that they have done on behalf of the overall community.

After speaking with Baba Ji and committee members Manpal Singh, Raj Singh and Kamalpreet Singh, I look forward to working in partnership with them and to obtaining the approximately \$1.2 million dollars in funding that is needed for a community kitchen, a community bathroom, doors, lift, community area and car park to complete the temple.

But I think also what has occurred in the United Kingdom is that, when Tony Blair was Prime Minister, Baba Ji spoke to him, and they obtained government funding to ensure that the school was actually built in the United Kingdom. What happened after that is that it is going to become one of the first Sikh universities in Europe. So this is the trajectory I think that this fantastic facility in Lynbrook can follow. The fact that his Holiness has actually spent so much time coming down to Australia, motivating his community and talking to political leaders, like myself, means that we can bring this project to fruition, on a collective basis not just on a singular basis.

It is an iconic temple which is yet to be completed, by importantly a school facility also. We have had a lot of discussion about multiculturalism and what it means. But I can tell you what I see with the Sikh community. I see a community that wants to create a facility primarily for the rest of the community not just for the Sikh community. As I said, it is a community that was concerned and wanted to talk to me about their community safety before it became a very popular issue. But it is now a community that wants to build facilities so that they can feed the poor and the homeless. They have a situation where they will feed people on a consistent basis if they can get the centre up and running properly.

This is the story of Australia. It is a great story, and I will do what I can to assist the Sikh community to complete their mission and their journey on behalf of the community.

Agriculture Industry

Mr BROAD (Mallee) (19:43): I want to talk a bit about agriculture, because it is something very dear to my heart and because it is also something that is very dear to the economic driver of my community. We have been instrumental—largely under the leadership of Andrew Robb, who is sadly now no longer with us in the parliament and now under Steve Ciobo, the current Minister for Trade, Tourism and Investment—in developing market opportunities. Market opportunities are so important if we are going to drive prosperity.

We have delivered the free trade agreement with China, Japan and South Korea. I had the privilege of being in Tokyo and Beijing in the last couple of weeks and I can see the benefits of those agreements. We are working on a good outcome for water. What Minister Joyce is doing is trying to bring communities together and deliver the Murray-Darling Basin Plan in a way that also ensures that there is prosperity for our farmers through access to water.

We are building the freight links. We have recently committed \$220 million to upgrade the Murray Basin Rail Project. That \$220 million partners with \$220 million from the state government to help us get our product to the port from where we grow it in the north of the state of Victoria.

The fourth key element to driving prosperity is access to workers. I just want to touch on the backpacker tax for a little bit. We have a source of workers in our horticultural industry that is made up of some backpackers; it is made up of some Pacific Island workers, it is made up of some locals, it is made up of some contractors. It is important that we have a mix of workers. Ultimately, a backpacker does not take a Australian job. If you get someone who is going to work out in the field and actually pick the fruit and put it in a box, you now have a product that is in a box that someone can market—someone can drive a truck, someone can fix that truck, someone can work as an exporter, someone can be a marketer, a developer and

a grower of that product. Without the person that is going to pick the product, the whole system falls down.

I have looked at the backpacker tax issue through four key caveats, and I think these caveats remain fair and consistent. Thirty-two-and-a-half per cent tax fails the fairness test. It gets up to over 40 degrees. You cannot expect a person to be out picking fruit in over 40 degrees and then giving a third of that money to the government. It just fails the fairness test. Also, though, a foreign worker should pay at least as much tax as an Australian. Currently, a backpacker is paying no tax. They take a tax out at 13 per cent, but they claim that back and get no tax. That does not pass the fairness test. So the argument that a backpacker should even pay 10½ per cent tax, which is what the Labor Party are putting forward with the amendments from Jacqui Lambie, means that an Australian worker is still paying more tax than a backpacker. So that does not pass the fairness test.

The third is: the employment of backpackers must be easy to administer. Wherever possible we should be trying to take the red tape and the workload off people who employ people. The fourth is: the workforce numbers must keep coming. This is where I want to touch on the amendments that Senator Xenophon is suggesting to the backpacker tax and to add my weight to those. What he is saying is: currently a person who is receiving unemployment benefits, or currently a person who is receiving a pension, can lose much of those benefits if they go out and do a seasonal work job. I have a strong belief that the best way for a person to get a job is to have a job. So if we can make it easier for a person to be engaged in the workforce, they are more likely to then stay engaged in the workforce.

I think finding a landing of anywhere between 15 and 19 per cent is fair. I think encouraging and making it easier for people to work a season—and many of our pensioners in my patch would come out and work a season—and not lose their benefits would also be fair. I think we need to land this one. Ultimately, the great opportunities there are only realised if we have people who are going to go out and work in our fields. We can grow the economy. We must give certainly. I think, and I hope, the parliament is big enough to resolve this one clearly.

Australian Defence Force Parliamentary Program

Ms RISHWORTH (Kingston) (19:48): The Australian Defence Force Parliamentary Program offers a unique opportunity to parliamentarians like myself to gain a better understanding of the roles our ADF play in supporting Australia's national interests in the world.

I was joined by my parliamentary colleagues the member for Bruce, the member for Solomon and the member for Dunkley, as well as Senator James Patterson and Senator Skye Kakoschke-Moore, in visiting our ADF personnel recently on operations in the Middle East. The ADF currently have four major operations in the Middle East, undertaking missions on land, in the air and at sea. These include Operation OKRA, Operation HIGHROAD, Operation MANITOU and Operation ACCORDIAN. In the short two-to-three-day briefing and training we received on arrival—which everyone deploying into the Middle East theatre of operations is required to undertake—it quickly became obvious to me that there is a great deal of complexity and skill involved in Australia's ongoing contribution to these operations. The ADF leave nothing to chance, and I witnessed their professionalism and commitment to

ensuring our deploying troops have all of the training, preparation and support to undertake their missions safely.

Seeing firsthand the main logistics hub for the Middle Eastern region gave me a great deal of insight into the scale of support needed to ensure that Australia's success occurs in the offshore operations. As we visited the various missions, I was struck by the range of different roles our people are conducting in these joint operations and the diverse range of skills inherent to our Defence Force personnel.

I would particularly like to mention the ADF personnel I met who are supporting the air campaign in Iraq and Syria. Their commitment to assisting the Iraqi forces in the fight against Daesh is a significant Australian contribution to the coalition effort. What especially struck me was the seriousness and professionalism with which they undertook their duties. These personnel clearly understood the grave consequences of their actions, always holding themselves accountable, constantly considering all of the second- and third-order effects on the civilian population before making operational decisions. This was an overwhelmingly proud and humbling experience for me that I was able to hear about firsthand.

I would also like to mention 7 RAR, who are based in my home state of South Australia at Edinburgh. The regiment is playing an exceptionally important force protection role for our military, mentoring teams in Afghanistan. I was surprised to learn that several of the young 7 RAR soldiers that I spoke to were undertaking their first operational deployment overseas. It was surprising because I could not fault their professionalism and the pride they took in their mission. I also spoke personally with our military mentors who are helping to rebuild and professionalise the Afghan army officer corps training at the Afghan National Army Officer Academy in the Qargha area of Kabul. Our mentors are doing an excellent job to train the trainers at the academy, ensuring that these officers are equipped to provide military and leadership training to future Afghan army officers. This initiative will clearly enable the government of Afghanistan to have a professional and well-trained army to ensure the future security of their country. There was an overwhelming sense of gratitude from the Afghan trainers, who expressed to me their appreciation of the guidance our Australian officers provide them. In concert with the deployed UK forces, it is clear to me that our military mentors are making a valuable contribution to the future of a safe and secure Afghanistan.

The time spent on the ADF PP enabled me to see firsthand the investment Australia is making in the Middle East, and our efforts and contribution are significant. Most importantly, I would like to acknowledge how hard our ADF personnel are working, both in Australia and on deployment, to support and prosecute the mission we have set them in the Middle East region. Their ongoing commitment and sacrifice—and that of their families—does not go unrecognised by this parliament. I pay tribute to them. Being away from loved ones is extremely difficult and we thank our ADF personnel for the sacrifice they make. I would like to thank Major Gregory Cranswick and Major Briana Sterling for their support. The experience was incredibly humbling. What I can honestly say to this House is that, witnessing our ADF personnel, I have never been more proud to be Australian.

Bihary, Mr Josh**Hoad, Mr Lew**

Mr ALEXANDER (Bennelong) (19:53): Tonight, I would like to recognise and express my gratitude to two friends and two mentors. Firstly, I would like to talk about Josh Bihary, who for the last six years has been my senior adviser—and I will tell you how we got started. On the day before we came here for the very first time and I knew very little about this place, Josh got married. The honeymoon had to wait and Josh travelled the next day and commenced his training of this wayward child in the art of politics. I would come up with ideas; Josh would get the job to deliver them. We saw kids being left out of activities in playgrounds and we came up with the idea of introducing table tennis so kids of different ethnic backgrounds could play with each other and engage. We went to Hyundai with business plans that they accepted, we got table tennis tables put in all 40 schools in the electorate and kids engage in this great sport. We brought the Bennelong Cup here just last week, where eight countries played at the highest level of table tennis. We saw problems in small businesses, where big companies were squeezing them out, and we invented this thing called the Bennelong Village Businesses campaign. We got discounts on advertising, we letter-dropped and we promoted small business. We saw a problem with people with disability not being able to find work. We came up with an idea called Bennelong Gardens and we got the land for them to establish commercial market gardens on and give themselves employment and that independence.

When we were writing the maiden speech, we came across the fact that we had never had a plan of spatial settlement and that we had effected this incredible imbalance of settlement. We have been working on that one ever since. We have come up with the concepts of retrofitting infrastructure and effecting decentralisation through high-speed rail. Many people laugh at high-speed rail, but this can be funded through value capture. Five years ago, when we started talking about value capture, nobody knew what value capture was. Now you will not see one day where a newspaper does not refer to value capture and the power of value capture to retrofit infrastructure into our cities. Infrastructure should be associated with land planning and the combination is dynamic because it uplifts the value of land that you can then capture the value from and create a sustainable funding model.

With Josh's integrity and friendship, you would not meet a more honest, decent and hardworking man. Now his marriage has a greater chance of going much longer, until that awful moment when death might part us! They have two beautiful children and I apologise to Karen!

This week, I have the great pleasure of having Jenny Hoad staying in my house. On Friday, we will play tennis. That is not that unusual, except Jenny is 84 years of age. I am so pleased to have Jenny, who is Lew Hoad's widow, stay with me. Today is Lew Hoad's birthday. Lew Hoad, in many people's minds, is the greatest tennis player that ever lived. Pancho Gonzales, who was the world champion eight times, said he had no say in the outcome of matches when he played Lew—and then he would say some expletives about what he thought of Lew and what he would do to him on a tennis court. Rod Laver, who was the greatest player of all in many people's minds and won the grand slam twice, said he had no say in the outcome of matches when he played Lew and he thought Lew was the greatest player of all time. When Rod won the grand slam in 1962 and turned professional, Lew had all but retired. Lew went into training for six weeks and the tennis twins Ken Rosewall, the world professional

champion, and Lew played a series of 13 matches each against Rod Laver, the man who had just won the grand slam. Ken dominated Rod and won 11 out of those 13 matches. Lew dominated Rod to a greater extent and won all 13 matches—and continued to dominate Rod every time they played.

When I was a young boy of 10 years old, Lew gave us a tennis camp. He taught me rhythm, evaluating shots and the essence of professional or percentage tennis. He would come out to our house and look in on how I was going on the way to waterski at the Narrabeen lakes. He was always friendly and engaging whenever I ran into him at Wimbledon or the French Open. He remained a friend. Tragically, leukaemia took him at the age of 60. We have agreed to do a 100-kilometre walk around Bennelong, as we did for motor neurone disease last year, to raise awareness of the great Lew Hoad and raise awareness of and raise money for leukaemia.

Timms, Ms Michelle

Mr ANDREWS (Menzies) (19:58): I rise to acknowledge tonight one of Australia's greatest sportswomen, Michelle Timms, who just recently was inducted as the first legend in the Australian Basketball Hall of Fame and, indeed, prior to that was named in the international federation hall of fame, only the second Australian to be named after the male player Andrew Gaze. Michelle started with the Bulleen Boomers in my electorate in 1984 and completed her career as a player with the Phoenix Mercury from 1997 to 2001. She subsequently became a coach, most recently the assistant coach of the Chinese national team. She made 264 appearances for the Australian national team. She participated in four world championships and three Olympic Games, winning a silver medal and a bronze medal. She has just returned to Bulleen, where, indeed, her daughter is now playing basketball and hoping to emulate her mother.

Known as 'Timmsy', Michelle, at just five feet four inches tall, was one of the grittiest players in world basketball. The point guard player pioneered the involvement of Australians at a world level. With her familiar crop of short hair, she was one of the most feared competitors on the international scene. Let's pay tribute to Michelle Timms for her wonderful career.

House adjourned at 20:00

NOTICES

The following notices were given:

Mr Morrison: to present a Bill for an Act to amend the *Corporations Act 2001*, and for related purposes.

Mr Frydenberg: to present a Bill for an Act to amend the *Hazardous Waste (Regulation of Exports and Imports) Act 1989*, and for related purposes.

Ms Ley: to present a Bill for an Act to amend the *National Health Act 1953*, and for related purposes.

Mr Tehan: to present a Bill for an Act to amend the law relating to veterans' entitlements and military rehabilitation and compensation, and for related purposes.

Wednesday, 23 November 2016

The DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Bird) took the chair at 10:00.

CONSTITUENCY STATEMENTS

Franklin Electorate: Centrelink and Medicare

Ms COLLINS (Franklin) (10:00): Members in this place might remember earlier this year when a Centrelink and Medicare office in my electorate was slated for closure by the coalition government. Senator Catryna Bilyk and I ran a community campaign and had a petition with more than 3,000 signatures, and we managed to get the government to backflip on its decision to close the Centrelink office. What they did was co-locate the Centrelink office with a Service Tasmania office, which is a one-stop shop for state government services. We raised some concerns with the minister at the time and with local Liberal Senators Eric Abetz and David Bushby about the services that would be at this new Service Tasmania co-location with Centrelink and Medicare.

In March I got a letter back from the Minister for Human Services, Alan Tudge, where the minister assured me in writing that the agreement with Service Tasmania 'will result in no change to the service offering for Kingston residents'. Sadly, there has been a change in services—and not for the better. Both my office and Senator Bilyk's office have been overwhelmed with concerned people talking about the lack of privacy in the new centre, talking about their concerns about not being able to get the services that they once accessed at the previous Kingston office, and talking about how they are now being told that they need to travel into Hobart for those services.

What I do not think the minister fully understood at the time is that the Centrelink and Medicare office is the only Medicare office south of Hobart for many thousands of residents, and we are talking about areas where there is not a lot of good public transport. The Centrelink office in Hobart is poorly located and not on a public transport route. It is very difficult for residents from the Huon and Kingborough areas generally to get access to Centrelink and Medicare services in Hobart. We are so concerned about this that Senator Bilyk and I have written to the whole Kingston and Blackmans Bay communities asking them to fill out a survey about their experiences at that new Centrelink and Medicare office.

What we want to do is go back to the minister and remind him of his undertaking, remind him that he said there would be no reduction in services and prove to him that there has indeed been a substantial reduction in services. What this government is doing to people who are relying on Medicare and Centrelink services is not good enough. They should be ashamed of what is happening to this very important public service that so many of our citizens rely on. When they go to the doctor and they need a reimbursement—yes, it is all moving towards being electronic, but there are times when you need a face-to-face interview. There are times when you cannot resolve your issue over the phone or on an app, or the app is down or you have to wait forever in a queue—for several hours sometimes—on the phone to Centrelink and Medicare. Sometimes you need that face-to-face interaction, and the residents in my area of Kingston, Blackmans Bay and down the Huon deserve that service. I am going to keep fighting for them to get it.

Water Safety

Mr EVANS (Brisbane) (10:03): As we move into summer, as temperatures rise and the school holidays start, Australians will be following a long-time tradition in flocking to the water—pools, the beach, creeks, rivers and dams all around our continent. I would like to take this opportunity to raise the awareness of Brisbane families, and all families around Australia, of the importance of water safety. Australia, sadly, has some of the worst drowning statistics of any country around the world. It should not surprise anybody to know that the drownings are most likely to occur over the summer period. In the 12 months to 30 June this year, Australia recorded about 280 drownings—in other words, about one a day—and 66 of those fatalities unfortunately were in Queensland. Far too many of those who drowned were kids.

I have spoken previously in this chamber about the great work of Kidsafe Queensland in their work to raise awareness around kids' safety and reducing accidents around the home. I want to commend all parents who are taking steps to ensure their children learn to swim. Last week I was able to visit a local business in Brisbane teaching swimming and water safety to children from the earliest ages. I met with Ben Holland and his very energetic and passionate team at the Aquatic Achievers swim school based in Paddington, who are doing great work preparing our kids—and their parents—for the pool, beach and creeks this summer.

In encouraging all parents to consider talking to their kids about water safety, taking them to swim schools and enjoying the summer safely, I would also highlight some other benefits of swimming in terms of giving kids a chance to be more active and fit. The recent Active Healthy Kids Australia report card gave Australian kids a D minus for overall physical activity levels. National data indicates that only about one in five Aussie kids is meeting the daily physical activity guidelines, which recommend about 60 minutes a day of physical activity. I hope we can inspire more families to take advantage of their local swim schools for the fitness benefits and also because every drowning that occurs is one too many.

I also note that earlier this year the Turnbull government, in conjunction with the Australian Water Safety Council, launched the Australian Water Safety Strategy 2016-2020. The strategy outlines priority areas where various water safety bodies, governments at different levels and other interested stakeholders can work together to prevent drownings. It aims to reduce fatal drownings by 50 per cent by the year 2020.

In closing, I would like to commend the work of the team at the Aquatic Achievers swim school in Paddington. I would like to give a shout-out to the Queensland surf lifesavers; to Kidsafe and the many other water safety bodies doing great work around Australia; and to the Hon. Sussan Ley, the Minister for Health and Aged Care and Minister for Sport, for her role in launching the Australian Water Safety Strategy. Most of all, I would like to dedicate this speech to the parents helping their kids to learn to swim. I urge all families, when taking to the water this summer, to be safe.

Pensions and Benefits: Pension Assets Test

Mr CONROY (Shortland) (10:06): On 1 January 2017 the Turnbull government's cuts to the pension assets test will kick in. These will cut the age pension for 330,000 elderly Australians. Nearly 3,000 pensioners in Shortland will have their pension cut or cancelled. The average reduction in income is nearly \$4,000 per annum and, since over a quarter of the residents in Shortland are over the age of 60, this will have a profound impact in my

electorate. It is another example of this government's appalling attack on pensioners in our community. Pensioners who have done the right thing throughout their lives, pensioners who have made a great contribution to our community, are under relentless attack from this government, which does not care about them.

Independent analysis shows that these new cuts will affect half of all new retirees within 10 years. More than a million retirees will be affected by these cuts, including 700,000 people who will retire in the next decade. Any pensioner home owner couple with more than \$375,000 in assets will have their part pension cut, and any single home owner pensioner with more than \$250,000 in assets will have their part pension cut. Currently, for every \$1,000 of assets that you own over the assets-free area your pension is reduced by \$1.50 per fortnight. From 1 January next year it will be \$3. So the most profound impact of this change to the assets test will not be on pensioners at the top end with regard to assets. It will be on those in the middle: pensioners who might have somewhere between \$300,000 and \$500,000 worth of assets, which is not an unreasonable amount if they have, say, sold up in Sydney and retired to my region to enjoy the much better quality of life. They will be profoundly impacted by these changes.

I am proud that Labor and I voted against the Liberal government's changes to the pension assets test. We opposed it in parliament. Unfortunately, the Greens and Liberals did, yet again, another dirty deal to cut the pension. There will be another impact on 190,000 pensioners if the Prime Minister gets his way and limits overseas travel for Australian pensioners.

Another issue is the failure of this government to update deeming rates in line with falling interest rates. The government has failed to adjust the deeming rates for more than 18 months despite the official interest rate falling from 2¼ per cent to 1½ per cent. This is another pension cut by stealth.

I am proud to be part of the Labor Party, which introduced the pension and gave pensioners the greatest rise ever. Those on the other side, the Liberal-National government, are only concerned with cutting the pension while at the same time giving a \$48 billion tax cut to their corporate mates. Yet again it demonstrates the skewed priorities of those on the other side: cutting pensions while giving a tax cut to the richest people in our community. I say: shame on Mr Turnbull and his government!

Bradfield Electorate: Stronger Communities Program

Mr FLETCHER (Bradfield—Minister for Urban Infrastructure) (10:09): I am very pleased to rise to speak about the Hornsby Eco Garden. This project in Hornsby is funded in part by the Turnbull government's Stronger Communities Program. It will be built on a site on the corner of Sherbrooke Road and Burdett Street in Hornsby, within my electorate, and will give members of the local community a chance to learn some of the principles of permaculture and to generally improve their health and wellbeing.

I want to congratulate Hornsby council for the work it has done in supporting this important initiative. I particularly also want to congratulate all of the members of the community who developed this concept, secured the support of Hornsby council and then put forward a compelling grant application under the Stronger Communities Program. I had the chance to meet a number of those involved in developing and championing this concept at the

future site of the Hornsby Eco Garden just a few Saturdays ago. I was extremely impressed with the plans that the community has for the development of this garden and their vision of this garden as being a place where people who live in the surrounding area, including those who might live in apartments and who do not have a garden of their own, to come and enjoy the garden and participate in planting, tending and harvesting of the plants that will form part of this garden.

This is exactly the kind of initiative which the Stronger Communities Program is designed to support and I am very pleased at the range and calibre of projects which are being supported under the Stronger Communities Program in Bradfield. Some of the other projects which are being supported include the funding of a Meals on Wheels delivery van for \$20,000, improvements to the Triple H broadcasting studio at Waitara for over \$6,000 and the purchase of portable goals for the Northern Suburbs Football Association.

There is a consistent theme across all of these projects, including the Hornsby Eco Garden, which is that this funding supports the work of dedicated members of the community, typically meeting needs which they have identified and which they have taken action to address. This is an example of government funding, in a modest way, supporting very worthwhile community initiatives. I congratulate all involved in the Hornsby Eco Garden and all of the other projects that have secured funding under the Stronger Communities Program in Bradfield.

Kennedy Electorate: Water

Mr KATTER (Kennedy) (10:12): The annual streamflow of the Flinders River, one of Australia's biggest rivers, is 6.6 million megalitres. This means that in some years it runs much greater than that and in some years it runs less. The federal parliament and Senate unanimously resolved, with the support of the Greens, to allocate around six million megalitres for the Murray-Darling waters for irrigation. This is around 27 per cent of 21 million megalitres streamflow in the Murray-Darling. Applied to the Flinders River, this formula would provide over two million megalitres for irrigation.

However, in an extraordinary and appalling decision, the Queensland water resources department of the Queensland government has decided that only 350,000 megalitres will be allocated. Infinitely worse still, it has allocated that 350,000 megalitres to absentee landlord corporations—two of the biggest agricultural corporations in Australia, whose shareholders include two of the richest families in Australia. In sharp contrast, the Hughenden irrigation development corporation, a type of cooperative, requested 200,000 megalitres of the two million megalitres that should be available for irrigation. Within 10 days of the Hughenden community benefit application being received by the Queensland minister—after the government had sat for 15 months on the application—he rushed the golden handshake for these two big corporations though to a completed allocation.

Water is sold in New South Wales at \$850 a megalitre. If 230,000 has been allocated to these corporations, as we have heard, then clearly they have received \$180 million of allocation: a decision by water resources and their minister to enrich the rich with a \$100 million golden handshake and to leave the poor infinitely poorer without this water. Since QWRD is only making 350,000 megalitres for allocation, this water is taken, by definition, off the Hughenden and Cloncurry communities, which desperately need that water, and people who live in North Queensland and given to two absentee landlord corporations, both

of which may or may not be sold to the Chinese in the near future. Whilst there is no conceivable way one could justify the minister's decision, nor its curious timing, there can be no earthly justification for the actions of QWRD.

The history of mismanagement has cost the people of Queensland over \$1,000 million: the Tully-Millstream debacle; the Traveston dam; \$300 million in inquiries into northern water schemes, with no schemes having ever been built; the Gold Coast desalination plant; and, worst of all, the Cubbie Station decision. A \$130 million golden handshake was given to one person, and the officer enabling and facilitating that then moved out to take a position of employment with Cubbie Station. Probably the worst aspect of this decision was that it led to a corruptive water allocation system on the Murray-Darling. *(Time expired)*

HealthInfoNet

Mr GOODENOUGH (Moore) (10:15): Last week I had the pleasure of meeting Professor Neil Drew, Director of the Australian Indigenous HealthInfoNet, based at Edith Cowan University, who gave me a briefing on his work. I would also like to acknowledge the distinguished contribution of Professor Colleen Hayward AM, Pro-Vice-Chancellor and head of Kurongkurl Katitjin, ECU's Centre for Indigenous Education and Research. It is commendable to have such a leading service operating from our local university.

Since its establishment in 1997, HealthInfoNet has been addressing the need for policymakers and health practitioners to have access to the best and most up-to-date knowledge and information about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health. An important focus of the service is on the development of knowledge exchange tools and resources that synthesise research and other information related to a wide variety of health issues. These resources provided a time-poor health workforce with the capacity to quickly and effectively enhance their knowledge and skills to guide their everyday work in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

With over a million visits per year to its web resource, 5,000 easily searchable pages of resources and a bibliography of over 35,000 publications, HealthInfoNet is the go-to web resource for anyone working or studying in the sector. Its suite of knowledge exchange tools and material includes an annual overview of Indigenous health summarising over 300,000 health research papers, surveillance data reports and national statistics. It has published 16 peer reviewed health topic reviews as well as numerous plain language reviews and newsletters. Knowledge exchange materials now include ebooks, animated infographics and short films. The service is unique in the world, the first resource of its kind, and it is guided by a strong commitment to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives. It has formal partnerships with a wide range of Indigenous peak health organisations and is guided by over 140 experts on a wide range of health topics. It is recognised internationally and is the winner of many national awards.

The HealthInfoNet is aligned with key government objectives addressing key policy and strategic goals identified in national policy documents, including the *National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health plan 2013-2023* and the *National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Workforce Strategic Framework (2011-2015)*. *(Time expired)*

Lalor Electorate: Lalor Heroes

Ms RYAN (Lalor—Opposition Whip) (10:18): I have the honour and the privilege to serve the community where I was born and raised and I work hard every day to serve that community, but I am lucky because my community make that easy. It is easy to get up in the morning and go to work every day fighting for a community filled with passionate volunteers and people who work so hard together to build a community. I remember Werribee when it was a small town. Now it is one of the fastest growing growth corridors in the country and a large city of over 200,000, but we still have not lost that sense of responsibility to and for one another that I knew as a child. People in my part of the world do not have a lot, but I think that makes them more generous. When you have gone without yourself, you are more likely to feel the pain of someone doing it tougher than you and give them a hand, and this is reflected in our community everyday.

Last month, I had the privilege of holding the third annual Lalor Heroes Awards, where we celebrated many of those local communities, and 27 members of our community who are active volunteers. I want to share those names and have them said aloud in this chamber: Sunil Abbot of Club 60 Tarneit Inc.; Greg Archer from the Rothwell Cemetery Trust and Little River CFA; Wesley Armstrong from the Wyndham Netball Association; Fabian Baynes from the Wyndham Ultimate frisbee; John Campbell of the Wyndham Environment and Community Park; Ritesh Chugh, Australia India Welfare and Cultural Society; Tim Daniels, Wyndham Environment and Community Park; Kerry Flaherty of the Werribee Tennis Club; Sam Garrick of the Werribee Concert Band; Wen Jian, Laverton Community Centre; Ron Jones, Carpet Bowles for All Abilities; Wendy Knight, Little River Lions Club; Jeffrey Lai, Wyndham Community and Education Centre along with Margaret Mahony; Trevor Murphy, Werribee Softball Association; Beverly Ahearn, Wyndham Diabetes Support Group; Geoff Parker, Wynbay Football Club; Vic Pilch, Vietnam Veterans Association Melbourne West Sub Branch; Les Porter, Wyndham Rotary Club; Penelope Renden, Wynbay Blue Light Disco; Bronwyn Riddell, Shoestring Gardening Inc.; Harold Rixon, Wynbay Football Club; Mathew Taylor, Werribee Concert Band; Madhav Vaddepalli, Australia India Welfare and Cultural Society; Glen Van Boven, Nippon Den Kempo Go Ju Ryu Karate Club; Steve Ward, Wyndham Environmental and Community Garden; and Leigh Younger, Point Cook Monkey Girl Guides.

These people were singled out on this very special night by their peers for their work—the work that builds community everyday by sharing their passion and passing it on, often to the next generation. We build community everyday in the seat of Lalor by sharing our experiences and working together to build that community.

Page Electorate: Schools

Mr HOGAN (Page) (10:22): Copmanhurst Public School holds a special place in the hearts of all who went there and recently many students, including some who were there during the 1930s, travelled from far and wide to be at the school to celebrate its 125th anniversary. Also there were former principals Francis Kean and John Molloy, along with current principal Andrew Patterson. To organise this event, a public meeting was held at the Rest Point family hotel, and from there the community got behind the celebrations. I thank Leone Roberts, Don Frame, Philippa Page and Elizabeth Faye from the museum; also the P&C's Franca Scalia, Paul Clausen and Terri and Peter Quiring; and the school's Rhonda

Dunkel, Latasha Andrews and Tami Parnell. Also helping out were Tod Ensby, Anne Simkus and Colleen Johnson. I thank everyone who organised this, and happy birthday to Copmanhurst Public School.

I donate a book to all schools that are happy to accept it for a student for a reason nominated by the school. Today, I would like to acknowledge those whom I know about: Heidi Pitman, Corindi Public School; Hayley Hutchin, Tuntable Creek school; Merlin Bennett, Richmond River campus; Cormac Mercer, Trinity Catholic College; Amellia Andrews, Goonellabah Public School; Kate Mitchell, Alstonville High; Hayley Mitchell from Kadina; Taylah McMahon from Jiggi; Latrell Hickling, Old Bonalbo Public School; Hannah Czarnecki, Kyogle Public School; Jacinta Berhagen, Bonalbo Central; Will Harris from Eltham Public; Jasper Delman from St Joseph's at Alstonville; Roxanne O'Halloran, Coramba Public School; Patrick Williams-Hardy from Lowanna; Leo Nicholls, Tucabia Public School; Billy Sutherland, Woolgoolga High School; Quinn Lamerton from Larnook; Matilda Sheehan, St Joseph's at South Grafton; Lucinda Quinn from Wyrallah Public; Dominic Scholl from Manifold; Jorja Hodgton, Wollongbar Public School; Chad from Hernani; Oliver Hausen from Rukenvale; Breeana Richardson from Wyrallah Road; Isobel Stockton from St Francis Xavier at Woolgoolga; Izabella Bennett from Dundurrabin; Jessica Deleuien from Gillwinga; Caleb Ford from South Grafton; Sharhi Ware from Gulmarrad; Jack Smith from Lismore South; Sophie Lynch, St Mary's high in Casino; Liam Sommerville from Blakebrook; Payton Summers from Stratheden; Daniel Frey from Nimbin Central; and Heath O'Malley from Mummulgum.

Melbourne Ports Electorate: Arts

Mr DANBY (Melbourne Ports) (10:25): The electorate of Melbourne Ports is the heart of Victoria's, indeed Australia's, arts community. Some of our major institutions are located there, including the Melbourne Recital Centre, the Malthouse Theatre, the Australian Centre for Contemporary Art, the Arts Centre Melbourne and the National Gallery of Victoria. Some of our educational facilities include the Victorian College of the Arts, The Australian Ballet School, the Victorian College of the Arts Secondary School and our beloved Australian National Academy of Music. On 13 November I was at ANAM to attend a community event that they had put on, featuring their Symphony Orchestra conducted by the dynamic young Venezuelan conductor Ilyich Rivas, accompanied by the equally gifted Elsternwick vocalist Lior, along with staff and guests in a breathtaking performance for the local community.

All of these institutions are feeling the pressure from this federal government's cuts to the arts. I have spoken about it many times in this parliament. In most cases the state governments are being forced to pick up shortfalls, as is being done with the Australian National Academy of Music. Anyone who has been to St Kilda knows the famous National Theatre on the corner of Barkly and Carlisle streets, which, after the Second World War, used to be called the Victory Theatre. A wonderful ballet school operates from there—my niece, Shani, attended—and, of course, it has highly developed diplomas for high-end drama workers and dancers.

The Australian National Memorial Theatre's Susan Thacore and I met education minister Birmingham to discuss funding cuts affecting diplomas in acting and ballet. Minister Birmingham advised us that the current model will not be revised for several months and that state governments skills tests need to be looked at, to see whether or not the artists who graduated from there can continue to get VET support. I understand the states are reviewing

their skill lists; however, it may prove too late for some students, as two states are required to list before VET-FEE HELP becomes available.

The National Theatre Melbourne Drama School graduates include Kat Stewart and Richard Harris from *Offspring*, Richard Cawthorne, Lawrence Mooney and Bella Heathcote. The National Theatre's ballet graduates include: the great Amber Scott, who is currently principal artist at The Australian Ballet and board director of The National Theatre; soloist with The Australian Ballet Jarryd Madden; and Alice Top, a highly awarded choreographer who also graduated from The National Theatre. In the last couple of weeks three of the advanced diploma students have been snapped up for professional caress at the West Australian Ballet and the Singapore Ballet.

This institution obviously produces the highest quality drama workers, actors and ballet dancers. It is not the kind of institution that should have been cut back as a result of the minister's campaign against colleges that are producing people from invented courses at the last minute. (*Time expired*)

Canning Electorate: Dawesville Chemmart Pharmacy

Mr HASTIE (Canning) (10:28): In March this year I became aware that the Dawesville Chemmart Pharmacy, in my electorate of Canning, was unable to dispense medications listed on the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme, making it economically vulnerable as a small business. More importantly, it was unable to perform its primary function as a chemist of providing a basic service to the local community, a community where many people rely upon their local chemist for their health.

This was just ridiculous. 'Why?' you may ask. The reason for this is that the pharmacy did not meet the requirements that would allow it to be issued with a PBS approval number. These requirements state: 'At all relevant times there is, within 500 metres, in a straight line from the proposed premises, a supermarket with a gross leasable area of at least 1,000 square metres.' The closest supermarket to the pharmacy at the Dawesville Shopping Centre met this requirement, under the definition of 'gross leasable area', but fell 25 square metres short under the definition of 'gross leasable area retail'. In other words, the pharmacy could not dispense PBS medication because the nearest shopping centre fell short of the size requirement by 25 square metres. I call this quibbling. This decision left the community of 7,215 people without suitable access to PBS medications. It is no surprise, then, that when the Dawesville Chemmart started a petition to have this decision overruled, it ended up with 2,300 signatures—over 30 per cent of the local population. My office also received a number of letters, emails and phone calls about this matter. Many elderly residents cannot easily travel the 18-kilometre round trip to the nearest PBS-approved pharmacy.

I want to congratulate the local community for their leadership in fighting this regulation. It shows they have strong, grassroots local leadership. But more importantly, they do not wait for government to fix things, nor do they tolerate bad regulation. To me and to the many people affected by this decision, this was an example of red tape getting the way of common sense. The coalition's priority is to encourage job growth; to encourage small business and to protect Australians from senseless regulation that negatively impacts their lives. That is why I was very pleased to announce that thanks to the Hon. Susan Ley, Minister for Health, the Dawesville Chemmart pharmacy last week received confirmation that it will soon be able to dispense PBS medications. This means that local people will be able to access PBS

medicines, and it will also protect that small business—and its employees—from closure. Common sense has prevailed, the Commonwealth government has acted, and the people of Dawesville are the better for it.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Bird): I understand that it is the wish of honourable members that constituency statements continue for a further period of 60 minutes. There being no objection, the chair will allow that course to be followed.

Perth Electorate: Pride Parade

Mr HAMMOND (Perth) (10:31): I rise to discuss a wonderful and momentous celebration that occurred on the weekend in my electorate of Perth, within the City of Perth. It occurs every year, and on 19 November it was time for the annual Pride Parade to commence—there is a reason why my voice has been a bit hoarse in the course of this week! I am very proud to have marched alongside my comrades in Rainbow Labor in the parade. The parade was a wonderful occasion that started on Brisbane Street, went down the heart of William Street in Northbridge and then finished on Lake Street. There were thousands of people involved in the parade, and the overwhelming theme of the parade was 'Love wins'. Under the banner of 'Love wins,' I was very proud to march alongside other members of the Labor Party—my federal colleagues from this place, my state colleagues, and also local candidates in the upcoming state election, including our candidate from Mount Lawley, Simon Millman—alongside a Rainbow Labor banner, proudly advocating for marriage equality.

What resonated all the way through that march was the feedback from the community—mums and dads, kids, grandmas and grandpas—all of whom were only too happy to join in the chorus advocating for marriage equality. You see, Madam Deputy Speaker, it is overwhelmingly clear that, just because the legislation may have slipped off the radar in this place, the desire and sentiment in our community to make marriage equality a reality has not diminished one single bit. There was uniform endorsement for Labor's position, as we proudly marched along the streets on Saturday night advocating for marriage equality. The reason for the hoarseness of my voice is because I started the chant—perhaps not being the most seasoned campaigner!—right at the start of the march, before realising that I had to keep my tone and passion up for the entire 45 minutes or so. But I tell you what, it was fantastic. I am glad I went out so hard and so early, and maintained the rage, because every single step along the way was met with a glowing affirmation to my calls: 'What do we want?'—'Marriage equality!' And, 'When do we want it?'—'Right now!' And that was precisely what we said from start to finish. Well done, Rainbow Labor—well done, Sonia; well done, Oskar; well done, Andy; well done, Brock—maintain the rage.

Mackellar Electorate: Stronger Communities Program

Mr FALINSKI (Mackellar) (10:34): I stand before you today to highlight the amazing work that the countless community groups in Mackellar are doing every single day. In the Northern Beaches, we do not wait around for others to fix problems. We come together as a community and we act. That being said, the Turnbull government's message is clear: if you are putting others first, if you get together and make your community a better place, we will support you. Our Stronger Communities Program has seen many recipients of well-deserved funds. The New South Wales Rural Fire Service volunteers on Scotland Island dedicate countless hours and energy to one goal: to help others and strengthen their community. To

support their ongoing service they have received \$25,000 to fund, among other things, a station extension.

I am proud that this government is supporting the Life Education Centre, with close to \$10,000 in funding to help provide preventive drug and health education. I speak not only for myself but for the parents of the Northern Beaches in thanking you for your work.

Living in one of the most beautiful parts of the world we are so lucky to be surrounded by water—beaches, bays and lagoons. The Terrey Hills radio room of Marine Rescue New South Wales are but one of the groups of unsung heroes of our waterways. They tirelessly work to keep all of us safe on the water and will finally be able to upgrade their facilities with over \$8½ thousand in funding.

It would be remiss of me not to thank the thousands of locals, young and old, who take it upon themselves to patrol our 18 beaches every summer we can. Our surf life saving clubs not only keep our beaches safe, but are a place for the community to gather for leadership, for mentorship and, most importantly, for friendship. I am immensely proud that, under the Stronger Communities Program, we have announced close to \$35,000 to upgrade the facilities of surf life saving clubs at Avalon, Collaroy and Palm Beach.

The Australian Outrigger Canoe Racing Association of New South Wales is a cornerstone group for the numerous paddlers in our community. They will now be able to invest in their GPS location and safety equipment with \$8,250 in funding from the Turnbull government. They are the people who ensure all racers have a good and safe time on the water.

Port Adelaide Electorate: Ex-Service Clubs

Mr BUTLER (Port Adelaide) (10:37): Today I rise to thank and recognise RSLs and the other service organisations in the electorate of Port Adelaide for convening the Remembrance Day services on 11 November this year—from Salisbury RSL to the Seaton RSL, from the West Croydon RSL to the Largs RSL. And, being a port electorate, we also host the Naval Association of South Australia and a very active Merchant Navy Association as well. All of those organisations worked very hard to convene Remembrance Day services this year. But I want to pay particular attention to the Semaphore and Port Adelaide RSL service, which I attend on Anzac Day every year. It is the biggest service in the area; at times, it is the biggest service in South Australia. On Anzac Day it convenes 10,000 people at the Semaphore Angel of Peace. The other reason I attend that service is that in 1924, on behalf of the RSL, my great great uncle laid the stone at the angel at the historic settlement at Semaphore.

I want to congratulate the sub-branch and President Colin Johns for their service this year. It was a beautiful service that was very well attended by the community. Importantly, it was attended by a number of the school communities in the area. The Alberton Primary School was out there in force and Lucinda Wetherill made a great speech on behalf of young people in the community. Songs were sung by the Dominican Choir and there was generally a very strong level of support demonstrated by the community. As was pointed out by President Colin Johns, this year is the 100th anniversary of the RSL in Australia. I want to pay tribute to the extraordinary work that that organisation has done on behalf of our nation and, in particular, returned service men and women.

The theme at Semaphore on 11 November was 'Passing the torch'—the importance of RSLs continually thinking about refreshing their organisations. The point was made that, in

spite of that extraordinary work—support services to returned servicemen, advocacy for things like the campaign that my great-uncle Charlie led in the 1920s to ensure that returned servicemen had preference in employment within state public services, and a safe place for returned servicemen to go and be among comrades who understood what they had gone through—it needs to be recognised that it has not been perfect. The Largs Bay RSL in my electorate was set up because returned servicemen from World War II did not feel welcome at the RSL club at Semaphore. My father is a Vietnam vet and was among 50,000 Vietnam vets who too often did not feel welcome when they returned. The message from president Colin Johns was to recognise the importance of looking to the present and the future, as well as the past. We have 40,000 men and women returning from service in the Middle East who must be the subject of our ongoing attention.

Telecommunications

Mr PASIN (Barker) (10:40): I rise to speak on the importance of improving mobile telecommunications across my electorate of Barker. Upon being elected in 2013, I was excited to see the coalition government's Mobile Black Spot Program rolled out across the nation. I looked forward to reaping some of these dividends for regional South Australia. The coalition recognised that, in order to attract investment in telecommunications in rural, regional and remote areas, the government needs to incentivise telecommunication companies to invest in the less densely populated areas of our nation. How naive I was to think that our state government in South Australia might too recognise and appreciate this need!

Round 1 of the Mobile Black Spot Program included a \$100 million commitment from the federal government. In addition to the federal government funding, telecommunications companies contributed \$185 million and state and territory governments contributed \$87 million. I should also pause to acknowledge local government, businesses and community contributions of \$1.7 million. This cooperative approach to improving mobile black spots in regional areas across the country resulted in 499 improved or new mobile phone towers from a pool of \$385 million. Of the \$87 million contributed by state governments to round 1 of the program, the South Australian Labor government contributed a whopping nothing. It is little wonder that South Australia received the bare minimum number of tower upgrades. In my electorate, it was a paltry two.

Compare this to our Victorian neighbours across the border. The Victorian government saw the opportunity that, sadly, the South Australian state Labor government did not. The Victorian government contributed \$21 million to the program. Accordingly, the Victorian government and the Victorians of this great nation received 110 towers. South Australia was competing with other mainland states that had contributed between \$10 million and \$32 million. Our state Labor government put up a total of nothing. Despite a long and dedicated campaign by me and my federal colleague the member for Grey to lobby the state government to contribute a meaningful sum to round 2, Jay Weatherill's Labor government have again failed us, this time putting forward an insulting \$2 million. That was all they could spare to resolve one of the major issues for regional South Australians, at a time when they were spending \$60 million to shave seven minutes off a bus trip from the northern suburbs of Adelaide. The question remains: what will \$2 million translate into for South Australia? I fear it will be very little, and you have Jay Weatherill to blame for it.

Grayndler Electorate: Roads

Mr ALBANESE (Grayndler) (10:43): Today I rise to give voice to the concerns, frustration and suffering of my constituents in the suburb of Haberfield who are being adversely affected by the construction of the WestConnex project. Many have experienced ongoing noise pollution as a result of late-night construction works, as well as increased risk to pedestrian safety caused by large-truck movements in local streets. For several months, residents in Wattle Street and adjoining areas have been suffering from unacceptable late-night noise between 9 pm and 5 am. Older residents and families with small children have been particularly impacted and are finding the ongoing noise pollution very distressing. Residents have informed me that they have continually raised concerns with the Sydney Motorway Corporation and New South Wales Roads and Maritime Services about the impact this noise is having on their sleep patterns and quality of life.

Unfortunately, to date the response from New South Wales government agencies has been hopelessly inadequate. This extraordinary level of late-night noise pollution is certainly not acceptable. I understand that RMS would prefer to carry out works at night in order to minimise daytime disruption to traffic flows and to expedite completion of the project; however, indefinitely sacrificing the quality of life of hundreds of Haberfield residents in order to meet these objectives is unfair and unprofessional. The failure to police limits on the movement of heavy vehicles in local streets in Haberfield is also posing safety risks for residents there.

There are specified routes that trucks working on WestConnex are required to use; however, residents have continually reported to me that drivers are not adhering to this plan. In addition to that, some of the work that has been carried out in streets such as Northcote Street have occurred before the notification has gone out to residents saying that this work will occur. When this was raised with one of the workers on site, he said, 'That way we'll get less complaints'. And they wonder why the community are concerned about these issues! Once quiet streets, including those on which primary schools and childcare centres are located, have now become thoroughfares for large and dangerous vehicles because conditions of consent for this project are not being enforced. Added to that is the anguish caused by the fact that the head of the planning system in New South Wales, Lucy Turnbull, stated that she was not even aware that houses were being demolished in the heritage suburb of Haberfield. The New South Wales government has a responsibility to protect the amenity of people living in Haberfield; they are not doing the right thing, and they must do better.

Goldstein Electorate: Black Rock Life Saving Club

Mr TIM WILSON (Goldstein) (10:46): Today I would like to draw attention to the state of the Black Rock Life Saving Club in the wonderful electorate of Goldstein. Over its 88-year history, the club has consistently provided a safe, friendly and welcoming environment for its members and its visitors. The club's volunteers promote the benefits of healthy outdoor activities, water safety, and an awareness of the beach and the aquatic environment that we are so blessed with on Port Phillip Bay. Last year, Black Rock volunteers performed 2,399 hours of patrol, assisted a beach-loving community with preventative actions and, of course, rescued those people in need. We are indebted to them for their service.

The clubhouse is used by a variety of community groups, including schools, hospitals and sporting teams. We sincerely wish that this could continue, but unfortunately the failing state

of repair and the decaying state of the clubhouse is making it very difficult for this community resource to be used by the people who need it and it may be lost. To address this an active fundraising program is underway, but it remains a mighty challenge given the scale of the work needed. This is because the clubhouse at Black Rock was one of eight clubhouses listed as most in need of urgent renewal by the Life Saving Victoria statewide audit in 2011. Precious resources are being wasted as the decaying facilities are in constant need of repair. The first aid room regularly floods, rendering it unfit for purpose. I have been down to the Black Rock Life Saving Club; I have seen the state of the facilities, and it is truly appalling that people who are trying to save people's lives would have to put up with such circumstances.

Five years after the audit, the clubhouse renewal remains unfunded by the state government, the Andrews government. The president of the club, Simon Tucker, like many, applauds the fact that some clubhouses have been renewed in that time and have been given injections of support to rebuild their facilities. But there is an issue in that there seems to be a very opaque process of allocation of these funds—not necessarily based on what is 'need' first and foremost.

I was astounded the state government was funding solar panels for the existing clubhouses—in fact, it has put some on the Black Rock Life Saving Club, even though the state of facilities is decaying and they need resources and money for the rebuilding of it. The state government needs to take a hard look at its priorities, because when it comes down to it there is an absurdity to approving funding for installing solar panels on a decaying clubhouse that is in dire need of replacement when club volunteers cannot even use basic first aid facilities to the extent we need to make sure we can care for people. I genuinely hope that common sense will be restored, and I can assure the Black Rock Life Saving Club that I will do anything to assist and work with them to fix the state of their clubhouse.

Gumana, Dr Gawirrin, AO

Mr SNOWDON (Lingiari) (10:49): Sadly, on 19 November this year, Dr Gumana AO passed away surrounded by his family and kinship at his homeland of Gangan in North-east Arnhem Land. He was a spiritual man whose life spanned the transition of his country from an exclusively Yolngu reality to the establishment of the Arnhem Land reserve and the birth of land rights. He is mourned by all Yolngu people of East Arnhem Land as the last of the great lawmen in the area, but also as a humble, kind, patient, gentle and friendly man with a razor-sharp mind and a fierce resoluteness in the face of injustice. He was esteemed by all the Balanda who knew him, and I was privileged to know him well.

Dr Gumana spoke about a vengeance massacre of up to 30 of his people at Gangan when he was a young boy. The young Dr Gumana suffered from Hansen's disease, or leprosy, which caused him the loss of a majority of his fingers and toes, and he was sent to the Channel Island leprosarium at around the age of eight. This was a notorious prison-like hellhole of depravation and neglect. Dr Gumana met and married his wife at Channel Island, learned English and became attracted to elements of Christian philosophy. He remained on Channel Island for nine years, and his release may have coincided with the patient walk-off in 1946 in protest at the atrocious conditions. When he returned to Yirrkala, his discovered his parents were not there. Undaunted, he paddled for over 20 days by dug-out canoe with a friend to be finally reunited with them at Numbulwar.

Dr Gumana's life has been one of incredible courage and intellect. Following his return to Yirrkala in the 50s, he acted as a bridge between the European missionaries and his people in resolving philosophical, spiritual and practical issues which arose on a daily basis. In 1968, he assisted the Yirrkala people and acted as an interpreter when they took their protest over land to the courts. He acted as an interpreter and cultural bridge. He played a key part in the homeland movement of the 1970s in developing his homeland of Gangan. He worked closely with Lance Bennett and the Aboriginal Cultural Foundation in organising overseas dance troupes in 1982 and 1988. He was ordained a Uniting Church minister in November 1991.

He said when awarded first prize in the 19th National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art Award in 2002, 'I did not make this larrakitj just for my community, but for the world, so that black and white can walk together.' He was a signatory of the Bark Petition—as a thumbprint annexure—in 1963. He was the last surviving artist of the world-renowned Yirrkala Church Panels, also made in that year, which are housed in the Buku-Larrnggay Mulka Art Centre, which he helped to start in 1976 and which still carries his design as its logo. He was an artist of the Barunga Statement, which hangs in this Parliament House.

In May 2003, he was made an Officer of the Order of Australia. He was a wonderful man, and, when asked what else he would like said about him, he replied, 'Tell them I'm a man from the bush.' He was a significant Australian, by any measure.

Ryan Electorate: Disability Services

Mrs PRENTICE (Ryan—Assistant Minister for Social Services and Disability Services) (10:53): I rise to speak on and recognise some of the truly remarkable community organisations in my electorate of Ryan, providing support, friendship and inclusion to local residents with disability.

The first organisation, with which I recently met after attending their open day, is eWaste Connection. Established by local constituent Monique Lowndes, eWaste Connection is providing skills, support and friendship to their participants. eWaste Connection partners with the Shed West Men's Shed, local schools and other community groups to dismantle and recycle electronic waste including old computers, televisions or obsolete electrical equipment. By partnering volunteer mentors with individuals with disability, eWaste Connection is assisting people with disability to participate in meaningful work. Through this interaction, individuals gain real world experience in work and developing social skills, while reducing the amount of electronic waste being disposed of as landfill.

Another wonderful organisation in my electorate is the McIntyre Centre. The McIntyre Centre, located at Bellbowrie, does amazing work in our community by providing weekly therapeutic equestrian sessions for around 200 young people and children with disabilities. Established in 1964, the centre provides a range of activities and support services for these young people and their families and also receives incredible backing from the community. It was estimated that in 2014-15 more than 10,800 hours were contributed by volunteers to the successful running of the centre. With figures like this it is no wonder the McIntyre Centre is always on the lookout for more volunteers to assist in grooming and feeding the horses, lesson assistance and the sorting of donations for McIntyre thrift shops whose profits help fund the therapeutic sessions. The McIntyre Centre is an integral part of our community and draws individuals from all parts of Brisbane. They continue to enhance the lives of these special young people and help them and their families thrive in these programs. Acknowledgement

must also go to the countless hours of volunteer support provided by many dedicated locals who simply want to give back to the community and see the smile on someone else's face.

Recently, I was delighted to officially open HELP Enterprises' new office at Mitchelton. HELP provides innovative employment and training models to support job seekers with disability. I am very proud to have such an enthusiastic organisation with a dedicated commitment to disability employment services in my electorate of Ryan.

Sadly, there are some people who would not give the slightest consideration to these organisations and those of similar ilk. But for those with disability fortunate enough to participate, these community organisations are providing hope to what are challenging lives. It is not just about recycling e-waste or riding lessons; it is offering support and inclusion to those in our communities with disability. *(Time expired)*

Bass Electorate: Launceston Sewerage Improvement Project

Mr HART (Bass) (10:56): Launceston's combined sewerage system dates back to the 1860s. It is clearly insufficient to meet the needs of the growing Launceston community. Just 33 per cent of waste water plants met their environmental licence in 2015. Without a modern standard tertiary treatment plant water quality will not improve, the environment will continue to be degraded and the health and safety of Launceston residents will continue to suffer.

Before the last election, TasWater guaranteed \$400 million over 10 years to a \$1.8 billion upgrade of Tasmania's water infrastructure, with the project contingent upon external funding. I am proud that I was able to seek a commitment from federal Labor to provide \$75 million for the extensive works required to consolidate an upgrade to Launceston's water and sewerage infrastructure. I said at the time that it was important to make a start, despite the fact that the capital requirement was very significant and the project would take many years to complete. Indeed, the Launceston Sewerage Improvement Project is one of the largest urban infrastructure projects ever undertaken in Tasmania. Infrastructure Australia has independently assessed the project as a priority. I am of the view that it would be inequitable for the burden of such a significant capital project to fall purely upon the ratepayers of Tasmania.

The failure of the Turnbull government to act on this project and commit to the necessary infrastructure funding is putting at risk the Tamar River environment and the health and safety of Tasmanian communities. So while I am pleased that the Turnbull government has committed \$1.5 million for the Tamar River Recovery Plan, it is less than a drop in the river for what is actually required. This so-called plan is meant to improve water quality, while raw sewage continues to pour into the river. Prime Minister Turnbull needs to stop dragging his heels. This 156-year-old sewer needs to be upgraded now.

This is not to mention the four new Green Army projects that promote exploitation of young Tasmanians, paying them much less than the minimum wage. They are not even legally workers and they have no workplace rights. The Turnbull government expects us to be excited that instead of these people enrolling in continued education and training or looking for work, they are forcing our young people to perform manual work for less than award rates. So whilst I welcome the government's commitment in this area I question their commitment to genuine improvements to the river. Only Labor had the strategic infrastructure plan for northern Tasmania and particularly for my electorate of Bass.

Berowra Electorate: Hornsby North Public School

Mr LEESER (Berowra) (10:58): I rise today to congratulate Hornsby North Public School on their 50th anniversary. I was very pleased to be able to attend the school's 50th anniversary assembly and celebrations on 18 November, when the school community came together to celebrate the history and the future of the school. It was fantastic to join such a warm and welcoming community of parents, teachers, friends and students. The first school visit I did after being elected as the member for Berowra was to open the Hornsby North Public School art fair, so I have a great connection with the school.

The school was built in 1966 in response to the residential expansion in the area of Hornsby following the bushfires of 1957, which caused damage to the existing Hornsby school. The first day of the school for 90 excited students and four staff was 31 January 1967. The school quickly became a hub for the local community, bringing together young families who were new to the area and providing the foundation for strong, long-lasting community relationships.

A very active group of local parents established the Parents and Citizens Association and, in the early days, they established the annual school fund-raising event of barbecue and fireworks on cracker night in June. The fireworks became very popular, organised by Howard & Sons Pyrotechnics, attracting up to 2,000 people from across the district. From these early foundations in the sixties and seventies the school quickly developed and grew, adding classrooms, a library block, a school hall and other buildings to cater for a growing number of young families in the local area. Today the strong community spirit of Hornsby North remains a strong driving force behind the school.

Several of the original parents have seen their grandchildren—and some great grandchildren—now attend school. Hornsby North has educated the great grandchildren of the original orchard owners of the area that the school was built on and there is a special group of former school students who have joined the staff. The Hornsby area continues to attract new young families. They are attracted by the outstanding educational experience, the band, the choir and the exceptional principal, Maree Sumpton. They are also attracted by the spirit of diversity in the school, most notably on display during the international food fair, which provides the foundation for Hornsby's annual autumn fare.

Throughout the school's history its parent body has been partner in the school's development and success. I congratulate the Parents and Citizens Association for its remarkable contribution to the school, led by the current president, Kath Millar, and its former president, Lynne Slevin. I also want to acknowledge a number of the parents who have been particularly welcoming to me and who have been engaged in the organisation of the 50th anniversary. They are Melissa Burne, Carolyn Binet, Donna Westwood, Jenelle McIntosh, Julie Hall and Alexi Boyd. I also pay tribute to the school captains, Charlie and Sebastian, who will leave the school shortly for their high school adventures.

Hornsby North's mission is: 'Caring for children; educating for life.' They aim to educate students to become lifelong learners. This is something we should all be striving for, and I commend Hornsby North Public School for its vision and for the students in its care.

Macarthur Electorate: Tharawal Aboriginal Corporation

Dr FREELANDER (Macarthur) (11:01): Today I would like to speak about an iconic community organisation in my electorate of Macarthur, the Tharawal Aboriginal Corporation. Tharawal is an Aboriginal community controlled medical and health-care service that is unlike any other health-care service in this country. It has been marvelled at and visited by people such as Sir Michael Marmot, head of the World Medical Association and the World Health Organization's chair of the Commission on Social Determinants of Health, who said that Tharawal was making the fantasy of a fairer distribution of power, money and resources a reality. It uses community empowerment, a community controlling the services needed for its population, to improve things for its own community and for others.

As we know, there are major discrepancies between Indigenous and non-Indigenous health in Australia. We constantly hear of the shorter life expectancy, higher infant mortality, higher drug and alcohol use and poorer overall health. But what we often do not hear are the success stories, and Tharawal is a remarkable success story. It is simply inspiring. It is led by Daryl Wright and a proactive board, all from the local Indigenous community. Over 14,000 people use the services provided by Tharawal, including: medical, specialist and dental services; child and family services, such as maternal and child health and parenting programs; social and emotional wellbeing services; and healthy-living services, such as tackling Indigenous smoking, the good tucker program and the Lyrebird exercise program.

Tharawal places a high emphasis on education and uses education to give many disadvantaged children hope. Tharawal is located next to John Warby Public School, one of the most disadvantaged schools in New South Wales. It works with the school to provide extensive educational support. It also works with incarcerated Indigenous children in the Reiby juvenile detention centre, a short distance away.

Tharawal is providing support services for university students, from six universities—in medicine, nursing, allied health and education—to do their practical work. Tharawal has plans to grow its service. However, there has recently been a plan put forward by the New South Wales government to reduce the land that the Tharawal Corporation leases, consequently isolating Tharawal from the community it serves. This plan is short-sighted and, once again, puts short-term financial gains ahead of long-term community benefits.

Tharawal is an organisation we need to foster and promote—not tear down. Services need to continue and be improved. We need to empower people and both major political parties need to have a commitment to protecting and improving Tharawal, which is an invaluable community institution.

Swan Electorate: Roads

Mr IRONS (Swan) (11:04): I rise today to provide the House with an update on the Manning Road on-ramp, which has been an important local issue in my electorate of Swan for many years. In fact, it has been a project that has been discussed since the 1980s. When I became the local federal member for Swan in 2007, constituents began to express their frustration with the lack of an on-ramp at Manning Road to take the traffic south on Kwinana Freeway. In 2009, I did a survey and I received over 1,000 responses with almost unanimous support for the project. As a result, I have continued to campaign for the people of Swan for the provision of a southbound access to the freeway on Manning Road.

To provide some background for the House, Manning Road connects Albany Highway to the Kwinana Freeway in the southern part of my electorate. It is not only used by thousands of my constituents but by the broader population of Perth. It is also a key road to Curtin University, which boasts of an enrolment of nearly 40,000 at the Bentley Campus, and is used by many others on their daily commute to the city. However, the real issue is that anybody needing to join the Kwinana Freeway and head south from Manning Road is currently required to navigate a complex stretch of road, do a circle around the freeway which involves heading northwards, merging and then a lane change back across the Canning bridge. You then have to merge with the traffic coming off the freeway to get back onto the freeway. It is the cause of immense frustration, but it is also a very dangerous stretch of road in our great state of Western Australia.

In addition to this, the on-ramp is more urgent than ever to ensure ease of access to the new Fiona Stanley Hospital, with increased demand from patients needing to head south to attend the hospital or the ED. In November last year, I took the Prime Minister to Manning Road, and he said he could see the need for an on-ramp and that heading south is currently quite an elaborate exercise. And then, only a few months on, this government committed to help fund the Manning Road on-ramp. The need for the on-ramp seems blatantly obvious, unfortunately though, Labor has not supported this. When former member for Perth, Alannah MacTiernan, was a WA minister for planning and infrastructure, she rejected the on-ramp project. Similarly, Senator Sue Lines, with a seat in the Senate, certainly does not start her list of priorities with it.

The coalition has listened to the community and committed to this funding during the election. Last week, I met with the Western Australian state minister for transport, Bill Marmion, to discuss the state's share of funding and a potential time line for the project. I look forward to further updating the House and the residents of Swan on this project, and would like to thank all the residents of Swan who have inquired about this project and continue to support it not only through sending their messages of support but also by continuing to vote for the coalition at both the federal and state elections. Thank you.

Hunter Electorate: Broadband

Mr FITZGIBBON (Hunter) (11:07): Very sadly, the divide between city and country in this nation is growing. It is growing in health, education, government service delivery, infrastructure and, of course, broadband services. This is the legacy of three years under this coalition government.

In my own electorate, constituents fall into one of five categories. Some have an inferior copper-based NBN, which they often say is slower and less reliable than their old ADSL2 service. Further, many lost their landlines for protracted periods during the switchover, and many still report voice phone dropouts on a regular basis. This problem is most prominent around the townships of Lake Macquarie. The second category are those still waiting for a second-rate NBN and cannot secure an ADSL2 service because Telstra says it does not make the investment because the NBN will come one day. The third category includes those who are receiving fixed wireless. I have to say, pleasingly, I have had few complaints about the fixed wireless service but, of course, too few residents have access to it.

The fourth group are those who can hope for no coverage other than satellite but are told they do not qualify for satellite. The fifth group have a problem in common with farmers and

rural residents right across this nation: they have a satellite service which costs more and is inferior to the services enjoyed by those who live in our capital cities. While those in the cities are spoilt with choice, including options of limitless download capacity for less than \$90 a month, the average Sky Muster satellite customer is forced to pay \$135 per month for 55 gigabytes of download between 7 am and 1 am. Many have no choice but to turn to very expensive wi-fi options to keep their farms running.

Rural and remote families face being put on expensive data rations when they connect to the National Broadband Network. Two Sky Muster satellites are the only option for those who live beyond the reach of the NBN fixed wireless tower. Action group Better Internet for Rural, Regional and Remote Australia surveyed 750 Sky Muster customers, with 60 per cent saying the satellites did not meet their data needs and 86 per cent that they had connection issues.

In the 21st century access to broadband is not a want; it is a need. Much of our farm equipment now relies on connection to broadband services. This is putting our agriculture sector at an international economic disadvantage. This government with its inferior NBN service is letting rural Australia down and it is letting our farmers down.

Surrogacy

Mr BROAD (Mallee) (11:10): I wish to talk on an issue that is a little bit sensitive and a little bit controversial. Children, of course, are a gift and the ability to have a family is something that we all aspire to. For some—myself included—it eludes us, and then we look at fostering and other things.

We support people who want to endeavour to have children through IVF. We have a legal framework around surrogacy. I want to touch on offshore surrogacy. Australian law allows for a surrogate mother in Australia to be a surrogate mother but certainly not to receive a commercial benefit from doing so. Three of our states—New South Wales, the ACT and Queensland—currently essentially stop, or make illegal, offshore surrogacy.

If a law protects a citizen of Australia because of a principle that we believe in, I believe the principle should run through so that a woman who is not an Australian citizen is also to be protected under Australian law. As we think through the issue of offshore surrogacy we are bound by focus on the rights of the child, by our human rights agreements, but there does not appear to be enough talk about the rights of the surrogate mother. I think this is a space that we need to have a very real discussion in.

Australia is one of the most active countries in the world for surrogacy and for some this has delivered a beautiful child for their family. My fear is that the paying of money to a surrogate mother in a poor country has the risk of serious exploitation, in recognition of the fact that that woman is not protected by Australian law. It has the risk of pressures upon that woman. It has the risk of major exploitation of that woman, including whether, in some instances, she actually gets paid. There is a real discussion to be had around how we, as the Australian government, ensure that if surrogacy is going to take place, and it is taking place, we protect the surrogate mothers in those poor countries.

We are all putting our hands on our hearts today and talking about White Ribbon Day and support for women in domestic violence situations. But the principle has to run true that we have to find a way of ensuring that Australian law protects a surrogate mother. We can do

this. We do this with paedophilia overseas. We prosecute if someone partakes in something that is against our principles overseas. I think there is a real discussion to be had on this. It is something we should tackle. It is something that average Australians think we can do better on.

Paterson Electorate: Lions Club of Raymond Terrace

Ms SWANSON (Paterson) (11:13): Today, I would like to pay tribute to some members of my community in Paterson who are truly deserving of recognition. Last Saturday, I was honoured to give the toast to the Lions Club of Raymond Terrace as they celebrated their 60th birthday. The international Lions Club has 45,000 members, and it is always inspiring to spend time with people who are in service to others. The Lions Club of Raymond Terrace was formed in September 1956 and has given countless hours in the service of our town and community, whether it be at the driver reviver—when people pull over in the busy times of Easter or Christmas, which gives them a chance to have a cuppa and refresh—or providing funds to many worthwhile causes.

In 2015 alone, they provided a portable ultrasound machine for the Mater Hospital's oncology unit and contributed a donation of \$100,000 to people affected by the flooding in Dungog—a sizeable amount of money for such a small group of people. Lions also support young people and, as a former Lions Youth of the Year, I can attest to the skills and experience that that fantastic arrangement gives to young people, such as I was in the eighties. When we lead such busy lives, it is important to recognise an organisation that fosters service to others. Thank you to the Lions Club of Raymond Terrace.

I would also like to congratulate and wish a hearty bon voyage to some young Maitland soccer players and their parents who are off to Amiens in France on Friday. The busload will leave their home ground in East Maitland on a pilgrimage to mark the route their forefathers took 100 years ago, when Maitland's own 34th Battalion set out in 1916 to fight World War I. The 34th Battalion of coalfield lads and Maitland boys did us proud on the battlefields of the Western Front, receiving commendation for their valour. Apparently they also did us proud on the soccer field in a historic match between the 34th Battalion and the French aerodrome team of Amiens. The 17-year-old boys from my home town of Maitland and the coalfields will recreate that match. Congratulations to Ian Mather and his team for organising a trip of a lifetime to mark the sacrifice of a lifetime. Last week, I presented the players with Australian flags to take to Amiens and I could not help but look at their young faces and think back to the young faces of those boys we sent to war 100 years ago, and the men and women who go to war for us today. On that note, I would like to send my sincere thanks to our Defence personnel serving overseas this Christmas. We are incredibly proud and grateful for what you do. *(Time expired)*

Country to Canberra 2016

Mrs SUDMALIS (Gilmore) (11:16): Yesterday, a number of quite inspiring young women gathered in parliament to meet their MPs. They were the winners of the Country to Canberra 2016 leadership competition. This is an Australian not-for-profit organisation that empowers young women from regional, remote and rural areas to reach their full potential through a nationwide leadership competition based around gender equality for high school students in regional areas. Winners have their work published, are awarded a trip to Canberra, get to meet influential role models and politicians, connect with mentors through the raising

Hope Foundation and participate in public speaking and leadership training. I was introduced to Elise Toyer, who is only 16 years old and is currently in year 10 at St Peter's Anglican College in Broulee but actually lives in Batemans Bay. Her role model is her Tia, her father's mother. Elise is passionate about achieving healthcare equality within Australia, particularly in rural and remote areas, and would like to become a rural and regional paediatric specialist after she finishes high school.

Elise is a vivacious and enthusiastic young woman with a contagious personality. I asked her to send me a copy of her winning entry and the following are her words which she presented in an empathic and powerful video, especially relevant as we emphasise White Ribbon Day this week:

Why is gender equality important to me and my community? This is my friend and I proudly laying a wreath on behalf of our local scout group at Anzac Day last year. We were introduced as representatives of the Boy Scouts Association of Australia.

The only problem? We're both girls. That man that introduced us did something we all do—myself included. We attribute certain qualities to a particular gender. The typical view of a woman is meek and humble, submissive and emotional. A man is strong and tough, emotionless. But these stereotypical labels that are doled out to us are not a gift, they are a burden; a heavy weight that limits our potential. For gender equality to occur, we must see past the gender labels given to a person and see their qualities not as female and male but as human.

Gender equality means that when the young women in my community become leaders in their schools and workplaces, they are not bossy or rude but confident, strong leaders. As Beyonce said, 'I'm not bossy ... I'm the boss.' And when the young men in my community have had a tough week and are struggling to see the light in each day, they know it's okay to ask for help, to talk and to hug. To know that it's okay not to be okay.

Gender equality means to me that when I'm a scout and I am out there leading in the community, it's not automatically thought that I belong to a boy's group because those qualities are for men—I belong to Scouts. Because women and men can be both strong and humble and kind and confident.

The qualities that make a person aren't male or female—they're human and that's why gender equality is important to me and my community.

Elise, you are wonderful. Thank you. *(Time expired)*

Australian Men's Shed Association

Mr KHALIL (Wills) (11:20): I want to acknowledge the work of the Australian Men's Shed Association and, in particular, all the men's sheds in my electorate of Wills. We are all familiar with men's sheds and the good work that they do. They are community spaces modelled after the old-fashioned backyard shed, but not all men's sheds are the same. Depending on which shed you visit, you may see a number of blokes making furniture or perhaps restoring bicycles for a local school. They could be making bird traps or fixing lawnmowers or making a cubbyhouse for Camp Quality to raffle. You often see a few young men as well, working with the older men, learning new skills and learning something about life from the men that they work with. You might also see local elders making traditional arts and crafts. You will usually see teabags and coffee cups strewn about in a comfortable area where men can just sit and talk. You will probably see an area where men can learn to cook for themselves, or even contact family members by computer.

Many men struggle to talk about their feelings and their emotions. They do not really take a serious interest in their own mental health. According to beyondblue, one in eight men will have depression and one in five men will experience anxiety at some stage of their lives. While women are statistically more likely to experience depression and anxiety, men are less likely to talk about it. Depression is a serious and common condition which will not get better by itself. But some men are still subscribing to the idea that they should just tough it out and be self-reliant in any and all circumstances. It is said that because of this, some males are known to drink more and take more risks with their health, and can suffer immensely from a lack of appropriate treatment. Good health is based on many factors, including feeling good about yourself, being productive, contributing to your community, connecting with friends and maintaining an active body and mind. Professor Barry Golding from Federation University, in an address to the 2007 men's shed conference, said:

Men don't talk face to face, they talk shoulder to shoulder.

This is the real power of the men's shed. Your local shed provides a safe and busy environment where men can find many of these things, in an atmosphere of old-fashioned mateship.

In Wills, there is already an excellent men's shed in the suburb of Glenroy. I recently met with a group of blokes from Fawkner who are working on the establishment of a men's shed in their area. These guys have been trying to establish a Fawkner men's shed for years. I visited them on a vacant plot of land on Lorne Street in Fawkner, and they told me all about their plans that were already underway. The first project that these guys will have is actually building the shed. I will be backing their bid to get the men's shed up and running in Fawkner. I encourage everyone to get involved in their local men's shed by visiting the Men's Shed Association website for more information.

Logan Urban Design Awards

Mr VAN MANEN (Forde—Government Whip) (11:22): It is my pleasure to rise in this House today and speak about the achievements of various entities around Logan City in the Logan Urban Design Awards. The 2016 Logan Urban Design Awards were held recently, and I would like to congratulate the overall winner, the Beenleigh Artisan Distillery's new visitor centre. Held every two years, the LUDA awards promote excellence in the design and creation of urban environments, large and small, within the City of Logan. The award winners across all categories are chosen for their clever design, delivering excellent community spaces that, in some cases, also put a unique twist on conventional buildings. Beenleigh Artisan Distillery's new visitor centre was named the overall winner for its striking modern cellar door design, introduced to the distillery's entrance by Blueprint Architects. The design was praised for re-imagining the iconic Beenleigh business, while also respecting its heritage—and for the benefit of those in the House: it is the oldest operating rum distillery in Australia. The judges' comments said it was 'a project that exemplifies the value and contribution of good design,' and that the project's 'adaptive and contemporary design unites old and new to breathe fresh life into this Beenleigh business icon'.

The Logan Urban Design Awards covered four categories: the Master Planning Award, awarded to master-planned developments and communities; the Landscape Architecture and Urban Infrastructure Award; the Architecture Award, awarded to exemplar building-form projects covering residential, commercial, industrial and institutional; and the Business and

Events Award, awarded to exemplar businesses, programs or events that contribute our community.

I would like to congratulate all the winners, as well as the nominees, on their commitment to quality design and development within the city of Logan, including: the Master Planning Award winner, My Home and The River Estate; the Landscape Architecture and Urban Infrastructure Award winner, Jimboomba Community Garden; Architecture Award winner, McDonalds Underwood and Landini Associates; and the Business and Events Award winner, Extraction Artisan Coffee at Springwood. Those receiving commendation awards were: the Early Bird Breakfast Markets, Cavern Music Concerts, the Rum Rump and Rumba Festival 2015, and The Vicker Ridge. Congratulations to everybody involved for the tremendous work of continuing to build and grow our magnificent community.

Corio Electorate: Medicare

Mr MARLES (Corio) (11:25): The ongoing freeze of the Medicare rebate has driven up the cost of primary health care across Australia. That is being felt by many Australians, who expressed their voices in huge numbers at the last election. In my electorate of Corio, it is estimated that 12,000 people put off going to the doctor today because of the cost of primary health care and 15,000 people put off gaining their prescriptions because of the costs associated with that. Those numbers are most significant in the northern part of my electorate, in the northern suburbs of Geelong—Norlane and Corio—where health needs are at their most complex. It is in this part of my electorate that we see the highest rates of diabetes, for example. Diseases of poverty are most prevalent there. The refugee populations in my electorate are most concentrated in that part of it. Their health needs are particularly acute. Dr Mark Kennedy, who runs the Corio Medical Clinic, says:

We have more cases of diabetes coming into our clinic than anywhere else in the country. Our clinic and the public in Geelong's Northern suburbs have got long term benefits out of the former Labor government's Primary Care Infrastructure grants; they allowed us to expand and teach new GPs and medical students that are working across the country today.

Dr Abbas Mahmood from the Corio Bay Medical Centre says:

Refugees have a greater need for health care and life support infrastructure and a collaborative approach by doctor services will be better able to ... support them.

Dr Ganes Kunjidapaadhum, who runs the First Point Medical Centre, says:

Instead of taking away doctors and health assets it's time the government starts adding doctors and health services dependent on what the public needs.

On 15 November—last Tuesday—I called a meeting of those three doctors, who between them cater to about 80 to 90 per cent of the primary health care needs in the north of Geelong, to talk about ways in which they could better coordinate and ways in which we could use them as a voice for the medical needs of the north of Geelong. There was a real sense of excitement amongst them about working together. There is an opportunity, I think, for them to work more closely and to coordinate their resources around, for example, servicing those refugees in the north of Geelong who need medical assistance. Operating with the council is also something which I think they can do better as a group, making sure that overseas doctors who come to Geelong are able to operate in the northern suburbs. This is an important forum. Along with Jason Trethowan, the CEO of the Western Victoria Primary Health Network, we are really excited about the opportunity it presents. *(Time expired)*

Belair National Park

Ms FLINT (Boothby) (11:28): This year marks the 125th anniversary of the Belair National Park. I would like to thank all the dedicated volunteers who give their time to care for what is a really wonderful natural and historical resource in my electorate. The park is nestled in the start of the Mount Lofty Ranges, and it is the second-oldest national park in Australia. It attracts 250,000 visitors a year. It was created in 1891, when the state of South Australia was only 55 years old. It is also the sixth-oldest national park in the world.

The success of Belair National Park is testament to its value to the community. More than just a protected green space, it has great public utility and is saturated with South Australian history dating right back to 1837, which is only a year after our state proclamation. The park is complete with ovals, pavilions, tennis courts, barbecues and picnic areas and is a hive of activity for families on the weekends. For those who wish to explore the park's natural beauty, there are a variety of trails suitable for all, from novice walkers up to veteran hikers. While keeping fit and healthy, walkers can marvel at the waterfalls along the aptly named Echo Track to the north, or make their way south along Valley Road up to Amphitheatre Rock. For lovers of history and politics like myself, Belair National Park is also home to the summer residence of former South Australian governors. The residence is a magnificent Victorian mansion which boasts the state's first indoor swimming pool, which is quite a sight to see. I was there to see it myself in early March, which was the launch of the park's birthday celebrations. For a gold-coin donation, the Friends of Old Government House happily conduct tours of this wonderful historical site for tourists and the public.

The Friends of Old Government House is just one of the many community groups who devote their time to maintaining the Belair National Park, which covers 835 hectares in total. The Friends of Belair National Park is another one of these volunteer groups involved with the park. They are a committed group that I have had the pleasure of being a member of, and they do a huge amount of work, from weeding and bushland protection to hosting visitors and taking tours of the park, and letting people know about the wonderful flora and fauna that we have. We in Adelaide are lucky to have such a space only 13 kilometres from the city centre. It is right on our doorstep. In this, the 125th year of Belair National Park, I pay tribute to all of those who make the park the wonderful place that it is, and I encourage all South Australians and visitors to South Australia to visit the park on 3 December for the end of the 125th birthday celebrations. I cannot commend it highly enough.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mrs Wicks): In accordance with standing order 193, the time for members' constituency statements has concluded.

MOTIONS

Equal Rights

Consideration resumed of the motion:

That this House:

- (1) reaffirms its commitment to the right of all Australians to enjoy equal rights and be treated with equal respect regardless of race, colour, creed or origin;
- (2) reaffirms its commitment to maintaining an immigration policy wholly non-discriminatory on grounds of race, colour, creed or origin;

(3) reaffirms its commitment to the process of reconciliation with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, in the context of redressing their profound social and economic disadvantage;

(4) reaffirms its commitment to maintaining Australia as a culturally diverse, tolerant and open society, united by an overriding commitment to our nation, and its democratic institutions and values; and

(5) denounces racial intolerance in any form as incompatible with the kind of society we are and want to be.

Mr BURKE (Watson—Manager of Opposition Business) (11:32): My feelings are very mixed, standing to speak on this motion today. It is a motion which was first moved in the parliament 20 years ago. It was moved at the time that One Nation first entered the House of Representatives; moved by the then Prime Minister, John Howard and supported by the then Leader of the Opposition, Kim Beazley.

On the first day of the new parliament, Bill Shorten, the Leader of the Opposition, put to the Prime Minister that it was time to carry this motion again. The intention was that carrying the motion would be an affirmation of principles that would be unanimously held across parliament. And the Prime Minister, in good faith, took that offer on and made the motion his own. By the time we vote on this—either later today or tomorrow—it is hard to believe that this motion is still supported by every member of the House of Representatives. The second paragraph of the motion—of a 20-year-old motion—says that the House:

reaffirms its commitment to maintaining an immigration policy wholly non-discriminatory on grounds of race, colour, creed or origin.

It simply cannot be the case that every member of the parliament still believes that. I have no doubt that this motion reflects the majority view of our parliament. But I cannot reconcile that second paragraph with the words that we have heard in recent days from Australia's Minister for Immigration, when he put the argument not that the Fraser government let the wrong people in but that the people who were let in had children and grandchildren who have behaved in an unacceptable way—and therefore used the phrase that the government had 'made a mistake'. The only point of continuity with those people was that they, being the grandchildren of the people who came through under the Fraser government, were of the same race, were of the same ethnicity and adhered to the same creed. There is no way of reconciling the words of the minister for immigration with the words of this motion. I wish there were.

I want this resolution, which is about who we are as a country, to be something that both sides of politics can unanimously agree on. When the Leader of the Opposition put this motion forward and said it is time to move it again, it was not intended to be a wedge through the government. It was not intended to be a point of division; it was intended to be a statement of unity. I cannot, for the life of me, see how that second paragraph of this resolution can in any way be reconciled with the views that the minister for immigration has now put forward.

In those views that the minister for immigration has put forward, he has connected issues of race, ethnicity and religion with crime. This part of the language is not new. Back when we had a debate in the 1980s about whether Asian immigration should be held back, the language at the time was about triad gangs, Asian gangs and gangs in Cabramatta. In the sixties and seventies, when people were arguing about whether or not Italian immigration was appropriate, the language then was about the links to the Mafia and about crime. I do not

accept for one minute that the serious issues of national security that we are dealing with are an excuse to legitimise the racial profiling of a community based on its children and grandchildren.

I support this motion because I support its principles and the way they define our nation. I genuinely believe that there is a majority of members in the government who believe and support every clause of this motion. I have no doubt whatsoever that what has been put forward by the minister for immigration is damaging and no better than those arguments that were put forward 20 years ago opposing Asian immigration or those arguments that were put forward in the sixties and seventies opposing migration of Greeks and Italians.

I have no doubt that the comments from the minister for immigration will win him votes. I do not care! There has to be a time when we are willing to provide a level of leadership to bring a country together. I expect the comments from the minister for immigration will not result in any change of immigration policy. He will hint at it and he will tempt at it, but I suspect the policy will not in fact change. I suspect also that it will not add a single job to Australia nor a dollar to our GDP. But I know some things that it will do. It will make the work of our security agencies harder. It will cause people to feel marginalised when we want them to feel 100 per cent part of our community. It will cause some people, a small minority, to have a sense of licence and permission to belittle and abuse some of their fellow citizens, and that has already commenced.

There are two sorts of Australian stories: an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander story that goes all the way back to the first sunrise, and a story of immigration. Every Australian either has one or both of those stories. Modern Australia is about bringing those 24 million stories together. That is what it is. Part of the role of the minister for immigration is making sure that we are as cohesive as possible in making sure that people who might feel marginalised in fact feel every word that is in our citizenship oath.

I do not want there to be partisanship in a motion like this. The reason it was brought forward was that we believed at the time that we would have a unanimous statement from the parliament that would ostracise some of the voices that have come into the other place and make clear that, while they have been given a really loud microphone, they do not represent the majority of this parliament, they do not represent the story of bipartisan support for modern, multicultural Australia.

I want it to be true. The Prime Minister backed the general work of the Minister for Immigration but he did not back those particular words. While ministers for immigration have at different times dealt with challenges in immigration policies and settlement policies for different communities in Australia, you have to go all the way back to the days of the White Australia policy to find a minister for immigration referring to communities that should be excluded based on race or religion. You have to go that far back.

We should not underestimate the choices that are being made by this parliament right now. While we might be concerned at the extent to which some racist voices have been handed a big megaphone, there is no megaphone louder in this country than the voice of the parliament itself—and it is at its loudest when we stand together. You cannot equivocate on this stuff: you either support and believe in modern multicultural Australia or you do not—and I have no doubt that the vast majority in this House and the other place do. I implore the Minister for Immigration not to go down the path he has started to step down. There is a way through for

him to simply talk about settlement policies, about integration policies, about bringing people into the centre and not link it back to whether a mistake was made by letting people in the door at all based on their race or religion. There is a way forward and I want him to take it. We will define what sort of country we are, and no country has ever grown to prosperity by excluding a minority.

Mr TIM WILSON (Goldstein) (11:42): I want to start by reiterating some of the sentiments of the previous speaker. We want this motion to be unanimous and we want people in this parliament to support the spirit and ideals of the motion. One of the best ways to get there is not to use it as an opportunity for partisan political discussions designed to divide society but to focus on how we are all coming together as a country. Hopefully, every member of the House of Representatives appeals to the idea that we are all equal before the law and everybody has a place in this country regardless of their background. This is not an opportunity for members to score cheap political points because they think it will get them some attention in a newspaper or enable them to go off and send messages to one section of the community or another, as part of their grandstanding exercise, rather than focus on things that improve the human condition. And that is where I was disappointed with the previous speaker and the way he conducted himself. In the end, he was not focusing on what we could do to bring the parliament together and support this motion unanimously. He used it as an opportunity to grandstand so that he himself could score cheap political points. And that is exactly what this motion is designed to stop.

This motion is designed to focus on how we bring the country together and move it forward together. When you look through the principles that underpin it, it is extremely straightforward. It is based on a motion that was passed 20 years ago, through the leadership of John Howard. It is a motion to reaffirm our commitment to 'the right of all Australians to enjoy equal rights and be treated with equal respect regardless of their background'. We all agree. It is a motion to reaffirm our commitment to 'maintaining an immigration policy that is wholly non-discriminatory on grounds of race, colour, creed or origin'. Let's face it, it should also include any other irrelevant attributes. It also says:

(3) reaffirms its commitment to the process of reconciliation with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, in the context of redressing their profound social and economic disadvantage;

(4) reaffirms its commitment to maintaining Australia as a culturally diverse, tolerant and open society, united by an overriding commitment to our nation, and its democratic institutions and values; and

(5) denounces racial intolerance in any form as incompatible with the kind of society we are and want to be.

At every point, all I have heard from people on the government side—all the ministers, all the members of parliament—has been a commitment to that process and a commitment to those ideals and values. When we use it as an opportunity to divide because we think we score cheap political points it is not just that we distract from the central thrust of it, it is that we undermine and send a message, somehow, to the rest of the community that these values are not shared and extolled. That is why this government takes values and principles so strongly—as do I. In fact, these values in many ways are some of the key reasons that I sought to enter public life in the first place. Because there is no place in society for people to face marginalisation or exclusion simply because of who they are and the basis of how they live their lives.

What we want is a society where everybody feels an equal investment and an opportunity to contribute, both economically and socially, to build this country from the bottom up, where we have individuals who come together to form families, community and ultimately country. That is the type of country we want to be. That is how we achieve a more just society. It is about how we take everybody forward together.

We know full well that we still have enormous challenges, particularly with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, in making sure that they can move forward together as part of Australian society around issues of health and economic disadvantage. That is why as Human Rights Commissioner I was very proud to work on issues directly around improving the economic opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and enabling them to use their land and property rights to achieve greater economic participation, not just as an end in itself but so that we could go on and build opportunities for a greater social dividend for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, particularly those outside capital cities. I was very happy to enjoy the support of the Attorney-General, George Brandis, and the government in doing that work, because there was so much advantage to it. I might add that I had the support also of many senior Indigenous leaders.

That is how you take a country forward together. It is not done by focusing on points of negativity and division to try to achieve some political exercise. You take a country forward together by focusing on the points that unite us as a country and, as the motion says at the end, appeals to our idea of the kind of society and country that we want to be. That is why this government has had such a generous and ongoing commitment to a non-discriminatory global humanitarian program. That commitment, despite the hyperbole and the vented and confected outrage that, let's face it, has come from some of the other speakers, remains utterly resolute from the minister as well as from the government.

Last financial year the government delivered a total refugee and humanitarian program of 17,555 places, which included 15,502 offshore places. That is the largest offshore intake in Australia in 30 years, and was done under this current minister. Australia's annual refugee and humanitarian program is set to grow to 18,750 by 2018-19. That is one of the most generous permanent resettlement programs in the world. We achieve that because we have a strong border protection, we have a commitment from the government to make sure that people smugglers are not rewarded and we have now, to the government's great credit, efforts to resettle in the United States as well as potentially other countries people who were held in offshore detention.

You cannot build public confidence and public support for higher rates of migration, generally, as well as for helping people who are seeking asylum from across the world unless the public believes that the borders are secure, that there is a process by which people are treated equally and with dignity and that people's assessment of their claims is based on the legitimacy of their claims, not on their process of arrival. That is what this government has achieved and is one of its great achievements and legacies that it will continue to contribute to the development of this great country. By maintaining public confidence in this issue of border security, which is so vital, the government has continued to be able to offer 16,350 visas since July 2015 to those displaced by the conflict in Syria and Iraq—helping people based on legitimacy of their need, not on the process of their arrival. We have also had been able to offer 5,490 people who have been interviewed and assessed as meeting the threshold

requirements for a visa and are awaiting the outcomes of health, character and security checks. These new Australians—new Australians—will be provided with the best opportunity to start productive lives and reach their full potential. That is what we want—that is something that is good for our country. Those are the values and the spirit the motion the Prime Minister has moved and which we are debating and discussing, and hopefully supporting, very much seeks to achieve.

The government is proudly sustaining our world-class resettlement services. Entrants are eligible for the same social service benefits as other humanitarian entrants, including Medicare, income support payments, English language tuition, torture and trauma counselling and settlement services. The objective of that is to take people and to enable them to best integrate into Australian society, and then go on and live productive lives. That again goes to the heart and the spirit of the program of the government, but equally what it seeks to achieve when we bring people here is that they can be full participants as new Australians. We are committed to enabling these new Australians to become self-reliant, to stand on their own two feet, not just so they can take care of themselves, though that is very important, but so they can assist those who come in similar waves of migration to contribute to this great country and participate equally in all of Australian society.

That is at the heart of what liberalism is—it is a political philosophy built on the idea and the capacity of the individual to make their maximum contribution, to live their lives and be able to make their commitment and contribution to our society. That is why the spirit of this motion goes to the heart of liberalism itself—not labourism, which in the past, sadly, has been at times deliberately exclusionary—which focuses on those uniting principles that bind all people, that sit in the heart of Liberal philosophy and that motivate us, including yourself, Mr Deputy Speaker, to leave our community and come onto the national stage and be able to reaffirm those basic commitments of liberty for all. That is why I support this motion. I hope other members of this House do. In fact, I agree with the aspirations of the previous speaker, the member for Watson, and my hope is that support for this motion is achieved unanimously. In the end it does send a message about the type of country we want to be—united, focused on the future and building the potential of every single Australian, new or old, to contribute to this great country. (*Time expired*)

Mr GEORGANAS (Hindmarsh) (11:52): I rise to speak on this motion on equality for all Australians. I believe Australians see themselves, rightly, as an egalitarian society and it is vital that we affirm and continue to reaffirm our commitment to equal rights for all in this nation. But in this debate it is equally vital that we ask ourselves what is it exactly that creates and most importantly maintains and protects equal rights. While legislation is important, unless a society is able to adapt and be flexible in the face of changing circumstances, equal rights can become questionable, questioned and challenged. There is no doubt that Australia has made a very successful commitment to human rights. I think we have been one of the most successful countries in the entire world. I cannot think of another nation that has done better in this area than us. But it is imperative that we continue to remind ourselves, and others, of the need for and positive benefits of equal rights. Changes in legislation are important—no-one can deny that—but legislation alone does not ensure equal rights. As we have seen through the debate on section 18C of the Racial Discrimination Act, legislation can

be changed, undermining equal rights at the drop of a hat. Unless the wider community is convinced of the importance of defending equal rights, these rights will remain vulnerable.

It is our job as policy and law makers to ensure that we make a strong case for the protection of equal rights. My electorate of Hindmarsh is a very diverse community. As I have said many times in this place, approximately 200 languages are spoken in my electorate. People have settled there from every corner of the world, from the traditional postwar migrants to the new emerging communities. Every language that you can possibly think of, every nation you can possibly think of is represented within my electorate.

In 2016, the ABS estimated almost 27 per cent of Hindmarsh residents were born overseas. Since postwar migration began, Australia has been taking in approximately one million immigrants each decade from every region of the world, and today 15 per cent of the population report that they speak a language other than English at home. I am so proud of the cultural diversity within our nation, and within my electorate of course, because, as I said, I do not think there is any nation in the world that has done it better than us.

I have always been a fighter to protect this great cultural diversity, and our multiculturalism, and I will continue to do so, as I know many others in this place will do so, because I believe that our successful multicultural society is truly one of the greatest assets that we have in this nation. Multiculturalism has been an important element in the making of modern Australia, and has been critical to fostering social cohesion and inclusion. It has underpinned cohesion and inclusion, and, through multiculturalism, the Australian experience has shown that diversity can absolutely go hand in hand with stronger social cohesion. This is undoubtedly thanks to successive governments on both sides who have supported multiculturalism and, of course, the broader labour movement.

Official racial discrimination, in the form of the Immigration Restriction Act 1901—more commonly known as the White Australia policy—was not removed until the 1970s when the policies around multiculturalism emerged. It was the Whitlam Labor government that set about addressing many of these inequalities, followed by the Fraser and Hawke governments. I remember as a teenager, back in the seventies, attending one of my community's annual functions, the Greek Orthodox ball. This particular night we had some very honoured guests—I will never forget it—and the whole community with just astounded by the attendance of Gough Whitlam and Don Dunstan. It was the first time we had ever seen people of that calibre attend one of our functions. I remember how excited everyone was—and that memory is still vivid in my mind, which could have been something that threw me into politics. To have this great man there, the Prime Minister of Australia, giving a speech and telling us how he valued our community, how he saw the contribution that our community had made, was something that we had never witnessed before. From that moment onwards, I recall feeling equal to everyone else. Any inadequacies that I had about being from a different background or perhaps my parents speaking a different language, being different, was thrown out the window that night because we felt equal. I remember it very well. We still talk about that night in my community in South Australia.

Let us not forget that immigration to Australia was closely tied to labour market needs. My parents came here after World War II, from a nation that had been absolutely decimated by war. They came here with very little English. They worked in the lowest paid jobs, but they managed to carve out a life for themselves. They did that because of the labour laws that

existed in this country. There was a debate after World War II, when we decided to open up immigration—if you look at the *Hansards*, you will see the debates—where, on the one hand, there was a group within this place, and outside in industry, that agreed with bringing in migrant workers, but wanted to have them on lower pay rates than Australian workers. On the other hand, there was the view of the labour movement that staunchly said, no, they would be on the same pay rates as everyone else if they come out here. And you can imagine how life would have been so different had that not prevailed back then. So in addressing equality, we need to also address inequality in the workplace. We see today many people coming out on different types of visas. I say this: if we have a shortage in particular areas, bring them out as migrants to settle in this nation, to be part of our community, to fill the gaps that are required and to become Australians. Like all of us have. That is really important.

In addressing equality, the workplace is fundamental. In 1973, the then Labor government ratified ILO convention 111. This required a commitment to remove discrimination in employment on the basis of race, colour, gender, political opinion, national extraction or social origin. Importantly, however, it also involved taking positive action to promote real equality of opportunity in employment. In 1973, the government's position was fully supported by business, the ACTU and the state governments. As a result of this commitment, the first federal antidiscrimination law, the Racial Discrimination Act 1975, was enacted, making it unlawful to take certain actions by reason of race, colour, religion or national or ethnic origin of a person or a relative or associate of that person.

However, before the bill was introduced into parliament, the conservative then Liberal-National Party coalition government came to power in 1975. It took another nine years and a Labor Party victory before this legislation was finally passed. During this period, those states which had Labor Party governments put in place their own antidiscrimination legislation. They took matters into their own hands, enabling citizens to make formal complaints in the face of discrimination based on gender, race, ethnic origin, religion and physical disability.

So, while Australia today can be very proud of its equality, it clearly has not always been the case. We only need to recall our treatment of Indigenous Australians, the White Australia policy, the Cronulla riot and our growing mistrust of certain nationalities. Today sometimes I despair when I hear language that is being used in reference to diversity, inclusion and multiculturalism. More and more I hear words of fear, of exclusion, calls for the building of walls and fortresses, calls for the banning of certain clothing, calls for the banning of certain foods and even calls for the banning of certain groups from entering the country. These voices are very, very few, but they are very loud. We must remember that: they are very few but unfortunately very loud.

There is no doubt that the recent demonisation of refugees has contributed to the language of fear, and it is contaminating the way we view our cultural diversity. But I am certain that in this place, if we take a moment to see this within a global context, we know that there are over 60 million refugees seeking refuge. I support united, equal rights for all, not just for some but for everyone. (*Time expired*)

Dr ALY (Cowan) (12:02): I rise here today to talk about equality for all Australians. I have spent a long part of my life talking about equality and working towards equality. I have devoted many years to that. So I stand here today torn, I guess, in speaking about this issue. On the one hand, I think: it is the year 2016. Shouldn't we, as a progressive, First World

nation, take it for granted that all Australians have equal rights and that the equal rights for all Australians are embedded in everything that we do? Don't all Australians already enjoy equal rights? Why do we even need to be talking about this in this day and age?

But, on the other hand, I know through my own experiences that, though we have formal equal rights for most things—bar of course marriage equality—and for most people, those formal rights that are by law accorded to all Australians do not necessarily translate into substantive equality and into substantive rights, into an equality where all Australians are not just accorded equal rights but have equal access to opportunities and equal outcomes. That kind of equality recognises that not all of us start life on an equal playing field. The provision of equal rights for all means that no single person's rights or the rights for some group are over and above anyone else's rights or the rights of another group.

This morning I spoke to the media about an experience I had while growing up. When I was 10 years old, I was pursued by a young girl of the same age, 10 years old, in the schoolyard. For some reason she disliked me from the very first day I started at this new school. As a 10-year-old, I never quite understood why she disliked me. I had never done anything to her. We had never had any real altercations in the schoolyard, but Christine—that was her name—and her friend Iris would seek me out every single lunchtime and every single recess time. They would follow me around the playground and taunt me. One lunch time it culminated in Christine spitting in my face, telling me that I was a dirty Muslim, a dirty Arab, and that she hated me because I did not believe in Jesus. Of course, Muslims do believe in Jesus, but that was beside the point. I then went to my teacher Mrs Phillips. I was very distraught when I reported to her what Christine had just done. Rather than her offer any kind of comfort, rather than pull up Christine and Iris for the comments they had made, it was a case of: we are not considered equal.

I note that there are some people in this parliament and in this government who would seek to argue that they have a right to free speech. I would ask those people whether they think that their right to free speech is better than or worth more than my right to feel protected, whether they think that their right to be a bigot is worth more than my right to have a form of recourse, to have some form of justice, to be able to call out the things, the activities, the behaviours that are taken against me not because of anything I have said or not because of anything I have done but simply because of the colour of my skin.

We cannot claim to have an Australia where all Australians are equal if we do not pursue all rights equally. We cannot claim to have an Australia where every Australian has equal rights if we pursue the rights of one group over and above the rights of another group. All rights are worth pursuing and all rights are worth pursuing equally. So I ask: is my life and my rights the lesser? Am I second-class citizen where my right to feel protected is less than somebody's right to be a bigot? These are questions that I think we should not have to ask in the year 2016; but, sadly, we do have to ask them.

This morning I received death threats. I do not worry about myself because, in this place, I am afforded the protections that not many people are afforded. But these were death threats against my family. Somebody came out and said that they would like to kill my family. Where are my rights?

Can we honestly say that all Australians have equal rights when we are sitting in this parliament debating about whether or not we should take away an essential law that has

served Australia well for 20 years, a part of the Racial Discrimination Act that has served Australia well for 20 years and that has protected people like me for 20 years? Can we honestly say that we have achieved equal rights for all Australians?

Just to finish: we cannot talk about equal rights for all Australians without also talking about the substantive and very real fact that inequality exists for many Australians in many, many different ways, not just in the ways that I have just mentioned through my personal story but for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, for our LGBTIQ communities and for the communities of the outer suburbs for whom inequality exists in the lack of access to infrastructure, services and job opportunities. In my electorate of Cowan, a child growing up in Wanneroo is 30 per cent less likely to finish school. A family living in Lockridge has half the income of those in the inner suburbs.

Until we recognise the inequality that exists for people in Australia in all its forms, not just in the forms that affect people like me—because, let us face it, I am also privileged to be in the position that I am in and feel honoured to be in the position that I am in. Inequality also exists for people who are not racially different or who are not religious minorities. It exists in different ways for different people in Australia. Until we recognise the real and substantive impact of those inequalities across Australia, diversely across all forms and all backgrounds for all Australians, we can never stop talking about this. We need to continue talking about this, and, more than that, we need to continue taking action to ensure that those inequalities do not continue to affect standards of living, quality of life and mental health for people across Australia. For we will never be truly free, and we will never be a truly progressive country, until we are all well and truly equal.

Ms BUTLER (Griffith) (12:12): I too rise to speak in relation to this motion moved by the Prime Minister and supported by Bill Shorten, the Leader of the Opposition, in what was intended to be a moment of national unity reflecting the same type of moment of national unity that occurred 20 years ago in 1996 when then Prime Minister John Howard and Kim Beazley, the Leader of the Opposition at the time, moved a motion in the same terms. Since this motion was moved, it has become, if anything, more important for national leadership on issues of unity than ever before in the history of this nation. We are in a situation today where decades of commitment to multiculturalism, immigration and reconciliation are at risk of being eroded—where that progress is at risk of being eroded—and that is a terrible thing for our nation. Not only is it a terrible thing because of the sharp end of bigotry and racism but it is a terrible thing because multiculturalism, immigration and movements towards reconciliation have done so much for this country over such a long period of time.

It is estimated that 10 million people have arrived and settled in Australia since the First Fleet came here. Seven million of them have come to Australia since 1945, so there has been a massive amount of postwar migration to Australia. That massive amount of postwar migration means that, today, one in four Australians was born overseas and almost half of Australians—46 per cent—have at least one parent who was born overseas. That is contributing to making us the incredibly successful multicultural country that we have been for a very long time. It is estimated that migrants provide an estimated fiscal benefit of over \$10 billion in their first 10 years of settlement here in Australia, so it is not just a cultural contribution, which is in and of itself very important, but an economic one.

The economic impacts are worth mentioning because they are so significant. Migration Council Australia estimated that by 2050 migration would be contributing \$1.6 trillion to Australia's GDP. It will have added 15.7 per cent to Australia's workforce participation rate, 21.9 per cent to after-tax real wages for low-skilled workers and 5.9 per cent in GDP per capita growth. They have estimated that by 2050 each individual migrant would be contributing, on average, 10 per cent more to Australia's economy than existing residents.

That is not the only set of reporting or modelling in relation to the economic contributions of migrants. Professor Graeme Hugo's report *Economic, social and civic contributions of first and second generation humanitarian entrants*, which was a study commissioned by the Department of Immigration and Citizenship, found that refugees and other humanitarian entrants provided significant economic benefit to our country. The report's analysis of data by country of birth found that for second-generation humanitarian arrivals—people whose parents came here as refugees—at least half of the nationality groups had a higher level of participation than the Australian-born population and that, because humanitarian entrants are highly entrepreneurial, with a higher than average proportion of those entrants engaging in small and medium business enterprises, that makes a contribution to our economy. Also there is the willingness of people who have come from very difficult situations to fill some low-wage and low-skilled jobs.

All of these things are an economic contribution to our nation, and we should remember them, but more importantly when we talk about national unity we should remember the sort of country that we want to be. We should remember the sort of country that we dream of being. Racism, the coarsening of public debate, public attacks and vilification do not just hurt the people who are vilified; they hurt everyone. They hurt our entire society. No-one gets to live on an island in Australia—in a metaphorical sense; obviously there are people living on islands! No person gets to live isolated from our society. That is not the way it works. No matter how wealthy you are, no matter how poor you are, no matter what you do or where you have come from, the nature of Australian society affects your life.

That is why we should be very concerned about some of the division that is starting to arise. In my own electorate it took the form of a party that was aimed at stopping Muslim immigration into Australia and that ran against me at the last federal election. It is also a situation where you see vilification and abuse online. The sorts of things that nobody would even have thought of saying on the street 20 years ago are now routinely written online.

I was particularly thinking about this today. I was recently in the media talking about a racial vilification case where some students had been alleged to have written some Facebook posts after not being able to use an Indigenous-specific computer lab, using words like, 'Where's the white supremacist lab?' and, 'Why are we meeting segregation with segregation?' There was a Facebook post—and the person whose name was on it said it was a hacking, of course—using the phrase 'ITT' and then the n-word. There were a number of matters alleged in this case.

The case itself was not successful, because the judge found that there was no reasonable prospect of success and struck it out around eight months after the applicants had made a strike-out application. That, to me, goes to show something really important, which is that the vilification laws are quite narrow in this country, and rightly so. You want to have vilification

laws that meet their aims of both signalling the inappropriateness and wrongness of vilification and providing a remedy when the worst cases of vilification arise.

I spoke about that case on television recently, and today I received an email from someone I have known for a long time but not very well, and that is Susan Moriarty. She wrote to me:

I am the lawyer acting for Cindy Prior—

who was the applicant in that case. She said:

Up until Friday 18 November, there were over 9,000 comments—
online—

about Cindy's case. It has been like being forced to watch a public flogging. 'Just kill her - problem solved' wrote one North American on The Australian Facebook page, while another wrote 'wrap that bitch in plastic and sink her in the sea'. Another wrote 'let's get crowd funding going, so we can bankrupt this black bitch' while another wrote 'she can't have been vilified because if she had she'd been lynched by now'. Another wrote 'this black—

'c-word'—

has set back the constitutional amendment - remember that Prior'. Another screamed for her ovaries to be torn from her body and burned so that she could never breed.

Ms Moriarty wrote:

On and on and on and on went these murderous inclinations by white Australia. She arrived home to read this on her Facebook –

I just want you to know that you're a racist bigot and should be held accountable for your racist bigotry. Instead of you flashing a victim card while discriminating against individuals on the basis of their race, why don't you take a step back and realise what a hypocrite and unbelievably racist piece of shit you are—

'c-word. F-word you.'—

You need special treatment because you cannot take responsibility for yourself as an individual. Anyone giving you special treatment is just practicing soft bigotry of low expectations. They expect you to be a leech, you—

'f-ing c-word.' Ms Moriarty went on to say:

Six month ago, the 'White Lives Matter' movement ... leafleted her—

the applicant's—

suburb in Western Australia. Because she—

the applicant—

was unambiguously an indigenous Australian she had remained hidden indoors for several days.

What is also interesting is the reaction of some people who went onto a Facebook page that had been created by a former QUT student after that case had been struck out. It was struck out in early November. It makes for pretty awful reading, to be honest. Students or apparent students—maybe they had all been hacked—wrote: 'ITT: n-word' the same quote that had been alleged in this matter. There was a chap—it appears to be a chap, but it is Facebook and maybe they had all been hacked—who said:

All the aboriginals accomplished in forty thousand years in Australia is just some shit finger paintings.

Another person said:

Apparently they're the only "civilisation" to never independently invent the wheel

Another person said: 'ITT n-word', again, the same quote that was alleged in the case. Another person said:

Where's the white supremacist computer lab so I can continue this thread properly

Another person said:

I wonder if you can say ITT—

'n-word'—

on ss2.0 again?

The respondent who was alleged to have said it appears to have said—it may not be him; maybe it was hacked:

Give it a crack what's the worst that can happen?

These things are very concerning. It is a coarsening of our public debate and we should be very worried about it.

Mr PERRETT (Moreton—Opposition Whip) (12:22): I rise to speak on the motion instigated by the opposition leader and moved by the Prime Minister. It is a very important motion that we speak on today: the right of all Australians to enjoy equal rights and be treated with equal respect, regardless of race, colour, creed or origin. It is a very important motion and I am proud to speak here today in the people's place, in Parliament House, where we reaffirm our commitment to ensure that all Australians can enjoy the rights and respectful treatment that is often taken for granted by some of us. This is an important matter, irrespective of whether you are an Indigenous Australian or your ancestors migrated here as convicts or free settlers or arrived here recently from Holland or wherever, or even if you came here seeking asylum, or any other permutation of those. We are not first-, second- or third-generation migrants; we are all Australians who have some of those other characteristics. It saddens me greatly when I hear that members of the multicultural community, especially in my electorate of Moreton, have been treated disrespectfully. My dear departed mum taught me that good manners are always important, and I know that my mum never got anything wrong, so I think she was on the money. Sadly, it still happens that people are treated disrespectfully, as we have heard from speakers in the bipartisan support for this motion.

In fact, just last week, members of the Taiwanese, Rwandan, Indian, Fijian, Egyptian, Filipino, Bosnian, Pakistani and South African communities joined me in my electorate office to hear the member for Cowan talk about her experience of growing up in a multicultural community. It was a fascinating discussion but, sadly, many of those present at that table shared their own stories of being the victims of racial discrimination. They shared their very real concerns about the possibility of racial discrimination laws being watered down. I am fortunate that my community on Brisbane's south side is pretty much a model of inclusive cultural diversity. I am not being naive; I know that there are still some racists in the community who sometimes get frustrated and articulate things that are horrible, and every now and then there are some manifestations of racism. But, on the whole, our community—like much of modern-day Queensland, I would suggest—celebrates our diversity and the contributions that members of communities have made to Australia irrespective of where they have come from.

I would just like to mention a few of these considerable contributions. The Sunnybank RSL, with the support of the local Chinese community, created a memorial for all those Chinese Australians, or people of Chinese heritage, who have served Australia in past wars. The memorial recognises soldiers like Billy Sing and Caleb Shang, who fought in the First World War, and Jack Wong Sue, who served Australia in World War II, to name but a few. There are many other great stories of courage and bravery by the Chinese Australian diaspora, and they have been commemorated by this memorial. Just one of the stories, a well-known story, is that of Private Billy Sing, who was a sniper with the Australian 5th Light Horse Regiment. He was a kangaroo shooter originally but went over to Gallipoli and was conservatively credited with more than 150 kills in Gallipoli. He was known to his fellow soldiers as 'the assassin' and was awarded the Distinguished Conduct Medal for conspicuous gallantry as a sniper at ANZAC.

The memorial itself was a labour of love for the Chinese community and it has contributed to stronger links between that community and the local RSL. It is a continuing reminder of the diversity, cooperation, understanding and friendship that exists on Brisbane's south side, and it also goes a long way to recognising the slights and racism that existed, perhaps, 100 years ago when people were allowed to fight and die for their country but were not allowed to own land because they were seen to be not Australian because they were Chinese—and there are others.

I also point out that the success of the Chinese war memorial has inspired a commemoration of contributions from other communities. There is currently a project underway, which I am excited to be a part of, to erect a memorial for the Indian Australian service men and women who contributed to Australian war efforts in the past and are doing so now. I was pleased to attend a dinner just a few weeks ago, where the winning design for this memorial was announced. We had a mock-up of the winning design, and 11 students from Griffith University turned up at the dinner. I think it is going to be a great project, so I look forward to working with the Indian Australian community and to seeing that completed memorial in due course. Like the Chinese memorial, there will also be bursaries associated with the memorial, so you will have the physical memorial but then you will have the living bursary where students from local high schools will be urged to research and tell those stories.

I would also like to mention the contribution of another Australian. I was very pleased to attend an event on the weekend where the member for Fisher was representing the Prime Minister. It was for the Australian African community and, at the event on Saturday night, an award was given for an act of incredible bravery by a former refugee from Sudan. Aguek Nyok came to Australia as a refugee from Sudan and now drives a taxi in Brisbane. He took a break from collecting his passengers to get a haircut at the local Moorooka shops one day last month, and as he left the hairdresser's shop he saw smoke billowing out of a bus on Beaudesert Road—at a bus stop that I walk through every morning when I am in Brisbane. Aguek saw passengers trapped inside and bashed open the back door and, by his bravery, saved 11 people who were trapped inside the bus, which was filling up with toxic fumes. This was an incredible act of bravery. Many people would not run towards flames, especially in a bus that might explode. But this brave Australian says:

I just helped people and that is what I am expecting from my fellow Australians if I was in the same situation.

We can all learn from his bravery and, dare I say it, his humility. Aguek Nyok was the very worthy recipient of the African Australians Bravery and Heroes Award at the celebration of African Australians national awards held at the Brisbane City Hall on Saturday night.

As I said, I am very lucky to be constantly reminded in my community of the valuable contributions that can be made by all Australians in a diverse and inclusive community. This motion reaffirms our commitment to maintaining that successful inclusive community. The success of our multicultural communities is in large part dependent on continuing to denounce racial intolerance. The recently announced inquiry into freedom of speech will look at how our laws that prevent racial hate speech are working. It is important to remember that freedom of speech has no explicit constitutional protection. Commonwealth, state and territory legislative protections are not absolute. They contain necessary limits to accommodate the countervailing public interest. There can be a natural tension between one person's right to be free from racial discrimination and another person's perception that they have a right to speak freely. The total freedom of one will negate the rights of the other. It is necessary for good governments to balance these important rights.

Prime Minister Gough Whitlam introduced the Racial Discrimination Act in 1975. From memory, I do not think it was broadly supported by the Liberal Party, apart from Neville Bonner, the senator from Queensland; nevertheless, the Fraser government did not do anything to abolish the Racial Discrimination Act when it was in power. This important legislation has been protecting individuals against discrimination for 41 years. Then, just over 20 years ago, the protections in section 18C and exemptions contained in section 18D were added. Then Attorney-General Michael Lavarch said in his second reading speech to introduce the bill:

This bill is an appropriate and measured response to closing the identified gap in the legal protection of all Australians from extreme racist behaviour. It strikes a balance between the right of free speech and the other rights and interests of Australia and Australians.

In the years since 18C was added the Human Rights Commission has received about 100 complaints a year, and most of these are resolved through a conciliation process. Only about five end up in court annually. Obviously the claims are limited. I am supportive of the idea that we do not offend people because of their race, obviously. Religion is something to discuss as another topic. I thank the Prime Minister and the Leader of the Opposition for this motion before the chamber.

Mr STEPHEN JONES (Whitlam) (12:32): This motion has languished in the basement of parliamentary business for a couple of months—two months does not sound like a lot of time to most Australians but if you look at what has gone on over the last two months, it has been a very long time indeed. Last night I read the Prime Minister's speech on this motion. It was a good speech—a very good speech. There was not a word in there that I could not agree with. Sadly, it was very difficult, looking at the Prime Minister who gave that speech two months ago, who spoke most eloquently and passionately in support of this motion, to recognise the Prime Minister who has done very little in the last couple of days to confront the rising tide of bigotry, including bigotry in this place.

The motion reconfirms our commitment to the right of all Australians to enjoy equal rights—a policy which is based wholly on non-discriminatory grounds when it comes to race, colour, creed or country of origin. It reaffirms our commitment to the process of

reconciliation with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people; it reaffirms our commitment to maintaining Australia as a culturally diverse, tolerant and open society. How easy would it have been during question time yesterday for the Prime Minister to repeat those words that he spoke so passionately not two months ago? What has changed?

Much has been written in the last two weeks about what has changed: Trumpism and the US election; back further we can look at Brexit—the vote by millions of Brits to excise themselves from the European Union; and closer to home we can look at the results of the 2016 election and now the monumental swing against the National Party in the New South Wales by-election in Orange.

From Australia, Trumpism looks like a disaffection with the political class—technocrats, the city elites and the experts. Those very same insiders, those experts, are now bemoaning what appears to them to be post-facts politics. In fact, they do it with the exact same vigour the way that their detractors conclude that all of those facts and all those theories are just a conspiracy from the insiders, those very people who are controlling and making the decisions that we do not agree with. There is more than a nagging suspicion amongst this group that the trade deals have got more downside than upside, unless you are a merchant banker. It is a belief that immigration policy is working against their interest in some sort of zero-sum, one-more-mouth-to-feed way. In all this, words like 'innovation', 'modernity', 'economic change' and even 'multiculturalism' sound like doublespeak for a future that does not include these people.

There is a lot we can recognise in our own country in all of this. It really is not that hard to understand if you are listening and, of course, can be a stretch if it is a long way from your lived experience. If you are a city professional putting in 50 to 60 hours a week and pulling in your six-zero-figured salary, it might be a bit hard to understand that upwards of a million Australians are in jobs where they are not getting enough hours to bring in the income which is meeting their cost of living. If you are working these mad hours in the inner city, it might be very difficult for you to understand that there are people who are in a casual or a part-time job who do not have enough work to pay their bills.

If you stop listening, you are not going to hear what they are saying. If you are listening, you might hear the guy who is saying: 'I no longer have a permanent job' or 'I'm 29 years of age and I've never had a permanent job' or 'For the last month, I've spent four hours travelling to and from work everyday for a job that I may not have in six months time and people ask me why I don't move from the place where I live to the place where I'm working. I tell you reason I don't move is because I can't afford to rent or buy a house there and I don't even know if I'm going to have that job in a few months time.' These are the people who are deeply concerned with what is going on in Australia and we hear their concerns. When you have a decent conversation with these people, when you duck below the dog-whistling and all the noise and the concern and you talk to them about their concerns, you talk to them about 'Islamophobia'—a word that they would never use—they might say, 'I really am concerned about all that bombing and that killing that is going on in Iraq and Syria, and I don't want that stuff going on here.' Is that too hard to understand? It really is not too hard to understand.

America with its politics, its economy and its culture are very different places to Australia but there are plenty of similarities. We are both advanced economies with cities that are fully embedded in the modern and international economy and regions that are in industrial decline.

We have been trading nations that have enjoyed the benefits of trade with Asia and, in the case of the United States with Latin America, have been able to spread the benefits of that trade to jobs in labour-intensive sectors, particularly in resources and manufacturing. But now with the growth in Asian manufacturing capacity, it means that the region that was once the market for our goods is now the origins of our import competition. If you live in one of these big cities, the transition from the manufacturing economy to a service economy might have been less marked. But if you live in a region like mine, it has been extreme, and I know in your region, Deputy Speaker Vamvakinou, it has also been extreme. You see, the goods that you were once able to afford, which were the trade-off for those well-paid jobs—those goods have disappeared.

At the heart of this discontent is economics, because the truth for Australia and for the world is that we have dropped the ball when it comes to equality. There is growing inequality right across the board, but nowhere is it greater than between city and regional Australia. In the Illawarra on the South Coast, unemployment rates are three to five times those in the capital cities. Income disparity is growing rapidly. There are unacceptably high suicide rates all across the country, but these are multiplied by two and three and four in regional Australia. This is the circumstance which is breeding discontent; it is inequality which is breeding alienation and discontent. It is the way that we respond to this inequality which defines us. It is the way that we respond to the exclusion and the fear and uncertainty which defines us as a nation.

It would be quite open to us to use parliament and the privilege of our titles to stoke the fire of discontent. We could do that. We know that there are ready ears out there for that message—people who are already hurting, because they are not getting the benefits that the Prime Minister talks about of these never-more-exciting times where we are 'nimble'. That is another world to the world that these people live in. We could convince people that the real cause—of unemployment, of homelessness, of rental stress, of the time they are spending in a traffic jam, or of the train that does not run on time—is these wretched souls that are languishing in detention on Manus Island and Nauru, and that all we have to do as a nation is stop them coming to Australia. We could convince people that that was the truth, but that would be a lie.

It is the way that we respond to these things which defines us as humans. It defines us as parliamentarians. It defines us as people who have been sent here to uphold the best traditions of Australian democracy. Sadly, what we have seen on display over the last week is a long way from the eloquent words of the Prime Minister and the Leader of the Opposition when they brought this motion into the House two months ago. This motion is the sort of bipartisanship that we need. It is bipartisanship around the best traditions of Australian democracy and not the worst.

Mr KEOGH (Burt) (12:43): It was 20 years ago, almost to the day, that then Prime Minister Howard moved a motion, first proposed by opposition leader Kim Beazley, in the same words as the motion we are debating today: to reaffirm the commitment of the Australian government and the Australian parliament to equal rights. Looking back on Mr Howard's reflections in this place on that day does show that the more things change, the more they can stay the same. Mr Howard said:

It is natural that people, particularly those who feel themselves at the sharp end of challenge and anxiety in industries that have seen extensive job losses, should feel some sense of anxiety about immigration levels. It is our obligation to point out, where it is appropriate, the error in their understanding of the causation between immigration and job security.

It is no coincidence that the need to reaffirm this House's commitment to equal rights, regardless of race, colour, creed or origin, has come at another point in our history where some Australians are feeling left behind and where inequality is on the rise. It is very easy for politicians and so-called leaders to talk to those people—those who are out of work or feeling the pinch of an economic downturn—about patriotism and the supposed threat of immigration. It is easy to create an enemy, and to whip up fear and ride that sentiment into power, but that does not solve the problem. Those people who you were talking to remain out of work, down on their luck and struggling. Those who have come to Australia from across the seas, most of whom have given so much to our country, are caught in the middle, demonised for crimes they never committed to appease people they have never met. This creation of fear is not leadership. It is not what we are here to do.

Mr Beazley, on the day this motion was first brought, impressed upon this place the need for leadership. He said:

But each time each new wave of migrants came in — whether they were from southern Europe, eastern Europe, the Middle East and now more recently from Asia — there has been a requirement on the political leadership in this country to point out the advantage; to mould, insofar as we can, and without arrogance, community opinion that makes it acceptable and ensures that the community sustains its tolerant and decent traditions. There has been that requirement constantly upon us for leadership.

Over the past 200 years, Australia has made enormous progress on racial tolerance led by a series of true leaders. From a nation state born in conflict with the original inhabitants of this great land—built then on a foundation of a White Australia policy—over 200 years, we have begun to bridge that conflict with Indigenous Australia. We have deconstructed the White Australia policy. We have moved away from a sectarian society, and opened our nation up to immigration from Europe first and then across the globe. It would be a tragedy of the highest order for us to abandon that progress, to walk away from the achievements of our forebears and walk back towards the fear and hatred of a sectarian society. Right now, our country needs us all in this place to stand up.

The rights expressed in this motion are what our cousins in the United States would call 'self-evident truths'. They are the values that tie together our nations and bring together liberal democracies across the world. But being self evident does not mean that we do not have to fight for these rights. We must continue every day to press the case for a multicultural Australia; that our multicultural Australia is where we celebrate the practice of many cultures, but always consistent with and underpinned by Australian values.

We must remind ourselves and our constituents of the contributions that different cultures have made to Australia: the Irish Australians who moved here in the 19th century due to famine, like my family; the Chinese at the turn of the 20th century; the Eastern European Australians who came out after the Second World War and helped to build the Snowy Mountain Scheme, or the orchards that surround my electorate of Burt and the hills of Roleystone, Karragullen and Pickering; the Vietnamese Australians who came as refugees and who have become leaders across business, politics and the arts, like the South Australian Governor; the Lebanese Australians, like the former New South Wales Governor; and

businessmen and philanthropists, and so many more, as well as those coming to Australia now like those from India and South Asia, through the western areas of the electorate of Burt. All of these people have one thing in common: they are Australians.

I would close by noting another comment by Mr Howard in his speech 20 years ago, which, given some of the commentary from recent days by government ministers, seems more striking than ever.

I remain very fond of the fact—

Mr Howard said—

that I was a member of the coalition government led by Malcolm Fraser which, in the late 1970s, chose to admit to this country tens of thousands of people from war-torn Indochina. Inevitably—

Mr Howard went on—

the character of Australia has changed as a result of this migration. Much of that change has been profoundly beneficial. I think this country owes an enormous debt to people who have chosen this as their home; people who have come from the four corners of the world.

This motion 20 years ago articulated the Australia that we were becoming as we moved into the 21st century. Today, 20 years later, the prosperity and unity of our nation relies on us living the values of this motion, and I am proud to reaffirm our commitment to tolerance and diversity today.

Mr BRIAN MITCHELL (Lyons) (12:49): This motion to reaffirm Australia's bipartisan commitment to equality irrespective of race, creed, colour or origin, was moved by the Prime Minister on 10 October, just 47 days ago. It was another era because, on 10 October, Donald Trump was not the President-elect of the United States and Steve Bannon, a close ally of America's Neo-Nazi movement, was not the new Chief Strategist in the White House. When I put my name down to speak to this motion, I never intended to talk about America, but we must talk about it. There is a direct relevance to what is going on in America and the subject of this motion in Australia.

Before becoming Donald Trump's campaign chief of staff, Steve Bannon used to run a political website called Breitbart. Breitbart started out publishing news with a conservative viewpoint—somewhat like a hybrid of *The Australian* and *The Daily Telegraph* newspapers. It was journalism but through a right-wing, wind-them-up prism with inflammatory headlines. Under Bannon, Breitbart became extreme, spreading the lies about Obama not being American. In July this year, Bannon bragged that he had transformed Breitbart into 'the platform for the alt-right movement'.

Because of Bannon, the alternative right and its leader, Richard Spencer, gained notoriety, influence and access to the political mainstream. Last week—in fact, just days ago—a video emerged of an alt-right conference held in a federal building in Washington DC. This is how *The New York Times* newspaper reported Spencer's address:

He railed against Jews and, with a smile, quoted Nazi propaganda in the original German. America, he said, belonged to white people, whom he called the "children of the sun," a race of conquerors and creators who had been marginalized but now, in the era of President-elect Donald J Trump, were "awakening to their own identity."

As he finished, several audience members had their arms outstretched in a Nazi salute. When Mr Spencer, or perhaps another person standing near him at the front of the room—it was not clear who—shouted, "Heil the people! Heil victory," the room shouted it back.

You do not have to take *The New York Times's* word for it; there is a video—Nazi salutes and all. So let us be clear: the alternative right is an avowed movement of white supremacists—a group described by journalist Shaun King, who writes for the New York *Daily News*, as 'the KKK without the hoods, skinheads with suits and ties'. The alt-right has been enthusiastically supported by Steve Bannon, and Steve Bannon is now the chief strategist for the White House.

As journalist Shaun King reported earlier today:

When you build, fund, and promote the online home for the modern-day Neo-Nazi movement, and openly brag that you have done so, that makes you a supporter and enabler of Neo-Nazis. If someone built, funded, promoted, and openly admitted to creating the online home for the latest iteration of ISIS, you know what they'd be called? Terrorists.

So what does all of this have to do with Australia and the motion we are discussing today? We do not live in a vacuum. We cannot ignore what is happening in America, because it is happening across the Western world and it is starting to happen here—UKIP, Brexit, the deeply troubling rise of Le Pen's fascist National Front in France, far-right parties in governing coalitions across Europe and the re-emergence of One Nation in Australia.

In just the past week, the immigration minister made a deplorable comment that the government led by Malcolm Fraser 'did make mistakes in bringing some people in'. The minister went on to refer to Australians as 'second and third generation migrants' and sought to justify his comments by stating that the children and grandchildren of Muslim migrants from Lebanon were overrepresented as national security threats.

What the minister did not do was offer an explanation as to what mistake he believed the Fraser government had actually made. How, for example, would he have liked the government of the day to screen migrants? What was it about the screening process that was deficient? What magical device could have screened a migrant to check whether their child or grandchild growing up here might turn out to be a national security threat? I wonder whether the minister might make this wondrous device widely available so young couples can be screened now to see whether their children will end up being criminals. Perhaps he can screen me to tell me whether my future grandchildren will one day smoke pot—or worse, vote Liberal!

The code behind the minister's reprehensible comments was that the mistake made was that these migrants were Muslim or Lebanese, or both. If there is another way of reading it, I would like him to explain it to the parliament. So we have a minister this week criticising a decision to allow Lebanese Muslim migrants into Australia when, just 47 days ago, we had the Prime Minister move this motion to recommit to Australia's equality principle irrespective of race, colour, creed or origin. A lot sure has changed in 47 days.

This motion is proudly supported by Labor. My preference would have been to use this speech to talk in more detail about the many great things that immigration has provided Australia and how pleased I am that a commitment to equality continues to cross the political divide. After all, I am an immigrant. I arrived here in 1975, with my parents, at the age of seven. My brother was four. Our family became citizens. Of course, to run for election to this

place, I was required to surrender my dual citizenship with the United Kingdom. But, apart from being called a pom at school and learning that you do not wear socks with sandals, I never really felt like an immigrant. I have always known in the back of my mind that, when we talk about immigrants in this country, we are not really talking about poms or kiwis; we are talking about people who are not white or whose first language is not English.

My parents left family behind when they brought us here, but the language, culture and religion were largely the same. I cannot begin to imagine what it must be like for people from Lebanon, whether Christian or Muslim, or the refugees from Vietnam, who arrived with just the shirts on their backs. But the vast majority of immigrants to this nation forged bright futures here. The success of Australia's immigration is testament to both the commitment of immigrants to their new country and Australia's willingness and ability to provide a welcoming new home. In the fields of science, mathematics, business, politics, education, the arts and others, immigrants and the children and grandchildren of immigrants—Australians—have made wondrous contributions. They deserve better than to be lumped in with the pitiful handful who have turned traitor.

I have spent much of this speech talking about what is happening in America—because, to address a problem, you first have to acknowledge that there is one. And there is a problem in the White House when someone like Steve Bannon has the President's ear. As the Leader of the Opposition said in his statement in reply to the Prime Minister: 'We need to do more than mouth words of respect. We must thoroughly and publicly reject racism wherever it occurs and whoever says it. There is no place in Australia for extremism no matter the party, no matter the agenda, no matter the importance of their vote.' I too believe we must call out racism when we see it, even—or perhaps especially—when it is given a home, a voice and a platform at the highest political levels of our most important ally and good friend, the United States of America.

Debate adjourned.

Sitting suspended from 12:59 to 16:00

Equal Rights

Consideration resumed of the motion:

That this House:

(1) reaffirms its commitment to the right of all Australians to enjoy equal rights and be treated with equal respect regardless of race, colour, creed or origin;

(2) reaffirms its commitment to maintaining an immigration policy wholly non-discriminatory on grounds of race, colour, creed or origin;

(3) reaffirms its commitment to the process of reconciliation with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, in the context of redressing their profound social and economic disadvantage;

(4) reaffirms its commitment to maintaining Australia as a culturally diverse, tolerant and open society, united by an overriding commitment to our nation, and its democratic institutions and values; and

(5) denounces racial intolerance in any form as incompatible with the kind of society we are and want to be.

Ms VAMVAKINO (Calwell) (16:00): I am very pleased to be speaking to this motion on equal rights for all Australians that was moved by the Leader of the Opposition and

seconded by the Prime Minister. I want to start by saying that I was in your place, Mr Deputy Speaker, just before lunch listening to many of my colleagues speak to this motion. I particularly want to reflect on some of the comments that the member for Cowan made, clearly with a lot of emotion. She began her presentation by asking the rhetorical question: why in 2016 is it necessary that we talk about the preservation of rights and equality before the law for all Australians? I understood clearly where she was coming from. I might have asked myself that question too when I thought about speaking to this motion.

We should never take for granted the battles that we have won and the society that we have built here in Australia—a democratic society that has enshrined in law equality for all Australians regardless of their race, colour, creed or origin. We should never take for granted those hard-fought battles by generations of people before us and indeed members of parliament who were in the parliament before us. We should never take for granted that those battles have been won and we no longer need to concern ourselves about these inequalities. It is probably not a bad idea in 2016, some 20 years after the same motion was moved by Mr Howard when he was Prime Minister, to take stock and reflect on where our community is in relation to the laws of our land.

I want to reflect on a couple of things. I want to reflect on the fact that this country has been built by waves of migrants from all over the world, including me. We are often described as a modern multicultural and open society and a democratic country. There are currently some seven million Australians who were born overseas. There are lots of things that unite us, but the one thing that enshrines our rights almost in law is the Australian Citizenship Act and the fact that we become Australian citizens and as Australian citizens we enjoy the same privileges and have the same obligations.

We have a society that is based on some very strong institutions and laws that protect all of us. The Racial Discrimination Act was put in place over four decades or so ago. Laws passed by this parliament and other parliaments are aimed at ensuring everyone has equality and that we are all protected against things said by others that might be hurtful and offensive or that might degrade us. I understand that very much—and I understand where the member for Cowan was coming from—because I grew up in this country as a foreigner, I became an Australian citizen and now I am in the Australian parliament. I think I represent what the modern contemporary Australian is today, and I am very proud of that. Obviously I am very keen to ensure that nothing interferes with future generations or current generations of people who are working their way through the integration process here in Australia and are becoming Australians.

I have often said to those in particular who are critical of multiculturalism and who argue that it is a divisive thing and we should abandon it—we have sporadic outbreaks of those sorts of debates, and we are having one at the moment; we have had many before in the past, and we will overcome it in the same way that we have overcome it in the past—that multiculturalism for me and for many Australians is really underpinned by these laws. It is also a process by which people become Australians. So it is not a divisive policy; it is 4½ decades of government policy that has over the years enjoyed bipartisan support. There have been times, blips along the way, where there have been critics, but, by and large, there has been bipartisan support on this issue, and I think that that is what underpins the strength of our modern Australian multicultural society.

We have also, in that mix, pursued a non-discriminatory immigration policy. We do not select people on the basis of their race or their colour or their creed or their origin. We do not exclude them, and we do not select them on that basis. We have a non-discriminatory immigration policy.

If I look at the period when the White Australia policy was finally done away with, I see in my electorate in particular the great Turkish-speaking Australian community that was able to finally come to Australia on the abolition of the White Australia policy. I am sure that at the time there would have been people in my community who would have thought that this was not a good thing—that we would not have wanted Turkish migrants in this country, that they would not have been capable of integrating or that they would have been future problem makers. At the time I probably was a very young child, but I am sure that in my neighbourhood in Broadmeadows there were people who would not have wanted the Turks to come to Australia.

But when you reflect—and we are now nearing 50 years of Turkish migration in this country—it cannot be said that, with the abolition of the White Australia policy, which then allowed Turks and other non-Europeans or nonwhites to come to this country, there has been a detriment to the Australian community. On the contrary, my community have made a great contribution, and they are continuing to make a great contribution as Australians of Turkish descent and as Australians of the Muslim faith. So the idea that at some point in time we reflect and we say, 'We shouldn't have let those people in because there are some problems today,' really puzzles me and concerns me. I will come to that a little bit later.

The 17 per cent or so of my constituents who are of the Muslim faith do come also from Lebanon. I have many of them in my electorate who are actually very good Australian citizens and who are making, as I said, a very good contribution as Australians to this country.

In addition to that, I am also very pleased that we are to welcome a very large number of Iraqi Christians—in fact, the biggest number of Iraqi Christians to come to this country in Victoria are living in the federal seat of Calwell. They have come to live here under the refugee program. I have spent a lot of my time interacting with them in trying to assist them and teach them about the Australian community that they have come to live in. And, yes, many of them come here with preconceived ideas and views about people of the Muslim faith. I can understand that. They have come out of the Middle East. They still have family who are being persecuted.

But I have found that this is important to me as their federal member: rather than use that concern and fear that they have and stir my community, I realise it is absolutely critical that the leadership that I show in my local community is to ensure that I help them through a process of settling and integrating into Australia that helps them to have a positive experience. So I am very, very critical of anyone who chooses to hijack this debate and turn it into a political attack on other people. I am worried about the rise of a particular attitude in our Australian community and in this place because it has now found a political voice. I am very worried that succumbing to that attitude is going to be detrimental to the Australian community. The biggest threat to Australia's security or social cohesion is not where people are born; it is rather the racism that often finds expression in this country and the failure of leadership to reject it.

Mr CREWTHER (Dunkley) (16:10): I rise today to speak on the resumption of debate on the motion of the Prime Minister to recognise equal rights for all Australians. As the Prime Minister noted, 50 years ago Australia became an early signatory to one of the world's most profound declarations on human rights: the United Nations' International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination. As many of my colleagues have done already when speaking on this motion, I would like to take this opportunity to reaffirm my commitment to the common values that I believe in and that I believe make our nation great. It is a commitment to the values which ensure that, regardless of who you are, where you are from, your ethnicity, the colour of your skin, your chosen faith or your ability, no Australian should be denied equal opportunity. This is something that I and many Australians strive towards on a daily basis. This motion, which is of great importance to our society, clearly outlines the values of many Australians who support the importance of equal rights for every Australian, including being treated with respect regardless of ethnicity, colour, creed, origin or any other factor.

This motion reaffirms our commitment to maintain Australia as a culturally diverse and open society united by an overriding commitment to our nation and its democratic institutions and values. The values recognised in this motion are common amongst many Australians—for example, notions of freedom which our ADF have fought for over a long period of time. Regardless of their individual background, ethnicity or location in Australia, each migrant who comes here to call Australia home is, in many cases, trying to achieve success for themselves and their families.

Before I came into this place, I worked as an international lawyer through the UN at the Kosovo Property Agency in the former Yugoslavia, resolving claims for people who had lost possession of their properties due to the 1998-99 conflict. In Kosovo, there were about 43,000 claims for farms, for houses and for businesses—by people who were refugees or internally displaced people, or others. We presented nearly 800 cases before an international tribunal every two months. This work assisted individuals and families who had become victims of a situation in which they were not given equal rights or opportunities in terms of the conflict. At the same time, this process of property resolution also enables that nation to move forward. For example, if you wish to invest in Kosovo, you want to know that the property you are purchasing is actually owned by the person who purports to own it. Not only is this resolution process helping people to return to their properties, sell their properties or rent their properties, it enables the country to move forward in investing in their future.

Using what I learned during this time, part of the importance of my work now as a member of the Australian parliament is that I can be a voice for others and contribute to the continued success of our country. We can uphold what so many in our history have worked towards and ensure that we are part of society which celebrates and values the diversity of our people and the rights of all to have equal opportunities. I, like many Australians, believe in the value of equality for all. In my maiden speech, I spoke about why I am a Liberal. I mentioned that I am a Liberal because I believe in equality of opportunity and reward for effort. All people, irrespective of background, deserve a fair go to achieve their best. I focused on this as my own family, like many in our country, came from humble beginnings and would not have been able to succeed if our people and society did not uphold the value of equal opportunity for all.

My wife, Grace, originally came from South Korea and moved to Australia with her family when she was three years old. Australia opened the door for her as well as many other migrants from South Korea. Many South Korean migrants have been very successful in Australia in both integrating into Australian society and achieving success. I am proud that I am able to share in my family that experience with my wife, Grace. As I mentioned in my maiden speech, she experienced the detriments of communism in North Korea when her great-grandparents were unfortunately killed by being thrown alive into a well under the communist regime. Fortunately, her family on one side were able to make it out of North Korea before the borders closed and then she had the opportunity later to move to Australia.

South Korea is recognised in my electorate as well with an increase in South Korean migrants locally. I was able to open recently the first South Korean restaurant in Dunkley, which is called Geonbae, which means 'cheers'. We are proud as a nation to have common values supported by all Australians, such as the importance of a fair go for all. Like my family, Dunkley locals are hardworking and aspirational, wanting the best for themselves and their families. That is why I believe in equality of opportunity. My electorate of Dunkley is full of people from vibrant cultural backgrounds and faiths. The make-up of Dunkley has a majority who were born in Australia. However, we also have a significant population of people who were born in England, New Zealand, Scotland, Germany, India, the Netherlands, South Africa, Italy, China, Ireland, the Philippines, the United States of America, Greece, Poland and more, as well as many whose parents also came from these nations.

In September this year I had the privilege of hosting Senator the Hon. Arthur Sinodinos, the cabinet secretary, to my electorate. A part of Senator Sinodinos's visit to Frankston included meeting with the Frankston Greek Senior Citizens Club—a fantastic group of people who have made our community their home. Some made the Frankston community their home several generations ago and others in recent years. The fact that our society supports the rights of all Australians to enjoy equal rights and be treated with respect, regardless of ethnicity, colour, creed or origin, means that I was able to hear so many success stories from the members of the Greek senior citizens, many of whom came to Australia with very little but were able to make the most of the opportunities our community had to offer, while also contributing to and giving back to the community in many ways, which we hope that all migrants to our country can do. The Australian way of ensuring equality of opportunity for all and a fair go has meant that Australia is full of vibrant, culturally diverse communities—something which has made our country and communities so much greater.

Another example in my local electorate of Dunkley is the Ahmadiyyan Muslim community, with their mosque in Langwarrin. The Ahmadiyyan Muslim community is a part of the overall Islamic faith and in many Islamic countries is persecuted. Many have sought refuge in Australia and in many other countries around the world. They are an example of a community which has integrated locally in my electorate and is presenting a message which preaches love instead of hate.

We have a proud history as an immigration nation. Each year over 200,000 immigrants, as well as over 18,000 refugees and people coming through the humanitarian program, make Australia their home. That makes nearly 220,000 people, which is nearly one per cent of Australia's population, each year. Australia should be proud of its generous contribution in the world in settling migrants and refugees and others, particularly in terms of our settlement

services and our ability to integrate people into Australian society. We must continue to show order and continue to improve our settlement processes through our immigration programs and our actions recently through the great work of the Minister for Immigration and Border Protection, Peter Dutton, and assistant minister, Alex Hawke. If we control our borders and ensure an orderly process, that enables trust by the Australian people in our processes, which can increase generosity towards both migrants and refugees. This assists with further settlement into the future, in terms of settling those refugees and migrants, and we can continue to improve our settlement and other processes.

The ADF also do a great job, not only in Australia but around the world, in terms of preventing conflict at its source and in terms of protecting the freedoms that we all take for granted. This is part of our global efforts to stem the tide of those seeking refuge elsewhere. We currently have the largest population of refugees and internally displaced people around the world of more than 65 million people, which is greater than after World War II. We all have a responsibility, not only in Australia but in other countries, to enable the settlement of these people and to help resolve the issue.

I am proud as an Australian and as part of this parliament to support equality of opportunity, and I commend the Prime Minister's speech and this motion to the chamber.

Mr DREYFUS (Isaacs—Deputy Manager of Opposition Business) (16:20): This year marks the 41st anniversary of the Racial Discrimination Act, one of the great legacies of the Whitlam government. Passed in 1975, the Racial Discrimination Act makes it an offence to discriminate against a person because of their race, colour, descent, national or ethnic origin, or immigrant status. The act, of course, gave effect to some of Australia's international obligations under CERD, the Covenant for the Elimination of all forms of Racial Discrimination, and under the ICCPR, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.

Diversity is what makes Australia great. We do not merely tolerate or accept multiculturalism; we welcome and embrace it. Every new community that has come to this wide brown land of ours has added its own unique culture to the great multicultural fabric that is modern Australia. This diversity makes our great country stronger. It offers all Australians the chance to learn about the customs and traditions of others, making us all wiser and more civilised as a result. I cannot imagine an Australia that is not the multicultural community that it is today, because this is what we have become over the many decades of successive waves of immigration to our country. The multiplicity of cultures that we see around us, particularly in our great cities, makes Australia an extraordinarily distinctive culture. Very, very few countries in the world can boast of the multicultural diversity that we have in our country.

I welcome the Prime Minister's words in this House about his commitment to an immigration policy which is wholly non-discriminatory on the grounds of race, colour, creed or origin. I also welcome the Prime Minister's denunciation of racial intolerance in any form as being incompatible with the kind of society we are and want to be. I trust that the Prime Minister's words will be followed by swift action in support of the laws and policies that uphold the commitments that are contained in his words, including upholding section 18C of the Racial Discrimination Act, which provides protection for all Australians from being vilified because of their race or ethnic origin. It is exceptionally disappointing that the right-wing fringe of Australian politics, including some coalition MPs, have chosen to renew their

attack on a law which has served Australia particularly well in the 21 years that it has been part of our law.

I note that the Prime Minister has yet to respond to a letter written by the Leader of the Opposition inviting him to join all members of the Labor caucus in signing a parliamentarians' code of race and cultural ethics which pledges to discuss racial issues in a truthful and respectful way. This parliamentarians' code of race and cultural ethics is built on a document to very, very similar effect instigated by Senator Margaret Reynolds from Queensland in 1996, signed by very many members of both houses of the Australian parliament by 1998, which was prompted by what was, on any view, an outbreak of racial intolerance that had the potential to threaten the course and conduct of debate in this parliament. It is prompted by the potential for that same outbreak of racial intolerance that this new parliamentarians' code of race and cultural ethics has been brought into existence. I very much hope that the Prime Minister and the members of the joint coalition party room do respond to the invitation that has been extended by the Leader of the Opposition. What the Prime Minister's words in this House should lead to, but have not to date, is a swift denunciation of the member for Dickson's recent derogatory and uninformed comments about communities that came to our country under the Fraser government. The words that he has used when speaking of 'second- and third-generation migrants' demonstrate his ignorance. The children and grandchildren of migrants are not second- and third-generation migrants; they are Australians, and the member for Dickson should recognise that. He should be ashamed, as the immigration minister, of the phrases he has used.

The member for Dickson's other statements, about the supposed immigration mistakes of the Fraser government, are equally ignorant and, of course, divisive. Let me make this entirely clear to the government and to the Australian public: Labor does not think the successive waves of immigration to this great country of ours were a mistake. When I walk down Douglas Street in Noble Park, one of the great multicultural hubs of my electorate, I see the successes of multiculturalism. When I talk to the Vietnamese Australian cafe owner or the Sudanese Australian butcher, I see the opportunities that Australia offers and the diversity and success that multiculturalism brings. When I speak to the Mayor of the City of Greater Dandenong, my friend Jim Memeti, who came to Australia from Albania at the age of two, and who built a successful business while giving his time to his community as a councillor for the last 11 years, I see the success of Australian multiculturalism. All three of these people are dedicated, hardworking people who give their time and their labour to make our great country even better. Nobody who met these people would think that their coming to Australia was a mistake. Each one of them has created jobs for Australians and has contributed in many ways to our community. And everywhere I go in my electorate I see that cultural diversity. People from over 180 nations have made their home in my electorate, and many other electorates in Australia can say exactly the same thing.

What is distinctive about the Australian community, notwithstanding the incredible number of countries across the world from which Australians have come, is the harmony in which that amazing diversity is able to exist. Elected representatives, and in particular ministers in the government of our great country, have a responsibility to set a standard of acceptance and civility for all Australians. I would be greatly saddened if the 'ignorant' and 'alarmist' comments by the member for Dickson—and I am there quoting the former Fraser government

minister Ian Macphree—were to be considered acceptable by young and impressionable Australians. We have to be particularly careful to speak in this place with care and compassion, and not with a view to divide and inflame, because, when an elected representative speaks, their words and their beliefs are legitimised by the very fact that an elected representative speaks them. I say again: there is a particular responsibility cast on elected representatives, particularly on ministers, to choose their words with care, and not—and this goes particularly for a minister of immigration in this country—to use words that have the capacity to divide and inflame and excite prejudice. The immigration minister of this country is the last minister who should be using the kind of language that, regrettably, the member for Dickson has used in the last week and, might I say, has gone on using despite the storm of criticism that has rightly erupted over the comments that he made.

Multiculturalism is the success of hope over fear, of opportunity over apprehension and of reaching out instead of staying in. As a proud Labor member and, more importantly, as a proud Australian, I stand here today in defence of multiculturalism, in defence of diversity and in defence of the continued commitment to denounce racial intolerance in any form as incompatible with the kind of society we are and want to be. What we need to hear from the government of our country, not just from the opposition, is the same defence of multiculturalism and diversity. What we need to hear is a sustained rejection of racial intolerance in any form—and not merely on occasions like the occasion of this motion jointly sponsored by the Prime Minister and the Leader of the Opposition. Every time a minister speaks, every time an elected representative speaks, whether within this parliament or without, we need to hear a defence of multiculturalism and diversity.

Instead of attacking the Australian Human Rights Commission the Prime Minister and the Attorney-General need to be defending that statutory agency when it carries out the statutory functions that it is charged to do. Instead of attacking the provisions of the Racial Discrimination Act which gives effect to Australia's obligation to outlaw race hate speech, the government should be upholding those provisions. *(Time expired)*

Mr HOWARTH (Petrie) (16:30): I rise to speak on this motion today which has bipartisan support across the parliament. Of course, I follow the member for Isaacs. It is a shame that he has chosen once again to attack the Minister for Immigration and Border Protection like he does so often. The member for Isaacs cannot help but engage in grubby politics in relation to the Minister for Immigration and Border Protection. He should 'log out of his own eye' because, in parliament, the member for Isaacs loves to divide, as do a lot of members on the Labor Party side. The question that was put to the Minister for Immigration and Border Protection by the Labor Party the other day had as its very purpose to divide, to try and find a weakness, to get the minister to say something that they could exploit politically. That is the truth of the matter. It is absolutely grubby politics from those opposite.

A division having been called in the House of Representatives—

Sitting suspended from 16:32 to 16:45

Mr HOWARTH: As I was saying before, I was calling out the member for Isaacs for his divisive comments on this issue around the Minister for Immigration and Border Protection. I know the minister for immigration personally, and he is a very good man who cares deeply about his portfolio and cares deeply about Australian people from all walks of life. He has

done a great service to this country in his role. He has saved lives, particularly in relation to stopping people smugglers.

This motion, of course, I do support. That issue was originally raised by the Leader of the Opposition. That was in relation to the fact that there were new One Nation senators in this place. I would have chosen to just ignore that fact. I think we already had strong bipartisan support on this issue. But I do support the motion, which the Leader of the Opposition and of course the Prime Minister have spoken on.

I believe Australia is a great country. It is the greatest country in the world to live in. We have a strong democracy, with freedom of race and religion. As a federal member of parliament, I have had the privilege of participating in many local citizenship ceremonies. It is great to see so many people wanting to move to Australia and embrace Australian citizenship. People want to come here. They want to live here. They want to build their lives here because Australia is a country of opportunity.

When I go to citizenship ceremonies in my electorate, I see how happy they are. People from right around the world, from different races, from different religions, take this pledge, where they say:

From this time forward, under God, I pledge my loyalty to Australia and its people, whose democratic beliefs I share, whose rights and liberties I respect, and whose laws I will uphold and obey.

If people become citizens and they mean that pledge and they embrace Australia, we welcome them with open arms. People need, of course, to respect our country and culture, and they do, even if people come from parts of Asia, parts of the Middle East, India or wherever they are from. Yes, of course, they hang on to some of their own traditions and beliefs from where they were born, the food they eat and everything else, but many of them make a big effort to adopt the Australian way of life and to learn and speak English as well. It is very important. They love this country very much.

I think of Manmeet Sharma, an Indian bus driver who was murdered in Brisbane just a couple of weeks ago. I gave a speech on him in this place. He was a bus driver in Brisbane. He had a great work ethic. He worked really hard. He often helped new Indian people settle in to become Australian citizens here. He spoke at local functions in the electorate where he lived, and he sang as well. He was an Indian man—born Indian—who just settled into the Australian way of life and embraced it very much. What happened to him was an absolute tragedy.

I think of the Indian community where I spoke. There is a big Indian community in my electorate, particularly in the southern end. They had a memorial service for Manmeet the other day. They are Aussie people who love this country, and they play a big role in our area here.

In relation to Indigenous people as well, section (3) of the motion is:

(3) reaffirms its commitment to the process of reconciliation with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, in the context of redressing their profound social and economic disadvantage ...

We know that a previous Prime Minister, the 26th Prime Minister of Australia, said sorry to the Indigenous people, and that went a long way to reconciliation. We love Indigenous people. I know quite a few. I have a big Indigenous community in the northern part of my electorate, up around Deception Bay, and they play an important role.

There are some great Indigenous Australians who have been succeeding at a high level for a long time. Not all Indigenous people are disadvantaged. I think of our first Indigenous senator in this place, the first Indigenous parliamentarian in the Australian parliament, a Liberal senator from Queensland, the honourable Neville Bonner, who had little formal schooling, leaving school after he attained the third grade, apparently. In 1971, he became the first Aboriginal person to sit in the Commonwealth parliament when he was chosen to fill a vacancy in the Senate caused by the resignation of a Liberal senator for Queensland. Of course, Neville Bonner was returned at subsequent elections, from 1972 right through to 1980. Recently, his niece, Senator Joanna Lindgren, was also elected as a Queensland senator to this place. She is not here now, but she was elected.

Last Thursday, we saw the release of the seventh *Overcoming Indigenous disadvantage* report from the Productivity Commission. The report found that significant progress has been made across education, health and economic participation. The Minister for Indigenous Affairs, Nigel Scullion, 'said the progress was the result of concerted effort across government, but a great deal more needed to be done to address Indigenous disadvantage, including building the evidence of what worked'. He said that 'there are positives to take out of the report', specifically, reducing mortality rates of children, increasing year 12 attainment rates and school participation, and improving Indigenous employment rates and that 'this is good news and should be celebrated'. As the Minister for Indigenous Affairs, coalition minister Nigel Scullion, said:

The progress we have made in these areas is a positive development and critical to overcoming Indigenous disadvantage, but ... there is ... more to be done.

He praised all levels of government and different governments for their help.

Of course, unless you are an Indigenous person, you came to Australia as a migrant or are a descendant of immigrants. We are a multicultural society. This is the foundation Australia was built on, and this does make Australia great. We have all benefited from it, and we all embrace it, whether it is eating out at Thai, Chinese, Indian—whatever it is, we are happy to embrace it.

I want to talk quickly about the Asian work ethic because I know that Asians are some of the most hardworking people around. In my business, some of my customers ran Vietnamese bakeries, and these men and women used to come in at three o'clock in the morning to start their bakery and would not leave until eight o'clock at night. This went on seven days a week. I said to a guy I know, Tran, who runs the bakery at Banyo, 'When was the last time you had a holiday?' and he said, 'Five years ago.' These people have a wonderful work ethic, and they really do make a big difference.

I remember that in primary school, in years 2 and 3 at St Flannan's at Zillmere, there were a couple of brothers, Fretz and Jonathan. They were from the Philippines. They were very well respected by our classmates. When I trained in judo from the age of seven right through to my early 20s, I represented Queensland with a good friend of mine, a guy called Jason Gavin, whose mum was Malaysian. I mention that because, as a man in my 40s, I have grown up in a multicultural society, and we never looked upon these people that I grew up with as anything different than Aussies. Yes, they might have been born in a different country, but they were Australians. We are a country of opportunity, and, for anyone who wishes to make their mark in the story of Australia, we welcome them. I support the motion.

Ms CHESTERS (Bendigo) (16:53): This is an important motion, and it is good to see members of the government add their names to the list to show their support for the words that have been moved in the House. It is a very important reminder at this time in Australian politics that this House recommits to equal rights for all Australians and reaffirms its support for all Australians to enjoy equal rights and to be treated with respect regardless of race, colour, creed or origin.

I know that a number of MPs have stood in this place and said that one of the joys of being a federal member is being able to participate in citizenship ceremonies, and I too would like to add my voice to that call. We in the City of Greater Bendigo have had just over 280 people in our area take the pledge to become new Australian citizens. I know that that is not as many as in other electorates around the country. I know that in some electorates there are that many at every citizenship ceremony. But in Bendigo that is the number of people we were proud to celebrate taking the step to become Australian citizens.

They have come from many countries to make Australia and Bendigo their home. We have asylum seekers and refugees from Myanmar. We have a number of skilled migrants from Sri Lanka, Bangladesh and India. We also have a number of people who have lived in Australia for a very long time but only recently decided, even though they identify as Australian, to take that step to become Australian citizens—people from New Zealand, the UK and the Netherlands.

In our part of the world we celebrate this event. It is always covered by the local media. There is always joy. There is a lot of nervousness. People are encouraged to wear dress from their original country at the citizenship ceremony. We hold these ceremonies not just in Bendigo; we also hold these ceremonies in the Macedon Ranges and Mount Alexander but less frequently than in Bendigo. It is a way that we in our community celebrate and acknowledge our diversity. It is important that we in this place reflect and respect that diversity not just when we speak in citizenship ceremonies but every day that we are members of parliament.

When I get the great privilege to speak at these events—in fact, at any event in our community where we celebrate our diversity and the many cultures that make up the Australian culture—I talk about how Australia is a rich tapestry of many cultures woven together to form the Australian culture. We do that through the traditional way—through food, music and sharing stories. We always encourage each other to share our stories and our journeys because that is the true Australian culture—many cultures woven together.

Unfortunately, in Bendigo in the last few years we have had a few people invade our town and suggest that we are not a multicultural community, that we are not diverse and that we do not celebrate our diversity. The City of Greater Bendigo just over two years ago quite proudly approved the first application to build our city's first mosque. We have a growing Muslim Australian community in Bendigo and they did not have a place of their own in which to worship. They put forward plans to build a community centre that contained a small mosque.

Unfortunately, the United Patriots Front, Reclaim Australia and a few other groups boarded trains to Bendigo and drove to Bendigo to protest against the building of the first mosque. These people were outrageous and at times violent. The United Patriots Front staged a mock beheading of a dummy out the front of the Bendigo city chambers. They posted this on Facebook. Whilst many community leaders and political leaders, people like me, condemned

the video at the time, we really struggled to get Facebook to take down the video. This goes to the role of social media in this space. We note what happened recently in the United States.

I hope that Facebook takes these concerns seriously because the people involved in this incident have since been charged by Victorian Police for serious religious vilification. We welcome that because it is very important that people in Bendigo and in Australia are not subject to the kind of vilification that this group have been pushing for. They say that people who practise the Muslim faith are not Australians. They are wrong. They say people who pray in mosques are not Australians. They are wrong. It says very clearly in our Constitution, very clearly in a number of our federal laws, that people are free in this country to practise their religion. That is one of the reasons I want to speak to this motion, to reiterate my strong support for maintaining respect within this place.

Whilst this group's actions have been broadly condemned by many in politics, you can see how these groups do not see what they are doing is wrong when they are being encouraged by comments that are made by our immigration minister. His words in question time sent alarm bells and shock waves through our community, and it was not just in question time but also during the recent federal election. When the immigration minister said that refugees are clogging up our Medicare system, clogging up our unemployment system and taking Australian jobs in the way that he did, he did it purely and simply to incite fear and push people's buttons within our community. He is not being inclusive, he is not respecting our rules and he is not respecting the fact that we celebrate diversity and migration in our country. This week he also spoke about Australians who have Lebanese heritage.

I would like to take a moment to acknowledge the way political leaders and members of parliament have taken to Twitter to tell the immigration minister why he should be sacked and to also tell him about their history. I would like to acknowledge Jackie Trad, the Deputy Premier of Queensland; Marlene Kairouz, a member of parliament in Victoria; and Steve Bracks, the former and much-loved Premier of Victoria—who all say they are proud Lebanese Australians. But let's make it clear: they are Australians with Lebanese heritage. My parents are from England, but I do not go around saying that I am a proud English Australian. I say that I am Australian with parents who were born in England. It is the same for these three celebrated MPs—they are Australians with Lebanese heritage.

Migrants built our country; it is the history of who we are. It is important that all of us always practise that when we stand and make comments, that we are being true to that; that we reaffirm our commitment to maintaining a migration policy that is wholly non-discriminatory on grounds of race, colour, creed or origin. I want to see the immigration minister recommit to that, a value that for so long has been bipartisan but just this week we have seen him tear that up and go for the cheap political shots. He should be ashamed and apologise for his comments. He is saying these things to invoke fear and division in our community and that is something we should never accept in this place or the other place.

Ms FLINT (Boothby) (17:03): I am delighted to support this motion put by the Prime Minister today. Equality before the law is one of the fundamental pillars of our liberal democracy and one that I certainly support and hope that all members in this place and the other do as well. Hailing from South Australia, I am conscious of the nature of my state's founding, 180 years ago this year. I attended our Proclamation Day ceremony at Glenelg on 28 December last year and I thoroughly commend it to all South Australians and indeed

anyone visiting my home state over Christmas. As a free settled state, the only one in the nation, as we like to proudly remind everybody else, and a place that was to be the embodiment of the best qualities that British society had to offer—economic freedom and prosperity, freedom of association and the right to be free from religious persecution—I am a very proud South Australia. This is important because freedom, I believe, is a most thorough and capable instrument that we may use to achieve equality.

South Australia was founded as a utopia for free settlers. It was home to many who were fleeing religious persecution from Prussia. Lutherans settled in and around the Adelaide Hills and the Barossa Valley, and wrote one of the first of many chapters in Australia's colourful and successful multicultural history. We have German migrants to thank for so much of our wonderful wine and food. It must also be highlighted that South Australia's proclamation was the only proclamation in the nation which included safeguards for Aboriginal Australians and their descendants, and thus proclaimed rights—albeit, rudimentary—for our First Australians. Closer to home for me, South Australia was also the first jurisdiction in Australia to legislate for women's suffrage and the only state to grant women the right to vote and to stand for parliament at the same time.

I mentioned that part of what we offered in South Australia was economic freedom and prosperity, and there is no greater tool to achieve equality than through freedom. One of our best examples of this was under the leadership of Sir Thomas Playford. Throughout the post-World War II migration era, South Australia's population exploded with non-English-speaking migrants, who have made a wonderful contribution to our state. Their inclusion in South Australia's life and community was facilitated by the demand for workers to work in the factories and in our economy at the time. These industrious migrants and their children have achieved equality and integrated properly into Australian life, and the credit must go to the principles of the Liberal democracy that my state and our nation were founded on.

Half a century later, and Australia is still a place of refuge for those fleeing persecution. While the world is a far more complex place now, and our immigration practices have needed to keep pace, the principles of providing refuge to those who need it remain the same and are stronger than ever. Australia's humanitarian program is global and non-discriminatory. Last financial year, the government's refugee and humanitarian program delivered a total of 17,555 places, which included 15,552 offshore places. This is the largest offshore intake in more than 30 years. The number of special humanitarian program places, visas for families of Australians in refugee-like situations offshore, has grown from 503 places in 2012-13 to 7,268 places in 2015-16. At the same time, the number of illegal maritime arrivals taking place under the program has fallen from 4,994 in the last period of Labor to one in 2015-16. Australia's annual refugee and humanitarian program will grow to 18,750 by 2018-19, one of the most generous permanent resettlement programs in the world. The coordinated efforts of the Australian government agencies and international partners have led to a steady flow of visa grants to Syrians and Iraqis from Australia's annual humanitarian program, an additional 12,000 humanitarian places. As a result, the number of Syrian and Iraqi humanitarian entrants arriving in Australia has also increased. The Department of Immigration and Border Protection and the Department of Social Services continue to work in close cooperation to ensure that post-arrival settlement services and supports are in place to assist people as they arrive in Australia.

It is important to note that we could not afford to be as generous in our refugee intake had we not managed to get our borders under control. Unfortunately, due to the failed Rudd-Gillard-Rudd Labor governments, our nation completely lost control of our borders and we incurred billions of dollars of spending. There was something like an \$11 billion budget blowout as a result of this. Far worse than any monetary impact was the loss of 1,200 lives at sea. The moment I realised how crucial it was to have our borders under control was when I saw the footage, in 2010, of the 50 people who drowned in very rough seas off Christmas Island. Having grown up on the coast, along a coastline pretty similar to that of Christmas Island, it was one of the most devastating things I have ever seen. We cannot allow it to happen ever again; we just cannot.

The results of stronger borders are clear: in the last six years of the Howard government, for example, just 288 illegal immigrants made it to Australia by boat. In the six years of Labor and the Greens, 50,000 people flooded in via 800 successful people-smuggling ventures, and, as I have mentioned, 1,200 people were tragically lost at sea. I am very proud to say that, under the coalition government's policies, no boats have arrived in Australia for 840 days. There are no children in detention. That number is down from 8,000 children who were held in detention under Labor's policies. There have been 17 detention centres closed. This means that we can now take more refugees from refugee camps who have been waiting patiently for a better life here in our wonderful country. We have been able to assist those refugees from Iraq and Syria.

I think it is very important to note that our migration program does not discriminate on the basis of ethnicity or religion. The purpose of migration is to build the economy, shape society, support the labour market, reunite families and provide protection in accordance with Australia's protection obligations. The contribution of migrants to Australian society, culture and prosperity has been an important factor in shaping our nation. I hope that everyone in this place and the other place are acutely aware that we were all migrants once. My earliest South Australian forebears arrived in my home state in 1838—two years after settlement. They did their small part to help build South Australia's economy and community, as migrants do every single day.

Today, our migration program is designed to meet Australia's economic and social needs. It includes the skilled stream, the family stream and the special eligibility stream, along with the humanitarian component for refugees and others in humanitarian need. The size and composition of the permanent migration program is flexible and changes over time. It has changed from a smaller program with mostly family migrants in 1993-94 to a larger program with more skilled migrants in recent years. In recent years, roughly two-thirds of people migrating to Australia were skilled migrants and about one-third were from family visa streams. The total migration program outcome for 2014-15 was approximately 190,000 places, compared to 62,800 in 1993-94. In recent years, the major source countries in the migration program have been India, China and the United Kingdom. We welcome all of these migrants.

I am sure everyone in this place would join with me in saying that one of the great privileges of being a member of parliament is going to citizenship ceremonies, welcoming new people into our communities and acknowledging the very rich contribution that our new citizens make to our culture and that our migrants have made to our culture and our

community over the years. I again commend the Prime Minister's motion. I congratulate the Prime Minister and our current and former ministers for immigration for the work that they have done, particularly in securing our borders and making sure no lives are ever again lost at sea as a result of a government policy in this country.

Mr DRUM (Murray) (17:13): I too would like to echo the words of the member for Boothby in relation to the incredible success that we have had in stopping the boats and the humanitarian aspect of that—saving lives at sea. We know that we still have a lot of work to do in this area. We can see that, sometimes, in these worldwide crises, we move the issue from our local oceans to the Mediterranean. We still have a worldwide issue, and we have a lot of work that needs to be done. However, it is great to see that we were able to work through this very complex issue. Everybody knows that, as soon as Australia blinks in relation to relaxing the current laws, the people smugglers will seize every opportunity to kickstart their industry once again. The better a job we do in protecting our borders, the more humanitarian and generous our legal intake of refugees can be.

It was with great pride that I had the opportunity to speak on the Prime Minister's motion about the right of all Australians to enjoy equal rights and be treated with equal respect regardless of race, colour, creed or origin—and you can throw religion in there or whatever. Certainly, we are all privileged to live in this country. Only once people have travelled overseas does the real benefit of growing up in a country like Australia hit home. To have so many freedoms—to not have to worry about being attacked on the way to school, to not have to worry about being treated as a second-class citizen—is something we take for granted in this country.

We also need to look very carefully at our Indigenous peoples because we have not brought them along in the same way that other countries have been able to do. You need only look across to New Zealand; they seem to have been able to bring their Maori population along in a different way from what we have been able to do with our Indigenous peoples. Shepparton and the Goulburn Valley has a very strong cohort of Indigenous people, and there are some significant issues in this area as well. I am lucky to have very good relationships with Aboriginal community leaders, who are able to enunciate a very clear vision for their people and have created so many positive initiatives within the Goulburn Valley and the Shepparton region. It is incredibly important that we continue to work with our Aboriginal communities to make sure that they are given every opportunity to pick up the education that most of us take for granted and to look at how we can give them employment opportunities that will change their lives, if we are able to do that.

Today I had the great pleasure of hosting my friend Kevin Sheedy, who was up here spruiking the benefits of a country round of football for next year. Every time you get Kevin Sheedy on his own, he wants to talk about the Indigenous players that he was able to nurture, teach and encourage—and they repaid him in spades with brilliant football and brilliant careers. He was certainly able to increase the profile of Indigenous Australians within the sport of Australian rules football. Prior to Kevin Sheedy coming in as a coach in the eighties, we might have had 30 or 40 Indigenous AFL players. But within a short 20 years we have now had over 350 Indigenous AFL players—and they continue to bedazzle all of us. Again, that was just one man's passion to bring out their absolute talents.

Getting back to the Murray electorate and, in particular, the Goulburn Valley, it has always had a diverse multicultural break-up and mix. Growing up there as a school child, I had friends from every different European country. It did not matter whether they were Greeks, Italians, Macedonians or Albanians. Many people from European countries who migrated to Australia after the Second World War came directly to Shepparton. They gave Shepparton a very multicultural feel, even before any of us knew what the word 'multicultural' meant. That sense has continued to grow; in fact, it is changed quite significantly. We still have all of those populations but in recent years we have had increased numbers arriving from Malaysia, Indonesia and Sri Lanka. With the break-up of Yugoslavia, we had more and more arrivals from those European areas. And in recent years we have people had come from a range of Arabic speaking countries. There are Iraqis and there are a lot of Afghans who are trying to find their way in Shepparton.

On a very serious note, Shepparton and the Goulburn Valley have done an awful lot of heavy lifting in relation to resettling refugees. Governments need to be very careful when they think that they can just plonk people in certain areas because there seem to be a lot of other immigrants and refugees in those areas, it all looks good and we will talk about it in such a positive light. To a large degree it is positive, but what we need to be very careful of is the issue called secondary migration. When we bring refugees into Australia we put a cohort of support structures around them, with language skills, housing support and employment support—there is a whole range—but, when those refugees migrate out of the eastern suburbs of Melbourne and decide they want to make Shepparton their home, the secondary migration takes place without the associated supports. That is where Shepparton is at the moment. We have had so much secondary migration. People have moved to the regions because it is cheaper to live there and there is a bigger cohort of refugees of like race, so they feel they can move into those areas and be amongst their own. But we need to be very cognisant of the continued need to put supports around these people. I would like to push the fact that language is a very serious barrier for enabling people to further assimilate into whatever community they want, but it is an incredibly important part of us being able to welcome these people. These people will not come into our community groups, our community clubs and our community organisations if they do not have the confidence generated by being able to speak the language.

When talking about being a great country in relation to this, whilst I am incredibly proud of the government's achievements with our borders, we need to be mindful of the damage that is done to individuals after prolonged periods in refugee camps overseas and in offshore detection. When we bring these people in and we are able to resettle them here, there are still significant issues and support that they need because of the separation from their family, the uncertainty about bridging visas and the uncertainty around temporary protection visas. Whilst I am incredibly proud of our record and what we have achieved, I am also incredibly aware that there is a real cost to dealing with this problem, and that simply means that we have to be very honest about all the associated issues when it comes to refugees being resettled here.

The Goulburn Valley is an amazingly multicultural environment. It is a beautiful place for food. We have beautiful people from beautiful parts of the world making this beautiful food. It is a real awakening when people come to Shepparton. They would not realise that we have

all these amazing cultures and amazing opportunities for greater understanding. We have a lot of work to do and we need a lot of support. I am looking forward to the migration committee's work under Jason Wood. We are conducting an inquiry into resettlement. I want to reaffirm the Prime Minister's motion to the House.

Ms BANKS (Chisholm) (17:23): I am absolutely delighted to support this motion by the Prime Minister, Malcolm Turnbull, today. This motion goes to the very essence of what I stand for. I am so proud to be here supporting this motion as the member for Chisholm, Australia's third most culturally diverse electorate. Australia is the world's most successful multicultural nation on this earth. This is reflected in our celebration and warm embrace of different cultures in community and business life. The contribution of migrants to Australian society, including many in the electorate of Chisholm, is significant to the prosperity and harmonious way in which we celebrate our culture. In any one day in Chisholm—as I said, the third most culturally diverse electorate in Australia—many languages other than English are spoken and many cultural events and traditions are enjoyed, and this all happens in harmony.

The embrace of multiculturalism and equal opportunity is intuitive and formidable under the Turnbull government. Our commitment is to a completely non-discriminatory policy and the rights of all Australians to enjoy equal rights and be treated with equal respect, regardless of race, colour, creed or origin, as is our commitment to the process of reconciliation with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. Australia's migration program does not discriminate on the basis of ethnicity or religion.

In recent years the major source countries in our program have been India, China and the United Kingdom. Australia is an immigration nation and we should all be very proud and, indeed, as in the words of our national anthem, we should 'all rejoice'. Today, almost half of us have a parent born overseas and more than a quarter of Australians were born overseas themselves. We are much more diverse than the United States.

Since 1949 more than 7½ million people have come from all corners of the earth to make Australia their home. Migrants from all over the world, including our newest Australians, have arrived under a broad range of visas—as skilled migrants nominated by employers, as refugees, as humanitarian entrants, as partners, as carers, as business owners, as regional skilled migrants, as people of distinguished talent, as parents, as children and as students. Each one brings a rich personal history that we have welcomed into our community. At the time that they formalise their commitment to our country, our values and our rule of law, they start their journey in Australia.

This year marks the 50th anniversary of when Australia became an early signatory to the United Nations International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination. It is a treaty that goes directly to a basic principle of respect for each other as fellow human beings and respect for each other regardless of race, colour or ethnicity.

It is always important to reflect on history and see how far we have come as a nation. In 1966 that treaty was signed by the Liberal Prime Minister Harold Holt. Only months earlier the Holt government made significant changes to our migration laws, dismantling all laws allowing discrimination against migrants on the grounds of colour or race.

In May 1967 Australians overwhelmingly voted to amend the Constitution to enable the Commonwealth to make laws for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians—a process that was begun under the Sir Robert Menzies government and was completed under the leadership of Harold Holt. These decisions under the Menzies and Holt governments removed the White Australia policy and embraced all the new and exciting opportunities for our country, which were underpinned by the people who came from far and wide. They sought to end discrimination, celebrating and reaffirming the Australian values of mutual respect regardless of ethnicity, race, colour or creed.

Central to our democracy is the rule of law. The rule of law is empowering and constraining as it applies to every citizen and protects every citizen regardless of race, colour, gender or status. But harmony and security are not mutually exclusive. Indeed, they are intrinsically linked. To this, I discuss Labor's border failures, which are, in my view, Labor's greatest shame. Under Labor the criminal people-smuggling syndicates flourished. Eight hundred boats arrived, 50,000 people arrived and 2,000 children were in detention, and the greatest shame of all is that 1,200 people died.

Under the Turnbull government we have not had one boat arrival, no deaths at sea, we closed the detention centres and there are no children in detention. The Turnbull government's work in relation to border protection and securing our shores is lauded and praised around the world. Moreover, the fact that we have our borders under control is what has created our dividend to bring in refugees—those most vulnerable from Syria and other parts of the world. A total of just under 19,000 refugees have come to Australia recently as a result of our measured, controlled approach.

Our proud migrant story has many chapters and is told in the waves of people who have come to our shores, and many of their stories are about their immigrant experience, stories and heritage. Last week I had the honour and privilege of presenting Australian citizenship certificates to many new citizens who have made Australia their home and who live in my electorate of Chisholm. In their pledge of citizenship they promise loyalty to Australia and its people whose democratic beliefs they share, whose rights and liberties they respect and whose laws they will uphold and obey. It gave me so much pride and heartfelt warmth to have this honour of officially welcoming people and congratulating them in joining our great nation, and to share this moment with them. The looks on many of their faces and the pure joy that was in that room as I handed their certificates was joyful. My parents and ancestors, like many—including the many in my electorate of Chisholm—have come, in the words of our national anthem, 'across the seas' and 'toiled with hearts and hands'. New citizens have come from the United Kingdom, China, India, Greece, Italy, Sri Lanka, Vietnam, Hong Kong, New Zealand, Korea, Taiwan, Ireland, Mauritius, the Philippines, and Malaysia. All those new citizens who attended the ceremony, like all those before them, have so many stories to share. But the one thing we all have in common is that we are able as 'Australians all' to rejoice—because this is the most successful multicultural nation on this earth.

Mr LEESER (Berowra) (17:30): I rise in support of this motion today, and I thank the Prime Minister for introducing it. This motion outlines one of the most fundamental principles of Australian society: that an individual should be judged according to their character, their ideas, their actions and their deeds, and not their race, colour, creed or origin. It is a particular honour to be the member for Berowra and to speak on this particular motion, because of my

illustrious predecessor, Phillip Ruddock, who served as member for Berowra for 23 years but served the Commonwealth parliament for 43 years; our second-longest serving member of the House of Representatives ever. It is particularly good to be speaking to this motion here where my friend, the member for Bennelong who—like the member for Berowra—has been a great champion of multiculturalism in Australia.

One of the things about my predecessor—and this motion gives me an opportunity to pay some tribute to him—was his very strong connections with multicultural communities, along with his very deep interest in the diversity of Australia, and the nation-building that he sought to do throughout his political career. Phillip Ruddock's interest in multiculturalism goes back to the time in the early 1980s when he was shadow minister for multiculturalism. He was asked to produce a policy on multiculturalism, initially for the ACT, and became interested in getting to know some of the community leaders around the country. Phillip famously put his political career in the firing line, as it were, when in 1988 he crossed the floor to support Australia having a race-blind migration policy. I think, of the many important things he did in his career, this was actually the most important. This is a principle which is reflected in the motion today, but I think it is actually a fundamental principle of who we are as Australians. It was very important to the making of Phillip Ruddock, in terms of his political career—not just as a very good local member and as someone who could forge a policy agenda but as somebody who stood for something that was very deep and very important. I really pay tribute to him for that.

Philip was also our longest-serving minister for immigration, and he enjoyed that portfolio; he was also minister for Indigenous affairs, and that portfolio is also encompassed by some aspects of this motion. Phillip saw his role in the immigration portfolio as building the nation. Some people see the immigration portfolio as merely a border protection portfolio, but that was not how Phillip saw it. He saw it as both choosing the next generation of people to be Australians, and welcoming them, ensuring that they had good settlement services and ensuring that they became and felt part of the broader community. Having observed Phillip closely, I think that being immigration minister was something that left its mark on him. But it was also, undoubtedly, one of the most difficult policy areas imaginable. It was difficult because he had to make some tough decisions about Australia. He had to make some tough decisions about border protection when large numbers of boats came—and I think every immigration minister faces those difficult decisions. While I am paying tribute to Phillip, I also want to pay particular tribute to the present immigration minister, Peter Dutton, who has done a fantastic job—as his predecessor, Scott Morrison, did—in ensuring that we have public confidence in the migration program by ensuring that people continue to come to Australia in an orderly manner; that we do not have the deaths at sea; that we do not have 50,000 people turning up on our doorstep; and that we do not have the large number of people in detention that existed under the previous government. The success of multiculturalism in Australia today is really founded on the issue of public confidence. That was something that both Phillip Ruddock and Peter Dutton have stressed in their contributions to the public debate on this issue. Diversity is the goal. Diversity is fundamental to who we are, but you cannot have public support for diversity unless you have public confidence that we have an orderly system to bring people in.

For me, the right to equality and the idea of a race-blind immigration policy is absolutely axiomatic. I am very proud to have been the first Jewish Australian chosen by my party from New South Wales to serve in the House of Representatives. It is an interesting fact that in the first Commonwealth parliament the people of Indi in northern Victoria chose Isaac Alfred Isaacs, one of the framers of the Constitution and later Chief Justice and Governor-General, the people of South Australia chose Vaiben Louis Solomon and the people of Fremantle, just out of Perth, chose Elias Solomon. Both Solomons were free traders, and Isaacs was a protectionist. Those two streams formed the modern Liberal Party, but it was another 115 years before my party, or its antecedents, in my state chose somebody of my faith.

Prior to becoming a member of this parliament, I served on the representative body for the Jewish community in New South Wales. I had a particular role as chair of the community relations committee of that body. The NSW Jewish Board of Deputies' community relations committee is absolutely fundamental, because its role is to build harmony and build relationships with other religious communities and other ethnic communities across the state. That is a very important thing in terms of a harmonious multicultural society—not just that you have tolerance and diversity, but that you have people making an effort to share their differences and to celebrate the similarities of what makes us Australian. That was a great privilege for me, because it gave me an opportunity, just as some of my previous work with Philip Ruddock had done, to interact with some of the great community leaders involved in the multicultural space. I particularly think of people like Stepan Kerkyasharian who is, if you like, the godfather of multiculturalism in New South Wales. He served on the Anti-Discrimination Board of NSW for many years, he served on what is now the Community Relations Commission as its president for many years, and he served on SBS multicultural radio to help create a sense of inclusion and a sense of multiculturalism across the broader community.

I do not just think of people like Stepan, I think of people like Sev Ozdowski, of people in the Chinese community like Benjamin Chow and Tony Pang, of people in the Indian community like Parveen Gupta and Pallavi Sinha, of Professor Agar and Sanjeev Bhakri from the Hindu Council, and of some of the other amazing people I met along the way. I am very lucky to represent a community that, like the member for Bennelong's electorate, has a great deal of ethnic diversity in it. About 40 per cent of people in my electorate were born overseas, which is consistent with the national population. There are significant Chinese, Indian, Korean, Italian, Lebanese and Malaysian populations in my community. It is that difference and that diversity that brings strength.

One of the things I find whenever I am speaking to people who have chosen to be Australians, who have come from other countries to settle here, is that they have an enormous pride in being Australian. Australians by choice are a great benefit to our country, because, very often, they have left circumstances, regimes and situations that are not as good as they find here. They are grateful and feel fortunate to be here, and they want to see our country prosper, because, if our country prospers, they too shall prosper. That is a great strength of our system.

One of the other aspects of this particular motion is the commitment to reconciliation with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. I thought I might begin by talking a little bit about that. I have been on a real journey in relation to the issue of recognition of Indigenous

people in Australia. I must say, at the beginning of my journey I was opposed to any recognition of Indigenous people, not because I do not wish to see Indigenous people prosper and succeed, but because I was deeply concerned about the implications of adding words to the Constitution that might have unforeseen consequences.

Over the last three or four years I have had the privilege of working with a group of Indigenous leaders, people like Noel Pearson, Megan Davis and Marcia Langton, to come up with a suite of proposals which I think will provide a good pathway to achieving reconciliation and recognition of Indigenous people. It involves an extra constitutional declaration of recognition, designed by Australians and voted on by Australians. It involves amending and updating the words in the race power so they reflect and codify current practice and that they change those words for being a power for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander affairs. It involves removing the spent provision in section 25 in the Constitution. Finally, it involves creating a body that can provide advice to parliament and advice to government on laws relating to Indigenous people.

As we know, whenever you make a law you make a better quality law when you have consulted the people who are most affected by it. That is why some sort of body that provides a voice for Indigenous people, in the policymaking and law-making process, would be a great advantage. I commend the motion to the chamber.

Mr O'DOWD (Flynn) (17:40): I rise to reaffirm my commitment to the rights of all Australians to enjoy equal rights and to be treated with equal respect, regardless of race, creed, colour or origin. Equal rights and personal freedom are fundamental ideals of Australian society, fought for by our soldiers in so many theatres of war across the globe. Despite a long proud history of tolerance and acceptance there is still—and always will be—more to do.

While the bare-faced discrimination of the early days of Australian settlement has virtually banished from our society, as we stand here today, there is still more work to be done. As the Prime Minister said in his speech:

Our achievement in creating a harmonious nation is not an accident. It has been carefully crafted, and it must be nurtured. And a necessary precondition for harmony is security.

It is this security that binds our entire society and allows it to be so diverse. Security is easily identified in ways we interact with the rest of the globe.

We have a history, and I think a proud history, of supporting the rights of those who are in peril through military action. In the First World War as a new nation we saw European countries—and it would eventually have led to our own country—under threat by the Germans. Our war started in New Guinea, where the Germans had a pretty strong base in Rabaul and other parts of New Guinea. Our first recorded deaths in World War I were in Rabaul, when five Australian soldiers were killed. But they did achieve what they set out to do: take over the communications that controlled all of the Pacific Islands. We then went on to Gallipoli, North Africa and those dreadful trench wars in France. But it was aggression that helped the Western world and the islands achieve their independence.

The Second World War was similar, with German aggression again, including the extermination of millions of people based on their race. That was sad but we responded to the

call. Those people now have the freedom that they longed for back then. They have it to a degree now.

Vietnam was our stance against the spread of communism and people being persecuted. Whether the Vietnam War was one we could have kept out of is up to the individual to make their own mind about, and there are two schools of thought. We thought we were doing the right thing by going in and helping the Vietnamese retain their freedom. With the current Middle Eastern wars, Australia has taken to assisting those whose rights and safety are under siege.

Work continues to this day with the ADF against the scourge of IS. Australians can stand proud in the knowledge that their military tradition has fought for the rights of people when called upon, time after time. That security is also identified in Operation Sovereign Borders. There are two ways to come into Australia as an immigrant or refugee: the legal way and the illegal way. By keeping our borders secure, we take the market away from the criminal human-traffickers, thus allowing a more generous inflow of safe, legitimate, security-checked refugees.

While the media likes to throw doubt at Australian society's acceptance of newcomers, I think the best indicator of our acceptance is just how keen migrant families are to become Australian citizens. All of us in this House attend regular citizenship ceremonies in our different locations. Each month, if I am available, I attend citizenship ceremonies at Gladstone and in other parts of my electorate of Flynn—Emerald and so forth—and I am taken aback by the passion and love that the so-called new Australians have for our community. I think these ceremonies are one of the greatest events you can attend as a politician. You see the expressions on their face change as the words 'You are now an Aussie, mate' are said. I think it is proof of how proud these people are to leave their countries of birth and come to a place called 'Australia'. They had never been here before. Maybe they had some family members who have been here. In essence, they had not been on Australian soil. They are here for the first time and they embrace the nation of Australia.

For the majority of them, all they want to do is become good Aussies, work hard and achieve what they could not achieve in their place of birth. These people often do so in order to escape terrible dangers, and they hope to make a new life in a safe and secure country. By offering them security and safety, we are able to welcome those new Aussies and the new economic windfall that they bring with them. That is where Australia benefits. We need these immigrants, on a regular basis. We are an ageing nation and we need these people to look after people like me when we go into retirement in the next few years. They will replace the baby boomers. They are an essential part of our immigration policy.

This government is committed to equal rights and constitutional acknowledgement of Indigenous Australians. Recognition is overdue, and it is not helped by distracting comments from those opposite about a treaty. I think if we leave things as they are, everything will be fine. Recognition is an important step, but it is improving the life outcomes for all Indigenous Australians that will make a measurable difference to them and to Australia. Through poor health outcomes, Indigenous Australians have a lifespan that is, on average, 10 years shorter than for those in the non-Indigenous population. This is something that all governments must address.

This comes back to safety and security. The Prime Minister was talking about every Australian. Every visitor needs security. By continuing the fight for security and safety this nation and its people will continue to see Australia as a welcoming and sought-after destination. My family, the O'Dowds, came from Ireland in 1949, just before the so-called Great Famine—the potato famine. It was a famine—the potatoes were diseased—but the English, who then ruled Ireland, sought to shut off all the fishing holes and lakes, exported the lamb and beef to England and let 5½ million Irish people die on the streets of Ireland. That is how my family came to Australia—to escape the famine of 1850.

In those days, it was the Catholics against the Protestants. As a young child, I can remember that the Catholics and the Protestants were separated in religious classes in the tiny little schools they used to go to. That is a fact. Trinity College had an interesting story in Dublin. Trinity College is still there. It is a very old school and it was only for the Protestants. For hundreds of years, the Catholics fought to be able to attend Trinity College. When they finally got self-government, in 1920, they were told: 'Okay, you can now go to Trinity College.' The Irish response to that was, 'It's good to know that we can go there, but we don't want to go there now.'

An honourable member: To be sure!

Mr O'DOWD: To be sure! With that, I would like to endorse what we are here to talk about, and that is freedom for all, regardless of race, creed, colour or origin. Thank you very much.

Mr LITTLEPROUD (Maranoa) (17:50): Today, I stand in this chamber as a proud member of a government that throughout our nation's history has supported and respected the tolerance of others no matter what their race, religion or gender and it continues to do so today. I am also proud of the fact that this country is the most successful multicultural society in the world. This is something all Australians should be proud of. If you ask a person in the street what they think defines our Australian culture I am sure the words, 'mateship' and 'getting in and having a go' are likely to be the responses that you will get. In fact that narrative rings true here with this motion today, where both the government and the opposition agree, just like it was 20 years ago when our former Prime Minister, John Howard, and the then opposition leader, Kim Beazley, spoke on this very motion.

It would be remiss of me not to say that this generous, respectful and multicultural Australia has been underpinned by giving our people peace of mind. When I refer to the giving Australians peace of mind I am referring to the efforts we take to ensure that Australia remains a harmonious multicultural society, underpinned by the focus on our country's national security.

I have to say that I am extremely proud to be part of a government focused on the security of our borders and diligently managing our immigration programs. It is our ability to control our borders that enables us to live in a harmonious, well-balanced and multicultural society. We are definitely one of the luckiest countries in the world, and as a member of a functional global society this government recognises the need to do our part. I believe that the people who come to this country by visa, whether as a skilled immigrant, a refugee or as a humanitarian entrant; as partners or carers; as a business owner; as a regional skilled migrant; or as parents, and who agree to respect our country's sovereignty and laws deserve our mateship and an opportunity to contribute. Entry to our country through our humanitarian

program—a program that is global and non-discriminatory—provides hope for a better future for people and their families who are displaced by conflict.

This government has committed to settling 12,000 additional humanitarian refugees who have been displaced by enduring conflict in Syria and Iraq. This government will work to ensure that refugees who are welcomed to Australia through our humanitarian program pass imperative security checks and meet health and character criteria. This government will be providing the necessary services to our humanitarian entrants to help them to build a life here in Australia so that they too can become self-reliant and participate equally as members of our Australian society.

My electorate of Maranoa is classified as regional, rural and remote and I would like to talk with the tangible benefits of ensuring that migrants successfully integrate in our regional rural and remote areas. On the ABC's *Australian Story* two weeks ago we learned firsthand about the benefits of encouraging multicultural integration in the small community town of Mingoola, just over the border in New South Wales—a town that my leader, Deputy Prime Minister Barnaby Joyce, actually represents. This is a town which in many ways is similar to the sum of the towns in my electorate of Maranoa, in the sense that these communities are facing the challenges of a declining population and sustaining their essential services and facilities. Smaller rural communities like Mingoola, and the many communities across Mingoola, while facing challenges are also proud, community-minded and respectful communities, where people are friendly and helpful and care about the future of their town.

Julia Harpham noticed the pressure placed on the future of Mingoola. It was a problem which almost resulted in the closure of the local Mingoola school. Instead of accepting a sad end, Julia worked to find a solution that would suit her community. In Julia Harpham's words:

You don't like to see a community die. And there's not much joy in a place with no children.

Together the community of Mingoola worked with refugee advocates to facilitate, with the help of this government, to bring refugee families from Central Africa to Mingoola.

Families arriving here as refugees from countries in Central Africa, like Rwanda, often do not want the hustle and bustle of the city. They want a life on the land, to live in smaller communities to which they can contribute and for their children to enjoy a country upbringing. Earlier this year three families relocated to Mingoola, increasing the small rural town's population by 29 and saving the local school from closure. The relocation of these three families has also provided employment opportunities for people with local farmers and alleviated the pressure placed on farmers in the area in attracting a reliable workforce.

By all reports this project is a success for Mingoola and is an example of how Australia's humanitarian program produces good outcomes, particularly in regional, rural and remote Australia. This outcome is exactly what the evidence tells us. When we integrate our immigrant population into our rural towns we broaden and revitalise our communities. We have people to utilise our schools and people to take job opportunities that we in rural Australia often find hard to place. Maintaining sustainable populations in our smaller communities means that all levels of government are able to ensure adequate investment in planning, infrastructure, programs and services in the country. In my first speech I spoke about infrastructure being important for unlocking our economic prosperity in Maranoa.

In the three months I have been in this role I have been fortunate to attend two citizenship ceremonies: one in Dalby, at which the community welcomed 21 new citizens, and another at Kingaroy, where 23 citizens joined the South Burnett community. In fact, the citizenship ceremony in Kingaroy was one of the largest held by the South Burnett Regional Council. I watched proudly as our new citizens pledged loyalty to Australia, our people, our democratic beliefs and our rights and liberties and promised to respect and obey our laws. After speaking to some of Maranoa's newest citizens and learning about them, their children and their background I was able to fully appreciate the value of their contribution to the social fabric and the economies of their new regional and rural communities.

Another issue which I have been focusing on in my electorate is the value of our passionate, dedicated and community minded volunteers in helping address community disadvantage, whether that be by reason of unemployment, disability or otherwise. I have been encouraging people to recognise good citizens—the people who donate their time to help others. In preparing my speech on this very important motion I was surprised to learn that, according to Volunteering Australia statistics from 2010, 36.2 per cent of people aged 18 years and over participated in formal volunteering, so roughly about 6.1 million people or 27 per cent of the then 2010 population. Of that amount 1.44 million volunteers were people who were born overseas, and 840,000 of those were people who spoke a language other than English. I think these statistics truly reflect the fact that the opportunity we provide to people through our immigration programs is of benefit to Australia.

I would also like to acknowledge our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders who contribute so much towards this country. I am grateful for our First Australians who are now saving lives as doctors, nurses and paramedics, teaching children, working with our unique Australian environment and serving the Australian people here in this place. But I am also cognisant that we must continue our work in bettering the lives and opportunities of our First Australians.

Our government is extremely committed to preserving our First Australians' history. While the Prime Minister was in Birdsville with me last month we met with Jean Barr-Crombie, who through Red Ridge received a grant to publish a book on the Indigenous language unique to outback Birdsville. This grant will ensure that our Indigenous languages survive the years to come and remain an important part of Australia's history.

In closing, what we as a nation have achieved in creating the most functional and harmonious nation on earth is a great achievement but we can never take this for granted and we should be prepared to defend and preserve that achievement at all costs.

Debate adjourned.

Federation Chamber adjourned at 17:59